



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES

CHANGING LIVES

Evaluation Summary Report: WFP Contribution to Market Development and Food Systems in Southern Africa (2018 -2021)

Introduction

This evaluation summary report presents findings and recommendations from the thematic evaluation of the World Food Programme (WFP) contribution to market development activities (MDAs), and food systems in Southern Africa. The evaluation was commissioned by WFP Regional Bureau for Southern Africa (RBJ) and covers the period from 2018 to 2021. Data collection was conducted from May to August 2021. The evaluation was undertaken by a team of external evaluators and researchers from Forcier Consulting LLC.

Subject of the evaluation and Scope

The evaluation focused on the MDAs implemented as part of cash-based transfers (CBT) and related interventions. The overall objective of MDAs is to identify and remove inefficiencies in the market system to improve price, quality, and service for the people and communities served by WFP. MDAs ensure that the involved market actors can sustain the related gains and continue to provide the best possible customer value after the end of WFP interventions.

The evaluation covered all MDAs led by WFP in six countries (i.e., Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe). Depending on the nature of WFP CBT programming and delivery approach in each country, the evaluation covered three main groups that benefited through the following intervention types:

- i. **Restricted cash with specific MDAs linked to specific market actors (Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe)** to MDA recipients who include men and women retailers, partnering banks, mobile money companies, and other actors.
- ii. **Unrestricted cash with/without specific MDAs (Malawi, Madagascar)** covering the beneficiaries/recipients of assistance through CBTs and some retailers within the markets where beneficiaries use the cash.
- iii. **System strengthening without CBTs (Tanzania)** with activities benefiting government officials, private sector, and other actors working within the supported institutions/sectors.

Critical to WFP's contribution to food systems are smallholder farmers and their linkages to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). While smallholder farmers were not the core focus of the evaluation, the work WFP did to link farmers to SMEs was also reviewed, and emerging lessons documented.

Evaluation Objectives and Rationale

The evaluation served the mutually reinforcing objectives of accountability and learning, with a focus on learning since this was a relatively new and under-evaluated area of WFP work. In the past, WFP programmes did not include explicit objectives, indicators, and targets related to MDAs (except for capacity development and technical support outputs). This left a knowledge gap as to how WFP contributes to market development and food systems strengthening, what lessons WFP staff are learning, and most importantly, how these lessons can be applied to enhance such contributions. The evaluation, therefore, aimed to contribute to filling this evidence gap.

Stakeholders and Users of the evaluation

The findings and recommendations from the evaluation are relevant for use by:

- RBJ and Country Offices (COs) across the region to enhance the design and implementation of market development and system strengthening activities.
- Headquarters (HQ) Supply Chain (SC) and CBT teams to review and enhance the CBT business model for MDAs.
- HQ Corporate Planning and Performance (CPP) division to inform the next Corporate Results Framework (CRF) on outputs and indicators related to market development and supply chain.
- Other market actors, including host governments in targeted countries, United Nations (UN) agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), implementing partners, and donors, to strengthen their engagement and partnerships with WFP.

Key Evaluation Question

Using the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability, the evaluation intended to answer one overarching question: **“What is the contribution of WFP to market development and food systems and how can such contribution be enhanced to contribute to zero hunger?”**.

Design and Methods

Data were collected through (i) a detailed literature review of WFP market development-related documents, (ii) the standardized Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol (QuIP) methodology and tool using key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) with retailers in four countries (Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe), and (iii) traditional qualitative approaches to KIIs were used in Madagascar and Tanzania, due to a different set of circumstances for the COs.

The evaluation assessed WFP’s contribution to market development using the nine dimensions that WFP uses to assess market functionality 1) Assortment of essential goods, 2) Availability, 3) Price, 4) Resilience of supply chains, 5) Competition, 6) Infrastructure, 7) Services, 8) Food quality, and 9) Access and protection.

Limitations and Mitigation measures

The evaluation faced a couple of limitations highlighted below:

- The sample used to collect data through the QuIP methodology was not representative of the wider population and findings are not generalizable.
- The number of women retailers in the sector was small, therefore, gender disaggregated analysis was not possible due to the very small sub-sample of women respondents.
- The WFP approach to designing and implementing MDAs varied across the countries, with Tanzania having no CBTs at all while Madagascar had unrestricted cash with limited/no direct engagement with market actors. Since there was no direct engagement with retailers to interview, it was not possible to apply the QuIP methodology in these two countries.

To the extent possible, the evaluation team (ET) addressed the challenges outlined above by devoting extra time to further stakeholder consultations.

Ethical Considerations

The evaluation was conducted in a process of free and uncoerced consent with absolute confidentiality ensured for

participants, and the right to withdraw at any time. The evaluation team trained its staff on ethical safeguarding protocols and collected data with the highest ethical standards in terms of neutrality, participation, and confidentiality.

The evaluation team was cognizant of the ethical implications of conducting fieldwork during COVID-19 and strictly adhered to each country’s national COVID-19 protocols, and Forcier’s internal health protocols during data collection. Fieldwork staff were tested before starting data collection. Some interviews were conducted remotely, and where remote interviews were not possible, the respondent was asked for consent to interview in person. The interviewer used personal protective equipment (PPE) and social distancing to minimize the risk of covid-19 transmission during the interview process.

KEY EVALUATION RESULTS

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RELEVANCE

WFP developed guidance materials on assessing market functionality, addressing market inefficiencies, retail engagement, smallholder markets support, and food systems based on experiences and lessons learned from various country contexts. The materials are useful in providing broad guidance to market and agricultural development activities as separate sectors, rather than as part of a larger food system, to identify synergies and to facilitate the coordination required to achieve results. Gender, disability, and inclusion issues were missing from the frameworks and tools, leaving a significant gap in the guidance materials.

MDAs linked to specific market actors (Lesotho, Mozambique) were generally more developed and adhered to corporate and country-specific guidelines. In Zimbabwe, WFP had not been implementing explicitly designed MDAs with specific objectives except retailer onboarding training. Therefore, retailers were being supported on an as-needed basis. MDAs under unrestricted cash (Malawi and Madagascar) without any specific linkage to market actors were yet to be developed. Tanzania designed and implemented MDAs aimed at strengthening the capacity of various supply chain actors. The WFP agriculture MDAs that address demand and supply challenges faced by smallholder farmers followed corporate guidance in their design and implementation across the six study countries, whose activities are shown in *Table 1* below.

Reference:

Full and summary reports of the evaluation and the Management Response are available at <https://www.wfp.org/publications/wfp-contribution-market-development-and-food-systems-southern-africa-thematic>

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Table 1: Smallholder agriculture market activities in the six study countries (Source: MDA Evaluation Report, Page 27)

Country	Agriculture market activities
Lesotho	Conducting training and direct negotiations with farmer organizations during the procurement of food commodities.
Madagascar	Increasing production capacities of targeted low-income rural smallholder farmer organizations (SHFOs) facilitating their access to formal markets.
Malawi	Product quality improvement, irrigation scheme capacity strengthening, and collective marketing to gradually support Food Assistance for Assets participants in farming as a business, linking farmer organizations to supply schools, supporting hermetic grain storage technologies, and providing training to reduce food losses and risk of aflatoxins.
Mozambique	Introduction of hermetic storage technologies to smallholder farmers, schools, and local communities in targeted areas. Technical support to link smallholders and agro-processors to schools.
Tanzania	Integrating smallholder farmers into the WFP supply chain commodities and other markets, developing infrastructure, providing quality management equipment, and building smallholder farmers' capacity.
Zimbabwe	Training of farmers on collective marketing and post-harvest management and storage; facilitating farmers' access to affordable agricultural input loans, training farmers in small grain production, good agricultural practices, post-harvest management, and climate-smart agricultural techniques; providing advice on financial literacy and credit management; and linking farmers to markets through WFP tenders and a mobile eco-farmer platform.

Country offices (COs) regularly conducted diverse market and monitoring assessments to inform country strategic plans (CSP) activities such as CBTs, retail engagement, smallholder farmers, and resilience interventions. The extent to which these assessments are utilized varied by country. Typically, the assessments played a significant role in the design and implementation of MDAs and agricultural market interventions. In some cases, the assessments were insufficiently comprehensive (including mainstreaming gender, disability, and other groups) to allow for appropriate actions to address the identified market inefficiencies. Furthermore, capacity gaps in conducting multi-sectoral assessments were also identified in some countries.

The MDAs and related interventions implemented in the six countries were largely relevant to the needs of targeted men and women and to addressing market inefficiencies identified in each country. The relevance of MDAs was most visible in countries implementing restricted

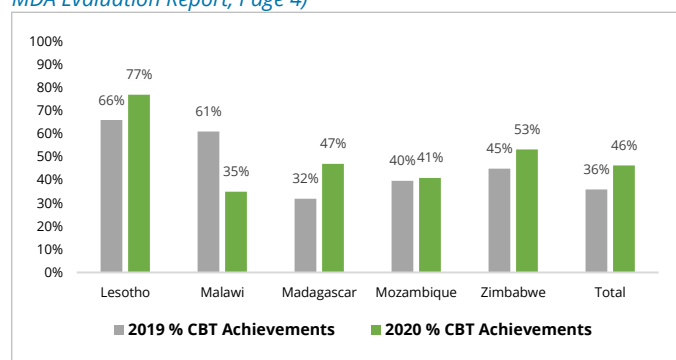
cash because of the direct interaction with market actors. In addition, MDAs were less relevant to some men and women retailers in Zimbabwe because of the unfair competition between large wholesalers/retailers and smaller retailers.

All MDAs, agricultural market development, and related CBT interventions were in line with national development plans and policies on social protection, agriculture, food security, and nutrition. Although the government was in support of MDAs in Mozambique, there were challenges in implementing CBT and MDAs within IDP camps due to the host community feeling left out and not benefiting from such initiatives.

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EFFECTIVENESS

Figure 1 and Figure 2 reflect the CBT achievements in percentages and absolute amounts of cash in 2019 and 2020 respectively, for five countries, (Lesotho, Malawi, Madagascar, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe) excluding Tanzania which did not implement CBT. In Tanzania, the evaluation covered areas related to supply chain activities.

Figure 1: Percentage of CBTs achieved in 2019 and 2020 (Source: MDA Evaluation Report, Page 4)

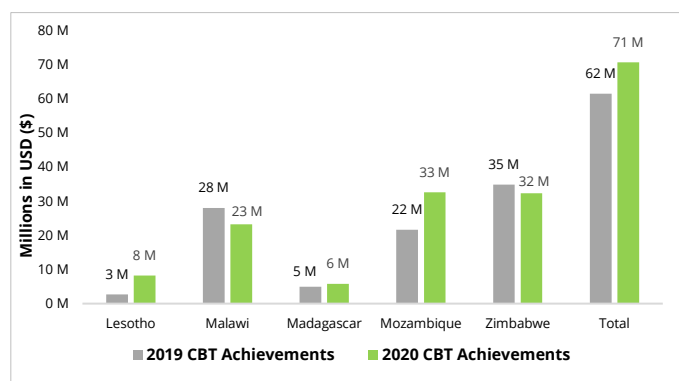
Apart from Malawi and Zimbabwe, all the evaluated countries saw an increase in CBT achievements in 2020 compared to 2019, demonstrating the increasing use of CBTs and the importance of MDAs (Figure 2). Malawi's use of CBT decreased due to shortages of food commodities, and the CO switched to food transfers to address food needs in the refugee camps. Similarly, in Zimbabwe refugee assistance was shifted to in-kind in 2019 and 2020 due to the government's monetary policies.

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Figure 2: Amounts of CBTs achieved in 2019 and 2020 (Source: MDA Evaluation Report, Page 4)



In the absence of explicit output and outcome indicators for MDAs in the WFP corporate results framework, the Supply Chain division developed indicators for price, availability, quality, and services to measure results. These indicators were largely monitored qualitatively but not consistently tracked in the same format to enable any significant analysis of results over time in the countries where data were available (Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe).

The four key performance indicators of price, availability, quality, and services were used to measure performance in the retail engagement work. However, these indicators were not uniformly measured across MDAs, making it difficult to establish criteria for monitoring and evaluation purposes. Since the indicators were at the time of evaluation being tracked ad-hoc, rather than in a systematic manner, the impacts of MDAs could not be clearly linked back to the countries' larger strategic outcomes. In addition, not much information on the indicators could be found at the country level, for example, in training reports, assessments, or in the Annual Country Reports (ACRs).

The data on MDA beneficiaries, where available, showed high levels of achievements in capacity strengthening activities. At outcome levels, there was consensus amongst stakeholders that the delivery of planned outputs likely contributed to the outcomes reported. There were, however, gender variances in the delivery of outputs and contribution to outcomes. Except for Lesotho, most MDAs were dominated by men. In addition, there was limited consideration of the needs of disabled people and those of pregnant and nursing women. The overall performance on MDA outputs delivery and outcome achievements varied when measured against what each country had planned to do. Country-specific MDA achievements are summarised below.

Lesotho: Linking retailers with banks promoted financial inclusion, making it easier for retailers to access credit. In addition, WFP trained the retailers on bulk buying, thereby

reducing the unit cost of the commodities. Evidence from retailer performance reports and process monitoring reports showed significant achievements in terms of faster turnover of stock, more clients for retailers, and increased profits between March 2020 and April 2021. Conversely, the same reports highlighted issues regarding delayed payments and high prices due to supply challenges experienced between October 2020 and November 2020.

Mozambique: Despite their significant achievements, project staff noted that Market Systems Analysis (MSA) had not yet become a way of working in the CO, which severely limits MSA's ability to contribute to planned outcomes in the long run. However, MSA recommendations provided concrete solutions, allowing WFP to overcome the bottlenecks that had resulted in inefficiencies in the provision of goods to beneficiaries.

In the short run, mobile shops addressed some of the four pillars of food security, but not in the long term. The retail-in-a-box (RIAB) had significant achievements and its design was good, however, operational challenges caused delays in project implementation. In addition, shops were not yet open throughout the week, and there was room for improvement in service provision. Furthermore, the effects of the training provided were visible as retailers expanded their shops and implemented the recommended warehouse management approaches.

Zimbabwe: There was a generally positive achievement across most performance indicators assessed except for prices of commodities, observation of COVID-19 prevention measures, access, and protection issues. Access and gender were major constraints, with most shops lacking facilities to accommodate the needs of the disabled, elderly, pregnant, and nursing women, and little had been done to address this area of concern. In general, all retailers were similarly treated in terms of compliance requirements regardless of their size or location.

Malawi: The home-grown school feeding project also created better and more stable markets for smallholder farmers by linking them to schools. The establishment of cooperatives also helped farmers to act collectively and construct warehouses, which improved the storage conditions of the goods.

Tanzania: The reopening of the Lake Victoria corridor and the introduction of a multimodal transportation system resulted in shorter transit times and lower overall costs, thus improving business performance, increasing profits, investment opportunities, and enhancing capacity to meet operational costs as reported by the Tanzania Railway Corporation (TRC) and Marine Services. However, the full benefits were not being realized and important clients and

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business opportunities were lost because the TRC was not increasing its limited rail capacity (including the number of wagons) to meet the increasing demand generated. The transporters interviewed stated that as a result of contracts with WFP, they managed to diversify and broaden their business operations. The training of drivers from transport and logistics companies was also beneficial and addressed the challenges they faced.

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IMPACT

WFP interventions were among multiple factors that contributed to either positive or negative changes in market functionality dimensions of assortment and quality, availability, price, the resilience of the supply chain, infrastructure, service, competition, access, and protection. Most retailers in the four countries (Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe) where data were collected using QulP reported a positive change in assortment and quality (Table 2).

Lesotho and Mozambique had most retailers reporting a positive change in prices, marketplace competition, and services. Overall, Malawi had the highest number of retailers reporting negative changes on 5 of the 8 indicators, with most retailers reporting a negative change in marketplace competition (Table 2). COVID-19 was perceived as the main causal factor of the changes experienced in Lesotho and Malawi, whether negative or positive.

In Mozambique, an increase in demand was the main causal factor identified which indirectly led to increased quality and variety of goods through an increase in marketplace competition and to a lesser extent through an increase in the number of suppliers. In Zimbabwe, WFP support was the top causal factor for the changes in assortment and quality, availability, state of infrastructure, and changes in marketplace competition.

Most retailers in all the four countries reported a positive change in assortment and quality, that is, 21 out of 28 (Lesotho), 13 out of 29 (Malawi), 22 out of 27 (Mozambique), and 16 out of 19 (Zimbabwe). The retailers were asked to describe the changes they had experienced in the past three years along the market functionality indicator dimensions of *assortment and quality, availability, price, the resilience of the supply chain, infrastructure, service, competition, access, and protection*. The frequency and the direction of these changes in the four countries are indicated in Table 2 below.

Retailers in Lesotho and Zimbabwe believed that the link between increased business and performance and WFP support was direct, while in Mozambique, most retailers reported an indirect link. Although WFP supported retailers financially, this also generated a market with demand and competition which subsequently stimulated retailer growth. This was the intention of MDAs and makes the approach more sustainable, meaning, **if WFP exits, the markets will remain, and retailers will continue to grow.** In Malawi, the WFP interventions or its cash injections into the economy were unlikely to have resulted in significant development for the retailers consulted.

Table 2: Direction of changes reported by retailers consulted in the 4 countries (Source: MDA Evaluation Report, Page 44)

Number of responses (N)	Changes in assortment and quality in the past 3 years			Changes in availability in the past 3 years			Changes in the price in the past 3 years			Changes in ability to meet demand in the past 3 years			Changes in the state of infrastructure in the past 3 years			Changes in service in the past 3 years			Changes in marketplace competition in the past 3 years			Changes in access and protection in the past 3 years		
	-	+	0	-	+	0	-	+	0	-	+	0	-	+	0	-	+	0	-	+	0	-	+	0
Lesotho (n=28)	5	21	2	8	16	4	0	28	0	5	19	4	2	20	6	0	24	4	2	20	6	1	8	19
Malawi (n=29)	9	13	7	13	7	9	10	11	8	12	7	9	8	15	6	5	6	18	16	9	4	2	4	23
Mozambique (n=27)	2	22	3	6	15	6	0	26	1	5	13	9	1	16	10	1	22	4	0	25	2	2	8	17
Zimbabwe (n=21)	2	16	1	6	12	3	11	4	2	5	9	7	3	12	4	6	13	3	0	18	2	4	5	8

+ Positive change - Negative change 0 No change. In instances when the sum of responses is lower than n, there were qualitative responses that were impossible to categorize into -, +, or 0. The different colours of purple have been used to differentiate the levels of change. Dark purple is the highest and white is the lowest.

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4 SUSTAINABILITY

According to retailers in Lesotho and Zimbabwe, the reimbursement or financial support received from WFP, although not sustainable, was perceived as the primary factor that allowed them to grow. However, Governments were generally not yet fully involved in the planning and delivery of MDAs. Where the government was involved, its capacity was still insufficient to manage and support MDAs, thus undermining MDAs sustainability.

However, in most instances, evidence suggested that some of the benefits of MDAs are, or will be, sustainable beyond WFP assistance, for example, in Lesotho (linking of retailers to millers and retailers' buying clubs), Tanzania (supply chain capacity strengthening activities in Lake Victoria corridor), and Mozambique (Retail-in-a-box) and associated retailer training). In Madagascar, Malawi, and Zimbabwe, assessing sustainability was difficult due to limited evidence.

CONCLUSIONS

While there were no corporate objectives / targets indicators on MDAs, the guidance materials for the design, implementation, and monitoring of MDAs developed by WFP headquarters were generally useful but needed to be consolidated and refined using a food-systems approach. The capacity strengthening of WFP, governments, and partners is needed to enhance the contribution of WFP to market development.

MDAs designed and implemented by WFP across the study countries have been largely relevant to the needs of the people benefiting from the assistance. However, the MDAs under unrestricted cash were yet to be fully developed. Partnerships, particularly with governments, have generally not been leveraged for a long-term solution to MDA implementation. The support to smallholder farmers across all countries was relevant in addressing challenges of low production, post-harvest losses, lack of access to credit, and fair markets.

The incorporation of gender dimensions and needs of youth, the disabled, and other groups in MDAs was generally weak in the design of MDAs across all countries. This may be due, in part, to a lack of gender consideration in the MDA guideline documents and tools and the context and nature of MDAs. Implementation of MDAs was more gender-sensitive by actively promoting the inclusion of women and conducting gender sensitization where necessary. Monitoring and reporting were rather weak in gender analysis.

WFP lacked a specific results framework for MDAs that could be used to measure results. COs relied on WFP Corporate Results Framework (CFR) indicators on capacity strengthening which were insufficient to isolate specific WFP contributions to market development in each country. There was a varying overall performance on MDA outputs delivery and outcome achievements from 2018 to 2021 across the targeted countries. The achievements were generally not well documented since they are, by design, integrated within the overall CBTs and supply chain interventions.

WFP support had varied effects in improving retailers' businesses and provided them with financial security by increasing the demand for products and improving their capacity to meet that demand. WFP financial support was the main factor that contributed to increased growth in business and performance in Lesotho and Zimbabwe. Furthermore, WFP financial support in Mozambique created increased demand and competition, resulting in increased growth and business amongst retailers. Conversely, WFP's cash injection did not contribute to growth in business and performance in Malawi. Evidence suggested that supply chain capacity strengthening activities of the Tanzania Railway Corporation, marine services, and transporters, and the smallholder agriculture market support provided, will likely help to reduce market inefficiencies in Tanzania.

FACTORS AFFECTING RESULTS

Presented below are the internal and external climatic, and socio-economic factors that affected the results of MDAs.

Internal Factors Affecting Results

The short-term nature of the funding negatively impacted the programme outputs and their contribution to outcomes. WFP across the study countries and implementing partners agreed that long-term interventions such as MDAs require dedicated human resources. Hence funding of MDAs should not be subjected to seasonality if they are to have a sustainable impact. Although Malawi did not have challenges in receiving donor funding, the problem was the sustainability and the need for long-term funding that is not necessarily linked to emergency response.

Contracting: Farmers in Lesotho and Malawi complained about the lack of continuity of the interventions because they were not provided with a formal contract indicating the duration of the WFP project. This made it difficult for the farmers to predict when they should slow down production to prepare for the project termination.

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Working in silos and a lack of coordination between WFP units resulted in a lack of inclusivity and diversity of perspectives during the design and implementation of MDAs.

Lack of indicators in the CRF, and consistent/systematic monitoring to inform decisions and promote understanding of guidelines for MDAs in an unrestricted cash context affected the implementation of MDAs. In addition, lack of baseline data affected the measuring of impact.

External factors affecting results

Climate change raised the level of risk and uncertainty in Southern Africa. Temperatures and rainfall pattern changes resulted in increased water scarcity, pest infestations, and an increase in the frequency and intensity of droughts and floods. Farmer associations concurred that poor weather conditions resulted in low crop production and presented a threat to food security. Climate variability experienced in the form of Cyclone Idai in 2019 and the droughts in 2018 and 2019 had an impact on agriculture production and availability of food in Mozambique, Malawi, and Zimbabwe. On a positive note, Zimbabwe experienced above-average rainfall in 2021, resulting in a 46 percent decrease in the number of food-insecure people. In contrast, Southern Madagascar faced severe drought conditions in 2021 with crop harvest expected to be less than 40 percent of the five-year average, pointing to a longer and more severe lean season. Retailers confirmed the significant impact of climate change on the availability and price of commodities and ultimately business performance.

Flooding reduced accessibility to WFP beneficiaries even further, creating delays in the supply chain and negatively affecting the ability of retailers and wholesalers to provide for the market.

The remoteness of some locations targeted by MDAs in Mozambique limited accessibility to beneficiaries, especially in areas with bad road infrastructure or in areas at risk of flooding during the rainy season.

Limited coordination between WFP and the Cash Working Group (CWG) and between agencies affected the ability to offer a variety of inputs and broaden the strategies of MDA interventions. WFP staff reported that participation was limited, and the CWG could be more inclusive, particularly with government stakeholders. The government was considered a factor that could positively influence the implementation of MDAs, if it is willing to take the lead.

The macroeconomic environment in Zimbabwe constituted fuel shortages, cash shortages, and a critical shortage of farm inputs that contributed to the scarcity of goods on the market and subsequent commodity prices identified in 2018. Across all periods, the country was plagued

by policy uncertainty as evidenced by a plethora of statutes dealing with monetary policies designed to control exchange rates and restrict foreign currency use.

The strong extension support from the government was cited by farmers as a positive external factor that contributed to the outcomes in Malawi and Zimbabwe. The technical advice provided by extension workers was critical in building farmer associations' capacity in good agriculture practices, which contributed to increased crop productivity.

EMERGING LESSONS

Lesson 1: The absence of any MDA indicators in the CRF and CSP frameworks indicated that MDA implementation and results have not been adequately tracked.

Lesson 2: As observed in Lesotho, working on both the supply side (smallholder farmer support) and the demand side (retailers) in a more holistic and coordinated approach is likely to have a greater impact.

Lesson 3: Coordination of MDAs, including with local government authorities, is a critical success factor for MDAs to be effective and impactful.

Lesson 4: Communication and transparency with stakeholders (retailers and farmers) throughout the duration of MDAs and available budgets builds trust and ownership and is likely to contribute to the sustainability of results.

Lesson 5: Building relationship between WFP and retailers with the latter as partners with WFP adopting a differentiated approach to partnering with small retailers and large-scale retailers has the potential for positive outcomes.

Lesson 6: Since most market actors/retailers in the countries covered by this evaluation are predominantly men, WFP risks perpetuating gender inequalities if efforts to intentionally target and/or encourage women market actors are not made.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Building on the draft theory of change (TOC) developed through a consultative process as part of this evaluation, **WFP Markets and Supply Chain divisions should develop a TOC for market development to guide RBs and COs in conceptualizing, designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating MDAs.** The TOC should be tailored to the COs' specific needs. Furthermore, COs should establish a proper baseline and consistently track and measure the expected and unexpected outcomes of MDAs (on targeted people, retailers, and the marketplace).

Recommendation 2: Consolidate the various guidance materials that are currently in place and produced by the

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supply chain, markets, and smallholder agriculture market support and strengthen frameworks and tools for designing and implementing MDAs within a broader food systems approach. This entails (i) developing clear leverage points for the demand-side work on linkages with retailers and other market actors and supply-side involving the smallholder farmer market support work; (ii) strengthening and formalizing guidance materials and tools for MDAs and (iii) finalizing the MDA guidance material and tools to be used in unrestricted cash scenarios and disseminating them to country offices.

Recommendation 3: Strengthen WFP market assessments and retailer performance tracking. To achieve this, there is a need to (i) strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of MDAs and enhance the measurement of retail engagement results; (ii) strengthen recommendations, ensuring that they are directed at specific WFP units for effective implementation; (iii) strengthen market assessments by considering market dynamics and seasonality of supply and demand in the design of assessments as well as conducting periodic and continuous monitoring of price differentiation; (iv) enhance the market systems analysis to ensure that it covers contextual issues beyond the targeted markets being assessed; (v) improve the preferred supplier network and keep it up-to-date and (vi) enhance the collection and reporting of sex-disaggregated data and access and protection issues in assessments.

Recommendation 4: Strengthen country retailer (and other supply chain actors) market engagement strategies to enhance the contribution of WFP to market development by (i) strengthening linkages of small-scale retailers to wholesalers and food manufacturers to gain the best value of goods in quality, service, and price; (ii) strengthening support to the retail business by helping them to be competitive and sustainable and essentially foster competitiveness in the retail sector to bring costs down and pass on the gain to the targeted people; (iii) enhancing fresh produce supply chain and nutritious food commodities by strengthening linkages of retailers to farmers; and (iv) expanding the coverage of MDAs to a larger proportion of beneficiaries and taking into account country contexts.

Recommendation 5: Continue to strengthen the gender approach in the supply chain, CBT, and smallholder agriculture market interventions that are aimed at market development by (i) conducting assessments of the participation of women in the retail sector, supply chain, and logistics with relevant institutions in addressing the capacity gaps to contribute market development in various contexts; (ii) strengthening linkages of women smallholder farmers and retailers/actors to markets by increasing their participation in WFP supported aggregation systems and with retailers contracted by WFP; (iii) taking a transformative approach, identify strategies to strengthen women engagement and

participation in retail store businesses; and (iv) contributing to developing a gender action plan for small, medium, and micro-enterprises (SMMEs) and retailers on how the gender, disability, and other social inclusion gaps can be addressed.

Recommendation 6: Take a cross-functional approach to market development in targeted areas at the country level by encouraging collaboration among various units such as programme CBT, VAM, M&E, Gender, Nutrition, and Supply Chain to achieve programmatic outcomes. Learning from Kenya, management should establish a process/system from the start of market and retail engagement activities, that break down the silos that have traditionally existed between supply chain and programme roles.

Recommendation 7: Strengthen multisectoral collaboration in the design and implementation of MDAs. To achieve this, (i) WFP should engage more actively with the government to ensure the activities continue after the organization's funding cycle ends, as well as discuss and seek guidance from other country offices and partners outside WFP on MDAs to increase their impact on stakeholders and work together with local organizations to design MDAs; (ii) strengthen the utilization of existing external CWGs as the main conduit of cooperation for MDAs, facilitate multi-sectoral stakeholders' participation and ensure that participation is made more inclusive; and (iii) create MDA lesson learning opportunities for all country offices led by RBJ, where COs can disseminate findings, share lessons learned and collaborate with partners in academia, the private sector, and other development organizations.

Recommendation 8: Increase collaboration with retailers and other market actors. WFP should (i) recognize retailers/traders as partners and find ways to involve them in the design of CBTs and the design of MDAs. The relationship should go beyond simply adhering to WFP contractual obligations. In addition, WFP should engage retailers and other stakeholders for ideas on how to improve retail participation in the CBT programme. (ii) Strengthen the communication with retailers while acknowledging their limitations in terms of connectivity, access to roads, and other infrastructure. (iii) Continue to improve payment procedures by addressing delays. This entails continuous synchronization of the SC of WFP, procurement, ICT, and finance systems which should be simple to maintain if the multisectoral approach to MDAs is used.

Recommendation 9: Advocate for multi-year funding for MDAs. This entails (i) Documenting and sharing results from MDAs with donors, government, and partners and their impact on businesses, the economy, and market development in general; (ii) Implementing MDAs through social protection and resilience programmes including the SAMS rather than just in emergencies only to address the challenges that come with the short duration of interventions.

Reference:

Full and summary reports of the evaluation and the Management Response are available at <https://www.wfp.org/publications/wfp-contribution-market-development-and-food-systems-southern-africa-thematic>

For more information, please contact the Office of Evaluation wfp.decentralizedevaluation@wfp.org

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACRs	Annual Country Reports
CBT	Cash-Based Transfers
CO	Country Office
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CPP	Corporate Planning and Performance
CRF	Corporate Results Framework
CSP	Country Strategic Plan
CWG	Cash Working Group
ET	Evaluation Team
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HQ	WFP Headquarters
ICT	Information and communication technology
MDA	Market Development Activities
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MFI	Market Functionality Index
MSA	Market Systems Analysis
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
QuIP	Qualitative Impact Assessment Protocol
RB	Regional Bureau
RBJ	Regional Bureau Johannesburg
RIAB	Retail-in-a-box
SAMS	Smallholder Agricultural Market Support
SC	Supply Chain
SHFOs	Smallholder farmer organizations
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises
TOC	Theory of Change
TRC	Tanzania Railway Corporation
UN	United Nations
VAM	Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping
WFP	World Food Programme

Reference:

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