



Thematic Evaluation of Supply Chain Outcomes in the Food System in Eastern Africa

2016-2021

PROCUREMENT BRIEF



CONTEXT

Introduction

To support increased emphasis on food systems approach, WFP Regional Bureau for Eastern Africa (RBN) commissioned a regional Supply Chain evaluation. The objective was to **identify and assess the nature and extent of the effects of Supply Chain activities on the food system**, and thereby to make recommendations to improve future interventions.

Subject and focus of the Evaluation

The subject of the evaluation was the **wide range of Supply Chain activities implemented by procurement and logistics teams in collaboration with programmes within WFP Eastern Africa region**. As a thematic evaluation, it

focused on the relevance, results, and factors affecting performance and outcomes of WFP Supply Chain activities in the cross-cutting area of food systems.

Another key focus was to understand how outcomes may have varied according to specific groups of stakeholders, particularly women.

The evaluation covered **all nine country offices** supported by WFP RBN **from January 2016 to December 2021**. The region-wide assessment was complemented by three focal country case studies in **Kenya, Somalia** and **South Sudan**.

The evaluation has provided a number of findings and recommendations relevant to **WFP Procurement**. One overarching evaluation brief and one logistics brief are also available.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

WFP Procurement

WFP procurement tenders have promoted the development of the large-scale trading sector, and benefits to smaller traders and producers have been less evident. Instead, the processes have reinforced existing dynamics within food systems and in particular the dominance of larger wholesalers. **WFP procurement has focused on low costs and efficient performance through its larger commercially orientated contracts, with less attention given to sustainable and equitable food systems development.**

While WFP procurement prices may exceed market prices, there has been no evidence of increased prices to producers.

Even though the scale of interventions to promote

smallholder production has been small relative to WFP procurement activities and national levels of production, **these interventions have generated positive results that have been evident in the short term.**

Linkages between smallholders and markets are fundamental to all food systems that are based on smallholder production but are often rife with inequities and inefficiencies. WFP has conducted interventions to enhance linkages between smallholders and markets. The focus has been on the empowerment of producers and cooperatives with the intention that they should be able to capture a larger share of the value chain. With the exception of Rwanda, where cooperatives have been strongly endorsed by the Government, these interventions have yielded few positive outcomes.

Food Processing Capacity Development

WFP promotion and procurement of processed foods have resulted in significant investments in production capacity and sustainable changes in this particular aspect of food systems. They have leveraged WFP programme and nutritional expertise. The combination of skills has catalysed changes in standards and regulations that effectively embed have improved nutrition within the food systems (Kenya, Rwanda and Ethiopia).

National Capacity Strengthening

The most common area for national capacity strengthening has been in food commodity standards assessment and regulation. This has contributed to significant changes in food systems in Kenya. Elsewhere, similar interventions have not yet achieved the same level of outcome. This has highlighted that in this particular thematic area, **outcomes have been highly dependent upon context and could not be determined by resources deployed or training provided.**

Inclusiveness

WFP procurement systems have often been gender-blind, with limited commitment to Gender Equality and Women Empowerment.

WFP procurement has operated as to give priority to efficiency, rather than inclusiveness. Current procurement processes have favoured wholesalers with access to finance and have not specifically empowered women and youth.

Knowledge Sharing and Collaboration

The extent of both knowledge sharing and collaboration has varied considerably according to the nature of Supply Chain interventions. In the case of strengthening smallholders capacity, there has been close collaboration between programme and Supply Chain units. In the case of commercially orientated contracts with wholesalers and transport companies, there has been little evidence of any regular collaborative process. Supply chain management has been well aware of nutritional and environmental priorities as well as considerations of gender and inclusiveness, but these have been secondary to the primary consideration of availability and cost-efficiency.

Data collection and analysis

The existing data collection systems **have not been adequate to inform a robust assessment of changes in food systems.** The information collected by Monitoring & Evaluation, Supply Chain and VAM units has been well suited to the specific purposes for which it is gathered, but it could not be readily integrated and provide a comprehensive assessment of food systems development.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROCUREMENT

Enhancement of inclusiveness in Procurement and Distribution. WFP RBN should promote the inclusion and participation of stakeholders to maximise the competitiveness of food systems. It should focus on stakeholders who would otherwise be precluded from commercial interactions. Recommended measures include: implement initial research to identify and assess the constraints to stakeholder participations, especially to women and other disadvantaged groups; incorporate

measures to relieve the identified constraints; and consider setting aside a proportion of annual procurement volumes as small lots with a maximum number open to any one bidder.

Data Collection and Analysis. WFP RBN should consider the adoption at country office level of data collection and management systems specifically to monitor changes in food systems, including specific concerns of disadvantage groups.

Reference:

Full evaluation report, as well as evaluation briefs are available at [*Eastern Africa, Supply Chain outcomes in the Food System: Evaluation | World Food Programme \(wfp.org\)*](#)

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