



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

Evaluation of Haiti WFP Country Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022

CONTEXT

Haiti has a population of 11.4 million people, 58 percent living in severe multidimensional poverty according to most recent 2012 data. By the end of 2021, 44 percent of the population faced acute food insecurity (IPC phase 3 crisis or above) and chronic malnutrition affecting children below five years stood at 23 percent, while 66 percent of children below five years and 49 percent of women and girls aged 15 and 49 years suffered from anemia. Haiti ranked 152nd out of 162 countries on the gender inequality index in 2020.

The country is plagued by frequent natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods. Since 2019, political instability and the COVID-19 pandemic have led to a contraction of the Haitian economy. Insecurity, including armed gangs controlling major parts of the capital and country, has led to public services and enterprises shutting down, severe access restrictions and massive internal displacement of people fleeing violence.

The National Policy and Strategy for Food Sovereignty, Food Security and Nutrition in Haiti aims to promote local agriculture, develop social safety nets and improve access to basic services, among others.

SUBJECT AND FOCUS OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation covered the transitional interim country strategic plan (T-ICSP from January 2018 to June 2019) and the country strategic plan (CSP from July 2019 to December 2023). The T-ICSP focused on school feeding, disaster preparedness and social safety nets. The CSP covered emergency food assistance, school feeding, nutrition, smallholder agriculture and climate resilient food systems, country capacity strengthening for social protection and humanitarian services. It aimed to place greater emphasis on the humanitarian-development nexus, gender equality and women's empowerment, and to improve synergies between strategic outcomes.

The needs-based plan for the T-ICSP evolved from USD 24 million for 631 000 beneficiaries to USD 88 million for 1 182 000 beneficiaries. The T-ICSP was 49 percent funded. As of December 2021, the needs-based plan for the CSP had grown from USD 200 million for 1.5 million beneficiaries to USD 470 million for 3 million beneficiaries. The CSP was 77 percent funded as of July 2022.

OBJECTIVES AND USERS OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation was commissioned by the WFP Office of Evaluation to provide evidence for accountability and learning, and to inform the design of the next CSP for Haiti. The evaluation covered all WFP activities implemented between January 2018 and July 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 Haiti country office, the Regional Bureau for Latin America and The Caribbean, technical divisions at headquarters, target programme recipients, the Government of Haiti, partners and donors.

KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

Strategic positioning

The strategic direction of the CSP is aligned with national objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 2. WFP activities were relevant to immediate food security and nutrition needs of populations affected by crisis, but activities to address chronic vulnerabilities remained limited in scale.

Geographic targeting was relevant and based on several food security assessments but targeting at the household or individual level was problematic due to challenges with prevailing targeting mechanisms and vulnerability analyses which did not reflect specific needs.

WFP adapted well to successive crises by scaling up emergency response and humanitarian services. Its organisational agility stemmed largely from its ability to collaborate with key partners, mobilise resources and operate effectively in an emergency context.

Interventions were overall coherent with UN strategies and WFP played an active humanitarian coordination role in different sectors and working groups. Partnerships with UN agencies were overall positive with some challenges including funding competition, donor siloing and perceptions by some of WFP exceeding its mandate.

Contribution to CSP outcomes in Haiti

WFP emergency assistance reached about 71% of the targeted population, helping improve food consumption and reduce reliance on negative coping strategies, although a large proportion of beneficiary households still frequently resort to harmful coping strategies. The overall food security and nutrition situation in the country continues to deteriorate.

School meals were expanded contributing to improved learning, retention rates and nutrition among schoolchildren, even though the regularity of school meals was impeded by COVID-19 and natural disasters. Nutrition sensitization activities and cash transfers for social protection both suffered from funding constraints. Scale-up of **smallholder farmer support** and the home grown school meals programme was also hampered by limited resources and competition from imported foods.

Asset creation activities helped generate productive assets and improve food security but gains are likely unsustainable. These activities were not implemented in areas recovering from recent shocks, thereby missing an opportunity to strengthen the resilience of the most vulnerable.

To **strengthen institutional capacities** WFP supported the development and implementation of national policies and strategies on school feeding, food security and nutrition, and social protection. Results remain fragile due to the difficult context and prospects for handover remain limited.

WFP provided effective telecommunication, supply chain, humanitarian air transport and logistics **services to partners**, which helped them overcome the difficulties associated with the COVID-19 crisis, the earthquake and the insecurity.

On **cross-cutting themes**, WFP improved **gender** analysis but did not sufficiently consider intersectional vulnerabilities. Implementing gender equality and women's empowerment measures was challenging and related activities were not sufficiently monitored. WFP adhered well to **humanitarian principles**, though some perception risks exist in terms of operational independence from government. It took recent measures to improve **protection** of beneficiaries at distribution sites though community feedback mechanisms remain little known. WFP also recently introduced measures to reduce the **environmental footprint** of activities. On the **triple nexus**, activities addressing root causes remained small scale, and collaboration with development agencies was insufficient, though social protection support has potential to build links between humanitarian work, development and peace.

Efficient use of resources

The **allocation of resources** among activities between 2018 and 2022 shifted towards emergency food assistance and **expenditure rates** were hindered by changing priorities, human resource gaps, limited cooperating partner capacities, administrative challenges and late receipt of funds.

Timeliness was sometimes affected by both external and internal factors such as insecurity, Haiti's weak banking system and targeting delays. Delays were mostly felt in resilience activities.

Cost-efficiency of operations was overall satisfactory. WFP was able to deliver assistance at lower cost than planned. Losses occurred due to quality issues, transport and processing issues, but WFP established mitigation measures. Efforts were made to reduce costs, but sometimes a balance had to be struck between containing costs and achieving CSP objectives. For example, home grown school meals were promoted for their positive effects on local production even if they came at a higher cost than school meals using imported food.

Factors that explain WFP performance

WFP **adapted** well to the changing context based on lessons learned from evaluations, stakeholder consultations, and joint analyses with government and other partners. **Monitoring** enabled quick adjustment in implementation, but provided limited information at outcome level and was therefore of limited use for strategic decision-making.

WFP was able to mobilize **funding** from development banks to support the national social protection system. Earmarking and short-term funding, linked to the stronger focus on emergency response, hampered the intended strategic shift from humanitarian assistance to addressing the underlying causes of food and nutrition insecurity.

WFP developed strong **partnerships** with Government and civil society, including at the local level where WFP's transparency, good communication and flexibility was well appreciated.

Human resources limitations were a significant constraint owing to high turnover and many vacancies due to the difficult working conditions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite the very challenging country context, WFP managed to adapt the CSP to the changing context, and assist large numbers of people in need.

The intended shifts from saving lives to changing lives and towards stronger integration of activities were hampered by contextual and funding constraints, keeping WFP focused on emergency assistance.

Resilience activities were more difficult to fund, highlighting the need to further convince donors of WFP's full mandate and growing resilience-building capacity.

Overall, WFP is an effective and trusted partner to the Government, donors, and humanitarian actors. By providing essential services to humanitarian and development actors, WFP helped ensure more effective and efficient emergency assistance. However, WFP did not maximize partnerships with UN agencies with long-standing development expertise in Haiti.

WFP's strategy and staff capacity need strengthening to achieve transformative gender results. Humanitarian principles and protection were integrated into WFP's work, but beneficiary feedback mechanisms remained underutilized.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. Give greater attention to addressing root causes and resilience building, for a more integrated approach in line with the CSP's envisaged strategic shift.

Recommendation 2. Ensure that all necessary financial and human resources are mobilized.

Recommendation 3. Expand partnerships with Haitian state institutions and strengthen their capacities.

Recommendation 4. Enhance targeting and adjust modalities to changing needs and circumstances.

Recommendation 5. Ensure that cross-cutting dimensions are integrated in all activities of the country strategic plan.