



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP EVALUATION

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Latin America and the Caribbean Region

Gender disparities are significant within the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region, affecting women in areas such as food security, poverty, employment opportunities, and ownership of agricultural land, among others. Violence against women and girls is a major problem in the region.

The World Food Programme (WFP) Regional Gender Strategy 2023-2025 for LAC emphasizes the importance of strengthening capacity and evidence in gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) to ensure that programmes are better equipped with a gender-sensitive approach.


WFP Gender Policy 2022 aims at enhancing gender equality and women's empowerment through three objectives: 1) achieving equitable access and control over food security and nutrition, 2) addressing the root causes of gender inequalities that affect food security and nutrition, and 3) improving the economic empowerment of women and girls in food security and nutrition. Priorities to support GEWE include:

- Increased and equitable engagement of women
- Strengthen leadership and decision-making among women
- Enhanced protection for women to ensure their safety, dignity, and meaningful access to and control of resources
- Transformative action on social norms and structural barriers to benefit women


Commissioned by the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean


KEY FINDINGS


EVIDENCE ON GEWE OUTCOMES


1  **LIVELIHOODS AND RESILIENCE.** GEWE improvements are most evident in activities related to livelihoods and resilience. These programmes increased women's participation in productive associations and decision-making roles. They also increased women's income, product diversification, access to finance and markets, leadership and self-confidence.


Adopting a comprehensive approach, in which attention to productive capacities is supplemented by support for literacy, enhanced rights awareness or social cohesiveness is key to achieving larger- and longer-term results.

2  **CASH-BASED TRANSFERS.** Cash-based transfers (CBT) generally bring positive GEWE results. Evaluations frequently emphasize the dual benefit of targeting women to both increase their decision-making power in the household, as well as gains of the transfer itself. This may explain women's increasing preference for cash over vouchers, using cash to invest in productive activities.


3  **COUNTRY CAPACITY STRENGTHENING.** The inclusion of GEWE in country capacity strengthening (CCS) programming has not been systematically examined. While good examples were identified of GEWE dimensions being integrated in activities emphasizing gender mainstreaming within social protection systems, sex-disaggregated data and school feeding programmes, there were also missed opportunities to streamline gender in risk management, emergency response, food security and nutrition.


4  **NUTRITION.** GEWE results for nutrition interventions are primarily centered on mother-and-child health and nutrition findings focusing on women, but there is also evidence that social behaviour change communication shows a mixed performance in incorporating gender considerations. While some cases includes initiatives towards the participation of women and men in promoting healthy nutrition practices and fostering shared caregiving responsibilities within households, others are gender blind.

5  **SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMMES.** School-based programmes GEWE results are limited with evidence pointing to risks and missed opportunities.

6  **EMERGENCY PROGRAMMES.** Attention to GEWE in emergency programmes is poor, with the focus on analyzing gender parity of caseloads.

EVIDENCE ON PERFORMANCE OF GEWE MAINSTREAMING

1  **CAPACITY BUILDING, STAFF AWARENESS, AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES.** There have been improvements in internal capacity building, staff awareness raising, and in the development of tools and training programmes, with some positive cases demonstrating the importance of active leadership to promote progress. Alignment with national GEWE priorities is also evaluated positively.

2  **INFLUENCE ON GEWE.** On dimensions that may influence the effectiveness of GEWE mainstreaming:

- Challenges remain in consolidating staff commitment and awareness of how to effectively mainstream GEWE throughout country office activities. There is still room to improve understanding and awareness of GEWE issues as well as engagement in gender equality.
- M&E systems have made significant progress in collecting sex-disaggregated data more systematically; nonetheless, corporate gender indicators remain insufficient to capture changes in empowerment and shifts in gender social norms.
- Gender analysis is used to inform programmes to varying degrees, and there is no clear evidence to indicate if the Gender and Age Marker is used in designing and implementing WFP initiatives.
- Despite increased efforts to mobilize resources for GEWE, financing for GEWE transformative programming is routinely reported as insufficient.

2 MAIN AREAS OF EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS ON GEWE

STRATEGIC

Develop clear theories of change grounded in a specific GEWE analysis, fostering alliances to strengthen GEWE activities and gender sensitive social behaviour change communication strategies, and taking advantage of opportunities to incorporate gender issues into CCS and shock-responsive and social protection activities.

OPERATIONAL

Related to GEWE mainstreaming, improve WFP staff capacity, and ensure a strong commitment to GEWE, establishing indicators that reflect a transformative gender perspective, adopting mixed quantitative and qualitative approaches to monitoring, and implementing GEWE fundraising strategies.

9 GOOD PRACTICES

1 The **commitment of WFP leadership to GEWE capacities is vital** to drive gender-responsive programming and implementation.

2 **Women's participation in the emergency response process** is essential to ensure that women's needs are addressed and to identify highly vulnerable households in the community, particularly in targeting beneficiaries and prioritizing asset recovery.

3 **Benefits of targeting women with CBTs include increased autonomy** and the ability to play a more significant role in making decisions within the family regarding food expenditures.

4 Participation of men and boys in **awareness-raising workshops or trainings** is crucial to women's sustainable empowerment as the whole family becomes aware of shared roles and responsibilities in the home, women's leadership role, and preventing violence against women and girls.

5 **GEWE transformation outcomes could be improved** by integrating knowledge of gender rights, fostering women's self-esteem, and promoting women's confidence at individual, family and at community levels (like farmer organizations) into resilience-building interventions.

6 **WFP-organized workshops and meetings with beneficiaries** (i.e., during the distribution of food and non-food aid) increases women's collaboration, the establishment of associations and networks to demand rights, and encourages transformation in gender roles and power relations.

7 WFP benefits by **partnering with and learning from organizations with stronger experience in gender** issues. Collaboration with local gender NGOs and women's organizations also offers sustainability to interventions.

8 **Gender-sensitive workshop, training, and meeting** design (appropriate locations, scheduling, supporting services such as childcare and duration) increases women's participation.

9 When **learning from the voices of women and men during the design stage, interventions are relevant and adjust to people's needs**. Participatory methods, formative research exercises, and workshops have all proven to be effective in ensuring that interventions remain relevant and address specific needs.

BREADTH OF EVIDENCE

This summary of evaluation evidence compiles findings from 25 evaluations commissioned by WFP rated 'satisfactory' or higher by WFP's external Post-hoc Quality Assessment (PHQA) from 2018-2023. One WFP Evaluation Synthesis, two WFP studies and four "lessons from UN Women evaluations" were added to the universe to supplement the analysis.

The evaluations cover 13 countries within Latin America and the Caribbean; 11 of the 25 evaluations were decentralized activity or thematic evaluations; the others comprised five Country Strategic Plan evaluations, three Policy, three Strategic, one Corporate Emergency Response, one Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation, and one Joint Evaluation.

The summary applied the following approach and methods:

- A universe of WFP evaluations and other sources were gathered, all of which included information on GEWE.
- Evidence was extracted systematically using an analytical framework that reflected key areas of interest indicated during the framing stage.

- Evidence was analysed and clustered around analytical themes, with key patterns and findings identified.
- The resulting report was drafted and reviewed by stakeholders before being finalised in October 2023.



The designations employed and the presentation of material in the map does not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever of WFP concerning the legal or constitutional status of any country, territory or sea area, or concerning the delimitation of frontiers.

ANNEX **LIST OF DOCUMENTS CONSULTED**

- [Evaluation of Bolivia WFP Country Strategic Plan 2018-2022](#)
- [Evaluation of Peru WFP Country Strategic Plan 2018-2022](#)
- [Evaluation of Honduras WFP Country Strategic Plan 2018-2021](#)
- [Evaluation of Ecuador WFP Country Strategic Plan 2017-2021](#)
- [Evaluation of El Salvador WFP Country Strategic Plan 2017-2021](#)
- [Evaluation of Bolivia's 2013-2017 Country Programme 200381](#)
- [Evaluations of WFP's role and response in promoting a food assistance approach integrated with social protection systems in Ecuador](#)
- [Evaluation of the Nicaragua Country Program 200434](#)
- [Final evaluation of the Project "Response to the El Niño phenomenon in the Dry Corridor", El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua](#)
- [Baseline Evaluation of USDA McGovern Dole Food for Education and Child Nutrition Programme Support \(2020-2023\) in Haiti](#)
- [Final Evaluation of Joint Programme 'Enhancing Resilience and Acceleration of the SDGs in the Eastern Caribbean' from 2020 to 2022](#)
- [Mid-term Evaluation of the BOOST Project from August 2018 to June 2021 in the areas of Nueva Segovia, Madriz, Estelí, Matagalpa, Jinotega and the RACCN](#)
- [Evaluation of Strategic Outcome 1 \(SO1\) of Peru's Country Strategic Plan: Towards the objectives of Zero Hunger through advocacy, communication, and mobilization \(2017-2021\)](#)
- [Evaluation of El Salvador's Country Strategic Plan's Gender related topics \(2017-2021\)](#)
- [Joint evaluation of the pilot Shock-Responsive Social Protection in Arauca \(Colombia\)](#)
- [Evaluation of Marketing Intervention to Empower Women and to Reduce the Risk of Intimate Partner Violence in Colombia- World Food Programme](#)
- [Evaluation of WFP's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Global End-term Evaluation of the Joint Programme on Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Nepal, Niger and Rwanda from 2014 to 2020](#)
- [Evaluation of WFP Policies on Humanitarian Principles and Access in Humanitarian Contexts](#)
- [Evaluation of the WFP's Humanitarian Protection Policy](#)
- [Evaluation of the Gender Policy \(2015-2020\)](#)
- [Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Capacity to Respond to Emergencies](#)
- [Strategic Evaluation of the Contribution of School Feeding Activities to the Achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals Centralized Evaluation Report](#)
- [Strategic Evaluation of WFP's work on Nutrition and HIV/AIDS](#)
- [Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and Girls - Case Study: Colombia](#)
- [Evaluation Synthesis of evidence and lessons on country capacity strengthening from decentralized evaluations](#)
- [Analysis of the Incorporation of Corporate Policy Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in WFP Peru's Programs](#)
- [Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: WFP Evidence from Evaluations Panel Discussion](#)
- [UN-Women -Leadership and political participation](#)
- [UN-Women -Women's economic empowerment](#)
- [UN-Women - Elimination of violence against women and girls](#)
- [UN-Women - Women, peace and security](#)

WFP EVALUATION

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