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# Evaluation of Local and Regional Food Procurement Pilot Programmes in Eastern Africa (2021-2023)

Decentralized Evaluation Report

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WFP Regional Bureau Nairobi (RBN)

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# Key personnel for the evaluation

## **WFP REGIONAL BUREAU FOR EAST AFRICA NAIROBI (RBN)**

Evaluation Manager: Nikki Zimmerman, Regional Evaluation Officer

## **PREPARED BY**

Dariusz Dziewanski, Team Leader

Nathan Horst, Senior Evaluator

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# Contents

List of figures .....	ii
List of tables .....	ii
Executive Summary .....	i
<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 Evaluation features .....	6
1.2. Context.....	7
1.3. Subject being evaluated .....	11
1.4. Evaluation methodology, limitations, and ethical considerations.....	17
<b>2. Evaluation findings .....</b>	<b>23</b>
2.1 EQ1: (Relevance/Coherence).....	24
2.2 EQ2: (Effectiveness/Impact) .....	32
2.3 EQ3 (Efficiency) .....	43
2.4 EQ4 (Sustainability) .....	51
<b>3. Conclusions &amp; recommendations .....</b>	<b>54</b>
3.1. Conclusions .....	54
3.3. Recommendations .....	58
<b>Annex 1. Summary Terms of Reference.....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Annex 2. Timeline.....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Annex 3. Methodology .....</b>	<b>67</b>
Sampling .....	67
Data Collection Methods .....	69
Data Analysis .....	71
Quality Assurance .....	71
<b>Annex 4. Evaluation Matrix.....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Annex 5. Data collection Tools.....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Annex 6. Fieldwork Agenda.....</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>Annex 7. Findings Conclusions and Recommendations Mapping.....</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Annex 8. List of People Interviewed.....</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>Annex 9. Bibliography .....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Acronyms .....</b>	<b>103</b>

# List of figures

Figure 1: LRFPP implementation plan for Workstream 1 .....	13
Figure 2: LRFPP ToC lite for workstream 1 (optimize impact of regional commodity purchases) .	15
Figure 3: Three Components of the Evaluation Approach .....	18
Figure 4: Geographic targeting priorities for WFP's procurement/programming initiatives .....	28
Figure 5: Comparing RBN annual needs versus allocated (confirmed) contributions (USD).....	28

# List of tables

Table 1: Summarized conclusions and findings that inform them .....	iv
Table 2: Summary list of evaluation recommendations and links to supporting conclusions .....	iv
Table 3: Breakdown of agricultural employment by sex .....	8
Table 4: Total local procurement quantities and values in 2023 by CO .....	12
Table 5: Fieldwork components .....	19
Table 6: Key stakeholder groups participating in fieldwork .....	20
Table 7: Ethical considerations, risks, and safeguards.....	22
Table 8: Guide to EQ sub-question coverage within the report's thematic presentation of findings .....	23
Table 9: Breakdown of SHFs purchases from private sector actors in Uganda .....	33
Table 10: Size of WFP's vendor/FO network in each CO .....	34
Table 11: Price transmission for different value chains.....	39
Table 12: GCMF purchases in 2023 per CO .....	45
Table 13: Summary of recommendations for future LRFPP engagements.....	61
Table 14: Detailed timeline .....	65
Table 15: Description of expected case studies considered during the evaluation.....	69
Table 16: Detailed evaluation matrix.....	73
Table 17: List of questions for KIIs with procurement / supply chain teams .....	83
Table 18: List of questions for KIIs with Country Director / Deputy Country Director.....	85
Table 19: List of questions for KIIs with the Head of Programmes .....	85
Table 20: List of questions for KIIs with AMS/HGSF.....	86
Table 21: List of questions for KIIs with M&E/RAM.....	87
Table 22: List of questions for KIIs with traders.....	88

Table 23: List of questions for KIIs with government partners .....	89
Table 24: List of questions for KIIs with cooperating partners .....	89
Table 25: List of questions for KIIs with WFP Sub-Office / Area Office.....	90
Table 26: List of questions for KIIs with local government authorities.....	91
Table 27: List of questions for KIIs with traders.....	91
Table 28: List of questions for KIIs/FGDs with SHFs/FOs .....	92
Table 29: Fieldwork components .....	94
Table 30: Findings and recommendations.....	95
Table 31: List of stakeholders interviewed in during inception phase .....	96
Table 32: List of stakeholders interviewed in during data collection phase .....	96

# Executive Summary

## Evaluation Type, Purpose, and Objectives

- i. This evaluation report presents the results of the evaluation of the World Food Programme's (WFP) Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy (LRFPP) pilots in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda (January 2021 – December 2023). It summarizes the scope, methodology, and sampling for each pilot Country Office (CO) and presents the evaluation's findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The evaluation took place from February 2023 to December 2023 and served two objectives: accountability and learning. An emphasis on learning supported the rationale of the evaluation to:
  - Inform and adapt the design and implementation of pilot local and regional food procurement interventions, in an on-going manner throughout the pilot period (2022-2023)
  - Inform decisions to scale-up local and regional pilot interventions at the end of the pilot period
  - Provide a robust evidence base to better understand emerging results of the pilot interventions, and support on-going learning, intervention design, and advocacy
- ii. Pilot COs, the Regional Bureau Nairobi (RBN), and WFP headquarters will use this evaluation to inform programming decision making, the overall implementation of the LRFPP, advocacy efforts, for funding appeals, and for scale-up/adaptation. Evaluation findings are intended to inform WFP stakeholders; support activities to strengthen value chains; and to help identify lessons, challenges, opportunities, and gaps related to LRFPP rollout.

## Context

- iii. Implementation of the LRFPP was initiated in 2020 with a global pilot period. In the Eastern Africa region, piloting began in mid/late 2021 in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda. The context of the evaluation includes regional food systems, market access bottlenecks, and the wide range of actors that participate in value chains within these food systems. The lack of control that women smallholder farmers (SHF) have over productive resources creates barriers to their participation in value chains.<sup>1</sup> The result is a persistent gender gap in agriculture throughout the region.<sup>2</sup> In Ethiopia, rainfed agriculture is the main livelihood of about 80 percent of Ethiopia's 120 million people – 42 percent of whom are under the age of 15, over two thirds of the population is considered multidimensionally poor,<sup>3</sup> and insecurity in the Tigray region has caused some farmers to miss several harvest seasons and for others has blocked market access. In Sudan, the multidimensional effects of economic and political crisis, conflict, displacement, climate shocks, and poor harvests drive food insecurity; in April 2023, armed conflict broke out between rival factions of the military government of Sudan. Compared to Ethiopia and Sudan, Uganda currently enjoys relative stability; its agricultural sector contributes 25 percent of national gross domestic product and employs 70 percent of the population.<sup>4</sup>

## Subject of the evaluation

- iv. The subject of this evaluation is WFP's LRFPP pilots in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda from January 2021 to December 2023; more precisely, the decentralized implementation of a global policy through the programme portfolio in each pilot country aimed at achieving the following procurement and development objectives: increasing the functional and cost-efficient supply of food; injecting cash into local economies;

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<sup>1</sup> Njiraini, Georgina Wambui, Marther Ngigi, and Evelyn Baraké, 2018, "Women in African Agriculture Integrating Women into Value Chains to Build a Stronger Sector", *ZEF Working Paper Series, No. 175*.

<sup>2</sup> Gebre, Girma Gezimu, et al., 2021, "Gender Differences in Agricultural Productivity: Evidence from Maize Farm Households in Southern Ethiopia", *GeoJournal*, 86(2): 843–864.

<sup>3</sup> UNDP, 2022, *Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022*; 68.7 percent of the population in Ethiopia (80,553 thousand people in 2020) is multidimensionally poor while an additional 18.4 percent classified as vulnerable to multidimensional poverty (21,509 thousand people in 2020).

<sup>4</sup> World Bank, 2018, "Closing the Potential-Performance Divide in Ugandan Agriculture: Fact Sheet".

strengthening value chain actors/market functioning; increasing smallholder income and resilient livelihoods; and contributing to resilient, sustainable, and nutrition-sensitive food systems.

- v. Piloting of the policy began in mid/late 2021 in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda, focusing on introduction and testing of procurement approaches and tools: direct purchases (spot contracts and forward agreements) and indirect purchases (conditional contracts and mandate contracts). The evaluation covers LRFPP activities under these tools, any intentionally linked or integrated programmatic activities, and organizational systems and operational processes that support procurement and programming activities. The geographic targeting of the evaluation is Ethiopia (national and Amhara), Sudan (national), Uganda (national, Karamoja, and western region), and where relevant the regional dimension of RBN procurement activities and LRFPP pilot oversight.

## Methodology

- vi. The Terms of Reference (ToR) presented four evaluation questions (EQ) – as well as associated sub-questions – designed to address the evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability (gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) is mainstreamed across the evaluation criteria):
- **EQ1 (Relevance/Coherence):** To what extent are regional LRFPP pilot interventions relevant to, appropriate for, and coherent with dimensions of food systems and policies?
  - **EQ2 (Effectiveness/Impact):** To what extent are LRFPP efforts contributing to changes within the wider food system (national, regional) and local economies?
  - **EQ3 (Efficiency):** How have WFP pilot COs been able to balance efficiency considerations with the programmatic objectives of LRFPP?
  - **EQ4 (Sustainability):** Have LRFPP investments contributed to or show promise in fostering sustainable results?
- vii. Data was collected between 17 September and 14 November (2023). Fieldwork in Uganda and Ethiopia was in-person; Sudan and RBN/Rome activities were remote. To achieve a holistic assessment of the pilots in each country, the evaluation identified and examined local and regional procurement within the context of direct and indirect procurement modalities. The still emerging and unfinished nature of the LRFPP pilots was a key limitation; outcomes associated with each pilot were not well-defined, understood, or consistent across countries. An exploratory approach was used to ‘mine’ a range of outcomes and good practices connected to different LRFPP programming models used by the pilot countries.

## Summary of key findings

- viii. Evaluation findings are grouped by themes under the key evaluation criteria of relevance/coherence, impact/effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Themes were created by clustering existing EQs and sub-questions, bringing to together common points of inquiry under each criterion.

### RELEVANCE/COHERENCE

- ix. **Strategic and contextual alignment** (Findings 1-4) - WFP’s pro-SHF local procurement is an important tool for facilitating market access for SHFs and LRFPP pilot procurement models align with WFP strategies, United Nations Country Team objectives, and national governments’ high-level priorities. However, most SHFs targeted by WFP for programming are unlikely to produce surpluses when they are first engaged in interventions and would not represent an attractive procurement opportunity without the benefit of successful resilience/livelihoods interventions over time. LRFPP efforts that were integrated into existing work on market support, resilience, and Home-Grown School Feeding (HGFS) produced demonstrable evidence that activities supporting SHFs and strengthening food systems can be aligned effectively with local procurement.

### EFFECTIVENESS/IMPACT

- x. **Impacts** (Findings 5-9) - Local procurement modalities had positive impact on livelihoods of SHFs; impacts of the LRFPP are dependent upon modality and the context it is applied in. Conditionalities associated with indirect procurement modalities can be too low, as some do not meet a minimum threshold to incentivize more pro-SHF purchases by traders. Local procurement and related programming efforts have created



gains in resilience among SHFs through sustained investment in value chain activities; local procurement models do not exhibit food systems gains based on procurement objectives alone. Definitions of SHF are not sufficiently standardized across countries to inform targeting of purchases from vulnerable SHFs; these ambiguities may be undercutting the development objectives of the conditionalities placed on indirect purchases, even when traders are meeting minimum thresholds for SHFs purchases because they might not be purchasing from vulnerable farmers.

**Intervening factors** (Finding 10) – The onerous and lengthy administrative and procurement processes that WFP uses are not well-aligned with needs of poor SHFs, who lack capital and prefer quick transactions and cash-on-hand; WFP first must assess the quality of the aggregated produce, then transport that to their warehouses, and then only after that can they transfer the money to a farmers' organization (FO) account. It is only then that FOs can pay SHFs. This process averages 10-14 working days, if it goes smoothly. It can take upwards of a month if it does not. In cases where quality assessment is not possible locally, commodity samples must be sent to a regional testing facility (Nairobi), which further extends this timeline.

- xi. **Comparative advantages** (Finding 11) – Although WFP engages government partners, other United Nations (UN) agencies, and cooperating partners, use of its convening power in the LRFPP has been limited. While there are currently few examples of WFP's convening power being applied in the context of the LRFPP pilots, WFP's convening capacities enable it to mobilize external partners in support of common objectives and to promote greater integration between its own market-oriented programmes and partners' initiatives. The limited use of this convening power so far around LRFPP initiatives is tied to the fact that early piloting efforts were focused on internal uptake of the policy and testing its rollout, rather than convening collective action. Of course, the clear exception to this is the work that WFP does within its own vendor network to influence private sector actors to take on more pro-smallholder purchases and to improve the quality of their own agricultural products. The exercise of WFP's convening power is also constrained/influenced by capacities (of WFP, other actors, relevant markets) and funding availability.

## EFFICIENCY

- xii. **Institutional support** (Findings 12-13) - The Global Commodity Management Facility's (GCMF) financing for procurement from SHFs enabled LRFPP modalities and reduced lead times. However, the GCMF is not designed to offer a reliable market for SHFs; it can be out of synchronization with the seasonality of agricultural markets, undermining market development outcomes. A key LRFPP pilot activity was to trial pro-SHF purchase modalities through the GCMF, as a way of optimizing impact of regional commodity purchases; all three COs were able to capitalize on the GCMF as a strategic working capital management mechanism under which agricultural commodities could be purchased in a way that reduced food delivery purchase time and lead-time. The lack of demand stability is a key bottleneck in market development of SHFs. Due to the rotating nature of GCMF's capital reserves, speed of stock turnover and unsold inventory can constrain GCMF procurement. Currently, there is no mechanism within the GCMF that allows sale of commodities to entities other than WFP COs; this was identified as a rich area to explore – which could unlock the ability of the GCMF to liquidate GCMF corporate inventory to enable a smoothing of WFP demand from the perspective of SHFs.
- xiii. **Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and evidence** (Findings 14-17) – All pilots were informed by evidence; the value chain analysis (VCA) in Sudan has been useful, while the late implementation of VCAs in the other COs has limited their utility. VCAs in each pilot CO were used to identify procurement opportunities, but less so to design programmes to strengthen value chains to support procurement. M&E frameworks have been established, but data generation so far favours amount and value of procurement carried out, rather than food system impacts. Current traceability efforts cannot verify if WFP vendors are buying from WFP-supported SHFs and/or the most vulnerable SHFs; there are several dimensions to the challenges with SHF traceability – at the core is a gap in the level of definition around SHFs and standards for verification of these definitional claims.

## SUSTAINABILITY

- xiv. **Sustainability and scalability** (Finding 18-19) - There are many efforts to collaborate around standards, but development, awareness, and enforcement remain a challenge. Standards enforcement has the potential to incentivize private sector actors to engage with SHFs. Applicability and scalability of LRFPP procurement approaches/tools depends on the implementation context and extent of integration. Direct

procurement modalities are controllable and targeted, and lead to direct price transfers. However, because direct purchases are focused on farmers with lower capacities, they typically must be accompanied with a significant programmatic effort – limiting their range, sustainability, and scalability. Indirect modalities, on the other hand, rely on the private sector to connect with what are on average higher capacity farmers that can supply high agricultural produce. WFP's direct and indirect procurement modalities are typically driven by divergent contextual characteristics and require different geographic targeting.

## Summarized conclusions and recommendations

- xv. Seven major conclusions were arrived at based on the evidence gathered and analysis conducted by the evaluation team (ET). Each conclusion was supported by several findings, as indicated in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Summarized conclusions and findings that inform them**

Conclusions (summary/truncated versions)	Findings
<b>Conclusion 1:</b> Local procurement was relevant to local and national priorities, as well as WFP strategies, but there are opportunities for great collaboration between WFP and external partners in subsequent phases of the LRFPP.	1, 3, 6, 11, 12, 18
<b>Conclusion 2:</b> When WFP's local and regional food procurement was properly integrated into WFP and its partners' programming interventions it could be an effective mechanism for addressing bottlenecks in value chains, enhancing food systems, and for improving the livelihoods and resilience of SHFs.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 19
<b>Conclusion 3:</b> Indirect procurement modalities could be an effective and impactful tool for incentivizing pro-SHF purchases, but were constrained by inadequate traceability, lack of definitional clarity around definitions of 'smallholder', and (in some cases) low conditionality thresholds.	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18
<b>Conclusion 4:</b> Competition among buyers of quality grains was low, limiting the market opportunities for SHFs. Weak government enforcement of food safety and quality standards, overall low competition for buying quality grains relative to the many buyers buying indiscriminate of quality, and the limited size of WFP's vendor network are all key barriers to incentivizing greater production and creating larger markets of quality grains among SHFs.	3, 5, 18, 19
<b>Conclusion 5:</b> There was a tension between support for food system development objectives and the need for procurement cost-efficiency that limits outcomes (especially those related to food systems) of the LRFPP. Direct and indirect purchases from SHFs each have their strengths, weaknesses, and trade-offs, with neither contract modality alone able to fully meet desired SHF/food system outcomes and cost-efficiency objectives.	2, 4, 8, 10, 13, 16, 17
<b>Conclusion 6:</b> Procurement modalities alone were not contributing to increased levels of inclusion. Additional interventions to increase incentives was needed.	2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 17
<b>Conclusion 7:</b> Thus far, there was limited application of VCA findings to design targeted interventions to support local procurement and limited use of monitoring data and evidence to measure impact of local procurement efforts at the food systems level.	2, 5, 14, 15, 16, 19

- xvi. Based on these conclusions, six recommendations were developed for action by various WFP actors. Each recommendation is supported by several conclusions, as indicated in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Summary list of evaluation recommendations and links to supporting conclusions**

Recommendations (+ number of sub-recommendations)	Conclusions
<b>Recommendation 1:</b> Approach LRFPP as a continuum from subsistence, to surplus, to sustainability.	2, 3, 7
<b>Recommendation 2:</b> Promote development objectives through expanded conditionalities.	1, 3

<b>Recommendation 3:</b> Improve targeting of SHFs and traceability/M&E.	3, 6, 7
<b>Recommendation 4:</b> Streamline procurement processes.	2, 3, 5
<b>Recommendation 5:</b> Expand the roster of active WFP vendors.	2, 4
<b>Recommendation 6:</b> Continue to strengthen the enabling environment.	1, 2, 7

- xvii. The ET also produced a Learning Brief as a companion piece to this evaluation report, which discusses several key lessons learned relating to WFP’s engagement with food systems and SHFs. Thus, lessons learned are not specifically included in this report.
- xviii. Brief descriptions of each recommendation are provided below; see the main report for details of sub-recommendations and specification of responsibilities, priority levels, and timeframe suggested for each.
- xix. **Recommendation 1:** WFP should approach local pro-SHF procurement as an integrated continuous process – from direct to indirect – rather than a series of separate approaches/tools. Viewing direct and indirect contracting modalities as existing along a continuum of smallholder development could improve coherency, effectiveness, and impact of support given by WFP as it moves from direct supply and market supports to SHFs (coupled with direct purchases) at first, to indirect support by working with traders to take on pro-SHF and more inclusive business models (and indirect purchase) later on.
- xx. **Recommendation 2:** WFP should address development objectives and barriers to inclusion through expanded conditionalities attached to procurement modalities, in addition to pursuing these issues through programmatic strategy; these might include conditionalities to quotas/thresholds on purchases from females, youth, or people with disabilities (PWD). VCAs or other dedicated studies should be used to estimate the appropriate conditionalities based on the inclusion of SHFs in into current value chain scenarios in specific contexts.
- xxi. **Recommendation 3:** WFP should strengthen its ability to trace and target SHFs, especially the most vulnerable. There is a need to develop more nuanced SHF taxonomy, perhaps introducing the concept of a very smallholder farmer (VSHF), and to apply more specificity in targeting and traceability approaches.
- xxii. **Recommendation 4:** There is an emerging opportunity to improve the efficiency of local procurement processes, recognizing that the length of time to procure and pay for local procurement is a key bottleneck for cash-strapped SHFs. Making local procurement contracting processes more efficient will have a significant impact on SHFs, getting money in farmer’s hands at the right time to mitigate financial constraints many SHFs face.
- xxiii. **Recommendation 5:** There are opportunities for WFP to expand its roster of active vendors to create a broader participation among WFP suppliers and create competition among wholesalers. Gains in market resilience require further efforts to incentivize market entry and greater competition among buyers of quality grains. In the short-term, qualified traders can be verified, accredited, and incorporated into the WFP network. In the long-term, FOs previously supported by WFP can be assisted to become wholesalers.
- xxiv. **Recommendation 6:** Building on WFP’s partnerships with its governmental and non-governmental partners, it can continue to strengthen the enabling environment to support pro-SHF local procurement in the three pilot countries. The early focus should be support for governments to build national capacities to assist SHFs within the agricultural sector through targeted efforts to improve guidance on quality and safety practices/standards, technical assistance and other support related to laws and enforcement of such standards, and advocacy among government, UN agencies, and cooperating partners to incentivize private sector actors to take on more pro-SHF business models. Close government partnerships are essential for the integration of WFP’s work into national and local priorities.

# 1. Introduction

1. This evaluation report presents the results of the evaluation of the World Food Programme's (WFP) Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy (LRFPP) pilots in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda. It summarizes the scope and the methodology, and sampling strategies for each of the pilot Country Offices (CO), including the extent, nature, and timeline of data collection activities undertaken, the stakeholders interviewed, activities undertaken. The report also presents the evaluation's findings, conclusions, and recommendations. The evaluation team (ET) prepared the report as the culmination of the evaluation reporting phase.

## 1.1 EVALUATION FEATURES

2. The evaluation covers the performance of LRFPP pilots in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda between January 2021 and December 2023. Commissioned by the Regional Bureau Nairobi (RBN), the evaluation took place from February 2023 to December 2023 and served two objectives: accountability and learning. Under the accountability objective, the evaluation assessed and reported on the performance in terms of both processes and results of the LRFPP pilot interventions. This was done in an ongoing, adaptive manner, culminating in a final assessment on performance and results at the end of the pilot period. As a pilot evaluation, more emphasis was put on the second objective of organizational learning – as was explicitly called for in the terms of reference (ToR) for this evaluation.
3. An emphasis on learnings supported the rationale of the evaluation, which was to:
  - Inform and adapt the design and implementation of pilot local and regional food procurement interventions, in an on-going manner throughout the pilot period (2022-2023)
  - Inform decisions to scale-up local and regional pilot interventions at the end of the pilot period
  - Provide a robust evidence base to better understand emerging results of the pilot interventions, and support on-going learning, intervention design, and advocacy
4. Specifically, pilot country offices, RBN, and WFP headquarters will use this evaluation to inform programming decision making, the overall implementation of the LRFPP, advocacy efforts and key messages, as well for funding appeals to donors and scale up/adaptation.
5. To generate specific and actionable learnings and recommendations, the evaluation examined and compared the different procurement modalities, organizational strategies, and operational approaches applied by the three pilot countries. It identifies and assesses the outcomes WFP's local and regional food procurement modalities have contributed to at different levels across different agricultural value chain actors, especially among smallholder farmers (SHF) and traders, and within local food systems. It also examines the operational processes related to the implementation of the LRFPP pilots and assesses the organizational changes occurring because of the policy.
6. The LRFPP pilots were evaluated according to standardized criteria developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC): relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability.<sup>5</sup> A gender equality and human rights lens was applied throughout the evaluation, and was streamlined into the design, implementation, and dissemination of the evaluation to help ensure that: ethical considerations were included as part of the evaluation serve to avoid potential harm to any evaluation stakeholders, interview partners, and the ET; relevant rights-holders, and in particular female stakeholders, participated meaningfully in the evaluation; methods were designed and implemented to understand if and how the LRFPP pilots contributed to change; and that evaluation findings are communicated to key stakeholder groups.
7. Evaluation criteria and related gender equality and human rights issues were assessed using a methodology that incorporated elements of a developmental evaluation approach, though this aspect was limited by budgetary constraints and the timing of the evaluation process vis-a-vie the timeline of the

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<sup>5</sup> OECD-DAC Network on Development Evaluation, 2018. "Evaluation Criteria".  
<https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

ongoing policy rollout process. This provided evidence-based findings in different formats that inform operational and strategic decision-making, including through an emphasis on recommendations and learnings as part of reporting, as well as a Learnings Workshop and Learning Brief. For example, gender was incorporated into accountability objectives by disaggregating data and analysis (where possible) by sex, while gender was included in the learning objective by ensuring conclusions and recommendations incorporate gender.

8. Evaluation findings are intended to inform WFP stakeholders and partners who are involved in the design, implementation, and monitoring of LRFPP activities; support activities linked to strengthening value chains; and identify lessons, challenges, opportunities, and gaps related to LRFPP rollout.

## 1.2. CONTEXT

9. In November 2019, WFP's executive board approved WFP's new LRFPP. Implementation of the policy was initiated in 2020 with a global pilot period. In the Eastern Africa region, piloting commenced in mid/late 2021 in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda. These COs were selected as pilot sites based on their Country Strategic Plans (CSPs) including primary activities focusing on introduction and testing of various procurement approaches and tools for local and regional food purchases.<sup>6</sup> The policy marks a shift within WFP to create tighter linkages between efforts oriented towards "saving lives" and those aimed at "changing lives", building on strides made through the Purchase for Progress (P4P) programme to leverage WFP's purchasing power to increase agricultural production and sustained market engagement among SHFs, thus increasing their incomes and livelihoods.
10. The LRFPP also seeks to improve quality and quantity of farm produce and acknowledges the role of other value chain actors – like traders – in adding value by providing liquidity to local markets, transport, storage, and crop aggregation capabilities that can ensure improved food quality.<sup>7</sup> In particular, by promoting purchases through traders, large aggregators etc., the LRFPP is intended to help guarantee the quality and volume of commodities required by WFP through the use of innovative contract modalities – conditional, mandate, etc. – to ensure that benefits of the purchases can be spread and maximized for food system value chain actors – especially for SHFs.
11. This evaluation clarifies an analytical framework for assessing the policy's contribution to food systems level change. According to the ToR, a food system consists of everyone and everything involved in producing, distributing, or consuming food. Unlike P4P, which was focused on direct purchases, the LRFPP has also created indirect purchase modalities and explicitly considers the trade-offs between acquiring the maximum amount of food for vulnerable populations and furthering additional programmatic objectives of strengthening livelihoods, good nutrition, and contributing to food systems value chain development.
12. **Regional strategic context:** The Eastern Africa region is affected by food and nutrition insecurity and is a priority area of focus for efforts to contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2 – Zero Hunger). WFP's RBN oversees operations in ten countries: Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda – in which it provides a range of assistance aimed to save lives and change lives. The Eastern African region ranks low globally in food security and faces complex shocks including conflict, climate change shocks (drought, floods, locust infestations, etc.), and weakened food system resilience because of these multi-dimensional vulnerabilities (unevenly experienced by different population groups, with women and girls facing exceptionally high and multi-faceted vulnerability scenarios that have context-specific cultural elements of gender discrimination).<sup>8</sup>
13. **Regional food systems:** Agriculture accounts for a large share of gross domestic product, not just in the pilot countries, but across the entire African continent and SHFs are the backbone of agricultural systems across Africa – an estimated 80 percent of all farms in Sub-Saharan Africa are smallholder farms; they

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<sup>6</sup> The delayed start was due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the evaluation's Terms of Reference.

<sup>7</sup> See the main LRFPP (pp. 8-9). Further on pp. 15-16 the policy states: "Import parity price (IPP): Under the new policy approach, cost analysis regarding whether importing a particular commodity is more cost effective than procuring it in-country, remains essential".

<sup>8</sup> Summary of the evaluation ToR's overview of context factors.

directly employ about 175 million people.<sup>9</sup> Agricultural production in the region is predominantly smallholder-based, giving rise to issues of aggregation, standards, and traceability as well as post-harvest losses. The region is also characterized by areas of significant surplus and deficit that are linked to varying degrees by limited transport infrastructure. At the same time, poor and asymmetrical market information diffusion between stakeholders promotes suboptimal and inequitable allocation of profits along the value chain. These dynamics all serve to block SHFs from participating in regional markets dominated by traders.

14. The LRFPP envisions SHFs as suppliers to national markets (such as HGFS) and regional markets (e.g., via WFP’s regional reserves that are used to respond to emergencies). The value chains connecting SHFs in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda to national and regional commodity markets are long and idiosyncratic.
15. WFP’s engagement at the food system level is seen as key to achieving Zero Hunger. Inequalities in food systems can make it difficult for the poorest to afford nutritious food, often also eroding profits for SHFs.<sup>10</sup> Structural weaknesses within food systems can also combine with shocks related to climate change and globalization, as well as conflict and strife, to limit people’s ability to access the food they need. Food systems in the region are not supportive of dietary diversity and access to nutritious foods and there is an overreliance on unsustainable crop varieties and imports.<sup>11</sup> The LRFPP is an important part of WFP’s regional response to strengthen food systems by promoting demand-driven, value chain development approaches to improve smallholder livelihoods and develop food system value chains.<sup>12</sup>
16. **Gender and agriculture:** Across the globe, rural women are key agents in the agricultural sector, constituting a major share of the labour force in agriculture across Africa, including in East Africa.<sup>13</sup> The table below shows that agriculture accounts for approximately half of female employment in the pilot countries, and in Uganda it exceeds the percentage of males employed in agriculture.

**Table 3: Breakdown of agricultural employment by sex**

Country	Employment rates in agriculture	
	Female	Male
<b>Ethiopia</b>	55%	71%
<b>Sudan</b>	55%	36%
<b>Uganda</b>	68%	58%

Source: World Bank<sup>14</sup>

17. However, studies conducted in East African countries indicate that rural female farmers have lower agricultural productivity than male farmers.<sup>15</sup> Women’s land tenure remains low in many countries due to ambiguities in national laws or when discriminative customary law informs decisions that disadvantage women.<sup>16</sup> In Ethiopia, for instance, women face gender-specific constraints related to customary laws and have limited access to productive resources (including land), which limits their agricultural productivity.<sup>17</sup>
18. The lack of control women have over productive resources creates significant barriers to entry to value chains, because land and other resources such as inputs, capital, technology, extension services, training

<sup>9</sup> OECD/FAO, 2016, *Agricultural Outlook 2016-2025* Chapter 2, Agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa: Prospects and challenges for the next decade.

<sup>10</sup> WFP, 2023. “Food Systems”. <https://www.wfp.org/food-systems>

<sup>11</sup> Evaluation ToR, para. 8. Ref: WFP, Food Systems in Fragile Settings: Identifying Gaps and Opportunities to Support Access to Improved Diets, Fill the Nutrient Gap Report, July 2020.

<sup>12</sup> WFP, 2021, 2021 Regional Achievements & Outlook. P. 30.

<sup>13</sup> FAO, 2010, “Women in Agriculture: Closing the Gender gap for Development”. In *The State of Food and Agriculture*.

<sup>14</sup> The World Bank, 2021. World Bank Data <https://data.worldbank.org/>

<sup>15</sup> UN Women, 2019, “The Gender Gap in Agricultural Productivity in sub-Saharan Africa: Causes, Costs and Solutions”, *Policy Brief* No. 11.

<sup>16</sup> USAID, 2022, “East Africa: Gender Equality & Female Empowerment”, *Factsheet*.

<sup>17</sup> Tesfaye, Abonesh, et al., 2022, “Gender Empowerment and Parity in East Africa: Evidence from Climate-Smart Agriculture in Ethiopia and Kenya”, *Climate and Development*.

etc. are essential for up-scaling from subsistence to marketed output.<sup>18</sup> Where women do participate in value chains, it is often either as wage labourers in the production and postharvest processing stages, or they are concentrated in certain nodes of the chain that require low-skilled labour.<sup>19</sup>

19. Women also face barriers in accessing procurement opportunities because they may not be able to travel to selling points and might be unable to receive digital payments (where these available) for their crops because they are less likely than men to have access to mobile phones.<sup>20</sup>
20. The result is that women farmers all over the region fall behind men, creating a persistent gender gap in agriculture.<sup>21</sup> This gender gap reduces rural women's participation in household decision-making and suppresses women's empowerment within their households and communities too.<sup>22</sup> Closing the gender gap in agriculture puts more resources in the hands of women and strengthens their voice within their household and community – a proven strategy for enhancing the food security, nutrition, education, and health of children.<sup>23</sup>
21. **CO contexts of the LRFPP pilots:** This evaluation covers the piloting of the LRFPP in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda. There are many similarities between these country contexts and several notable differentiating characteristics.<sup>24</sup> The COs covered by the evaluation are in the top four largest COs in the region with Sudan having 1,312, Ethiopia 1,177, and Uganda 446 staff.<sup>25</sup> The three countries represent a range of context dynamics for LRFPP piloting each with unique and diverse livelihoods zones nationally (e.g., in the Karamoja region of Uganda, livelihoods are derived predominately from livestock as part of pastoralist/agro-pastoralist livelihood strategies) as well as distinct positioning within the region – in terms of enabling environment factors such as private sector investment, access to finance, infrastructure and quality control systems, vulnerability and exposure to various climate shocks, conflict (particularly relevant for Ethiopia and Sudan in this case), and food insecurity. Discussion of relevant policies can be found in Section 2.2.<sup>26</sup>

**Ethiopia:** Rainfed agriculture is the main livelihood of about 80 percent of Ethiopia's 120 million people – 42 percent of whom are under the age of 15.<sup>27</sup> Over two thirds of the population is considered multidimensionally poor, according to UNDP's 2022 Multidimensional Poverty Index.<sup>28</sup> According to the Global Report on Nutrition, Ethiopia is on course to meet one SDG target for maternal, infant, and young child nutrition (MIYCN). However, no progress has been made towards achieving the target of reducing anaemia among women of reproductive age. The Global Report on Nutrition also indicates that Ethiopia has made some progress towards achieving the target for wasting and towards achieving the target for stunting, though 36.8 percent of children under 5 years of age are still affected by stunting.<sup>29</sup>
22. Ethiopia has made progress over the last decade, from an economic growth average of 10 percent per annum (2007-2017) to a reduction by half of extreme poverty and hunger rates in the country (from 61 to 31 percent). However, the context also includes insecurity in the Tigray region; due to this conflict, farmers

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<sup>18</sup> Njiraini, Georgina Wambui, Marther Ngigi, and Evelyn Baraké, 2018, "Women in African Agriculture Integrating Women into Value Chains to Build a Stronger Sector", *ZEF Working Paper Series, No. 175*.

<sup>19</sup> FAO, 2016, *Developing Gender-sensitive Value Chains: A Guiding Framework*.

<sup>20</sup> GSMA, 2022, *Reaching and Empowering Women with Digital Solutions in the Agricultural Last Mile*.

<sup>21</sup> Gebre, Girma Gezimu, et al., 2021, "Gender Differences in Agricultural Productivity: Evidence from Maize Farm Households in Southern Ethiopia", *GeoJournal*, 86(2): 843-864.

<sup>22</sup> World Bank, 2017, *Implementing The World Bank Group's Gender Strategy- From Analysis to Action to Impact*. Food and Agriculture Global Practice Follow-up Note and Action Plan.

<sup>23</sup> FAO, 2010, "Women in Agriculture: Closing the Gender gap for Development". In *The State of Food and Agriculture*.

<sup>24</sup> WFP, 2021, *RBN Regional Achievements and Outlook 2021*.

<sup>25</sup> WFP, 2021, *RBN Regional Achievements and Outlook 2021*.

<sup>26</sup> Specifically, Finding 1: LRFPP pilot procurement models were generally aligned with WFP strategies (as reflected in CSPs), are coherent with the broader development objectives of the UNCT in the pilot countries (as articulated in existing cooperation/development frameworks), and are in line with national governments' high-level priorities related to agriculture, nutrition, and food systems.

<sup>27</sup> ToR, para. 14.

<sup>28</sup> UNDP, 2022, *Multidimensional Poverty Index 2022*; 68.7 percent of the population in Ethiopia (80,553 thousand people in 2020) is multidimensionally poor while an additional 18.4 percent classified as vulnerable to multidimensional poverty (21,509 thousand people in 2020).

<sup>29</sup> Global Nutrition Report, 2023. "Ethiopia", *Country Nutrition Profiles*.

have missed harvest seasons and seen market access and functionality blocked. Conflict in Ethiopia's Tigray region has been a substantial challenge for WFP's humanitarian operations, which must engage and coordinate with federal and regional governments to request safe access for the humanitarian community to continue its operations. WFP staff in Tigray have been facing a challenging and complex operational context due to the lack of electricity, communications networks, and fuel.<sup>30</sup> While conflict is ongoing in parts of Ethiopia and the country is also receiving refugees fleeing the conflict in neighbouring Sudan, both the Logistics Cluster's April 2023 Operation Overview of the Northern Ethiopia Response and United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' (UN OCHA) 29 May 2023 Ethiopia Situation Report indicate that the humanitarian access situation in Ethiopia had somewhat improved since November 2022.

23. **Sudan:** The multidimensional effects of economic and political crisis, conflict, displacement, climate shocks (including droughts and floods), and poor harvests drive food insecurity. The conflict in Ukraine has driven up prices for food and fuel in this import-dependent country. Sudan has a population of 46.7 million and ranks 170 out of 189 in the 2020 Human Development Index. The *Global Nutrition Report* indicates that Sudan has made no progress towards achieving the target for wasting, with 16.3 percent of children under 5 years of age affected, which is among the highest in the world. Although no progress has been made towards achieving the SDG target of reducing anaemia among women of reproductive age, Sudan has made some progress towards achieving the target for stunting, even if 38.2 percent of children under 5 years of age are still affected (higher than the average for the Africa region (30.7 percent)).<sup>31</sup>
24. There is ongoing conflict and movement of vulnerable populations in the region; the armed conflict in South Sudan's Upper Nile State has caused at least 3,000 people to flee to the neighbouring states of White Nile and South Kordofan. WFP's Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment (CFSVA) estimated that 15 million people (34 percent of the population) were food insecure at the beginning of 2022.<sup>32</sup> In April 2023, armed conflict broke out between rival factions of the military government of Sudan. Fighting has killed more than 1,800 people, and more than one million people have been displaced within Sudan, while an additional 300,000 people have fled to neighbouring countries.<sup>33</sup> WFP Sudan is undertaking delivery of food aid, with ongoing efforts being made to procure commodities from SHFs, after having temporarily closed all its operations in response to the current crisis.
25. **Uganda:** Compared to Ethiopia and Sudan, Uganda currently enjoys relative stability. One key consideration is the country's longstanding history of hosting refugees. Uganda (as of June 2022) currently hosts 1.42 million refugees – mainly from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Burundi. In some parts of the country – for example, the north – influxes of refugees have exacerbated disputes over land, which is negatively impacting the viability of farming activities.<sup>34</sup> Looking at Uganda as a whole, agriculture plays a crucial role in economic activity. The country's agricultural sector contributes 25 percent of national gross domestic product and employs 70 percent of the population;<sup>35</sup> women contribute to more than three-quarters of the total farm labour and to over 90 percent of farm-level primary processing operation, while almost half of the heads of smallholder farming households are under the age of forty. Rising population and growth of incomes have increased the demand on agricultural production, which suffers from several challenges: poor agricultural practices, low technological adoption, insecurity over land ownership, poor access to extension services, low quality inputs, and lack of credit.<sup>36</sup>
26. The challenges just mentioned continue to hinder the agriculture sector and contribute to 'serious' levels of food insecurity in Uganda – as classified by the 2022 Global Hunger Index.<sup>37</sup> Malnutrition is widespread across the country, and inadequate diets are a root cause of persisting nutritional problems which undermine the health of Ugandans, a problem that is particularly detrimental to the growth and development of Ugandan children.<sup>38</sup> More than half of Ugandan children are anaemic and at risk of not

<sup>30</sup> WFP, 2021. Ethiopia Country Brief, June.

<sup>31</sup> Global Nutrition Report, 2023. "Sudan", *Country Nutrition Profiles*.

<sup>32</sup> Summarized information drawn from: WFP, 2022, *Sudan Country Brief*, December.

<sup>33</sup> *Al Jazeera*, 2023. "United Nations Backs Sudan Envoy as Army Seeks to Expel Him", 27 May 2023.

<sup>34</sup> World Bank, 2018. "Closing the Potential-Performance Divide in Ugandan Agriculture".

<sup>35</sup> World Bank, 2018, "Closing the Potential-Performance Divide in Ugandan Agriculture: Fact Sheet".

<sup>36</sup> World Bank, 2018, "Making Farming More Productive and Profitable for Ugandan Farmers".

<sup>37</sup> Global Hunger Index, 2022, "Global Hunger Index 2022: Uganda".

<sup>38</sup> WFP, 2023. "Uganda". <https://www.wfp.org/countries/uganda>



reaching their full mental and physical potential.<sup>39</sup> Though Uganda has made some progress towards achieving the target for stunting, 25.4 percent of children under 5 years of age are still affected.<sup>40</sup>

### 1.3. SUBJECT BEING EVALUATED

27. The subject of this evaluation is WFP's LRFPP pilots in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda from January 2021 to December 2023. The pilot countries were three of the top four countries globally in terms of amounts of locally grown commodities purchased by WFP in 2018.<sup>41</sup> While the evaluation is entitled as an *Evaluation of Local and Regional Food Procurement Pilot Programmes in Eastern Africa (2021 – 2023)*, it is understood that the subject of the evaluation is the decentralized implementation of a global policy. The procurement and development objectives of this pilot included: increasing the functional and cost-efficient supply of food; injecting cash into local economies; strengthening value chain actors/market functioning; increasing smallholder income and resilient livelihoods; and contributing to resilient, sustainable and nutrition sensitive food systems. Thus, the results of evaluation activities in individual pilot countries will also be useful for understanding if/how the pilots achieved these objectives, and informing other LRFPP activities at the global and regional levels to better do so.
28. Local procurement has been integrated into the programme portfolio in each pilot country, which represents an opportunity to examine how LRFPP contributes to uplifting smallholder farmers through activities such as: food assistance for assets, rural resilience initiatives, post-harvest loss initiatives, the Farm to Market Alliance, Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF), and Smallholder Agricultural Market Support (SAMS). Each programming model represents one of many different entry points for supporting SHFs and other value chain actors relevant to the LRFPP. WFP's programmes support SHF-friendly procurement processes and local supply chains to enable SHF market access.<sup>42</sup> Further, organizing SHFs to work through associations, helps them negotiate better, sell more, lower their transaction costs, add customers, and improve quality. As well, strengthened value chains can better connect traders with SHFs in ways that increase farmers' capacities to aggregate better quality produce in commercial volumes.<sup>43</sup>
29. The supply chain key performance indicator dashboard published by WFP's RBN gives some perspective and a comparative overview of the scale of WFP's operations in each of the three selected LRFPP pilot countries. In terms of the quantity of food transported, the scale of operations in Sudan is substantially larger than either Ethiopia or Uganda.<sup>44</sup> The agricultural markets in each country have their own complexities and dynamics that affect the cost per MT of commodities transported in each context, yet a clear economy of scale can be observed; Sudan was able to achieve lower costs due to larger quantities.<sup>45</sup>
30. Quantities of commodities procured from SHFs have been reported on by WFP to some extent, with work ongoing to develop traceability systems to better track such data. The Ethiopia CO reported having procured 10,400 MT of maize from cooperative unions between 2021 and 2022 – through eight direct purchase contracts and two conditional contracts. These purchases injected USD 6.7M into the local economy, supporting over 30 primary cooperatives and over 2,500 SHFs.<sup>46</sup> The Sudan CO reported procuring 5,700 MT of sorghum from over 5,500 SHFs at a total value of USD 1.8M from 2021 to 2022.<sup>47</sup> The Uganda CO reported procuring 16,800 MT of maize under conditional contracting (20 percent traceable to SHFs) at a value of USD 7.25M between June 2021 and December 2022.<sup>48</sup> The table below shows local

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<sup>39</sup> WFP, 2022, *Uganda Country Brief*, June.

<sup>40</sup> Global Nutrition Report, 2023. "Uganda", *Country Nutrition Profiles*.

<sup>41</sup> WFP, 2019, *Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy*, p. 7. Tanzania is also in the top-4 for local food procurement.

<sup>42</sup> WFP, 2023. "Overview of Smallholder Market Support". According to the ToR (p. 15), the new SAMS conceptual model has been the basis for LRFPP ToC modelling.

<sup>43</sup> MSI, 2014, "Experience Buying from Small and Medium Traders", *P4P Global Learning Series*.

<sup>44</sup> WFP, 2021, *RBN Supply Chain KPI Dashboard*, March 2021.

<sup>45</sup> WFP, 2021, *RBN Supply Chain KPI Dashboard*, March 2021.

<sup>46</sup> WFP, 2023, Ethiopia Country Office Key Achievements and Plan for 2023, PowerPoint presentation.

<sup>47</sup> WFP, 2022, Key Pilot SDCO Learnings to Date. PP presentation at the RBN LRFPP Workshop, October.

<sup>48</sup> WFP, 2023, *Uganda Local & Regional Food Procurement Policy*. PowerPoint presentation, February.

procurement figures from 2023 for local procurement financed through the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF).

**Table 4: Total local procurement quantities and values in 2023 by CO**

Country (commodity)	Tonnage	Value
<b>Ethiopia (wheat, white maize, corn soy blend+, and ready-to-use supplementary food)</b>	60,653 MT	44,060,461
<b>Sudan (sorghum)</b>	4,150 MT	USD 2,553,951
<b>Uganda (maize, beans, maize meal)</b>	76,854 MT	USD 45,562,420

**Source:** Compiled from data provided by CO procurement teams to the ET

31. In November 2019, WFP’s executive board approved the LRFPP; implementation of the policy was initiated in 2020 with a global pilot period through December 2023. The LRFPP recognizes the catalytic power of WFP as a major actor on the demand side in agricultural markets of countries in which it operates in East Africa, and around the world. The policy aims to boost WFP’s local, regional, and pro-smallholder food procurement by complementing the cost-efficiency considerations that guide its procurement decisions, with additional parameters to better account for links to programmatic outcomes on SHF incomes, local economics, food systems, nutrition, resilience, and gender equality.<sup>49</sup> This includes developing strategic partnerships with government and parastatal institutions, private sector actors, and academic institutions.
32. Piloting of the policy began in mid/late 2021 in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda,<sup>50</sup> with primary activities focusing on introduction and testing of various procurement approaches and tools:
  - Direct (spot): used to purchase from SHFs based on ad hoc availability of stocks and are typically signed during or after marketing season.
  - Direct (forward agreement): used to purchase from SHFs using an agreement signed before the marketing season. Based on expected WFP (funded) demand and SHFs availability, a food supply agreement is signed as early as possible before the marketing season starts and includes a target volume to the whole season.
  - Conditional contract: very similar to regular tenders, but with SHF content that is enforced by adding (to tender documents and contracts) a clause that defines a minimum percentage of total volume to be sourced from SHFs.
  - Mandate contract: WFP signs a food supply agreement with a trader before marketing season based on expected WFP demand; the entire volume is to be sourced from SHFs and price is defined by WFP.
33. In addition to procurement activities, other core building blocks were worked on concurrently, including a value chain analysis (VCA) in Sudan, price transmission analysis and traceability analysis in Uganda, and demand and supply analysis at regional level. Implementation of the LRFPP within WFP’s global operations has required additional systems, tools, investments, and innovative approaches to be developed that maximize the contribution of WFP’s local and regional food procurement to achieving zero hunger, the wider goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development, and commitments made in the 2021 Food Systems Summit. Pilot implementation was structured into three workstreams:
  1. Optimize the impact of regional commodity purchases.
  2. Increase the volume and value of regional purchases through commodity import substitution.
  3. Increase regional sourcing capacity for Specialized Nutritious Foods (SNF) and optimize impact.
34. Workstream 1 is the focus of this evaluation.<sup>51</sup> Under workstream 1 (see Figure 1), the pilots have utilized various procurement approaches, such as indirect conditional contracting, indirect mandate contracting,

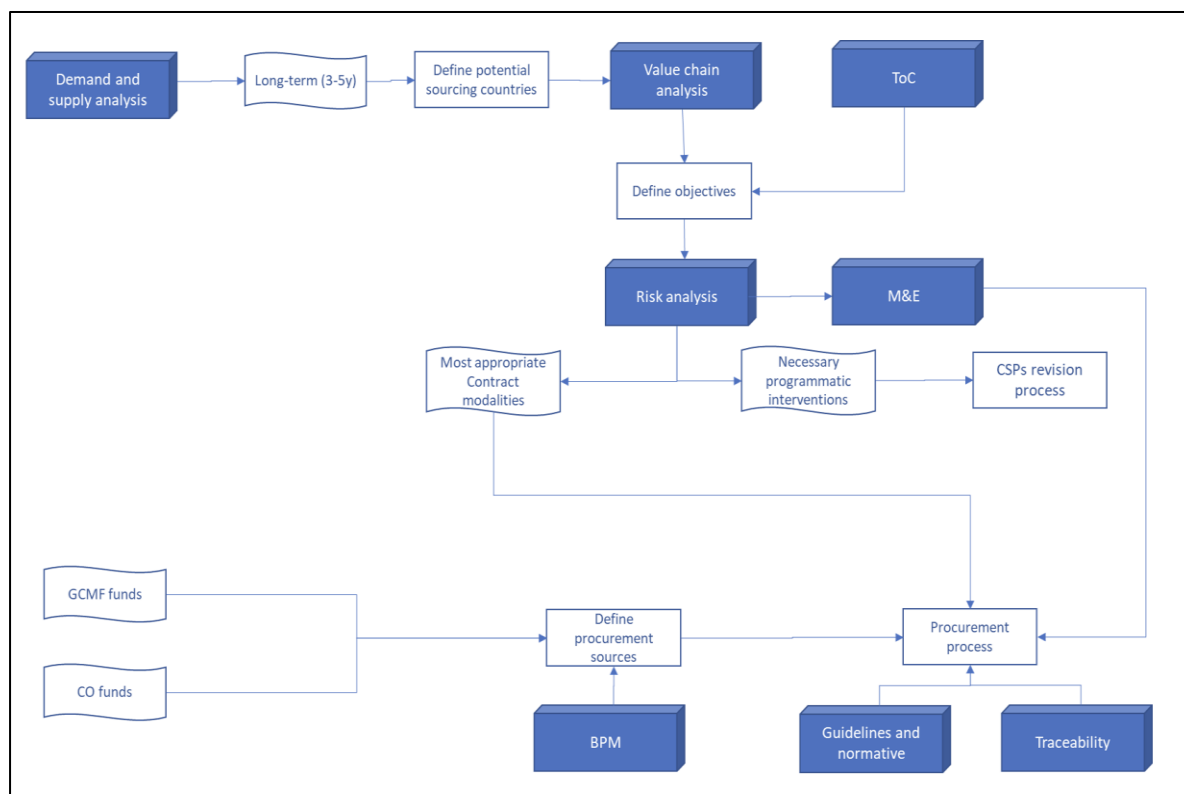
<sup>49</sup> Evaluation ToR.

<sup>50</sup> The delayed start was due in part to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the evaluation’s Terms of Reference.

<sup>51</sup> Workstreams 2 and 3 are being implemented at the regional level and are not included in the scope of this evaluation.

and direct SHF contracting.<sup>52</sup> The LRFPP describes a planned shift towards designing and implementing traditional procurement activities in collaboration with WFP programming – particularly related to nutrition, resilience, SHF income and livelihoods, and gender equality. The policy also refers to use of innovative procurement modalities, including use of long-term agreements that create price predictability for value chain actors and pursuing linkages with systems-level procurement markets such as HGSF that are particularly suited to engaging with SHFs. The specific dynamics of linkages between HGSF and SAMS with the LRFPP pilot initiatives were explored in the data collection phase; many of these linkages pre-date the LRFPP.

**Figure 1: LRFPP implementation plan for Workstream 1**



Source: WFP HQ (PRORF)

35. **Ethiopia:** Several LRFPP contracting modalities are currently being implemented in Ethiopia’s Amhara region, where there are also plans to extend resilience programming. Efforts to establish LRFPP contracts in Gambella are ongoing, with a contract having been issued in July 2023.
36. **Sudan:** WFP’s CO in Sudan has produced several strategic and operational documents that relate specifically to the LRFPP. For example, the CO’s concept note on strengthening livelihoods and resilience of SHFs in Sudan by leveraging WFP food procurement operations describes the background, rationale, and objectives of the LRFPP pilot in Sudan – with identified procurement interventions and programmatic interventions.<sup>53</sup> These categories are further clarified through the identification of short and medium-term interventions (under which two tracks of procurement modalities would be used (Track 1: indirect conditional and Track 2: indirect mandate), and long-term interventions (which use a third modality (Track 3: direct contract). All three tracks were operationalized by March 2023. The Sudan CO’s LRFPP pilot is the only one of the three to be informed by a thorough VCA – which informed the Sudan CO’s *Plan for Pro-Smallholder Procurement (2022–2023)*.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>52</sup> See ToR, para 55 for additional descriptions of these modalities.

<sup>53</sup> WFP, 2021, Sudan CO, Concept Note, LRFPP – Sudan CO.

<sup>54</sup> WFP, 2020, Plan for Pro-smallholder (SHFs) Procurement for Sudan CO, 2022-2023.

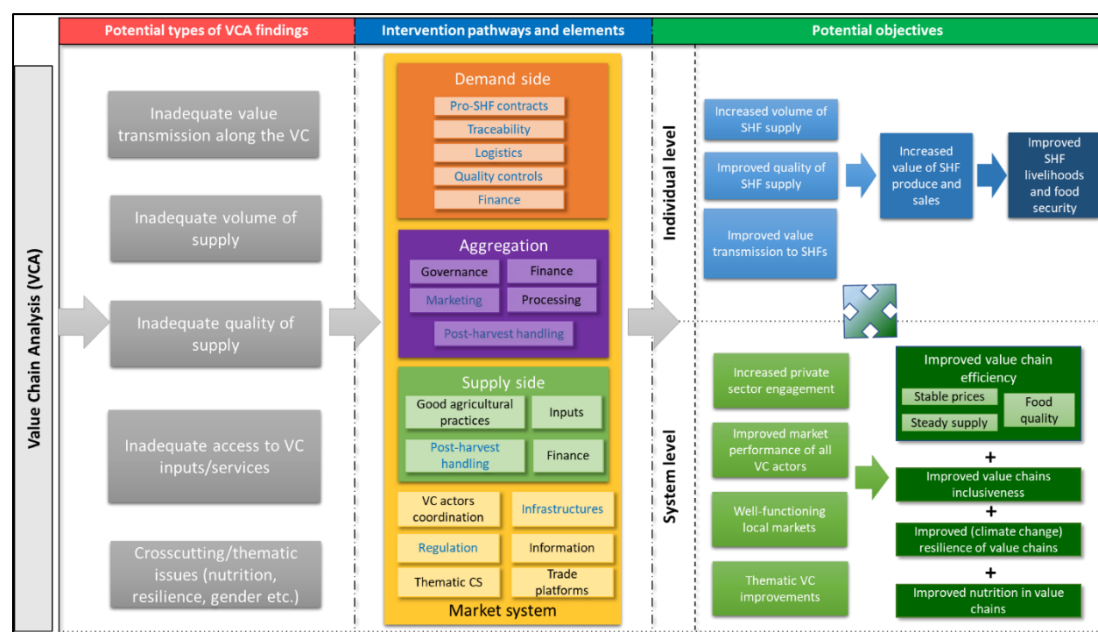
37. **Uganda:** The Uganda CO has one of WFP's largest local food procurement operations in the world; Uganda hosts several refugee populations from the horn of Africa, including from Ethiopia, Somalia, and Eritrea (United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) are important partners of WFP in safeguarding their safety and well-being). Over the last two decades, the CO has been leveraging pro-smallholder local food procurement to contribute to the stimulation of inclusive market systems. This includes a focused effort in Uganda's Karamoja region to directly procure commodities from SHFs/farmers' organizations (FOs) and link these activities to agriculture development and a nationally owned HGSP programme. WFP's 2019 market assessment found a supply gap in vegetable oil in Karamoja and that beneficiary preferences indicated low interest in red sorghum. The CO requested a waiver of competition for direct negotiation with Karamoja SHFs/FOs for the purchase of 1,000 MT white maize and 300 MT beans during the 2020 and 2021 harvest seasons in Karamoja.<sup>55</sup> In the western part of Uganda, WFP is undertaking indirect purchase of maize and beans, by working with the other value chain actors through conditional contracts that require 20 percent traceability to SHF, based on purchasing through traders using competitive tendering.
38. **Consideration of gender in LRFPP pilot planning:** WFP's RBN Food System team has assessed the capacity of staff in gender and its integration into LRFPP, and the CO in Uganda has conducted a gender and youth assessment under the Mastercard Foundation programme and is integrating it with LRFPP. Still, it is noted in the evaluation ToR that "To date, no specific gender assessment has been conducted for the pilot programmes. Countries across the region experience gender inequalities which affect food security of men and women . . . the LRFPP aims to allow WFP to increasingly integrate procurement and elements of its programmes, including smallholder livelihoods activities and the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment in line with *WFP Gender Policy*".<sup>56</sup> Further, the three LRFPP pilots have various levels of planning and strategy development. Therefore, extent to which gender indicators have been developed specifically for the LRFPP pilots is highly constrained due to the overall gap in indicator development and ongoing efforts to build theoretical/logical linkages between procurement operations and programmatic initiatives. ET assesses that the LRFPP pilots are currently approaching the requirements of the UN System-Wide Action Plan (UNSWAP) criterion 3a; the LRFPP has transformational elements and pilots are exceeding some requirements.
39. **Consideration of existing evidence about LRFP:** The ET did a thorough review of literature and documentation as part of the inception phase – to assess evaluability and identify existing evidence that could inform the evaluation approach. The evaluation ToR identified several key resources as starting points, and the ET has expanded upon this body of evidence. Key sources of existing evidence that the ET referred to include: *Strategic Evaluation of WFP's Pilot Purchase for Progress Initiative (2008-2013)*, *Rwanda Local Regional Procurement Project (2017-2019) Endline Evaluation, Final Evaluation of the USDA-supported Local and Regional Procurement (LRP) Project in Kenya (2017-2020)*, *Thematic Evaluation of Supply Chain Outcomes in the Food System in Eastern Africa (2016-2021)*, *Uganda Traceability Study*, and the original VCAs commissioned to inform LRFPP pilot programmes in Sudan (2021) and Uganda (2022).
40. **Theory of change (ToC):** WFP is both a type of value chain actor (engaging in direct and indirect procurement activities) and a development actor (seeking to enhance the productivity, capacity, and equity of value chains and food systems). Accordingly, the LRFPP has a global level theory of change, in addition to individual ToCs that have been developed at different times of the piloting process by each CO. The figure below is a simplified ToC – or ToC lite – reflecting possible intervention pathways and objectives. The simplified ToC catalogues options that may be included in a CO's planning and is based on the assumption that intervention pathways and objectives will be driven by and developed after a VCA has been conducted. As compared to an earlier version of a detailed LRFPP ToC, this one is easier to digest, though it does not articulate clearly the theory of what is happening in terms of contributory/causal pathways.

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<sup>55</sup> WFP, Request for Approval of Procurement Plan of Local Purchases from Small holder Farmers through Direct Contracting – January 2021 to May 2022.

<sup>56</sup> ToR, para 58.

Figure 2: LRFPP ToC lite for workstream 1 (optimize impact of regional commodity purchases)



Source: WFP HQ (PRORF)

41. This ToC rests on assumptions about the importance of smallholder agriculture in areas where WFP works, WFP's ongoing demand for large quantities of quality grain, and the enduring interest of government and private sector actors in collaborating on pro-SHF and food system development. The model reflects the importance of a sequential movement between VCA implementation, intervention, and objectives/outcomes positing that:

IF COs undertake robust VCAs and IF these can be successfully used to generate integrated interventions that positively impact the demand, aggregation, supply, and market systems, THEN individual SHFs will benefit and value chains and food systems will be strengthened, adding value will be better transmitted to SHFs producing quality food.

42. **Timeframe:** The period covered by this evaluation is from January 2021 to December 2023, noting that activity implementation toward the end of this period has been considered where possible as part of the evaluation's developmental approach.
43. **Areas of focus:** Inception meetings identified several areas of potential of focus. One such area was looking at how the LRFPP is promoting sustainable food production systems, resilient agricultural practices, and creating more stable market relations among WFP, traders, and SHFs to increase farmer production and productivity and the quality of their produce, augmenting their income-generating opportunities and livelihoods. Further, the evaluation also examines how traders and other value chain actors are being encouraged to take on pro-SHF business models and practices. Finally, the evaluation assesses WFP's organizational processes in relation to value chain and food systems outcomes.
44. **Geographic targeting:** The geographic targeting of the evaluation is Ethiopia (national and Amhara), Sudan (national), Uganda (national, Karamoja, and western region), and where relevant the regional dimension of RBN procurement activities and LRFPP pilot oversight. Each of the pilot countries are essentially treated by the evaluation as case studies, although the scope and focus on each varies due to the progress of the piloting process, security, logistics, and approach in each country.
45. **Components:** Activities covered include direct and indirect local and regional procurement activities and any intentionally linked or integrated programmatic activities, as well as those organizational systems and operational processes that support procurement and programming activities. Achievements and challenges in the LRFPP pilot process, outputs, and progress towards outcomes were assessed both at individual, community, and system levels as was appropriate depending on the status of implementation, based on an adapted outcome harvesting approach that considers outcomes alongside the programmatic and institutional processes that support these.

46. **Target groups:** A key group targeted by this evaluation was external stakeholders active across different agricultural value chains (with a focus on SHFs and traders, but also aggregators, processors, wholesalers, retailers, etc.), as well as other actors supporting them (national and local governments, UN agencies, civil society, private enterprises, etc.). Another important internal target group are the WFP staff supporting value chain actors and working with these third-party stakeholders.
47. **Inclusion:** Among target groups listed above, the evaluation emphasized inclusion. Since much of the work in agrifood systems is done by women and youth, it was particularly important that evaluation procedures for data collection and analysis were all designed to facilitate and integrate female and youth perspectives. In this regard, the evaluation design, methodology, tools, and analysis were all intended incorporate into the evaluation the concerns of women and youth and the intersectional vulnerabilities each face. Further, the evaluation examined wherever local and regional procurement activities can be observed to have affected third-party stakeholders through divergent gender- and youth-sensitive outcomes (for example: incomes, access to land and inputs, exposure to discriminatory social norms and rules, access to extension services, and coping mechanisms and resilience to shocks and stressors in agrifood systems that are shaped by gender inequalities, etc.) and attempted to determine the perceived reasons for this. Findings were further analysed to determine how future local and regional procurement models might be adapted to minimize negative outcomes and maximize positive ones from an inclusion perspective.

## 1.4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY, LIMITATIONS, AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

### Methodology

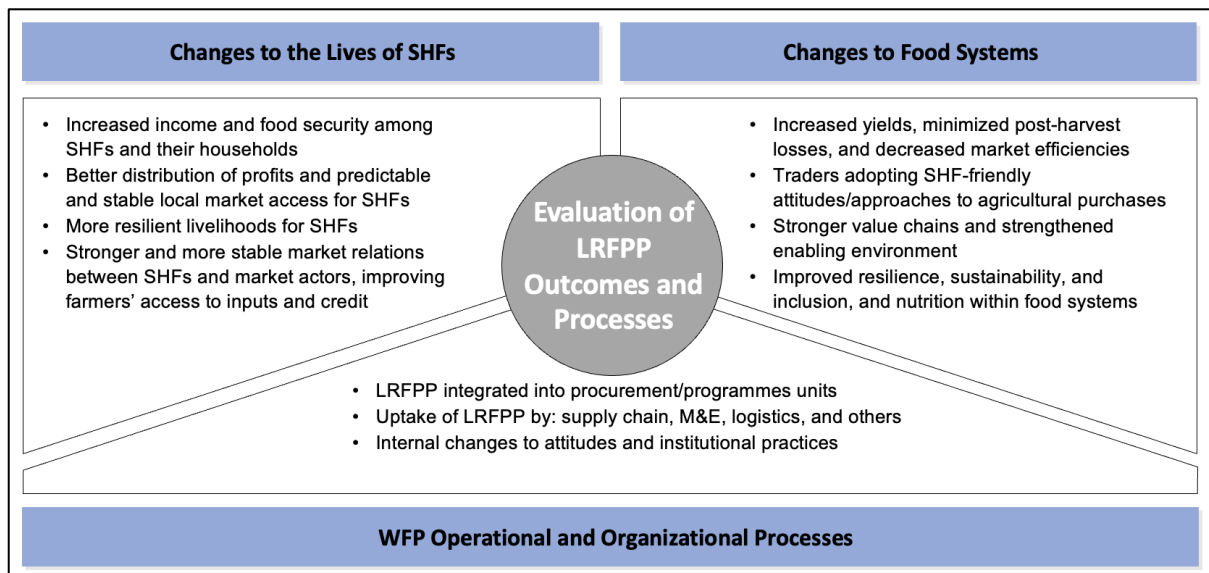
48. The ToR presented four evaluation questions (EQs) – as well as associated sub-questions – designed to address the evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, efficiency, and sustainability (gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE) is mainstreamed across the evaluation criteria).<sup>57</sup>
- **EQ1 (Relevance/Coherence):** To what extent are regional LRFPP pilot interventions relevant to appropriate for, and coherent with dimensions of food systems and policies?
  - **EQ2 (Effectiveness/Impact):** To what extent are LRFPP efforts contributing to changes within the wider food system (national, regional) and local economies?
  - **EQ3 (Efficiency):** How have WFP pilot COs been able to balance efficiency considerations with the programmatic objectives of LRFPP?
  - **EQ4 (Sustainability):** Have LRFPP investments contributed to or show promise in fostering sustainable results?
49. The evaluation matrix – Annex 4 – outlines how the EQs and sub-questions were linked to indicators, sources of data, and methods of analysis. In the findings section below, some criteria are presented together – relevance/coherence and effectiveness/impacts – in an effort to make the report more concise and bring together common analytical elements in the ET’s presentation of the evaluation findings. Collectively, the questions highlight priority areas for assessing the performance of the LRFPP and drawing key lessons from it. While more emphasis has been given to criteria around impact/effectiveness, the evaluation also integrated a process-oriented assessment of the LRFPP across all evaluation criteria.
50. The methodological approach outlined below was used to tackle the main EQs. Questions related to the relevance of the LRFPP pilots focused on the how LRFPP pilots reflected the national and local needs of the intervention environment, and how well the pilots considered the differing needs of various vulnerable sub-populations. Questions of coherence dealt primarily with how pilots related to WFP programmes and other organizational mechanisms – whereas questions of impact and effectiveness deal primarily with the actual outcomes reported by SHFs and other value chain actors. Efficiency measures are less oriented towards outcomes and were addressed primarily from a process perspective to determine the timeliness, integration, adaptiveness, etc. of the modalities used for procurement. Operationally, the research looked at implementation approaches as a modifier of outcomes, to determine what programming models can be expected to yield greater benefits to SHFs and food systems, as per the ToC of the LRFPP. The criterion of sustainability reflects both outcome and process-oriented considerations, to see the extent to which planning and implementation included consideration of sustainability, and the extent to which any outcomes produced were expected to be sustained beyond the pilot interventions.
51. To achieve a holistic assessment of the pilots in each country, the evaluation identified and examined local and regional procurement within the context of direct and indirect procurement modalities. It then connected this evaluation of outcomes to a review of relevant procurement modalities, programming efforts, and organizational processes. The still emerging and unfinished nature of the LRFPP pilots creates a situation where the outcomes associated with each pilot were not well defined, understood, and varied across countries.
52. The mixed methods approach was centred around open-ended enquiry and foregrounding learning objectives over accountability objectives. The evaluation originally aimed to rely on an outcome mapping approach to identify, analyse, and assess outcomes against each other from the perspectives of different project stakeholders, rather than measured against predictable indicators. However, it was later determined through consultations with RBN and COs that a hybrid approach that took into consideration outcomes within the context of a rigorous assessment of procurement, programmatic, and organizational processes would be better suited to the learning objectives of the evaluation.

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<sup>57</sup> ToR, para. 65.

53. Overall, an exploratory methodological approach was essential to ‘mine’ the wide range of outcomes and good practices connected to different LRFPP programming models used by the various pilot countries, identifying where there was evidence of differences in effectiveness and uptake of local procurement modalities; organizational processes and systems; changes to the lives and livelihoods of key value chain actors; and changes in regional food systems. In analysing its findings, the ET has triangulated and disaggregated perspectives as far as possible. That the evaluation has been conducted across three different countries requires the ET to focus on drawing out continuities and discontinuities with/between countries. Further disaggregation would require creating commonalities across groups (e.g., gender/youth) between contexts that can be considerably different and not necessarily comparable.
54. The evaluators worked backwards from these points of difference to understand how direct and indirect local and regional procurement modalities contributed to this change, and how this change is further linked to supporting programming models, as well as WFP’s organizational structures and operational processes. Taken together, the evaluation offers a comprehensive assessment of how the LRFPP pilots 1) contributed to changes in the lives of SHFs, 2) contributed to changes in the broader food systems they were connected to, and 3) were affected by and in turn affected WFP’s operational and organizational processes (see Figure 2). The goal was to generate in-depth comparisons of key elements of the three pilot countries to determine what approaches work – or do not work – in what contexts.

**Figure 3: Three Components of the Evaluation Approach**



55. **Assessing changes to the lives of SHFs:** Primary research was designed to gauge effects of local and regional procurement in key areas of the lives of SHFs: income, food security, distribution of profits, market access, etc. Considerations included the extent to which local and regional procurement offers opportunities for SHFs to gain access to a predictable and stable local market and to maximize the benefits they can derive from such access. The evaluation also emphasized the role of traders – who key within agricultural value chains because of their ability to set the terms (pricing, quantity, quality, sources, etc.) of agricultural purchases – and the extent to which they have adopted SHF-friendly approaches to trading agricultural commodities.
56. **Assessing broader changes to food systems:** The evaluation focused on food systems outcomes that were observed in the relationships between and amongst the agricultural stakeholders in different value chains, and especially by SHFs and traders. This included the extent to which the pilots have helped improve the performance of food systems in terms of increasing the productivity of yields, minimizing post-harvest losses, and improving market efficiencies, as well as developing an enabling environment – by



promoting laws, policies, strategies, and procedures<sup>58</sup> – for inclusive, resilient, sustainable, and nutritious food systems. The evaluation also looked at emerging outcomes and changes in attitudes of key actors.

57. **Assessing WFP’s operational and organizational effectiveness in supporting the LRFPP pilots:** This line of enquiry had two key areas of focus. The first one investigated how the pilots were integrated into the procurement and programmes units, as well as how effective uptake of the LRFPP has been by other CO units related to workstreams such as: supply chain, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), resource management, logistics, and others. It assessed how systematically integrated these functions were – especially procurement and programmes units – given the explicit recognition that LRFPP requires greater integration and good cross- and inter-unit collaboration, and that there is a need for better division of work and greater clarity on the roles and responsibilities between all the units involved at different levels.<sup>59</sup> This analysis includes cultural shifts within WFP, such as internal changes to attitudes and institutional practices that favour greater integration, collaboration, and the like. A second key area of inquiry examined the integration into and coherence with LRFPP activities into different programming models (such as: HGSF, SAMS, and others).
58. **Components of data collection:** In total, data collection was carried out between 17 September and 14 November across four areas of focus: Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan, and RBN/headquarters (HQ), with activities in each country sequenced sequentially to take advantage of staggered approach that gave focused attention to activities being carried out in research each site, building on the methodological approach, lessons learned, and emerging themes in each phase. Table 5 outlines the locations, date(s), and the persons responsible for each phase; as indicated below, the fieldwork activities in Uganda and Ethiopia were conducted in-person, while those focusing on Sudan and RBN/HQ were done remotely.

**Table 5: Fieldwork components**

Phase	Focus	Location/date(s)	Responsible
1	Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kampala (17-23 September)</li> <li>Kyenjojo, Mubende, Masindi, and Kiryandongo (24-28 September)</li> <li>Karamoja (24-28 September)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team Leader (TL)</li> <li>Senior National Consultant</li> </ul>
2	Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addis Ababa (16-21 October)</li> <li>Adama (26 October)</li> <li>Amhara (28 October – 5 November)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior National Consultant</li> </ul>
3	RBN/HQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remotely targeting Nairobi and Rome (17 October – 2 November)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TL</li> <li>Senior Evaluator</li> </ul>
4	Sudan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remotely targeting Port Sudan, Khartoum, South Darfur, Gedaref, and White Nile (28 October – 14 November)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior National Consultant</li> </ul>

59. The locations for fieldwork in each country were defined during detailed discussions with WFP procurement and programme teams in each country before fieldwork commenced. The evaluation sought to examine a representative cross section of procurement and programming activities and outcomes across the countries, and to focus on areas where it would be possible to find evidence of pilot-related outcomes.
60. **Stakeholder participation:** Prior to fieldwork, stakeholder mapping was conducted to identify the relevant organizations, groups, and individuals that may affect the success of the LRFPP pilots considered for evaluation or be affected by the success or failure of the pilots. Meetings with CO staff in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda, who have familiarity with the implementation of the LRFPP, were instrumental in helping to identify who the key stakeholders for this evaluation were, what their role was in the intervention, and the nature of their interest in the evaluation. Guidance given from the COs was complemented with the WFP stakeholder analysis methodology,<sup>60</sup> as well as an influence-interest matrix to identify interests and

<sup>58</sup> WFP, 2021, Synthesis of Evidence and Lessons on Country Capacity Strengthening from Decentralized Evaluations, WFP/EB.A/2021/7-C.

<sup>59</sup> WFP RBN, 2022. LRFPP Learning Summary, Learnings, Reflections and Observations on RBN Pilots, December.

<sup>60</sup> WFP OEV, (n.d.). “Evaluation for evidence-based decision making: Stakeholder Analysis”, *Technical Note*. WFP OEV.

priorities.<sup>61</sup> Based on this analysis, the evaluation sought the views of a broad range of internal and external stakeholders; data collection activities are based on the stakeholder groups presented in the table below and in Annex 8.

**Table 6: Key stakeholder groups participating in fieldwork**

Group	Stakeholders	Data collected	Female	Male
<b>Internal WFP stakeholders</b>	Key informant interviews (KIIs) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deputy Country Director</li> <li>Head of Procurement</li> <li>Head of Programmes</li> <li>Procurement Officers</li> <li>Programme Policy Offers (SAMS, HGSF, etc.)</li> <li>Head of Nutrition and Food Systems</li> <li>Head of Supply Chain / Supply Chain Officers</li> <li>Head of Research, Assessment, and Monitoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outcome data related to LRFPP pilots</li> <li>Data collected across all criteria</li> <li>Secondary data (where available) to measure the outcomes recorded</li> <li>Linkages of outcomes to effectiveness of procurement/programming</li> <li>Performance of supporting structures/ systems</li> </ul>	29	39
<b>External value chain stakeholders</b>	Focus groups discussions (FGDs) or small group discussions with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SHFs/ farmers organizations (FOs)</li> <li>WFP vendors</li> <li>Other value chain actors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outcomes data related to LRFPP pilots based on each category of external actor (SHF, trader, etc.) to concentrate on the experiences of that group in each discussion</li> <li>Focus on impact, but also relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability</li> <li>Successes and challenges linking outcomes to effectiveness of procurement/ programming</li> </ul>	30	56
<b>External stakeholders from government</b>	KIIs or small groups discussions with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Ethiopia:</b> Ethiopia Cooperative Commission, Agricultural Transformation Institute/Agency, Ethiopian National Disaster Risk Management Commission, and Ethiopia Commodity Exchange</li> <li><b>Uganda:</b> Ugandan National Bureau of Standards, Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, and Ministry of Education</li> <li><b>Sudan:</b> State Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Bank of Sudan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LRFPP pilot-related outcomes data</li> <li>Focus on relevance, coherence, and sustainability of pilots</li> <li>Triangulated data to substantiate outcomes that have been recorded</li> </ul>	10	21
<b>KIIs with external stakeholders from United Nations Country Team (UNCT), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and others</b>	KIIs or small groups discussions with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Ethiopia:</b> United Nations Industrial Development Organization and Bahir Dar University</li> <li><b>Sudan:</b> International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the United Nations Development Programme</li> <li><b>Uganda:</b> Self Help Africa and Sasakawa</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outcomes data related to LRFPP pilots</li> <li>Focus on coherence, and sustainability of pilots</li> <li>Triangulated data to substantiate outcomes that have been recorded</li> </ul>	4	3

<sup>61</sup> The influence-interest matrix is a systematic way to establish who the stakeholders are, and their level of interest and degree of power/influence.

## Limitations

61. The limitations described below affected the evaluation – sometimes constraining evaluability.
62. **Emerging nature and unfinished implementation of the LRFPP across COs:** The LRFPP is a new WFP global policy and is very much emerging in terms of the guidelines and institutional mechanisms that sustain it. As a result, the LRFPP is still not widely or always well understood in WFP.<sup>62</sup> This created challenges for internal stakeholders in terms of planning, describing, and assessing outputs and outcomes, which subsequently also create challenges in terms of the evaluability of the LRFPP. As well, the implementation plan, modalities, and supporting activities related to the LRFPP were also still very much evolving throughout the evaluation period and were various stages of development and implementation across the pilot countries.<sup>63</sup> For example, mandate contracts have only been rolled out in Sudan, and not in Ethiopia or Uganda, making it difficult for the ET to properly assess this indirect procurement modality. As well, the COs relied mostly on direct spot contracts. Therefore, the comparative analysis of direct and indirect modalities that the ET has carried out looks at a comparison of direct spot contracts and indirect conditional contracts, even if it is not referred to as such.
63. **Inconsistent implementation of the LRFPP:** The LRFPP pilots in the three countries have commenced unevenly, with each of them taking different paths towards implementing the LRFPP. Importantly, in Uganda and Ethiopia, procurement activities started before a VCA had taken place and prior to a ToC being developed to guide how WFP's local and regional procurement work will contribute to a specific set of planned outcomes and outputs. In general, the varying approaches to implementation of the LRFPP make it difficult to gauge whether the interventions have been implemented as intended by the *LRFPP Interim Guidance for Pilot Implementation* that came out in 2020.
64. **Overlap between programming/procurement activities pre-LRFPP:** Isolating the outcomes attributable to the LRFPP pilots is difficult because piloting has largely been incorporated into an extension of already existing procurement and programme activities in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda. Nevertheless, the analysis below still attempts to demonstrate the types and extent of change that is possible through local procurement – alongside associated programmatic activities – even if this is not always directly, or only, linked to the LRFPP itself.
65. **Lack of available data:** Another evaluability challenge was data availability. Broader issues related to data are summed up in the evaluation ToR, which lists data availability and reliability as a key risk to the evaluation approach and methodology, citing the following challenges: difficulty in establishing baseline data, lack of key outcome data, and uneven availability of data across countries.<sup>64</sup> As noted by WFP's internal learnings, there still exists “a need for better mechanisms to gather evidence and measure the impact of LRFPI. This includes developing a set of tools and indicators to measure at output and outcome levels”.<sup>65</sup> The implementation of M&E systems to track LRFPP outcomes and outputs was still emerging over the course of the pilots and in many cases was largely limited to measuring the quantities and values of commodities purchased.
66. **Conflict and insecurity:** Travel restrictions related to conflict and insecurity were key limitations to the evaluation, in particular in the case of Sudan. In April 2023, armed conflict broke out between rival factions of the military government of Sudan. As a result, WFP Sudan completely shut down its development operations because of the outbreak of conflict in the country. Though operations were eventually restarted, the ET had only remote access to all internal and external stakeholders. Relying only on remote access made it difficult to access some stakeholders, significantly limiting the number of engagements that were possible with SHFs and WFP vendors. As well, the remote format did not allow for FDGs. Whereas in the

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<sup>62</sup> WFP RBN, 2022. LRFPP Learning Summary, Learnings, Reflections and Observations on RBN Pilots, December, p. 4.

<sup>63</sup> In Ethiopia, the global COVID-19 pandemic and insecurity within the country delayed piloting, which only picked up in earnest in 2022. Having started their piloting processes in mid-2021, Sudan and Uganda are comparatively farther along. Even in those two countries, however, the pilots have not been extended to their full scope or have reached their full potential in terms of implementation, with WFP Sudan now completely shutting down its development operations because of the recent outbreak of conflict in the country.

<sup>64</sup> ToR, para. 72.

<sup>65</sup> WFP RBN, 2022. LRFPP Learning Summary, Learnings, Reflections and Observations on RBN Pilots, December, p. 6.

other two pilot countries FGDs were possible with SHFs, this was not possible in Sudan. Remote data collection also limited the observational inferences available to the ET in Sudan.

67. **Evaluability implications and mitigation strategies:** The inconsistent and incomplete nature of the implementation of the three pilots means that the evaluation was influenced by how far along implementation was in each country. The evaluation remained open-ended and took an expansive perspective on what types of outcomes were possible because the LRFPP pilots offers broader possibilities of learning. Moreover, the evaluation used a number of specific feedback opportunities at an end-of-fieldwork evaluation debrief, as well as through a final Evaluation Learning Workshop. Adopting such a strategy offered some opportunities input from key stakeholders into findings as the evaluation unfolds. Although the inconsistent nature of the implementation of the LRFPP creates evaluability challenges, it also provided the ET with an opportunity to contrast different implementation approaches. For this reason, the evaluation analysed the different approaches taken to create comparisons from which to draw learnings from the various intervention models. The ET used all existing secondary data sources (ToCs, VCAs, concept notes, implementation/ procurement plans, and other key sources associated with the LRFPP), but relied mostly on deep qualitative analysis to generate an understanding of the effectiveness and impacts of the LRFPP to generate recommendations as part of the evaluation. Indicators used for M&E were limited mostly to amounts and values of agricultural commodities purchased. The learning-focused and opened-ended nature of this evaluation was designed to not rely on predefined outcomes, indicators, targets, but rather relies on an approach that allows key stakeholders to define outcomes, gauge impact, determine effectiveness, and articulate GEWE considerations.

## Ethical Considerations

68. WFP decentralized evaluations must conform to WFP and the UN Evaluation Group’s (UNEG) ethical standards and norms. The contractors undertaking the evaluations are responsible for safeguarding and ensuring ethics at all stages of the evaluation cycle. This includes, but is not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups) and ensuring that the evaluation results in no harm to participants or their communities. These commitments are confirmed by each ET member and as part of their contracting and work assignment process all members of the team signed a pledge of ethical conduct including an agreement to protect anonymity and confidentiality of interviewees, and to protect data security. Moreover, SALASAN committed to safeguarding and ensuring ethics at all stages of the evaluation cycle. This included, but was not limited to, ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity of participants, ensuring cultural sensitivity, respecting the autonomy of participants, ensuring fair recruitment of participants (including women and socially excluded groups), and ensuring that the evaluation resulted in no harm to participants or their communities. The table below presents the ethical issues, related risks, and safeguards considered during the different phases of the evaluation.

**Table 7: Ethical considerations, risks, and safeguards**

Phases	Ethical issues	Risks	Safeguards
<b>Inception</b>	Design decisions made during the inception phase can affect overall validity, appropriateness, and inclusiveness.	Certain stakeholders may not be considered; neglect of operational context can lead to violation of the “do no harm” principle. This can happen at operational and theoretical levels.	The evaluation was based on a thorough evaluability assessment and applied principles of inclusion to capture perspectives of women, youth, and other marginal groups, to centre the experiences of these important rights-holders and their understanding of if and how the intervention may have contributed to results.
<b>Data collection</b>	The LRFPP pilot countries included in this evaluation present possible and/or likely security that affected the scope and focus of fieldwork.	Security issues present a threat to the safety of the ET and evaluation stakeholders – and to the quality and validity of data collected. Limitations will be clearly stated, and remote methods may be used as a preferred option in some cases.	The ET was be guided by the 2020 <i>UNEG Ethical Guidelines</i> and the 2014 <i>Guidelines on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations</i> . The evaluation also consulted vulnerable and marginalised populations – underscoring the importance of the ET abiding by the core WFP and UN values of integrity, humanity, commitment, inclusion, and collaboration.

Phases	Ethical issues	Risks	Safeguards
<b>Data analysis</b>	Validity and sufficiency of data.	As evaluation stakeholders had the choice to opt out of interviews and other data collection tools; data may not fully cover all perspectives.	Anticipating that interview data would be largely qualitative in nature, the ET planned to use a methodology that was well-suited to supporting the development of critical insights through narrative-based analysis.
<b>Reporting</b>	Representation of the voice of affected populations through commitment to Accountability to Affected Populations	Reporting in overly technocratic language can exclude key groups of evaluation stakeholders from participating in important dialogue around issues that affect them.	The ET informed interviewees of mechanisms for feedback prior to engaging with them. Every effort was also made to ensure the use of simple and clear language and graphics to make the final ER as broadly accessible as possible, while still meeting the technical requirements of Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS).

## 2. Evaluation findings

The evaluation findings presented in this section are grouped according to themes under the key evaluation criteria of relevance/coherence, impact/effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. Themes were created by clustering existing EQs and sub-questions, bringing to together common points of inquiry under each criterion. The table below is provided as a general guide to which themes contain information relevant to the evaluation sub-questions found in the evaluation matrix (see Annex 4); sub-questions are otherwise not explicitly referenced in the presentation of findings below.

**Table 8: Guide to EQ sub-question coverage within the report's thematic presentation of findings**

Evaluation Question	Key Themes	Relevant Sub-Qs
<b>EQ01: Relevance/Coherence</b>	Strategic alignment	1.4, 1.1
	Contextual alignment	1.3, 1.5
<b>EQ02: Impact/Effectiveness</b>	Impacts (intended and unintended)	2.1, 2.2, 2.5
	Intervening factors	2.8
	Comparative advantage and opportunities	2.3, 2.4
<b>EQ03: Efficiency</b>	Institutional support	2.7, 2.6
	Integration of procurement and programming	3.1, 3.2
	M&E and evidence	3.3, 1.2, 3.4
<b>EQ04: Sustainability</b>	Sustainability	4.1, 4.2
	Scalability	4.3

## 2.1 EQ1: (RELEVANCE/COHERENCE)

### Strategic alignment

***Finding 1:** LRFPP pilot procurement models were generally aligned with WFP strategies (as reflected in CSPs), are coherent with the broader development objectives of the UNCT in the pilot countries (as articulated in existing cooperation/development frameworks), and are in line with national governments' high-level priorities related to agriculture, nutrition, and food systems.*

69. There was a high-level consensus across both internal and external stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation – including among government partners – that market development is a key need among SHFs and that pro-SHF local procurement is an important tool for facilitating market access for this group of farmers. Interviews with government stakeholders in the three pilot countries indicate unreliable and exploitative market linkages are a well-known constraint to SHFs in most agricultural value chains in the region. Perhaps most importantly, government partners were insistent about the need for pro-smallholder local procurement to help address the challenges of insufficient and unfair markets, which in turn help to ensure fairer agricultural value chains for SHFs. Government representatives in Ethiopia, Uganda, and Sudan also noted that WFP's close working relationship with state partners helps ensure that local procurement in each CO is supported by an existing portfolio of interventions that are aligned with national and local priorities. They frequently expressed the opinion that WFP's portfolio of interventions provides essential assistance to SHFs in accessing other important needs such as: quality inputs, better storage and PHM, technical knowledge, and better organizational capacities, among other needs.
70. Further, the LRFPP builds on WFP's long-standing work with SHFs in a wide range of programmatic scenarios. The *WFP Strategic Plan (2022-2025)* prioritises vulnerable SHFs,<sup>66</sup> while explicitly stating its aim to leverage WFP's procurement footprint to provide a guaranteed, fair, and remunerative market for marginalized smallholders through predictable formal contracts and aggregation support.<sup>67</sup> The *WFP Supply Chain Strategy* further underscores WFP's commitment to using its purchasing power to strengthen and stimulate local and national markets, including retail capabilities.<sup>68</sup> Key agricultural policies in the LRFPP pilot countries generally do not use local procurement terminology, but instead frame objectives in terms of market development and sustainability/functionality of agro-economic systems. Focus in all three countries is anchored in overall market development, supporting small farmers through systems-level objectives that involve increased multisectoral coordination. Generally, policies aim to increase productivity and efficiencies of the agricultural supply-chain; this includes provision of extension services and supporting the improvement of post-harvest handling (to reduce loss and improve quality).
71. **Ethiopia:** WFP's current CSP (2020–2025) in Ethiopia includes five strategic outcomes, including that vulnerable and food-insecure populations (including SHFs) in targeted areas have increased resilience to shocks by 2025. The CSP is aligned with the *UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2020-2025)* for Ethiopia, the *Government's Ten-Year Perspective Plan (2020-2030)*, the *Homegrown Economic Reform Agenda*, the *Productive Safety Net Programme*, and the *Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework*.<sup>69</sup> The CO also recently developed a framework document for resilience-building of SHFs and agropastoral communities (titled *Scaling Up Transformative and Resilient Local Food Systems in Ethiopia*) which applies a food systems lens and highlights the LRFPP as a tool for boosting local food-sourcing and improving market access for SHFs.<sup>70</sup> The *Ethiopia Pro-SHF Procurement Strategy for LRFPP Implementation 2023-2025* includes detailed mapping of commodity market channels in Ethiopia and a detailed ToC for sustained impact – building on context analysis already developed in the CSP.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> WFP, 2022. WFP corporate results framework (2022-2025). P. 4, 6, etc.

<sup>67</sup> WFP, 2022. WFP Strategic Plan (2022-2025). P. 26.

<sup>68</sup> WFP, 2017. WFP Supply Chain Strategy (2017-2021). P. 6.

<sup>69</sup> WFP, 2020. Ethiopia Country Strategic Plan (2020-2025). P. 2.

<sup>70</sup> WFP, 2023. Ethiopia Pro-Smallholder Farmers Procurement Strategy for Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy Implementation 2023 – 2025. P. 11.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid. P. 7, 8.

72. Further, WFP's Ethiopia CSP explicitly states that its transition and handover strategy is to focus on providing capacity strengthening and long-term support within national institutions with a view to ensuring the sustainability of resilience-building activities, nutrition activities, progress in addressing gender inequalities, and WFP's market-driven support for SHFs and food value chain actors.<sup>72</sup> CSP Activity 5 is to provide nutrition-sensitive social protection, climate risk management services, and capacity strengthening support for SHFs, pastoralists, refugees, and returnees most vulnerable to climate shocks.<sup>73</sup>
73. Ethiopia's *Agricultural Sector Policy and Investment Framework* recognizes the importance of market development as an essential complement to agricultural productivity enhancement in helping the rural poor to escape poverty.<sup>74</sup> WFP is identified as an important stakeholder in the country, through its work in key sectors in supporting SHFs' marketing opportunities through its food procurement partnerships and efforts to strengthen the capacities of the cooperative unions and small-scale traders associations through which many SHFs access markets.<sup>75</sup> As well, the *Post-harvest Management Strategy in Grains in Ethiopia* supports development of markets, market infrastructure, and institutional/organizational structures.<sup>76</sup> Ethiopia's *Ten Years Plan of Agriculture Sector* also emphasizes increasing agricultural production and productivity through multiplication and distribution of improved seeds, training, post-harvest management, demonstration of new technologies, and strengthening monitoring and evaluation – agriculture sector reform is the top priority in the sectoral reform pillar of the plan.<sup>77</sup>
74. **Sudan:** WFP's 2019-2023 CSP incorporates a nexus approach aimed at improving national capacity to reduce hunger and malnutrition while contributing to SDGs 2, 17, and five strategic outcomes – including, that food insecure people in targeted areas and food systems have increased resilience to shocks by 2024. The CSP supports the *Sudan Zero Hunger Strategic Review 2017-2030 (ZHSR)*, the government's *Long-Term Agricultural Strategy 2003-2027*, and *Sudan's United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2018-2021*. CSP Activity 7 is to provide capacity strengthening support to farmers and local, state, and national agricultural institutions.<sup>78</sup> The CSP states that WFP will approach Strategic Outcome 3 (Food-insecure people in targeted areas and food systems have increased resilience to shocks by 2024) "through a combination of gender-responsive productive and shock-responsive safety nets (community and household asset creation and climate change adaptation, linked with livelihood support), support for SHFs and capacity strengthening at the national and subnational levels" through outputs including that vulnerable SHFs receive tools and services such as post-harvest management technologies, technical assistance and climate services that enhance their productivity and resilience.<sup>79</sup> This combination/layered approach is consistent with the LRFPP's guidance to base intervention designs on value chain analysis that considers the complexity of food systems and the perspectives and interests of various actors within them.
75. In Sudan, WFP targets SHFs based on three criteria: 1) small-scale farmers (5-10 feddans); 2) farmers in areas that are viable for farming; 3) poor but economically active farmers (at least 30 percent of targeted farmers should be women).<sup>80</sup> These criteria are highly aligned with the LRFPP in that they emphasize programmatic overlap/integration (SHFs from within areas that WFP is operating in already) and clearly specify that not all poor SHFs should be targeted (economically active). WFP's CSP in Sudan also supports

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<sup>72</sup> WFP, 2020, Ethiopia Country Strategic Plan (2020-2025). P. 20.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. P. 19.

<sup>74</sup> Government of Ethiopia, 2010. Ethiopia's Agricultural Sector Policy and Investment Framework (PIF) (2010-2020).

<sup>75</sup> Government of Ethiopia, Ministry of Agriculture and The Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency, 2015. *Sorghum Sector Development Strategy (Working Document 2015-2020)*.

<sup>76</sup> Government of Ethiopia, Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2018. *Postharvest Management Strategy in Grains in Ethiopia*. P. 56.

<sup>77</sup> Government of Ethiopia, 2022. Ethiopia's Ten-year Development Plan. P. 5.

<sup>78</sup> WFP, 2023. WFP Sudan Country Brief, January 2023. To contribute to post-harvest loss reduction, WFP provides trainings and hermetic storage to SHFs, allowing them to store and save grains from infestation/destruction by insects, rodents, mold, and moisture; during January 2023, WFP trained 26,000 SHFs on PHH and distributed 60,500 hermetic bags and 15,500 tarpaulins in Kassala, North Darfur, and Central Darfur States.

<sup>79</sup> WFP, 2018, The Sudan Country Strategic Plan (2019-2023). P. 21.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. P. 22.

the country's *Multi-Year Humanitarian Strategy (2017-2019)*, which builds on the *United Nations Darfur Protracted Displacement Strategy*.<sup>81</sup>

76. The *Strategic Plan for Agricultural Development (2017-2020)* states that, to enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems, the Government of Sudan will promote support for rural markets, administrative capacity, and supervision of the agriculture sector.<sup>82</sup> The *First National Adaptation Plan (2016)* includes climate-proofing strategies that include intensification of capacity building focusing on implementation of best agricultural practices and techniques, environmental measures, and diversification of crops – also strengthening farmers' local organization and networks, and improve marketing and strategic planning awareness/engagement.<sup>83</sup> Sudan's *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2015-2020)* recognizes that Sudan's forest biodiversity plays a major role in the sustainability of the traditional smallholder agricultural systems (including the restoration of germplasm of local farmers' varieties into the original farming systems in disasters and war-affected areas).<sup>84</sup>
77. In Sudan, the five areas targeted in North Kordofan by WFP were selected based on consultation with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Bank of Sudan – using criteria such as high production areas and the availability of registered FOs, in addition to considerations of where WFP was active and where there were opportunities to layer interventions with FAO. This is consistent with the Sudan Agricultural Revival Programme's goal of improving system efficiency by increasing farming intensity, marketing efficiency, and value addition through processing.<sup>85</sup>
78. Sudan's *National Agriculture Investment Plan* states an overall goal of achieving an agricultural development that transforms the agricultural sector from traditional subsistence farming into a modern sector that responds to market indicators and contributes strongly to reducing poverty, economic growth, and increasing foreign exchange earnings in light of sustainable management of natural resources.<sup>86</sup> One of the priorities of the Ministry of Agriculture in White Nile State, for example, is to increase access to finance for SHFs; this is a big gap and constraints on liquidity limit the scale of procurement from SHFs.
79. **Uganda:** The WFP Uganda CSP (2018-2022) is aligned with *Uganda's Vision 2040 and National Development Plan II* – contributing to the goals of the Uganda Zero Hunger Strategic Review; it addresses this context by contributing to six strategic outcomes including that SHFs, especially women, in targeted areas have enhanced and resilient livelihoods by 2030.<sup>87</sup> WFP's approach in the CSP is to support SHFs across the country – including refugee and host community farmers – to stimulate production by promoting predictable demand, promoting collective marketing of grains to increase incomes, and improving household food security.<sup>88</sup> What is more, the CSP identifies the strategic opportunity for WFP to link SHFs to markets while improving value chain efficiency and reducing post-harvest losses; it argues that local procurement creates demand for staple grains and that agriculture and market-support activities help SHFs gain access to markets.<sup>89</sup>
80. As well, the CSP is integrated into Strategic Priority 2 of Uganda's *United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2021-2025)*,<sup>90</sup> through which the UNCT aims to help marginalized and vulnerable people benefit from increased productivity and decent employment by supporting inclusive sustainable economic growth in productive sectors, including enhancing productivity and resilience of agriculture with a special focus on smallholders. Looking at particular programmes, WFP's five-year partnership with the Mastercard Foundation in Uganda is focused on creating employment opportunities for youth in agriculture

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid. P. 10.

<sup>82</sup> Government of Sudan, 2016. *Strategic Plan for Agricultural Development 2017-2020*, emanating from the Quarter-century Strategy.

<sup>83</sup> Government of Sudan, 2016. *National Adaptation Plan (2016)*.

<sup>84</sup> Government of Sudan, 2015. *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2015-2020*.

<sup>85</sup> FAO, Government of Sudan, 2015, *Country Programming Framework for Sudan, Plan of Action (2015-2019): Resilient Livelihoods for Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition*.

<sup>86</sup> Government of Sudan, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, 2016. *Sudan's National Agriculture Investment Plan (SUDNAIP)*.

<sup>87</sup> WFP, 2017, *Uganda Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)*.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> UNCT, 2021, *United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2021-2025)*.



through production and post-harvest management, market access, digital and financial inclusion, and national capacity strengthening.<sup>91</sup>

81. Uganda's *Third National Development Plan (NDP III) (2020/21-2024/25)* states the aim of accelerating the transformation of agriculture from subsistence to commercial production by connecting smallholders with value-chains.<sup>92</sup> Further, the country's *National Agriculture Policy* identifies as one of seven main agricultural development challenges the "lack of sustainable or dependable access to markets" and in response aims to develop regional markets for locally produced food products.<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, the country's *National Agricultural Extension Strategy (2016/17-2020/21)* recognizes the importance of linkages within the food system and the potential of commercial farmers as agents of extension service provision and sources of market pull-factors to move SHFs into market-oriented commercialisation.<sup>94</sup> WFP is mentioned in the *Uganda National Seed Strategy 2014/15-2019/20* as having the role of complementing government efforts in training, crop production, and marketing systems and at times buying seed from seed companies for distribution to vulnerable communities. *The Uganda Nutrition Action Plan II (2020-2025)* identifies infrastructural, technological, trade, and marketing barriers that negatively affect the production and consumption of nutrient-dense foods as a major contextual challenge.<sup>95</sup>

## Contextual Alignment

### *Finding 2: Targeting criteria are not harmonized between WFP's programming and procurement.*

82. WFP prioritizes work with SHFs/FOs in areas of high vulnerability. The majority of farmers at the point of enrolment are small-scale subsistence farmers, though this is not necessarily the case as targeting also takes in consideration farmers' willingness to engage in agriculture beyond subsistence purposes – (i.e., farming as business). In general, it can be said though that most SHFs targeted by WFP for programming are unlikely to produce surpluses when they are first engaged in interventions, and would not represent an attractive procurement opportunity without the benefit of successful resilience/livelihoods interventions. In terms of geography, WFP beneficiaries in LRFPP pilot countries are often located in regions that are characterized by relatively poor agricultural production, quality, and efficiency. As stated by the LRFPP, WFP's work by design targets settings where "value chains are often neither efficient nor balanced, and SHFs and their organizations are exposed to greater risks than other suppliers are or do not receive fair prices commensurate with the value they add".<sup>96</sup>
83. Local procurement becomes more challenging in contexts where value chains are either inefficient or unreliable – or both. Considerable investment is required to support the development of smallholder capacities with such value chains. Otherwise, local procurement is incentivized to target more established farmers, and even large commercial farms, where cost-efficiency and reliable supplies of food can be achieved, but in ways that do not lead to the attainment of pro-SHF development and programme objectives. This creates a tension between the operationalization of the LRFPP and its procurement and programmatic objectives that manifest at both strategic and geographic levels (see the figure below).

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Government of Uganda, 2020. *Third National Development Plan (NDP III) (2020/21-2024/25)*.

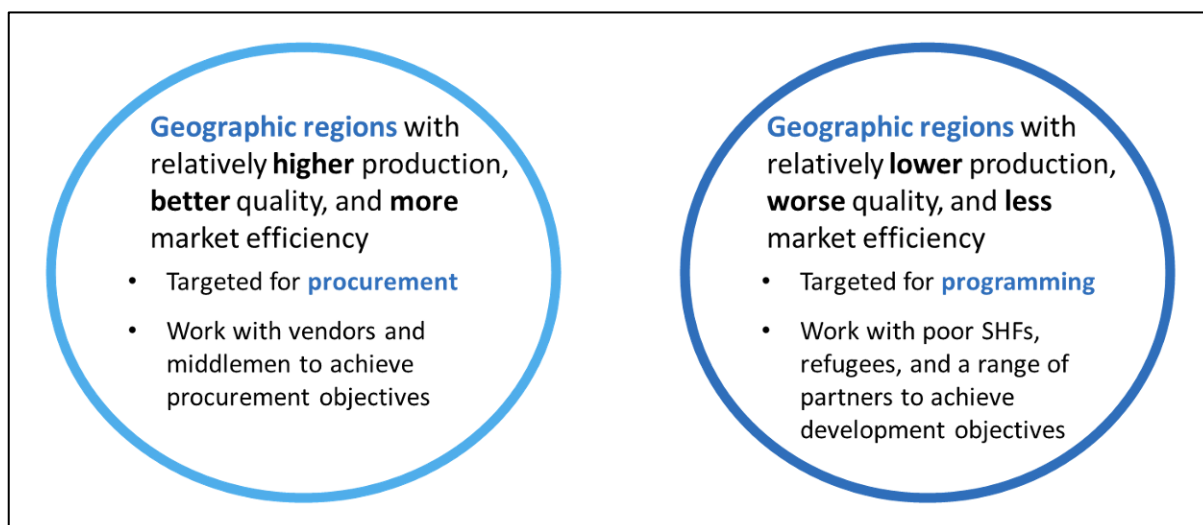
<sup>93</sup> Government of Uganda, Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, 2013. *National Agriculture Policy*.

<sup>94</sup> Government of Uganda, 2016. *National Agricultural Extension Strategy 2016/17-2020/21*.

<sup>95</sup> Government of Uganda, 2020. *Uganda Nutrition Action Plan II*.

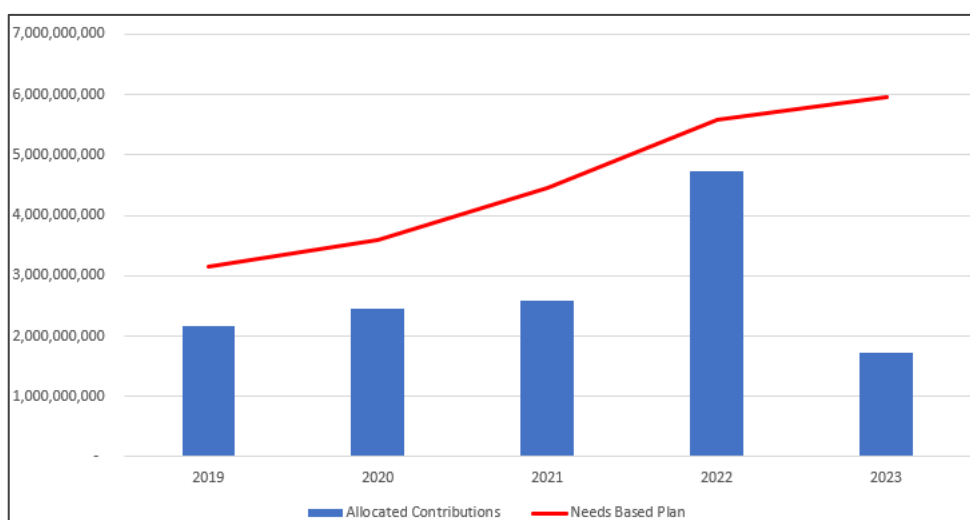
<sup>96</sup> LRFPP. P.12, para. 18.

**Figure 4: Geographic targeting priorities for WFP's procurement/programming initiatives**



84. Indirect procurement modalities in the three pilot countries tend towards areas with higher production capacity. WFP vendors source through these areas because they are relatively more likely to find producers there with the capacity to meet quantity/quality standards for bulking and fulfilling large orders – such as WFP’s – allowing vendors to source greater output with minimal input/support. Direct procurement modalities have been applied in areas with relatively lower capacities, integrating these into existing WFP interventions, where WFP has engaged extensively to strengthen market functioning by supporting SHFs and other value chain actors to improve smallholder production as a way of increasing supplies of cost-effective and reliable agricultural products available to WFP through pro-SHF local procurement. Direct procurement modalities of this kind have the benefit of being controllable and targeted, transmitting value directly to SHFs through shortened value chains that ‘cut out the middleman’. But considerable investments of resources are required to successfully implement the types of interventions required to strengthen the capacities of vulnerable SHFs to move them from subsistence farming to producing efficient and reliable surpluses for local procurement. Programming budgets and durations are finite to begin with, meaning that any particular intervention can only impact a limited group of beneficiaries, in a limited area, for a limited time, which in turn limits the potential to bring direct procurement to scale unless resources can be mobilised to extend and expand existing programmes. Unfortunately, interviews with the WFP RBN indicated a contracting funding climate in the coming years.

**Figure 5: Comparing RBN annual needs versus allocated (confirmed) contributions (USD)**



**Source:** RBN Budget and Programming, Partnerships and Innovation

**Finding 3:** *Substantial resources are needed to help develop the capacity of SHFs to meet large levels of purchases. But once capacity strengthening is reached there is potential to transition SHFs/FOs from direct procurement modalities to indirect modalities.*

85. A considerable investment in resources is required to help develop the capacity of SHFs to meet procurement requirements in terms of quantity and quality. In particular, capacity strengthening is required until produce surplus is reached, and then further support is needed to catalyse grouping and aggregating into FOs, coops, and apex organisations. But once a requisite level of capacity strengthening has been achieved, there is potential to create linkages with traders that operate in the area, and transition SHFs/FOs from direct procurement to indirect modalities.
86. **Ethiopia:** Direct procurement was tested in Gambella, a region of Ethiopia known for low production, where WFP worked with SHFs through resilience and livelihoods interventions aimed at supporting production and marketing of maize. Through these interventions, smallholders and cooperatives were eventually able to market their goods to WFP. The presence of WFP vendors in Gambella is limited. Most WFP vendors buy opportunistically throughout the country, sourcing from regions that are relatively more productive – like Oroma – and thus attractive as sources of cost-effective and steady agricultural commodities.
87. **Uganda:** WFP has demonstrated the successful use of direct modalities to procure maize in lower production areas like Karamoja. Due to WFP’s sustained investments over time in working with the SHFs in Karamoja, traders who previously had only procured from high production areas in the west/south-west parts of the country are now engaging in Karamoja as the productive potential of FOs increases. Note that WFP provides substantial support to producers in this area (driven by alignment with HGSP objectives) including covering storage and fumigation expenses for SHFs on a non-cost recovery basis.<sup>97</sup> This is an example of how SHFs supported by WFP programmes can mature over time from subsistence-level farming to increase production to the point that they have surpluses to sell – demonstrating longitudinal integration of programming and procurement efforts.
88. **Sudan:** Indirect modalities were used in Gedaref State, where there is high production. Direct modalities were used in South Darfur, North Kordofan, White Nile, etc. – where WFP focuses its SHF support. WFP has observed that increased procurement demand seems to stimulate production, as FOs prefer to sell to WFP in bulk, rather than selling their goods retail on the local markets. It is important to note that Sudan has been the only country so far out of the three pilots to implement indirect mandate contracts (long-term) with traders to buy sorghum from SHFs. According interviews with the CO, mandate contracts were implemented in the eastern states, covering Kosti, Gedaref, White Nile, and Blue Nile, for delivery of over 4,150 MT.
89. Still, there are often sizeable gaps between farmers’ desire to become a WFP supplier, and their capacity to do so. In lower production areas, in particular, neither SHFs nor FOs typically have the capacity to engage with direct contract modalities with WFP. For these contracts to take place, it is essential that SHFs and their FOs are functional and capable of producing and selling sorghum in satisfaction of WFP requirements. As mentioned, this evaluation found that substantial resources are needed to help develop the capacity of SHFs to meet large levels of purchases. As well, Sudan CO’s concept note for local procurement indicates that improving SHF participation and roles along the sorghum value chain requires interventions that contribute to building, improving, and strengthening SHF/FO production capacity and improving SHF participation and roles along the sorghum value chain.<sup>98</sup> It provides specific examples of the array of long-term support – proper agricultural inputs, equipment, and facilities, as well as access to extension services, financial services, and market and weather information – needed to effectively support direct procurement.

**Finding 4:** *When WFP’s local and regional food procurement is properly integrated into WFP and its partners’ programming interventions it is most effective in improving the livelihoods and resilience of*

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<sup>97</sup> WFP, Uganda. 2021. Request for Approval of Procurement Plan of Local Purchases from Smallholder Farmers through Direct Contracting, January 2021 to May 2022.

<sup>98</sup> WFP, Sudan. 2022. Strengthening livelihoods and resilience of smallholder farmers in Sudan by leveraging WFP food procurement operations. Concept Note, LRFPP-Sudan Country Office.

*SHFs through increased productivity and improved market support, with less evidence for impacts on addressing bottlenecks in value chains and enhancing food systems.*

90. Alignment between procurement and programmes in the pilot COs occurred primarily when local procurement piloted under the LRFPP was integrated into WFP's existing programming activities and objectives in the areas of market support, resilience, and HGSP. These efforts have produced demonstrable evidence across the pilots that programming activities supporting SHFs and strengthening food systems can be combined effectively with local procurement under the LRFPP.
91. **Market Support:** The Uganda CO has successfully leveraged pro-smallholder food procurement to catalyse inclusive market systems transformation through linkages to Agricultural Market Systems Support (AMS) interventions that aim to improve resilient and diversified livelihoods among targeted SHFs. Specifically, through direct pro-smallholder purchase modalities in the AMS operational areas in the Karamoja region, the CO created opportunities for smallholder participation in a quality-oriented and formal market. Direct pro-smallholder local food purchases in Karamoja have helped to build and consolidate the capacity of FOs that WFP has been supporting; AMS-supported FOs are linked directly to the WFP local food procurement activity to stimulate production, consolidate the organizational strengthening of FOs, build experience in collective sales, and improve incomes amongst farmers in the poorest sub-region of Uganda. By providing stable markets, local procurement has helped to incentivize increased productivity among SHFs in the region and consolidate the capacity of FOs to produce not just more maize, but better maize. KIIs indicated that SHFs previously producing at a subsistence level were able to generate and sell surplus grains in as little as 1-2 seasons, due to the combination of support offered by WFP and its partners and the promise of a market for quality grain to be offloaded through direct purchases.<sup>99</sup> Given the dearth of buyers in Karamoja paying a premium for quality grains, it is unlikely that market forces alone would have been sufficient for incentivizing SHFs to produce both high-quantity and quality grains.
92. **Resilience:** In Sudan, direct contract modalities have taken place in conjunction with the programmatic targeting of different SHF types, whose capacity needs were first supported by resilience programming to enable pro-SHF procurement. Local procurement activities are largely connected to the second part of a two-pronged resilience programming strategy that consists of 1) promoting productive safety nets (PSN), and 2) post-harvest loss (PHL) reduction. WFP's work to minimize PHL involves training SHFs on proper PHM and storage, as well as the provision of storage facilities (mainly plastic silos and hermetic bags) to individual SHFs. Local procurement commenced around programming activities concentrated in South Darfur and North Kordofan, which were later expanded to other parts of the country like White Nile State. Sorghum procured locally through direct modalities has provided WFP-supported SHFs incentives to pursue better PHM and storage with the knowledge that there are available markets for their higher quality agricultural outputs. While the outbreak of conflict in Sudan prevented contracts from being fulfilled, quality inspectors that visited the pilot production site found the quality of the sorghum from FOs was sufficiently high such that the FOs met the quantity and quality targeted by LRFPP. Thus, there is evidence to demonstrate that with appropriate supports, SHFs are able to produce a surplus of quality agricultural commodities that can be brought to market. Unfortunately, as is described later in this evaluation, farmers were not able to find alternative buyers for their goods. The war distorted agricultural value chains and prevented accessibility to suppliers and food for local purchase.
93. In Ethiopia, Rural Resilience Initiative (R4) aims to enable vulnerable rural families to increase their food and income security by managing climate-related risks through a combination of four risk management strategies.<sup>100</sup> It is the risk reduction component of the R4, which focuses on improved agricultural practices and other supports, that connects to LRFPP most directly.<sup>101</sup> The R4 was initially implemented in Gambella, a region of Ethiopia known for poor infrastructure and where agricultural production generally does not include the use of quality seeds or good agronomic practices. In response to these and other bottlenecks

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<sup>99</sup> The promise of a market comes with caveats and risks, actual purchasing is dependent on WFP's budget availability.

<sup>100</sup> The four strategies are: improved resource management through nature-based solutions or improved agricultural practices (risk reduction); access to insurance (risk transfer); increased investment, livelihoods diversification and microcredit (prudent risk taking); and savings (risk retention).

<sup>101</sup> WFP and Oxfam, 2016, *Impact Evaluation of The R4 Rural Resilience Initiative in Senegal Final Evaluation, Final report*. Evaluations of the R4 initiative elsewhere found that insured farmers are also more likely than those without any insurance to invest more in seeds and fertilizers.

WFP was able to provide SHFs in the area quality seeds, training on improved agronomic practices, and PHM. Market linkages were created – through direct local procurement modalities – to buy from those WFP-supported SHFs 5,000 MT of quality maize, which had no trace of aflatoxin and less than 1 percent in impurities.<sup>102</sup> The case of Gambella demonstrates that through the provision of end-to-end supports and capacity building for SHFs (and cooperative unions, along with the creation of market access, it is possible to successfully<sup>103</sup> integrate local procurement and programming even in areas where infrastructure is poor and the agricultural sector is underdeveloped.

#### Text Box A: Conceptualizing resilience

The multi-agency Resilience Measurement Technical Working Group of the Food Security Information Network, where WFP plays a leading role, defines resilience as: “the capacity to ensure that shocks and stressors do not have long-lasting adverse development consequences”.<sup>104</sup> This definition focuses on strengthening the capacities of rural, poor, vulnerable, and food insecure people’s livelihoods and production to: absorb shocks/stressors, adapt to change, and transform systems, structures and livelihoods.<sup>105</sup> The design and implementation of the resilience programming is wide-ranging, prioritizing elements that range from disaster risk reduction to prevention of undernutrition to increased support to social protection and safety nets; indeed, resilience can even include “smallholder-friendly procurement initiatives...[through which] WFP is improving farmers’ marketing skills and food quality.”<sup>106</sup> Based on this expansive definition, efforts to enhance market access for SHFs – such as with the AMS programme described above, or even local procurement initiatives under the LRFPP – might even fall under the umbrella of resilience. An evaluation of WFP’s resilience policy found that though it contains a relevant definition of resilience, the terminology used alongside this definition is ill-defined and can be confusing.<sup>107</sup> One result of this is that most resilience programmes align, to some extent, with the principles underlying the resilience policy design, but many resilience programmes are seen as a set of activities rather than an outcome for the whole of WFP.

96. **HGSF:** Food purchases in Ethiopia and Uganda from local FOs were integrated into national efforts to promote HGSF, thereby injecting revenue into the economy, empowering SHFs, and strengthening local food systems. For instance, WFP implemented pro-smallholder farmer contracting approaches to purchase food commodities locally and supply schools in the nine districts of Karamoja, Uganda, under an HGSF initiative known as Karamoja Feeds Karamoja Phase II. Local purchases from AMS-assisted FOs in the region were linked to nationally owned HGSF through WFP direct food purchases. Linkages made between AMS programming and HGSF demonstrates that local procurement can be used as part of a pro-smallholder home-grown approach that is helps farmers to gain access to predictable and stable local markets.<sup>108</sup>

<sup>102</sup> Interview with Ethiopia CO procurement team.

<sup>103</sup> Based on these successes, in 2023, resilience programming was expanded to other regions of Ethiopia, including Amhara, where the Evaluation Team conducted fieldwork. At the time of evaluation, resilience programming in Amhara was still at the beginning stages, and procurement activities had not been started.

<sup>104</sup> Food Security Information Network, 2013, Resilience Measurement Principles: Toward an Agenda for Measurement Design.

<sup>105</sup> WFP, 2015, Policy on Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition, WFP/EB.A/2015/5-C, 27 April.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, p. 14.

<sup>107</sup> WFP, 2023, Summary Report on The Evaluation of WFP’s Policy on Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition, WFP/EB.A/2023/7-D, 12 May 2023

<sup>108</sup> While local procurement offered local markets to SHFs and locally produced nutritious agricultural commodities to schools through HGSF, the case of Karamoja also illustrates the type of institutional capacity building needed to impact sustainable change to local food through local procurement. Currently, the local government contracted WFP to handle procurement for the HGSF program. Though this a common arrangement in HGSF programmes at some stage in their development, sustainable HGSF will require that government capacities are built to take over procurement from SHF/FOs.

## 2.2 EQ2: (EFFECTIVENESS/IMPACT)

### *Impacts (intended and unintended)*

*Finding 5: Local procurement modalities had important positive impacts on the livelihoods of SHFs; the impacts of the LRFPP are dependent upon the modality applied and the context it is applied in.*

97. **Impacts on SHFs:** The programmatic interventions integrated into the LRFPP pilots have helped improve the capacities of farmers,<sup>109</sup> increasing their ability to produce quality crops to meet the demand and standards set out by WFP as part of local procurement. Of course, the scale of these interventions is limited when compared to national levels of production, as well as WFP's own procurement activities. Still, for those farmers that are provided support, those included in fieldwork indicate that the possibility of selling to WFP acts as a key motivation for SHFs to produce higher quality agricultural products. While the qualitative nature of this evaluation makes it difficult to quantify the extent to which incomes increased, improvements to agricultural livelihoods were widely noted across most discussions with SHFs/FOs. Similarly, the limited qualitative sample does not allow for disaggregation of data by sex, age, or other characteristics. That being said, women and youth did also note benefiting from increased incomes, and were often proactively integrated into and empowered through the WFP programming that was linked to local procurement.
98. In particular, the price premiums paid through WFP contracts for quality grain (anywhere from 5-15 percent above market) is transmitted and captured by smallholders in the form of increased incomes. Evaluation findings provide some anecdotal evidence that a higher percentage of profits is transferred to farmers under direct procurement than through indirect modalities. The qualitative nature of this evaluation makes this finding very difficult to verify quantitatively. Still, SHFs in Uganda and Ethiopia both reported receiving higher prices for their goods than through the shorter value chains associated with direct procurement, which created a preference for direct contracting with WFP over engaging with traders (non-WFP vendors). Nevertheless, qualitative data suggests a positive overall impact on SHFs incomes. This is particularly true for direct purchases, and especially when taken into consideration with the compounded effects of the WFP interventions.
99. Gains to incomes were used by SHFs and their households for a wide range of purposes; these included: housing, healthcare, education, investment in farming inputs, small business investments, etc. SHFs also noted that increased incomes resulted in increases in food consumption in terms of the number of meals eaten each day, with some gains made in terms of diversity as well. However, interviews of SHFs and CPs also indicated the ways in which impacts on food diversity can be limited by inadequate nutritional knowledge and practices. In Uganda, for instance, additional incomes were used primarily to increase meat consumption, rather than other nutritious foods. The implication is that targeted nutrition-sensitive education and sensitisation is required alongside support given to SHFs, to increase consumption of nutritious foods and to promote dietary diversity as part of nutrition-sensitive food systems.

*Finding 6: Conditionalities associated with indirect procurement modalities can be too low, as some do not meet a minimum threshold that exceeds the existing proportion of purchases traders make from SHFs, so as to incentivize more pro-SHF purchases.*

100. It should be noted, however, that the impacts of the LRFPP are dependent upon the modality applied and the context it is applied in. This is particularly apparent when it comes to the impact that indirect purchase modalities have on incentivizing additional SHF purchases. The impact of indirect procurement depends on whether conditionalities are a suitable or sufficient threshold for compelling traders to undertake additional SHF purchases. For instance, in Ethiopia and Sudan traders reported that they struggled to meet 10 percent thresholds set for them under WFP contracts. In Uganda, vendors reported they already source 30-50 percent of their agricultural goods – depending on the company – from smallholders, though (as mentioned under EQ 1.3) there is no consistent definition of the term SHF across this stakeholder group, as

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<sup>109</sup> As mentioned elsewhere in this report, WFP support for SHFs in the areas of PHM (handling to decrease post-harvest losses, creating awareness on quality control and assurance, proper moisture control, storage, etc.) helped to build the capacity of SHFs so that they could meet the requirements set out by WFP.

shown in Table 9. In the case of Uganda then, indirect procurement modalities are being applied to “pay traders more for something that they are already doing”, as was indicated by an interviewee from the CO.

**Table 9: Breakdown of SHFs purchases from private sector actors in Uganda<sup>110</sup>**

Private sector actor	% From SHFs	% Purchased elsewhere
1	30%	70% from commercial farmers
2	30-40%	N/A
3	50%	50% from commercial farmers/own farms
4	30%	70% through traders
5	30%	70% through traders

**Source:** Compiled from data collected by ET during fieldwork

101. The case of Uganda is interesting also because many larger traders – including WFP vendors – in the country are engaged in pro-SHF business models that provide supports to SHFs (inputs, training, tarpaulins, storage, etc.) in exchange for exclusive supply and agricultural produce that is produced at higher volumes and according to higher standards through the support given.<sup>111</sup> The business case is for assisting SHFs with productivity and PHM is clear, whereas support for so-called ‘non-market’ aspects of agricultural enterprise (such as inclusion, nutrition, and sustainability) is limited.<sup>112</sup> Based on interviews with SHFs, working with traders that implement such pro-smallholder models, their yields and incomes have increased as a result of the support they have received. It should be noted though, that even though pro-SHFs business models exist in Uganda, these are driven by market forces – more and better produce to sell for traders – rather than the altruism that underpins the development objectives underpinning local procurement. Again, the pro-SHF business models being implemented by traders are based on the market-driven provision of inputs/training in Uganda to increase quantity and quality, and they do not have similar incentives to offer training that impacts knowledge, attitudes, and practices in the areas of nutrition, gender, climate, etc.
102. While the evaluation did not engage in an extensive profiling of traders working within the pilot countries, it did find that Ugandan traders that used pro-SHF business models were more likely to be larger, established traders. Neither informal traders – often referred to as middlemen – nor foreign traders from Kenya, Sudan, and elsewhere worked in a way that promoted SHF development in this way; opportunities may exist to more extensively profile the traders operating across the pilot countries to determine which ones are utilizing pro-SHF business practices and which ones can be incentivized to do so.
103. Unlike in Uganda, pro-SHF business models among traders in Ethiopia and Sudan are not widespread. Interviews with traders in these countries indicate a perception among this stakeholder group that the current potential for productivity among SHFs/FOs is not sufficient to justify the investment that pro-SHF business models require. Additionally, some traders in Ethiopia indicate that previous experiences with such pro-smallholder business practices resulted in farmers reneging on informal agreements to supply produce after receiving inputs/training. Such experiences eroded incentives for traders to subsequently pursue such modalities. Where pro-SHF business models do happen, it is through contract farming. As with pro-SHF business models in Uganda, traders in these two countries use contract farming to provide support to the SHFs – in the form of seeds, land preparation services, in addition to some cash as loans – in exchange for the exclusive sale of their produce.

<sup>110</sup> Table includes one processor and four WFP vendors.

<sup>111</sup> For example, in Kiryandongo these include: Rise and Shine and Farm Uganda

<sup>112</sup> The companies Asili and Aponye claim to provide gender training, but few SHFs said they received this from the groups; sustainability training limited to crop rotation and soil tilling, where it exists; and no traders reported providing nutrition training.

104. Even if contract farming is not widely used in Ethiopia and Sudan, governments in both countries have shown interest in expanding its use. In Ethiopia, contract farming is listed as a key strategy (along with cluster farming, strengthening improved access to credits, facilitating producer-buyer linkages, addressing processor challenges, etc.) in the *Ten Years Plan of Agriculture Sector* to boost agricultural productivity.<sup>113</sup> In Sudan, the Government of Sudan is prioritising contract farming, and had been drafting a law (with the support of WFP) to mandate contract farming until the war interrupted these efforts. In addition, there have already been some instructive localized efforts in the country to promote contract farming by the government in Sudan. For example, the Ministry of Agriculture supported farmers in a project funded by IFAD by working with private sector actors that were buying from project SHFs to implemented contract farming. Under this arrangement, the private sector provided finance and other inputs to the SHFs and the SHF would repay in-kind from the harvest; contract farming in this instance was only uses for cash crops such as sesame or groundnut, and not for cereals.
105. **Impacts on traders:** One place where an impact has been seen over time as a result of long-term WFP partnerships with vendors, is the improvement in vendors’ reputation for sourcing and providing quality grain. According to traders interviewed across the three COs, there is a powerful incentive to sell to WFP because this helps to build their commercial profile. Vendors also reported being incentivized to improve grain quality to be able meet standards associated with WFP tenders. “If we get an opportunity to participate in international tenders, the experience we have with WFP will help us increase competitiveness...We also obtained new knowledge and skills from engagements with WFP, especially on quality standards, warehouse management and post-harvest management. We also benefit by renting our storage facility to WFP,”<sup>114</sup> noted one trader, echoing the opinions of others. Traders viewed their ability to meet WFP standards and requirements as signalling of their potential to compete and succeed in national and international markets.
106. WFP has worked throughout the years to conduct trainings and transfer knowledge and skills for post-harvest handling (PHH), testing, storage, etc., to be able to secure supplies of quality agricultural products. Some vendors have reportedly incorporated quality standards, practices, testing, and storage along their own value chains, seeing this a necessary step to be able produce sufficient quality agricultural goods to bid on WFP contracts. Quality improvements of this type cannot specifically be attributed to local procurement carried out throughout the LRFPP piloting phase, as WFP’s professional relationship with most of its vendors precede the policy. There was no evidence of analogous changes occurring beyond the current WFP vendor network, suggesting that perhaps WFP procurement is not large enough in scale to induce indirect changes in the wider food system. Nevertheless, the nature and power of the influence that WFP has over its own vendor network could be magnified if the number of vendors WFP actively buys from is expanded.

**Table 10: Size of WFP’s vendor/FO network in each CO**

Country	Traders/aggregators	FOs (including cooperative unions)
<b>Ethiopia</b>	15	40
<b>Sudan</b>	32	35
<b>Uganda</b>	37 (12 engaged)	10 (8 engaged)

**Source:** Compiled from data provided by CO procurement teams to the ET

107. The table above shows that each pilot CO in the region currently has a network of around 15-30 registered traders that have the management, operational, and financial capacities to perform to expected WFP standards. Not all of these are equally active in bidding on and winning WFP bids. As the Ethiopia VCA states, “Wheat and maize WFP vendors are...large wholesalers, who buy wheat in large quantities to sell to

<sup>113</sup> Government of Ethiopia, 2022. Ethiopia’s Ten-year Development Plan.

<sup>114</sup> Traders interviewed by the ET in Ethiopia.



WFP and other institutions".<sup>115</sup> In Uganda, the VCA indicated that WFP procured around 91 percent of its commodities from four major private commercial suppliers, while Sudan's VCA showed that in 2019-2020 WFP procured about 96 percent of its sorghum from the government via the Agricultural Bank of Sudan and two commercial suppliers.<sup>116</sup>

108. Focusing purchases through a number of suppliers has important benefits. Doing so reduces the administrative burden on WFP staff to manage numerous relationships and contracts, which is in alignment with the procurement objective related to performance and efficiency. Nevertheless, aspects of this approach might adversely affect the development, resilience, and competition of agricultural markets, as it limits the number of traders willing to buy quality agricultural products. This limits competition among the traders operating in any given area, and the marketing options available to farmers in any given areas.

***Finding 7:** There is emerging evidence that local procurement and related programming efforts have created gains in resilience among SHFs through sustained investment in value chain activities. However, gains in market resilience are limited due to limited competition among buyers of quality grains.*

109. **Impacts on resilience:** The resilience of a food system is measured by its capacity to ensure that shocks and stressors do not have long-lasting adverse development consequences.<sup>117</sup> In the case of the LRFPP pilots, a key area of resilience would be the endurance and continuity of livelihoods and systems due to the creation of strengthened livelihoods and improved access to markets that extend beyond relying upon WFP for business to other clients that are will to pay a premium for quality agricultural commodities.
110. In Ethiopia, local procurement linked to the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative has potential impacts on SHFs' savings and investment in diversified productive assets – particularly among female farmers<sup>118</sup> – in ways that increase the overall resilience of smallholders to disruptions to the agricultural markets and other economic shocks. While it was noted that farmers in Gambella were able to sell 5,000 MT of quality maize to WFP – a notable achievement in a historically low-producing part of the country, it is unclear if they were subsequently able to find other buyers for their product, given that the traders in WFP's network are generally less active in that part of the country.
111. Importantly, AMS support in Karamoja in Uganda is another example of how WFP has worked with SHFs through FOs over the long-term to build their capacities such that many are now able to produce beyond subsistence to sell quality maize to WFP through direct purchase modalities. These FOs have now been strengthened to the point that large traders, which previously did not operate in the area, are now moving in to capitalize on production gains. As they continue to enter the market in Karamoja, they offer additional market outlets for quality maize. Today, there is some initial evidence that markets in Karamoja are starting to become more resilient, as vendors are entering Karamoja to capitalize on the strengthened capacity of WFP support to SHFs/FOs. Creating further linkages between WFP-supported SHFs/FOs and vendors can perhaps help incentivize the latter to enter otherwise neglected markets to increase the pool of available buyers for quality grains.
112. Still, key informants in Uganda noted that a lack of information about potential buyers for quality grain, as well as the presence of many smaller informal middlemen in the Uganda market that were not discerning about grain standards, made it less likely that SHFs would find outlets for quality maize in the event of WFP withdrawal. While the initial effects of AMS programming generated resilience gains, which can also be found in specific programmes in other pilot COs, a WFP intervention does not guarantee associated long-term increases in market resilience. WFP programming only creates the initial conditions for increased resilience of SHFs. But programming does not guarantee market resilience. Historically, there are examples that suggest that simply building famers' capacities did not automatically lead to expanded markets for quality maize in Karamoja. In 2020, for instance, contracting of SHFs was undertaken by WFP before funding had been secured to carry out direct purchases. Demand ultimately fell short of supply, leaving

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<sup>115</sup> WFP, 2023, Value Chain Analysis of Wheat, Maize and Red Haricot Bean in Ethiopia: Evidence for Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy Case Study: Amhara, Oromia and SNNP Regions.

<sup>116</sup> WFP, 2021, Value Chain Analysis of The Sorghum Subsector in Sudan, April.

<sup>117</sup> Food Security Information Network. 2013. Resilience Measurement Principles: Toward an Agenda for Measurement Design. Rome.

<sup>118</sup> Oxfam, US. 2017. R4 Ethiopia Impact Evaluation Report 2012-2016.

SHFs with 700 MT of unsold quality commodities and no market for the premium product or support for the premium pricing anticipated by SHFs as they invested in the production and PHH processes required.

113. The case of Sudan provides additional evidence that incentivizing SHFs to produce at higher quantities and qualities will not itself guarantee that resilient markets will be available to them. In Sudan, for instance, WFP-supported FOs were contracted to sell sorghum to WFP through direct modalities. After contracting, the product was aggregated, bagged, and stored from SHFs in the preparation for delivery. When civil conflict in Sudan erupted, the sorghum that had been bulked and prepared for transfer to WFP could not be picked-up/delivered and the contracts could not be fulfilled. The FOs that aggregated the sorghum from farmers were left with the product, which the SHFs eventually sought back, after FOs could not find an alternative buyer.<sup>119</sup> Because the war cut off both physical and internet connectivity between the WFP and SHFs, there was little possibility to hear directly from farmers to assess their changing situation and find contingencies to overcome their challenges. The conflict context in Sudan is an exceptional case, but nonetheless demonstrates that it is not always possible for SHFs to find alternate markets for commodities produced for WFP.

**Finding 8:** *Local procurement models do not exhibit food systems gains based on procurement objectives alone; achieving development objectives related to gender, environment, and nutrition outcomes requires integration into procurement objectives/activities that engage these issues in each context.*

114. **Impacts on inclusion:** This is to be expected given the that operational objectives focus on ensuring a reliable and cost-efficient supply of food for WFP operations in a way that does not differentiate on the basis of gender,<sup>120</sup> age, or other inclusion criteria. In this sense, procurement modalities can be considered ‘non-discriminatory’, in that they do not discriminate according to sex, age, disability status, etc. Nor do they procurement modalities demonstrate gains in representation or empowerment of women, youth, or other vulnerable actors than would otherwise be exhibited within the food systems of each country based on the social, economic, cultural, etc. forces affecting each. In this sense, procurement modalities can also be deemed ‘non-inclusive’, in that they do not seek the active inclusion of marginalized groups, outside of a handful direct purchases that specifically targeted women’s FOs, despite the considerable challenges women<sup>121</sup> and other groups like youth and PWDs<sup>122</sup> face in participating in the regional agricultural sector.
115. Profile data collected along with the traceability template usually includes data on the sex and age of the smallholder being targeted. But there is no indication that this data is used by WFP to influence or better target indirect procurement from an inclusion perspective. Just as procurement objectives related to WFP contracting modalities are driven by commercial considerations, WFP vendors report that they are also making their own procurement decisions based on the productive potential and quality – that is, the commercial viability – of the farmers they are working with – and as such does not in the modalities themselves make accommodations for inclusion. In other words, vendors do not favour women, youth, etc. in their buying decisions. Instead, a vendor will consider whether a given smallholder or FO can deliver the commodities at a specific date, price, and quality, and not whether buying from that individual or group will contribute to any inclusion objectives within a food system; this conclusion is supported by findings from the *Thematic Evaluation of Supply Chain Outcomes in the Food System in Eastern Africa from 2016 to 2021*.<sup>123</sup>
116. In terms of direct purchases, there are examples where targeted buying from women-led FOs has been used to empower women within the agricultural sector. For instance, in Sudan direct purchases have been made from female cooperatives, creating markets for these groups. Such instances are limited, however; as was mentioned, purchasing decisions are usually dictated by market the capacity of any SHF/FO to produce surplus grain of a sufficient quality. The main way of supporting inclusion in the context of local

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<sup>119</sup> The sorghum had to be emptied from the WFP bags/sacks into alternative bags – at an additional cost to the FO. Afterwards, the FO also incurred further transport costs to return the product back to the SHFs.

<sup>120</sup> As was noted above, none of the VCAs undertaken in the pilot countries had any detailed gender analysis incorporated into them, suggesting that gender is not a primary consideration when undertaking local procurement.

<sup>121</sup> UN Women, 2019, “The Gender Gap in Agricultural Productivity in sub-Saharan Africa: Causes, Costs and Solutions”, *Policy Brief* No. 11.

<sup>122</sup> FAO, CTA, and IFAD, 2014, *Youth and Agriculture: Key Challenges and Concrete Solutions*.

<sup>123</sup> WFP, 2022, WFP, *Thematic Evaluation of Supply Chain Outcomes in the Food System in Eastern Africa from 2016 to 2021*, Decentralized Evaluation Report.

procurement is through the programming models that are attached to it. Most – if not all – programming linked to procurement make explicit efforts to include and empower of women, youth, as well as other disadvantaged groups. Take WFP’s AMS programme in Uganda, as an example. It is aimed at increasing the capacity of SHFs, with a focus on women and youth, to improve agricultural incomes and diversify livelihoods by training women and youth SHFs in PHM, collective marketing, agri-finance, and business practices. In general, WFP programming across the pilot COs stresses women’s empowerment through equal opportunities in agriculture, equal access to agricultural resources, and equal voice in the decisions that shape FOs, as well as households, communities and societies. Youth are also well represented within programming models in the CO.

117. The interventions linked to local procurement can promote inclusion within local procurement processes, and vulnerable groups such as females, youth, and PWDs are often well-represented within the WFP interventions that are linked to direct procurement, like those programmes also previously listed under EQ 2.2. However, inclusion criteria like the gender, age, disability status, etc. of the seller are not taken into account when making buys decisions. As a result, procurement decisions rarely account for the fact that some groups are less likely to benefit from marketing opportunities, even where they are otherwise involved in agricultural production. This points to the ongoing friction between WFP procurement objectives to secure adequate and efficient purchases of agricultural commodities, and programmatic objectives.
118. **Impacts on nutrition and climate:** WFP’s nutrition policy demonstrates WFP’s commitment to focus on nutritional quality, requiring that WFP reshape its programmes to make them more nutrition-sensitive and to increase the demand for and consumption of diverse and nutritious food by households.<sup>124</sup> This includes promoting the use of specialized nutritious foods (SNFs) for nutrition-specific programmes and working with partners to strengthen nutrition-sensitive food systems – helping to ensure that more nutritious foods are available in local markets at more affordable prices. When it comes to climate change, WFP has mainstreamed environmental safeguards to systematically identify environmental risks within its work to reduce the negative impact of its operations on the environment and the people who depend on it. For example, COs apply safeguards by assessing the strategic environmental and social risks of WFP activities as part of the development of CSPs and screen programme activities for environmental and social risks throughout the programme cycle.<sup>125</sup>

#### Text Box B: Local procurement and SNFs

An important example of this is the Ethiopia COs local purchases of SNFs from local companies HILINA Enriched Foods and QUARIT Agroindustry. While HILINA Enriched Foods supply partnership predates the LRFPP – going back to 2011 – WFP signed a contract with QUARIT in 2021 during the LRFPP piloting period. In 2022, the company supplied 500 MT of super cereals to WFP. This amount increased to 3,000 MT in 2023. As reported by QUARIT, the company engages in a pro-smallholder contracting model, through which it procures approximately 50 percent of its raw materials from SHFs (or cooperatives) in Ethiopia. Likewise, in Uganda, WFP has been purchasing maize meal from agro-processor Mandela Millers. While this supply partnership precedes the LRFPP, Mandela Millers currently reports that it sources approximately 30 percent of its grain from SHFs – exceeding the 20 percent minimum conditionalities set out under policy – and only buys grain that meets East African Standards. The agro-processor also makes additional purchases from private vendors – like the WFP vendor Asili – which reportedly procures roughly half of its maize from SHFs. These are important examples of how WFP purchasing with private sector actors engaging the production of SNFs is strengthening pro-smallholder procurement, while also increasing the market availability of and access to nutritious foods.

121. For instance, the R4 project in Ethiopia implements physical and biological soil and water conservation practices and focuses on the use of improved inputs, asset creation, etc. to better cope and manage climate shocks. As well, resilience programming includes asset creation activities and technical assistance to help food insecure households reduce risk and adapt to climate change. Likewise, the AMS project in Uganda includes behavioural change communications on climate adaptation and nutrition; these are incorporated

<sup>124</sup> WFP, 2017. *Nutrition Policy* (WFP/EB.1/2017/4-C).

<sup>125</sup> WFP, 2022. WFP Strategic Plan (2022-2025).

in the training and mentorship activities and reinforced in information materials, community sensitization meetings, public events, and media programs.

122. As with gender, considerations related to climate and nutritional outcomes are not directly included in procurement decisions, but instead are sometimes incorporated into programmes linked to local procurement. Moreover, increased local and regional food procurement can have important impacts on climate and sustainability because it relies on considerably shorter supply chains, which has the potential to minimize the carbon and environmental footprint of WFP operations. In 2020, around 60 percent of food procured by WFP currently comes from countries with ongoing WFP operations.<sup>126</sup> As food and fuel prices continue to rise, local and regional procurement is likely to gain momentum as a way of reducing import dependency on longer and global value chains with higher transport costs and carbon footprints.

**Unintended impacts:** The main unintended negative impacts related to the LRFPP were the price distortions that resulted from WFP local purchases. These were noted in primarily in Ethiopia, and were not noted in Uganda or Sudan. During tender time, market prices are often higher than normal, pushing prices up an estimated 3-5 percent along affected supply chains. As market actors become aware of WFP contracting, prices begin to increase due to increased competition for scarce agricultural product. Increased prices do have positive benefits for SHFs, who reported receiving better value for their agricultural commodities, which led to higher profits. WFP tenders also stimulate other areas of local value chains, as jobs get created for laborers who do harvesting, cleaning, loading, etc.

123. However, value chain actors suggested that price transfer and profit increases are most pronounced in the middle of value chains intermediaries among traders and brokers, who take up most of the mark-up. Further, there are wider negative impacts on food systems, as food prices for local consumers rise. Discussions with the WFP CO in Ethiopia suggested that fluctuations in market prices are likely to be most pronounced in locations in smaller markets, where additional demand for agricultural products has a larger effect. It should be noted that COs also indicated that such price distortions on prices are temporary, with prices going back to normal levels as the WFP purchase process ends.
124. There are several good practices that WFP leverages in pilot COs to proactively minimize distortions to local markets from its procurement activities. First, it is utilizing market analysis to understand the capacities of local markets to supply additional demand, and in so doing identify possible market distortions. In cases where offered price is not aligned with local market price and international market price, WFP does not purchase food commodities from local market to minimize market price distortions. Secondly, buying in the right place and at the right time – for example, at harvest season – will help ensure that tenders are issued when supplies of commodities are highest, which will also reduce costs related to the purchase price of those commodities. Thirdly, WFP is coordinating its purchases such that they do not coincide with those of other large market actors, so as to avoid compound effects of multiple large tenders. Finally, in the long-term, WFP is working on supply side to increase production and productivity, and market distribution. Thus, while the unintended impacts of market distortions are a concern to be monitored as part of local procurement, the implementation and expansion of the strategies just mentioned can help minimize the negative effects of market distortions.

***Finding 9:** Definitions of SHF are not sufficiently standardized across countries to inform targeting of purchases from vulnerable SHFs, allowing traders to favour commercially viable producers due to their higher capacities to sell high quantities and at high qualities.*

125. In most cases, market-driven players such as traders indicate that they favour commercially viable producers due to their higher capacities to sell high quantities and at high qualities. The outlier to this general rule is Uganda, where some vendors pursuing pro-SHF business models, in an effort to expand their active supplier base by working with SHFs in efforts to boost farmers' supply and quality. Still, the indirect procurement process heavily targets more established farmers with access to inputs, extension, finance, and other services. As well, the ambiguities mentioned above related to defining SHFs may be undercutting the development objectives of the conditionalities placed on indirect purchases, even when traders are meeting minimum thresholds for SHFs purchases because they might not be purchasing from vulnerable farmers.

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<sup>126</sup> WFP, 2023. "Procurement". <https://www.wfp.org/procurement>

126. Compared to indirect purchases through traders, direct procurement processes have a greater focus on equitable development – even if are less commercially sustainable – that actively target vulnerable SHFs/FOs. As mention, targeting generally focuses on areas with lower productive potential, where existing WFP programming is supporting vulnerable SHFs/FOs, with the objective of bringing them from subsistence to surplus so that they can sell to WFP. Another strength of WFP direct purchase activities is the ability to ‘cut out the middleman’, transferring greater share of profits from agricultural sales to SHFs, a finding supported by VCAs that also indicate that direct modalities increase price transmission to farmers (see: Table 11). Middlemen are able to take advantage of asymmetries in agricultural markets – lack of access to price information, capital, and storage among most farmers, as well as the poverty of SHFs – to capture a share of profits that favours middlemen over producers, whereby traders are able to take a greater margin on agricultural transactions than value they actually add to agricultural products. VCAs conducted in the three pilot countries also indicated that even for indirect purchase modalities, shorter value chains that cut out middlemen are more likely to transfer profits to farmers, as gross marketing margin (GMM).<sup>127</sup>

**Table 11: Price transmission for different value chains**

Country (commodity)	WFP vendors buy directly from SHF	WFP vendors buy through middlemen
Ethiopia (maize)	SHF GMM: 26%	SHF GMM: 3-10%
Sudan (sorghum)	SHF GMM: 47%	SHF GMM: 41%
Uganda (maize)	SHF GMM: 9.6%	SHF GMM: 5.8%

Source: VCAs from Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda

127. That is not to say that traders in the agricultural sector do not serve valuable functions within the value chains in which they operate. Vendors that adhere to grain quality standards and pay a price premium for quality agricultural goods – such as those that WFP is working with – incentivize farmers to produce at higher qualities, rather than selling to informal middlemen that do not discriminate according to grain quality. Thus, there are gains to be made from expanding the pool of traders it is actively sourcing quality grains from, which would have the added benefit of also increasing competition among these private sector actors.
128. **SHF typologies are ambiguous and numerous** Although WFP vendors report purchases at or in excess of the necessary conditionalities in their particular countries, it is not clear the extent to which these actors are buying from SHFs. The evaluation found that none of the WFP private sector partners utilize standard definitions to determine who is – and is not – a smallholder, with SHF definitions varying considerably from stakeholder to stakeholder in the type and magnitude of criteria considered by each. The most common characteristics used to identify smallholder status included land size being used to cultivate agricultural goods, though the lower and upper thresholds given by each actor varied considerably (as indicated in the text box below); traders in Ethiopia provided estimates that were closest to targeting vulnerable smallholders with, at least according to the 2-hectare criterion provided by WFP in its background paper for the LRFPP.<sup>128</sup> In addition to land being accessed, traders suggested pointed to the presence/absence of mechanization, yield totals, and the number of labourers required to work the farm to differentiate between smallholders and other farmers.<sup>129</sup> The clear takeaway from this is that the term ‘SHF’ is a non-homogenous category that can benefit from further parsing in the technical and theoretical guidance, as a way of better targeting local and regional procurement and understanding its effects – or lack thereof – on the most vulnerable farmers. Indeed, there may also be a need to think more openly around the definition of what a SHF is. They might not necessarily be engaged in production, they can be aggregators or extension service providers (e.g., in Uganda, youth are hired for this or are the children of farmers).

<sup>127</sup> GMM is the share of the price paid by WFP (the end buyer) that belongs to farmers

<sup>128</sup> See: WFP, 2019, *Background Paper on 2019 Local Food Procurement Policy*, 23 July; but also note that the same background paper explicitly states that there is no unambiguous globally accepted definition of SHF.

<sup>129</sup> FAO, 2017, *Defining Small Scale Food Producers to Monitor Target 2.3 of The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, FAO Statistics Division Working Paper Series ESS / 17-12, June.

### Text Box C: Partners' definitions of 'SHF' in pilot countries

In Ethiopia, traders used different characteristics to define SHFs. They estimated that SHFs own small size of land, about 1.5-2 hectares. However, they also stated that the smallholder category generally refers to farmers that lack adequate resources to operate on their land with full potential, saying that SHFs use oxen to plough their land whereas other farmers relied on mechanized means; private sectors partners also suggested that the amount of labour used is a consideration, because, as it provides a proxy for the productivity of the farm.

Answers given by traders in Sudan depended on where they were located. A range of 500-1000 feddans (210-420 hectares) is supposedly used for higher production zones like Geddaref and White Nile States, whereas in lower producing zones like North Kordofan and South Darfur they put the size at anywhere from 10-50 feddans (4-21 hectares). These estimates are high, given that many SHFs that WFP targets are farming much smaller areas (e.g., 2-5 feddans or about 1-2 hectares).<sup>130</sup>

Similarly, in Uganda, definitions varied. For instance, one trader indicated that "big farmers" have more than above 4 hectares, and that "I believe a SHF should be between 1-5 acres. But company does not have a [smallholder] definition for when selling to WFP." In comparison, representatives of one private sector partner in Uganda suggested that SHFs are non-commercial farmers working less than 100 acres of land, while others instead said that "there is no specific [land] limit on what a SHF is", and that "if somebody [that is a farmer] goes into mechanisation we do not include them in the 20 percent".

## Intervening factors

133. **Global and national crisis:** According to WFP stakeholders, in Ethiopia, the global COVID-19 pandemic and insecurity within the country delayed the start of the LRFPP pilot, which did not commence until 2022. Even though local procurement was already ongoing previous to 2022 – with the purchase of maize, wheat, and sorghum – essential activities like the VCA and the drafting of the ToC were only carried out late in 2023 – at the end of the piloting cycle. While it is not possible to know exactly how the LRFPP pilot in Ethiopia would have been impacted if local procurement had been preceded by a VCA and ToC, it was noted above that the VCA presents a significant opportunity to identify and address – through targeted interventions – the constraints that prevent SHFs from fully benefiting from the local procurement of maize, wheat, sorghum, and other commodities. Drafting a ToC earlier on the in pilot could have helped the CO more systematically map the many underlying challenges of the SHF participation in agricultural markets to determine which WFP should address as a priority to maximize its contribution to pro-SHF development.
134. While the Sudan CO undertook a VCA at the start of its LRFPP pilot, the outbreak of armed conflict in the country caused WFP to temporarily shut down its development operations. The WFP mission in Sudan eventually resumed. Still, many areas where local procurement was being conducted were essentially cut off from operations. Crucially, indirect procurement in western Sudan – in South Darfur and North Kordofan – was halted when the war started, cutting SHFs off from potential markets. As well, local procurement that the Sudan CO managed to carry out with FOs in Darfur and Kordofan regions could not be competed, as collection of sorghum that aggregated by the FOs in their warehouses could not be carried out due to insecurity, even after contracts were signed. Although direct modalities were moved to eastern Sudan, these purchases had not started by the time the pilot phase had finished, considerably negatively impacting the amount and value of sorghum that could be locally procured in Sudan in 2023.
135. **Staffing:** Several staffing challenges also affected the implementation of the LRFPP.<sup>131</sup> While many of roles and activities required for the LRFPP existed prior to the pilots, CO stakeholders consistently noted that implementation of the policy comes with some notable requirements for additional staffing and resources (but few such resources to address additional requirements). Most prominently, the traceability function requires additional resources to be implemented as a robust field-based means of verifying indirect

<sup>130</sup> Interviews with Sudan CO procurement team.

<sup>131</sup> At the Uganda CO, staff turnover compounded issues related to human resources. Departure of key staff (the Head of Programmes, Head of Food Systems, and others) midway through the rollout the pilot hindered early uptake of and learning about the LRFPP pilot among key personnel, which impeded momentum and continuity in the uptake of the LRFPP.

contracts. Both procurement and Research, Assessment, and Monitoring (RAM) staff explained that traceability cannot easily be integrated into organizational capacities, as it necessitates that staff carry out additional functions outside the scope of regular monitoring activities. That there are no additional resources available currently for carrying out traceability means that it is only done remotely.

136. A key staff capacity issue is the need to build greater institutional capacity and expertise that combines experience and skills related to procurement and programming.<sup>132</sup> Within the WFP procurement function, technical expertise about procurement (e.g., cost analysis, vendor short-listing and management, tendering, pricing, and contract negotiations, etc.) were built through WFP's longstanding buying relationships with vendors in the pilot country; key informants at WFP also suggested that the knowledge, skills, experience, and other capacities needed to purchase locally from SHFs also exist with the organization, having been developed over the years through initiatives such as P4P. However, with greater integration of programming objectives in procurement processes through the LRFPP, procurement staff now require capacities typically associated with programming functions (like: gaining a greater understanding of programmatic objectives and outcomes and how these integrate into and are supported by procurement, as well as better knowledge of the fundamentals of programme design and implementation and how this addresses value chain bottlenecks that prevent SHFs from bringing agricultural goods to market). Likewise, programming colleagues require knowledge about procurement standards and processes.

***Finding 10:** The procurement processes that LRFPP pilots rely on are not well aligned with the needs for poor SHFs, who due their lack of capital favour quick transaction times and cash-on-hand.*

137. **Length of WFP procurement processes:** The onerous and lengthy administrative and procurement processes is misaligned with the needs of cash-strapped SHFs, who often prefer payment immediately; key informants and SHFs across all three COs echoed this finding. WFP first must assess the quality of the aggregated produce, then transport that to their warehouses, and then only after that can they transfer the money to a FO's account. It is only then that FOs can pay SHFs. This process averages 10-14 working days, if it goes smoothly. It can take upwards of a month if it does not. In cases where quality assessment is not possible locally, commodity samples must be sent to a regional testing facility (Nairobi), which further extends this timeline.
138. Such testing is important from the perspective of health and safety risk mitigation in theory; however, in practice such quality testing performed on bulked stockpiles are not able to detect quality issues which may be present in only a small part of the bulked quantity (e.g., having originated from a single SHF); such gaps in the existing risk mitigation measures not only expose WFP's larger warehousing/aggregation operations to the risk of contamination, but when contamination occurs, it is not possible to trace infested/affected commodities back to their source (given the many layers of aggregation that precede WFP's bulking operations). The rationale and operational reality of risk mitigation measures related to local procurement are in this way somewhat internally conflicted/mis-calibrated.
139. Drawn out procurement disincentivizes farmers from selling to WFP. The poverty of the most vulnerable SHFs makes this group very sensitive to timely payment. In addition to WFP as a buyer, there are many other buyers working simultaneously, with many operating within unregulated informal markets. FOs, SHFs, and other stakeholders consulted as part of this evaluation, indicated that SHFs frequently divert all or some of their yields towards buyer offering quick payment, rather than wait for the potential of a premium price while WFP carries out its procurement procedures. It is also important to understand that, SHFs are not homogenous, and may simultaneously use their own agricultural outputs in different ways: keeping some for consumption, selling some to informal middlemen for quick sales, and saving some for better PHM and waiting for better price. Longer processing times by WFP act as an incentive for smallholders to sell more – or even all – of their product to the many middlemen that do not pay for quality grains, but provide 'cash-on-hand'. In cases where smallholders do sell to WFP, but in doing so wait a longer-than-expected period for payment, run the risk of experiencing cashflow shortages that affect their ability to pay for necessities like health care, schooling, food, and other household expenditures – prompting the use of negative coping strategies in some cases.

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<sup>132</sup> A good example of a role that accomplishes this in Sudan, where the Value Chain and Food Systems Role, was staffed with candidate that has programming background, but who also possesses required procurement knowledge.

## Comparative advantages and opportunities

140. WFP has three key areas of comparative advantage in the area of local pro-smallholder food procurement; firstly, purchasing power, the scale of WFP purchases provides an opportunity to influence developments in local food markets; secondly, WFP knowledge of food markets, which makes WFP a partner of choice for both public and private entities interested in the development of better integrated, more efficient markets and stronger and fairer links from smallholders to markets; and finally, WFP's convening capacity enables it to mobilize external partners in support of common objectives and to promote greater integration between its own market-oriented programmes and partners' initiatives.

141. **Purchasing power:** Incentives to buy from WFP – bulk buying, higher price, reputational boost, skills transfer – can be leveraged as a value proposition for vendors to take more active role in pro-SHF modalities. Across each pilot CO, WFP has engaged with many private sector suppliers in long-lasting relationships that preceded LRFPP – sometimes by up to a decade. WFP is a sizeable market player and the prospect of securing a large WFP tender and premium price for quality grain, creates an important market incentive among buyers to improve the standards of the agricultural products they purchase. Vendors have worked to improve the quality of the grains they sell, through the years strengthening their capacities through formal trainings and other forms of knowledge, in order to qualify for such tenders. Once they are able to secure a WFP bid vendors report that their brand image is strengthened, as selling to WFP acts as a de facto seal of approval that signals to other buyers the quality of the vendor's produce. Thus, it is clear that WFP's purchasing power is has provided an opportunity to influence vendors – who by extension influence their own suppliers – to secure and sell higher quality grains.

**Technical expertise:** WFP's technical expertise in the agriculture sector has provided these private entities an opportunity to gain important capacities. As mentioned previously, long-term WFP partnerships with vendors have resulted in knowledge transfer and trainings – in areas such as PHH, testing, storage, etc. – has in turn increased vendors' abilities to source and provide quality grain.

142. **Convening around local procurement:** A global food crisis stemming from the rising costs of food, fuel, and fertilizers, stemming from a combination of climate shocks, the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the war in Ukraine has made importing food more expensive. The LRFPP is an opportunity to decrease food imports by buying locally – or at least regionally. Incorporating the LRFPP into WFP's global response to the food crisis offers longer-term possibilities for strengthening the resilience of food systems to future pricing shocks, as local and regional commodities are substituted for global imports. The global food and cost-of-living crisis also creates a strong case for government stakeholders to place a greater emphasis on local procurement by ensuring that adequate support is provided to farmers and the local private sector. Here, WFP can build political will and commitment for local procurement by convening stakeholders from across all sectors in the food system at various scales to promote a multisectoral approach to addressing food insecurity.

***Finding 11:** Although WFP does continuously engage with government partners, other UN agencies, and cooperating partners, use of its convening power around the LRFPP has thus far been limited, as piloting prioritized testing and implementing the policy over exerting external influence through private (other than with vendors) and public sector partnerships.*

143. While there are currently few examples of WFP's convening power being applied in the context of the LRFPP pilots, WFP's convening capacities enable it to mobilize external partners in support of common objectives and to promote greater integration between its own market-oriented programmes and partners' initiatives. The limited use of this convening power around LRFPP initiatives is tied to the fact that early piloting efforts were focused on internal uptake of the policy and testing its rollout, rather than convening collective action. Of course, the clear exception to this is the work that WFP does within its own vendor network to influence private sector actors to take on more pro-smallholder purchases and to improve the quality of their own agricultural products. The exercise of WFP's convening power is also constrained/influenced by capacities (of WFP, other actors, relevant markets) and funding availability.

144. There are also other signs of early gains in convening private and public sector partnerships in support of pro-SHF procurement, which point to how convening power can be used as part of LRFPP in the future. In Ethiopia, for instance, WFP convened a partnership with Bahir Dar University to support cooperative unions in addressing quality issues related to aflatoxin in maize. The production capacities of cooperative unions



are relatively strong, whereas the production of quality grains has been identified as a bottleneck to local procurement which was not being adequately addressed. In response to this problem, WFP RBN engaged in a partnership with Bahir Dar University to study key contributing factors to aflatoxin along the maize value chain in northern Ethiopia – and then developed guidance for controlling aflatoxins through better sensitisation of value chain actors. The guidance on aflatoxin was communicated to key governmental and non-governmental partners.<sup>133</sup> This serves as a model for bringing localized work to scale through effective partnerships, by first building and testing a model or good practices and then creating mechanisms – manuals, meetings, workshop, etc. – for their dissemination and scaling. The inclusion of government partners in such initiatives is key.<sup>134</sup> This shows how partnerships between WFP and academic institutions in support of local procurement. Further proof indicating the utility of such partnerships in helping to safeguard improved food quality can be found in Uganda CO's work with Texas State University (and Mandela Millers) to run training programmes on aflatoxin testing. This early evidence points to future possibilities for work with the public sector, food processors and others buyers, to share experiences from the LRFPP to promote pro-SHF local procurement.

## 2.3 EQ3 (EFFICIENCY)

### *Institutional support*

145. Approval of the LRFPP by WFP's executive board November in 2019 set in motion the decentralized piloting of a global policy that was anchored in a corporate policy document. Importantly, efforts to create global practices for the LRFPP followed in the form of *Interim Guidance*, which was developed and published by WFP HQ in October 2020, prior to piloting of the policy in East Africa. Guidance on the LRFPP offered to COs by HQ and RBN through presentations and webinars was informative. Still, WFP stakeholders indicated that time constraints often prevented participation in these activities. Where WFP staff were able to participate, they were often still left with questions about how to integrate learnings into their day-to-day activities. Similarly, the *Interim Guidance* document provided useful information on the LRFPP's building blocks, VCA methods, ToC, etc., but internal stakeholders noted that its length and the density of its content made it difficult to use, especially among staff already juggling many other competing priorities.
146. The absence of more concise communications documents prevented broader dissemination of knowledge about the LRFPP among staff. Therefore, despite the policy guidance and efforts made through HQ to institutionally support the rollout of the policy with additional documentation, templates, presentations, webinars, and the like, the policy was not well understood after its initial rollout. Moreover, the branding of the LRFPP as a 'procurement' policy,<sup>135</sup> initially gave the perception to programming colleagues that the policy was primarily a procurement activity, creating ambiguity about the roles and responsibilities of 'non-procurement' internal stakeholders at WFP. There was a perception at the CO level that procurement owned the policy was reinforced through the rollout of the LRFPP, even if at HQ actually programme (PRORF) were much more active in leading this than procurement and at the policy was rolled out between procurement and food systems teams. A better initial appreciation by COs of how the LRFPP connected to programming/food systems might have been needed to create greater buy-in and participation from programming functions at CO level. Ultimately, procurement management and staff at the CO level often had to take on the responsibility of socializing other units on the LRFPP. Insufficient institutional socialisation about the role of programmes in operationalizing the policy created questions about how programming objectives are to be integrated in procurement objectives, as well as related question about how WFP's mandate to support the most vulnerable subsistence farmers fits into procurement modalities focused on traders and SHFs producing surpluses.

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<sup>133</sup> The evaluation was not able to assess how many partners have taken up this guidance.

<sup>134</sup> To be effective, such efforts must from the beginning include state partners. Stakeholders from the Government of Ethiopia suggested that inadequate consultation and inclusion of relevant state entities impeded the endorsement of the outcomes of the partnership between WFP and Bahir Dar University, which presumably also affected their dissemination, reach, and impact – constraining rather than leveraging WFP's convening power and possible multiplier affects.

<sup>135</sup> This was reinforced by a guidance document that "delegated food procurement authority to the Procurement Division, [which is] responsible for managing food procurement processes including pro-SHF food procurement" (p. 33.), even if other parts of the document stressed integration of organizational functions.

147. The *Interim Guidance* document was an important building block for the LRFPP, establishing standards of operationalizing aspects of the LRFPP prior to the piloting process. But the other standards, guidelines, tools, and other institutional mechanisms needed to support the LRFPP were very much still emerging throughout the piloting period. Even the guidance document admits that it is “a work in progress that will be continuously enhanced and updated as implementation moves forward.”<sup>136</sup> The emergent nature of the policy allowed COs to adapt what they understood of the policy to their own contexts. But COs also reported that the “unfinished” rollout, guidelines, tools, etc. created a lack of clarity in terms of their understanding of the objectives and expected outputs and outcomes of the policy. As noted by the *Learning Summary* jointly prepared by the RBN evaluation and procurement units in December 2022, the LRFPP was “still not widely or well understood in WFP”<sup>137</sup> two years into the piloting period; this evaluation came to similar conclusions, finding that socialization of the policy during the early stages of the rollout was insufficient and sometimes inconsistent, creating considerable confusion early on about what the LRFPP is and how it should be adopted by COs.
148. Despite to the challenges mentioned above, as the pilots progressed, with repeated institutional support to COs by HQ and RBN – coupled with frequent and repeated engagement with the LRFPP – familiarity with the policy gradually increased among the Cos over time. Importantly, this included a greater understanding of roles and responsibilities of programmes in policy piloting, as well as increased buy-in from programming colleagues in the piloting process. Uptake of strategic support from HQ and RBN improved over the lifecycle of the pilots and was bolstered as support at the operational level was provide to COs requests for assistance on: VCAs, ToCs, M&E frameworks, traceability, and the other necessary building blocks of the LRFPP. Collaboration around these activities provides an important venue for further socializing internal stakeholders on the content of the LRFPP, its objectives, roles, and responsivities of different stakeholders, etc. – and the institutionalisation of the policy internally with each pilot CO.
149. There are also important links between HQ, RBN, and COs when it comes to procurement, as local procurement often occurs using local funds at the COs, which must be cleared through RBN and HQ. As was already mentioned, the GCMF is another key institutional mechanism that has been used to support the LRFPP and make it more efficient. RBN also facilitates institutional collaboration between the three pilot COs, convening quarterly meetings/workshops around the LRFPP that bring together representatives from programmes and procurement from each pilot CO to discuss key issues and share experiences. As well, RBN supported the Uganda CO in holding integration workshops to identify priorities for integration – an example of proactive integration around the LRFPP, which benefited from the staffing of a position within the CO to focus on LRFPP and facilitating procurement/programme integration. The CO presented VCA findings as a discussion point toward further integration of programmes and local procurement. The LRFPP ToC for the Uganda CO was largely based on discussions and inputs made during the integration workshop. A strong recurring theme throughout this evaluation is that integration of procurement and programme to operationalize LRFPP requires an extra-ordinary effort/intentionality on the part of the CO; dedicated human resources are one way to meet this.
150. By the end of the LRFPP pilots, important progress has been made in rolling out the policy in all three countries, each of which now have VCAs, ToCs, and M&E frameworks. Institutional support from HQ and RBN played a vital role in supporting these achievements. In the end, perhaps it is reasonable to expect that uptake of a global policy will be an iterative and long-term endeavour, which is sometimes uneven, and which requires some level of trial and error for institutional integration to occur. COs themselves suggested that approaching policy rollout as decentralized pilots was the right approach, as it allowed COs to retain agency and control over the pilots, adapting them to local priorities and realities. In this way, LRFPP piloting can best understood to be a co-adaptive process, with HQ establishing and communicating a policy framework and guidelines, and then backstopping RBN to assist COs in the technical aspects of the rollout of decentralized and context-specific national pilots. In the next stages of the LRFPP, the three pilots evaluated are likely to be scaled and the policy expanded to other countries in the region. In this process, institutional support will become even more important to use the early experiences from the LRFPP pilots to help inform institutional guidance and good practices during the next phase of the LRFPP.

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<sup>136</sup> WFP, 2020. Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy Interim Guidance for Pilot Implementation. P. 4.

<sup>137</sup> WFP RBN, 2022, LRFPP Learning Summary, Learnings, Reflections and Observations on RBN Pilots, December, p. 4.

**Finding 12:** *The GCMF's dedicated financing for procurement from SHFs enabled LRFPP procurement modalities and was used for most procurements from SHFs in the three pilot countries and reduced the lead time for procurements from SHFs when used.*

151. A key LRFPP pilot activity was to trial Pro-SHF purchase modalities through the GCMF, as a way of optimizing impact of regional commodity purchases. In Ethiopia, WFP key informants reported that the GCMF helped to prevent major delays in programming due to the advance procurement (including local and international). Most food procurement undertaken by WFP in Ethiopia is through the GCMF.<sup>138</sup> In Sudan, stakeholders interviewed for the evaluation indicated that most WFP commodities are procured through the GCMF, and that 95 percent of procurement under LRFPP modalities was from the GCMF; this represents 20 percent of food procured through the GCMF by the CO. Likewise in Uganda, the GCMF was well utilized as a mechanism for facilitating the majority of local procurement (see table below). Thus, all three COs were able to capitalize on the GCMF as a strategic working capital management mechanism under which agricultural commodities could be purchased in a way that reduced food delivery purchase time and lead-time.<sup>139</sup>

**Table 12: GCMF purchases in 2023 per CO**

Country	Value	% of total value
<b>Ethiopia</b>	USD 23 million	52.3%
<b>Sudan</b>	USD 2.6 million	100%
<b>Uganda</b>	USD 45.6 million	97.5%

**Source:** Compiled from data provided by CO procurement teams to the ET

152. While the GCMF accommodates pro-SHF procurement, this is an exception to the otherwise price-competitive stance of the GCMF. Purchasing from low-capacity SHFs in less productive regions can increase the cost of commodities. For example, the cost of production in the Karamoja region of Uganda is very high, resulting in prices that can be up to 1.5 times the market price in Uganda; the CO made the case to GCMF that purchases made in Karamoja would be utilized in Karamoja. This was accommodated as a special case under USD 20 million reserve for pro-SHF procurement within the GCMF;<sup>140</sup> prior to LRFPP piloting, the Uganda CO and key people at RBN were not aware of this funding possibility. Procuring from SHFs in Karamoja through the GCMF increased the overall level of familiarity with the management facility at both the CO level and RBN, creating awareness about additional funds available for pro-smallholder procurement. Greater awareness about these funds may create future opportunities for funding facilitating local procurement from vulnerable farmers via the GCMF; however, interviews with RBN indicated that the full USD 20 million reserved for procurement from SHFs has never been fully utilized.

**Finding 13:** *The GCMF is not designed to offer a reliable market for SHFs and can be out of time with the seasonality of agricultural markets, together which creates both buying inefficiencies and a risk of undermining achievement of sustainability and market development outcomes.*

153. COs noted that the GCMF does not help create secure demand for local agricultural commodities. Because WFP's demand is international, it cannot guarantee a market for SHFs. The lack of demand stability is a key bottleneck in market development of SHFs. Due to the rotating nature of GCMF's capital reserves, speed of stock turnover and unsold inventory can constrain GCMF procurement. The UGCO procurement plan expected procurement of 51,000 MT of maize and beans by the end of Q1 2021, but purchase requisitions

<sup>138</sup> WFP Ethiopia Procurement Plan.

<sup>139</sup> In 2021, procurement through the GCMF allowed recipient country offices to receive their commodities after an average of 32 days; this represents a 73-percent reduction of the average 120 days under the "conventional" procurement process. In 2021, USD 52.7 million in efficiencies were generated because of purchases made at the right time; see: WFP, 2021, *Annual Performance Report for 2021 / Annex III-C: Supplemental reporting on top ten efficiency gains in 2021*.

<sup>140</sup> WFP, 2022. Report on the utilization of WFP's advance financing mechanisms (1 January-31 December 2021). (WFP/EB.A/2022/6-B/1)

(PRs) were only executed for 18,200 MT due to slow moving stocks and unsold inventory.<sup>141</sup> Currently, there is no mechanism within the GCMF that allows sale of commodities to entities other than WFP COs; this was identified as a rich area to explore, which could unlock the ability of the GCMF to liquidate GCMF corporate inventory to enable a smoothing of WFP demand from the perspective of SHFs.<sup>142</sup>

154. The GCMF undertakes procurement of commodities and assumes responsibility (including all PHH costs) for storing them in a strategic/designated handover location until they are purchased by a CO through an internal sales mechanism.<sup>143</sup> GCMF-procured commodities are only available for purchase by a CO after they have been goods receipted by WFP at a handover location. This operational element of the GCMF procurement process constrains its use in situations where the objective is to establish localized supply-chains for interventions such as HGFS. It is not clear the extent to which flexibility has been exercised with regards to the geography and management of strategic handover locations; there may be opportunities for creative thinking around decentralizing this logistical element of the GCMF, but there would be associated risks since the GCMF assumes all cost and risk of PHH for commodities up until they are sold to a CO (which is again an uncertain timeline, given the uncertainty of demand/funding from the COs – both in terms of timing and amount). The current funding situation has led to cases where COs, once the grains come through GCMF, find that they no longer have the funds to buy it. This risk is higher this year than earlier years.
155. Further, the rotating nature of the fund ‘locks up’ capital at certain times when COs may want to pursue procurement opportunities; this blocks the ability of GCMF to synchronize procurements with seasonality – missing opportunities to capitalize on optimum pricing at harvest, and transferring PHH costs to SHFs who are left to either incur costs of storing commodities until WFP is ready to purchase, or selling to buyers with lower quality standards and prices.<sup>144</sup> GCMF PRs may be unavailable during marketing seasons, missing an opportunity to maximize the gains of buying at the ‘right time’ because regional demand forecasts are typically not available for CO input, which would allow WFP stakeholders at CO level to offer advice about when/where to buy particular commodities based on their market assessments and seasonal calendar.

### ***Integration of procurement and programming***

156. Although specific modes of collaboration and partnerships vary between COs, there are two broad areas where collaboration and partnerships occur: regular coordination activities and programmatic operations. These have largely focused on bringing together internal stakeholders. Firstly, collaboration and partnerships take place in the course of regular day-to-day organisational processes via regular coordination activities. Such activities differ by CO, but are usually oriented around monthly joint coordination meetings; these are co-led by procurement and programming, and LRFPP is usually one of many issues discussed at such sessions. Collaboration in specific areas is then extended through additional joint planning and work, for instance on the development of priority documentation and strategy such as VCAs, ToCs (and associated M&E frameworks), etc. Engaging around these issues offers a practical venue where a multi-stakeholder grouping of internal actors at different levels can share knowledge, jointly determine priorities, and plan together. For instance, VCAs are generally led by procurement teams (though in Sudan this was the responsibility of an independent consultant), but in close collaboration with a multi-stakeholder group that includes programming, RAM, and others at the COs, as well as with technical assistance from HQ and RBN.
157. Programmatic operations the other key entry point for integration, collaboration, and partnerships between programmes and procurement. In this regard, programmes and procurement staff have worked jointly to integrate commercial procurement activities through direct contracting modalities into the goals of interventions aimed at integrating developmental programme components, buying from SHFs/FOs supported by existing WFP programming. As indicated previously, the interventions that were integrated into the LRFPP pilots were generally oriented towards strengthening resilience or providing market support.

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<sup>141</sup> WFP, 2021, UGCO Pro-Smallholder Farmers Innovative Procurement Modality 2021.

<sup>142</sup> Although WFP commodities are generally ‘not for sale’, the GCMF operates on the basis of selling commodities it procures to COs through an internal mechanism.

<sup>143</sup> WFP, 2020. Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy Interim Guidance for Pilot Implementation.

<sup>144</sup> Drawing on consistent feedback from stakeholders at multiple levels, including WFP RBN, COs, and traders.

The programming models that made up these interventions spanned a range of modalities that included: input provision, PHM capacity building, organizational development, etc.

158. Once the capacities of WFP-supported SHFs were built to the point that they could potentially serve as suppliers to WFP, staff from programmes and procurement units at WFP jointly assessed the potential for SHFs to meet demand and quality requirements for WFP contracts, and vetted FOs to determine if they had the capacity to act as aggregation and distribution points for direct purchases from WFP. Prior to the contracts being fulfilled, WFP the programmes teams would also conduct regular monitoring activities to ensure that farmers are producing at the required quantity and quality, regularly inspecting farms and storage sites to offer technical support and troubleshoot issues related to the production, harvest, and PHM of the agricultural commodities. This continuous support was essential to ensure that farmers were able to meet the conditions of their contracts. Towards the end of the procurement process, however, stakeholders across COs noted that collaboration between programmes and procurement can suffer. This is partly due to an institutional separation between sites of responsibility where procurement is managed; contracting for procurement is done nationally at the CO level, while it is WFP's Sub-Offices and Area Offices that interface with beneficiaries, addressing any challenges or issues with the procurement process. It was reported that COs did not consistently communicate updates about the procedures, timelines, and other details of the procurement process to the programming colleagues that were interfacing with local farmers groups. Gaps in communication were especially problematic – creating frustration among farmers that had to be managed by programmes staff – if the procurement process experienced delays or other issues.
159. In the case of local procurement contracts with traders, there is little internal collaboration and partnership between procurement and programmes. Engagement with traders is carried out without direct programmatic support and without being linked to WFP-supported SHF/FOs. WFP is reluctant to dictate to its vendors where and with whom to conduct business, as indirect procurement relies on larger commercial activities where the objective is procuring food at quantity, quality, and cost-efficiency. Still, some efforts can be made to better create linkages between the SHFs/FOs that WFP works with and the vendors it purchases from. Some initial planning has been noted in this area, with procurement and programmes at the Uganda CO engaging in early discussions to create a market information system or lists of vendors that can assist in creating links between SHFs and vendors.

## **M&E and evidence**

***Finding 14:** All LRFPP pilots were informed by relevant analysis and evidence, and VCAs were carried out by each CO. Thus far, however, the VCA in Sudan has been useful for identifying additional opportunities for local procurement, while the late implementation of VCAs in the other COs has limited their utility.*

160. While each CO carried out a VCA by the end of the pilot period, only the Sudan CO completed this type of analysis – the *Value Chain Analysis of The Sorghum Subsector in Sudan* – at the beginning of its LRFPP piloting. The Ethiopia and Uganda COs relied on market-related data to inform its local procurement activities early on in piloting. The *Interim Guidance for Pilot Implementation* which indicates that “starting local purchases in full alignment”<sup>145</sup> with the LRFPP involves conducting a VCA as the first of eight *consecutive* (and complementary) building blocks. By the end of the piloting period all COs had undertaken VCAs.
161. Among the array of studies and sources of information that might inform local procurement, the VCA offers a robust methodology for gaining a deep and holistic understanding of the dynamic linkages amongst chain actors, the process of creating value, the flows/channels of products and services, and the context in which the chain operates. Importantly, the VCA can also be a useful tool for facilitating a larger role for SHFs by identifying prevailing bottlenecks, detecting inefficiencies and imbalances that may prevent farmers and other actors from fully benefiting from local food procurement, and to informing procurement/programming strategies that address existing constraints.
162. **Sudan:** According to key informants at the Sudan CO, findings of the sorghum VCA were essential for identifying opportunities for expanding local procurement to SHFs through direct procurement (labelled as Track 3 in Sudan). Prior to the VCA, the Sudan CO was focused on undertaking local procurement activities

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<sup>145</sup> WFP, 2020. Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy Interim Guidance for Pilot Implementation. P. 4.

through indirect modalities (Tracks 1 and 2).<sup>146</sup> Indirect procurement modalities were oriented in areas of country like Gedaref State, where production is relatively high and there are fewer constraints throughout the sorghum value chain. However, because the VCA analysis was able to identify bottlenecks<sup>147</sup> and opportunities for support within the sorghum value chain in Sudan, it was useful in steering decisions on local and regional food procurement strategies and other programmatic value chain interventions in the country.

163. The original sorghum VCA was later complemented through additional studies carried out on production costs, FOs, and the food system structure in general in the Eastern (Kassala, Gedaref, Blue Nile, and White Nile), Southern (Kordofan), and Western (Darfur) states of Sudan. The totality of this analysis was useful for identifying areas where support could be provided to improve the competitiveness of the sorghum sector in areas of Sudan where sorghum production was relatively low – like South Darfur and North Kordofan – in ways that could particularly benefit SHFs.<sup>148</sup>
164. **Ethiopia and Uganda:** Prior to the pilot, a VCA was carried out in Uganda, with funding from the Mastercard Foundation. The preliminary findings of the VCA were used in parallel to piloting the pro-SHF indirect contracting modalities. Later, in 2022, the Uganda CO carried out its own VCA analysis of the maize and beans agricultural subsectors in the country, using the findings of the study to inform its 2023 procurement plan. At the end of 2023, Ethiopia completed a VCA of wheat, maize, and red haricot beans, and will use the findings to inform its local procurement plan in 2024. As in Sudan, the VCAs carried out in Uganda and Ethiopia each analysed how value chains are functioning, as well as their prevailing bottlenecks, inefficiencies, and imbalances that may prevent SHFs and other actors in the target chains from fully benefiting from local and regional food procurement. VCAs have advantages over other tools because of they are a comprehensive analytical framework for generating an entire picture of the food system in a country or part of a country, for specific commodities (from production to delivery to final consumer), which provides the insight for deciding intervention methods for both programming and procurement.
165. Prior to their VCAs, Uganda and Ethiopia COs each also relied on already existing assessments and studies, drawing heavily on the past experiences with local procurement, as well as market assessments and the market information system work regularly done by VAM, to inform local procurement. Market assessments and the market information systems are sufficient for informing procurement decisions, such as estimating the type and quantities for commodities to be locally procured. But market data and analysis does not provide the type of comprehensive mapping of agricultural value chains – especially their constraints – that VCAs do. Where local procurement requires considerable support from and integration into programmes, VCAs will be necessary to effectively help identify and target points of intervention.

***Finding 15:** VCAs in each pilot CO have been used to identify procurement opportunities, but less so to proactively design programmes to strengthen value chains to support procurement.*

166. **VCA findings:** VCA findings were mostly integrated into local procurement decisions at the design stage. In Uganda, VCA findings indicated that conditional contracts used by WFP in maize purchases help maintain equilibrium in marketing margins for intermediaries, consequently bolstering farmers' incomes. As a result, all maize purchases made from traders are now under the conditional contracting modality. Likewise, in Ethiopia, the VCA conducted under the LRFPP has provided price transmission analysis; the main VCA provides the information which procurement will rely on when implementing the four procurement modalities to ensure the price transfer is visible along the chain from all actors. In Sudan, VCA findings have so far been used to effectively pinpoint procurement opportunities (e.g., in North Kordofan and South Darfur), rather than to design programmes to strengthen value chains to support procurement.

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<sup>146</sup> Tracks 1 and 2 refer to indirect conditional and indirect mandate contracts, respectively.

<sup>147</sup> Poor storage infrastructure, poor roads, heavy dependence on rains, pests and diseases, insecurity, informally organized farmers unions, high prices of fuel and inflation, lack of access to credit, weather information, agricultural insurance, quality seeds, and good extensions services, that all inhibit the desired market access for SHFs, and thus their improved livelihoods and sustainable food systems.

<sup>148</sup> WFP, 2021, *Value Chain Analysis of The Sorghum Subsector in Sudan*, April. This includes support to: organize the actors of the sector to allow fluidity of information, transferring of technology, providing advisory support, and improving access to financing.

167. VCAs results were also incorporated into the pilots to identify key actors in the selected food value chains, especially to identify opportunities like the willingness of farmers to deal with WFP directly as vendors and establishing of key parameters needed in price-setting for farmers (e.g., production costs of farmers, marketing costs, transport costs, taxation costs, etc.). As well, the Sudan CO used the VCA findings to refine its definition of a SHF from 100 feddans; it now uses a land-size criteria of 5-50 feddans for farmers in the western part of the country and 50-100 feddans for SHFs in the eastern part of the country. There are also examples where VCAs have been applied to inform programming by the pilot COs. For example, in Sudan, the VCA helped identify challenges in the selected value chains to design feasible programmatic interventions (e.g., technical training of farmers on food standards that were lacking before the VCAs). In Ethiopia, the VCA generated findings used to improve resilience programming (carried over from Gambella to other regions like Amhara).<sup>149</sup> In Uganda, the VCA did not include the Karamoja region where LRFPP-related programming is currently being undertaken.
168. VCA findings have been less effective in informing programming models that complement local procurement efforts. For the most part, local procurement in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda has largely been integrated into programming that predates the VCAs and LRFPP pilots, leveraging existing intervention designs. Even though KIIs with COs noted that VCAs produced a wide array of constraints and recommended several context-specific programmatic intervention points for specific actions along key value chains, the vast majority of these remain unimplemented. A key explanatory factor for lack of implementation of VCA findings is the time and resources required to design, resource, and carry-out programming modalities. Therefore, as procurement and programmes continue to work together, more can be done to specifically design programmes using the VCAs to identify opportunities to address constraints in key value chains. Selected interventions would complement and expand upon other relevant activities and projects currently being implemented across the three pilot COs. Better application of evidence generated through VCA for the purpose of programmatic design can expand the array of supports offered to SHFs and other value chain actors across the value chain.
169. **Lack of gender analysis in VCAs:** As well, it should be noted that the *Interim Guidance* does not explicitly incorporate into its VCA methodology a module for gender analysis, or for a wider analysis on inclusion or environmental considerations for that matter. Consequently, COs also did not use their own VCAs as an opportunity to expand existing analysis/evidence to help determine how gender relations impact on different parts of a value chain and how GEWE can be proactively integrated into the programmatic objectives that support local procurement. Currently, there is a noticeable dearth of gendered analysis included in the VCAs conducted by the COs. As well, recommendations from VCAs fail to mention<sup>150</sup> ways in which programming could be used to better integrate gender into LRFPP pilots from the beginning, so that women SHFs can equally benefit from agricultural activities and be better represented in marketing and sale of agricultural outputs.

**Finding 16:** *M&E frameworks have been established, but data generation so far favours amount and value of procurement carried out, rather than impacts of local procurement on value chains and food systems.*

170. Overall, the development and use of M&E systems and data to support LRFPP is still in its nascent stages in the three pilot COs. A key achievement so far in this area has been that all COs have created a monitoring framework as part of a ToC that guides the M&E and key performance indicator (KPI) data used to inform the LRFPP pilots. In Uganda, procurement-related KPIs informed the full implementation of the conditional contracting modality in maize and the plan for 2024-2025 to include a trial for mandate contracting and conditional modality for beans. Additionally, these KPIs informed the definition of the WFP Uganda Food Systems strategy for supply chain. In Ethiopia, KPI data supported the CO in conducting market

<sup>149</sup> Findings are currently being reviewed and considered to address similar value chain fragmentation observed in other regions where resilience and food systems interventions are being implemented (including: Gambella, Jijiga and Afar) while awaiting their area specific VCAs to be completed.

<sup>150</sup> The one exception is the Sudan VCA on Sorghum, which under its PHL section states that: "Special focus should be placed in targeting and involving women in any sorghum grain loss-reduction to make a meaningful impact and bring all efforts to reduce grain losses in all the stages of the food supply chain, as sorghum losses in all stages are lower in farms headed by women, than farmers managed by men": see: WFP, 2021, *Value Chain Analysis of The Sorghum Subsector in Sudan*, April. (p. 28)

assessments and understanding which regions had high production of cereals and pulses and aligned the implementation of procurement strategies or modalities in reference to the LRFPP.

171. In Sudan, KPI data was used to focus procurement targeting to the context preferred by the programming objectives. Such indicators provide useful high-level planning information for WFP local food procurement carried out through pro-SHF contract modalities. Once procurement is undertaken, M&E data was also useful for measuring and reporting quantities and values of local procurement, including pro-SHF procurement. However, the use of such frameworks to understand the impact of local procurement, which in Uganda and Ethiopia were only developed this year (2023), has been limited to measuring the volume, value, and percentage of WFP food procurement conducted through pro-SHF contract modalities.
172. However, little progress has been made in using M&E systems to understand the impacts that the LRFPP has had. By comparison, the WFP programmes attached to (direct) procurement activities have well-developed M&E frameworks that generate data to assess programmatic performance related to each intervention against outcome and output indicators/targets. Such M&E systems are associated with a wide range of data to support performance management and monitoring of WFP interventions over time, especially their impacts on the lives and livelihoods (productivity, incomes, food security, post-harvest losses, etc.) of SHFs/FOs. While the M&E systems related to WFP programmes have generally performed well when it comes to tracking and assessing the direct outcomes in the lives of smallholders, they are less useful for assessing and tracking if and how WFP interventions are effecting changes at the food systems level. This finding is also supported by findings from other evaluations in the region.<sup>151</sup> Interviews with WFP stakeholders at all levels indicated a “shallow, though growing, understanding of food systems in the organisation.”<sup>152</sup> WFP monitoring frameworks rely on the mapping of linear outcomes, outputs, and activities in the lives of SHFs. By contrast, monitoring at the food systems level needs to look at cause-effect relationships that are non-linear, where interventions are measured for the indirect downstream effects they might have on parts of the food system that WFP is not directly intervening in. Key informants at RBN noted that WFP does not currently utilize food systems analysis tools for this purpose.

***Finding 17:** Current traceability efforts cannot triangulate whether WFP vendors are buying from WFP-supported SHFs or whether they are targeting the most vulnerable smallholders.*

173. WFP’s traceability system is an important tool within the LRFPP that can be used to verify that the food that the WFP procures through its vendor network is actually originating from smallholders, or to measure some of the impacts of pro-smallholder local procurement (like the price that the farmers receive from traders).<sup>153</sup> The traceability system in the region has been useful in tracking SHF sales in a coherent and consistent way. Each CO incorporated traceability into its piloting efforts, ensuring that vendors complete a traceability template to capture the names and contacts of SHFs each vendor has purchased from, as well as the price and quantity of goods purchased. Each CO has also been carrying out validation of information captured in this template. However, due to staff and resource shortages, all validation is carried out only over the phone for a sample of transactions recorded on the traceability forms returned by each vendor; the CO carries out a phone call, but without follow-up on the ground. As a result, internal stakeholders admitted that WFP may be signing off on contracts that have not been properly verified on-the-ground. Also, more detailed traceability data – for example, on price transmission – to compare the share of the contract value received by individual SHF/aggregators under different contract and procurement modalities – has not been carried out outside of VCAs.<sup>154</sup>
174. As it is now, the traceability mechanism is also not being used to identify whether traders are purchasing from WFP beneficiaries. Perhaps more importantly, current efforts to undertake traceability are not used to define or characterize the types of SHFs that traders are purchasing from, to understand if they are including smaller and more vulnerable farmers that have less capacity and resources at their disposal. As was explained already, vendors offer different understandings for what constitutes a SHF, with many

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<sup>151</sup> WFP, 2022. Thematic Evaluation of Supply Chain Outcomes in the Food System in Eastern Africa from 2016 to 2021, Decentralized Evaluation Report.

<sup>152</sup> Quotation taken from interview with WFP stakeholder at RBN.

<sup>153</sup> WFP, 2020. Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy Interim Guidance for Pilot Implementation. p. 25.

<sup>154</sup> Note that this data gap – price transmission to and production costs for SHFs – corresponds to the theoretical gap evident in some of the LRFPP’s ToC discussion.



suggesting that their definition incorporates farmers with considerable acreage at their disposal and with those that are able to produce sizeable yields, rather than the smallest, poorest, and most food insecure SHFs. Collecting information from the transactions at this level of granularity may be time-consuming and challenging. Yet, it is essential to assessing whether pro-SHF procurement is targeting the right farmers.

#### **Text Box D: Existing SHF traceability systems/practices in the pilot countries<sup>155</sup>**

The traceability system outlined in the LRFP *Interim Guidance* is designed to trace indirect contracts in a coherent way using a tracking tool to control if the food that WFP procures from mandated traders is actually originating from SHF and if prices being paid by traders to FOs and SHFs are in line to those defined and disbursed by WFP.<sup>156</sup> The result is a database that captures data to measure that the programme objective of improving SHFs' incomes, by increasing their value and volume of sales to stable and reliable buyers, is met. It requires a number of minimum data points<sup>157</sup> that should be collected and registered by the trader for each lot that is procured from SHFs/FOs under a contract signed with WFP. Based on the information received, WFP shall select some FOs/SHFs mentioned as suppliers in the trader's list and cross check all the information provided by the traders, particularly the price and quantity sold – first in an Excel spreadsheet, and eventually (ideally) through a digital traceability system, which is currently being developed to enhance data management. Currently, each of the pilot COs are using Excel spreadsheets.

In Ethiopia, traceability processes were started in 2022 and covered 30 percent of SHFs. However, the main supplier is Ethiopian Trading Businesses Corporation (ETBC), an arm of the government that claims to source all commodities it provides to WFP from SHFs through cooperative unions; WFP has requested ETBC to provide evidence of cooperative unions that they are working with, but this is an area for growth in the traceability of SHFs in Ethiopia.

In Sudan, traceability efforts started in 2021 as part of the first pro-SHF conditional contracts issued in the harvest season of sorghum. Traceability information templates are shared with bidders during tendering and form part of the food supply agreement. The supplier provides the completed form with the information that WFP requires to validate farmers; validation is done in advance of payment – all tracing was done by phone and 90 percent of SHFs are covered.

In Uganda, tracing started in 2021 when traders were required to provide traceability information for 20 percent of the supplied tonnage that was to be procured from SHFs. Using this information, the procurement team conducted vetting for five percent of the SHFs listed by traders in traceability forms. This vetting was limited in scope and consists of confirmation that the FOs did indeed sell food to the trader within a specified period.

## **2.4 EQ4 (SUSTAINABILITY)**

### ***Sustainability***

180. **Sustainability of direct modalities:** Several interventions to promote smallholder production and market access have generated positive results. Nevertheless, the scale of these interventions is small relative both to WFP procurement activities and to national levels of production, and their significance to food system development is currently limited. Across all three COs, WFP's integrated package of programming support and direct pro-smallholder local procurement has helped build the capacities of SHFs where leading FOs have 'graduated' in their levels of production, organisation, and marketing to be able to succeed without WFP support. In this regard, there are illustrative positive examples of how local procurement and programming can be linked for the purposes of sustainable agricultural development.

<sup>155</sup> Correspondence with the procurement teams in the pilot COs.

<sup>156</sup> WFP, 2020. Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy Interim Guidance for Pilot Implementation. P. 25-27.

<sup>157</sup> Trader name, contract (PO number), trader cell phone number/email, FO/SHF name, FO/SHF cell phone number, place of purchase, date and time of purchase, type/quality of commodity purchased, quantity (MT), unit price (USD/MT), and date of payment.

181. In Karamoja, for example, WFP has catalysed production through direct purchases, following up support to SHFs. Direct purchases in the area were a catalyst in the growth of pioneering FOs that have notably scaled their bulking and collective actions, allowing many SHFs to move from subsistence farming to producing and selling surpluses of maize.<sup>158</sup> As well, in the Gambella region of Ethiopia, which has been historically a low producing agricultural region in the country, WFP has supported farmers – formerly producing at or close to a subsistence level – to harvest large quantities of quality maize. Thus far, these farmers have only sold to WFP. But opportunities exist to link them to other markets, as the next stage in building sustainability. In Sudan, WFP-supported FOs did not qualify for direct purchases, which were instead attempted with FOs being supported by WFP partner IFAD; the outbreak of conflict prevented the delivery of these contracts (as detailed under EQ 1.5). The sudden outbreak of conflict in Sudan makes it difficult to assess the sustainability of LRFPP interventions there. Uganda and Ethiopia do indicate some sustainability gains. In Uganda, especially, FOs have developed and expanded the scope of their operations to the point that some are able to compete with larger market players – such as traders and middlemen – buying/bulking produce from local SHFs and selling to buyers other than WFP. Such success stories show that over time – with the right support and access to markets – vulnerable SHFs are able to grow into competitive FOs, with some even access and thriving in markets beyond WFP procurement.
182. **Sustainability of indirect modalities:** Over the course of its long-term engagement with its networks, sellers indicate that WFP has helped them to realize sustained improvements in providing quality agricultural products. To begin with, pursuit of engagement with WFP standards and quality has incentivized private sector actors to strengthen their protocols, standards, and quality of the food stuffs they buy and sell. WFP has also actively engaged with companies in its vendor network to promote knowledge exchange and technical skills transfer to improve PHH, storage, food safety, and overall quality assurance over the years. Importantly, private sector partners also suggest that the expertise they gained is often also cascaded to the SHFs they work with, multiplying across value chains the impacts of their initial quality improvements. In addition, private sector partners selling to WFP have broadly indicated making gains in their capacities to improve the standards and quality of goods they buy and sell have allowed them to access markets beyond WFP (e.g., government, export markets, other private sector buyers, etc.). When WFP tenders are not available, these private sector actors sell to other buyers, whether it be government, exporters, or other large private sector buyers, suggesting that they are able to sustainably sell beyond WFP. Of course, the long-term nature of WFP partnerships with vendors in Ethiopia, Sudan, and Uganda means that not all of the capacity gains noted above are attributable to LRFPP pilots. But these are still an important indication of the sustainable impact of continuous engagement with vendors. Working with WFP also incentivizes the improvement of standards through interaction with WFP's rigorous enforcement of requirements to manage aflatoxin and other quality issues through improved drying, improved stocking, and handling.
183. Even if LRFPP is too early on in its implementation to have any real integration, there are many examples of promising collaboration with government and private sector partners to build on. The enabling environment to support pro-SHF local procurement is generally weak in the three pilot countries and knowledge of the LRFPP among government partners is limited. Still, WFP has been working with governments to build national capacities to support SHFs within the agricultural sector.

***Finding 18:** There are many efforts to collaborate around standards, but development, awareness, and enforcement remains a challenge.*

184. Standards enforcement has the potential to incentivize private sector actors to engage with SHFs. In theory, if there was stronger enforcement of quality standards in the general marketplace, demand for quality would increase – to the advantage of SHFs that have invested in adoption of best practices in production and PHH. It should be noted that quality standards in this context link directly to food safety, as poor quality can lead to aflatoxin which is a threat to human life; generally, inadequate messaging/awareness

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<sup>158</sup> FOs like Namalu Farmers Association (NAFA) have bulked and collectively sold up to 140 MT of good quality maize (since 2017), while the FO Napak Farmers Association has bulked and collectively sold up to 98 MT of good quality grains (also since). With this experience of selling to WFP, NAFA has diversified its activities into rice hulling, maize milling, sunflower oil production, and packaging, thus increasing their income sources. Individual members have equally diversified into both agricultural and non-agricultural business enterprises including piggery, poultry production, agro-processing and value addition of maize and sunflower.

around this issue was observed. Enforced grain quality standards are a safeguard to help mitigate the risk of this limited awareness and protect public health.

185. **Ethiopia:** Stakeholders from the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) in Ethiopia emphasized the importance of collaboration and coordination – and their interest in supporting initiatives such as the LRFPP and WFP’s resilience programming. MOA stakeholders further stressed that it is important for international organizations to follow the proper channels to ensure coherency and linkages to support from actors like the MOA on issues like follow-up, strategy design, preparation of manuals, provision of trainings, etc.; such improvements in collaboration are seen as essential for developing a well-regulated food system and value chains within.
186. **Sudan:** According to stakeholders in Sudan, one of the challenges in bringing local procurement to scale is the shortcoming from the government sector. Policies and strategies are not actively monitored to ensure they are being implemented. Without this close monitoring and enforcement some like the banks end up doing what they want and diverting their resources to the large-scale farmers. In a new model or the fusion between WFP LRFPP modality and the contract farming – for example the private sector entity can be registered with the ministry – some guarantees and facilities can be made by the Ministry for the private sector entity. It is evident that progressive realization of improved government capacities to enforce standards is a critical element of enabling sustainable SHF market access.
187. **Uganda:** There are quality standards governing grain, for example the East African Grain Standards and national standards set by the Grain Council of Uganda. But these have not been enforced. Stakeholders reported that there were only a couple of instances reported where imported Uganda grain was rejected at the borders of Kenya and South Sudan (viewed as evidence that standards are not being enforced). Even amongst some government interviewees at the district level (district production team in Masindi) there was not a great understanding of standards, with some questioning if there are standards; one person knew of the East African Standards, but the government has not been enforcing standards. Furthermore, there are many middlemen in Uganda, due to relatively liberal economic regulation. Many middlemen come and give SHFs the same price as cooperatives selling to WFP, without the quality requirements. Foreign middlemen from Kenya, South Sudan, and Rwanda – countries that have a lower supply of maize than Uganda does – offer a higher price to SHFs without being as discerning about moisture content and quality. Such international traders keep prices of Uganda maize high, and distort the price-to-quality ratio. This appears to disincentivize adherence to and enforcement of quality standards; however, awareness and understanding of standards is low and the government has human resource challenges that constrain its ability to carry out enforcement. Few traders are being sanctioned/penalized for buying/having low quality grain. There is a consensus among stakeholders consulted by the ET that more support is required to help the government create an enabling environment for systematic enforcement of grain quality standards.

## Scalability

***Finding 19:** The applicability and potential for scalability and replication of the different procurement approaches/tools related to the LFFPP depend on the context each is implemented in. Integration of these approaches over time can help maximize the strengths of each.*

188. Direct procurement modalities are controllable and targeted, and lead to direct price transfers. However, because direct purchases are focused on farmers with lower capacities, they typically must be accompanied with a significant programmatic effort – limiting their range, sustainability, and scalability.
189. Indirect modalities, on the other hand, rely on the private sector to connect with, what are on average, higher capacity farmers that can supply high agricultural produce. As was discussed at length above, WFP’s direct and indirect procurement modalities are typically driven by divergent contextual characteristics and require different geographic targeting. Therefore, these two modality types are best suited for different contexts – direct modalities to areas with FOs that have higher production capacity, and indirect modalities to areas with higher production capacities. Like this, there appears to be a tension between, on one hand, WFP’s core mandate to help countries respond to the urgent needs of substance farmers – in other words those that are furthest behind – and those that are relatively better off, with the capacities, resources, and opportunities to produce and sell surpluses.
190. That direct and indirect procurement modalities have different aims and generally operate in different contexts does not necessarily mean that they should be considered separately. These two procurement

modality types can effectively be thought of as existing along a continuum of WFP engagement that seeks to build the capacities of SHFs/FOs from subsistence, to surplus, to sustainability through a combination of local procurement and targeted programming. Indeed, there are notable examples (as illustrated above) from the evaluated COs that the impacts of WFP interventions compound over time, building farmers' capacities to the point that previously vulnerable smallholders are adequately able to respond to WFP purchase requests, as they move from subsistence farming to surplus supply to sustainability. Thus, supply-oriented interventions become the entry point to building resilience among the poorest smallholders. As the productive capacities of smallholders improve, additional support for post-harvest practices and assistance aimed at organizing into groups have helped farmers grow to the point they able supply sufficient quantity and quality that can be aggregated to supply direct procurement modalities.

191. Unfortunately, intensive investment required means that the reach and sustainability of interventions linked to direct purchases is limited, as is the extent to which such direct purchase interventions could be brought to scale. However, there is evidence – as is well demonstrated in the case of Karamoja – that gains made through programming and direct purchases can lead to sustainability gains. Some SHFs/FOs previously supported by WFP have proven that they are not only able to sell to buyers other than WFP, but can even compete with traders and middlemen; these sustainability gains in part been catalysed by local procurement. Very preliminary steps are now being taken – for example, with the Uganda CO's efforts to create linkages to its vendor network, using meetings, or by compiling and setting up market information systems or lists of vendors – to integrate FOs previous efforts through direct procurement into further support through indirect modalities. There is potential that market linkages of this type can consolidate and make sustainable previous programming efforts by expanding the market access available to SHFs/FOs, moving them towards more sustainable market engagements with private sector actors. As more smallholders move long the continuum from subsistence to surplus, better access to the WFP vendor network – which sells to markets beyond WFP – can ease demand volatility linked to the uncertainty of WFP funding and overcoming the sustainability challenges associated with direct support of SHFs.
192. Pro-smallholder indirect purchases also show some scalability potential. In the short-term, there are also opportunities to expand the active roster of WFP traders to encourage smaller traders to bid for WFP contracts, and gain benefits from selling to WFP – bulk buying, higher price, reputational boost, skills transfer. The Learning Workshop for this evaluation indicated that WFP processes are excluding small businesses and favour those who are already in the system. Therefore, there are additional opportunities to look at how WFP processes can be made more inclusive to smaller traders. In the longer-term, indirect procurement processes presently only emphasise conditionalities related to the percentage of purchases that must be made from SHFs. But the incentives that compel vendors to buy from WFP can then be leveraged as a value proposition for these same vendors to take a more active role in pro-SHF modalities. In particular, inclusive pro-smallholder modalities can be replicated by WFP's interventions in agricultural value chains through their relationships with traders. Like this, more buyers will have the knowledge, skills, and expertise to pursue business models that are inclusive of smallholders, rather than reinforcing existing purchasing dynamics that favour the stronger and more established farmers and actors within those systems (and tend to marginalize vulnerable populations while neglecting climate change adaptation).

## 3. Conclusions & recommendations

### 3.1. CONCLUSIONS

193. Integrated conclusions are presented below, based on the consolidated findings introduced in the sections above. The conclusions also include a review of the ToC proposed in the Inception Report.

**Conclusion 1:** *Local procurement was relevant to local and national priorities, as well as WFP strategies, but there are opportunities for great collaboration between WFP and external partners in subsequent phases of the LRFPP.*

194. Overall, the evaluation found that LRFPP pilots were well-aligned to high-level national priorities related to agriculture, nutrition, and food systems. Further, linking SHFs to markets was relevant to the local needs of SHFs, and local procurement can be key catalytic tool for promoting smallholder production within food

systems. These initiatives were coherent with WFP's work towards 'changing lives' by promoting resilience, market support, etc. Initial rollout of the LRFPP focused on implementation of contracting and integration of procurement activities into programming, rather than scaling through partnerships. Therefore, collaboration with government entities on various aspects of LRFPP interventions has thus far been relatively ad hoc and piecemeal. WFP did continuously engage with government partners, other UN agencies, and cooperating partners, yet piloting prioritized testing and implementing the policy over exerting external influence through private (other than with vendors) and public sector partnerships. There were opportunities to collaborate on developing, disseminating, and enforcing standards, for example.

**Conclusion 2:** *When WFP's local and regional food procurement was properly integrated into WFP and its partners programming intervention it could be an effective mechanism for addressing bottlenecks in value chains, enhancing food systems, and for improving the livelihoods and resilience of SHFs.*

195. LRFPP piloting built on existing initiatives, and thus was rooted in existing WFP strategies at the corporate and country level – all of which prioritized support for SHFs in agriculture in East Africa. Linkages between smallholders and markets were fundamental to food systems there; however, due to the low capacity of most SHFs – often producing a subsistence levels – inequities and inefficiencies too often prevented vulnerable farmers from accessing markets. Thus, there were still untapped opportunities to adapt and calibrate LRFPP procurement modalities to better meet the needs of SHFs and WFP's strategic interests related to both programming and procurement objectives. To improve the capacity of SHFs, WFP has conducted interventions within the three pilot countries, designed to strengthen smallholders and improve linkages between producers and markets. Integrating local procurement into WFP interventions helped address bottlenecks in value chains, assisted in enhancing food systems, and improved the livelihoods and resilience of SHFs. While the scale and geographical scope of these interventions was limited, there was evidence of their impacts in empowering SHFs/FOs to capture a larger share of the value chain. Further, WFP procurement paid above market prices for the agricultural commodities they purchased, and there was some evidence that this increased price could be an important factor in transmission of value to producers. While linking WFP interventions to local procurement through direct procurement modalities helped catalyse and sustain gains in resilience among SHFs, there were aspects of the procurement processes that LRFPP pilots relied on that were not well-aligned with the needs for timeliness on multiple dimensions. For example, while the GCMF's dedicated financing for procurement from SHFs enabled LRFPP procurement modalities, and was used for most procurements from SHFs in the three pilot countries (reducing the lead time for procurements from SHFs when used), it did not offer a reliable market or stable demand for SHFs; this introduced market shock risks that could undermine sustainability and consistent progress towards resilience of farmers and food systems.

**Conclusion 3:** *Indirect procurement modalities could be an effective and impactful tool for incentivizing pro-SHF purchases, but were constrained by inadequate traceability, lack of definitional clarity around definitions of 'smallholder', and (in some cases) low conditionality thresholds.*

196. Even with contract conditionalities intended to incentivize purchases from SHFs, traders favoured commercially viable producers due to their higher capacities to sell high quantities and at high qualities, whereas direct procurement processes were targeted on equitable development and vulnerable SHFs/FOs. Definitions of SHFs varied among WFP vendors, creating considerable ambiguity about the term 'SHF'. Joining up procurement and programming objectives through indirect purchases required theoretical and programmatic clarity on the rationale about the characteristics of the 'term' to better capture this group through indirect purchases. The traceability mechanism was also not being used to identify whether traders were purchasing from WFP beneficiaries (a sub-category of SHFs). Perhaps more importantly, efforts to undertake traceability were not used to define or characterize the types of SHFs that traders were purchasing from to understand if they were including the most vulnerable smallholders. Moreover, indirect procurement processes emphasized conditionalities related to the percentage of purchases from SHFs – intended to incentivize more purchases from SHFs. The relevance of this is contextual – in Ethiopia and Sudan, traders found it difficult to procure 10 percent of commodities from SHFs, whereas in Uganda many traders already sourced from 30-40 percent from SHFs (leaving contract conditionalities to be largely irrelevant and not the source of incentive for increasing quantities sourced from SHFs).

**Conclusion 4:** *Competition among buyers of quality grains was low, limiting the market opportunities for SHFs.*

197. WFP procurement undertaken through its vendor network helped to transfer technical expertise and skills to traders that in-turn catalysed changes in standards and regulations that effectively embedded improved quality and food safety in the operational standards and practices of private sector partners that WFP buys from. However, competition for quality grains was still low; WFP bought from a handful of traders and standards are not systematically enforced by governments – deflating demand. If more traders were assisted to become vendors of WFP, producers would enjoy a wider market and increased competition for their agricultural products. Increasing the number of traders that WFP buys from would open up additional markets for SHFs to sell quality agricultural products, simultaneously stimulating competition among the traders operating in any given area, thereby increasing prices paid to farmers for agricultural goods.

**Conclusion 5:** *There was a tension between support for food system development objectives and the need for procurement cost-efficiency that limits outcomes (especially those related to food systems) of the LRFPP.*

198. There was an ongoing tension between the understandable commitment on the part of WFP to low costs and efficient performance through its larger commercially orientated contracts, and its commitment to sustainable and equitable food systems development. An assessment of the outcomes of direct purchases from smallholders and indirect procurement from traders suggests that both had strengths and weaknesses. Direct purchases transferred higher profits to SHFs and increased the extent to which SHFs were able to produce at scale by integrating improved agricultural technologies and practices, but the interventions associated with these came at considerable costs. Significant investments of time and money into programming were required to achieve reliable quality and performance from smallholders. Sustainability of direct purchases was also limited due to the significant investment required in both procurement and programming to support these. Conversely, indirect purchases required less investment by WFP, but worked through a small number of suppliers focused on commercial considerations over development objectives. As such, indirect modalities were likely to reinforce existing dynamics within food systems that favoured larger and stronger producers. Therefore, they were less well suited – at least in their current form – to changing systems levels objectives related to improved value chain efficiency, inclusiveness, resilience, and nutrition.

**Conclusion 6:** *Procurement modalities alone were not contributing to increased levels of inclusion. Additional interventions to increase incentives was needed.*

199. Procurement objectives favoured commercial considerations (e.g., price, reliability) and did not incentivize traders that promote inclusion. Considerable barriers inhibited full participation of women, youth, PWDs, and others in the agricultural sectors of the three countries in which the evaluation took place. The extent to which different groups were excluded from food systems varied according to country context and the part of the food system being considered. Overall, there was very little evidence that WFP procurement by itself has contributed to an increased level of inclusiveness within food systems, as procurement modalities did not actively support the inclusion of disadvantaged groups. This points to an ongoing friction between LRFPP programme objectives that aim to promote more equitable food systems development, and WFP procurement objectives that aim to secure adequate and efficient purchases of agricultural commodities (as discussed above). In particular, issues of inclusiveness, climate change resilience, and nutrition could not be assumed to be downstream objectives or outcomes of local procurement, as is currently portrayed in the LRFPP ToC. These were not actively integrated along LRFPP integration pathways and elements. In addition, none of the VCAs undertaken in the pilot countries engaged in a detailed analysis on gender, inclusion, or the environment to better support inclusion and climate/environmental sustainability through the programmatic and procurement objectives of the LRFPP. Without greater intervention through added incentives to promote the inclusion of women, youth, or PWD, or to enact more pro-smallholder supports or supports related to climate and nutrition these modalities are likely to continue to reinforce existing dynamics within staple food systems, favouring the strongest actors within those systems.

**Conclusion 7:** *Thus far, there was limited application of VCA findings to design targeted interventions to support local procurement and limited use of monitoring data and evidence to measure impact of local procurement efforts at the food systems level.*

200. By the end of the piloting period, VCAs, ToCs, and monitoring frameworks had been carried out in each pilot country. However, use of M&E data has so far been limited to measuring the volume, value, and percentage of WFP food procurement conducted through pro-SHF contract modalities, with little progress

made thus far in using M&E systems understand the impacts that the LRFPP has had on value chains and food systems. For instance, detailed datasets collected by WFP were of little utility in informing the analysis in this evaluation, as little evidence had been collected to measure outcomes related to the LRFPP – especially on food systems. Data collected as part of individual programmes was well suited to the specific purposes for which it is gathered, but could not be readily integrated to determine the impacts of local procurement and hence did not provide a comprehensive assessment of the impacts the LRFPP.

### 3.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

201. The ET developed evidence-based recommendations that build on the findings and conclusions presented in this report and offer a way forward for WFP in its further rollout of the LRFPP. These are briefly summarized in narrative below and presented (along with sub-recommendations and indications of grouping, responsibility, priority, and timing for each) in the following table. In addition to the judgement of the ET, the parameters of the recommendations also consider stakeholder feedback and realistic expectations, given context factors.

*Recommendation 1: Approach LRFPP as a continuum from subsistence, to surplus, to sustainability.*

202. WFP should approach local pro-SHF procurement as an integrated continuous process – from direct to indirect – rather than a series of separate approaches/tools. Adopting this perspective (e.g., that direct and indirect contracting modalities exist along a continuum of smallholder development) could improve the coherency, effectiveness, and impact of support given by WFP. The continuum moves from direct supply and SHF market supports (coupled with direct purchases) at first, to indirect SHF support – by working with traders to adopt pro-SHF and more-inclusive business models (e.g., engaging in indirect purchase) later. To begin with, capacity strengthening of SHFs/FOs is required until surplus production levels are reached, and then further support is needed to catalyse grouping and aggregating SHFs into FOs, coops, and apex organizations. Direct procurement can then be attached to interventions implemented to develop the capacity of SHFs, after which there is the potential to create linkages with traders that operate in the area – connecting SHFs with traders and transitioning them from direct procurement modalities to indirect modalities. VCAs can be used to expand and improve existing programming in a way that further informs strategies to address existing constraints by targeting prevailing bottlenecks, addressing inefficiencies, and correcting imbalances that may prevent farmers and other actors from fully benefiting from local food procurement.<sup>159</sup> Further, VCAs can be an important source of evidence to secure funding for programming linked to procurement activities – from improving seed quality, through to supporting PHM, good storage practices, and market linkages.
203. As FOs gain capacity, WFP support can progressively shift to creating linkages to its vendor network, using meetings, or by compiling and setting up market information systems or lists of vendors, that can assist in creating initial contact between FOs and vendors. As more FOs are supported indirectly through WFP purchases made via its vendor network, WFP can offer vendors technical guidance related to defining and working with the most vulnerable SHFs, as well as capacity building to incorporate assistance on gender, nutrition, and climate in pro-SHF business models. In the long-term, FOs previously supported by WFP – especially those inclusive of women, youth, and other disadvantaged groups – can be assisted to become wholesalers of WFP creating a wider marketplace and increased competition for quality grains. Using the model just described, WFP can more-coherently sequence LRFPP-related support to move SHFs/FOs from subsistence, to surplus, to sustainability in a context-specific way.

*Recommendation 2: Promote development objectives by making conditionality more targeted and context-relevant.*

204. In addition to pursuing development objectives and reducing barriers to inclusion through interventions integrated into local procurement, WFP should address these through expanded conditionalities attached to procurement modalities; conditionalities might be expanded to include quotas/thresholds on purchases from females, youth, or PWDs. VCAs or other dedicated studies should be used to estimate the appropriate conditionalities based on the inclusion of SHFs into current value chain scenarios in specific contexts (e.g., ensuring that targets are both realistic and ambitious). To this end, standardized guidance within VCA methodologies should be developed to guide COs to collect data not just on inclusion, but also on nutrition,

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<sup>159</sup> As an example, in Ethiopia this could mean complementing the existing resilience model by linking farmers and FOs with private-led mechanization services providers, building on the traditional storage facilities (indigenous knowledge) and improving them, engaging and advocating for contract farming with SHF, etc. As well, in Uganda, existing AMS activities can be complemented by additional support that improves harvesting and post harvesting practices that SHF apply, promotes promote community-based seedbanks to help vulnerable farmers access seeds at affordable prices, introduces better price policies regarding inputs, and encourages WFP vendors and aggregators to become key entry points to provide individual farmers with training, storage, transportation, quality assurance.



and climate.<sup>160</sup> If utilized like this, VCAs could be more effectively leveraged to provide a baseline analysis of the critical issues related to inclusion, nutrition, and climate that would hinder the full achievement of the development objectives of the LRFPP. Gathering the right evidence will help WFP to intentionally generate and target the strategies that are essential in realizing the long-term development goals of local and regional procurement through an evidence-based approach to local and regional procurement. Importantly, VCAs could also be leveraged to better inform how to effectively set conditionalities that incentivize pro-smallholder business models (as in Uganda, or through contract-farming in Ethiopia and Sudan). In those areas where market incentives cannot be created to promote development objectives – such as climate/environment and nutrition – WFP can use its own programming, strengthening the capacities of its vendor network to promote development in these areas. Alternatively, climate/environment and nutrition outcomes can be promoted by creating linkages to existing initiatives in these areas that are being undertaken by government or other partners.

***Recommendation 3: Improve targeting of SHFs and traceability/M&E.***

205. WFP should strengthen its ability to trace and target SHFs, especially the most vulnerable. Specifically, there is a need to develop more nuanced SHF taxonomy, perhaps introducing the concept of a very small holder farmer (VSHF), and to apply more specificity in targeting and traceability approaches. Building on Recommendation 2, future purchases through WFP’s vendor network could better incentivize purchases from the most vulnerable SHFs, by working with traders, SNF suppliers, and government authorities to harmonize use of SHF definitions as the basis for which local procurement is carried out. As well, there is the need to roll out and implement the recently developed monitoring frameworks related to SHFs, value chains, and food systems to enable measurement of the programmatic objectives of the LRFPP. In particular, procurement, programmes, and RAM should work together to improve M&E related to food systems gains (e.g., nutrition gains, environmental impacts, etc.) in order to better trace the impacts of local procurement on food systems, etc. To implement this recommendation, WFP must accompany procurement efforts with additional staffing resources for more robust on-the-ground traceability. This could mean allocating additional internal resources for this function to procurement, programmes, or RAM, or by contracting external actors through an independent consulting firm. As the LRFPP is expanded and scaled, additional staffing and skills will be needed across other WFP functions to implement LRFPP-specific activities. The necessary staffing and skills requirements could be identified through an outline of the ‘minimum structure/skills’ needed to implement the policies going forward (e.g., value chain experts). These could be developed and communicated by HQ, with HQ and RBN working with COs to identify required funding/resources for implementation.

***Recommendation 4: Streamline procurement processes.***

206. There is opportunity to improve the efficiency of local procurement processes by recognizing that the length of time to procure and pay for local procurement is a key bottleneck for cash-strapped SHFs. Addressing the payment system may take a long time, therefore this recommendation should be seen as a long-term process. As part of actioning this recommendation, HQ/RBN could consider leading an evaluation or assessment of systemic issues related to identifying inefficiencies/bottlenecks in existing procurement processes. Making local procurement contracting processes more efficient will have a significant impact on SHFs, getting money in farmer’s hands at the right time to mitigate the financial constraints many SHFs face. This issue requires further reflection from WFP on ‘do no harm principles’, developing more efficient procurement processes, where WFP could both shoulder more of the PHH cost burden while creating storage-related assets in producer communities that could help to strengthen the value chain. There is also a need to improve communication and feedback mechanisms to ensure clarity for all stakeholders involved in local procurement – from procurement to purchases – in the case of delayed orders or cancellations. Finally, making GCMF PRs available during marketing seasons can help maximize the gains of buying at the right time. ‘Right time’ availability of PRs can be facilitated if GCMF shares regional demand forecasts in advance with COs for feedback, allowing COs to provide input into when/where to buy particular commodities based on their market assessments and seasonal calendars.

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<sup>160</sup> The VCA methodology was revised recently, but this had not been operationalized at the time of the evaluation. The food systems unit at RBN has also organized a capacity building initiative for VCA, development, and food systems analysis.

### **Recommendation 5: Expand roster of active WFP vendors**

207. There are opportunities for WFP to expand its roster of active vendors to create a broader participation among WFP suppliers, which in turn will create competition among wholesalers. The increased numbers of traders in the market would bring both more efficiency and competition – market conditions that enable producers to negotiate more effectively. To achieve this recommendation, WFP could review requirements for adding vendors and get waivers to classify vendors in a different way (e.g., to target women-owned businesses). In the short-term, this could result in more qualified traders being verified, accredited, and incorporated into the WFP network. There may also be opportunities to more extensively profile the traders operating across the pilot countries to determine which ones are engaging in pro-SHF business practices and which ones can be incentivized to do so. In the long-term, smaller traders with less capacities (in particular, those FOs previously supported by WFP) can be assisted to become wholesalers of WFP creating an even wider marketplace and increased competition for quality grains. Further, to better integrate development objectives into indirect procurement, there are opportunities to encourage women's businesses,<sup>161</sup> or those inclusive of youth and other disadvantaged groups to bid for WFP tenders by designing interventions to build the capacities of trading companies led by women, youth, and PWDs, so that they might also eventually bid for WFP tenders. The focus of such interventions should identify and address the main bottlenecks to entry of disadvantaged groups in trading; these might include training in business management, access to finance, and support for food safety, quality, and storage.

### **Recommendation 6: Continue to strengthen enabling environment.**

208. Building on WFP's partnerships with its governmental and non-governmental partners, COs can continue to raise knowledge and awareness of the LRFPP among partners. As the LRFPP rolls out and gains institutional strength and coherence, WFP COs will be in a better position to incorporate partners into their local and regional procurement efforts. Especially, the early focus should be support for governments to build government capacities to assist SHFs within the agricultural sector through targeted efforts to improve national enabling environments as it relates to the quality and safety practices/standards, technical assistance and other support for strengthening the drafting of laws and the enforcement of standards. Opportunities also exist to advocate among government, UN agencies, and cooperating partners to incentivize private sector actors to take on more pro-SHF local procurement and business models that favour smallholders. For instance, COs in Ethiopia and Sudan can continue to advocate for contract-farming, while in Uganda the early focus might be working with local governments to improve enforcement of existing grain standards. Localized efforts that are successful provide a model for scaling up guidance, standards, enforcement, etc. – first building and testing a model or good practices and then creating mechanisms (e.g., manuals, meetings, workshop, etc.) for their dissemination and scaling. In all of these activities, it is essential to work closely with government partners, creating early buy-in, supporting institutional capacity building, and thus making it more likely that WFP's work will be integrated into government priorities nationally and locally. Overall, there are future possibilities to be exploited – building on already-established relationships – for work with the public sector, food processors, and other buyers to share experiences from the LRFPP and promote pro-SHF local procurement. As WFP is not the only buyer looking for high quality grain, there is a need to raise awareness among other buyers to increase the demand for pro-SHF agricultural products. RBN could work with COs to develop further guidance in this regard.

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<sup>161</sup> As there are already some notable examples of FOs run by women that have increased their participation in various agricultural markets as a result of WFP interventions, programming aimed at vendors could all help smaller wholesalers participate in WFP tenders and thereby promote the development more competitive value chains.

**Table 13: Summary of recommendations for future LRFPF engagements**

#	Recommendation	Grouping	Responsibility	Contributing entities	Priority Level	By when
1	<p><b>Recommendation 1:</b> Approach LRFPF as a continuum from subsistence, to surplus, to sustainability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 1.1:</b> Include integrated programme planning based on VCA to show how the CO will support local value chains to gradually scale up its procurement operations and the use of pro-SHF contract modalities, including the identification of key activities necessary for their success.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 1.2:</b> Utilize a mix of approaches that responds to the varying levels of maturity of SHFs – building up SHFs and later leveraging the success of stronger FOs to support smaller FOs through aggregation and even service provision.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 1.3:</b> Facilitate linkages between successful WFP-supported FOs and WFP vendors, through meetings, market information systems, or lists of vendors/SHFs that can assist marketing connections.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 1.4:</b> Support WFP vendors with training on: technical guidance related to defining and working with most vulnerable SHFs, as well as capacity building to incorporate assistance on gender, nutrition, and climate in pro-SHF business models.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 1.5:</b> Roll out and implement the recently developed monitoring frameworks related to SHFs, value chains, and food systems to enable measurement of programmatic objectives related to the LRFPF.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 1.6:</b> Use VCAs as evidence-based to secure funding programming linked to local procurement.</li> </ul>	Strategic	Procurement and programmes units at WFP COs	RBN	High	Beginning of phase of LRFPF
2	<p><b>Recommendation 2:</b> Promote development objectives by making conditionality more targeted and context-relevant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 2.1:</b> Set strategic conditionalities that exceed (and therefore incentivize) vendors to make additional purchases from SHFs above and beyond what they are already doing as part of everyday business practices.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 2.2:</b> Expand conditionalities for traders to provide other supporting practices aimed at other food systems areas that are not market incentivized – such as gender, youth, PWDs – providing technical support to vendors to build the capacities of SHFs in these areas.</li> </ul>	Operational	Procurement unit at WFP COs	WFP Vendors and relevant government agencies	Medium	December 2024

#	Recommendation	Grouping	Responsibility	Contributing entities	Priority Level	By when
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 2.3:</b> Guidance on VCAs methodologies should also be adjusted to better collect data on the situations of the marginalized groups, nutrition, and on climate/environmental considerations.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 2.4:</b> In those areas where market incentives cannot be created to promote development objectives – such as climate/environment and nutrition – WFP can promote development through its own programming or through linking to partners doing the same.</li> </ul>					
3	<p><b>Recommendation 3:</b> Improve targeting of SHFs and traceability/M&amp;E.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 3.1:</b> Develop further technical/theoretical guidance on how SHFs are defined, with guidance oriented to assisting WFP partners in identifying and working with vulnerable SHFs.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 3.2:</b> Implement awareness raising activities that communicate to private sector partners the importance of pro-SHF support and the provision of market incentives (e.g., better prices, training) to buy from SHFs.</li> <li>• <b>x</b> Developed 'minimum structure/skills' needed to implement the policies going forward and identify required additional funding/resources for implementation.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 3.4:</b> Enhance traceability of SHFs that supply to WFP through all contracting modalities; ensure COs have capacities to carry out rigorous in-field traceability.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 3.5:</b> Roll out and implement the recently developed monitoring frameworks related to SHFs, value chains, and food systems to enable measurement of programmatic objectives related to the LRFPF.</li> </ul>	M&E and evidence generation	Procurement and M&E unit at WFP COs	HQ, RBN, and WFP Vendors	High	December 2024
4	<p><b>Recommendation 4:</b> Streamline procurement processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 4.1:</b> Consider how procurement processes can be made more efficient.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 4.2:</b> WFP should improve communication and feedback mechanisms to ensure clarity for all stakeholders involved in local procurement – from procurement to purchase.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 4.3:</b> WFP should make GCMF PRs available during marketing seasons to help maximize the gains/value.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 4.4:</b> HQ/RBN to consider leading evaluation/assessment of systemic issues related to procurement processes.</li> </ul>	<u>Operational</u>	Procurement unit at WFP COs	HQ and RBN	Medium	End of next phase of LRFPF

#	Recommendation	Grouping	Responsibility	Contributing entities	Priority Level	By when
5	<p><b>Recommendation 5:</b> Expand the roster of active WFP vendors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 5.1:</b> Review requirements and get waivers to classify vendors in a different way, esp. to target women-owned businesses.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 5.2:</b> Profile the traders to determine which are engaging in pro-SHF business practices and which can be incentivized to do so.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 5.3:</b> Create a broader network of active WFP suppliers that can create competition among wholesalers, finding existing qualified traders that can be verified, accredited, and incorporated into the WFP network.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 5.4:</b> Work with smaller traders (in particular those FOs previously supported by WFP) can be assisted to become wholesalers of WFP creating a wider marketplace and increased competition for quality grains.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 5.5:</b> Encourage women's businesses, or those inclusive of youth and other disadvantaged groups to bid for WFP tenders by designing interventions to build the capacities of trading companies led by women, youth, and PWDS.</li> </ul>	<u>Operational</u>	Procurement unit at WFP COs	HQ and RBN	Low	July 2024
6	<p><b>Recommendation 6:</b> Continue to strengthen enabling environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 6.1:</b> Strengthen the enabling environment to support pro-SHF local procurement and raise knowledge and awareness of the LRFPP among government and non-governmental partners.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 6.2:</b> Support for governments to build national capacities to support SHFs within the agricultural sector through targeted efforts to improve guidance on quality and safety practices/standards, technical assistance and other support related to laws and enforcement of such standards, and advocacy among government, UN agencies, and cooperating partners to incentivize private sector actors to take on more pro-SHF business models.</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 6.3:</b> Bring localized efforts to scale by first building and testing a model or good practices and then disseminating and scaling through: manuals, meetings, workshop, etc. (which have early buy-in and endorsement from government partners).</li> <li>• <b>Sub-recommendation 6.4:</b> Raise awareness among other public sector, non-governmental, and private consumers of agricultural products to increase the demand of pro-SHF agricultural products. RBN could work with COs to develop further guidance in this regard.</li> </ul>	Institutional	Procurement and programmes units at WFP COs	Relevant government entities, UNCT, CPs	Medium	On-going

# Annex 1. Summary Terms of Reference

209. The ToR for this evaluation is available at: <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000149882/download/>

## Annex 2. Timeline

210. A detailed timeline for the evaluation is outlined in the following table.

**Table 14: Detailed timeline**

	Phases, deliverables, and timeline	Key dates
<b>Phase 1 - Preparation</b>		<b>Up to 9 weeks (Oct.-Dec. 2022)</b>
<b>Evaluation Manager (EM)</b>	Desk review, draft ToR and quality assurance (QA) by EM and Regional Evaluation Officer (REO) using ToR quality control (QC)	31st October
<b>EM</b>	Share draft ToR with quality support service (DEQS) and organise follow-up call with DEQS	31st October
<b>EM</b>	Review draft ToR based on DEQS and REO feedback and share with ERG	7th November
<b>EM</b>	Start identification of ET	7th November
<b>ERG</b>	Review and comment on draft ToR	14th November
<b>EM</b>	Review draft ToR based on comments received and submit final ToR to EC Chair	21st November
<b>EC Chair</b>	<b>Approve the final ToR and share with ERG and key stakeholders</b>	<b>23rd November</b>
<b>EM</b>	Assess evaluation proposals and recommends team selection	30th November
<b>EM</b>	ET recruitment/contracting	31st December
<b>EC Chair</b>	<b>Approve ET selection and recruitment of ET</b>	<b>31st December</b>
<b>Phase 2 - Inception</b>		<b>Up to 13 weeks (Feb.-July 2023)</b>
<b>EM/TL</b>	Brief core team	9th February
<b>ET</b>	Desk review of key documents	27th February
<b>ET</b>	Draft inception report	7th June
<b>EM</b>	Quality assurance of draft IR by EM and REO using QC, share draft IR with DEQS and organise follow-up call with DEQS	19th June
<b>ET</b>	Review draft IR based on feedback received by DEQS, EM and REO	3rd July
<b>EM</b>	Share revised IR with ERG	3rd July
<b>ERG</b>	Review and comment on draft IR	10th July
<b>EM</b>	Consolidate comments	10th July
<b>ET</b>	Review draft IR based on feedback received and submit final revised IR	17th July
<b>EM</b>	Review final IR and submit to the evaluation committee for approval	24th July
<b>EC Chair</b>	<b>Approve final IR and share with ERG for information</b>	<b>31 July</b>
<b>Phase 3 - Data collection</b>		<b>Up to 16 weeks (Aug.-Nov. 2023)</b>
<b>EC Chair / EM</b>	Brief the ET at CO	21st August

	Phases, deliverables, and timeline	Key dates
ET	Data collection	28th August
ET	COs debrief	30th November
Phase 4 - Reporting		Up to 11 weeks (Dec. 2023 – Mar. 2024)
ET	Draft evaluation report	31st December
EM	Quality assurance of draft evaluation report by EM and REO using the QC, share draft evaluation report with quality support service (DEQS) and organise follow-up call with DEQS	5th January
ET	Review and submit draft evaluation report based on feedback received by DEQS, EM and REO	26th January
EM	Circulate draft evaluation report for review and comments to evaluation report, RBN, and other stakeholders	26th January
ERG	Review and comment on draft evaluation report	9th February
EM	Consolidate comments received	9th February
ET	Learning brief draft	16th February
EM	Review learning brief draft	
ET	Review draft evaluation report based on feedback received and submit final revised evaluation report	16th February
EM	Review final revised evaluation report and submit to the evaluation committee	23rd February
ET	Submit final learning brief	23rd February
EC Chair	Approve final evaluation report and learning brief and share with key stakeholders for information	1st March
Phase 5 - Dissemination and follow-up		Up to 4 weeks (Mar.- Apr. 2024)
EC Chair	Prepare management response	29th March
EM	Share final evaluation report and management response with the REO and Office of Evaluation (OEV) for publication and participate in end-of-evaluation lessons learned call	19th April



## Annex 3. Methodology

211. The evaluation largely took on a qualitative open-ended approach, the objective of which was to identify a range of outcomes from the intervention through the perspectives of affected stakeholders. The methodology was initially based on an outcome harvesting approach that was later adapted by the ET to also consider a process-oriented assessment of intervention activities. Primary lines of inquiry looked at the intended and unintended outcomes of the LRFPP pilots. Secondary lines of questioning focused more directly on how outcomes are linked to procurement modalities and programming models, as well as WFP's supporting structures and systems. Where outcomes are limited, the ET probed those challenges and bottlenecks that prevented outcomes from being realised more fully.
212. Each stakeholder group – external and internal – was asked questions that pertain to the points just mentioned, first identifying outcomes, and then linking these to procurement and programming. Interviews with internal WFP stakeholders were also used to understand and further articulate how outcomes, procurement, and programming are linked to organisational structures and systems across the three pilot countries.
213. In general, research sought to strike a balance between impartially exploring outcomes determined by the stakeholder included in the research, allowing respondents to – in an unbiased way – list and discuss the outcomes they perceive to be most significant, and then engage in more focused lines of inquiry that are oriented towards a discussion of local and regional procurement modalities, programming models, and WFP organizational and operational processes. As well, it was necessary to probe critical areas of research; whether it is issues of gender and age or marginalization and vulnerability, the ET was mindful of integrating equity and wider inclusion issues into discussions about the LRFPP's outcomes and objectives. This required the ET to be informed about the full scope of the intervention – including its objectives and expected outcomes – to facilitate research appropriately, while not unduly influencing respondents' views.
214. All question sets have different focuses depending on the stakeholders involved. Take questions targeted at government partners as an example. These were used largely to gauge the national relevance of the LRFPP and the pilot approaches to national needs, as well as how well partnerships with government help promote sustainability of the pilot activities and associated outcomes. Conversations with the UNCT and NGOs, on the other hand, were useful for determining the coherence of pilot programming within the broader policy/programming ecosystem in each country, and the extent to which WFP is working according to its comparative advantage relative to other actors in that ecosystem. Internal interviews with WFP stakeholders were important for determining different approaches - what works, what does not, where, and why - for implementing the LRFPP. Adding this additional element to an outcome-oriented evaluation is important to interrogating the content and function of causal links between WFP activities and outcomes.
215. By adopting a comprehensive and rigorous evaluation approach that incorporates both outcomes and processes the evaluation provides a detailed and nuanced assessment of the LRFPP pilots for decision-making regarding potential future investments and expansions of the policy, as well as for improving the policy to better achieve its objectives. Using this approach, the ET produced localised, national learnings and recommendations, as well as broader learnings and recommendations that can be applied across all three pilot countries.

### SAMPLING

216. The sampling strategy elaborated below was developed to ensure representation of a cross-section of LRFPP activities so that – across the three countries – the evaluation considers different types of direct and indirect procurement. Based on this approach to sampling, the evaluation undertook a high-level national analysis of the LRFPP activities in each pilot country through remote interviews with WFP stakeholders and other relevant stakeholders. It also used targeted field-based data collection in key parts of Ethiopia and Uganda to generate comparative case studies with a range of potential learnings and recommendations for future LRFPP work in the region. This sampling strategy covered a cross-section of procurement modalities and supporting programmes, even if the evaluation does focus fieldwork on all types of procurement modalities and programming models present in each pilot country.

217. Initially, the ET was expected to undertake fieldwork in all three pilot countries. However, the outbreak of conflict in Sudan precluded on-the-ground data collection there. Still, the case of Sudan was integrated in the evaluation via remote engagement with available stakeholders, as it provides an indispensable test of the expected implementation sequence for LRFPP pilots. The remote nature of evaluator’s work in Sudan permitted a national focus that incorporates all parts of the country where LRFPP piloting is being undertaken. For their part, Ethiopia and Uganda provide examples of deviations from the expected sequence and offer unexpected successes and opportunities to improve the current LRFPP programming model. In-country fieldwork was carried out for these two pilots. Regional fieldwork areas of focus for Ethiopia and Uganda case studies were selected according to the following criteria:
1. The size, importance, nature, type, and range of local and regional procurement activities undertaken in each country
  2. Potential for assessing linkages to other programmatic activities being implemented by WFP
  3. Logistical considerations such as the ease of access to the research sites and the likelihood of accessing appropriate stakeholders.
218. Each LRFPP pilot was considered on its own terms, providing conclusions and recommendations specific to each individual country where these are important. Country pilots were also compared against LRFPP activities in other countries, where this was appropriate. The detailed investigations together underpinned the broader assessment of outcomes across the rest of the region to generate robust conclusions and recommendations.
219. The following table describes each of the case studies from each of the countries and briefly details the sampling rationale within each.

**Table 15: Description of expected case studies considered during the evaluation**

Countries	Regions sampled	Procurement modalities	Programme linkages	Case study rationale
<b>Ethiopia</b>	National (remote) and Amhara Region (in-field)	Direct (Amhara and Gambella) and indirect (Amhara)	LRFP in Ethiopia is connected to the Resilience Project being implemented in the Gambella region and Amhara regions of the country.	Several LRFP several contracting modalities were implemented in the Amhara region, offering the ET the potential to test these in the country context. Further, there are plans to extend the resilience programming, which offers the evaluation an opportunity to consider and provide learnings for future linkages between this programme and the LRFP. Consideration was given also to national programs that are relevant.
<b>Sudan</b>	National (remote)	Direct (South Darfur, North Kordofan, White Nile, etc.) and indirect (Gedaref)	WFP was implementing different interventions related to post-harvest management and the provision of input/equipment to reduce post-harvest losses in North Kordofan, among other regions.	The sampling approach considered three tracks of direct and indirect procurement modalities. Prior to the conflict, WFP expected so source much of the tonnage for LRFP in Sudan from the western part of the country, where the most vulnerable SHFs are operating. Including the LRFP activities in North Kordofan also has important linkages to WFP programming activities.
<b>Uganda</b>	National (remote) and Karamoja and West (in-field)	Direct (Karamoja) and indirect (West Nile, West and Southwestern)	In the Karamoja sub-region WFP is directly procuring commodities from SHFs organisations, linking these to AMS and a nationally owned HGSP programme. Sampling is focusing only in Karamoja while WFP Uganda CO is also implementing indirect contracting modalities though traders in surplus areas (mainly in the West and Southwest) and exploring linkages to AMS and Mastercard Foundation activities.	The sampling focus was chosen to take advantage of the Uganda COs programming activities in the Karamoja region, to explore how these connect to and support LRFP, while also considering indirect contracting modalities though traders in the West region and exploring linkages to SAMS and Mastercard Foundation activities.

220. **Constraints and considerations:** The ET explicitly acknowledges the trade-offs that had to be made between attempting to consider the full national rollout of LRFP pilots and undertaking a deep localized analysis of procurement modalities that were implemented within those countries. In particular, resource and time constraints precluded an approach to fieldwork that engaged all possible sites where the LRFP-related interventions are active in each pilot country. In consideration of these constraints, the selection of the research sites was informed by a review of the following: existence and quality of documentation and data (or lack thereof); a stakeholder mapping of groups relevant to the evaluation; and inception meetings that focused on identifying priorities, key themes of interest, early successes, challenges, presence of different procurement modalities, and their linkages of LRFP activities into different WFP programmes.

## DATA COLLECTION METHODS

221. The EQs for the evaluation were addressed using a mix of different methods, selected according to the question concerned. But the main focus of the evaluation was on primary qualitative data collection that is

complemented by quantitative secondary sources. The methods listed below were used for collecting data to answer the EQs:

1. **Review of secondary sources:** Where data and literature were available, the ET undertook a review of all documents relating to local and regional procurement, as well as available data. However, secondary sources of data did not play a large role due to the limitation of data availability. But where they exist, VCAs, implementation plans, learnings reports, and other such documents provided some insights into the design and early implementation of the LRFPP pilots. The ET also reviewed relevant national plans, policies, strategies, etc. to determine the alignment of LRFPP pilots with national agricultural development priorities.
  2. **KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders:**<sup>162</sup> WFP staff were asked to participate in KIIs – either in person or online depending on their preference and location. Interviews focused on exploring the effectiveness of the integration and coherence of institutional roles, responsibilities, and activities across WFP functions. Internal interviews were also used to elucidate outcomes and linkages with WFP activities, as well as to help facilitate the collection (where feasible) of objective data to measure the extent of the outcomes that have been recorded. This is a necessary part of the validation process of outcome harvesting that confirms the interventions, places responses in context and elucidates the linkages that have been described by external stakeholders. The ET worked closely with each CO in the region as the iterative process develops to ensure that all respondents can be available and are not overburdened by this exercise, and to suggest alternate respondents if necessary. Though standard interview guidelines were prepared according to the information to be collected, KIIs were semi-structured to allow for sufficient non-standardized follow-up questions that may vary from interview to interview, to conduct an in-depth analysis of key points as they arose.
  3. **KIIs (and small group discussions) and FGDs with external stakeholders:** Sampling for both KIIs and FGDs was purposeful and based on convenience sampling that is combined with proactive snowballing to source additional key informants through the evaluation process. KIIs focused on government, UNCT, and NGOs stakeholders, while FGDs prioritized SHFs. As in the case of interviews with internal stakeholders, KIIs and FGDs with external stakeholders used an open-ended discussion format that allowed for follow-up probing questions in order to examine research topics in greater depth and to allow space for unexpected findings of impact, effectiveness, etc. to emerge. FGDs with SHFs were made up of approximately 8-10 persons that were organized around a single category of external actor (SHF, trader, etc.) to concentrate on the experiences of that group each discussion. Sampling prioritized stakeholders that have been directly engaged in and/or affected by the piloted interventions, as these groups were likely to have the best understanding of the pilots' performance, especially their effectiveness and impacts. Individual discussions were held with males and females separately, as well as youth (18-24 years) and non-youth (25 years and up) in FGDs that were also disaggregated by sex so that girls are able to comfortably express themselves in a female-only space.
222. **Women and youth:** All research activities with external stakeholders and evaluators were informed by a gender- and youth-sensitive approach, also taking into consideration other relevant vulnerability characteristics to ensure that all data collection methods sensitively addressed inclusion issues. In addition to holding separate research activities for women and youth, there were number of other steps the evaluation used to incorporate gender- and youth-related issues. In particular, the evaluation assessed the extent to which procurement activities were undertaken to maximize inclusion or to enhance women's/youth empowerment, including the selection of potential partners, the contracts themselves, and the subsequent management and oversight of actual implementation – analysing these from the perspectives of equity and wider inclusiveness. As well, the evaluation assessed food system outcomes of LRFPP pilots based on how equitable and inclusive these were. Further, research tools were designed to facilitate and integrate gender and youth perspectives through interviews and discussions, including those with women and youth themselves, using and lines of questioning to highlight relevant concerns. The

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<sup>162</sup> In addition to their involvement as key informants, several internal stakeholders also played other important roles in the evaluation process. For example, the RBN and COs were involved in the validation of evaluation results and the RBN manage the evaluation and will support the management response.

differential outcomes experienced by women and youth were assessed wherever LRFPP pilot interventions could be observed to have affected these groups, where possible determining the reasons for gender- and youth-related differences; as part of this process, the ET took note where specific implementation designs and strategies have been most effective in bringing these about, or where there are still existing bottlenecks to promoting youth empowerment and gender equality. As part of this process, gender analysis was used to understand the types of discrimination and gender inequalities – often multiple and intersecting – that leave females – including young women – and their families marginalized and excluded from full participation in the agricultural sector.

## DATA ANALYSIS

223. The analytical approach adopted by the ET triangulated evidence obtained through a mix of perspectives from different stakeholders. Where possible different methods to capture the nuances of contributing positive and negative factors within the intervention's results logic. Analysis of available quantitative data from secondary sources was presented as statistics, tables, graphs, and figures to complement primary research collected throughout the evaluation. Quantitative data were used to supplement and validate qualitative findings from primary research. Qualitative data collected during fieldwork was captured through a combination of notetaking and digital recording. Notes were compiled and analysed throughout the evaluation process, using a standardized technique for all members of the ET that were undertaking fieldwork during the evaluation.
224. The ET used content analysis that identified key themes in responses between KIIs and FGDs to give meaning to the data. Qualitative analysis involved coding of important issues and using these to determine qualitative trends to complement quantitative data from secondary sources. The first phase of analysis involved working through transcripts, notes, and secondary data sources to find and identify “first cycle”<sup>163</sup> codes. Codes were then be grouped according to categories that served as basic organizing ideas for research.<sup>164</sup> Another round of “second cycle coding”<sup>165</sup> organized codes and categories around an analytical strategy that connected codes (and sub-codes) to categories that went into higher-order themes that in turn were connected to a ToC, its outcomes, and the different causal links related to the interventions. To mitigate subjectivity potentially associated with individual KIIs and FGDs, all research activities were contrasted and compared with each other, as well as to quantitative data, to intersect and validate findings across data collection. This form of data triangulation was a key tool for the verification and confirmation of the information collected to support the findings. Within this process, the search for competing explanations and negative evidence was important to analysis procedures and implementing analytical controls.<sup>166</sup>
225. Based on the analysis conducted, the team wrote a draft evaluation report in line with the WFP Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS) guidelines. Within the report, findings were developed as in-depth examples within the context of outcomes of the pilot interventions. They were provided the detailed and comprehensive analysis necessary to validate the conclusions of the broader investigation. Clear links were be made between the findings, the conclusions, and the recommendations. Initial drafts of this report were circulated among relevant stakeholders for feedback and revision. `

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

226. WFP has developed a DEQAS based on the UNEG norms and standards and good practice of the international evaluation community (the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP) and the Development Assistance Committee (DAC)). It sets out process maps with in-built steps for quality assurance and templates for evaluation products. It also includes checklists for feedback on quality

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<sup>163</sup> Saldaña, Johnny, 2009, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, pp. 145-148.

<sup>164</sup> Ryan, Anne, 2006, “Methodology: Analysing Qualitative Data and Writing up Your Findings,” In *Researching and Writing Your Thesis: A Guide for Postgraduate Students*.

<sup>165</sup> Saldaña, Johnny, 2009, *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*, pp. 149-184.

<sup>166</sup> Firestone, William, 1986, “Meaning in Method: The Rhetoric of Quantitative and Qualitative Research,” *Educational Researcher* 16 (7).

for each of the evaluation products. DEQAS were systematically applied during this evaluation and relevant documents have been provided to the ET.

227. In addition to quality assurance mechanisms noted above, the ET members took on the primary responsibility for the quality assurance process, ensuring rigorous data collection, analysis, and synthesis, supported by triangulation and verification to minimize potential errors. The data collection processes detailed in this report have also been specifically designed to triangulate responses from different stakeholders to ensure that data is as accurate and representative as possible. In addition to the data quality assessment and peer review of deliverables conducted within the ET, an additional review by a dedicated Quality Assurance Specialist (QAS), employing SALASAN's internal QA systems, acts as a further QA mechanism. The ET placed a high priority on ensuring that corporate-level commitments to quality are applied across all work and that all evaluation products meet the WFP OEV quality standards (for DEQAS, in this instance) – including the principles of independence, impartiality, credibility, and utility – and that international ethical standards are respected.
228. The QAS is responsible for assessing the quality of the evaluation process and products and their adherence to the evaluation ToR and the approved Inception Report and its detailed workplan. Using an established internal QA checklist, and WFP's DEQAS guidance for Process and Content of Decentralized Evaluations, the QAS alerted the TL to issues that may arise from the coordination of field data collection and analysis with desk study, questionnaires, and other methods. The QAS ensured that products and processes integrated cross-cutting aims such as GEWE, human rights, and other equity issues – including expanded understandings of vulnerability, intersectional dynamics, effects of climate change, disability, age, etc. The QAS worked with the TL to verify adequacy of responses to WFP's DEQAS inputs and comments from the ERG following the submission of the draft Inception Report and the draft Evaluation Report. The aim was to ensure products were comprehensive; findings, conclusions, and recommendations were evidence-based; and revisions/corrections responded adequately and constructively to stakeholder comments.

# Annex 4. Evaluation Matrix

229. The evaluation matrix in the following table sets each of the revised EQs, as well as related sub-questions, indicators, data collection methods, sources of data and information, and data analysis methods and triangulation strategies.

**Table 16: Detailed evaluation matrix**

Evaluation Questions				Criteria	
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data / information	Data analysis methods / triangulation strategies	Data availability / reliability
<b>1.1 To what extent is LRFPF pilot designed aligned to relevant national priorities, policies, and strategies?</b>				<b>Relevance</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Alignment of LRFPF pilots with key national policies, priorities, and strategies	Review of secondary sources KIs with internal WFP stakeholders KIs with external stakeholders	Literature (focusing on national plans, agricultural strategies, etc.) Internal WFP stakeholders (Procurement) Government stakeholders UNCT	Comparison between the outcomes between the expected outcomes of the LRFPF pilots, as stated by internal stakeholders and the stated priorities of national plans, policies, etc.	N/A
<b>1.2 To what extent are LRFPF pilot interventions informed by relevant stakeholders needs, analyses, and evidence as well as adaptive to the programmatic context?</b>				<b>Relevance</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Perceptions of stakeholders and outputs from relevant reports and analyses that pilots are aligned with key needs	Review of secondary sources KIs and FGDs external stakeholders	Literature (VCAs, implementation plans, etc.) WFP RBN and CO stakeholders SHFs and other value chain actors Government stakeholders	Comparison between the outcomes reported key external stakeholders and the stated priorities of national plans, policies, etc. and their stated needs within the agricultural value chains and food systems	ToCs are available in for COs, while implementation plans are only available for Sudan and Uganda and only Sudan has carried out a VCA Access to SHFs and other value chain actors in Sudan may be limited

Evaluation Questions				Criteria	
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data / information	Data analysis methods / triangulation strategies	Data availability / reliability
<b>1.2a To what extent are the pilots aligned with local value chain actors' needs (including the need women and youth along the value chain)?</b>	Perceptions of vulnerable groups among SHFs and other value chain actors that pilots are aligned with key needs	KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders KIIs and FGDs with external stakeholders	WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes Vulnerable groups among SHFs and other value chain actors Government stakeholders	Comparison between the outcomes reported by external stakeholder groups (including women and youth) and the stated priorities of national plans, policies, etc. and their stated needs within the agricultural value chains and food systems	Access to SHFs and other value chain actors in Sudan may be limited
<b>1.2b Is implementation of LRFPP pilots based on analyses (like: VCAs) and other evidence (other existing evidence on local/regional food procurement)?</b>	VCAs, implementation plans, and other analyses have informed pilot strategies and implementation	Review of secondary sources KIIs with internal stakeholders	Literature (VCAs, implementation plans, etc.) WFP RBN and CO stakeholders	Comparison of key analyses and evidence to pilot strategies and implementation	ToCs are available in for COs, while implementation plans are only available for Sudan and Uganda and only Sudan has carried out a VCA
<b>1.3 How appropriate are pro-SHF contracting modalities in meeting procurement objectives and supporting SHF livelihoods in various contexts (such as acute emergency response and non-emergency situations)?</b>				<b>Relevance</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Procurement modalities have contributed to purchases of sufficient quantity and quality for local and regional food distribution, with economic benefits distributed to SHFs	KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders KIIs and FGDs with external stakeholders	WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes SHFs and other value chain actors	Comparative analysis of effectiveness of procurement modalities in contributing to purchases of sufficient quantity and quality for local and regional food distribution, with economic benefits distributed to SHFs.	Access to SHFs and other value chain actors in Sudan may be limited



Evaluation Questions				Criteria	
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data / information	Data analysis methods / triangulation strategies	Data availability / reliability
<b>1.4 To what extent were LRFPP pilot procurement models and interventions aligned and coherent with national and WFP strategies related to local/regional procurement?</b>				<b>Coherence</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Programmes (such as SAMS) are integrated into procurement modalities to strengthen value chains.  Procurement modalities are being used to supply and strengthen food distribution efforts (for example: HGSF)	KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders	WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes	Comparison between the outcomes reported key internal WFP stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes	N/A
<b>1.5 To what extent have LRFPP procurement models been leveraging/adapting to programmatic approaches?</b>				<b>Coherence</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	LRFPP pilots have been adapted throughout implementation to include global guidance and regional/national lessons	Review of secondary sources  KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders	Literature on guidance and lessons learned  WFP stakeholders from RBN  WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes	Comparison of emerging guidance and lessons learned and the extent to which these have been integrated to adapt LRFPP pilots.	N/A
<b>2.1 What effects, positive or negative, intended or unintended, did LRFPP have on local food systems have resulted or are emerging?</b>				<b>Impact</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Data that provides direct or indirect evidence of positive or	KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders	WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes	Identification and analysis of outcomes (positive or negative)	Access to SHFs and other value chain actors in Sudan may be limited

Evaluation Questions				Criteria	
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data / information	Data analysis methods / triangulation strategies	Data availability / reliability
	negative outcomes on productivity, livelihoods, profit equity, savings, market access, etc. of SHFs	KIIs and FGDs with external stakeholders	SHFs and other value chain actors	that SHFs link (directly or indirectly) to LRFPP pilots.	
<b>2.2 Is there evidence that LRFPP-supported local and regional food procurement are effective tools to strengthen food systems across thematic dimensions of: nutrition, resilience, climate adaptation, and gender?</b>				<b>Impact</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Direct or indirect evidence of positive or negative outcomes related to food security and diversity, reduced coping, strengthened livelihoods, local economic activity, climate adaptation, risk management women's economic empowerment, participation in agricultural decision-making, access to extension, etc.	KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders KIIs and FGDs with external stakeholders	WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes SHFs and other value chain actors	Identification and analysis of outcomes (positive or negative) related nutrition, resilience, climate adaptation, and gender	Access to SHFs and other value chain actors in Sudan may be limited
<b>2.3 To what extent has WFP been able to leverage its position and convening power to influence others (private and public sector partnerships) to create multiplier effects in outcomes through increased participation of public/private actors in pro-SHF procurement?</b>				<b>Impact</b>	

Evaluation Questions				Criteria	
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data / information	Data analysis methods / triangulation strategies	Data availability / reliability
N/A	Public and/or private sector actors are pursuing pro-SHF procurement policies or strategies	KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders KIIs and FGDs with external stakeholders	WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes SHF, traders, other value chain actors, and government ministries and other institutions	Public and/or private sector actors demonstrate willingness (or plan to) pursue pro-SHF procurement policies or strategies	Access to SHFs and other value chain actors in Sudan may be limited
<b>2.4 What other opportunities can WFP seize, especially, related to its comparative advantage, to strengthen results/impacts?</b>				<b>Impact</b>	
N/A	Comparative advantage expressed in key strategic documents and by key internal stakeholders aligned with implementation strategy of the LRFPP	Review of secondary sources KIIs internal stakeholders	CSP, LRFPP document, and other strategic documents WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes	Comparison of key strategic documents and perspectives of key internal stakeholders aligned with implementation strategy of the LRFPP	N/A
<b>2.5 How equitable are outcomes across and within different value chain actor groups (for example: across SHFs, aggregators, traders and across different types/sizes of actors within these groups, including women, youth, and other vulnerable and marginalised groups)?</b>				<b>Impact</b>	
N/A	Proportion of earnings/profits transferred to different actors across commodity value chains, disaggregated across women, youth, and other vulnerable	Review of secondary sources KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders KIIs and FGDs with external stakeholders	Monitoring data from procurement activities WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes SHF, traders, and other value chain actors and private sector	Analysis of interviews vulnerable and marginalised groups along the value chain actors, with comparisons made between earnings/profits	N/A

Evaluation Questions				Criteria	
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data / information	Data analysis methods / triangulation strategies	Data availability / reliability
	and marginalised groups				
<b>2.7 What role has GCMF played in supporting or hindering LRFP implementation and achieving results?</b>				<b>Effectiveness</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Has GCMF been used as a strategic financing mechanism under which WFP has made local purchases of food commodities	KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders	WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes	Analysis of outcomes reported through the use of GCMF to make local food purchases the results on reduced delivery lead-time, shortened emergency response time, food purchased when market conditions are more favourable, and increased local and regional purchases where and when possible)	N/A
<b>2.8 Have LRFP pilots been institutionally supported in a way that is coordinated and synergistic?</b>				<b>Effectiveness</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	WFP units express buy-in regarding LRFP and work collaboratively on LRFP pilots, with common objectives, workplans, activities, M&E, etc.	Review of secondary sources KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders	Implementation plans, monitoring data and reports, and other monitoring and learnings documents  WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement, Programmes, supply chain, M&E, logistics, and others	Analysis of internal WFP stakeholder perceptions of ownership regarding LRFP, and how this has translated into programme administration and operations	Implementation plans are only available for Sudan and Uganda  M&E has been incorporated differently and inconsistently into the three CO pilots, creating challenges with data comparability
<b>2.7 What factors, internal to WFP or external, have influenced LRFP performance, effectiveness, and outcomes?</b>				<b>Effectiveness</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Relevant contextual (internal and external)	Review of secondary sources	Analysis of contextual data	Relevant contextual (internal and external) factors present relevant	N/A

Evaluation Questions				Criteria	
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data / information	Data analysis methods / triangulation strategies	Data availability / reliability
	factors present relevant to pilot implementation	KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders	WFP stakeholders at all levels	to implementation of pilots and their linkages/impacts on pilots (along with presence of mitigation strategies (if any))	
<b>3.1 How have WFP Procurement units ensured functioning and efficient collaborations and partnerships with Programme units and external stakeholders?</b>				<b>Efficiency</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Procurement units have created partnerships that contributed to synergies between LRFPP, other WFP programmes, and the work of external partners	KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders KIIs and FGDs with external stakeholders	WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes Government, private sector, and NGOs	Analysis of key roles of programmes and external partners in LRFPP pilots	Access to private sector actors in Sudan may be limited
<b>3.2 Has the integration of programmatic objectives affected the timeliness or other operational parameters of LRFPP processes?</b>				<b>Efficiency</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Funding appropriately allocated and disbursed, including for field-based activities involving SHFs and other value chain actors	Review of secondary sources KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders	Budgets and monitoring reports WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement, Programmes, and M&E, and finance	Analysis of budgets, pilot workplans, and implementation	M&E has been incorporated differently and inconsistently into the three CO pilots, creating challenges with data comparability
<b>3.1a Has the development and integration of programmatic guidelines from HQ/RBN affected the</b>	Guidelines for key LRFPP components are available and have been adequately disseminated with tools and trainings for	Review of secondary sources KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders	LRFPP guidelines and tools WFP stakeholders from RBN and COs	Analysis of guidelines, tools, and the timeliness of their uptake into implementation	LRFPP guidelines and tools are emerging as the pilots are being rolled out, and as such these do not exist for all elements of the LRFPP

Evaluation Questions				Criteria	
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data / information	Data analysis methods / triangulation strategies	Data availability / reliability
<b>timeliness or other operational efficiency of LRFPP processes?</b>	uptake in a way that has not impeded pilot implementation				
<b>3.3. To what extent have LRFPP interventions used a monitoring and evaluation system ensuring reliable, valid and timely pro-SHF reported data and the associated supplier traceability records and efforts?</b>				<b>Efficiency</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Traceability data has been collected, verified, and incorporated into M&E	Review of secondary sources KIs with internal WFP stakeholders	Traceability data and monitoring reports WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement, Programmes, and M&E	Analysis and presence of traceability data, and the extent to which it has been incorporated into key programming activities	M&E has been incorporated differently and inconsistently into the three CO pilots, creating challenges with data comparability
<b>3.4 How has WFP utilised evidence to inform LRFPP implementation decisions and adapt to changes in procurement approaches/models?</b>				<b>Efficiency</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	LRFPP pilots have been adapted throughout implementation to include global guidance and regional/national lessons	Review of secondary sources	Literature on guidance and lessons learned LRFPP pilots have been adapted throughout implementation to include global guidance and regional/national lessons	Analysis of guidance/lessons and the extent to which these have resulted in changes to implementation of LRFPP pilots	LRFPP guidelines and tools are emerging as the pilots are being rolled out, and as such these do not exist for all elements of the LRFPP
<b>4.1 Are LRFPP intervention results likely to be sustainable?</b>				<b>Sustainability</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Sustainability is incorporated into pilot projects, and these have been implemented in such a way that considers	Review of secondary sources KIs with internal WFP stakeholders KIs and FGDs with external stakeholders	Implementation plans and context analysis WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes	Analysis of sustainability plans for expected outcomes (these in place and implemented) and that sustainability gaps have been properly accounted for (identification of existing sustainability gaps)	Implementation plans are only available for Sudan and Uganda Access to private sector actors in Sudan may be limited

Evaluation Questions				Criteria	
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data / information	Data analysis methods / triangulation strategies	Data availability / reliability
	potential barriers to sustainability		Government, private sector, and NGOs		
<b>4.2 To what extent have LRFPP initiatives leveraged or involved, strengthened capacities, and created ownership among national governments, intergovernmental bodies, and private sector partners to promote sustainability?</b>				<b>Sustainability</b>	
<b>N/A</b>	Government partners and non-governmental partners have been included in all aspects of the pilots, with appropriate plans in place and implemented to build their capacities	Review of secondary sources KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders KIIs and FGDs with external stakeholders	Implementation plans and context analysis WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes Government, private sector, and NGOs	Analysis that partners incorporated into implementation of all expected outcomes, with capacities adequately built to scale local and regional procurement across all actors (identification of existing capacity gaps)	Implementation plans are only available for Sudan and Uganda Access to private sector actors in Sudan may be limited
<b>4.2a How has this helped or hindered achieving LRFPP pilot outcomes, food system outcomes, and sustainability of any positive other outcomes?</b>	Inclusion of external partners has led to multiplier effects in pilot objectives, food system impacts, and sustainability of any positive outcomes?	Review of secondary sources KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders KIIs and FGDs with external stakeholders	Monitoring reports WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes Government, private sector, and NGOs	Analysis of key outcomes and contribution of external partners to each and identification of existing partnership gaps	M&E has been incorporated differently and inconsistently into the three CO pilots, creating challenges with data comparability Access to private sector actors in Sudan may be limited
<b>4.3 Which procurement approaches and tools for local and regional food purchases offer the best potential for scalability and replication at the national and regional levels?</b>				<b>Sustainability</b>	

Evaluation Questions				Criteria	
Sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection methods	Sources of data / information	Data analysis methods / triangulation strategies	Data availability / reliability
N/A	Direct and indirect procurement modalities are considered to be sustainable and scaleable	KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders KIIs and FGDs with external stakeholders	WFP CO stakeholders from Procurement and Programmes Government and private sector	Analysis of scalability potential for each procurement modality applied through the LRFPP pilot	Access to private sector actors in Sudan may be limited



## Annex 5. Data collection Tools

230. This section provides an outline of the key data collection tools that were used for this evaluation: KIIs with internal WFP stakeholders, KIIs with external stakeholders (like government, NGOs, UNCT, and private sector), and KIIs and FGS with SHFs and other value chain actors. It is important to understand that each tool was adapted to each stakeholder, and where necessary was translated into the language of each country. As such, the questions below should be thought of as guides of those that were asked during data collection. Moreover, all research activities were undertaken according to a semi-structured format to allow for sufficient non-standardized follow-up questions that may vary from interview to interview, to conduct an in-depth analysis of key points as they arise; example probing questions are provided in the parenthesis in the tables below. ET members underwent training on these tools and their associated methodology and protocol to form a common understanding of each data collection tool, what its various questions mean, and how questions should be asked, in order to ensure the consistent implementation of the evaluation methodology, including how to conduct follow-up probing questions in order to dig into the specifics of each piloting context.

### TOOLS FOR NATIONAL/CO LEVEL STAKEHOLDERS.

231. The following table provide lists of questions for procurement / supply chain teams.

**Table 17: List of questions for KIIs with procurement / supply chain teams**

Question type	Questions
<b>Procurement modalities</b>	Please describe direct purchases WFP is undertaking in the country? (What commodities? What regions? At what quantities? What are the main programmes that support LRFPP in the country?)
	Do SHFs have capacity to produce at sufficient quantity and quality to sell to WFP? (What the main remained bottlenecks? Does it vary depending on region? Commodity?)
	Please describe indirect purchases WFP is undertaking in the country? (Who are the traders? How long has WFP been buying form them? What regions are they working? At what quantities?)
	Do the traders have different business models they implement when accessing SHFs? (In particular, are any traders engaging activities to support SHFs (e.g., providing inputs, extension support, PHM training, etc.))
	Has traceability been effective in testing 20 percent threshold? (Do you think the LRFPP has challenged/pushed the traders to meet the 20 percent threshold, or were they buying 20 percent from SHFs anyway?)
	Have efforts been made to connect WFP-supported SHFs to traders WFP is buying from?
	What are the incentives/impediments for traders to sell to WFP (relative to others like government, private sector, exporters, processors)?
	What evidence is there of the impacts of the local procurement (SHFs, food system, and even smaller-scale changes like attitudes)? (Are these impacts different for different procurement modalities?)
	Is there any evidence of unintended impacts (positive or negative) of LRFPP on SHFs or local food systems? (E.g., creating distortions in local pricing, or dependencies among SHFs/traders, creating cartels of traders, etc.?)
	Please describe direct purchases WFP is undertaking in the country? (What commodities? What regions? At what quantities? What are the main programmes that support LRFPP in the country?)

Question type	Questions
	Do SHFs have capacity to produce at sufficient quantity and quality to sell to WFP? (What the main remained bottlenecks? Does it vary depending on region? Commodity?)
	Please describe indirect purchases WFP is undertaking in the country? (Who are the traders? How long has WFP been buying form them? What regions are they working? At what quantities?)
	Do the traders have different business models they implement when accessing SHFs? (In particular, are any traders engaging activities to support SHFs (e.g., providing inputs, extension support, PHM training, etc.))
	Has traceability been effective in testing 20 percent threshold? (Do you think the LRFPP has challenged/pushed the traders to meet the 20 percent threshold, or were they buying 20 percent from SHFs anyway?)
	Have efforts been made to connect WFP-supported SHFs to traders WFP is buying from?
	What are the incentives/impediments for traders to sell to WFP (relative to others like government, private sector, exporters, processors)?
	What evidence is there of the impacts of the local procurement (SHFs, food system, and even smaller-scale changes like attitudes)? (Are these impacts different for different procurement modalities?)
	Is there any evidence of unintended impacts (positive or negative) of LRFPP on SHFs or local food systems? (E.g., creating distortions in local pricing, or dependencies among SHFs/traders, creating cartels of traders, etc.?)
	Please describe direct purchases WFP is undertaking in the country? (What commodities? What regions? At what quantities? What are the main programmes that support LRFPP in the country?)
	Do SHFs have capacity to produce at sufficient quantity and quality to sell to WFP? (What the main remained bottlenecks? Does it vary depending on region? Commodity?)
<b>Evidence and planning</b>	Has WFP utilised VCA to inform LRFPP implementation decisions and adapt to changes in procurement approaches/models?
	Describe the ToC, since the ToC has been developed, how has it been used/applied? (How was it developed, and who has ownership over it? How it will be measured (e.g., does it have measurement indicators?)
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Is the LRFPP well understood by procurement and programmes? (Are roles and responsibilities clearly understood between procurement and programmes?)
	How well integrated is the LRFPP between procurement and programmes? (What are the main mechanisms for integration (e.g., working groups, common activities, common planning, etc.)? What obstacles still exist for integration (i.e., how can integration be made better?)
	Is there evidence that LRFPP pilots have changed or are changing systems/structures/ or organizational practices/attitudes in terms of integration, collaboration, etc.? (Are there opportunities in this regard to still be exploited?)
<b>Efficiency</b>	Are LRFPP activities sufficiently well-funded and resourced? (In terms of staffing? In terms of buying commodities? What are the gaps (if any)?)
	Has Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF) been used for local procurement? Which procurement modalities/commodities was this used for?
<b>Sustainability</b>	Is the CO ready scale up local procurement? (Is this true for the different modalities?)

Question type	Questions
	What are the gaps that are stopping COs from scaling up, even if we're going in the right direction?
	Are there key areas/themes that the CO would like to see brought out through the evaluation through learning workshop/brief?
<b>Conclusion</b>	Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?

232. The following table provides a list of questions for the Country Director / Deputy Country Director.

**Table 18: List of questions for KIIs with Country Director / Deputy Country Director**

Question type	Questions
<b>Relevance/ coherence</b>	How does LRFPP contribute to WFP Global Strategy and CSP? (Is it well integrated across the different strategic objectives?)
	Is the LRFPP well understood within the CO? (Are roles and responsibilities well understood?)
	What was the readiness of the CO to implement the LRPP? (What was missing to help successful implementation across the CO?)
	Have LRFPP pilots been institutionally supported by HQ and RBN in a way that is coordinated and synergistic? (Any gaps?)
<b>Impacts</b>	Key successes/impacts of LRFPP so far on the lives of SHFs?
	Main challenges so far?
	Has there been any impact from the LRFPP pilots on WFPs internal structures and systems? (Probe, if necessary: changes at different levels to culture, behaviours, mindsets, etc.)
	What have been some of the lessons learned (positive/negative) from the way that the LRFPP is structured and staffed within CO? (How to incentivise better integration and collaboration? Have LRFPP procurement models been leveraging/adapting to programmatic approaches?)
<b>Effectiveness</b>	How well integrated is the LRFPP between procurement and programmes? (What are the main mechanisms for integration (e.g. working groups, common activities, common planning, etc.)? What obstacles still exist for integration (i.e., how can integration be made better?)
	What lessons are there to inform integration, collaboration, etc. of LRFPP across WFP procurement and programmes / other units?
	Is there evidence that LRFPP pilots have changed or are changing systems/structures/ or organisational practices/attitudes in terms of integration, collaboration, etc.? (Are there opportunities in this regard to still be exploited?)
<b>Sustainability</b>	Are there key areas/themes that the CO would like to see brought out of the evaluation as learnings?
<b>Conclusion</b>	Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?

The following table provide lists of questions for the Head of Programmes.

**Table 19: List of questions for KIIs with the Head of Programmes**

Question type	Questions
<b>Impacts</b>	What are the main programmes that support LRFPP in the country? (What programmes? What commodities? What regions? At what quantities?)
	Do SHFs have capacity to produce at sufficient quantity and quality to sell to WFP? (What the main remained bottlenecks? Does it vary depending on region?)
	In what ways, if any, is programming supporting indirect purchases WFP is making from traders? (Are there any opportunities to do so?)
	Key successes/impacts of LRFPP so far on the lives of SHFs? (Main challenges so far?)
	Is there evidence that LRFPP pilots have changed or are changing systems/structures/ or organisational practices/attitudes in terms of integration, collaboration, etc.? (Are there opportunities in this regard to still be exploited?)
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Is the LRFPP well understood within the CO? (Are roles and responsibilities well understood?)
	What was the readiness of the CO to implement the LRPP? (What was missing to help successful implementation across the CO?)
	Have LRFPP pilots been institutionally supported by HQ and RBN in a way that is coordinated and synergistic?
	How well integrated is the LRFPP between procurement and programmes? (What are the main mechanisms for integration (e.g., working groups, common activities, common planning, etc.)? What obstacles still exist for integration (i.e., how can integration be made better?)
	Have LRFPP pilots been institutionally supported by HQ and RBN in a way that is coordinated and synergistic?
<b>Efficiency</b>	Are LFPF activities sufficiently well-funded and resourced? (What are the gaps (if any) (especially on the programmes side)?)
<b>Sustainability</b>	What are the key opportunities for scaling up local procurement in the future?
	Are there key areas/themes that the CO would like to see brought out of the evaluation as learnings?
<b>Conclusion</b>	Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?

The following table provide lists of questions for AMS/HGSF.

**Table 20: List of questions for KIIs with AMS/HGSF.**

Question type	Questions
<b>Relevance/ coherence</b>	Is the LRFPP well understood within the AMS/HGSF team? (Are roles and responsibilities well understood?)
	What are the key AMS/HGSF activities that have supported LRFPP? (Key successes/challenges?)
	Are there any local procurement /market activities currently incorporated into AMS/HGSF? If so, what are these? What have been their impacts/challenges? (If not, are there any ways that you see local procurement efforts integrated into AMS/HGSF activities in the CO?)
	Do SHFs have capacity to produce at sufficient quantity and quality to sell to WFP? (What the main remained bottlenecks? Does it vary depending on region?)

Question type	Questions
<b>Impacts</b>	What evidence is there of the impacts of the local procurement (SHFs, food system, and even smaller-scale changes like attitudes)? (Are these impacts different for different procurement modalities? Are the impacts different across different groups SHFs/FOs, men/women, refugees, youth (as focus of AMS/HGSF)?)
	Is there any evidence of unintended impacts (positive or negative) of LRFPP on SHFs or local food systems? (e.g., creating distortions in local pricing, or dependencies among SHFs/traders, creating cartels of traders, etc.?)
	Have efforts been made to connect WFP-supported SHFs to traders WFP is buying from?
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Is the LRFPP well understood within the CO? (Are roles and responsibilities well understood?)
	How well integrated is the LRFPP between procurement and programmes? (What are the main mechanisms for integration (e.g., working groups, common activities, common planning, etc.)?)
	What obstacles still exist for integration (i.e., how can integration be made better)?
	Do you foresee any challenges to further integration between LRFPP and AMS/HGSF (especially as this relates to integrating organisation systems/processes)?
<b>Sustainability</b>	What are the key opportunities for scaling up local procurement in the future?
	Are key areas/themes that the CO would like to see brought out of the evaluation as learnings?
<b>Conclusion</b>	Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?

233. The following table provide lists of questions for M&E/RAM

**Table 21: List of questions for KIIs with M&E/RAM**

Question type	Questions
<b>Coherence/ relevance</b>	Are you aware of the LRFPP pilot at the CO? If so, to what extent?
	Is the LRFPP well understood within the CO? (Are roles and responsibilities well understood?)
	How well has M&ERAM been integrated into LRFPP-related activities? (Generating evidence, setting indicators, monitoring activities, evaluating impact? Other areas where RAM has been included in LRFPP?)
	Is implementation of LRFPP pilot based on analyses (like: VCAs) and other evidence (other existing evidence on local/regional food procurement)? (How have the results of the VCA been used to design/improve the implementation of LRFPP in Uganda?)
<b>Impact</b>	Are there currently results/monitoring indicators set for the LRFPP? (What are the indicators? Are they both amount procured and impact indicators?)
	Who is responsible for meeting them? Monitoring them?)
<b>Effectiveness</b>	What other kinds of data are currently generated by and used as a part of LRFPP? (To what extent have LRFPP interventions used a M&E system ensuring reliable, valid and timely pro-SHF reported data and the associated supplier traceability records and efforts?)
	What still needs to be done to improve M&E of LRFPP? (From an organisational perspective, what are the key challenges of integrating M&E into LRFPP?)

Question type	Questions
	How well integrated is the LRFP between procurement and programmes? (What are the main mechanisms for integration (e.g., working groups, common activities, common planning, etc.)? What obstacles still exist for integration (i.e., how can integration be made better)?)
	Do you foresee any challenges to further integration between LRFP and AMS (especially as this relates to integrating organisation systems/processes)?
	Are there key areas/themes that the CO would like to see brought out of the evaluation as learnings?
<b>Conclusion</b>	Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?

234. The following table provide lists of questions for traders

**Table 22: List of questions for KIIs with traders**

Question type	Questions
<b>Background</b>	Please describe your value chains as they connect to good sold to WFP. (How long have you been selling to WFP? What commodities? Has this changed in the last two years?)
	How much of your market do WFP purchases constitute? (For each commodity? Has this changed through the years and why?)
	What incentives do you have to sell to WFP over other buyers?
<b>SHFs</b>	Do you have a set definition for the organisation of what a SHF is? (What is that definition? Is that definition made official anywhere in the organisation?)
	What percentage of each commodity do you procure from SHFs versus commercial farmers and/or own production? (How is this validated?)
	Do SHFs have capacity to produce at sufficient quantity and quality to sell to you? (What the main remained bottlenecks? Does it vary depending on region?)
	Are you engaging in pro-SHF activities to support (e.g., providing inputs, extension support, PHM training, etc.) (What sort of training do you provide? Do you provide training on gender? Environmental sustainability? Nutrition? (Explain))
	What incentivizes you to engaged in such pro-SHF modalities?
	Has selling to WFP incentivized more purchases from SFHs? (How much originally and how much now?)
	Would you be willing to increase purchases from SHFs? (What incentives do you need?)
<b>Opportunities</b>	Are the other opportunities for WFP engagement beyond procurement? (Priority areas? What needs to be in place to make these happen?)
	What are the incentives/impediments for you to sell to WFP (relative to others like government, private sector, exporters, processors)?
	What have been the challenges on having WFP as a client?
<b>Conclusion</b>	Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?

235. The following table provide lists of questions for government partners.

**Table 23: List of questions for KIIs with government partners**

Question type	Questions
<b>Background</b>	Please describe how your mandate connects to agricultural value chains, and especially SHFs.
	Please describe the key activities that you have partnered on with WFP? (E.g., PHL, food safety, quality, etc.)
	Key successes of this work so far? (E.g., Has WFP helped improved agricultural productivity, quality, enabling environment, etc.? E.g., Has WFP helped improved standards and criteria for trade and exporting of traders?)
	What are the key bottlenecks in the agricultural sector?
<b>SHFs</b>	Can local procurement from SHFs help overcome these bottlenecks? If so, how?
	Is creating markets or engaging in local procurement from SHFs a government priority currently? (E.g., what are the main policies, plans, and strategies it connects to?)
<b>Opportunities</b>	What are the opportunities for local procurement in the coming years?
	What would be the key priority areas to support ongoing government activities? (What type of support is required (specific trainings capacity building, institutional support?)
	What support is WFP best positioned to offer?
	What support are other actors best positioned to offer?
<b>Conclusion</b>	Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?

236. The following table provide lists of questions for cooperating partners.

**Table 24: List of questions for KIIs with cooperating partners**

Question type	Questions
<b>Background</b>	Please describe the key activities that your organisation has partnered on with WFP?
	What are the key government priorities in this area that the work of your organisation and WFP supports? (Are these the most relevant development priorities? Are there gaps?)
	Key successes of this work so far? Which value chains are most successful?
	What are the key bottlenecks in terms of agricultural value chains in this area?
<b>SHFs</b>	Can local procurement from SHFs help overcome these bottlenecks? If so, how?
	How has local procurement impacted the lives of SHFs? (Has this been the same for all SHFs (e.g., women, youth, PWDs, etc.) Are there ways to make this more inclusive?)
	How has local procurement impacted food systems? (In terms of sustainability? In terms of inclusion? In terms of nutrition?)
<b>Opportunities</b>	What would be the key opportunities for expanding local procurement and bringing it to scale? (Target certain crops? Groups? Modalities?)

Question type	Questions
	What would be the key challenges for expanding local procurement and bringing it to scale?
	What other actors are important to bringing local procurement to scale and making it more sustainable?
	How do each of these actors need to be supported in order to bring local procurement to scale and making it more sustainable?
<b>Conclusion</b>	Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?

## TOOLS FOR SUB-NATIONAL / SUB-OFFICE / AREA OFFICE LEVEL

237. The following table provide lists of questions for WFP Sub-Office / Area Office

**Table 25: List of questions for KIIs with WFP Sub-Office / Area Office**

Question type	Questions
<b>Relevance/ coherence</b>	Are you familiar with LRFPP? If so, please describe. (Note knowledge among staff or LRFPP.)
	How does the LRFPP tie into key government priorities in this area? (e.g., what are the main policies, plans, and strategies it connects to?)
<b>Procurement modalities</b>	Please describe direct purchases WFP is undertaking in this area? (What commodities? At what quantities? What are the main programmes that support LRFPP?)
	Do SHFs have capacity to produce at sufficient quantity and quality to sell to WFP? (What the main remained bottlenecks?)
	Please describe indirect purchases WFP is supporting here? (What are the traders? How long has WFP been buying form them? At what quantities?)
	Have efforts been made to connect WFP-supported SHFs to traders WFP is buying from?
	What evidence is there of the impacts of the local procurement (SHFs, food system, and even smaller-scale changes like attitudes)? (Are these impacts different for different procurement modalities? Are the impacts different across different groups SHFs/FOs, men/women, refugees, youth (as focus of AMS)?)
	Is there any evidence of unintended impacts (positive or negative) of LRFPP on SHFs or local food systems? (e.g., creating distortions in local pricing, or dependencies among SHFs/traders, creating cartels of traders, etc.?)
<b>Effectiveness</b>	Is the LRFPP well understood by procurement and programmes at field level? (Are roles and responsibilities clearly understood between procurement and programmes?)
	How well integrated is the LRFPP between procurement and programmes? (What are the main mechanisms for integration (e.g., working groups, common activities, common planning, etc.)? What obstacles still exist for integration (i.e., how can integration be made better?)
	What lessons are there to inform integration, collaboration, etc. of LRFPP across WFP procurement and programmes / other units?



Question type	Questions
<b>Sustainability</b>	What are the gaps that are stopping COs from scaling up, even if we're going in the right direction? And what does scaling up even mean? To take it to another level, instead of just keeping this to a minor intervention
	Are there key areas/themes that the CO would like to see brought out through the evaluation through learning workshop/briefs?
<b>Conclusion</b>	Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?

238. The following table provide lists of questions for local government authorities

**Table 26: List of questions for KIIs with local government authorities**

Question type	Questions
<b>Background</b>	Please describe the key activities that you have partnered on with WFP?
	What are the key government priorities in this area that the work of WFP supports (e.g., district development plan)? (Are these the most relevant government priorities? Are there gaps?)
	Has WFP helped improved productivity, quality, market creation, etc. of agricultural value chains in this area? (Key successes of this work so far? Which value chains are most successful?)
	What are the key bottlenecks in terms of agricultural value chains in this area?
<b>Local procurement</b>	Can local procurement from SHFs help overcome these bottlenecks? If so, how? (How has local procurement impacted the lives of SHFs? Has this been the same for all SHFs (e.g., women, youth, PWDs, etc.) Are there ways to make this more inclusive?)
	How has local procurement impacted food systems? (In terms of sustainability? In terms of inclusion? In terms of nutrition?)
	What would be the key opportunities for expanding local procurement and bringing it to scale? (Target certain crops? Groups? Modalities?)
	What would be the key challenges for expanding local procurement and bringing it to scale?
	Are there any local procurement activities currently incorporated into the work that the government does here? If so, what are these? What have been their impacts/challenges?
	If not, are there any ways that you see local procurement efforts integrated into District Production Teams activities?
<b>Opportunities</b>	What would be the key priority areas to support ongoing government activities? (What type of support is required (specific trainings capacity building, institutional support)?)
	What other actors are important to bringing local procurement to scale and making it more sustainable?
<b>Conclusion</b>	Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?

239. The following table provide lists of questions for traders

**Table 27: List of questions for KIIs with traders**

Question type	Questions
<b>Background</b>	Please describe your value chains as they connect to good sold to WFP. (How long have you been selling to WFP? What commodities? Has this changed in the last two years?)
	How much of your market do WFP purchases constitute? (For each commodity? Has this changed through the years and why?)
	What incentives do you have to sell to WFP over other buyers?
<b>SHFs</b>	Do you have a set definition for the organisation of what a SHF is? (What is that definition? Is that definition made official anywhere in the organisation?)
	What percentage of each commodity do you procure from SHFs versus commercial farmers and/or own production? (How is this validated?)
	Do SHFs have capacity to produce at sufficient quantity and quality to sell to you? (What the main remained bottlenecks? Does it vary depending on region?)
	Are you engaging in pro-SHF activities to support (e.g., providing inputs, extension support, PHM training, etc.) (What sort of training do you provide? Do you provide training on gender? Environmental sustainability? Nutrition? (Explain))
	What incentivizes you to engaged in such pro-SHF modalities?
	Has selling to WFP incentivized more purchases from SFHs? (How much originally and how much now?)
	Would you be willing to increase purchases from SHFs? (What incentives do you need?)
	Are the other opportunities for WFP engagement beyond procurement? (Priority areas? What needs to be in place to make these happen?)
<b>Opportunities</b>	What are the incentives/impediments for you to sell to WFP (relative to others like government, private sector, exporters, processors)?
	What have been the challenges on having WFP as a client?
	Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?
<b>Conclusion</b>	

240. The following table provide lists of questions for SHFs/FOs

**Table 28: List of questions for KIIs/FGDs with SHFs/FOs**

Question type	Questions
<b>Background</b>	Have you received any support from WFP in this area? If so, please describe the type of support received, how long, conditions of support, etc. (Probe, if necessary: contract to supply agricultural commodities directly/indirectly to WFP, support to increase agricultural productivity, support for reducing post-harvest losses, local procurement, etc).
<b>Local procurement</b>	What are the impacts of WFP support for local procurement / development of market linkages on... ? ((Probe, if necessary: higher incomes, more stable incomes, improved agricultural practices, improved quality, improve reputation, exposure to other markets, etc.))
	For WFP activities related to local procurement / development of market linkages, please indicate if there are any groups that benefited more than others? How did the impacts vary? (Probe, if necessary: income, gender, age, disability, etc).

Question type	Questions
	For WFP activities related to local procurement / development of market linkages, were there any negative impacts? (Did WFP take any steps to reduce negative impacts? If so, what was done?)
	Were there any external factors that affected WFP support for local procurement / development of market linkages? (Probe, if necessary: security situation, COVID-19, government support, programmes by other organizations, etc).
	Were there any other challenges or gaps in WFP's support for local procurement / development of market linkages? (How can WFP programming be made better in the future?)
<b>Development of market linkages</b>	What other WFP activities were most important to supporting local procurement / development of market linkages? How did these impact...(SHFs and their families? Other value chains?)
	What are the most important remaining challenges affecting SHFs in this area?
	What else needs to be done to address these challenges? (Which stakeholder WFP, government, or others are best positioned to address these challenges?)
<b>Conclusion</b>	Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?

# Annex 6. Fieldwork Agenda

241. The following table outlines fieldwork activities undertaken as part of the evaluation.

**Table 29: Fieldwork components**

Phase	Focus	Location/date(s)	Responsible
1	Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kampala (17-23 September)</li> <li>Kyenjojo, Mubende, Masindi, and Kiryandongo (24-28 September)</li> <li>Karamoja (24-28 September)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Team Leader (TL)</li> <li>Senior National Consultant</li> </ul>
2	Ethiopia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Addis Ababa (16-21 October)</li> <li>Adama (26 October)</li> <li>Amhara (28 October – 5 November)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior National Consultant</li> </ul>
3	RBN/HQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remotely targeting Nairobi and Rome (17 October – 2 November)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TL</li> <li>Senior Evaluator</li> </ul>
4	Sudan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remotely targeting Port Sudan, Khartoum, South Darfur, Gedaref, and White Nile (28 October – 14 November)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior National Consultant</li> </ul>

# Annex 7. Findings Conclusions and Recommendations Mapping

242. The table below maps recommendations and conclusions to the findings which support them.

**Table 30: Findings and recommendations**

Recommendation	Conclusions	Findings
<b>Recommendation 1:</b> Approach LRFPP as a continuum from subsistence, to surplus, to sustainability.	<b>2</b>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 19
	<b>3</b>	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18
	<b>7</b>	2, 5, 14, 15, 16, 19
<b>Recommendation 2:</b> Promote development objectives by making conditionality more targeted and context-relevant.	<b>1</b>	1, 3, 6, 11, 12, 18
	<b>3</b>	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18
<b>Recommendation 3:</b> Improve targeting of SHFs and traceability/M&E.	<b>3</b>	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18
	<b>6</b>	2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 17
	<b>7</b>	2, 5, 14, 15, 16, 19
<b>Recommendation 4:</b> Streamline procurement processes.	<b>2</b>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 19
	<b>3</b>	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 17, 18
	<b>5</b>	2, 4, 8, 10, 13, 16, 17
<b>Recommendation 5:</b> Expand the roster of WFP vendors.	<b>2</b>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 19
	<b>4</b>	3, 5, 18, 19
<b>Recommendation 6:</b> Continue to strengthen the enabling environment.	<b>1</b>	1, 3, 6, 11, 12, 18
	<b>2</b>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 18, 19
	<b>7</b>	2, 5, 14, 15, 16, 19

## Annex 8. List of People Interviewed

243. The table below provides a list of stakeholders interviewed as part of the inception phase of this evaluation.

**Table 31: List of stakeholders interviewed in during inception phase**

No.	Stakeholder Group	F	M
1	WFP HQ	2	2
2	WFP RBN	3	1
3	WFP Ethiopia Country Office	3	2
4	WFP Sudan Country Office	1	3
5	WFP Uganda Country Office	2	3

244. The table below provides a list of people interviewed as part of the data collection phase of this evaluation.

**Table 32: List of stakeholders interviewed in during data collection phase**

Stakeholder Group	Female	Male
<b>WFP</b>		
WFP HQ	0	1
WFP RBN	6	2
<b>Uganda</b>		
WFP Uganda Country and Field Offices	14	16
Mastercard Foundation	0	1
US Agency for International Development	1	0
Ministry of Trade, industry, and Cooperatives - Processing and Marketing	1	0
Ministry of Education and Sports – Policy Analysis Directorate (Kampala, Karamoja)	0	2
Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF)	0	1
Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS)	2	0
Market Link Officer, Sasakawa Staff, Moroto office	1	0
Aponye Uganda Limited	1	5
Mandela Group	0	5
KAM Suppliers and Contractors (Trader)	0	2

Stakeholder Group	Female	Male
Grain Pulse Limited	3	0
Kaabong District Local Government	3	1
Kotido District Local Government	0	3
Napiripirit District Local Government	0	2
Namalu Farmers Association (NAFA)	0	2
Napak District Local Government	1	2
Bulamazi Balim Kwekwaukwaya / Bulamizi Farmer's Development Association, Muebende	5	5
Raise The Child Foundation Farmers Association	4	6
District Production Team, Masindi	3	3
District Production Team, Kiryandogo	0	2
Nyamahasa SHF Cooperative, Kiryandogo	3	3
Self Help Africa, Kigumba	1	0
Kiigya United Farmers Cooperative Society, Kigumba	4	4
<b>Ethiopia</b>		
WFP Country Office and Sub-offices	8	11
Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) (Crop Development)	0	1
Agricultural Transformation Institute (ATI)	0	1
Ethiopia Business Trading Corporation (ETBTC)	0	1
Disaster Risk Mitigation Commission (EDRMC)	0	1
Ethiopia Cooperative Commission (ECC)	0	1
National Traders, Manager of Processing factories, Storage Systems, Quality Control Managers, Adama Ethiopia	1	6
Merkeb Union, Amhara	0	2
SHF and cooperative unions, Amhara	4	6
<b>Sudan</b>		
WFP CO and Area offices	1	9
Ministry of Agriculture	1	0
IFAD and sub-offices (North Kordofan)	2	0

Stakeholder Group	Female	Male
Private Sector, SAYGA Food Industries	2	0
ZEESCO Investment and Development Co. Ltd	0	1
FOs, White Nile	2	0
Traders DAL Group	0	1
Ministry of Agriculture, North Kordofan State	0	1
Traders ZAS for Agricultural Production	0	1
Traders Betanus Company	0	1
Farmer Cooperatives, North Kordifan	0	2
Ministry of Agriculture, White Nile State	0	1
Farmer Cooperative, White Nile State	0	1
ZEESCO for Investment and Development	0	1
UNDP Field Office, White Nile State	0	1



# Annex 9. Bibliography

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# Acronyms

<b>AMS</b>	Agricultural Market Systems Support
<b>CFSVA</b>	Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Assessment
<b>CO</b>	Country Office
<b>CSP</b>	Country Strategic Plan
<b>DEQAS</b>	Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System
<b>EM</b>	Evaluation Manager
<b>EQ</b>	evaluation question
<b>ERG</b>	Evaluation Reference Group
<b>ET</b>	Evaluation Team
<b>ETBC</b>	Ethiopian Trading Businesses Corporation
<b>FO</b>	Farmers' organization
<b>FGD</b>	focus groups discussion
<b>GEWE</b>	gender equality and women's empowerment
<b>GCMF</b>	Global Commodity Management Facility
<b>GMM</b>	gross marketing margin
<b>HQ</b>	Headquarters
<b>HGSF</b>	Home-Grown School Feeding
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agricultural Development
<b>KII</b>	key informant interview
<b>KPI</b>	key performance indicator
<b>LRFPP</b>	Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy
<b>LRP</b>	Local and Regional Procurement
<b>MIYCN</b>	maternal, infant, and young child nutrition
<b>MOA</b>	Ministry of Agriculture
<b>MT</b>	metric tonnes
<b>M&amp;E</b>	monitoring and evaluation

<b>NDP</b>	National Development Plan
<b>NGO</b>	non-governmental organization
<b>OEV</b>	Office of Evaluation
<b>OECD-DAC</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
<b>PHH</b>	post-harvest handling
<b>PHL</b>	post-harvest loss
<b>PHM</b>	post-harvest management
<b>PSN</b>	productive safety nets
<b>PWD</b>	People with disabilities
<b>P4P</b>	Purchase for Progress
<b>PR</b>	purchase requisition
<b>QA</b>	quality assurance
<b>QAS</b>	Quality Assurance Specialist
<b>QC</b>	quality control
<b>RBN</b>	Regional Bureau Nairobi
<b>REO</b>	Regional Evaluation Officer
<b>RAM</b>	Research, Assessment, and Monitoring
<b>RBN</b>	Regional Bureau Nairobi
<b>R4</b>	Rural Resilience Initiative
<b>SAMS</b>	Smallholder Agricultural Market Support
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SHF</b>	smallholder farmer
<b>SHF</b>	specialized nutritious foods
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SNF</b>	Specialized Nutritious Foods
<b>TL</b>	Team Leader
<b>ToC</b>	Theory of change

<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCT</b>	United Nations Country Team
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNEG</b>	United Nations Evaluation Group
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children’s Fund
<b>UN OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>UN SWAP</b>	UN System-Wide Action Plan
<b>USD</b>	United States dollar
<b>VCA</b>	value chain analysis
<b>VSHF</b>	very smallholder farmer
<b>WFP</b>	World Food Programme
<b>ZHSR</b>	Zero Hunger Strategic Review

**WFP Regional Bureau for Eastern Africa**

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**World Food Programme**

Via Cesare Giulio Viola 68/70

00148 Rome, Italy

T +39 06 6513 **wfp.org**