

Evaluation title	Final Evaluation of the SDG Fund Joint Programme Social Protection for the Sustainable Development Goals in Malawi: Accelerating Inclusive Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals (2020-2021)	
Evaluation category and type	Decentralized - Joint	
Post Hoc Quality Assessment (PHQA) - overall rating	Satisfactory: 71%	
<p>The Final Evaluation of the SDG Fund Joint Programme Social Protection for the Sustainable Development Goals in Malawi: Accelerating Inclusive Progress Towards the Sustainable Development Goals (2020-2021) presents credible findings that can be used with confidence for decision-making. The report includes relevant context information and provides a concise description of the programme logic, main characteristics, and its evolution over time in response to changes in the external environment. The evaluation objectives, rationale and scope are clearly outlined, and findings are based on mixed data collection methods, including documents reviewed, interviews with a variety of stakeholders, as well consultations with community-level beneficiaries/non-beneficiaries through focus group discussions and a household survey. While the report clearly addresses all evaluation questions and sub-questions, with findings generally well substantiated, there are specific findings that could have benefitted from a clearer explanation of the evidence base and some conclusions on effectiveness and coverage are not reflected in the findings. Some recommendations lack specificity and lessons learned could have been more clearly formulated to enhance WFP organizational learning.</p>		
CRITERION 1: REPORT SUMMARY	Rating	Satisfactory
<p>While it exceeds the maximum word limit for joint evaluations, the executive summary includes a concise overview of the evaluation features, context and methodology, as well as of its conclusions and lessons learned. While key findings for some of the evaluation questions are adequately summarized, it would have been useful to provide a more comprehensive summary of key findings related to all questions. The recommendations are adequately summarized but are not specifically linked to findings, nor are they in the required format specifying responsibilities and timelines.</p>		
CRITERION 2: CONTEXT AND OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION SUBJECT	Rating	Satisfactory
<p>The Joint Programme is comprehensively presented, especially the logic of the intervention through a description of its expected outcomes, outputs, core activities, typology of shock responsive social protection, main partners, beneficiaries, geographic coverage, and the underlying assumptions of the theory of change. The report includes substantial information on the country's context in relation to vulnerability assessment mapping, emergency food transfers, and cash-based transfers as well as a concise overview of intersectionality of social groups in Malawi. However, the report would have benefitted from a brief overview of the pillars or key objectives of the MGDS III, which is mentioned as the principal national plan with which the Joint Programme's theory of change is aligned. The context section would also have benefitted from the inclusion of key indicators for data on wasting, agriculture (i.e., percentage agriculture of GDP and smallholder farmer productivity) and education.</p>		
CRITERION 3: EVALUATION RATIONALE, OBJECTIVES, AND SCOPE	Rating	Highly Satisfactory
<p>The evaluation's rationale, objectives and scope are comprehensively and concisely summarized, with no weaknesses identified. Notably, the report includes explicit mention of the inclusion of gender equality considerations within its description of the evaluation's objectives.</p>		
CRITERION 4: METHODOLOGY	Rating	Satisfactory
<p>Overall, the methodological design of the evaluation is comprehensively presented and relevant. The evaluation matrix contains all required elements, as well as a column indicating data availability and reliability. The evaluation consulted a diversity of stakeholders at national, district and community levels, from various stakeholder groups, including community-level beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries of the Joint Programme. However, the report would have</p>		

<p>benefitted from the inclusion of an assessment of monitoring data and the extent to which sufficient information during the programme implementation period was collected to measure progress on human rights, gender equality, and equity and inclusion dimensions. The report could also have provided a clearer sampling rationale for beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries consulted.</p>		
CRITERION 5: FINDINGS	Rating	Satisfactory
<p>The report covers all evaluation questions and sub-questions, and its findings are well substantiated overall by available primary and secondary data. Evidence from primary and secondary sources of data is referenced throughout the findings, in terms of document citations and stakeholder categories consulted. Contributions of WFP interventions to intended outcomes are discussed substantially, and the lack of evidence as well as the effect of other factors related to the implementation context and to the scale/coverage of the Joint Programme are fully discussed. Some unanticipated effects are also reported. There are, however, specific findings that could have benefitted from a clearer explanation of the evidence base, or lack thereof. Furthermore, the report would have benefitted from the inclusion of an assessment of the Joint Programme's performance against International Humanitarian Principles.</p>		
CRITERION 6: CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS	Rating	Partly Satisfactory
<p>The evaluation's conclusions are balanced overall, examining the implications of the findings beyond synthesizing or summarizing them. The conclusions cover all evaluation criteria and questions and include a stand-alone conclusion on gender and inclusion. While they do not contain major gaps, some conclusions related to effectiveness and coverage are not fully reflected in the findings. There appears to be misalignment of the paragraphs referenced for conclusions in the annex and the actual paragraphs that contain the conclusions in the main body of the report rendering it difficult for the reader to use the annex to see the linkages between the finding, conclusions and recommendation. Additionally, it is difficult for the reader to distil what the main lessons that may contribute to organizational learning and guide future action are, based on the content that is provided, and may have benefitted from the inclusion of lessons 'statements', and/or clearer formulations of the wider relevance and potential contribution to organizational learning for WFP and its partners.</p>		
CRITERION 7: RECOMMENDATIONS	Rating	Satisfactory
<p>The majority of the recommendations appear realistic, feasible and actionable for responsible entities. Furthermore, all recommendations are prioritized and have a clear timeframe for implementation. However, there are some recommendations that could have benefitted from more specificity in terms of how they could be implemented.</p>		
CRITERION 8: ACCESSIBILITY AND CLARITY	Rating	Satisfactory
<p>The report is well written, in a clear, professional language. Where technical jargon is used, such as in findings that report on outcome indicators, the report provides explanations of the indicators for the benefit of the reader. The report uses visual aids extensively, particularly in its presentation of quantitative data from the household survey, and these serve to aid the reader to make better sense of the information. The presentation of findings statements in bold and the use of text boxes throughout the report to highlight key messages derived from various data collection methods and sources enhance the readability of the report. While data sources are cited for almost all information provided in the report, specific tables in the report would have benefitted from having their sources referenced. The report would also have benefitted from listing annexes in the order that they appear in the main report.</p>		

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
<p>GEWE and equity issues were a priority thematic area, as noted in the report's methodology section, and the report utilized a mixed-method approach that was appropriate to evaluating GEWE considerations, such as through gender-specific focus group discussions, survey questionnaires that ensured sex-disaggregated data was collected, and questions on men and women's participation in household decision-making processes. Gender dimensions are explicitly mentioned in the evaluation's objective of accountability and are examined through a stand-alone evaluation criterion. However, the report could have benefitted from consulting with Gender and/or Protection Officers at WFP, ILO, UNICEF</p>	

COs, or clearly mentioning a rationale for not having consulted these individuals. The report's context section contains information on Malawi's National Gender Policy and data on rural/urban and geographic disparities, as well as information on child marriage. While two recommendations are related to gender equality and inclusion, they would have benefitted from more specificity on potential types of interventions or points for entry for the Joint Programme's implementing units that could be considered moving forward.

Post Hoc Quality Assessment – Rating scale and definitions at overall report and criteria levels	
Highly Satisfactory	<i>Definition at overall report level:</i> 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>Definition at criterion level:</i> The criterion is addressed without any gaps or limitations.
Satisfactory	<i>Definition at overall report level:</i> Evaluation users can rely on the quality and credible evaluation findings provided and can use it with confidence for decision-making.
	<i>Definition at criterion level:</i> There are no significant gaps or limitations in addressing the criterion.
Partly Satisfactory	<i>Definition at overall report level:</i> 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>Definition at criterion level:</i> There are some significant gaps or limitations in addressing the criterion.
Unsatisfactory	<i>Definition at overall report level:</i> 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>Definition at criterion level:</i> There are critical gaps or limitations in addressing the criterion. Most of the required parameters are not met.