



**WFP EVALUATION**



**World Food Programme**

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# Evaluation Synthesis of evidence and lessons on country capacity strengthening from decentralized evaluations

Synthesis report

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This version contains the following annexes: i. The component evaluations; ii. Summary of evidence against evaluation criteria; iii. Summary Terms of Reference; iv. Methodology; v. List of stakeholders consulted and interviewed.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WFP's long-standing commitment to country capacity strengthening is reflected in key strategic documents. The WFP policy on capacity development and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development launched in 2015 provided further impetus to efforts to strengthen capacity support for countries in pursuing their Sustainable Development Goal targets, particularly for Sustainable Development Goals 2 and 17. An internal audit of WFP's capacity strengthening and a corporate evaluation of its 2009 policy on capacity development noted successful examples of capacity strengthening support, identified areas for improvement and highlighted capacity strengthening as an area of risk for WFP if implemented without adequate support.

## Purpose

The purpose of this synthesis is to provide evidence of WFP's performance in country capacity strengthening, both for the purpose of learning and in the interest of accountability for results to its stakeholders.

## Context

WFP developed a framework and approach to country capacity strengthening in 2017<sup>1</sup> that comprises five pathways of change and activities within three domains: laws, policies, strategies and procedures (enabling environment); well-functioning organizations (organizational domain); and educated, skilled people (individual domain).

## Scope and methodology

Thirty-two decentralized evaluations were completed between 2016 and 2019. The activities and operations covered by the evaluations were designed prior to the publication of the 2017 country capacity strengthening framework and associated

guidance. Evidence from the evaluations was assessed according to an analytical framework in order to answer key questions on the relevance and results of country capacity strengthening interventions and the factors that contributed to their success.

## Key findings

All the evaluations found country capacity strengthening to be integral to WFP interventions and approaches, regardless of programme or region, and to be generally aligned with national priorities. Improved identification of specific capacity needs by WFP or others would have increased the relevance and targeting of country capacity strengthening interventions, particularly at the local level. Appropriate identification of national and local partners for country capacity strengthening delivery (such as non-governmental organizations, academia or government) was key to the relevance and effective targeting of interventions.

Capacity strengthening results are evident for individual and organizational domains, but less so at the level of the enabling environment.

Long-term engagement that is responsive to changing government needs contributes to successful changes in policy and strategy. Two thirds of the evaluations include considerations of gender in country capacity strengthening interventions, although they are not well addressed; other WFP cross-cutting issues are virtually absent.

Elements of the evaluated interventions that contributed to success and more sustainable results included strengthening national ownership, building strong and trusted relationships and effective partnerships (through prolonged engagement) and promoting good coordination. Adaptation to local context was also critical to achieving positive results.

## Conclusions

Country capacity strengthening interventions that delivered simultaneously in all three domains (individual, organizational and enabling environment) made the greatest contributions to long-term outcomes. Issues raised in the 2016 audit and the 2017 evaluation of the corporate policy continue to be evident in the evaluations, including inconsistent and incomplete approaches to country capacity strengthening, lack of expertise needed to support capacity strengthening design and implementation, and weak monitoring of and reporting on performance in capacity strengthening.

## Lessons

Successful country capacity strengthening interventions require needs assessments and expertise at the design stage. There is a need to combine advocacy with technical advice that is aligned with national government frameworks for transformative change. Collaborating with partners, including other United Nations agencies, and establishing (where appropriate) clear transition plans and agreements prior to transition also help to sustain results.



## Recommendations

Country capacity strengthening is critical to WFP's contribution to the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of its strategic objectives. This evaluation synthesis therefore puts forward five recommendations aimed at enabling WFP to improve its effectiveness in this area.

**One recommendation is strategic** and states that:

- ▶ WFP should reaffirm its commitment to country capacity strengthening through the preparation of a new or updated policy that ensures strong integration of country capacity strengthening approaches into second-generation country strategic plans.

The remaining **four recommendations are operational**. They call for WFP:

- ▶ To strengthen and fund expertise in country capacity strengthening throughout the organization by conducting a workforce planning exercise (or similar exercise) and implementing a skills development programme.
- ▶ To integrate capacity needs assessments into programme design and second-generation country strategic plans.
- ▶ To refine the country capacity strengthening indicators in line with the new strategic plan and the corporate results framework for 2022–2026. Linked to this is the inclusion of qualitative as well as quantitative indicators to better capture and measure country capacity strengthening results, and the production of enhanced guidance.
- ▶ To strengthen guidance and provide technical support that enhances the integration of gender, protection and accountability to affected populations into country capacity strengthening interventions and to ensure advocacy for and the mainstreaming of gender equality and women's empowerment in country capacity strengthening.



# INTRODUCTION

## Synthesis features

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The purpose of the synthesis is to provide evidence and learning on WFP's performance in country capacity strengthening (CCS) and accountability for results to WFP's stakeholders based on a synthesis of 32 decentralized evaluations completed between 2016 and 2019.<sup>2</sup>

The evaluations included assessments of a range of CCS activities carried out in countries covered by all six regional bureaux. The most common activity area was school-based programmes. The evaluations analysed for the synthesis are listed in annex 1, along with an explanation of the abbreviations by which they are referred to.

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## Context

A policy on building country and regional capacities was released in 2004, focusing attention on the importance of national capacity strengthening.<sup>3</sup> In 2009, the Executive Board approved the WFP Policy on Capacity Development: An Update on

Implementation,<sup>4</sup> which was followed by guidance documents including the National Capacity Index, Measuring Change in Capacity for Hunger Governance in Support of Projects to Strengthen National Capacity to End Hunger (2014), and the Design and Implementation of Technical Assistance and Capacity Development (2015).

The launch of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015 gave impetus to the provision of support to countries pursuing their Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets, particularly for SDGs 2 and 17. The latest United Nations report on implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (April 2020) affirms the importance of an integrated approach to CCS that is "demand-driven and focused on actual change rather than on activities to strengthen capacities".<sup>5</sup>

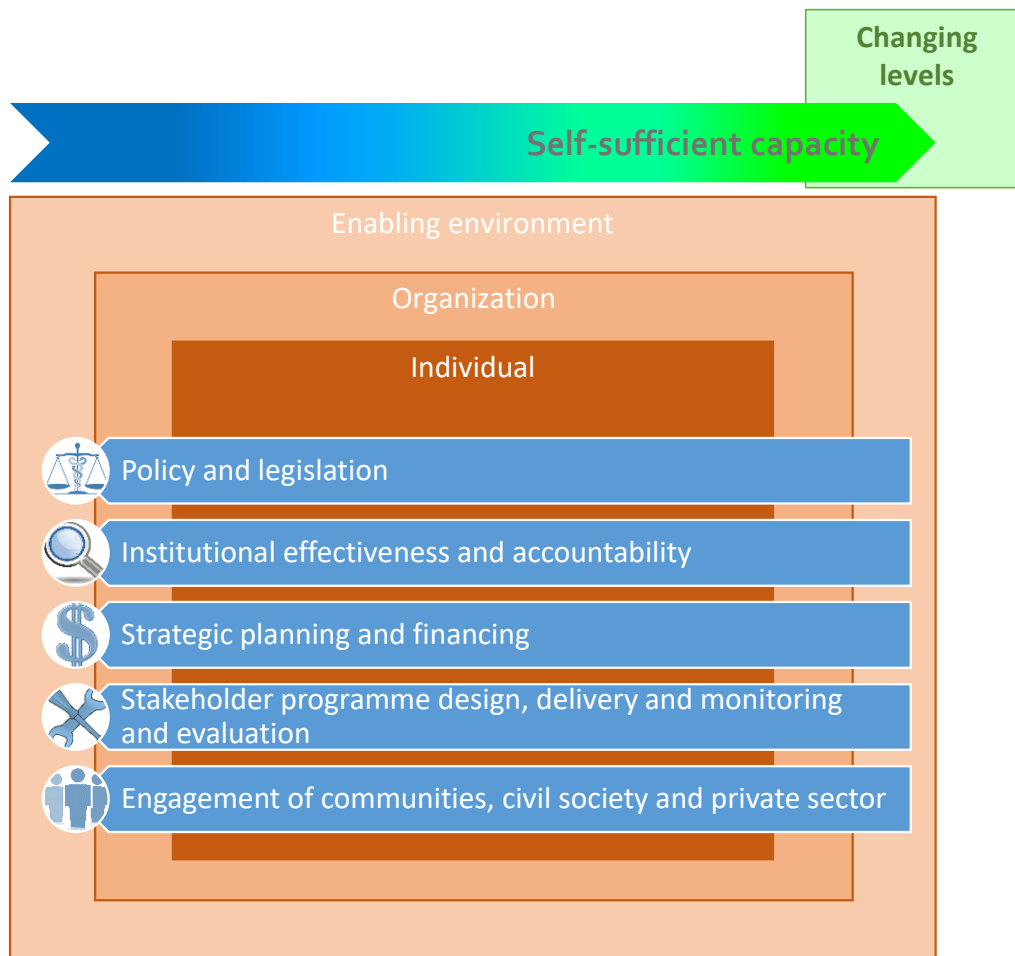
An internal audit of WFP CCS (2016)<sup>6</sup> found examples of successful CCS but noted that suboptimal use of corporate concepts, guidance and tools, had limited the visibility of CCS results. WFP's management of financial and human resources for CCS and fragmented knowledge management systems were insufficiently supportive of capacity strengthening interventions.

An evaluation of the capacity development policy<sup>7</sup> found that while its generic nature facilitated adaptation to various contexts the related action plan<sup>8</sup> did not provide sufficient practical guidance on how to use capacity development-related output and outcome statements. The evaluation concluded that capacity development would probably contribute to the long-term impact of WFP's work but cautioned that continuing "business as usual" in prioritizing capacity development without increasing internal support would generate "considerable reputational risk".

WFP developed a framework and approach to CCS in 2017<sup>9</sup> that includes supporting principles and guidelines and outlines how CCS should be applied (figure 1).



**FIGURE 1: COMPONENTS OF THE WFP COUNTRY CAPACITY STRENGTHENING FRAMEWORK**



Source: WFP. 2017. *WFP Corporate Approach to CCS, CCS Toolkit Component 001*.

The framework comprises five pathways of change and activities within three domains: laws, policies, strategies and procedures (enabling environment); well-functioning organizations (organizational domain); and educated, skilled people (individual domain).

WFP developed a series of tools for operationalizing the framework, all supported by detailed guidance.<sup>10</sup> The activities and operations covered by the evaluations included in this synthesis were designed after the 2009 capacity development policy but before the publication of the 2017 CCS framework and associated guidance.

In the WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021), CCS is referred to in Strategic Objectives 1–3 at the individual and organizational levels and is core to Strategic Objective 4, particularly

Strategic Result 5.<sup>11</sup> Capacity strengthening is identified in WFP’s corporate results framework (CRF)<sup>12</sup> in several different ways: as an outcome category, as an activity category (individual and institutional capacity strengthening) and as a transfer modality within an activity.

New CCS indicators were included in the revised CRF in 2019, but an internal mid-term review concluded that improvements were still required in order to link outcome indicators with high-level and long-term measures of reduction in food insecurity and malnutrition, particularly in development contexts and middle-income countries.

WFP is now developing a new strategic plan and CRF for 2022–2026 as well as a new or updated CCS policy.

## Methodology

The scope of the synthesis was determined through a two-stage process. WFP identified 40 decentralized evaluations that met or exceeded the requirements of the post-hoc quality assessment system. These evaluations were then screened to determine the extent of CCS coverage.<sup>13</sup> Thirty-two component evaluations were identified as having high (9) or medium (23) levels of CCS coverage; these evaluations formed the main evidence base for the synthesis exercise.

The following key questions guided the synthesis approach:<sup>14</sup>

- ▶ To what extent has the design of CCS interventions been relevant to national development priorities?
- ▶ What are the main contributions that WFP has made to strengthening the capacities of state and non-state actors?
- ▶ What are the common issues and potential opportunities most recurrently highlighted in decentralized evaluations regarding CCS intervention design and implementation?
- ▶ What internal and external factors contributed to positive or negative results in CCS implementation? Are there particular programme areas and contexts in which the CCS approach has worked better and why?
- ▶ To what extent has WFP's approach to CCS contributed to achieving sustainable, strengthened capacities at the enabling environment, organizational and/or individual level?
- ▶ What broad principles and lessons related to CCS should inform WFP's engagement with state and non-state actors in the context of the 2030 Agenda?<sup>15</sup>

A structured analytical framework was developed around the main questions, and data were extracted using deductive and inductive methods. As language related to

CCS varied across the evaluations, terminology and definitions were drawn from the CCS framework,<sup>16</sup> which is directly related to previous corporate frameworks.<sup>17</sup> Throughout the report, CCS is used to describe all capacity building, development or strengthening interventions. Preliminary findings were explored in more depth through nine key informant interviews with staff from WFP headquarters, regional bureaux and selected country offices, and two virtual workshops were held to validate findings and conclusions and consult on recommendations.

Limitations of the approach used stem from the wide variation in activity types, terminology and coverage of CCS results in the evaluations, which made it difficult to identify commonality or differentiation in approaches and results. Furthermore, the evaluations selected are a sample that contained sufficient CCS data but may not reflect the full scope of CCS interventions in WFP operations. CCS results were extracted where available, but inconsistent approaches to measurement and major data gaps required the synthesis team to conduct an adapted assessment of CCS using quantitative and qualitative data.





WFP/ Mahira Afzal

# FINDINGS

# 1

## RELEVANCE OF COUNTRY CAPACITY STRENGTHENING INTERVENTIONS

### Key findings

- ▶ The component evaluations indicated that CCS is integral to WFP interventions and approaches, regardless of programme or region.
- ▶ The design of CCS interventions is closely aligned with national priorities.
- ▶ In the absence of national priorities (or where they were weak) WFP's CCS project design included elements that would support the development or strengthening of such priorities. However, WFP's role in facilitating national ownership of the interventions could be improved.
- ▶ Programmes were more relevant when an assessment of capacity needs was undertaken as part of programme design, but this occurred in less than a quarter of the programmes covered by the evaluations.
- ▶ There is scope to improve the relevance of interventions at the local and individual levels, with more consideration given to local context.
- ▶ It is important to identify appropriate CCS partners in order to ensure the relevance of CCS intervention design in various contexts.

All evaluations highlighted the broad relevance of CCS, most commonly at the organizational level. The most effective results were seen where interventions across the three domains were appropriately linked, which is in line with capacity strengthening approaches generally.<sup>18</sup> In Tunisia, for example, a white paper on education included improvements to school feeding as part of its education reform (fostering an enabling environment); the national school feeding strategy that guided institutional programming was developed with WFP support (organizational CCS) and a second-phase intervention assisted the Ministry of Education with implementation of the strategy (organizational and individual CCS).

Generally, there was strong evidence of strategic relationships between WFP and government partners with clear links between national government policies and WFP's country-level objectives. Where there were no national policies or strategic priorities for a programme area, WFP support included the development of guiding documents as part of the CCS intervention such as school feeding policies; or supporting processes such as strategy developments; and the establishment of management secretariats. In circumstances where WFP had been asked to deliver specific services, a CCS approach may not have been required. In those cases, evaluations highlighted that more could have been done to strengthen national ownership.

**FIGURE 2: EXAMPLES OF RELEVANT COUNTRY CAPACITY STRENGTHENING INTERVENTIONS**

**Colombia** – Individual and organizational: Vulnerability analysis and mapping was used to target the most food-insecure communities and individuals. WFP sub-offices identified organizations and territorial entities (local governments) that had potential as implementing partners in CCS interventions. Such entities, along with non-governmental organizations, national academia and training institutes, provided food security-related capacity strengthening to local communities and individuals while WFP provided operational support to delivery partners.

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**India** – Individual, organizational and enabling environment: WFP supported the Government of India in formulating a customized package for a food distribution reform programme. Reforms were implemented based on the identified institutional capacity needs of the Odisha regional government and delivery partners. The intervention design combined organizational and individual support in order to build the capacity of implementors to reach and support food-insecure households.

Only nine<sup>19</sup> evaluations documented that some form of capacity needs assessment had been conducted, either through previous WFP, government or partner capacity assessments or through the current WFP capacity needs mapping tool or similar approaches. The Systems Approach for Better Evaluation Results (SABER)<sup>20</sup> includes an initial mapping of capacity needs and was used in most school feeding projects, providing an important foundation for the design of CCS activities. The Central America evaluation noted that the use of the Three-Pronged Approach in the food assistance for assets programme had helped to identify capacity strengthening activities linked to organizational, community and individual needs. Capacity needs assessment led to enhanced results; the lack of such assessments reduced the relevance of CCS, particularly at the local level.

WFP engagement with national and local partners during programme design was identified as a key determinant of CCS relevance to context. It can be assumed that country offices played an important role in this regard, although this was not clearly articulated in the evaluations. In Nepal, the Government recognized the importance of national school feeding programmes and, therefore, their relevance at the policy level, but the evaluation found that there had been no clear identification of the most relevant partners for delivering specific training or continuing support beyond the intervention. Partner selection could be improved in terms of relevance to context and capacity needs and in documenting performance.

# 2

## RESULTS OF COUNTRY CAPACITY STRENGTHENING INTERVENTIONS

### Key findings

- ▶ CCS results are not systematically measured or reported.
- ▶ Qualitative findings suggest that CCS results are achieved but underreported in all three CCS domains.
- ▶ WFP contributes most clearly to strengthening the capacities of state actors at the organizational level.
- ▶ While gender is regularly – albeit insufficiently – reflected in CCS activities, protection and accountability to affected populations are not often taken into account.

The synthesis of the results from the evaluations reconfirmed the observation of the 2017 policy evaluation that monitoring and evaluation of CCS remains “weak and inconsistent, limiting WFP’s ability to showcase and learn from its work”.<sup>21</sup> Only approximately one third of the evaluations reviewed (13)<sup>22</sup> recorded any data for specific CCS-related indicators and targets, as shown in table 1.

**TABLE 1: QUALITY OF COUNTRY CAPACITY STRENGTHENING INTERVENTION MONITORING**

	YES	NO	TOTAL
Quantitative* data on CCS results is presented in the evaluation	13	19	32

\* This refers to outputs or outcomes, i.e., any quantitative data that measures CCS results, and was present in the evaluations.  
 Source: CCS synthesis team findings 2021.

Of the 13 evaluations that recorded CCS data, only four<sup>23</sup> specifically stated that CCS monitoring was satisfactory. They were able to do so because baseline data had been captured and a monitoring and evaluation framework with CCS indicators was available, with regular monitoring occurring as intended throughout the project.

Of the 19 evaluations that did not monitor CCS data, ten noted significant weaknesses

in CCS monitoring. In Bangladesh 1, no needs assessment was conducted, while in Eswatini, training activities were carried out but not adequately documented. All the mid-term evaluations,<sup>24</sup> except Turkey, included recommendations for improved performance measurement. There is a need for clarity about the intended aims of CCS interventions and what will be measured and assessed when determining success.

This reflects a gap in WFP country-level expertise in relation to the design, measurement and implementation of CCS interventions when activities were designed. Country-level interviews validated the challenges in data availability and noted that there was insufficient guidance on how to develop meaningful indicators and targets.

To assess **the effectiveness of CCS results**, the synthesis team analysed qualitative evidence related to intervention objectives. This presented a more positive picture of WFP results in CCS than was recorded through formal reporting mechanisms. The Central America evaluation made this point clearly, stating that considering the great importance of institutional and governmental strengthening for the success of this project, it is unfortunate that corporate indicators and the logical framework for the project do not capture the extensive work done in terms of

development of institutional capacities. The assessment of effectiveness demonstrated a clear gap between actual and recorded CCS results.

Table 2 shows that only one quarter of the evaluations in the sample included clear evidence of effectiveness; more than two thirds provided partial evidence of effectiveness and two provided virtually no data on effectiveness, despite having a focus on CCS.

**TABLE 2: LEVEL OF EVIDENCE THAT ENABLED ASSESSMENT OF COUNTRY CAPACITY STRENGTHENING EFFECTIVENESS**

LEVEL OF EVIDENCE	STRONG EVIDENCE	PARTIAL EVIDENCE	INCONCLUSIVE	TOTAL
Number of evaluations that record evidence related to CCS effectiveness	8	22	2	32

Source: CCS synthesis team findings 2021.

Although the evaluations present a **wide variety of CCS activities** and interventions that support systemic change, they did not specify the transfer of skills or knowledge that was expected to take place as a result of the CCS interventions. While it can be assumed that each intervention sought to transfer skills or knowledge, there was inadequate monitoring to demonstrate whether this occurred, or in which domain, i.e., individual- or organizational-level change. There was often a lack of clarity as to what was being conducted, with whom and with what expected outcome, as well as insufficient evidence to determine any clear patterns across activity types. It can also be the case that the domain is determined by the intention rather than the type of the activity. As no evaluations explicitly mentioned CCS at the enabling environment level in results frameworks or targets, qualitative information had to be used to assess achievements in this domain.

At the **individual level**, capacity strengthening was included as an objective – explicitly or implicitly – in the design of 23 evaluated interventions. The most common activities undertaken were training and workshops. WFP frequently supported the set-up and strengthening of formal and informal community groups, providing guidance and training for parent-teacher groups, school feeding gardens (Tunisia and Bangladesh 1 and 2) or village committees for making decisions on assets and disaster preparedness (Malawi 1 and Colombia). Data was regularly provided for the number of groups established, but there was no information on the outcome of the activity. Evaluations reported that pre- and post-training follow-up was seldom conducted. This made it difficult to ascertain the contribution of completed activities to the achievement of the outcomes or the extent to which change could be sustained.

At the **organizational level**, capacity strengthening was included as an objective – explicitly or implicitly – in the design of 25 evaluated interventions. Capacity strengthening for staff in government ministries was often not documented in the evaluations. The contribution of enhanced staff capacity to the achievement of results was reflected in statements in the evaluations, even though it was not highlighted in results frameworks. It is assumed that better staff capacity was achieved through training, workshops or mentoring, but the types of activities undertaken were not well defined.

WFP support for **non-state actors** such as local supply partners and community-based institutions was presented as an achievement in three evaluations<sup>25</sup> where CCS interventions explicitly targeted non-state actors; most evaluations targeted both state and non-state actors. In Ecuador, organizations of small producers developed endogenous training schemes, which emerged as an unexpected result rather than an intentional part of the intervention design.

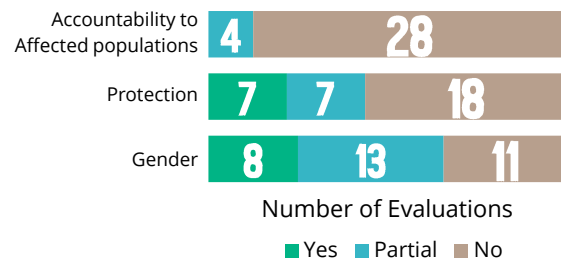
At the **enabling environment** level, capacity strengthening was included as an objective in 18 of the evaluated interventions. Related activities included support for the set-up of a government-led secretariat (Lesotho) or for agreements on policies and strategies (Philippines and Kenya) but without explicitly identifying WFP's role in the process. Fourteen<sup>26</sup> evaluations stated that CCS activities had been aligned with national priorities, but only eight<sup>27</sup> reported results in the form of improved policy or strategic instruments.

Investment in **South-South and triangular cooperation** activities was mentioned in three evaluations (Lao People's Democratic Republic, Bangladesh and Central America). Country interviews also highlighted the importance of these activities, acknowledging visits to the WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil that informed national decision makers about good practices used by WFP in other countries; however, there was no further evidence for the synthesis to draw on.

While almost all evaluations referred to the SDGs when describing the general context, only five<sup>28</sup> mentioned capacity strengthening as a contributor to SDGs 2 or 17.

Consideration of three **cross-cutting themes** in CCS results was largely focused on reporting results disaggregated by gender. Few evaluations had any evidence regarding how CCS interventions related to protection or accountability to affected populations (figure 3). However, these matters may be better reflected in evaluations of interventions implemented after 2017, which will have been guided by the 2017 CCS framework and associated guidance.

**FIGURE 3: CROSS-CUTTING THEMES IN DECENTRALIZED EVALUATIONS**



Source: CCS synthesis team findings 2021.

Eight evaluations demonstrated achievement of gender-sensitive implementation targets (i.e. they recorded the number of women participating in CCS activities); 13 evaluations provided partial evidence of CCS-related gender-sensitive outcomes, but 11 did not mention any gender-related CCS achievements. Effectiveness related to gender equality or empowerment was mixed, with more extensive reporting of results at the output than the outcome level. In Togo, for example, training and support resulted in specific improvements in the lives of participating women. The evaluation also concluded that the unpaid voluntary nature of the work of canteen mothers does not contribute to the goal of the national gender strategy of increasing the productive capacity of women and their level of income.

Of the 32 evaluations, 28 contained **recommendations relating to CCS**. Of the 110 recommendations related to CCS activities, 30 referred to improving the enabling environment, 57 to the organizational domain and 15 to the individual domain. A further eight recommendations focused on CCS and gender. It is also notable that 100 percent of CCS-related recommendations were either accepted (85) or partially accepted (25) in management's responses.





## FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO OR HINDERING COUNTRY CAPACITY STRENGTHENING SUCCESS

### Key findings

- ▶ There were no distinct success factors linked to particular regions or activity areas; instead, strong and trusted partnerships underpin CCS success in all the evaluations in the sample.
- ▶ Long-term investment in relationships with institutional and organizational partners is required for CCS interventions to culminate in self-sufficient capacity.
- ▶ Clearly defined designs and plans and dedicated resources are required for successful CCS implementation.
- ▶ Many hindering factors identified in the synthesis are common to those highlighted in the evaluation of the WFP capacity development policy in 2017;<sup>29</sup> such factors include weak and inconsistent monitoring, lack of WFP-wide expertise and embedding of capacity strengthening and lack of resources for promoting CCS.

The synthesis found a **high degree of variability** in CCS interventions, approaches and contexts and no success factors specific to particular regions or sectors; however, it is clearly essential to contextualize CCS approaches, i.e. to be aware of local context, design CCS approaches following a capacity needs assessment, and be flexible with regard to adaptation as part of regular planned monitoring if local needs or contexts change. Tools and approaches such as SABER and the food assistance for assets three-pronged approach could be studied in more detail as a basis for the development of more consistent guidance. The analysis of the evaluations also showed that factors that explicitly contribute to successful CCS interventions may also hinder the interventions if not considered, enacted or implemented well. Resource mobilization, for example, was a key success factor that ensured sustainability, while a lack of resources for agreed CCS initiatives clearly limited their success.

The CCS framework sets out five CCS pathways (shown in figure 1) that require

engagement with key stakeholders in each domain and effective organizational mechanisms for success. Although evaluations in the sample did not make explicit reference to the pathways because the CCS framework was only introduced in 2017, the five principles of partnership, ownership, trust, recognition of existing capacity and needs, and time required to develop self-sufficient capacity for transition<sup>30</sup> were identified in the evaluations as necessary for successful CCS interventions.

### Ownership, partnerships and trust

**Relationships with government** as a factor affecting CCS implementation was referenced in 12 evaluations<sup>31</sup> explicitly and in others implicitly. WFP's close knowledge of and relationship with partners (particularly at all levels of government) was noted as a key reason for the success of CCS interventions and, therefore, wider programmes.

## Time required to develop self-sufficient capacity for transition

Setting a realistic timeframe to strengthen capacity and see evidence of results is key to CCS interventions, including efforts to strengthen partnerships between WFP staff and state and non-state partners. The Togo evaluation stressed that capacity strengthening has a long-term timeframe and should always be understood as an ongoing activity, updated over time based on a reassessment of needs, rather than as an objective to be achieved precisely and definitively.

## Coordination

Some evaluations noted the need for better coordination of CCS activities among various programmes within WFP (Zambia), among various tiers of government (Lesotho) or between local communities and WFP and its implementing partners (Eswatini). In Malawi 2 and Liberia, a lack of joined-up approaches to engaging with national governments and between the district and national levels hampered CCS implementation. In addition, coordination with a wide range of partners including other United Nations agencies (without WFP necessarily being in the lead) could generate greater efficiencies and effectiveness.

## Context and adaptation

Sixteen evaluations<sup>32</sup> noted contextual factors that affected CCS implementation. Of those, only five<sup>33</sup> identified **mitigation strategies** that related specifically to the CCS components. All but six<sup>34</sup> evaluations articulated additional external factors that had affected CCS results, indicating a need for adaptability, which is particularly relevant given recent global events such as

the COVID-19 pandemic. In Lao People's Democratic Republic, partnerships were developed based on an understanding of local context together with a willingness to change and adapt programming modalities, following monitoring that included feedback mechanisms from local communities – this adaptability was noted as a key success factor.

## Additional internal factors

A number of additional internal factors were mentioned in specific evaluations that were consistent with the findings of previous policy evaluations and audits. This synthesis found that these factors contributed to successful CCS:

- ▶ engagement with key actors at the policy level;
- ▶ CCS expertise and technical support to guide project actions, either internally or through partnerships with organizations with capacity strengthening capabilities;
- ▶ specific budgeting for CCS activities; and
- ▶ integration of CCS guidance with WFP gender policies and best practices, as well as with other cross-cutting issues.

## Additional external factors

Other factors that did not necessarily represent a pattern or theme but which nonetheless affected CCS success included:

- cultural factors;
- ▶ lack of government commitment (including resources) and political uncertainty;
- ▶ environmental and health factors (two of the evaluations indicated that the programmes being implemented were affected by outbreaks of Ebola) and sudden onset natural disasters; and
- ▶ political and other factors, such as teacher strikes and conflict.

# 5

## SUSTAINABILITY OF COUNTRY CAPACITY STRENGTHENING INTERVENTIONS

### Key findings

- ▶ The extent to which CCS has contributed to sustainable, positive changes in capacity is difficult to assess due to a lack of clearly articulated CCS objectives across the evaluation, combined with inadequate monitoring.
- ▶ Strong partnerships and government commitment are essential for any transition of WFP activities to government responsibility.
- ▶ Where transition is appropriate, realistic transition plans identifying roles and responsibilities need to be prepared; they should include formal documentation of arrangements to ensure sustainability and preparation of the budgets and staff required for continued operations.

There was evidence of the potential for sustainability, primarily at the individual and organizational levels. Nine evaluations found a high level of evidence of the potential sustainability of CCS interventions in the individual domain and positive results in organizational strengthening. Fourteen<sup>35</sup> evaluations described measures to

strengthen the sustainability of CCS interventions – some identified as part of the programme under evaluation and others recommended by the evaluation. They included strengthening economic capacity, monitoring and evaluation, government institutions and partnerships and setting realistic timeframes for achieving CCS results.

**TABLE 3: SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF COUNTRY CAPACITY STRENGTHENING INTERVENTIONS**

	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	NOT RELEVANT	NO DATA
<b>Individual</b> domain	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Organizational</b> domain	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Enabling environment</b> domain	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>

Source: CCS synthesis team findings 2021.

Higher sustainability levels were seen where commitment and partnerships with government were strong (Kenya, Philippines and Tunisia). Poorly designed and implemented monitoring systems limit the evidence available for the evaluations, making it difficult to assess sustainability.

However, those evaluations that did demonstrate positive contributions to sustainability achieved did so through robust transition planning, formal documentation of sustainability arrangements, and the preparation of budgets and staff for continued operations.

**FIGURE 4: EXAMPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CONTRIBUTION OF COUNTRY CAPACITY STRENGTHENING TO WFP OBJECTIVES (LIGHT BLUE) AND CHALLENGES (DARK BLUE)**

**Ecuador** – continuity in the strategic relationships between WFP and partners represents a “guarantee of long-term complementary activities”.

**Kenya** – the WFP-supported school meals programme was in the process of being successfully handed over to the government-led school meals programme.

**Togo** – it is not certain that capacity building has sufficiently “permeated the fabric” or been embedded within actors for the sustainability of the programmes to be considered in the long term. Other training needs to be put in place and the retraining of actors will still require WFP support until a “sufficiently prepared and financially robust coordinating agency is in place”.

**Liberia** – WFP conducts capacity building activities; however, there is no documented action plan for how or when the programme will be handed over to the Government. The memorandum of understanding stated that there was no plan for transition to national ownership.



# CONCLUSIONS



## OVERALL

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The synthesis affirms the importance of CCS to the achievement of WFP's objectives, particularly in supporting countries in strengthening their capacities in nutrition and food security. The evaluations provide indications of potential long-term positive capacity change as a result of CCS interventions. The primarily qualitative reporting of positive results suggests that WFP is unevenly monitoring and underreporting CCS achievements. There is an unrealized potential for WFP to better monitor and therefore identify and showcase results and strengthen its own learning regarding what works well in CCS and what can be improved if a mix of quantitative and qualitative reporting is utilized.

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CCS can be country-led, partner-led, WFP-led or, most productively, a trusted partnership working towards shared objectives. Greater country ownership was recommended in many of the evaluations. The most effective interventions were long term and had a high degree of coordination between partners and between domains of activity. The WFP-led interventions assessed in the component evaluations were often in countries with weak policy environments, where there was a risk that a strong donor-recipient relationship rather than a partnership relationship would undermine CCS principles. This required greater attention in order to overcome challenges and provide strong institutional support.

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The findings show that the principles of CCS can be applied in all WFP activity areas covered in the synthesis. Good practices associated with CCS – from needs mapping and design through to implementation and monitoring – contribute to success, regardless of programme area or context. Mapping of capacity needs and stronger partner coordination, including with local communities, enabled WFP to customize CCS approaches to context. Implemented more consistently, this approach would allow WFP to position CCS as a core contributor to WFP's response to the 2030 Agenda, and in particular SDG 17.

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Findings across various regions and contexts highlighted that the CCS design process is not well developed. While the design of CCS interventions was relevant to national development priorities, there was rarely a systematic assessment of capacity needs. The CCS framework and guidelines from 2017 strongly promote the use of the capacity needs mapping tool or other mapping tools by WFP or partners. Yet the evaluations found that the use of capacity needs assessment was not widespread and that the guidelines were not referenced in recommendations. This reveals a need to disseminate and embed within WFP policy and practice the suite of CCS guidance materials. Evaluations identified a scarcity of CCS design expertise within WFP, difficulties in defining the expected results of CCS interventions and defining, as well as securing, required budget allocations as limiting factors. Stronger outcome-level monitoring would have helped the evaluations to identify examples of CCS good practices that could contribute to the transfer of CCS knowledge and skills.

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CCS interventions that delivered results simultaneously in all three domains contributed to long-term CCS outcomes. Such interventions might, for example, embed CCS at the community level while mainstreaming capacity strengthening initiatives with delivery institutions and encouraging prolonged commitment and funding from governments. Gender is the cross-cutting issue that was most commonly addressed, with few mentions of protection or accountability to affected populations. However, there is a lack of evidence of gender-responsive programming or gendered consideration of the impact of CCS activities.



## ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

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The synthesis finds that the evaluated CCS interventions focused predominantly on developing individual and organizational capacities and less on the enabling environment. This hinders the sustainability and scope of results. Long-term productive investment by WFP in CCS at the national level has facilitated continuous policy-related advocacy that supports transition and improves long-term results. Close alignment by WFP with the policies of national partners requires strong and trusted relationships that enable advocacy to be undertaken and grants WFP CCS interventions sufficient credibility to gain leadership attention.

Long-term engagement also facilitates relationship building and opens up opportunities for WFP to undertake advocacy related to government resource commitments and self-sufficient capacity. Yet the importance of such activities is not emphasized (or recorded) in the evaluations.



## ORGANIZATIONAL DOMAIN

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The investment in organizational level CCS was documented more clearly in the component evaluations, reflecting increased ease of definition and reporting compared to CCS that aims to contribute to an enabling environment. The overall sustainability of CCS interventions is often underpinned by results in the organizational domain.

Key factors for success in the organizational domain included undertaking needs assessments, focusing on continuous improvement for government staff and establishing effective partnerships for CCS delivery and ownership, particularly with key state actors. Where these factors were not adequately pursued they hindered success.



## INDIVIDUAL DOMAIN

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Positive outputs in the individual domain were reported but were largely disjointed from reporting at the organizational and enabling environment levels and were not well linked to intervention outcomes. The findings cited in this domain also relate to capacity strengthening for individuals who work in institutions, including government entities.

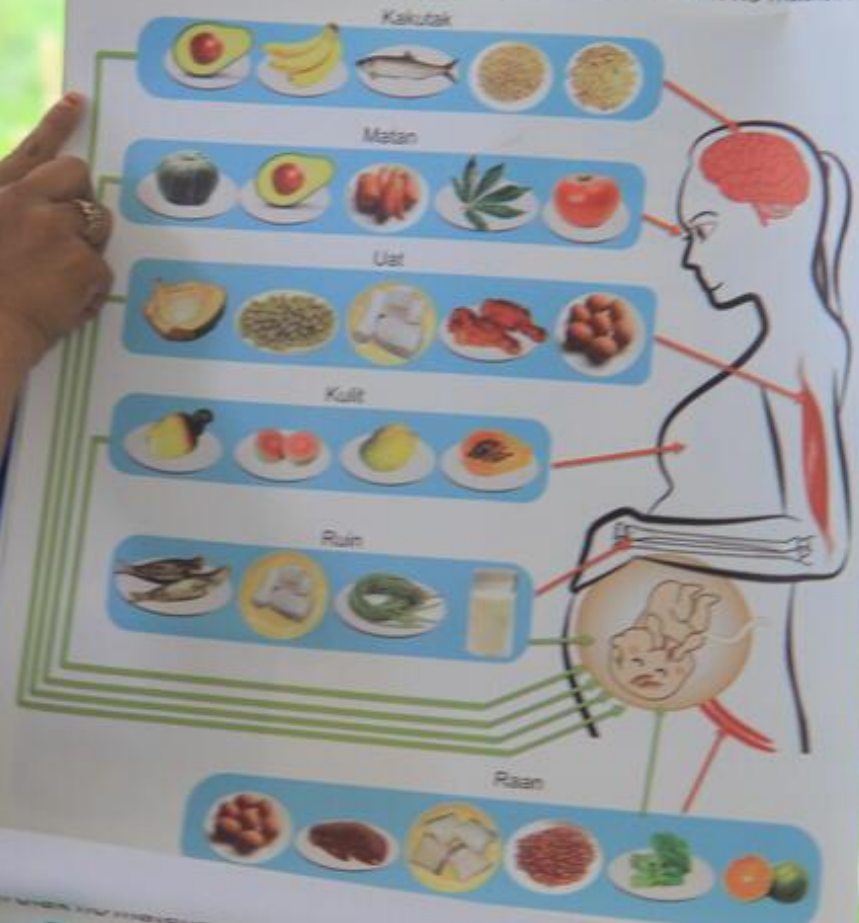
In order to incorporate diversity and inclusion in CCS activities, CCS approaches need to be adjusted to context. Yet approaches that focus on documented national priorities are not clearly contextualized to the local level. Interventions that use targeted capacity needs mapping or similar tools and have good feedback mechanisms demonstrate stronger responsiveness to context and, overall, more positive results.

There was evidence of good practice in CCS interventions designed to promote women's participation in decision making and increased access to training and information, but there was insufficient systematic evidence of how these interventions were targeted and measured or of transformational gender approaches.



# Diak ba isin, Diak ba saúde, Diak ba bebê

"Saida mak hau tenki han atu hau nia bebê sai isin diak no matenek?"



WFP/Denita Baptista

## KEY LESSONS



**1** As the nature of CCS is evolving within WFP, **systems for CCS knowledge management and performance measurement** are needed to enable continual improvement.

**2** **Successful interventions involve early consideration of CCS**, including through capacity needs assessments and CCS expertise at the design stage. Conducting capacity needs assessments or utilizing existing data in the design of all projects (both those with envisioned CCS elements and those without) could increase the scope and usefulness of CCS interventions.

**3** **Combining advocacy with technical advice aligned with national government frameworks** is the most effective course of action. This approach requires strong relationships and prolonged engagement with government to provide both advocacy and delivery, as required or requested.

**4** **Synergies between CCS across all three domains** also drive success, whereby individual, organizational and enabling environment activities are planned and implemented in a system-wide approach to achieve objectives. This requires a long-term view of how the domains interrelate and can be mutually supportive, as well as an effective feedback loop. In addition, effectiveness and efficiency can be increased through greater collaboration and coordination with partners, particularly other United Nations agencies

**5** **Where appropriate, developing clear CCS transition plans and agreements in collaboration with national partners** prior to transition helps to sustain project activities and results and embed national ownership. Establishing clear and validated agreements that stipulate expected roles and responsibilities for ongoing CCS activities and resource commitments results in more effective and sustainable CCS results.



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



WFP/ Damilola Oñafuwa

## RECOMMENDATIONS

# A. STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

**1. WFP should reaffirm its commitment to country capacity strengthening through the preparation of a new or updated policy that ensures strong integration of CCS approaches into second-generation country strategic plans (CSPs)**

**RESPONSIBILITY**

*Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service*

**TIMING/PRIORITY**

*December 2022 / High priority*

1.1 The new/updated CCS policy should include a clear conceptual framework, terminology and rationale for its approach.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service

**TIMING/PRIORITY**

June 2022 / High priority

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1.2 CCS approaches should be more systematically embedded into second-generation CSP design; harmonized and integrated across programming areas; tailored to local and country contexts, including risk mitigation; and aligned with partner needs.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service

**TIMING/PRIORITY**

December 2022 / High priority

## B. OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

### 2. Ensure adequate resources for the augmentation of CCS expertise across the organization

#### **RESPONSIBILITY**

*Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service with strategic corporate liaison points across WFP*

#### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

*January 2023 / High priority*

2.1 Conduct a workforce planning exercise or similar exercise to determine the current gaps and future demands for CCS skills and requirements across the organization in the context of the new strategic plan. This should include either recruiting or upgrading specialized CCS experts.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service with strategic corporate liaison points across WFP

#### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

June 2022 / High priority

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2.2 Drawing upon the substantial body of academic and practical evidence on CCS, establish a skills development programme and learning process based on the workforce planning outcomes in order to strengthen the capacity of corporate and country-level WFP staff involved in designing and implementing capacity strengthening, as well as those in support and management roles.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service with strategic corporate liaison points across WFP

#### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

January 2023 / High priority

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2.3 Set out a road map for funding and establishing strategic CCS specialist posts in divisions and functions and in regional and country offices to ensure that appropriate CCS expertise can be drawn upon for design, implementation and review.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service with strategic corporate liaison points across WFP

#### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

January 2023 / High priority

### 3. Integrate capacity needs assessment into programme design and implementation.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY**

*Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service with country offices supported by regional bureaux and programming area*

#### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

*June 2022 / Medium priority*

3.1 Review existing WFP tools used to assess capacity gaps and gauge their effectiveness in CCS design and implementation. Based on the review, refine and simplify CCS needs assessments and their use in programming and create a menu of options and examples of good practices.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service with country offices supported by regional bureaux and programming areas

#### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

June 2022 / Medium priority

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3.2 Promote the systematic use of capacity needs assessment tools as a critical element of CCS intervention design and implementation (working with partners as appropriate) and ensure that CCS initiatives are tailored to second-generation CSP environments, and grounded in national context and needs.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service with country offices supported by regional bureaux and programming areas

#### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

June 2022 / Medium priority

## 4. Refine CCS indicators to improve performance measurement and reporting in line with the new WFP strategic plan and CRF for 2022–2026

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

*Monitoring and Evaluation Liaison Unit with support of Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service*

### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

*June 2022 / High priority*

4.1 Review the relevance, application and utility of the existing CCS indicators and consider developing a menu of new/complementary qualitative and quantitative indicators. These should be aligned with country-level needs and should feature in the new CRF to measure country capacity strengthening at the individual, organizational and enabling environment levels, taking the five pathways into account.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Monitoring and Evaluation Liaison Unit with support from the Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service

### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

November 2021 / High priority

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4.2 Provide enhanced and accessible guidance to regional bureaux and country offices on identifying country-level indicators that facilitate effective measurement of and reporting on CCS and align with the revised CRF indicators.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Monitoring and Evaluation Liaison Unit with support from the Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service

### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

June 2022 / High priority

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4.3 Develop a road map with a timeline for any future CCS indicators to be developed during the implementation of the new strategic plan.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Monitoring and Evaluation Liaison Unit with support from the Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service

### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

June 2022 / Medium priority

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4.4 Develop guidance for country offices on how to introduce an integrated measurement of strengthened government capacity over time, across all programming areas.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service

### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

June 2022 / High priority

## 5. Strengthen guidance and provide technical support to enhance the integration of gender, protection and accountability to affected populations in CCS interventions

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

*Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division , with support from the Gender Office, and country offices supported by regional bureaux*

### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

*June 2022 / Medium priority*

5.1 Strengthen guidance and tools to support the integration and mainstreaming of commitments related to gender, protection and accountability to affected populations into CCS-related interventions across programming areas.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division with support from the Gender Office

### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

June 2022 / Medium priority

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5.2 Update and integrate the CCS gender checklist into the corporate CCS framework to ensure that gender equality and women’s empowerment are advocated and mainstreamed into CCS in a context-specific manner.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

Programme – Humanitarian and Development Division with support from the Gender Office, and country offices supported by regional bureaux

### **TIMING/PRIORITY**

June 2022 / Medium priority



WFP/Rein Skullerud

**ANNEX**



## Annex 1: The evaluations

TABLE: THE EVALUATIONS, THEIR REPORT ABBREVIATIONS AND POST-HOC QUALITY ASSESSMENT SCORE		
Subject of the evaluation	Abbreviation	Post-hoc quality assessment score* (%)
Final Evaluation of McGovern-Dole-supported School Feeding Programme in Bangladesh (2015–2017)	Bangladesh 1	62
Mid-Term Evaluation of McGovern-Dole-supported School Feeding Programme in Bangladesh (2014–2016)	Bangladesh 2	70
Final Evaluation of the WFP Country Programme in the Plurinational State of Bolivia (2013–2017)	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	75
Endline Evaluation of USDA McGovern-Dole Grant Food for Education Programme for WFP Cambodia (2013–2016)	Cambodia	66
Final Evaluation of the Project “El Niño Response in the Dry Corridor of Centro America”, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, 2016-2018	Central America**	74
Mid-term decentralized evaluation of the protracted relief and recovery operation 200708 in Colombia (2015–2017)	Colombia	72
Evaluation of the functioning of the WFP “Protecting Lives and Livelihoods and Promoting Livelihoods” PRRO Project in Côte d’Ivoire (2013–2017)	Côte d'Ivoire	70
Final evaluation of the relevance of WFP's role and response to advance a food assistance approach linked to social protection systems in Ecuador (2016–2017)	Ecuador	66
Evaluation of National School Feeding Programme in Eswatini (2010–2018)	Eswatini	66
Final Evaluation of WFP's USDA McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Programme's Support in Afar and Somali Regions in Ethiopia (2013–2017)	Ethiopia	70
Gambia DEV 200327: Establishing the Foundation for a Nationally Owned Sustainable School Feeding Programme in the Gambia (20122017)	Gambia	74
WFP's Country Programme 200326 in Guinea (2013–2017)	Guinea	61
End-line Evaluation of the Target Public Distribution Reforms Project in Bhubaneswar, (Odisha) India (2014–2019)	India	64

**TABLE: THE EVALUATIONS, THEIR REPORT ABBREVIATIONS AND POST-HOC QUALITY ASSESSMENT SCORE**

Subject of the evaluation	Abbreviation	Post-hoc quality assessment score* (%)
Final Evaluation of WFP'S USDA/McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program in Kenya (2014–2016)	Kenya	62
Mid-Term Evaluation of McGovern-Dole-supported School Feeding Programme in Lao PDR (2015–2016)	Lao People's Democratic Republic	71
Evaluation of the National School Feeding Programme in Lesotho, in consultation with the Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training (2007–2017)	Lesotho	74
World Food Programme McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program in Liberia (2013–2016)	Liberia	75
Mid-Term Evaluation of Integrated Risk Management and Climate Services Programme in Malawi (2017–2019)	Malawi 1	70
Final Evaluation of the School Meals Programme in Malawi with support from United States Department of Agriculture, and the Governments of Brazil and the United Kingdom (2013–2015)	Malawi 2	76
Joint FAO/WFP Evaluation of the project "Supporting the resilience of vulnerable populations in northern Mali" (2015–2018)	Mali	61
Mid-Term Evaluation of McGovern-Dole-supported School Feeding Programme in Nepal (2015–2016)	Nepal	69
Evaluation of the Country Programme 200434 in Nicaragua and complementary activities (2013–2018)	Nicaragua	75
Mid-term evaluation of the Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation 200961 in the Niger (2017–2019) and last year of PRRO 200583 (2014–2016)	the Niger	60
Final Evaluation of Disaster Preparedness and Response/Climate Change Adaptation Activities under the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance Fund in the Philippines (2011–2017)	Philippines	69
Mid-term evaluation of Country Programme 200648 in the Republic of Congo (2015–2018)	Congo	68
Mid-term evaluation of WFP's USDA McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program's Support in Rwanda (2016–2020)	Rwanda	72

**TABLE: THE EVALUATIONS, THEIR REPORT ABBREVIATIONS AND POST-HOC QUALITY ASSESSMENT SCORE**

Subject of the evaluation	Abbreviation	Post-hoc quality assessment score* (%)
Decentralized evaluation of the cash transfer modality used in the school feeding programme supported by WFP in Senegal (2014–2017)	Senegal	61
Evaluation of Institutional Capacity Strengthening in School Feeding in Togo (2016–2018)	Togo	66
Evaluation of WFP’s capacity building activities to develop the National School Feeding Programme in Tunisia (2016–2018)	Tunisia	61
Mid-term Evaluation of Emergency Social Safety Nets in Turkey (2016–2017)	Turkey	74
Mid-Term Evaluation of Zambia Country Programme 200891 (2016–2020)	Zambia	66
Evaluation of WFP’s Lean Season Assistance through the Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation 200453 in Zimbabwe (2013–2016)	Zimbabwe	62

\* Post-hoc quality assessment scoring: 75–100% = exceeds requirements; 60–74% = meets requirements.

\*\* For the sake of brevity, “Central America” is used throughout this report to refer to the Final Evaluation of the Project “Response to the El Niño phenomenon in the Dry Corridor”, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua (2016–2018).

**TABLE: FEATURES OF THE EVALUATIONS**

Evaluation by country	Income status <sup>d</sup>	Evaluation type	Year of completion	CCS activity <sup>a</sup>			Operations <sup>b</sup>				Activity categories <sup>c</sup>						
				CSP	CSB	CSI	EMOP	PRRO	DEV/CP	URT	ACL	CAR	SMP	NTA	NPA	SMS	EPA
Bangladesh 1	LMIC	Activity	2017		✓				✓				✓				
Bangladesh 2	LMIC	Activity	2018		✓				✓				✓				
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	LMIC	Operation	2018		✓	✓			✓		✓		✓	✓			✓
Cambodia	LMIC	Activity	2017		✓				✓				✓				
Central America	N/A	Operation	2019	N/A		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
Colombia	UMIC	Operation	2017			✓		✓		✓				✓		✓	
Côte d'Ivoire	LMIC	Operation	2018		✓			✓		✓	✓			✓			
Ecuador	UMIC	Thematic	2018			✓	✓	✓		✓						✓	✓
Eswatini <sup>f</sup>	LMIC	Activity	2019			✓			✓				✓				
Ethiopia	LIC	Activity	2018		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓				
Gambia	LIC	Operation	2018			✓			✓				✓				
Guinea	LIC	Operation	2018			✓			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		
India	LMIC	Activity	2019		✓	✓	N/A	N/A	N/A							✓	
Kenya	LMIC	Activity	2017		✓	✓			✓				✓				
Lao People's Democratic Republic	LMIC	Activity	2017		✓	✓			✓				✓				
Lesotho	LMIC	Activity	2018		✓	✓			✓				✓				
Liberia	LIC	Activity	2017										✓				
Malawi 1	LIC	Activity	2019	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓					✓
Malawi 2	LIC	Activity	2018		✓				✓				✓				
Mali <sup>g</sup>	LIC	Activity	2018			✓					✓						

TABLE: FEATURES OF THE EVALUATIONS																	
Evaluation by country	Income status <sup>d</sup>	Evaluation type	Year of completion	CCS activity <sup>a</sup>			Operations <sup>b</sup>				Activity categories <sup>c</sup>						
				CSP	CSB	CSI	EMOP	PRRO	DEV/CP	URT	ACL	CAR	SMP	NTA	NPA	SMS	EPA
Nepal	LMIC	Activity	2017			✓			✓				✓				
Nicaragua	LMIC	Operation	2019			✓			✓				✓	✓		✓	✓
The Niger	LIC	Operation	2018		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		
Philippines	LMIC	Operation	2018		✓	✓			✓			✓					✓
Congo	LMIC	Operation	2018			✓			✓				✓	✓	✓		
Rwanda	LIC	Activity	2019		✓	✓			✓				✓				
Senegal	LMIC	Transfer modality	2018		✓	✓			✓	✓			✓				
Togo	LIC	Activity	2019	✓		✓			✓				✓				
Tunisia	LMIC	Activity	2019	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓				
Turkey	UMIC	Activity	2018			✓		✓		✓							✓
Zambia	LMIC	Operation	2018			✓			✓				✓			✓	
Zimbabwe	LMIC	Activity	2016		✓	✓		✓			✓						
<b>Total</b>				<b>6</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>

<sup>a</sup> *CCS activity* refers to the specific CCS activity included in the evaluation, namely: individual capacity strengthening (CSB) or institutional capacity strengthening (CSI).

<sup>b</sup> *Operations* refers to the type of operation/s covered by the evaluation, namely emergency operation (EMOP), protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO), development operation (DEV) or country programme (CP).

<sup>c</sup> *Activity categories* refers to the additional activities, other than CCS, covered by the evaluations, namely: unconditional resource transfers to support access to food (URT), asset creation and livelihood support activities (ACL), climate adaptation and risk management activities (CAR), school meal activities (SMP), nutrition treatment activities (NTA), malnutrition prevention activities (NPA), smallholder agricultural market support activities (SMS) and emergency preparedness activities (EPA).

<sup>d</sup> World Bank classifications: <https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>. Abbreviations: upper middle-income country (UMIC), lower middle-income country (LMIC) and low-income country (LIC).

<sup>e</sup> CSP indicates that a component of the country strategic plan or interim country strategic plan was also part of the evaluation scope.

<sup>f</sup> The evaluation in Eswatini was jointly commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Training and the Eswatini country office.

<sup>g</sup> The evaluation in Mali was jointly commissioned by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and WFP.

## Annex 2: Summary of evidence compared to evaluation criteria

	Relevance – CCS aligned with national priorities			Relevance – CCS adjusted to context			Effectiveness of CCS		Sustainability of CCS results			Totals	
	Individual	Organizational	Enabling environment	Individual	Organizational	Enabling environment	Results adequately measured	Results achieved	Individual	Organizational	Enabling environment	Total three-star evidence	Total two-star evidence
Bangladesh 1	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	..	...	...	...	9	2
Bangladesh 2	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	10	1
India	...	...	...	...	...	...	-	...	...	...	...	10	0
Kenya	...	...	...	..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10	1
Philippines	..	...	...	...	...	...	.	..	...	...	...	8	2
Cambodia	...	...	...	...	..	...	...	..	..	...	..	7	4
Tunisia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	.	.	..	7	2
Togo	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	..	..	..	..	6	5
Zambia	...	...	...	...	...	...	..	..	..	..	-	6	4
Gambia	...	...	...	...	...	...	.	...	..	..	-	7	2
Lao People's Democratic Republic	...	...	...	...	...	...	.	..	..	..	.	6	3
Turkey	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	..	..	.	.	6	3
Eswatini	...	...	..	..	...	..	..	..	...	..	...	5	6
Rwanda	...	...	...	..	...	...	..	..	..	..	..	5	6
Ethiopia	...	...	...	..	...	...	..	..	.	.	..	5	4
Central America	...	...	-	...	...	/	.	...	..	..	/	5	2
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	...	...	...	-	...	-	.	..	..	.	-	4	2
Colombia	...	...	-	...	...	-	-	..	..	-	-	4	2
Nicaragua	-	...	-	-	...	...	.	...	-	..	-	4	1
Liberia	...	...	...	-	..	..	.	..	.	.	.	3	3

	Relevance – CCS aligned with national priorities			Relevance – CCS adjusted to context			Effectiveness of CCS		Sustainability of CCS results			Totals	
Malawi 1	***	***	**	-	-	/	**	**	***	•	/	3	3
Malawi 2	**	***	***	***	-	-	**	**	-	•	•	3	2
Mali	**	***	/	***	/	/	-	***	***	/	/	4	0
Lesotho	***	***	***	•	•	•	•	**	-	**	**	3	3
Nepal	***	**	**	**	**	***	•	**	•	•	•	2	5
Ecuador	***	***	/	/	-	/	•	**	•	**	/	2	2
the Niger	**	**	**	**	**	***	-	***	***	**	**	3	6
Côte d'Ivoire	-	•	-	-	-	-	-	**	-	***	-	1	1
Zimbabwe	***	/	/	-	-	-	-	•	-	-	-	1	0
Congo	•	•	•	***	**	•	-	**	-	-	-	1	2
Senegal	-	-	-	/	**	/	-	**	/	/	/	0	2
Guinea	•	**	**	**	**	**	-	•	-	•	•	0	5

#### Legend

***	High level of evidence present
**	Medium level of evidence present
•	Low level of evidence present
-	No evidence present
/	Not relevant

## Annex 3: Summary Terms of Reference

### Syntheses and Decentralized Evaluations – Synthesis Approach

Evaluation syntheses are an approach used to highlight issues that cut across different evaluations, and to address questions using an existing evidence base, in the case of OEV, quality-assessed evaluations, to further develop knowledge and inform decision making.<sup>36</sup> The nature of evaluation syntheses means that extensive primary data collection is not required. Decentralized evaluations in the context of WFP refer to demand-led evaluations covering operations, activities, pilots, themes, transfer modalities or other area of action. Decentralized evaluations are intended to be used in the preparation of CSP or to inform programming decisions.

### Objectives and intended users of the Synthesis

Evaluation syntheses serve the dual objectives of accountability and learning. In addition, this Synthesis will contribute to learning by drawing on key findings, lessons and recommendations to inform decision making, including the development of a new organizational capacity strengthening policy, provide insights into the effectiveness of CCS activities, provide an analytical lens for future assessment of CCS activities and serve accountability purposes. As such this Synthesis will be useful to internal WFP stakeholders involved in the delivery CCS activities and other external CCS organizations.

### Synthesis questions

This synthesis will answer the following synthesis questions:

1. To what extent has the design of country capacity strengthening interventions been relevant to national development priorities? To what extent have the approaches pursued by WFP contributed to the successful positioning of WFP in light of the current WFP strategic Plan?
2. What are the main contributions that WFP has made to strengthen the capacities of state and non-state actors?
3. What are the common issues and potential opportunities most recurrently highlighted across decentralized evaluations regarding CCS intervention design and implementation? To what extent are these issues reflected in CCS corporate guidance?
4. What internal and external factors contributed to positive or negative results in CCS implementation? Are there particular program areas and contexts in which the CCS approach has worked better and why?
5. To what extent has WFP's approach to country capacity strengthening contributed to achieving sustainable, strengthened capacities at the environment, institutional and/or individual level?
6. What are the broad principles and lessons from CCS that emerge that should inform WFP's engagement with state and non-state actors in the context of the Agenda 2030?
7. What is the extent of implementation of the actions agreed in the final management response by the targeted responsible entities in relation to CCS activities? What actions have been taken to implement the recommendations?



## Scope

This synthesis will include all decentralized evaluations that include country capacity strengthening interventions, in line with the following criteria:

- ▶ Evaluation type: decentralized evaluations commissioned and managed by country offices, regional bureau or Headquarters-based divisions.
- ▶ Time period: decentralized evaluations completed over the time period 2016-2020.
- ▶ Quality of evaluation: decentralized evaluations assessed by OEV's post-hoc quality assessment (PHQA) system as either meeting or exceeding requirements.<sup>37</sup>
- ▶ Type of activity category<sup>38</sup>: decentralized evaluations whereby country capacity strengthening activities were carried out by WFP, and whereby country capacity strengthening has been adopted as a transfer modality.

A preliminary shortlisting of evaluation reports was carried out based on decentralized evaluations assessed by OEV's post-hoc quality assessment (PHQA) system as either meeting or exceeding requirements,<sup>39</sup> which resulted in the identification of 40 reports<sup>40</sup> to be included in the synthesis.

As the information contained in OEV's management information system in relation to activity categories covered in decentralized evaluations is manually tagged, the coverage of CCS activities across decentralized evaluations will have to be reviewed. As such, the evaluation team will be expected to produce a synthesis method note for the refinement of the scoping protocol including the inclusion/ exclusion criteria used to finalize sample of reports that will be included in the synthesis during the inception phase.

To determine and finalize the total number of evaluations to be included in the synthesis scope, the team will undertake a first level screening of all 40 evaluation reports (presented in Annex 1 of the Full TORs), based on the extent to which CCS is covered. Evaluation reports are listed by their commissioning bureau and country, title, evaluation type, completion date and post-hoc quality assessment result.

In the period 2019-2020, 20 additional decentralized evaluations have been completed. However, these evaluations have not yet been assessed by OEV's post-hoc quality assessment mechanism. The inclusion of these reports in the scope of the synthesis will be determined after the above-mentioned first level screening is applied, through which the evaluation team will also determine whether the evidence on CCS provides a rich body of evaluative insights for the synthesis.

Should the CCS evidence from the screening of the 40 reports be limited, the evaluation team may be asked to undertake a second level screening of the 20 additional reports to assess the extent to which CCS is covered. Depending on the outcome of this screening, the team will either apply a light touch review to assess the extent to which the individual decentralized evaluations meet quality standards prior to its inclusion in the synthesis scope, or alternatively, use the evidence to add descriptive information to supplement or nuance fully fledged findings emerging and established from the analysis of the other evaluations in the universe.

The time period covered by the synthesis falls under WFP Strategic Plans 2014-2017 and 2017-2021, as well as two distinct WFP Results Framework (Strategic Results Framework 2014-2016 and Corporate Results Framework 2017-2021). The synthesis team is therefore expected to take into consideration the evolution and different positioning of CCS interventions in time, in the analysis and results of the synthesis.

The synthesis is expected to draw from a broad and diverse body of information, evaluative evidence, primary and secondary data. The main data sources are presented in Annex 5 of the full TORs

Primary data gathered for the synthesis will mainly come from interviews with WFP stakeholders.

## Synthesis methodology

The fully-fledged synthesis methodology will be developed during the Inception Phase of the exercise. Key features of the design are expected to be:

- ▶ Confirmation of final sample of evaluations.
- ▶ Development of a comprehensive analytical framework, which responds to the synthesis questions.
- ▶ Systematic analysis via (electronic or manual methods) of the component evaluation reports, including data extraction and coding.
- ▶ Primary data gathering through interviews with key stakeholders, such as evaluation managers of relevant decentralized evaluations, CCS program and policy advisors both at HQ, country and regional level, and South-South cooperation regional focal points to verify and deepen data from component evaluations.
- ▶ Secondary data gathering with structured analysis of documentation linked to the synthesis questions.

Secondary methods should apply the same method and analytical framework where feasible; where this is not feasible, it should apply a structured framework to ensure consistency and rigor of data collection.

The primary approaches to be adopted by this synthesis exercise are systematic and inductive. These will be operationalised as follows:

- ▶ Systematic: applying structured analytical fields to data sources, to ensure consistent and transparent extraction of evidence, and to ensure that findings are fully traceable back to the body of evidence.
- ▶ Inductive: Pre-defining an initial set of categories for analysis which correspond to the analytical framework but allowing other important categories and themes to emerge as the evidence base consolidates. Thus, categories may be merged, adapted or adjusted in response to higher- or aggregate-level themes emerging.

The methodology should reflect the standards for independence and impartiality, in line with WFP's commitments under its Evaluation Policy 2016-2021.

Based on the analyses from the desk review and additional primary information, this synthesis report is expected to present key lessons, conclusions and recommendations to: a) introduce new, or validate existing insights into WFP CCS program and policy design, and implementation processes at the country-level; b) introduce new, or validate existing, insights into how WFP learns and drives changes that informed by decentralized evaluation results on CCS; c) put forward recommendations to CCS policy owners and program implementers.

Ethical consideration shall be taken into account in the methodology. All members of the synthesis team will abide by the 2016 UNEG Norms and Standards and the 2020 UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. The synthesis team will also commit to signing Annex 9 of the Long-Term Agreement regarding confidentiality, Internet and Data Security Statement.

## Roles and Responsibilities

This synthesis is managed by WFP OEV. Federica Zelada, Evaluation Officer, has been appointed as the evaluation manager (EM). Her responsibilities include drafting the TOR; selecting and contracting the synthesis team; preparing and managing the budget; setting up the internal reference group; conducting the 1st level quality assurance of the synthesis products and soliciting WFP stakeholders' feedback on draft products.; providing access to all component evaluations and related material; draft report.

The EM will be the main interlocutor between the synthesis team, represented by the team leader, and WFP counterparts to ensure a smooth implementation process.

Deborah McWhinney, Senior Evaluation Officer, will provide second level quality assurance. The Deputy Director of Evaluation will approve the final synthesis products on satisfactorily meeting of WFP evaluation quality standards, which are expected to be systematically applied throughout the synthesis process.

Under overall guidance from the Team Leader (TL), the team’s responsibilities include:

- ▶ Finalize and submit for review the synthesis methodology and protocol for data extraction and analysis;
- ▶ Develop a synthesis matrix; conduct in-depth reviews of the full body of decentralized evaluations (2016-20), their related management response matrices and recommendations database;
- ▶ Carry out key informants’ interviews; draft the synthesis report for feedback and discussion at an internal virtual validation workshop;
- ▶ Submit the revised draft synthesis to OEV and address WFP comments before finalisation.

The main body of the final report is expected not to exceed 20/25 pages or 7,500 words.

An Internal Reference Group composed of selected WFP stakeholders will be established to review and comment on the draft synthesis report, be available for interviews with the synthesis team and attend the validation and learning workshop.

#### WFP Internal Reference Group (IRG) composition

HQ-level IRG member	
Asset creation and livelihoods	Bezuayehu Olana, Consultant
Capacity strengthening	Maria Lukyanova, Program Policy Officer
C&V/ CBT	Cinzia Cruciani, Program Officer
Climate Change	Vera Mayer, Program Officer
Gender	Cecilia Roccato, Program Policy Officer
Nutrition	Siti Halati, Program Officer
Partnerships	Noemi Vorosbak, Program Officer
Performance measurement	Natasha Nadazdin, Chief
School feeding	Jutta Neitzel, Program Officer
Smallholder Agricultural Market Support	Damien Fontaine, Program Officer
Social protection	Sarah Laughton, Program Officer
South-south and triangular cooperation	Andrey Shirkov, Donor & Private Sector Relations Officer
Supply Chain	Graan Jaff, Deputy Chief

## RB-level membership in the IRG

RB membership of the IRG includes Colleagues in the Policy / Program Advisors role

RBB	Luna Kim, Regional M&E Officer
RBC	Jane Waite, Program Policy Officer
RBD	Agnes Ndiaye Faye, Program Officer
RBJ	Karen Rodriguegervais, Regional CCS focal point
RBN	Francis Opiyo, Regional CCS focal point
RBP	Yasmin Swidan, Regional CCS focal point

### Phases and deliverables

The synthesis is structured in five phases summarized in the table below. The synthesis team will be involved in phases 2 to 5.

### Summary Timeline Synthesis

Main Phases	Timeline	Tasks and Deliverables
<b>1. Preparatory</b>	Aug – Sep 2020	Development of synthesis questions Identification of evaluation universe/library preparation Quality assurance of component evaluations Final TOR Constitution of Internal Reference Group Synthesis Team and/or firm selection & contract
<b>2. Inception</b>	Oct – Nov 2020	Briefing of Synthesis Team Document review Refine Synthesis Questions Confirm evaluation universe (protocols for inclusion/exclusion) and evidence quality Develop Inception Note including analytical framework, full methodology, synthesis organization
<b>3. Synthesis preparation</b>	Nov – Dec 2020	Data extraction and coding Document review Interviews Validation of coded data Higher level analysis
<b>4. Reporting</b>	Jan – Mar 2021	Report Drafting Comments Process Validation Workshop Final synthesis report

Main Phases	Timeline	Tasks and Deliverables
5. Dissemination	Mar – Jun 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Editing and formatting</li> <li>Two-page summary brief development</li> <li>Management Response preparation<sup>41</sup></li> <li>Executive Board discussion</li> </ul>

#### Team members' responsibilities and coverage

Team Member	Responsibilities/Coverage
<b>Dorothy Lucks, Team Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize and submit for review the synthesis methodology and protocol for data extraction and analysis</li> <li>• Develop a synthesis matrix; conduct in-depth reviews of the full body of decentralized evaluations (2016-20), their related management response matrices and recommendations database</li> <li>• Carry out key informants' interviews; draft the synthesis report for feedback and discussion at an internal virtual validation workshop</li> <li>• Attend/ organize all meetings between OEV and the synthesis team</li> <li>• Submit the revised draft synthesis to OEV and address WFP comments before finalisation.</li> </ul>
<b>Alayna Imlah</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the development of the synthesis methodology and protocol for data extraction and analysis</li> <li>• Lead on the development of a synthesis matrix, and analytical protocols for the data</li> <li>• Conduct in-depth reviews of the full body of decentralized evaluations (2016-20), their related management response matrices and recommendations database</li> <li>• Carry out key informants' interviews</li> <li>• Contribute to analysis and writing of the draft the synthesis report for feedback and discussion at an internal virtual validation workshop</li> <li>• Contribute to revised draft synthesis to OEV and addressing WFP comments before finalisation</li> <li>• Attend/ organize all meetings between OEV and the synthesis team</li> <li>• Lead on overarching project management of the process.</li> </ul>
<b>Josh Fuchs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review and extraction</li> <li>• Participation in key informant interviews (with colleagues)</li> <li>• Participation in team meetings</li> <li>• Ensuring data collection and analysis processes are implemented, as set out in the inception report</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis</li> <li>• Quantitative data analysis</li> <li>• Data visualisation and infographics.</li> </ul>

Team Member	Responsibilities/Coverage
Nick York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical and process QA</li> <li>• Quality assure the appropriateness and robustness of the methodology, data collection tools, data analysis and synthesis report, and provide senior peer support.</li> </ul>
Naomi Blight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility for rapid review of French evaluations and documents during inception (under guidance of Alayna Imlah and Dorothy Lucks)</li> <li>• Data Extraction of evaluations/ other documents in French during data extraction and content analysis and associated reporting/ translation to the team</li> <li>• Ability to conduct interviews in French, as required.</li> </ul>
Enrique W. Young	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsibility for rapid review of Spanish evaluations during inception (under guidance of Alayna Imlah and Dorothy Lucks)</li> <li>• Data Extraction of evaluations/ other documents in Spanish during data extraction and content analysis and associated reporting/ translation to the team</li> <li>• Ability to conduct interviews in Spanish, as required.</li> </ul>

## Annex 4: Methodology

### The approach

The approach to data collection and extraction was systematic for the 32 evaluations. A structured analytical framework was developed in relation to the synthesis questions to ensure consistent and transparent extraction of evidence. This enabled findings to be traceable to the body of evidence. An initial set of analytical fields for data extraction was developed based on the preliminary review of the component evaluations (deductive approach), while also allowing space for new fields to be added (inductive approach). This allowed space for unanticipated categories and lines of inquiry to emerge and be explored during the data extraction and analysis. The combined inductive/deductive approaches allowed for some structure to guide analysis from the outset but permitted flexibility as the process unfolded.

### Data sources and methods

A preliminary shortlisting of all decentralized evaluation reports completed during 2016-2020 (June) was carried out by OEV. This was based on the post-hoc quality assessment (PHQA) system as either meeting or exceeding quality requirements. OEV identified that 80 decentralized evaluations were completed during the period. Of those, 23 had not yet been PHQA assessed, 13 were below the 60% quality threshold and 4 had not been assessed because they did not follow the WFP evaluation quality assurance system. This preliminary screening resulted in the identification of 40 component evaluation reports with an evidence base of suitable quality for analysis.

As a next step, a protocol for determining the CCS coverage in the evaluations was developed by the synthesis team and validated by OEV. This led to an in-depth screening process of the 40 evaluations to ascertain those that contained medium or high levels of CCS coverage in the evaluation, and thus, had sufficient evidence to be included in the synthesis universe. Eight evaluations had insufficient evidence, resulting in 32 evaluations being selected for synthesis..

The primary data sources for the synthesis were the 32 component evaluations. The methods for data gathering and analysis relied as a priority on the systematic analysis of quality assured evaluative evidence and data extraction based on the evaluations, using the analytical framework. Secondary sources were used to triangulate and validate data, including documentary data, interviews with HQ divisions, staff in Regional Bureaux and selected country offices. The list of stakeholders consulted and interviewed is available in annex 5.

### Data coding, extraction, and analysis

This step required reviewing the component evaluations, coding, then subsequently extracting data against the analytical fields. In this process the synthesis team systematically reviewed the set of evaluation reports and coded data according to the analytical fields. Data (text from reports) was drawn from the individual evaluation reports, subsequently extracted from the evaluation reports and plotted onto the structured analytical framework. Recommendations were separately extracted and recorded in the analytical framework so that common aspects of recommendation could be identified across component reports.

For the purpose of data extraction, the team considered both electronic and manual data extraction, and while electronic methods using software such as MAXQDA offered some benefits, such as greater processing power and ability to code and organize data more quickly than manual methods,<sup>[1]</sup> they were considered to be time consuming and complex to code. Given the size of the universe of 32 evaluations, it was deemed that some of the functionality of MaxQDA

around integrating multiple data formats in large quantities was unnecessary, with manual coding offering greater flexibility and reliability for the extraction, coding and analysis of the data. As such excel was used to gather and extract and data, with all team members having access to a shared document stored on cloud services.

### Validity of evidence

The process for ensuring validity of evidence included weighting of the findings. The analytical framework development, data extraction, coding and analysis enabled the team to determine what evidence exists in relation to each synthesis question. It also enabled the team to consider the validity of sources, based on the contextual information from the related documentation. This approach meant that evidence from multiple sources was considered as strong/ reliable, while evidence with little triangulation was still noted (as equally important), but the strength/ triangulation of the data had an effect on the level of confidence in the evidence.



## Annex 5: List of stakeholders consulted and interviewed

Country Office/ Staff Location	Name of Interviewee (S)	
<b>Bangladesh</b>	Rezaul Karim	Chief - Programming
<b>Niger</b>	Raffaella Policastro	Policy and Programme Officer
	Koffi Akakpo	Head of Programme
<b>Nicaragua</b>	Marcela Mayorga	Head of Programme
	Carlos Rivas	Programme Officer
	Claudia Solórzano	Programme Officer
	Francisco Alvarado	Activity Manager
	Harold Mosher	Activity Manager
<b>Malawi</b>	Dominic Nyirongo	Programme Policy Officer
<b>Tunisia</b>	Magid Chaabane	Programme Policy Officer
	Moussa Jeantraore	Programme Policy Consultant
<b>CCS team (related to Tunisia evaluation)</b>	Hatem Ben Salem	Previously Minister for Education in Tunisia, now based in PRO-T in WFP
<b>School-based Programmes (SBP)</b>	Jutta Neitzel	Programme Officer
	Niamh O'Grady	Evaluation Officer
<b>Asset Creation and Livelihoods Unit (PROR)</b>	Scott Ronchini	Policy Officer
	Bezuayehu Olana	Programme Officer
<b>Performance Management and Reporting Division (CPP)</b>	Natasha Nadazdin	Chief
	Genevieve Wills	Chief
	Michele Kiermeir	Performance Reports Officer
<b>South-South and Triangular Cooperation</b>	Andrey Shirkov	Programme Policy Officer
	Jean-Pierre Demargerie	Deputy Director
<b>RBJ</b>	Karen Rodriguegervais	Programme Policy Consultant
<b>RBC</b>	Jane Wait	Programme Policy Officer
<b>RBB</b>	Luna Kim	Monitoring & Evaluation Officer
<b>Gender Office</b>	Cecilia Roccato	Programme Policy Officer

# ACRONYMS

ACL	Asset creation and livelihood support activities
CAR	Climate adaptation and risk management activities
CCS	Country Capacity Strengthening
CP	Country programme
CPP	Performance Management and Reporting Division
CRF	Corporate Results Framework
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
DEV	Development operation
EMOP	Emergency operation
EPA	Emergency preparedness activities
LIC	low-income country
LMIC	Lower middle-income country
NPA	Malnutrition prevention activities
NTA	Nutrition treatment activities
PROR	Asset Creation and Livelihoods Unit
PRRO	Protracted relief and recovery operation
SABER	Systems Approach for Better Education Results
SBP	School-based Programmes
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMP	School meal activities
SMS	Smallholder agricultural market support activities
UMIC	upper middle-income country
URT	Unconditional resource transfers to support access to food

# ENDNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> WFP. 2017. WFP Corporate Approach to Country Capacity Strengthening (CCS), CCS Toolkit Component 001.
- <sup>2</sup> Evaluations completed in 2020 were not included because they had not been assessed through the WFP post-hoc quality assessment system by the time this synthesis was completed. Post-hoc quality assessments are carried out by independent assessors who rate the quality of all WFP completed evaluations against international evaluation quality standards.
- <sup>3</sup> “Building Country and Regional Capacities” (WFP/EB.3/2004/4-B).
- <sup>4</sup> “WFP policy on Capacity Development: An Update on Implementation” (WFP/EB.2/2009/4-B).
- <sup>5</sup> [Implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system \(QCPR\)](#) (A/75/x-E/2020/7, advance unedited version), p. 52.
- <sup>6</sup> WFP. 2016. Internal Audit of WFP’s Country Capacity Strengthening.
- <sup>7</sup> “Summary Evaluation Report of WFP Policy on Capacity Development” (WFP/EB.1/2017/6-A/Rev.1).
- <sup>8</sup> The 2009 policy update was followed in 2010 by the approval by the Executive Board of the “Action Plan for the Implementation of the Capacity Development and Hand-Over Components of the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013)” (WFP/EB.2/2010/4-D). This document was intended as a road map for the transformation into action of the 2004 policy “Building Country and Regional Capacities” (WFP/EB.3/2004/4-B) and the 2009 policy update.
- <sup>9</sup> WFP. 2017. WFP Corporate Approach to CCS, CCS Toolkit Component 001.
- <sup>10</sup> The CCS database was rolled out in Burundi, Colombia, Mauritania, Philippines, Sao Tome and Principe, Sri Lanka and Uganda.
- <sup>11</sup> Strategic Objective 4, support SDG implementation; and Strategic Result 5, developing countries have strengthened capacities to implement the SDGs.
- <sup>12</sup> The current version of the corporate results framework was approved by the Executive Board at its 2018 second regular and 2019 annual sessions: “Revised Corporate Results Framework (2017–2021)” (WFP/EB.2/2018/5-B/Rev.1) and “Revised Corporate Results Framework (2017–2021) – Part II: 2021 targets for the programmatic outputs and performance indicators” (WFP/EB.A/2019/5-A).
- <sup>13</sup> Protocol used in assessing CCS content in evaluations: High – CCS is a primary focus; medium – CCS included in evaluation assessments (quantitative and/or qualitative); low – CCS mentioned but not evaluated; and zero – no mention of CCS.
- <sup>14</sup> During inception, three evaluation questions in the terms of reference were deprioritized because of time and resource limitations and the extensive secondary document review and interviews that would have been required, which would go beyond the scope of the synthesis.
- <sup>15</sup> This has been addressed in section 3.2: Lessons learned.
- <sup>16</sup> WFP. 2017. WFP Corporate Approach to CCS, CCS Toolkit Component 001.
- <sup>17</sup> The synthesis team notes ongoing work by the WFP Technical Assistance and Country Capacity Strengthening Service to strengthen the WFP CCS guidance documents that will supersede the reference documents used for this synthesis.
- <sup>18</sup> United Nations Development Programme. 2015. [Capacity Development: A UNDP Primer](#), p. 11.
- <sup>19</sup> Bangladesh 1, Cambodia, Colombia, Guinea, Mali, the Niger, Philippines, Togo and Tunisia.
- <sup>20</sup> SABER is a government-led process that helps to build effective school feeding policies and systems. The World Bank, The Partnership for Child Development (Imperial College, London) and WFP partnered in January 2014 to implement the SABER school feeding tool under the leadership of governments and other stakeholders. The tool aims to measure strengths and weaknesses in school feeding programmes and support planning and policy-making frameworks.
- <sup>21</sup> WFP/EB.1/2017/6-A/Rev.1, p. 14.
- <sup>22</sup> Bangladesh 1, Bangladesh 2, Cambodia, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi 1, Malawi 2, Rwanda, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey and Zambia.

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<sup>23</sup> Cambodia, Kenya, Tunisia and Turkey.

<sup>24</sup> Bangladesh 2, Colombia, Congo, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi 1, Nepal, the Niger, Rwanda and Zambia.

<sup>25</sup> Mali, Senegal, Zimbabwe.

<sup>26</sup> Bangladesh 1 and 2, Cambodia, Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi 1, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey and Zambia.

<sup>27</sup> Bangladesh 1 and 2, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Togo and Tunisia.

<sup>28</sup> Cambodia, Colombia, the Niger, Turkey and Zambia.

<sup>29</sup> WFP/EB.1/2017/6-A/Rev.1.

<sup>30</sup> The five CCS principles have been paraphrased from WFP. 2017. WFP Corporate Approach to CCS Toolkit Component 001.

<sup>31</sup> Bangladesh 1 and 2, Colombia, Ethiopia, Liberia, Malawi 2, Nicaragua, Philippines, Rwanda, Togo, Tunisia and Turkey.

<sup>32</sup> Bangladesh 1 and 2, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cambodia, Central America, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Nicaragua, Philippines, Rwanda and Turkey.

<sup>33</sup> Bangladesh 2, Guinea, Liberia, Rwanda and Turkey.

<sup>34</sup> Ecuador, India, Lesotho, Mali, Congo and Zimbabwe.

<sup>35</sup> Bangladesh 1 and 2, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cambodia, Gambia, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Nepal, Rwanda, Togo, Tunisia and Turkey.

<sup>36</sup> Adapted from: Wyburn et al (2018) Understanding the Impacts of Research Synthesis: Environmental Science and Policy Journal, Volume 86, August 2018, pp 72-84.

<sup>37</sup> Since 2016, OEV has used an outsourced post-hoc quality assessment mechanism, through which independent assessors rate the quality of all completed WFP evaluations against WFP's own evaluation quality standards, which are based on international professional evaluation standards and include the requirements for evaluation set by the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNSWAP).

<sup>38</sup> Activity categories are presented in annex 1 of WFP's Revised Corporate Results Framework (2017-2021) WFP/EB.2/2018/5-B/Rev.1.

<sup>39</sup> Since 2016, OEV has used an outsourced post-hoc quality assessment mechanism, through which independent assessors rate the quality of all completed WFP evaluations against WFP's own evaluation quality standards, which are based on international professional evaluation standards and include the requirements for evaluation set by the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNSWAP).

<sup>40</sup> In the period 2019-2020, there are 20 additional completed decentralized evaluations that have not been assessed by post-hoc quality assessment.

<sup>41</sup> The preparation of the management response is the responsibility of senior management, in particular of the CCS unit.

[1] Improving outcomes with Qualitative Data Analysis Software: A reflective journey Austin G Oswald, Qualitative Social Work 2019, Vol. 18(3) 436-442, Davidson J and di Gregorio S (2011) Qualitative research and technology: In the midst of a revolution. In: Denzin NK and Lincoln YS (eds) The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 629-643.

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