



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

Evaluation of Kenya WFP Country Strategic Plan 2018 – 2023

CONTEXT

Kenya has a population of 53 million people, 12.8 percent living in severe multidimensional poverty. Despite rapid economic growth, high levels of inequality persist.

Between February 2018 and December 2022, people experiencing acute food insecurity almost doubled, respectively from 2.5 million to over 4.1 million, as result of multiple factors, including consecutive below average rainy seasons and increasing commodity prices.

Since the start of the CSP, the refugee population increased from 420,000 people to around 500,000, mainly from South Sudan, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia. The 2021 Refugees Act signalled a policy shift from encampment towards resettlement.

The current development agenda aims at transforming Kenya into a newly industrializing, middle-income country, providing a high quality of life for all citizens in a clean and secure environment. In 2021, the Government unveiled a road map for accelerating progress towards gender equality.

SUBJECT AND FOCUS OF THE EVALUATION

The CSP (July 2018 – June 2023) was designed around four strategic outcomes and ten activities focusing on emergency response targeting refugees and other crisis-affected people; smallholder access to markets, livelihoods and resilience; country capacity strengthening; and supply chain and logistics services.

The original needs-based plan of USD 995 million aimed to reach 2.5 million beneficiaries over four years. It was revised six times (as of July 2022), resulting in an increase of the budget to USD 1,094.6 million and an increase in planned beneficiaries to 3.3 million. The CSP was 56 percent funded as of July 2022.

OBJECTIVES AND USERS OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation was commissioned by the WFP Office of Evaluation to provide evaluative evidence for accountability and learning to inform the design of the next CSP for Kenya. The evaluation covered all WFP activities implemented between July 2018 and June 2022 including WFP's strategic positioning, its effectiveness in contributing

to strategic outcomes, the efficiency of CSP implementation and factors explaining WFP's performance.

The main intended users of the evaluation include the WFP Kenya country office, the Regional Bureau for Eastern Africa, technical divisions at headquarters, target programme recipients, the Government of Kenya, partners and donors.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

Strategic positioning

The CSP was informed by extensive consultation with the Government of Kenya and aligned closely relevant national policies. WFP remained alert to changing national priorities, adapting successfully where needed, including in response to COVID-19 and droughts.

Programme design and targeting were informed by extensive evidence and community consultation. Activities were appropriately tailored to the needs of the different beneficiaries, though there were some gaps in serving the elderly and refugees with disabilities.

The CSP was highly coherent with the policies and priorities of other relevant United Nations entities, with good cross-entity collaboration and coordination.

The CSP articulated a clear strategic shift from 'delivering' food assistance, to 'enabling' national systems and capacities, though this was at odds with a budget strongly weighted towards emergency response. The CSP was characterised by strong internal links, and positive synergies, though it lacked an overarching theory of change and some silos remained.

Contribution to CSP outcomes in Kenya

Food assistance to refugees reached large segments of the affected population, and led to improved food consumption and dietary diversity in the early part of the CSP. Ration cuts were required, however, due to funding shortfalls and increased beneficiary numbers, reducing food security indicators. Overall, general food distributions and cash transfers proved insufficient to meet needs, increasing the use of crisis coping strategies.

Moderate acute malnutrition treatment achieved mostly positive results. School feeding in primary schools for refugee children helped improve enrolment and attendance rates. Small-scale activities aiming at improving refugee self-reliance and socio-economic integration into host communities showed promise.

Layering of activities, to establish the foundation for increased farmer production, and then to link producers to markets, was successful. **Community asset creation and livelihood activities** helped enhance crop yields. Supply chain support to smallholder farmers, linking them to high-quality input providers, buyers and companies, helped increase productivity. Although access to food for the most insecure households remained relatively stable, despite funding constraints and difficult circumstances, household capabilities to respond to shocks did not increase.

Country capacity strengthening work was grounded in a strong partnership with the Government. WFP made clear contributions to national systems and policies, most notably to the school meals management programme. However, persistent shortcomings in WFP's country capacity strengthening engagement included limited analysis, capacities, and the lack of a strategic approach.

Despite challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, commodities and **supply chain services** were delivered on time. The volume of food purchased locally by WFP from smallholder farmers increased, and WFP made valuable contributions in strengthening national procurement capacity.

Cross-cutting themes. The CSP was implemented in adherence to the humanitarian principles, though continued attention is needed to ensure a balanced approach given close partnership with government. Protection of beneficiaries was a priority and WFP effectively used community communications and feedback mechanisms.

Despite challenging circumstances, good progress was made on **gender equality** indicators. WFP Kenya mainstreamed gender into activities and programmes based on gender analysis and assessments but addressing gender based violence remained a challenge.

Sustainability of achievements is supported by capacity building, self-organisation, and continued engagement of beneficiaries, but ultimately depends on continued government commitment.

WFP made modest contributions to the **humanitarian-development-peace nexus** by supporting self-reliance, local economic development, integration of refugees in host communities and by applying conflict-sensitive approaches to reduce local tensions.

Efficient use of resources

Despite challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, commodities and supply chain services were delivered on time and, largely, in a cost-efficient manner, although with some variations across activities.

Assistance to refugees was largely cost-efficient, supported jointly by UNHCR, WFP and other partners. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service was funded on average at 70 percent through cost recovery. Some cost-effective programming choices, such as cash-based transfers for refugees, were hindered by regulatory issues. The establishment of a regional innovation unit – the first of its kind for WFP – provided the country office with opportunities to pilot cost-effective measures, such as harnessing synergies with the private sector.

Factors that explain WFP performance

WFP successfully mobilized resources over the CSP period, including additional resources in 2022 and funding for country capacity strengthening.

Internal capacity for monitoring and evaluation was a persistent challenge, though efforts to enhance capacity were ongoing.

WFP's partnerships in Kenya were instrumental in achieving the intended results, and the CSP's strategic shift to a more 'enabling' role brought WFP closer to the centres of national decision making. However, it also required adjusted skillsets and staffing profiles, which proved challenging for the Country Office.

CSP performance was constrained by limited cross-programme coordination, including at the field level, although there were recent efforts to improve including: enhancing staffing at the field office level, increasing the delegation of decision-making and adjusting reporting relationships.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite a highly ambitious vision for a strategic shift from "delivering" to "enabling", the CSP made partial progress in most areas of engagement, WFP's strategic positioning was relevant, valued by all stakeholders, and effectively adapted to evolving national priorities and needs.

The CSP supported large amounts of beneficiaries, but with less food than planned due to funding constraints and increasing needs. WFP made progress in achieving gender equality and inclusion objectives and strove to increase access to assistance for hard-to-reach populations. It fostered close partnerships with Government.

While significant siloing and cross-programme integration issues remain, there are promising efforts underway to address these concerns.

Finally, WFP's vision of a strategic shift towards enabling capacities is currently mismatched with a budget strongly weighted towards emergency response. Sustaining this shift will require longer-term commitments by donors, whose policies and strategies may not be fully coherent with WFP's vision of a strategic shift.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. Invest more in increasing self-reliance and resilience for both refugees and host communities; enhance efforts to include hard-to-reach populations.

Recommendation 2. Enhance the contribution of the specialized units: Nutrition and Gender Equality.

Recommendation 3. Strengthen organizational cohesion, human resources management and programme integration.

Recommendation 4. Strengthen capacities to engage in governance analysis and clarify internal responsibilities for CCS.

Recommendation 5. Strengthen the M&E function and the practice of documenting experiences and results to improve learning and reporting.

Recommendation 6. Strengthen the supply chain function and the overall approach to food systems and resilience.