

Evaluation title	Evaluation of Lao People's Democratic Republic WFP Country Strategic Plan 2017-2021	
Evaluation category and type	Centralized - CSPE	
Post Hoc Quality Assessment (PHQA) – overall rating	Highly Satisfactory: 90%	
<p>The Evaluation of Lao PDR's WFP Country Strategic Plan 2017-2021 provides credible findings, conclusions and recommendations, which decision makers can use with a high degree of confidence. It concisely presents the evaluation purpose, rationale and methodology, and provides relevant context information. It formulates clear and transparent findings on all the evaluation questions and sub-questions and indicates supporting evidence from a wide range of secondary and primary data sources. The evaluation effectively used and integrated its guiding analytical frameworks, including a reconstructed theory of change and evaluation matrix. Gender equality considerations are effectively mainstreamed in the methodology as well. The conclusions synthesize strategic implications of the findings while the evaluation puts forward five prioritized, targeted and actionable recommendations with 17 supporting sub-recommendations. The report uses clear and understandable language, and effectively utilizes textboxes to present good practice examples and key findings. However, readability and accessibility of the report could have been improved by condensing long narrative sections through tables or graphs, omitting some micro-level details, and ensuring that all annexes were referenced in the main report.</p>		
CRITERION 1: REPORT SUMMARY	Rating	Highly Satisfactory
<p>The summary evaluation report concisely presents the key evaluation features and relevant contextual information. It accurately summarizes key findings on all evaluation questions and provides an overview of the evaluation conclusions. It includes all recommendations exactly as they appear in the main report. Readability of the conclusions could have been further strengthened by using sub-headings or bold font to structure the section by theme or by evaluation question.</p>		
CRITERION 2: CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION SUBJECT	Rating	Highly Satisfactory
<p>The report clearly describes the evaluation context and the subject of the evaluation, striking a good balance between detail and synthesis. It reflects on gender equality, equity and inclusion issues of different contextual dimensions. The evaluation describes the main features of the CSP under review. The report also positions the CSP within the broader context of how WFP programming in Lao PDR has evolved over time, what analytical work informed the design of the CSP, and explains why and how the current CSP constitutes a shift in WFP's approach when compared to earlier programming. However, the report could have described more concretely how the CSP under review incorporated and addressed gender equality, equity and broader inclusion issues. Additionally, the presentation of the reconstructed theory of change would have benefited from a slightly longer accompanying narrative to elaborate on some of the key underlying assumptions.</p>		
CRITERION 3: EVALUATION RATIONALE, OBJECTIVES, AND SCOPE	Rating	Highly Satisfactory
<p>The report clearly outlines the evaluation objectives, purpose, and scope in terms of the time period and the activities covered. It identifies the intended users and uses of the evaluation, with a focus on informing the development of the next CSP, and notes that gender equality and women's rights, as well as accountability to affected populations, have been mainstreamed in the evaluation. However, identifying a specific objective related to assessing the integration of GEWE and human rights in the CSP would have further strengthened the importance of drawing attention to these dimensions in the evaluation.</p>		
CRITERION 4: METHODOLOGY	Rating	Satisfactory
<p>The evaluation's mixed methods and theory-based approach and methodology were appropriate for answering the evaluation questions in an unbiased way. The use of multiple mutually complementary data sources and methods of data collection facilitated triangulation. The methodology encompassed primary data collection from a variety of</p>		

stakeholders, including from affected populations, despite the limitations posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the evaluation questions addressed WFP contributions to gender equality and wider equity considerations, and evaluation activities were aligned with relevant ethical standards. The report could have been further strengthened had it explicitly commented on the extent to which available WFP monitoring data provided sufficient information on progress towards human rights, gender equality, equity and inclusion dimensions, and on the extent to which community-level data collection allowed for consulting with representatives of the most vulnerable populations. While evaluation sub-questions are mapped against evaluation criteria in the report, the evaluation matrix should have included evaluation criteria and methods of data analysis.

CRITERION 5: FINDINGS	Rating	Highly Satisfactory
------------------------------	---------------	---------------------

The evaluation addresses all of the evaluation questions and sub-questions posed in a clear and structured fashion. It uses a neutral tone, presents evidence transparently and clearly, and provides sources for all presented data and quotes. The report discusses WFP contributions to results in a fair and nuanced way, and takes contextual factors into account, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as likely contributions of other actors. The report assesses WFP performance against the International Humanitarian Principles and reflects the voices of diverse stakeholder groups. It could have explicitly noted whether WFP's work had any, positive or negative, unanticipated effects, including on human rights and gender equality. Also, the report could have commented on whether different consulted social groups or sub-groups (e.g., men and women within a community) fully agreed or expressed diverging views on topics discussed.

CRITERION 6: CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS	Rating	Satisfactory
---	---------------	--------------

The conclusions synthesize evaluation findings, noting both strengths and weaknesses of the CSP and its implementation, and point out strategic implications for the future. They include reflections on GEWE dimensions and broader equity and inclusion issues. The conclusions chapter would have benefited from providing a higher-level and less detail-oriented analysis, for example in relation to insights related to an evaluation question on contributions to results, and from formulating conclusions related to findings under another question on WFP's efficient use of resources.

CRITERION 7: RECOMMENDATIONS	Rating	Satisfactory
-------------------------------------	---------------	--------------

The evaluation puts forward five actionable and generally realistic recommendations that logically flow from the evaluation findings and conclusions. Two of 17 sub-recommendations specifically address equity and inclusion to ensure that WFP programming targets and reaches the most vulnerable populations, including women and girls. The recommendations are prioritized, include a timeframe for action, and identify responsible actors. Actionability of the recommendations could have been further strengthened by providing timeframes for implementation at the level of sub-recommendations. Recommendation 1 might have benefited from simpler phrasing to clearly articulate the envisaged change. Moreover, the refinement of the WFP corporate results framework suggested under sub-recommendation 1.4 may not be realistic given the sphere of influence of targeted actors.

CRITERION 8: ACCESSIBILITY AND CLARITY	Rating	Satisfactory
---	---------------	--------------

The report is written in clear and understandable language and makes use of visual aids including graphs, tables, text boxes and bold font to highlight elements. It provides sources for all data and quotes and effectively uses cross-referencing to help orient readers. One particular strength are the blue 'summary' boxes at the end of sub-sections that summarize key findings on the evaluation question discussed. However, the report does not comply with the length requirement, which negatively affects readability especially of the findings section. The report could have benefited from summarizing some narrative information through tables and omitting analysis at the activity level. Additionally, the use of bold font to highlight key messages is inconsistent between paragraphs and sections. Finally, while the report includes all of the mandated annexes, not all of the presented annexes are referenced in the main report, and those that are referenced appear in a different order than in Volume II (Annexes).

Integration of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) considerations in the evaluation report based on the UN System-Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) Evaluation Performance Indicator (EPI) scorecard

UN-SWAP EPI – individual evaluation score	Meets requirements: 7 points
--	------------------------------

GEWE considerations are well integrated into the report. The chosen mixed-method approach and evaluation methodology were based on deliberate considerations on how to effectively integrate GEWE. The evaluation matrix includes a stand-alone question on gender and the evaluation drew upon a variety of data sources and processes, thereby facilitating inclusion, accuracy and credibility. Findings consistently include reflections on GEWE dimensions. Two of 17 sub-recommendations address equity and inclusion issues. Ethical standards were consistently considered, and all stakeholder groups treated with respect for confidentiality and integrity. However, the report would have benefited from commenting explicitly on the availability of monitoring data on GEWE-related indicators. While the report describes how WFP adapted its programming to unanticipated external events, it does not explicitly comment on implications of these events or of WFP's response for GEWE dimensions.

Post Hoc Quality Assessment – Rating scale and definitions at overall report and criteria levels	
Highly Satisfactory	<i>Definition at overall report level: Evaluation users can rely on the credible and useful evaluation findings provided and can use the evaluation with a high degree of confidence for decision-making. The report is considered an excellent example.</i>
	<i>Definition at criterion level: The criterion is addressed without any gaps or limitations.</i>
Satisfactory	<i>Definition at overall report level: Evaluation users can rely on the quality and credible evaluation findings provided and can use it with confidence for decision-making.</i>
	<i>Definition at criterion level: There are no significant gaps or limitations in addressing the criterion.</i>
Partly Satisfactory	<i>Definition at overall report level: Evaluation users can rely on the evaluation findings provided and may use it for decision-making noting that there are some gaps/shortcomings in the information provided.</i>
	<i>Definition at criterion level: There are some significant gaps or limitations in addressing the criterion.</i>
Unsatisfactory	<i>Definition at overall report level: Evaluation users can use some of the learning from the evaluation, noting that there are significant gaps/ shortcomings in the evaluation findings provided. The report may still contribute to decision making but should be used with caution.</i>
	<i>Definition at criterion level: There are critical gaps or limitations in addressing the criterion. Most of the required parameters are not met.</i>