



CONFLICT SENSITIVITY AND CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE



World Food Programme

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LIVES**

Operationalising the HDP Nexus in WFP Western Africa

Case Study: WFP Burkina Faso

September 2023

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Introduction

In 2023, WFP's Regional Bureau in Dakar undertook a learning exercise to collate detailed and current information on how WFP country offices in Western Africa design and implement complementary, context specific, and agile HDP Nexus approaches. The goal is to inform and build WFP's evidence and advocacy with the latest practices from the field. This document outlines the key findings of a case study conducted on Burkina Faso in early 2023, designed to identify Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDP Nexus) emergent and good practices.

It was produced based on face-to-face interviews conducted in Ouagadougou in January 2023 with WFP staff and other external HDP Nexus stakeholders, virtual focus groups with WFP sub-offices, and desk review of WFP and partner documents.

WFP AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO PEACE

WFP has extensive experience delivering assistance in contexts of conflict, fragility, and violence.

WFP signed up to the Peace Promise at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 and adhered to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Recommendation on the HDP Nexus in 2020. Both these commitments oblige WFP to engage in conflict-sensitive programming, to ensure that vital crisis response programming is sequenced and layered with longer-term programming to address the drivers of humanitarian need over time, and more broadly to contribute to peace outcomes.

WFP globally frames its contributions to the HDP Nexus and peace and development outcomes in two main ways. First, by contributing to broader efforts of the United Nations and governments to strengthen the coherence and complementarity of humanitarian, development, and peace outcomes for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Second, through WFP's own programming and partnerships across the HDP Nexus domains, including investments in resilience outcomes and shock responsive social protection.

WFP's approach to the HDP Nexus is underpinned by a number of principles that inform the design, preparation, and implementation of nexus interventions. These are: a) commitment to partnerships and joint vision in support of national priorities, inclusion and localization; b) conflict sensitivity; c) gender, protection and accountability to affected populations; d) humanitarian principles; e) flexibility in design and implementation.

Operationalization of WFP's global approach to HDP Nexus in practice is based on emergent practices from the field, and the outputs of existing operational and strategic HDP Nexus partnerships.

Context for HDP Nexus operationalisation

Burkina Faso in 2023 is in the fifth year of what the UN characterises as a “severe and complex crisis”, in which **the growing activities of armed radical groups and inter- and intra-community tensions are intersecting with natural disasters, competition over scarce natural resources, and climate change.** WFP activated a Level 3 Emergency response covering Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali in 2019.

Security trends in the tri-border area between Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger show a continuous increase in the number of incidents, including the killing of hundreds of civilians. The four most conflict and violence affected regions of Burkina Faso are the Sahel, Central-North, North, and East.

Geographic areas in and in the vicinity of zones of active conflict ('buffer zones') in Burkina Faso are affected by mutually compounding structural vulnerabilities, environmental degradation, socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, low and inequitable access to productive resources and employment opportunities, and limited access to basic services.

Currently experiencing one of the fastest growing displacement crises in the world, one in every ten Burkinabe are now internally displaced. **Women and children are bearing the brunt of the violence and represent a vast majority of the displaced populations.**

Multiple factors contribute to the vulnerability of households and individuals, including poverty, unequal access to land (differentially affecting women, with access to land and resources denied either by inheritance laws, national, or customary laws), land degradation, recurrent climate-related shocks, economic shocks, the impact of poor

governance of common resources and basic services and gender inequalities.

Conflict and violence are further degrading an already negative food security and nutrition situation. Cadre Harmonisé analysis has showed a steady acceleration in the number of acutely food insecure people (IPC phases 3-5) during the crisis.

This is especially the case in areas which have been blockaded by armed groups. In these locations, communities have extremely limited access to basic services, food commodities, medical supplies and water resources. Blockaded communities cannot access their fields and grazing areas. **Existing vulnerabilities, including food insecurity and malnutrition, are also being aggravated by the pressure caused by significant inflows of displaced populations into communities which are already unable to cover their basic needs.**

Insecurity also means highly vulnerable communities which already had extremely limited access to basic services, food commodities, medical supplies, and water resources now cannot freely move to either access their fields and grazing areas, or move to search for food or to nourish animals during periods of floods and droughts.

Many people have moved to urban areas seeking safety. Others have gathered close to water sources, creating further tensions with local communities themselves not necessarily so directly exposed to climate change hotspots or the conflict, and further disrupting wider national and international poverty alleviation and development programming.

Certain pockets of the country, at time of writing notably the capital Ouagadougou, also remained stable settings with functioning public and private sector institutions.

UNDERSTANDING THE NEXUS OF INSTABILITY AND FOOD INSECURITY IN BURKINA FASO

The key study exploring conflict dynamics in Burkina Faso was conducted by the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and Interpeace in 2021. It identified a **close correlation between the conflict and the extreme levels of inequality and poverty in Burkina Faso**. The Human Development Index ranks the country 184th out of 191 countries, and 40 percent of people live below the poverty line. Over 70 percent of people live in rural areas, and poverty is also predominantly rural.

Participants in the study living in conflict areas especially highlighted unequal access to social and public services, thus impacting social cohesion; the degradation of the security landscape and emergence of self-defence groups; the threat of terrorism; ethnic stereotyping that leads to discriminatory behaviour; inter- and intra-communal conflict over access to land and natural resources; and lack of justice and trust in the government.

Research into the impact of the conflict on the food system by WFP in 2022 further documented the **compounding effects of conflict related shocks on the functioning of local food systems, highlighting the impact of Non-State Armed Group's control of main supply routes and hijacking of vehicles transporting commercial goods, destruction of water points, and taxing of local trade and cattle breeding**.



Enabling environment for HDP Nexus operationalisation

The operationalization of the HDP Nexus in Burkina Faso is identified by the country's national, regional, and international stakeholders and partners as an essential step towards achieving peace and sustainable development in the country. **Operationalizing the HDP Nexus will help ensure both economic growth and reduced poverty and inequalities.** Additionally, it will help to create resilient communities by improving equitable access to productive assets, clean water, and energy sources.

Significant efforts and investments have been made to operationalise the HDP Nexus approach in different geographical regions and at different stages of the conflict.

SUB-REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Sahel countries themselves are seeking greater integration of efforts. Since April 2022, Comité permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILSS) accompanied by the Sahel and West Africa Club of the OECD, and the Global Network Against Food Crises (hosted by WFP) and also bringing together ECOWAS and UEMOA has been coordinating the process of operationalizing the HDP Nexus in seven countries in the region with ongoing security challenges, including Burkina Faso. A political approach has been initiated by the three regional organisations, underpinned with a framework for the implementation of commitments made on the food-related HDP Nexus.

GOVERNMENT OF BURKINA FASO

National authorities are actively seeking to define new approaches that will address the multi-dimensional crisis affecting the country. The HDP Nexus process has been under discussion in Burkina Faso since 2018. Since July 2022 the process of operationalising the HDP Nexus has resumed. The Executive Secretariat of the National Food Security Council has been designated focal institution, and its Executive Secretary the focal point. A draft budget for the roadmap has been prepared. At time of writing, the national process was being further elaborated in consultation with CILLS.

UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND IFIS

Burkina Faso was one of seven countries selected by the United Nations to operationalize the HDP Nexus as a pilot, benefiting from fast-track procedures, capacity building of local actors, and commitments to facilitating closer collaboration between HDP actors in the country.

In 2023 the United Nations Country Team and United Nations Humanitarian Country Team are engaged in an ambitious process intended to improve the coherence and complementarity across humanitarian, development, and peace sectors by aligning indicators of progress in the Humanitarian Response Plans and the United Nations Cooperation Framework, and by setting collective outcomes. International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and development banks are seeking to target their support towards actions that can prevent further destabilisation.

DONORS AND FINANCIAL PARTNERS

The donor community and bilateral agencies have joined forces to ensure greater complementarity and coherence between their support and assistance under the Sahel Alliance.

At a high-level meeting organized by OECD, European Union, and the Global Network Against Food Crises in April 2022, euro2.5bn was committed to support national crisis response plans, and the structuring of programmes for food and nutrition security and resilience in the seven countries accompanied by CILSS.

WFP has benefited from dedicated funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the European Union's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments (FPI) enabling the second more ambitious phase of its integrated resilience programming which includes specific targeting

of displaced people and host communities, nexus-related outcomes, and social cohesion measurement.

WFP is also participating in the United States Agency for International Development - Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) RISE II projects built on the complementarity of USAID partners operating at different levels, and WFP receives EU Trust Fund for Africa funding for its Food Systems in Crisis in the Central Sahel (CRIALCES) regional project in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger.

Despite significant increases in overall development and humanitarian aid to Burkina Faso, financial partners have largely not promoted the operationalisation of the HDP Nexus through their own approaches. In the case of WFP, 94 percent of contributions received in 2022 were earmarked, and/or subject to other forms of conditionality, reducing WFP's flexibility and adaptivity.



WFP's approach to the HDP Nexus in Burkina Faso

In Burkina Faso, the HDP Nexus is an integral part of WFP operational response in the country. WFP implements a comprehensive portfolio aiming at bridging the nexus, relying on humanitarian response, resilience, and capacity building, ultimately addressing the root causes of poverty and food insecurity.

The longevity and depth of WFP's programme in the country is important context in respect to its ability to operationalise this approach. WFP has worked with national and international partners involved in the fight against hunger and malnutrition in both emergency and recurrent food and nutritional crisis settings in Burkina Faso for over 50 years.

This breadth and depth create **multiple humanitarian and development entry points to operationalising the HDP Nexus in all three of Burkina Faso's security contexts (active conflict, buffer zones, and zones of stability)**, spanning all four of the main interlinked programmatic pillars of WFP's HDP Nexus approach at the individual, household, community, and systemic levels.



Operationalising the HDP Nexus in WFP Western Africa

Pillar 1: scaling up life-saving assistance and complementary measures to prevent and mitigate the risks of severe food insecurity

WFP ensures that immediate food and nutrition needs among displaced and vulnerable host community populations are covered in close collaboration with other actors, including through the Food Security Cluster (FSC) and national coordination structures.

Assistance happens through unconditional transfers to meet essential needs either in the form of in-kind or cash-based transfers. At the outset of programmes WFP targets food insecure households for unconditional assistance through an initial period until these can be covered by other types of responses, either through the integrated resilience building package, contingent on local context, or through the inclusion of the most vulnerable in safety nets. The specific packages depend on the nature of needs and operational conditions, commodity pipelines, and assistance by Government and other actors and may differ over time and settings.

In Burkina Faso, an integrated assistance package, including food assistance, emergency school meals, and specialized nutritious food, to IDPs, vulnerable host populations, children, and Pregnant and Lactating Women and Girls (PLWGs) is also being implemented.

These programmes operationalize the HDP Nexus by ensuring that those furthest behind are able to meet their food and nutrition needs in periods of crisis, reducing acute food and non-food stresses that expose individuals to violence and further erode social cohesion.

Assistance is based on vulnerability assessments and provided throughout the year. This is necessary to meet the urgent needs of displaced populations and of host families whose productive assets have been lost and resources depleted. Where possible and appropriate, WFP uses shadow alignment with existing social protection systems, aligning targeting, procedures, and transfers. Gradual transition of beneficiaries receiving humanitarian assistance towards engagement in resilience activities is envisaged. This applies to host communities and displaced populations equally, mindful of the specificities of the displacement, socio-cultural linkages, land tenure, and the evolving security situation.

While initial support to Internally Displaced People (IDPs) through emergency food assistance will immediately alleviate pressure on host communities, the transition to the integrated resilience package with a focus on productive assets will enhance the resource base of the community and enable it to accommodate the existing population with more ease – and in a more shock-resistant manner.

Furthermore, WFP enables the wider humanitarian response to reach people in hard-to-reach locations by strengthening access dialogue in areas beyond the control of state authorities. In 2022 WFP assured access to at least 40 areas of the country which had become inaccessible due to insecurity and blockades, and was also providing communications and logistics platforms to the humanitarian response, including for the five United Nations integrated hubs (Dori, Kaya, Fada N’Gourma, Bobo, and Ouahigouya).

Joint partnerships with the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and other national and international partners ensure a convergence of interventions during WFP rapid emergency responses to new displacements and in blockaded areas which can only be accessed with the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) air assets.

ENABLING “NEXUS SENSITIVE” AND CONTEXT SPECIFIC APPROACHES

Some 98 percent of WFP assistance in Burkina Faso is delivered by cooperating partners, 90 percent of which are national organizations.

WFP is empowering and enabling these organizations to strengthen the capacities and capabilities of its cooperating partners and the wider inter-agency and government systems, in sync with the changing security and operating context. Programme teams report that in some ad hoc instances, WFP cooperating partners working for example on school feeding and Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) projects were able to introduce adaptations which added a reconciliation or community layer to their work. These adaptations in the context of the school feeding programme were also noted in the Evaluation of WFP’s Contributions to Peacebuilding in Transition Settings, which included extensive research in Burkina Faso, and was presented to the Executive Board in February 2023.

In 2023, WFP in Burkina Faso plans to develop a new partnership with a peacebuilding organization to provide its network of frontline cooperating partners (90 percent of whom are national organisations) who deliver 98 percent of WFP assistance in Burkina Faso with training in conflict sensitivity and participative approaches, fostering dialogue and trust at the community level, and strengthening local ownership.

The Country Office identified concrete opportunities through this approach to further increase the **direct contribution of WFP and its partners' conditional and unconditional assistance to reduced intra and inter-communal tensions, increased tolerance, and reconciliation in hotspots of organised violence.**

TARGETING BUFFER ZONES

In Burkina Faso WFP has assessed that the greatest potential for nexus approaches and prevention of further unravelling lies in the "buffer zones". It has identified and started operations in priority areas in the vicinity of zones with active armed conflict, indirectly affected by the armed conflict and at risk of contagion or spillover, and usually host to large concentrations of displaced populations. In these areas **WFP is seeking to use its portfolio of programmes and approaches, in partnership with other humanitarian and development actors, to contribute towards better social cohesion between populations, host and displaced, while addressing underlying root causes of conflict.**

WFP will target displaced or recently returned populations, households affected by conflict, and host communities in IDP arrival zones. Over the course of four years WFP estimates that the programme will reach up to 80,000 persons in Burkina Faso. Out of this population 51 percent will be women or girls. Displaced populations, whether IDPs, refugees, or returnees, are expected to make up 30 percent of the beneficiaries. IDPs will be integrated into the planning and implementation of resilience activities based on community dialogue and to strengthen trust and collaboration between groups. This is foreseen mainly in years 2-4 of the programme, as transition and participation of IDPs in asset creation activities is planned to increase, gradually increasing interaction and activity-based integration of IDPs and host communities.

Should displaced populations benefitting from the programme decide to return to their areas of origin during the programme, WFP will consider how they can be assisted depending on access constraints and the proximity to the locations already covered by the programme and in ensuring that activities and investments will not be spread too thin to support nexus outcomes.

WFP also seeks to support IDPs who are voluntarily returning to their villages of origin with early recovery packages and longer-term resilience building, access and security permitting. Beyond initial and rapid response to displacement, WFP will seek to avoid and minimize status-based targeting and support populations based on their needs and vulnerabilities. **This approach will be informed by conflict sensitivity risk assessments and designed so that targeting will not have a negative effect on social cohesion and feed perceptions of marginalization or exclusion.** This entails that both IDPs and vulnerable and food insecure host communities will be eligible for unconditional and/or conditional assistance, as both face pressure on their livelihoods and challenges to their food and nutrition security.

PUTTING AFFECTED PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE OF DECISION MAKING

Participation and dialogue with communities is at the base of WFP's life saving and complementary programming efforts in Burkina Faso.

WFP Community-Based Participatory Planning (CBPP) exercises are used to inform the design and implementation of some activities, fostering dialogue and trust at community level, to the extent possible, leveraging on the ownership, role, and leadership of decentralised authorities.

Conducted together with local government and NGO partners from various sectors, communities identify their priorities and propose sustainable

solutions. The exercises ensure community-wide consultation and ownership, balanced gender representation, and complementarity across partners' interventions. In collaboration with other humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding actors in Burkina Faso WFP seeks to define a participatory operational framework for targeting and planning. WFP's Three-Pronged Approach (3PA) tools along with enhanced capacity for conflict analysis and consultations with affected populations allow WFP to better understand conflict-related risks, prevailing tensions, and opportunities to bring together groups to promote dialogue. This informs targeting tools and methodologies, including those used by national systems, and serves to make them more conflict sensitive. The approach favours social inclusion, offering women and youth along with socio-economically vulnerable and marginalized groups meaningful participation in discussions affecting their lives, coming together to develop a common vision of their own future. **WFP in Burkina Faso is exploring opportunities to further enhance use of its CBPP approaches in settings of protracted displacement, with the goal of developing actions accepted by communities as promoting returns and durable solutions, in line with the national strategy.**

ENSURING CONVERGENCE AND COMPLEMENTARITY OF INTERVENTIONS

In its buffer zone operations, WFP geographic targeting seeks to identify ways to maximize complementarity and synergies between actions. Complementarity is sought with existing resilience interventions and with other actors, notably the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), a strategic partner of the Alliance Sahel, through the Approche Territoriale Integree. WFP manages and participates in several wider joint programmes which contribute to convergence of humanitarian assistance, especially in displacement settings (see Table 1). **These programmes are seeking to avoid scattering interventions too widely across the landscape and without enough concentration or duration to have impact.** As well, WFP is working alongside partners in Kaya, the only UN integration zone currently operational in Burkina Faso and host to over 150,000 displaced people, from which it may be possible to draw specific lessons for wider application over time.

Context specific convergence and integration with other actors across the HDPN

Project	Partners	HDPN Outcomes
SD3C Joint programme for the Sahel in response to the challenges of Covid-19 pandemic, conflict and climate change.	WFP, FAO, IFAD, regional institutions, government partner, civil society	Support to the livelihoods of small-scale producers, in particular women, youth living in conflict-affect cross-border areas
Joint programme in support of the Permanent Secretariat of the Presidential Initiative	WFP, UNICEF, participating UN Agencies	Piloted across five regions, the integrated programme promotes a home-grown school feeding model which facilitate the supply of schools with varied, nutritious and sufficient school meals by supporting local food production, processing and conservation. Joint programme targeting areas affected by insecurity and internal displacement providing daily hot meals in primary schools that host school children forcibly displaced by the conflict. Work with regional health directorates to strengthen their capacity to manage the supply chain of specialized nutritious foods, including their storage and transport to crisis-affected communities.
ARC Replica Policy	WFP, African Union, African Risk Capacity (ARC), Burkina Faso Ministry of Agriculture	Support to Burkina Faso's climate risk insurance strategy. In 2022 the policy enabled a payout of US\$1.2M through unconditional cash-based transfers to food insecure people.

BMZ Nexus Approach	WFP, BMZ, regional institutions, Cooperating Partners	Multifaceted programming through collaboration with government agencies in the delivery of resilience and social protection packages complemented by systems strengthening, enabling a transition from crisis response.
Reinforcement of social cohesion through a multidimensional support to displaced people and host communities over the long term in the North and Centre North of Burkina Faso	WFP, EU Foreign Policy Instruments, Cooperating Partners	Reinforcement of peaceful coexistence and social cohesion between displaced people and host communities, and improving peoples' resilience to shocks.

Pillar 2: reinforcing integrated community-based resilience

Since prior to the current exacerbation of the crisis in 2018, WFP has been driving innovative resilience approaches to reinforcing the capacity of the most vulnerable of the 80 percent of Burkinabe people who rely on smallholder agriculture as their principal source of revenue and food. For the first time, an integrated package of activities for resilience building is being implemented across the Sahel countries, with other partners providing complementary multi-sectoral interventions. An integrated package of activities is being delivered based on participatory watershed planning, triggering a variety of land rehabilitation activities, and linking them to school meals, nutrition programmes, and support to smallholder farmers. WFP is using these approaches to enable and accelerate the transition between short term humanitarian response and longer-term and durable solutions.

Project beneficiaries receive an integrated package of safety nets and early recovery activities, with a focus on productive and environmental asset creation and strengthening of social cohesion. This package includes unconditional cash transfers, income generating activities, FFA/public works, support for financial inclusion, and promotion of social and

behavioural change communication. The project is also linked with social protection. There is alignment of the transfer amount of the cash transfer to the national safety net, support to the expansion of the national social registry, as well as an absorption of the beneficiaries that remain extremely vulnerable after the finalization of the project into the national safety net. Using these approaches WFP is successfully reducing the recurrent and seasonal emergency-levels of hunger and malnutrition in Burkina Faso and also in other Central Sahel countries.

The programme speaks to nexus objectives in at least three ways.

Firstly, **participatory planning processes are at the centre of the efforts, fostering dialogue and trust at community level, to the extent possible, leveraging on the ownership, role, and leadership of decentralised authorities.** The approach favours social inclusion, offering women and youth along with socio-economically vulnerable and marginalized groups meaningful participation in discussions affecting their lives, coming together to develop a common vision of their own future. **Valuable experience has been gained from inclusion of displaced populations in participatory community-based planning and resilience building – an approach that can be scaled up in settings of protracted displacement to bolster self-reliance and to build social cohesion with host communities.**

Secondly, WFP's integrated resilience approach aims at reducing vulnerabilities and tackling root causes of fragility through asset creation and other livelihood activities that reduce pressure on populations while ensuring improved access to and better use of natural resources, as well as school meals and nutrition interventions that improve inclusive access to social services.

Synergies are built between the different multisectoral interventions to optimise their effects and sustainability. Some resilience activities more directly address typical lines of conflict, e.g., between farmers and herders.

Thirdly, capacity strengthening of national and decentralised/ deconcentrated institutions and local actors, including civil society, **enhances governance to deliver quality programmes and equitable services, potentially contributing to trust and accountability between citizens and authorities, and works towards increased ownership and sustainability of investments.**

CONTRIBUTING TO SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

WFP resilience programmes in Burkina Faso emphasize social cohesion and dialogue, conflict-sensitive programming, access to resources and livelihoods, as well as inclusion and socio-economic empowerment of the most marginalised sections of populations who have been affected by protracted conflict.

The planning, management, and implementation of Integrated Resilience Programme activities has been proven to yield a common vision within communities, and create spaces of encounter for individuals and groups of different identities.

This directly contributes to reduced intra-and inter-community tensions in areas of ongoing conflict and violence, and in displacement settings. Asset creation activities have also been found to help to reduce farmer-herder conflicts,

to empower women, and to provide economic opportunities for youth and involve them in community life. In 2023 research conducted by WFP and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) provided evidence as to how integrated resilience interventions contribute to social cohesion by increasing the availability, accessibility, and management of natural resources in fragile contexts in Burkina Faso.

Based on research in Burkina Faso and Niger, the [study](#) concluded that WFP's interventions contribute to improving social cohesion in fragile contexts in several ways:

- Activities have helped to develop a shared vision between different members of the community, particularly between IDPs and host communities,
- Collective action has strengthened trust between different social groups,
- Women expressed a sense of empowerment
- Activities have led to more equitable access to natural resources and communal assets.

In a number of resilience activity sites IDPs were organically integrated into community-based activities thus enhancing their access to food through asset creation and user agreements with host communities, thereby strengthening the trust, collaboration, and social cohesion among groups. In some instances in Burkina Faso even when WFP staff and cooperating partners have had to suspend the creation of new assets and monitoring and advisory support due to access constraints, some communities have continued the activities that were started on their own initiative based on the training they received.

Pillar 3: strengthening national systems

While the transitions in Burkina Faso from conflict to peace and emergency to sustainable development will not be linear or direct, there will not be a significant improvement until some of the still-worsening inequalities and economic and social imbalances in the country are resolved through more holistic, sustainable, nationally owned solutions that widely improve access to livelihoods and basic services. While political volatility and two military takeovers have reduced WFP's engagement with government authorities, WFP maintained its technical-level collaboration with national entities, based on a strict adherence to the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, independence, and neutrality.

WFP is providing technical support to structured, long-term, capacity strengthening activities, focusing on informing policies and programmes, integrating risk information into existing programmes, and preparing systems to respond to shocks. This includes the development and review of new national strategies and action plans, and assessments of coordination and institutional arrangements, with a view to providing more stable support to vulnerable groups.

WFP supports the Government of Burkina Faso in strengthening and expanding the current national social protection system and building its social registry (Registre Social Unifié - RSU) based on a holistic adaptive social protection (ASP) approach.

This support includes the facilitation of south-south learning missions and knowledge exchange, the establishment of ASP inter-ministerial committees, and co-chairing the task force on the unified social registry. WFP also has a strategic partnership and MOU with the World Bank that provides a framework for joint efforts aimed at strengthening social protection systems.

WFP has also agreed to strengthen the capacity of the Burkina Faso National Council for Social Protection which coordinates all social protection interventions at the national level. The Council so far benefitted from the WFP corporate capacity needs mapping approach.

WFP is engaged in ongoing discussions with the World Bank and the Government of Burkina Faso relating to capacity strengthening support to National Council for Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation (CONASUR) and the National Agency for the Management of Food Security Stocks (SONAGESS). WFP has also partnered with the humanitarian aid department of the European Commission (ECHO) to support early warning systems and emergency preparedness. **WFP is contributing directly to strengthening the link between citizen and state through inclusive and enhanced government service delivery by aiming to make national systems more sustainable, efficient, and adapted to the current shocks faced by Burkina Faso, and to supporting national basic social protection systems in prioritising their extension to people most in need.** As part of its service provision agreement signed with the Government of Burkina Faso, WFP is supporting the World Bank-financed Emergency Territorial Development and Resilience Project (Projet d'Urgence de Développement Territorial et de Résilience) by replenishing national food security stocks.

In 2022, WFP procured 40,000 metric tons of food commodities from local, regional and international markets when conditions were the most favourable. Destined for SONAGESS and CONASUR, the procured food will support the national response to the unfolding food security crisis.

PROVIDING ON-RAMPS FOR PRIVATE SECTOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO HDP NEXUS OPERATIONALISATION

WFP Burkina Faso with the support of the European Union's Trust Fund for Africa through the CRIALCES project is working with national food producers in the private sector and other parts of the value chain (including national Food Safety and Quality Assurance laboratories and regulatory bodies) for nutritious foods.

The goal of these interventions is increasing the availability of Specialised Nutritious Foods both for WFP, government, and non-profit use in displacement and host community settings, and to influence the availability and affordability of those products on markets in urban and rural areas especially in and around conflict areas.

Pillar 4: joint analysis and learning, and coordination

WFP plays a pivotal role in Burkina Faso's food security strategy as a permanent member of Burkina Faso's National Food Security Council (Conseil National de Sécurité Alimentaire CNSA).

WFP's joint analysis work is conducted jointly with the government, FAO, civil society, and the broader food security cluster. WFP also collaborates with the various agencies which assess food and nutrition security in Burkina Faso and feed into the CCA and Humanitarian Needs Overview, informing planning and programming across the HDP Nexus. These analyses also support early action to prevent food crises.

WFP and the World Bank in 2022 also supported the revision of the minimum expenditure basket which adjusted the transfer value received by beneficiaries through national shock-responsive social protection systems and social safety nets.

Regionally, with Burkina Faso as a pilot, WFP will also be rolling out new types of analyses and integrating new data layers relevant to the HDP Nexus approach in existing tools such as WFP's hotspot analyses, multi-hazard analyses, and Integrated Context Analyses.

In line with WFP's dedication to improving monitoring and measurement of the impact of the Nexus approach, WFP also proposes to conduct qualitative and quantitative research based on the project activities in Burkina Faso to feed into the measurement of peace and social cohesion outcomes.

Specifically, WFP will identify conflict data that goes beyond existing data on violent events, to contribute to a more in-depth understanding of conflict patterns.

With a range of national, regional, and international partners operational in Burkina Faso and the region it will be jointly defined how best these analyses can be integrated with other analyses available in Burkina Faso from the government, UN, donors, the World Bank, etc.

WFP's own programmatic offerings across the Nexus

While operationalising a nexus approach is not just about what WFP does on its own, WFP contributes directly to programming across the nexus in several key areas.

The Burkina Faso Country Strategic Plan (CSP) aims to increase emergency assistance while preparing to progressively move the focus of WFP's operation from crisis response towards greater safety net assistance and to recovery and resilience building of communities prone to shocks that impact on their food security and nutrition status.

Overall, the WFP CSP focuses on social protection, school meals programming, livelihood diversification, nutrition improvement, and capacity strengthening activities from the local to the national level. This includes a range of more transformative nutrition and food security programmes that reduce humanitarian needs, risks, and vulnerabilities over time, while addressing some of the root causes and structural drivers of hunger and malnutrition.

Thematic area	Humanitarian/crisis response (so1)	Development-resilience building and capacity strengthening	Potential opportunities to contribute to peace
Support to IDP recovery and reintegration/return	Gradual reduction in IDPs requiring humanitarian assistance as outcomes from investments in resilience and livelihoods increase	Resilience and livelihoods interventions for IDPs and host communities. Supporting IDPs return and their integration in their host communities. Capacity building of local institutions, strengthening of market institutions, income generating activity skills, and financial inclusion.	Improved natural resources management solutions (land restoration, water conservation, renewable energy or energy saving solutions) for beneficiary communities, including IDPs, reducing the incidence of conflict between different groups over resource competition and perceived degradation.
Social protection	Assistance provided to IDPs, and beneficiaries discharged from GFD through social protection systems	Contributing to the National Social Protection Policy as well as building and expanding the RSU as key elements of capacity strengthening of national and regional government counterparts, to improve the social protection system.	Investments in social protection through in-kind food or CBTs for urban and rural communities decrease the impact of structural causes of poverty by increasing food security, improve resources sharing, increasing social cohesion, and reducing vulnerability.

Thematic area	Humanitarian/crisis response (so1)	Development-resilience building and capacity strengthening	Potential opportunities to contribute to peace
Food systems support and SNF production	Cash stimulus to local markets through humanitarian cash assistance, combined with market analysis, and investments in productive assets and smallholders	Economic stimulus through private sector engagement including retailers, and industrial and artisanal transformation facilities.	Promoting socio-economic inclusion, access to basic services and financial literacy, and contributing to developing local economic systems with lower vulnerability to external shocks.
Cross-sectoral early recovery and resilience building	Early recovery from emergency intervention, including light interventions, malnutrition prevention and treatment, and emergency school feeding	FFA, SAMS, and nutrition and school feeding coverage converge in support of communities' progressive shift from direct assistance to self-reliance.	Disincentivisation of young people from joining armed groups by promoting their education and access to economic opportunities. Promoting social cohesion between IDPs and hosts.



Strategic opportunities for HDP Nexus operationalization

WFP in Burkina Faso has successfully undertaken activities and adaptations which are advancing the HDP Nexus approach and improving wider prospects for improved food and nutrition security, development, and peace.

Opportunities for further advancing application of these approaches include:

a) Building on, and potentially expanding and institutionalizing the use of, WFP's community-based participatory planning tools will require strengthening of national capacities for planning. Furthermore, national-level data collection on food security and nutrition and related information systems is required to ensure the availability of consistent, high-quality data on food security, markets functioning, socio-economic indicators, conflict dynamics, etc., and an evidence-driven approach in targeting.

b) As WFP is developing a progression approach, presenting operational options to decrease humanitarian needs (with suggested transition and/or exit criteria, clarifying when crisis response or resilience interventions are required, or no longer), in linkage with the future of the lean season response, the lessons from experiences in Burkina Faso in this regard merit additional elaboration.

c) A more mainstreamed conflict sensitivity approach in the country office was a strong recommendation from the evaluation of WFP's peacebuilding contributions in transition settings, published in February 2023. Related to this and to the current modalities for targeting, research in Burkina Faso by Ground Truth Solutions published in 2022 noted that many – in some regions of the country, the majority – of

aid recipients say they feel uninformed about available humanitarian assistance and the targeting process, finding targeting processes unfair, are experiencing tensions between aid recipients and those left out, think aid does not meet their basic needs, and feel insecure because they don't know if they can access aid.

d) Programmatic initiatives in the Sahel do demonstrate that WFP's food and nutrition security interventions contribute to peace. WFP is constructing a base of evidence pathways in this regard. **These learnings will help enhance and refine WFP's contributions to peace and social cohesion related outcomes.** Especially standardised approaches to measurement will have a broad general relevance for WFP operations beyond the Sahel.

e) In some settings, social registries are now gradually being built in Burkina Faso. WFP and partners across the nexus must continue to contribute to strengthening these tools gradually, by drawing lessons learned from interventions such as the present WFP programmes.

f) WFP's planned new research findings and analyses including of conflict dynamics can inform and influence joint decision making beyond WFP and its partners, and in a timely way relevant to the dynamic nature of the conflicts in Burkina Faso influence joint planning and measurement of collective outcomes. Similarly, the data being collected frequently for the shock-responsive safety nets can guide collective decision making by humanitarian partners for early warning and early action.

g) While only conducted as a relatively small pilot in Kaya, **convergence zones are a common concept in other HDP Nexus operationalisation countries and lessons can be cross-fertilised on a “fragile to fragile” exchange and learning programme basis** with WFP operations in other conflict contexts.

h) Despite the evident interest in the HDP Nexus among WFP stakeholders, the enabling environment for operationalization in Burkina Faso is highly fragmented and overall suboptimal, especially in terms of coordination and finance.

WFP occupies a unique position from which to seek to influence this situation through advocacy approaches influencing domestic political decision making, the broader regional and international processes involving Burkina Faso’s political actors and in which WFP is involved, refining UN coordination processes and coherence, and making the persuasive case for not only more but more longer-term and flexible resources to further break down barriers between humanitarian and development programming.

Conclusion

The conflict and development trajectory of Burkina Faso will remain negative for the immediate future. Continued, recurrent, and worsening crises can be expected, with the potential for inter-communal and ethnically driven violence on a large scale, further compounded by the country’s long-standing structural challenges.

In this context **WFP occupies an influential position deriving from its position at the heart of the national food system, and in regional and global political fora; the interlinkage of the food and nutrition sector with most if not all other humanitarian, development, and peace priorities; and WFP’s continued – unrivalled - ability to access many of the areas in which it has worked for many years**, unlike most if not all other long-term development partners of Burkina Faso.

In terms of programming elements many pre-2018 investments in multiple streams of resilience, nutrition, systems strengthening, and social protection-related work have been able to adapt and continue, thanks to successful ringfencing by WFP of those initiatives from the donor shift towards earmarked humanitarian funding in Burkina Faso since 2018.

Nonetheless although important steps have been taken by WFP and partners in the past, and the potential for the nexus approach is widely accepted, the rapid evolution of the context challenges WFP to keep evolving its programmatic approaches to the nexus in Burkina Faso.

Acronyms

3PA	Three-Pronged Approach
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
ARC	African Risk Capacity
BMZ	The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CBPP	Community-Based Participatory Planning
CILSS	Comité permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel
CIRALCES	Food Systems in Crisis in the Central Sahel
CONASUR	National Council for Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation
CSP	WFP Country Strategic Plan
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFA	Food Assistance for Assets
FPI	European Union's Service for Foreign Policy Instruments
HDP Nexus	Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	International Financial Institution
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RSU	Registre Social Unifié (Unified Social Registry)
SAMS	Smallholder Agricultural Market Support
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SNF	Specialized Nutritious Food
SONAGESS	National Agency for the Management of Food Security Stocks
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOWAS	United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel
USAID BHA	United States Agency for International Development – Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
WFP	World Food Programme

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