

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EVALUATION OF Decentralized Endline Evaluation of USDA Local and Regional Food Aid Procurement Grant (LRP-442-2019-011-00) for WFP School Feeding in Cambodia (DE/KHCO/2019/062) from September/2019 to March/2024)

Latest update date: 28/10/2024

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BACKGROUND

This document presents the WFP management response to the recommendations from the evaluation entitled “DECENTRALIZED ENDLINE EVALUATION OF USDA LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD AID PROCUREMENT GRANT (LRP-442-2019-011-00) FOR WFP SCHOOL FEEDING IN CAMBODIA (DE/KHCO/2019/062) FROM SEPTEMBER/2019 TO MARCH/2024” on strengthening national and local systems for local procurement of food commodities for schools within the larger Home Grown School Feeding framework in Cambodia. The purpose of the evaluation was to serve the dual purpose of accountability and learning and informed the end progress of the USDA LRP funded SFP.

The evaluation made a total of seven recommendations. These recommendations are provided with the perspective of how to continue to integrate and strengthen local procurement and smallholder agricultural production into the ongoing McGovern-Dole FY22 project as well as the overall National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme processes. The response presented below sets out whether WFP agrees, partially agrees, or disagrees with the evaluation recommendations and sub-recommendations. It presents the planned (or taken) actions, responsibilities, and timelines.

Recommendations and sub-recommendations [one recommendation/sub-rec per row, deadlines in brackets]	Recommendation and sub-recommendation lead office ¹	Management response ²	Actions	Action lead office ³	Action deadline (Indicate month and year)	Status ⁴
<p>Priority: High Overall recommendation deadline: (Q4 2024) Recommendation 1: Refining Technical Assistance. Based on the lessons learned from the endline evaluation and the NHGSFP review, WFP, in collaboration with the MoEYS and NSPC, should refine the ongoing technical assistance package within the McGovern-Dole FY22 project, based on the SABER assessment of what WFP can provide to Government in the post-transition phase. This may include, but not be limited to, the following themes: true costing for scale-up and staffing of LRP related elements, bidding guidelines and communication, ongoing SFIS technical support, revisions on the commodity target pricing approaches and parameters, MoEYS monitoring for food quality and safety.</p>	CO	Agreed	1. The World Food Programme (WFP) will obtain endorsement from the Government for Technical Assistance (TA) package, which is developed based on SABER and other assessments, to support implementation of the transition process and beyond, focusing on broader pillars of school feeding programme, including those relevant to LRP (procurement and food system).	CO Senior Management, SF programme Unit, (MoEYS and NSPC)	Dec 2024	Ongoing
<p>Priority: Medium Overall recommendation deadline: (Q3, 2024) Recommendation 2: Smallholder Agricultural Production. Based on the lessons learned from the endline evaluation, WFP, in collaboration with the MoEYS, NSPC, and MAFF, should continue to support the development of strengthened linkages between the NHGSF and strengthening local agricultural production within the current</p>	CO	Agreed	1. WFP is in the process of developing a 5-year partnership agreement with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF). This partnership agreement includes a significant component focused on facilitating linkages between local producers and the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP).	Food Systems and SF units (MoEYS, MAFF, MOH, NSPC, FAO)	Sep 2024	Ongoing

¹ Indicate the lead office, with any supporting offices in brackets

² Indicate whether each recommendation and sub-recommendation is 'Agreed', 'Partially agreed' or 'Not agreed'. Briefly justify partially or not agreed

³ Indicate the action lead, with any supporting offices in brackets

⁴ Indicate the current status of the action – Not started/ Ongoing/ Completed

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<p>McGovern-Dole FY22 package. This may include, but not be limited to, the following themes: continued support for operationalizing the relevant sub-decrees for inter-ministerial coordination; continued support for the enhanced linkages to agricultural cooperatives; supporting market feasibility studies to identify the potential breadth and range of school meals as an agricultural market; identifying mechanisms for verifying supplier sourcing from local production; and ongoing explorations for strengthening marketing and profitability for suppliers and farmers.</p>			<p>2. WFP has developed mechanisms to enhance market linkages for Agriculture Cooperatives and local producers to Home Grown School Feeding Programme (HGSFP) during 2024-25 school year, including with programmes funded by USDA and other partners. This included developing eligibility criteria, assessments to identify capacity for local producers and agriculture cooperatives in 8 potential districts.</p>	<p>Food Systems and SF units (MoEYS, MAFF, NSPC, FAO)</p>	<p>Sept 2024</p>	<p>Completed</p>
<p>Priority: High Overall recommendation deadline: (Q3, 2024) Recommendation 3: School Fit for the Standard NHGSF Model. Based on the lessons learned from the endline evaluation, WFP, together with MoEYS and the NSPC, should define a standard model for NHGSFP and then conduct an assessment and mapping of the types of schools (size, distance from market, existing infrastructure, vulnerability population) best suited for the application of the standard approach to NHGSF procurement and school meals provision. As part of this exercise, would be a census review and mapping of national schools which may not be best suited to apply the standard model.</p>	<p>CO</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	<p>1. As per the Joint Transition Strategy and Technical Assistance package being developed, WFP will support NSPC and MoEYS to review the procurement and delivery mechanisms of NHGSFP, including technical support to identify and rationalize context-specific procurement models, including mapping of schools based on criteria / categorization to be agreed.</p>	<p>School Feeding and RAM units, (MoEYS, NSPC.)</p>	<p>Sep 2024</p>	<p>Not started</p>

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<p>Priority: High Overall recommendation deadline: (Q4, 2024) Recommendation 4: Piloting Adaptations for Delivery. Based on the lessons learned from the endline evaluation, WFP, in collaboration with MoEYS, should support the development of an array of pilots to assess the feasibility of multiple food delivery models within the NHGSF that might better fit the contexts of different types of schools. This may include, but not be limited to, pilots to explore alternative school meal provisions for schools with minimal space or infrastructure such as catering, in-home provisions, or other variations. These pilots would also include an analysis of which types of schools fit which types of adaptations best.</p>	CO	Agreed	<p>1. Considering the current progress of transition of the programme to national ownership, WFP in collaboration with MoEYS and NSPC will explore and analyse different delivery models for the national homegrown school feeding programme that are cost efficient and effective in delivering commodities, including quality fortified rice. Such models will consider different national, sub-national and school characteristics, trade-offs / benefits to ensure efficient and safe delivery of nutritious meals to meet programme objectives, including local sourcing. Such analysis may result into identifying pilots to generate evidence before integration into national home-grown school feeding programme.</p>	SF programme and Food System units, (MoEYS, MAFF, NSPC),	Dec 2024	Ongoing
<p>Priority: High Overall recommendation deadline: (Q4, 2024) Recommendation 5: Piloting Adaptations for Procurement. Based on the lessons learned from the endline evaluation, WFP, in collaboration with MoEYS, and NSPC and MAFF, should support the development of an array of pilots to assess the feasibility of multiple procurement and contracting models within the NHGSF that might better fit the contexts of different types of schools. This may include, but not be limited to, pilots to explore multi-year contracting, different contracting modalities that enhance aggregation, assessing the most appropriate level for managing procurement contracts, and determining the viability of local food sourcing</p>	CO	Agreed	<p>WFP will collaborate with the government to explore different procurement models through 2 streams of work:</p> <p>(a) WFP, in collaboration with MoEYS will pilot two models of food procurement in 43 schools by exploring aggregation of commodity supply at district and commune levels, including rice fortification, modifications to supplier selection process, such as single supplier of fresh and non-fresh food and different pricing mechanisms to tackle issues like food quality, price fluctuations, and supply disruptions. Operational research will be undertaken to assess cost-efficiency, economies of scale and other benefits of centralized procurement and potential replication in current procurement process</p>	SF programme and Food System units, (MoEYS, MAFF, NSPC),	Dec 2024	Ongoing

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(versus imported foods or other regional sources. These pilots would also include an analysis of which types of schools fit which types of adaptations best.			b) WFP will support the government to explore options to integrate fortified rice into the National Home-Grown School Feeding Programme. This work among others will explore mechanisms for centralization, quality assurance, contract types as well as advocacy efforts for integration of fortified rice in NHGSFP	Food System and SF programme units, (MoEYS, NSPC),	Dec 2024	On going
<p>Priority: High Overall recommendation deadline: (Q4, 2024) Recommendation 6: Unready Transitioned Schools. According to the Joint Transition Strategy, all schools in a district are transitioned to the NHGSFP if 80 percent fulfils the criteria of readiness, leaving potentially up to 20 percent with gaps in procurement capacity. WFP, in collaboration with the MoEYS, should consider a mechanism to systematically identify, assess and provide technical assistance to those schools that were handed over without being fully ready. This collaboration would include: developing a map of these schools, an updated assessment on progress, and, in collaboration with MoEYS, an ongoing plan for remedial technical support to these schools.</p>	CO	Agreed	1. WFP developed transition checklist and rolled it out for data collection to assess the readiness of all hand over schools. Based on the results of transition checklist WFP will further provide response activities to support the schools to increase their readiness based on the criteria as in the signed transition strategy. If resources are available, WFP will still continue to support (those that are not yet ready) one more year after those schools are handed over to the NHGSF.	SF programme Unit (MoEYS, NSPC)	Dec 2024	Completed
<p>Priority: Medium Overall recommendation deadline: (Q3, 2024) Recommendation 7: Visibilizing LRP gender contributions. In alignment with the baseline and midterm evaluation recommendation, WFP, together with USDA and in consultation with MAFF, MoEYS and the Ministry of Women's Affairs, should seek to integrate and visibilize the LRP</p>	CO, RBB	Agreed	1. WFP, in collaboration with WFP RBB, conducted a study on gender transformative approach in school feeding programme and a disability inclusion within the home-grown school feeding program. WFP will develop an action plan, including the formalization of cook contracts and women's economic empowerment for suppliers, to guide WFP's advocacy for integrating gender equality into the program and engagement with	SF programme, Food System and RAM units (MoEYS, MAFF, MOWA)	Sep 2024	Ongoing

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<p>to contributions to gender equality, by improving gender sensitivity in the results frameworks for the next project cycle of school feeding (even if it does not include an LRP project itself). This would include the identification of gender indicators that would measure the concepts of gender equality identified in the endline: economic empowerment, Individual skills development, and community participation.</p>			<p>the Ministry of Women’s Affairs. Gender-disaggregated indicators are integrated into all monitoring and evaluation plans. These will be continuously monitored to inform programme adaptations if needed.</p>			