



WFP EVALUATION



World Food Programme

**SAVING
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Evaluation of Liberia WFP country strategic plan 2019–2026

Centralized evaluation report

OEV/2023/006
April 2026

Acknowledgements

The Evaluation Team (ET) would like to acknowledge the support provided by the World Food Programme (WFP) Office of Evaluation (OEV) throughout the conduct of this evaluation. In particular, the team is grateful to Mona Selim and Raymond Ssenyonga for their technical guidance and constructive engagement across the various stages of the evaluation process. The ET also wishes to thank the WFP Country Office in Liberia for its openness and collaboration, and for making staff time, documentation and logistical support readily available. Special appreciation is extended to Tarig Eltayeb, whose consistent support was instrumental in facilitating access to key informants, data sources and field sites. The team further extends its appreciation to representatives of government institutions, members of the United Nations system, cooperating partners and donors, as well as to programme beneficiaries, all of whom generously shared their perspectives and experiences in support of the evaluation. Finally, the Team Leader would like to recognize the professionalism, commitment and expertise of the entire ET and to acknowledge the valuable technical and administrative support provided by SALASAN Consulting throughout the project.

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Executive summary

Introduction

Evaluation features

1. The evaluation of the country strategic plan (CSP) for Liberia for 2019–2026¹ was conducted between August 2024 and April 2025 to inform the design of the next CSP. It assessed WFP's strategic positioning and contribution to strategic outcomes, the sustainability of the results achieved under the CSP, the efficiency in implementation and the factors explaining WFP's performance. Using a mixed-methods and theory-based approach, it drew on primary and secondary qualitative and quantitative data, including consultations with over 440 key informants and focus group participants.

2. The intended users of the evaluation are the WFP Liberia country office, the Western and Central Africa Regional Office, relevant headquarters divisions, the Executive Board, the Government of Liberia, including its various ministries and agencies collaborating with WFP, the United Nations country team and cooperating partners.

Context

3. Liberia is one of the world's least developed countries, facing profound challenges exacerbated by a history of civil conflicts from 1989 to 2003. Health crises (Ebola virus disease outbreaks and the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic), currency depreciation and high inflation, especially affecting food prices, have hampered post-war recovery. Approximately 50.9 percent of people live below the national poverty line and around 63 percent face multidimensional poverty.² There are also wide gaps between urban and rural areas in terms of income, livelihoods and services.

4. The number of counties of Liberia facing crisis level food insecurity increased between 2020 and 2023. Liberia has a score of 31.9 in the 2024 Global Hunger Index, and hunger in Liberia is thus categorized as "serious". Key drivers of food insecurity include low local agricultural productivity, high dependence on imported staple foods (especially rice), limited nutritional diversity of local production, and extreme poverty. Despite progress in some nutrition indicators, malnutrition remains a major concern across the country, with an estimated 38.9 percent of the population undernourished in 2023.³

5. Liberia's agriculture sector contributes over one third of the country's gross domestic product and employs 87 percent of the working-age population.⁴ However, it is characterized by subsistence production and low productivity, owing notably to a lack of fertilizers and irrigation, poor seeds and breeding stock, and inadequate access to credit, machinery and infrastructure for transport, storage and marketing.

6. Climate change and environmental challenges, including water scarcity, flooding due to increased intensity of rainfall, coastal erosion and sea-level rise, have exacerbated food insecurity and agricultural and economic challenges.

¹ This is the summary report on the evaluation. The full report and all related documents are available on the WFP website: <https://www.wfp.org/publications/evaluation-liberia-wfp-country-strategic-plan-2019-2026>.

² World Bank. [Liberia country page](#).

³ United States Agency for International Development. [Food Security Factsheet 2022](#) (not available online).

⁴ Comprehensive food security and nutrition survey, as cited in WFP. 2024. [Liberia Annual Country Report 2023 – Country Strategic Plan 2019–2026](#).

7. Liberia's health infrastructure was severely strained and weakened by outbreaks of Ebola virus disease and COVID-19. Historically, the public health system has faced challenges in the supply and distribution of drugs and commodities, particularly in remote areas.

8. A high proportion of children in Liberia are not in formal schooling, with 67 percent of boys and girls enrolled in primary school.⁵ In 2020, the proportion of boys and girls enrolled in school was almost equal (0.99), but there is a widening gap as education progresses, with 9 percent of girls and young women and 15 percent of boys and young men enrolled in tertiary education.⁶ Only 21 percent of primary and secondary children receive food through school feeding activities.⁷

9. In 2021 Liberia ranked 164th of 191 countries on the Gender Inequality Index, with women facing discrimination in many areas of social and economic life. Women make up 80 percent of the agricultural labour force, but only 22.6 percent of the women working in agriculture have incomes, increasing their vulnerability to economic stress and gender-based violence.⁸

10. Liberia's economy is heavily reliant on foreign aid and remittances (which accounted for 18.5 percent of its gross domestic product in 2023),⁹ leaving the country vulnerable to fluctuations in international support. Its largest contributors include China, France, Germany, Japan, the United States of America, and the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation.

Overview of the country strategic plan

11. The CSP for Liberia for 2019–2026 is focused on school feeding, emergency response and national and subnational capacity strengthening. Common services were reintroduced through a budget revision in May 2020 to support the COVID-19 pandemic response. Figure 1 provides an overview of WFP operations, national policies, contextual events and key elements of the CSP as it evolved.

⁵ World Bank. [School enrollment, primary \(% gross\) – Liberia](#).

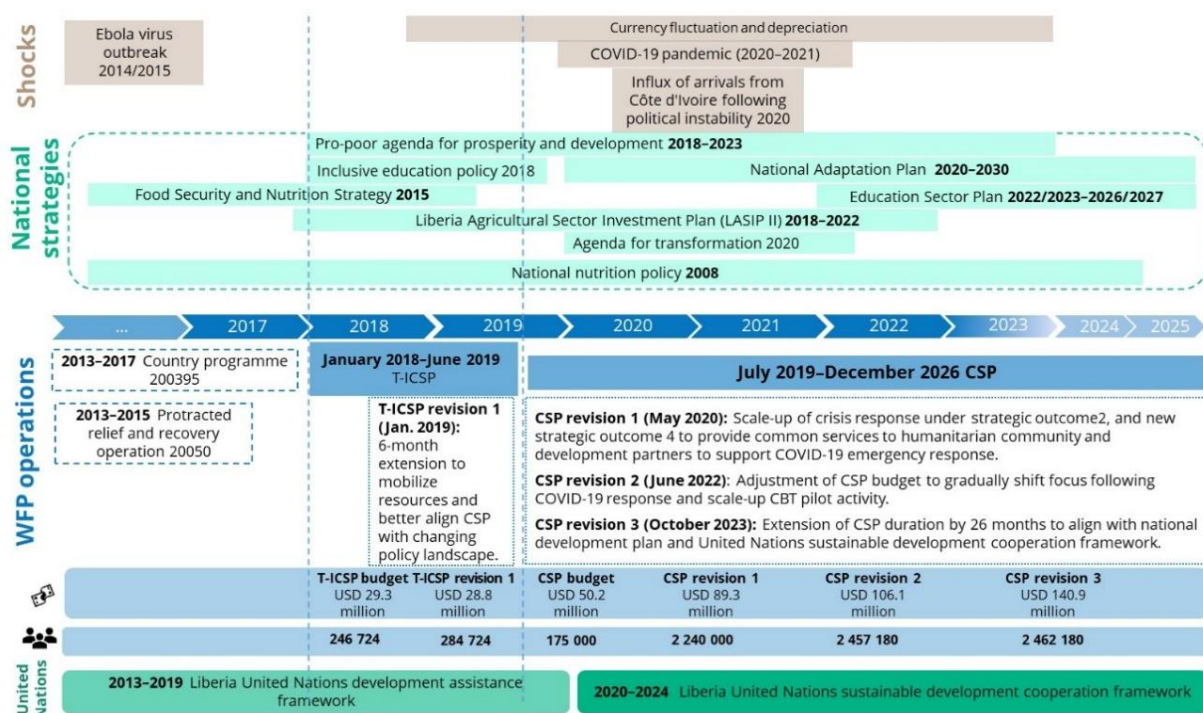
⁶ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. 2024. [Liberia: Education Country Brief](#).

⁷ Global Child Nutrition Foundation. 2024. [Global Survey of School Meal Programmes: Republic of Liberia – School Meal Coverage \(2022–2023\)](#).

⁸ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. 2021. [Issue Paper: Liberia Country Gender Equality Profile](#).

⁹ World Bank. [Liberia country page](#).

Figure 1: Timeline and evolution of the Liberia country strategic plan



Abbreviations: CBT = cash-based transfer; and T-ISCP = transitional interim country strategic plan.

12. Table 1 provides an overview of the CSP's four strategic outcomes. The home-grown school feeding (HGSF) programme (under strategic outcome 1) is considered WFP's flagship programme in Liberia, supporting the Government's plan to reduce poverty and address chronic issues in education, agriculture, nutrition and social protection.

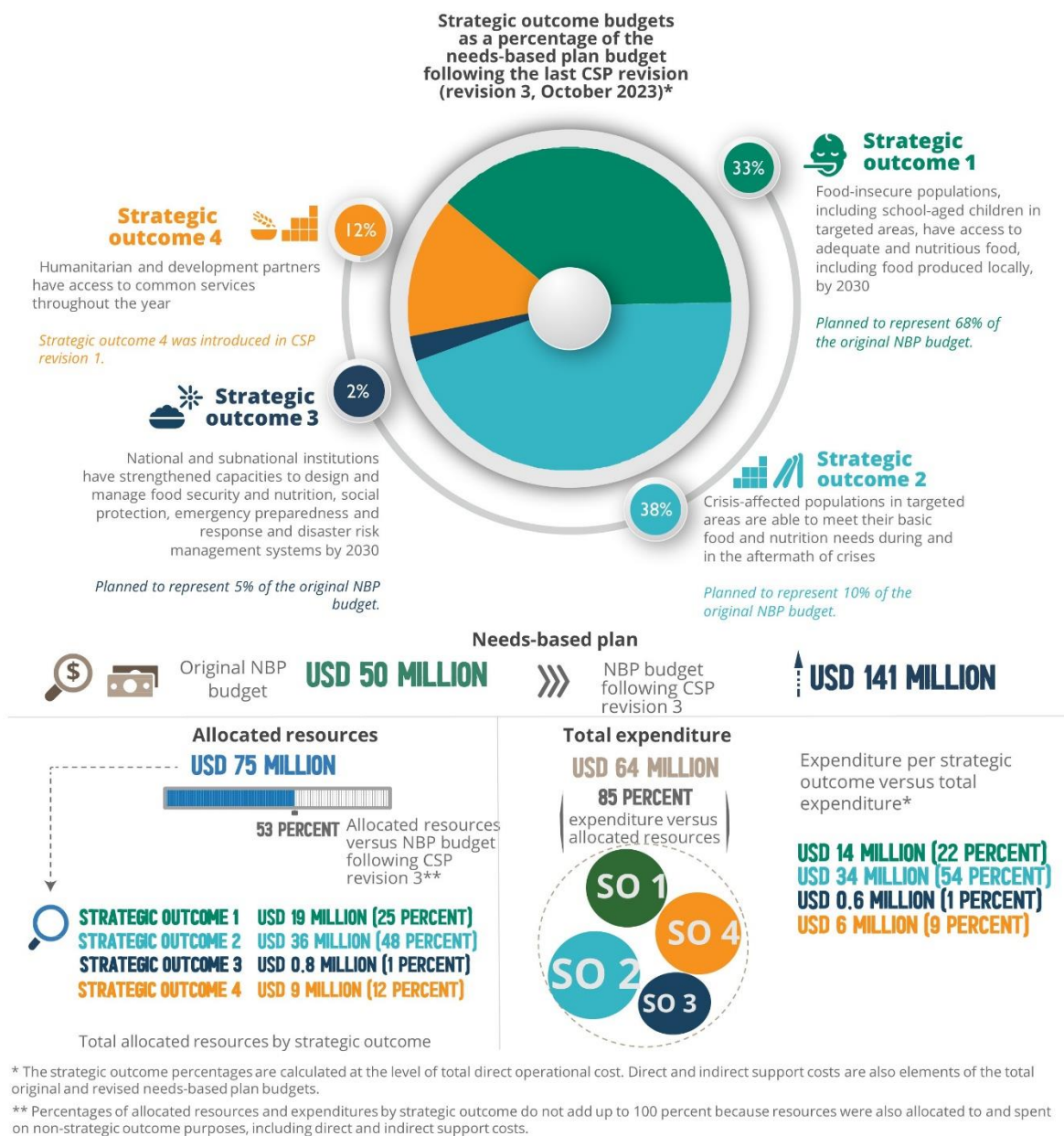
TABLE 1: LIBERIA COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN STRATEGIC OUTCOMES, FOCUS AREAS, ACTIVITIES AND MODALITIES		
Strategic outcomes (with focus areas in brackets)	Activities	Modality
1: Food-insecure populations, including school-age children in targeted areas, have access to adequate and nutritious food, including food produced locally, by 2030 (resilience building)	1: Provide an integrated and inclusive school feeding package to food-insecure and nutritionally vulnerable schoolchildren, including take-home rations for adolescent girls, in a way that relies on and stimulates local production (HGSP).	Food Cash-based transfers Country capacity strengthening
2: Crisis-affected populations in targeted areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crises (crisis response)	2: Provide an integrated emergency food and nutrition assistance package to vulnerable households affected by disasters or other disruptions.	Food Cash-based transfers Country capacity strengthening
3: National and subnational institutions have strengthened capacities to design and manage food security and nutrition, social protection, emergency preparedness and response and disaster risk management systems by 2030 (resilience building)	3: Provide capacity strengthening support to the Government and its partners to strengthen national coordination mechanisms and information management and monitoring systems for food security and nutrition and disaster risk management.	Country capacity strengthening
4: Humanitarian and development partners have access to common services throughout the year (crisis response)	4: Supply chain and information and communication technology services to humanitarian and development partners.	

13. The CSP budget increased from USD 50.2 million to USD 140.9 million through three budget revisions, reflecting the significant expansion of food assistance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the growth of the cash-based transfer programme under strategic outcomes 1 and 2. Beneficiary numbers increased commensurately, from 175,000 to 2,462,180, with female beneficiaries exceeding male beneficiaries in each year in both planned and actual numbers.

14. As of 31 December 2024, the CSP was funded at 53 percent of the needs-based plan budget. Funding levels spiked during the COVID-19 pandemic, with important contributions from the Government of Liberia, and then slowly increased between 2021 and 2024. Reflecting the focus on school feeding during CSP design, strategic outcome 1 accounted for 68 percent of the needs-based plan budget, with crisis response accounting for 10 percent. The large influx of funding for the COVID-19 pandemic response increased the focus on crisis response, which ultimately attracted almost half of allocated resources (48 percent), with 25 percent of allocated resources dedicated to strategic outcome 1 (see figure 2).

15. At the time of the evaluation, the Government of Liberia was the largest contributor to the CSP, primarily through funding for the COVID-19 household food support programme.¹⁰ Other donors included private donors, the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund, the United States of America, China and Japan.

Figure 2: Liberia country strategic plan (2019–2026) strategic outcomes, budget, funding and expenditures



¹⁰ The USD 30 million budget for the COVID-19 household food support programme was funded by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank through a Ministry of Agriculture project. Funds were transferred directly to WFP for implementation.

Key conclusions and evaluation findings

Strategic relevance and coherence

WFP grounded the CSP for Liberia in evidence and aligned it with Liberia's national priorities and United Nations system frameworks. The CSP was relevant and coherent, prioritizing long-term resilience complemented by short-term emergency response and leveraging organizational strengths in HGSF, local procurement with integrated post-harvest support, and logistics and supply chains. The strategic potential of these comparative advantages was not fully realized, however, because programmatic links were managed in an ad hoc fashion.

16. The **CSP design drew on credible evidence and consultations**, including national food security and nutrition assessments, notably the 2017 zero hunger strategic review, complemented by consultations with the Government, donors, other United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to define strategic outcomes, thematic areas and priorities. WFP's work aligned with the objectives of the United Nations cooperation frameworks for Liberia of promoting economic sustainability through rural livelihoods and fostering human development through increased access to education and improved social protection. While affected people were not directly consulted, community needs were considered through lessons learned from the transitional interim CSP for Liberia and extensive consultations during the zero hunger strategic review. Targeting was based on a comprehensive food security and nutrition survey, validated with government partners and updated using a 2022 rapid assessment. Community targeting was done with district-level authorities to safeguard operational relevance.

17. **WFP appropriately prioritized counties with high levels of food insecurity.**¹¹ **There were some gaps**, however, including inclusion and exclusion errors during the COVID-19 pandemic response; these were attributable to the urgency of scale-up, the selection of some unsuitable sites for resilience activities and the lack of a clear strategy for engaging out-of-school children in school feeding interventions. In 2023, the introduction of standard operating procedures strengthened community-driven targeting, improving outreach to vulnerable groups such as young people, households led by women, persons with disabilities and older persons.

18. The **CSP was appropriately focused on WFP's comparative advantages in Liberia, particularly in HGSF and logistics**. WFP was recognized by partners as having global and regional expertise in HGSF and was the only entity implementing an exclusively home-grown model, with a scale and purchasing power that could create stable, high-volume markets for smallholders. WFP was also widely recognized for its operational capacity to manage and deliver logistics support, particularly in emergencies and remote areas. No organization matched WFP's combination of national reach, delivery infrastructure, digital systems and preparedness. Beginning in May 2020, WFP provided essential common services to the Government, other United Nations entities and NGOs, including digital platforms for beneficiary management, warehousing, transportation and broader logistics and supply chain support. In 2022 and 2023, WFP provided the logistics backbone for the national COVID-19 pandemic response, supporting the distribution of personal protective equipment, vaccines and medical equipment. WFP then capitalized on its established supply chain infrastructure and expertise to transition from providing emergency support to strengthening national health supply chains at the request of partners. WFP's management of Liberia's main health commodity warehouse is the only activity of its type anywhere in the world.

19. **WFP's work in resilience building and school feeding was complemented by a flexible portfolio of crisis response activities, enabling it to shift between changing lives and saving lives.** WFP's ability to reorient to humanitarian response and take-home rations for school feeding during the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated its adaptability. **Integration at the humanitarian-development-peace nexus was limited, however.** For example, while WFP targeted farmers for emergency assistance

¹¹ Some highly food-insecure counties (such as River Gee and Grand Kru) that were targeted by conventional school feeding until its suspension in 2022 due to limited funding were subsequently covered by other partners.

programmes designed to respond to caterpillar infestations and food price inflation related to the conflict in Ukraine, it failed to include farmers in its resilience programmes, nor did it link beneficiaries targeted under crisis response to resilience programming. Although peacebuilding was not formally included in the CSP, evaluations of two joint projects found that WFP's technical assistance contributed to increasing the participation of young women and men in peacebuilding activities and to improving social cohesion.

20. **While the CSP was designed to create links between agricultural production and the provision of school meals through an integrated approach to HGFS, in practice integration was limited.** This stemmed from several factors, the first in relation to the distance between farmers and schools: in counties where WFP had school feeding programmes, smallholder farmers were connected to HGFS markets through direct purchases in 2022 and 2023, while those operating in other counties were not. Second, WFP shifted to a model of sourcing from cooperatives, which were not required to buy from WFP-supported farmers. These were missed opportunities to create synergies across programme areas for efficiency gains. Greater coherence across smallholder support and school feeding – particularly in post-harvest management, food safety and quality, and market development – could have expanded the local supply base, contributed to better outcomes for farmers and unlocked stronger food system links and multiplier effects.

Effectiveness and sustainability: Overall performance and key contributions to strategic outcomes

Home-grown school feeding and resilience

The HGFS model was a strong strategic asset through which WFP contributed to the development of inclusive food systems and improved education and nutrition outcomes for children. Although results were constrained by challenges related to operationalizing the cooperative sourcing model, including limited processing and production capacity, purchasing through cooperatives increased the supply of agricultural commodities at lower operational cost. It offered a scalable and sustainable model for procurement, boosting the productivity and resilience of farmers.

21. **WFP's school feeding programme contributed to overall positive increases in enrolment and attendance,** meeting or exceeding targets for most years; retention levels also remained high, at 90–98 percent. Parents and school officials cited additional positive outcomes, including children's reliable access to a diverse and fortified diet,¹² reduced financial burden on parents and increased learner attention and academic performance. The evaluation noted unintended effects, however, such as that a portion of enrolment growth in WFP schools was due to in-school children moving to government schools from nearby non-government schools that did not have school feeding programmes. Some WFP schools experienced sharp enrolment increases not matched by additional food, teachers or educational resources. Some parents of out-of-school children indicated that while school meals were an incentive, they were not sufficient to offset school-related costs.

22. **WFP's shift to buying from cooperatives shows promise as a scalable and sustainable procurement model** contributing to increased supply of agricultural commodities and profits, with cooperatives benefiting from price stability, bulk sales and lower transaction costs. It also encouraged better production practices¹³ and stronger local value chains that aligned with WFP's resilience objectives, with lower operational cost and greater reach and scalability. However, insufficient cooperative capacity assessments, unpredictable distribution planning and open-ended contracts led to supply shortfalls and delays, undermining cooperatives' ability to aggregate food commodities from farmers, meet food safety and quality standards, and secure financing for investment.

23. **School feeding in Liberia is becoming more institutionally and financially sustainable** as the Government has prioritized HGFS with recent budget commitments and plans to revise the national policy.

¹² Feeding days as a percentage of total days generally increased over the CSP, reaching 95 percent (2024), as did the percentage of multi-fortified meal days per year, which ranged from 80 percent to 100 percent.

¹³ At the time of the evaluation, only some cooperatives were working with networks of smallholders.

However, **progress in strengthening systems has been incremental**; school feeding remains largely externally managed, with limited investment in national systems. Opportunities to build capacity in food safety, procurement and policy frameworks – such as collaboration with Liberia’s standards authority – remain underutilized. WFP is well positioned to work with the Ministry of Education to review and implement the national school feeding policy, standardize menus and procedures, and strengthen government capacity in planning, budgeting, coordination and monitoring to support long-term sustainability.

24. At the community level, WFP improved implementation through training and equipment for food management committees. Nevertheless, many committees still struggle with stock management, literacy and understanding of entitlements and require continued oversight and support, which undermines sustainability.

WFP’s agricultural resilience programming contributed to increased farmer capacity and greater production. The model is limited in its scalability, however, and the sustainability of resilience outcomes was undercut by short project durations and weak organizational and financial capacity among farmers’ organizations.

25. Through agricultural resilience programming, WFP combined asset creation with capacity strengthening for smallholders and farmers’ organizations, providing agricultural inputs and training and some agricultural equipment. **The rehabilitation of productive assets – particularly inland valley swamps – was effective in supporting production by vulnerable farmers, with evidence of improved yields. However, operational delays, short project durations, poor site selection and rising food prices undermined food security and livelihoods gains**, with many households continuing to rely on negative coping strategies despite increased support and above-average yields.

26. **WFP’s approach to strengthening smallholder farmer capacity was designed with sustainability in mind.** Some farmers’ organizations saw their production, organization and marketing improve to a point that allowed them to graduate from WFP support. However, the limited scale of relevant activities and lack of organizational capacity, cohesion and governance among farmers’ organizations limited the sustainability of these activities and their impact on food system development.

27. WFP technical and financial assistance for policy formulation helped to improve policy coherence and prioritization in relation to post-harvest loss reduction. WFP’s collaboration with government partners enhanced data collection and analysis capacity through instruments such as the comprehensive food security and nutrition survey and price monitoring systems, contributing to better targeting and programme design.

Crisis response

WFP’s crisis response in Liberia helped to prevent further deterioration of food security among vulnerable households during the COVID-19 pandemic and contributed to improved rates of acceptable food consumption in subsequent emergencies. However, progress towards intended food security outcomes was hindered by operational challenges related to logistics, targeting and coordination.

28. **During the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020–2021, WFP provided several months of emergency food assistance to 2.5 million vulnerable individuals across Liberia.** Acceptable food consumption scores in those years, however, fell far below targets. A shift to cash assistance as an alternative to take-home rations for school feeding during pandemic-related school closures addressed safety concerns posed by people gathering, reduced logistical challenges and allowed broader coverage. Many households used cash assistance for urgent non-food needs, however, which diluted its effect on food security, even while it supported school enrolment.

29. **Operational challenges included delays due to unsuccessful attempts to procure food locally and discussions over rations, poor coordination and communication with stakeholders, and an insufficient number of staff in key functions and in the field.** These challenges undermined the effectiveness, timeliness and efficiency of the pandemic response, leading to reputational risks and

tensions at the community level. Country office staffing limitations also constrained oversight of food assistance. There were some reports of interference from local community leaders and manipulation of government distribution lists to favour specific groups, raising oversight concerns that were registered with WFP's Office of the Inspector General.

30. **Post-COVID cash-based transfers and e-voucher food assistance addressing localized crises**, such as flooding, caterpillar infestations and the impact of the conflict in Ukraine, helped vulnerable households to meet food needs and improved food security. They fell short of CSP targets, however, due to implementation challenges, including limited retailer access, inaccurate registration and transfer values that were not adjusted to account for regional cost variations. **Beneficiaries preferred cash over e-vouchers** due to its greater flexibility, including the ability to purchase food from vendors offering better quality, prices or service. Importantly, e-vouchers posed a cost and time burden for vulnerable people, including older persons, persons with disabilities and single mothers, in reaching vendors and transporting heavy food items. Such people often had to rely on others to collect rations, sometimes incurring informal costs or having to share assistance received.

31. **WFP's support for Liberia's national disaster management agency (NDMA) contributed to improvements in the quality and speed of post-crisis assessments in the short-term**, including better data collection tools and digitalization efforts. However, contributions were fragmented and constrained by limited resources and short-term engagement and **outcomes were not sustained after support ceased** in 2021. Operational inefficiency during subsequent post-disaster assessments indicated that gains in efficiency and data quality had not been sustained.

Access to common services – health commodity stock management and supply chains

WFP played a key enabling role in Liberia's health and humanitarian response by leveraging its logistics expertise to support the distribution of critical medical supplies during the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

32. Beginning in May 2020, **WFP played a key enabling role in Liberia's humanitarian response, leveraging its logistics expertise to support government and humanitarian partners**. Through the provision of digital platforms for inventory management, warehousing, transportation and broader logistics and supply chain support, WFP ensured the timely and equitable distribution of essential medical supplies during the COVID-19 pandemic.

33. **WFP continued to provide effective support to health supply chain coordination platforms in partnership with the Ministry of Health**, expanding its efforts to address structural issues and contributing to health system performance. Its interventions addressed systemic gaps in forecasting, storage and delivery, resulting in more reliable and transparent supply chains, more structured and predictable distribution models and reduced occurrence of supply shortages and product expirations.¹⁴ These improvements enhanced the availability of medicine and contributed to health system performance, although challenges with cold chain infrastructure, data systems and transport logistics remain.

34. **WFP's efforts to strengthen Liberia's health commodity supply chain also improved operational systems and local staff capacity**, as evidenced by increased staffing, training and digital tools. After assuming management of Liberia's Central Medical Store at the request of the Government and development partners, WFP increased the number of local staff by 84 percent, including Liberian pharmacists hired and trained to work in the store. The evaluation found limitations in handover planning, however; capacity strengthening was often implemented in an ad hoc manner rather than through a

¹⁴ Notably, WFP increased the number of annual distribution cycles from two to four and identified approximately USD 20 million in health commodities during an inventory undertaken with the Government, compared to an initial estimate of USD 2–3 million.

sustained strategy, limiting its potential to catalyse institutional change and threatening the sustainability of achievements.

Cross-cutting priorities

Progress on cross-cutting priorities under the CSP varied. The CSP emphasized women's and girls' equal participation and included some environmental considerations in programme design. Results in relation to equality and women's empowerment, the monitoring of environmental outcomes and the strengthening of accountability to affected people were limited, reflecting gaps in strategic intent, design and monitoring and undermining the effectiveness and accountability of WFP programming.

35. **WFP consistently prioritized the access and participation of women and girls and other vulnerable groups** in programming, with female beneficiaries representing more than 64 percent of participants in some key activities. **However, most initiatives lacked a systematic analysis of differential needs and barriers such that opportunities to address structural inequalities that contribute to food insecurity were missed.** Progress included greater financial independence for women smallholders, increased female representation in farmers' organization leadership and food management committees, a tripling of women-led cooperatives supplying school meals and reduced burdens on cooks – who are largely women – through the use of eco-stoves. The extent to which some of these gains translated into increased decision-making and influence for women varied, and there were unintended negative outcomes for some women cooks who reported that they were not paid and that their workloads had increased.

36. **Environmental considerations were not systematically integrated into programme design.** Some programmatic elements – such as farmer sensitization and training in climate-smart agriculture, sustainable land use, water conservation, crop diversification, local procurement and fuel-efficient stoves – supported environmental objectives. They were not, however, guided by clear targets, nor were environmental outcomes monitored. The absence of data or indicators relating to environmental performance meant that potential trade-offs and sustainability risks were neither identified nor managed.

37. **WFP broadly adhered to humanitarian principles and demonstrated commitment to accountability to affected people, although gaps remained.** WFP promoted humanity and impartiality through its work to alleviate suffering in the most food-insecure counties and to proactively include vulnerable groups based primarily on need. The vast majority of beneficiaries reported no safety concerns, no access barriers and respectful treatment. However, access to information in particular emerged as a key area for improvement. Limited and uneven communication engagement, including the provision of essential details on programming, created gaps in affected people's knowledge of targeting and selection criteria, entitlements and timelines, leading in some instances to frustration, mistrust and a sense of exclusion. Feedback mechanisms were also often limited. The formalized community feedback mechanism hotline established in 2023 was an important achievement, but general knowledge and use of the hotline varied.

38. **Progress on cross-cutting dimensions was constrained by insufficient staff training and chronic staffing shortages in the country office,** posing reputational risks and undermining the effectiveness of and accountability for WFP programming. This weakened WFP's ability to ensure quality, adapt to emerging challenges and fully integrate considerations related to the empowerment of women and girls and efforts to advance equality, environmental safeguards and beneficiary engagement.

Efficiency

While output performance improved modestly over time, overall delivery remained constrained by fragmented and short-term funding and operational and funding delays. WFP intentionally prioritized those facing the greatest access barriers in some elements of its crisis response and sought to advance broader developmental outcomes through the HGSM model, accepting trade-offs with operational efficiency, timeliness and cost-effectiveness.

39. **Operational challenges impeded the timeliness of WFP's assistance.** The COVID-19 pandemic response was undercut by poor coordination and communication, limited country office staff capacity stemming from prior funding shortages and human resource cuts, insufficient local produce and prolonged discussions with government and United Nations partners over ration content and volume. As a result, what was intended to be a three-month operation lasted more than a year. Technical errors with cash-based transfers also caused payment delays for post-pandemic crisis activities, take-home rations for school feeding and resilience-building food for assets activities for some beneficiaries (15–20 people per round of assistance, with more people generally affected in the first round). External factors, including a lack of retailers, poor network connectivity, difficult terrain and challenges posed by the rainy season, also delayed the implementation of e-voucher and resilience programming.

40. Strategic outcome 4 had the lowest expenditure rate (64 percent) over the period under evaluation due to delayed funding disbursement, a prolonged rainy season, delays in staffing and the need to achieve cost savings in hiring, as well as the need to retain funds as a buffer against possible cost overruns.

41. **Fragmented, short-term donor funding contributed to higher transaction costs and increased administrative burdens and time dedicated to programme planning and donor reporting.** This strained staff capacity at a time when the country office already faced operational delays and capacity limitations. Moreover, the lack of predictable flexible multi-year funding hindered WFP's ability to plan strategically, invest in systems strengthening and implement activities in a timely and efficient manner.

42. **At times WFP deliberately prioritized reaching population groups who face the most significant access barriers and contributing to broader developmental outcomes over operational efficiency, timeliness and cost-efficiency.** Challenges with e-voucher redemption and food delivery were particularly evident in hard-to-reach areas like Gbarpolu and Maryland counties. For example, operational challenges posed by the rainy season contributed to a 54 percent expenditure rate in 2022, with delivery of food to some sites taking over two months.

43. **Significant investment in capacity strengthening and management during the establishment of the HGSF model contributed to a cost per HGSF beneficiary three times higher than the cost of traditional school feeding.** Poor infrastructure also drove the higher cost of locally procured food, while imported rice benefited from economies of scale, efficient logistics and lower production costs, making it more competitively priced despite transportation and customs fees. Cost-efficiency was sacrificed by purchasing local food for HGSF, but this was done to yield greater development outcomes. This is in line with WFP policies such as the local and regional food procurement policy, which posits that higher procurement costs may be justifiable if they lead to the achievement of programmatic objectives.

Partnerships

WFP prioritized strategic partnerships with the Government that laid the foundations for sustainability, and it collaborated effectively with other United Nations entities and cooperating partners to extend its reach to vulnerable populations and provide targeted sectoral support. However, these partnerships were largely operational and were underutilized as strategic enablers.

44. Over the CSP period, **WFP shifted from primarily implementing operations with NGOs to prioritizing and building partnerships with national and subnational government institutions to build ownership and ensure sustainability.** Implementation, monitoring and reporting for many activities were undertaken jointly. Collaboration with the Government helped to institutionalize national food security assessments and strengthen analytical systems, although recent reductions in support have weakened Liberia's ability to respond to shocks. Sustainability remains challenged by limited institutional capacity and chronic funding gaps, with key programmes such as school feeding and health logistics still heavily dependent on WFP's technical and operational support.

45. **Through collaboration with other United Nations entities WFP has contributed to broader development objectives in Liberia.** WFP's engagement in two United Nations Peacebuilding Fund projects, providing technical assistance and livelihood opportunities, particularly for young people, demonstrated its capacity to address the root causes of conflict and contribute to peacebuilding outcomes,

including strengthened livelihoods, increased participation in peacebuilding activities and improved social cohesion. WFP also partnered to strengthen normative frameworks and food security and resilience analysis. Notable examples include a joint Cadre Harmonisé analysis, a comprehensive food security and nutrition survey and other assessments with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development and other partners, as well as WFP's support for the development of a zero post-harvest loss strategy.

46. **Partnerships with cooperating partners and private sector companies played an important role in extending WFP's reach and achievement of results**, leveraging the geographic coverage, community relationships and specialized expertise of those entities, notably in resilience and emergency response. Cooperating partners played a vital role in community mobilization, targeting and implementation, especially where WFP had limited presence.

47. **WFP has yet to fully activate its convening potential in the education sector**, where its operational footprint, supply chain assets and global school feeding expertise position it well to play a catalytic role in facilitating multi-actor collaboration. WFP is working with FAO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) on an integrated proposal for school feeding that could improve strategic collaboration and serve as a flagship project and an example of considered collaboration for the wider United Nations family.

Human and financial resources

WFP operated under significant resource and staffing constraints throughout the period under review. Unpredictable and fragmented donor funding affected planning and limited the quality, timeliness and scale of programme delivery and internal systems, including monitoring systems. Improvements were noted in later years, although staffing shortages continued to undermine responsiveness to known challenges.

48. **While the CSP was strategically relevant, its original scope was overly ambitious relative to the resources available to the country office** in terms of staffing levels, anticipated funding, donor base, availability of long-term funding and other matters. The assumptions underpinning the CSP proved unrealistic in Liberia's operational and funding context. In general, the CSP was under-resourced except for large funding infusions for the COVID-19 pandemic response. The amount needed to fund the country portfolio exceeded USD 140 million, of which only 53.2 percent had been received as of December 2024. Ninety percent of total resources were single-year commitments, requiring short programming cycles and limiting the duration, predictability and effectiveness of resilience-building activities.

49. **The funding situation made it difficult for WFP to maintain the CSP's strategic orientation and limited its ability to meet operational demands**. For example, funding shortfalls led to the suspension and delayed resumption of HGSF activities and constrained WFP's ability to implement capacity-strengthening activities. By contrast, with the highest level of funding relative to the needs-based plan budget, common services provision under strategic outcome 4 had sufficient resources to support implementation, which contributed to strong performance.

50. **Chronic staffing shortfalls and staff turnover – especially in technical and cross-cutting areas – also undermined the consistency, timeliness and quality of implementation across most CSP activities**. Critical functions such as monitoring, budgeting, programming and communications were chronically understaffed, and frequent turnover, including of three country directors between 2019 and 2025, affected continuity and strategic direction. In addition, the country office's ability to raise funds and plan proactively was constrained by staffing limitations (including the lack of a dedicated partnerships and communications position until June 2024) and the lack of a proactive resource mobilization strategy. After decreasing significantly in 2022 (from 77 staff to 48) staffing resources increased, largely driven by an expansion in supply chain staff with the shift of strategic outcome 4 to the management and distribution of public health commodities. Strategic outcome 4 benefited from dedicated capacity and relatively clear operational models. In contrast, programming in resilience, school feeding and capacity strengthening suffered from fragmented implementation, limited monitoring and constrained ability to resolve operational bottlenecks.

51. **WFP implemented several strategies to mitigate staffing and funding shortfalls, including a leaner staff complement, reprioritization of resources and adaptive delivery models.** The number of programming and policy and field operations staff was reduced from 22 to 13 based on a staffing structure review in 2022. WFP switched school feeding assistance from take-home rations to a one-time cash-based transfer for targeted households in 2022 and scaled up cash-based modalities more broadly for school feeding.

52. **Monitoring systems met minimum requirements but a lack of dedicated monitoring staff and resulting data gaps, particularly early in the CSP term, hindered WFP's ability to track programme implementation and assess contributions to outcomes.** This hindered timely strategic decisions and programming adaptations. The country office strengthened monitoring systems, hiring research, assessment and monitoring staff in 2023 and introducing third-party monitoring in 2024. These measures improved data collection, leading to the identification of key operational issues. In some cases, third-party monitors (TPM) also provided limited operational support. The country office's ability to respond to issues revealed through third-party monitoring remained constrained by insufficient staffing, especially in the field. For example, 2024 data indicated that of 133 issues identified only 25 percent were closed, while no action had begun on 40 percent and 35 percent were in the process of being addressed.

Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
Recommendation 1: Refine and consolidate the HGSP programming model, improving planning and using support for cooperatives as a means of building integrated smallholder farmer resilience.	Strategic and operational	Country office	Cooperatives, Liberian Standards Authority (LiSA), global headquarters	High	June 2028
1.1 Incentivize agricultural cooperatives – through technical support (in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture) and financial market opportunities – to provide training, inputs, market linkages and other assistance to smallholder farmers within their networks as a scalable model for boosting the productivity and resilience of farmers.			Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture		
1.2 Ensure the timely provision of distribution plans to all stakeholders based on a school feeding needs forecasting mechanism and connect specific cooperatives to schools to enable a timely supply of food to schools by cooperatives.			Cooperatives, regional office, headquarters in Rome		
1.3 Implement multi-cycle procurement contracts that specify delivery requirements (including quantities) for cooperatives that consistently meet supply targets and high quality standards.			Headquarters in Rome, cooperatives, LiSA		

Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
Recommendation 2: Strengthen WFP’s support for national and community capacity, systems and structures in areas where it adds distinct value, including school feeding, crisis response and health supply chains.	Operational	Country office	Global headquarters, NDMA, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Health, TPM	Medium	June 2030
2.1 Enable a gradual and sustainable handover of school feeding by supporting the Government in developing and operationalizing national school feeding policies and standardized procedures while simultaneously strengthening the capacity of food management committees through targeted refresher training, practical tools and frequent joint monitoring with the Ministry of Education and TPM.			Global headquarters, Ministry of Education, TPM		
2.2 Support the NDMA in working to strengthen sustainable rapid assessment capacity for emerging crises, for instance by supplying tablets and training on survey, information systems and database management.			NDMA		
2.3 Support the sustainability of the operations of Liberia’s central medical store by developing and implementing a clear capacity strengthening and transition plan for the future handover of the management of the store and related supply chain roles to national partners, featuring activities such as staff training, job shadowing and post-exit consulting.			Ministry of Health		

Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<p>Recommendation 3: Strengthen strategic programming partnerships and joint resource mobilization and policy development across the education sector, aligning the complementary capacities of partners with WFP's comparative advantage in school feeding in order to enhance education, nutrition and food systems outcomes.</p>	Strategic	Country office	FAO, UNICEF, LISA, global headquarters, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, International Fund for Agricultural Development	Medium	December 2029
<p>3.1 Establish a formal partnership framework to guide collaboration in areas where WFP has limited comparative advantage, such as water, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition-specific programming, agricultural production and food safety and quality systems, allowing WFP to focus on its core strengths in local procurement and school meal provision.</p>			Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture, FAO, UNICEF, LISA, global headquarters		
<p>3.2 Develop a targeted resource mobilization strategy that aligns funding opportunities with WFP's comparative advantages and partnership priorities, ensuring predictable financing for integrated, multi-year programmes that leverage complementary partner capacities.</p>					

Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
Recommendation 4: Strengthen organizational capacity and operational systems to facilitate the achievement of CSP ambitions.	Operational	Country office	Global headquarters, TPM, Ministry of Education	High	June 2030
4.1 Strengthen monitoring systems by responding to issues identified through third-party monitoring.			TPM, Ministry of Education		
4.2 Strengthen internal technical capacity on empowering women and girls and advancing equality and on the environment by ensuring regular training for programme and research, assessment and monitoring staff at the country office and suboffice levels, for example through support from the regional office and headquarters in Rome on empowering women and girls and advancing equality; safeguarding; protection; minimum standards for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse; and expertise on using indicators that can track differential outcomes in monitoring and evaluation systems.			Global headquarters		
4.3 Fully implement the 2024 community engagement strategy so that affected people receive continuous information and engagement as part of programming and are thus informed and empowered.			Global headquarters		

1. Introduction

1. In line with the World Food Programme (WFP) Policy on Country Strategic Plans (CSPs) and the WFP Evaluation Policy 2022,¹⁵ the Office of Evaluation (OEV) commissioned this evaluation of WFP Liberia's Country Strategic Plan (2019-2026). This report has been prepared following evaluation terms of reference (ToR) by a team from SALASAN Consulting Inc., with activities carried out between August 2024 and April 2025, including data collection in Liberia (January 2025).

1.1. Evaluation features

2. The purpose of this country strategic plan evaluation (CSPE) is twofold - learning and accountability. The findings, conclusions and recommendations are intended to inform the design of the next WFP CSP for Liberia. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with international guidelines.¹⁶ The empowerment of women and girls and advancing equality and principles of inclusion, participation and non-discrimination were included at each stage of the evaluation. All aspects of the evaluation were conducted following ethical standards, including adherence to detailed protocols for interviews and field visits. Primary users of the evaluation are the WFP Liberia country office (CO), the Western and Central Africa Regional Office (WACARO), the Office of Evaluation, relevant headquarters divisions and the Executive Board. External users include the Government of Liberia and its various ministries and agencies collaborating with WFP, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and cooperating partners (CPs). The beneficiaries of the CSP interventions are also key stakeholders.

1.2. Context

Country overview

3. Liberia is one of the least developed countries in the world, facing profound challenges exacerbated by a history of civil conflicts that lasted from 1989 to 2003. Health crises (Ebola virus disease and the global coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic), currency depreciation and high inflation (especially food inflation¹⁷) have hampered post-war recovery.¹⁸ Despite being relatively rich in natural resources, the country has high poverty rates. Approximately 50.9 percent of the population live below the national poverty line and around 63 percent face multidimensional poverty, impacting access to education, health and other services¹⁹ and overall living standards.²⁰ There are also wide gaps between urban and rural areas in access to income, livelihoods and services.²¹

¹⁵ [WFP. 2022. WFP Evaluation Policy 2022](#). (WFP/EB.1/2022/4-C).

¹⁶ [UNEG. 2020. United Nations Evaluation Group Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct and Guidance on Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation](#).

¹⁷ [World Bank Economic overview 2024: Liberia](#). Accessed 3 March 2025.

¹⁸ [World Bank. 2023. Liberia Poverty Assessment: Towards a More Inclusive Liberia](#), and [WFP. 2024. Liberia, Cash-Based Transfers Pilot 2021: Evaluation](#).

¹⁹ [World Bank Group data 2022 Liberia](#) Accessed 3 March 2025.

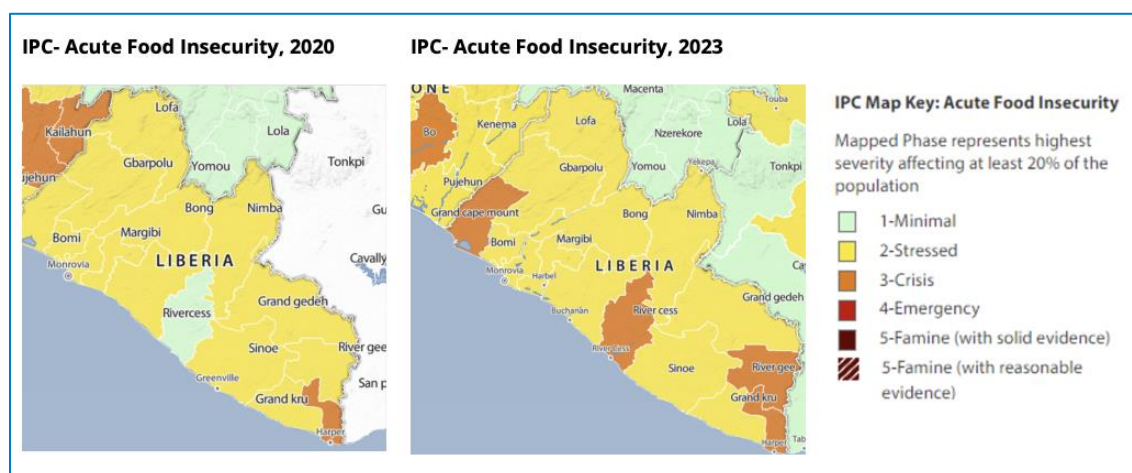
²⁰ [Government of Liberia, Sustainable Development Goals \(SDG\) Report 2023](#).

²¹ [WFP. 2024. WFP Liberia, Cash-Based Transfers Pilot 2021: Evaluation](#)

Food security and nutrition

4. Counties of Liberia facing food insecurity classed as “crisis” have increased between 2020 and 2023 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Liberia’s integrated food security phase classification (IPC) maps – acute food insecurity



Source: Liberia integrated food security phase classification mapping

5. According to a 2022 rapid food assessment, approximately one in two households (53 percent) have inadequate food consumption.²² With a score of 31.9 in the 2024 Global Hunger Index, Liberia has a “serious” level of hunger.²³ The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Food Security Factsheet of 2022²⁴ lists key drivers of food insecurity in Liberia as: low local agricultural productivity; high dependence on imported staples (especially rice); limited nutritional diversity of local production; and extreme poverty that prevents Liberians from meeting basic food needs. Despite progress in some nutrition indicators, a 2024 WFP country brief stated that malnutrition is “still a major concern across the country” and that “an estimated 416,000 people require urgent food assistance”. An estimated 38.9 percent of the population is undernourished.²⁵

Agriculture

6. Liberia’s agricultural sector contributes over one third of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP) and employs 87 percent of the working-age population.²⁶ However, the agricultural sector is characterized by subsistence production and low productivity. Contributing factors include lack of fertilizer and irrigation, poor seeds and breeding stock; as well as inadequate credit, machinery and infrastructure for transport, storage and marketing.²⁷ Liberia’s civil conflict has had long-lasting impacts, including displacement of farming populations (leading to land abandonment and loss of local knowledge),²⁸ destruction of irrigation systems and other infrastructure,²⁹ disruption of market linkages³⁰ and weakened farmer-based organizations and cooperatives.³¹

²² Government of Liberia. 2022. [Rapid Food Security Livelihoods Nutrition and Markets Assessment](#).

²³ [Global Hunger Index, “Liberia”](#). Accessed 17 October 2024.

²⁴ [USAID Food Security Factsheet 2022](#). Accessed 17 October 2024.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Comprehensive Food Security and Nutrition Survey, as cited in WFP. 2024. Liberia Annual Country Report 2023. Government of Liberia. (2023) Liberia National Commitment to SDG Transformation. Pg. 2.

²⁷ IFAD, “[Liberia: The Context](#)”. Accessed 21 October 2024

²⁸ [WFP Country Brief: Liberia](#). Accessed 21 October 2024

²⁹ [FAO Agriculture and Food Security in Liberia](#). Accessed 17 October 2024.

³⁰ [FAO Agriculture and Food Security in Liberia](#). Accessed 17 October 2024.

³¹ [Global Agriculture and Food Security Program \(GAFSP\): Liberia Agriculture Sector Investment Program \(LASIP\)](#). Accessed 17 October 2024.

7. Rice makes up over 20 percent of total food consumption and accounts for about 15 percent of average household spending in the country.³² Low productivity requires Liberia to import two-thirds of its rice from abroad.³³ National average yield per hectare is only 1.26 metric tons (mt),³⁴ with just 35 percent of cultivation occurring in lowland areas, despite lowland farming offering higher yields from multiple cropping cycles annually and environmental benefits.³⁵ Most locally produced rice is consumed at the household or village level due to lack of access to agricultural output markets.³⁶ Only 12 percent of farmers sell their rice, with just 4-10 percent of total production reaching broader markets.³⁷

The environment and climate change

8. Climate change and environmental challenges (for example, higher temperatures leading to increased water scarcity, flooding due to increased intensity of rainfall, coastal erosion and sea-level rise³⁸) have exacerbated food insecurity and disrupted agricultural and economic activities.³⁹ In June 2024, unprecedented floods killed two people and displaced nearly 50,000, severely damaging homes, schools and hospitals in Montserrado, Margibi and Grand Bassa counties.⁴⁰ Rice and subsistence agriculture is heavily reliant on consistent rainfall and is negatively impacted by erratic weather patterns.⁴¹ Liberia's smallholder farmers (SHFs) rely on inefficient technologies that are vulnerable to erratic weather patterns.⁴² Only 1 percent of the population has access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking, impacting respiratory health (particularly for women and girls).⁴³

Health and demography

9. Liberia's health infrastructure was severely strained and weakened by the Ebola virus disease and COVID-19 outbreaks.⁴⁴ Historically, the public health system has faced challenges in supply and distribution of drugs and commodities, particularly in remote areas, due to parallel distribution of community supplies, lack of proper inventory management and poor supply chain management.⁴⁵ The Ten-Year Health Policy and Plan (2012-2021), the National Health Policy (2022-2031) and the Supply Chain Master Plan have been developed by the Ministry of Health in response to these challenges.⁴⁶

³² World Bank. 2023. "[Liberia Economic Update: Improved Rice Production Is Critical for Food Security and Poverty Alleviation](#)". Press Release. 18 July 2023.

³³ World Bank. 2023. [Getting Rice Right for Productivity and Poverty Alleviation](#), Republic of Liberia: Economic Update, 4th Ed.

³⁴ [Liberia National Rice Development Strategy II](#) (2018-2030).

³⁵ Johnny, M, Karimu, J & Richards, P. 2011. "[Upland and swamp rice farming systems in Sierra Leone: the social context of technological change](#)".

³⁶ World Bank. 2022. "Improving Agricultural Service Delivery in Liberia".

³⁷ Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). 2021. "Competitiveness Analysis of Local Rice to Imported Rice Liberia".

³⁸ World Bank, 2021, [Climate Country Risk Profile](#).

³⁹ World Bank Group Climate Change Knowledge Portal: <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/liberia/vulnerability#> Accessed 17 October 2024.

⁴⁰ Reliefweb. 2024. "Liberia: Floods - Jun 2024": <https://reliefweb.int/disaster/fl-2024-000116-lbr>.

⁴¹ World Bank Group Climate Change Knowledge Portal: <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/liberia/vulnerability#> Accessed 17 October 2024.

⁴² World Bank. 2024. [Liberia: Country Climate and Development Report](#).

⁴³ World Bank Group data. 2022: <https://data.worldbank.org/country/liberia>. Accessed 21 October 24.

⁴⁴ WFP. 2024. Liberia, [Cash-Based Transfers Pilot 2021: Evaluation](#).

⁴⁵ Simen-Kapeu, A. et al. 2021. [Strengthening the community health program in Liberia: Lessons learned from a health system approach to inform program design and better prepare for future shocks](#).

⁴⁶ Liberia Supply Chain Master Plan (2023-2028) (produced by the Global Fund and the Ministry of Health) [Final-SCMP-2023-2028 Report-SIGNED.pdf](#).

Education

10. A high proportion of children in Liberia are not in formal schooling. The overall primary enrolment rate for boys and girls is 67 percent.⁴⁷ In 2020, there was almost equal proportion (0.99) of boys and girls in enrolled in school, but there is a widening gap as education progresses, with 9 percent of girls and young women and 15 percent of boys and young men enrolled in tertiary education.⁴⁸ Only 21 percent of primary and secondary children are receiving food as part of school feeding.⁴⁹ The Government, with support from international organizations, is making strides in enhancing educational facilities and nutrition programmes through school feeding initiatives, as part of broader efforts to improve public health and economic stability.⁵⁰

Empowering women and girls and advancing equality

11. In 2021, Liberia ranked 164 out of 191 on the Gender Inequality Index, with women facing discrimination in many areas of social and economic life.⁵¹ In the agricultural sector, despite accounting for approximately 80 percent of the labour force, women face unequal access to land title⁵² and challenges in accessing agricultural inputs and financing.⁵³ Only 22.6 percent of women working in agriculture earn cash payments, increasing their vulnerability to economic stress and violence against women.⁵⁴ Women in Liberia are also broadly excluded from accessing many other assets (for example, house ownership, bank accounts, mobile phones), as well as from decision making in the household.⁵⁵ The 2022 National Population and Housing Census indicates that 8.4 per cent of men and boys and 9.0 per cent of women and girls have some disability, with women and girls with disabilities having lower access to formal education.⁵⁶

Foreign aid

12. Liberia's economy is heavily reliant on foreign aid and remittances (18.5 percent of GDP in 2023),⁵⁷ leaving the country vulnerable to fluctuations in international support (Figure 2).⁵⁸ According to Liberia financial tracking system data, the largest contributors include the United States of America, Japan, the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation, France, Germany and China (Figure 3).

⁴⁷ [World Bank Group School Enrolment, Data](#) Primary (%gross) – Liberia. Accessed 7 November 24.

⁴⁸ UNESCO. 2024. "Liberia: Education Country Brief": <https://www.iicba.unesco.org/en/liberia>. Accessed 7 April 25.

⁴⁹ Global Child Nutrition Foundation | Global Survey of School Meal Programmes [Liberia 2024 Report R2.pdf](#) .

⁵⁰ WFP Liberia Country Brief, 2023.

⁵¹ Lamperty, C. UN Liberia. 2024. "Invest in Women: Accelerate Progress for Liberia's Future".

⁵² Demographic and Health Survey (DHS). 2019. DHS: Liberia: <https://dhsprogramme.com/pubs/pdf/FR362/FR362.pdf>.

⁵³ Oredipe, Adetunji. 2023. "[Supporting Gender Inclusiveness along Liberia's Agriculture Value Chain](#)", 14 September 2023.

⁵⁴ UN Women. 2021. "[Issue-paper- Liberia country Gender Equality Profile](#)".

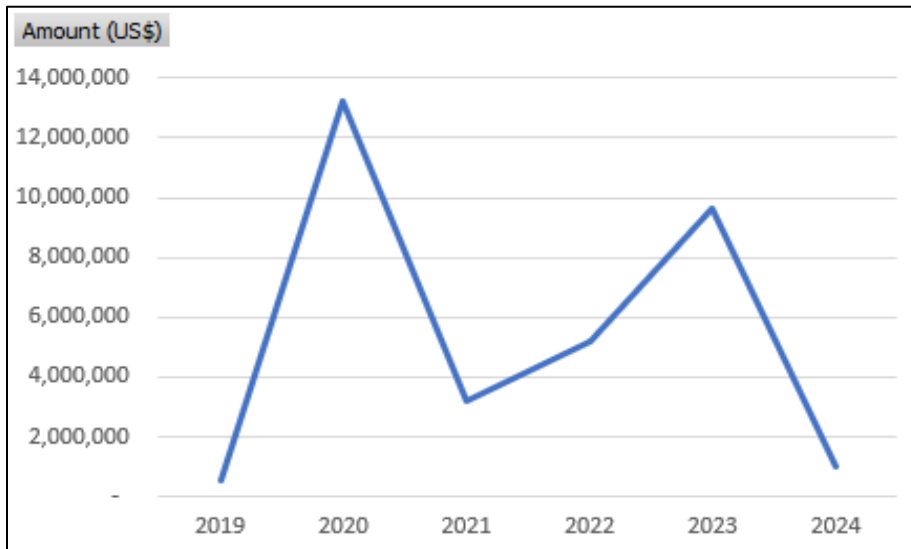
⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ UNFPA. 2024. [Persons with disabilities-Policy brief-Liberia 2024.pdf](#).

⁵⁷ [World Bank Group data 2023: Liberia](#). Accessed 17 October 2024.

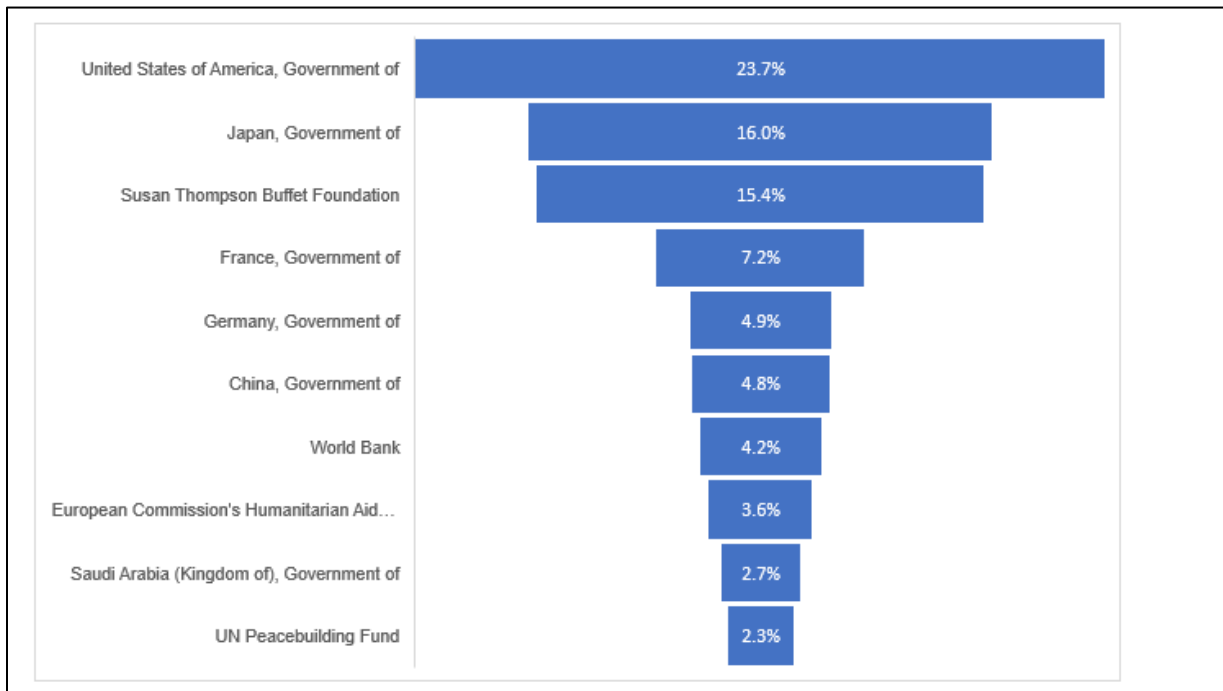
⁵⁸ World Bank. 2023. Liberia Country Profile.

Figure 2: Annual humanitarian funding to Liberia (2019-2024)



Source: Liberia financial tracking system (2019-2024)

Figure 3: Liberia's top ten donors (2019-2024)



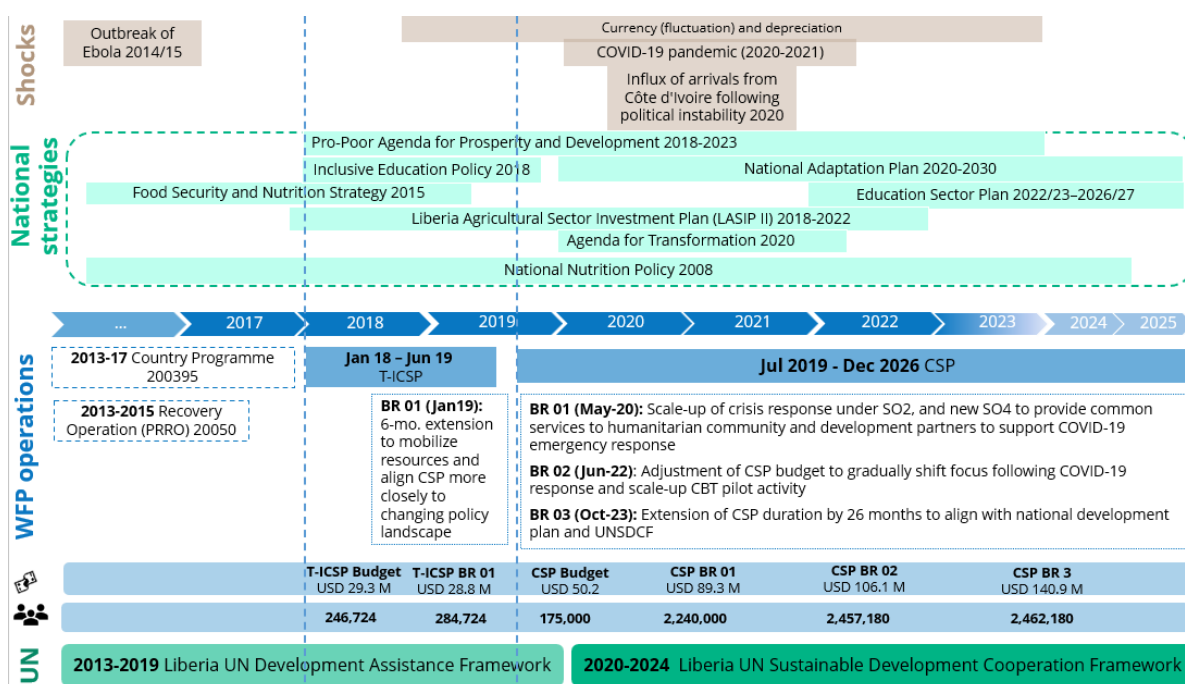
Source: Liberia financial tracking system (2019-2024)

1.3. Subject being evaluated

Strategic focus of the CSP

13. A transitional interim country strategic plan (T-ICSP) was introduced in January 2018. The plan pointed WFP towards country capacity strengthening (CCS) and transitioning from direct implementation of food assistance programmes to an enabling role. The T-ICSP focused on emergency response, support to smallholder farmers, school feeding and capacity building to support Liberia's progress towards sustainable food security via Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2. The subsequent CSP was developed in consultation with the Government of Liberia and other stakeholders. It was informed by contextual needs, gap analyses and recommendations from the 2017 Zero-Hunger Strategic Review (ZHSR)⁵⁹ and intended to contribute to government priorities and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).⁶⁰ The CSP is aligned with SDG 2 (zero hunger), with country capacity strengthening and service provision activities also supporting SDG 17. Figure 4 provides an overview of WFP operations, national policies, contextual events and key elements of the CSP itself as it evolved.

Figure 4: Timeline and evolution of the Liberia CSP



Source: Office of Evaluation, CSPE ToR

14. An overview of the four CSP strategic outcomes and their related activities is provided in Table 1.⁶¹ Figure 5 provides an overview of WFP Liberia operations related to SO1 and SO2, by county.

⁵⁹ [Government of Liberia 2017 Zero Hunger Strategic Review Report](#).

⁶⁰ [Government of Liberia United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework \(2020-2024\)](#) Liberia.

⁶¹ The CSP included a line of sight and results framework but not an explicit theory of change (ToC). The evaluation reconstructed the theory of change (Annex VI) in consultation with the WFP country office and Office of Evaluation.

Table 1: Overview of strategic outcomes and activities

Strategic outcomes (SOs)	Activities
SO1: Food-insecure populations, including school-aged children in targeted areas, have access to adequate and nutritious food, including food produced locally, by 2030 (resilience building)	Activity 1: School feeding to food-insecure and nutritionally vulnerable schoolchildren, including take-home rations (THR), in a way that relies on and stimulates local production (home-grown school feeding (HGSF)).
SO2: Crisis-affected populations in targeted areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crises (crisis response)	Activity 2: Provide an integrated emergency food and nutrition assistance package to vulnerable households affected by disasters or other disruptions.
SO3: National and subnational institutions have strengthened capacities to design and manage food security and nutrition, social protection, emergency preparedness and response and disaster risk management systems by 2030 (resilience building)	Activity 3: Capacity strengthening support to government and other partners.
SO 4*: Humanitarian and development partners have access to common services throughout the year (crisis response)	Activity 4: Supply chain and information and communication technology services to humanitarian and development partners.

*Added to the original CSP in a budget revision (BR) in May 2020

Source: CSP ToR

Figure 5: WFP Liberia operational counties (as of July 2025)⁶²



Source: WFP country office

⁶² Caterpillar in the legend refers to locations of WFP crisis response to caterpillar infestations which have destroyed crops and contaminated water resources in affected areas in Liberia; PBF refers to the Peacebuilding Fund.

Financial overview

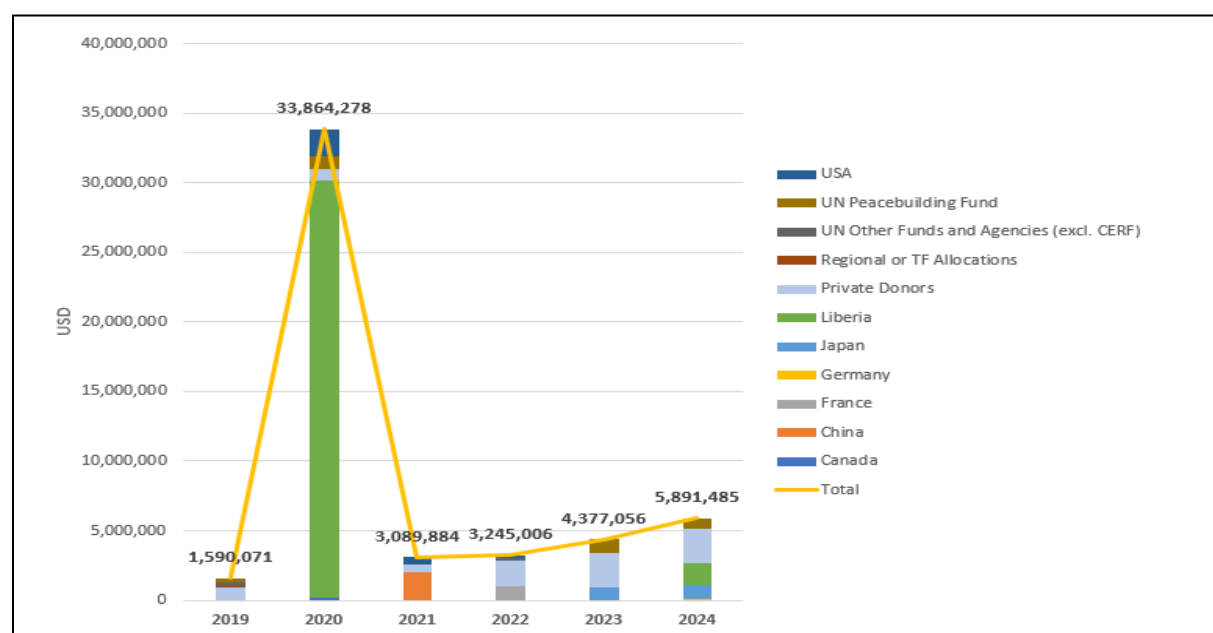
15. As of 31 December 2024, the CSP was funded at 53.2 percent of its needs-based plan (NBP) (Table 2). Funding levels have slowly increased between 2021 and 2024, after spiking primarily due to funding for the COVID-19 response from the Government of Liberia (Figure 6).

Table 2: Cumulative financial overview as of 31 December 2024 (USD million) of the Liberia country portfolio budget 2024 (2019-2026)

	NBP as per original CSP (entire CSP cycle) USD million	% of total direct operational costs	NBP as per BR3 (entire CSP cycle)	% of total direct operational costs	Allocated resources (as of 31 December 2024)	Resourcing level	Allocated resources as % total direct operational costs
SO1	33,940,303	81.4%	47,038,469	39.1%	18,944,023	40.3%	29.2%
SO2	5,202,145	12.5%	53,785,220	44.7%	36,031,977	67.0%	55.5%
SO3	2,564,169	6.1%	3,055,700	2.5%	818,265	26.8%	1.3%
SO4			16,514,908	13.7%	8,932,601	54.1%	13.8%
Total direct operation costs	41,706,618		120,394,297		64,949,579		
Total direct support costs	5,400,534		13,026,739		7,020,801		
Subtotal	47,107,151		133,421,036		71,970,380		
Total indirect support costs	3,061,965		7,454,955		2,983,160		
Non-activity specific	-		-		222,714		
Total	50,169,116		140,875,991		74,953,540	53.2%	

Source: ACR1- Cumulative financial overview report, Liberia CSP document and NBP-BR3.

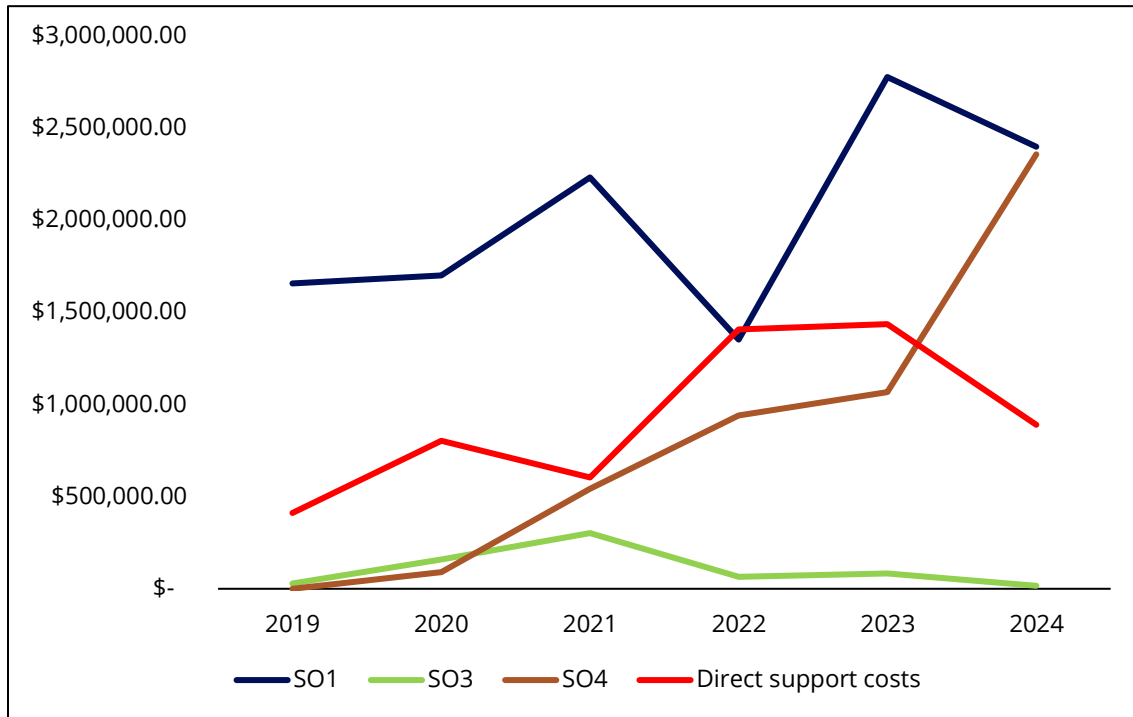
Figure 6: Liberia CSP annual donor contribution by contribution year



Source: Annual resource situation report, extracted on 28.10.2024

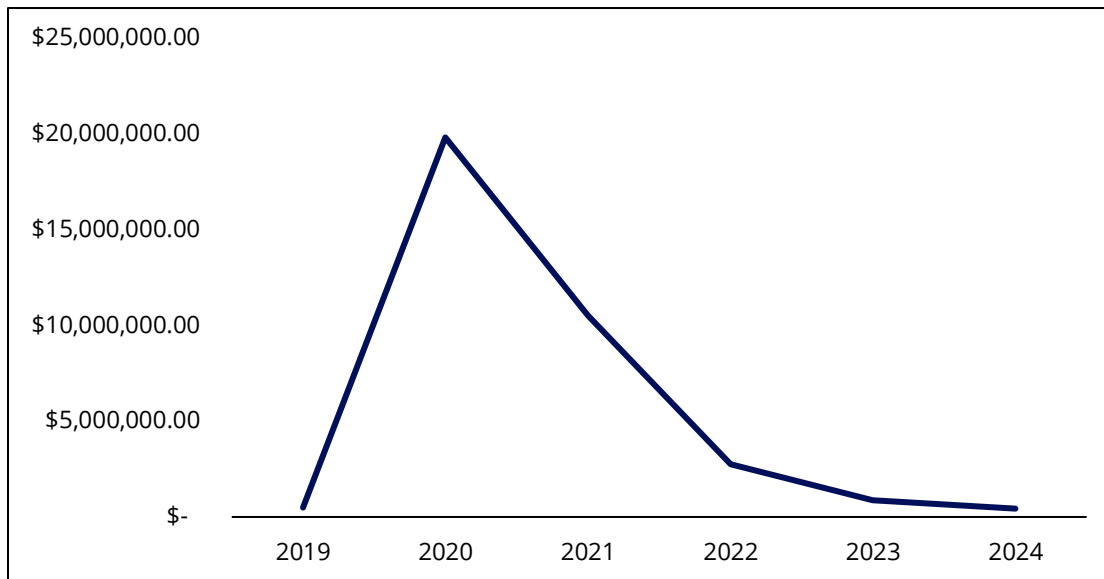
16. Figure 7 shows expenditure trends for SO1, SO3, SO4, and direct support costs (SO2 is presented separately in Figure 8). Expenditure trends for SO1 have increased to around USD 2.5 million in 2023 and 2024. SO4 expenditures have risen steadily through the CSP, while capacity strengthening expenditures have remained low. Figure 8 highlights for SO2 the large expenditure increase related to the COVID-19 response, followed by a decline through to 2024.

Figure 7: Expenditure trends for SO1, SO3, SO4 and direct support costs



Source: CPB expenditure report by year and commitment item

Figure 8: Expenditure trends for SO2



Source: CPB expenditure report by year and commitment item

Overview of beneficiaries

17. Significant adjustments in beneficiary numbers were made to the CSP through several budget revisions (BRs). Initially, the programme targeted approximately 175,000 beneficiaries. This target was substantially increased to 2,240,000 during BR1 (May 2020) to address heightened food security challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. BR2 (June 2022) and BR3 (October 2023) further increased beneficiary numbers to 2,457,457,180 and 2,462,180, respectively. The adjustments included a focus on support for individuals affected by continued economic instability and health emergencies (BR2) and further expansion of the cash-based transfers (CBT) programme following successful pilots (BR3).

18. At the time of BR3, 85.2 percent of total beneficiaries were supported with food assistance and cash-based transfers under SO1 and SO2 (Table 3). These figures reflect the significant expansion of food assistance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the growth of the cash-based transfer programme under both outcomes.

Table 3: Beneficiaries by modality at budget revision 3 (October 2023)⁶³

SO	Modality	Original CSP			BR3		
		Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
SO1	Food assistance	70,260	70,740	141,000	23,584	21,417	45,001
	Cash-based transfer				34,632	30,368	65,000
SO2	Food assistance	20,400	13,600	34,000	1,258,200	838,800	2,097,000
	Cash-based transfer				36,000	24,000	60,000
Total		90,660	84,340	175,000	1,352,416	914,585	2,267,001

Source: Liberia CSP 2019-2023, BR3.

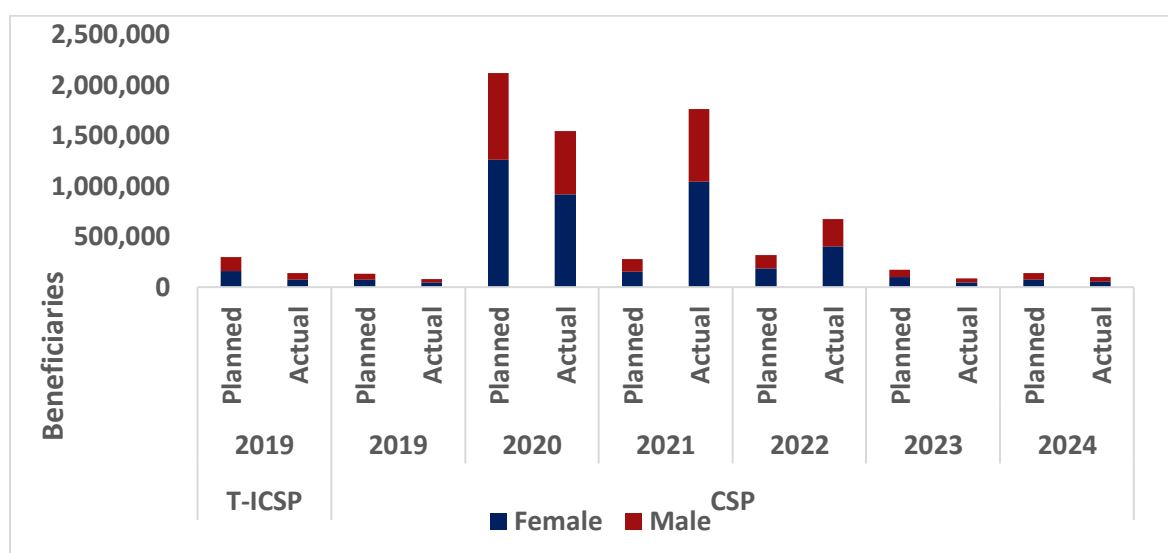
19. In 2019, the CSP (and T-ICSP) shows significantly fewer actual beneficiaries in comparison to planned, with more than a 50 percent shortfall in some cases (Figure 9). In 2020, there was a sharp increase in the planned beneficiary targets due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, delays in carrying out activities related to the pandemic response – noted both by interviewees (see EQ 2.1) and in the 2020 annual country report (ACR)⁶⁴ – pushed activities meant for 2020 into 2021. This resulted in a much higher level of actual beneficiaries than were planned for 2021. In 2022, actual beneficiaries again exceeded planned numbers, due to larger than planned unconditional resource transfers (provided as food assistance).⁶⁵

⁶³ There is a data quality issue, as the BR3 total exceeds the sum of female and male beneficiaries. The evaluation team decided to use the sum of female and male beneficiaries to calculate the BR3 total.

⁶⁴ WFP. 2021. Annual Country Report 2021.

⁶⁵ WFP. 2022. Annual Country Report 2022.

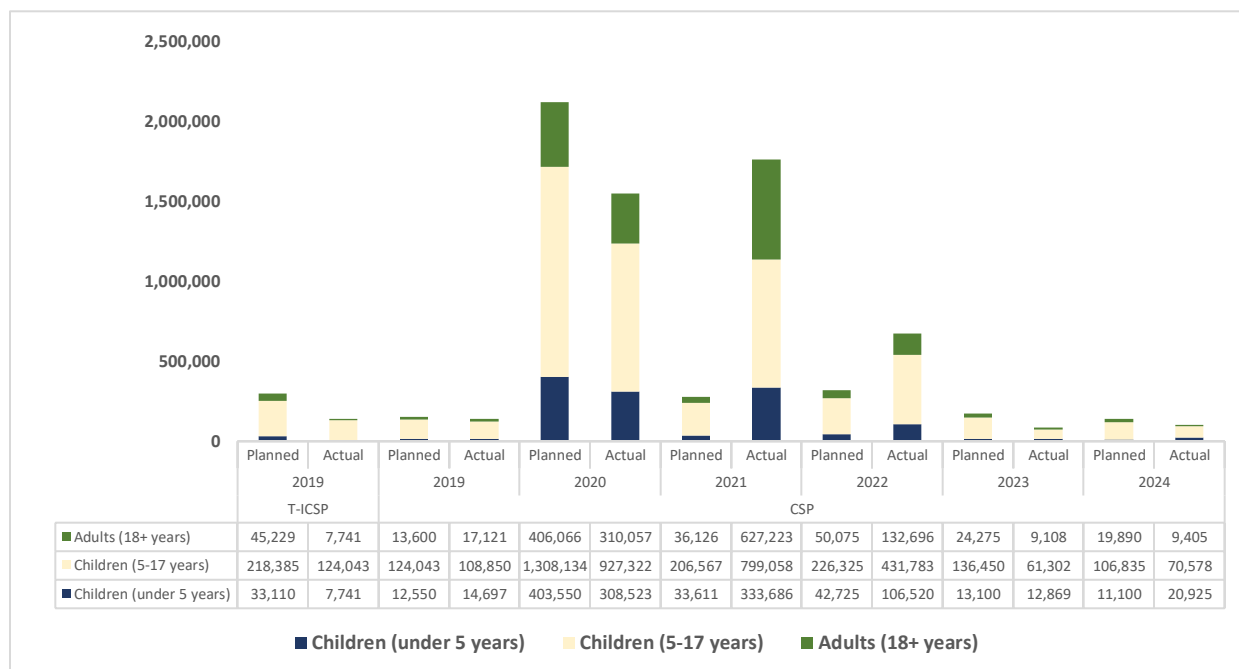
Figure 9: Planned and actual beneficiaries by year and sex



Source: The country office tool for managing effectively (COMET) report (CM-R001b), Data extracted on 17 March 2025

20. Female beneficiaries exceeded male beneficiaries in each year of the CSP and the T-ICSP (in both actual and planned numbers). There were significant variations across years and age groups (Figure 10). By 2023 and 2024, actual versus planned percentages dropped significantly across all age groups, with the lowest being for adults aged 60+ (23.5 percent) and children aged 0-23 months (36.2 percent).

Figure 10: T-ICSP and CSP Liberia (2019-2026) beneficiaries, composition by age category



Source: COMET report (CM-R001b) – annual country beneficiaries, (extracted 16 March 2025)

1.4. Evaluation methodology, limitations and ethical considerations

Evaluation criteria and questions

21. The evaluation followed standard United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) evaluation criteria - relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence and sustainability. To assess the CSP against these criteria, the evaluation addressed four main evaluation questions (EQs) common to all WFP CSPEs:

- EQ1: To what extent and in what ways is the CSP evidence-based and strategically focused to address the needs of the most vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity? (Relevance and coherence)
- EQ2: What difference did the CSP make to food security and nutrition in the country? (Effectiveness and sustainability)
- EQ3: To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently? (Efficiency)
- EQ4: What are the critical factors, internal and external to WFP, explaining performance and results? What are the factors that explain WFP performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected by the country strategic plan? (Effectiveness and efficiency)

22. The evaluation team refined the evaluation questions based on the evaluation priorities and learning themes. There are 18 sub-questions under the original four evaluation questions (see Annex IX).

23. Home-grown school feeding (HGFSF) activity design and implementation, and strategic positioning and partnerships, were identified by the country office as two themes with high learning potential. HGFSF may provide an innovative, multisectoral and community-driven platform for tackling chronic issues in education, agriculture, nutrition and social protection, as well as contributing to transforming the social norms and structural barriers that perpetuate food insecurity for women, men, boys and girls (EQ 2.1). Interest in strategic positioning and partnerships relates to the extent and means by which WFP Liberia's partnership strategy and specific partnerships (government, private sector, international financial institutions and non-traditional development partners) facilitated or hindered achievement of CSP outcomes (EQ 4.2).

24. The evaluation also addressed accountability to affected people (AAP) (EQ 2.2), the environmental impact of WFP activities (EQ 2.2b), and differential effects on men, women, girls, boys and other relevant socioeconomic groups (EQ 2.2), including an analysis of unintended outcomes integrated into the discussion of specific strategic outcome (SO) results. Given Liberia's vulnerability to recurrent natural disasters and its experience with the COVID-19 pandemic and Ebola virus disease, analysis also included the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence (EQ 2.2a).

Methodological approach

25. The evaluation adopted a mixed methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative data using deductive and inductive cycles of inquiry. Qualitative data were solicited from interviewees, and supplemented with quantitative secondary data (for example, performance data, financial figures, number of beneficiaries, quantity of transfers, geographic coverage, timelines), taking into consideration limitations identified through an evaluability assessment, which considered data availability, quality and gaps to inform choice of evaluation methods and techniques. Key evaluability issues included:

- consistency of measurement, reporting at different level of results, validity of data;
- limited monitoring data on cross-cutting indicators;
- high turnover of WFP and government stakeholders;
- logistical constraints and short timeframe to conduct fieldwork, limiting intervention sites accessed; and
- CSPE timeframe covering CSP implementation up to March 2025.

26. The evaluability assessment found that, although baselines and targets are generally available, data gaps still often prevent meaningful trends analysis. Subsequently, the evaluation focused on outcome

indicators with fulsome monitoring data. Limitations in monitoring data were mitigated through generation and documentation of primary data across all strategic outcomes.

Data collection and analysis

27. Quantitative sources of secondary data from the e-library were complemented by qualitative data from primary research largely centred on interviews in Monrovia (and remote interviews with former management and staff). Outside of Monrovia, the evaluation team conducted interviews with WFP staff at the Saclepea sub-office, as well as interviews and focus groups in three counties: Bong, Montserrado and Nimba, representing a cross-section of WFP programmes under the CSP. Data collection methods are listed in Table 4 below and described in detail in Annex V.

Table 4: Description of methods used

	Sample description	Sample size
Review of secondary data (document review and data analysis)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reports of WFP interventions; project endlines/evaluation • Decentralized evaluations • WFP ACRs • CSP monitoring and financial data • Relevant external documents • United Nations documents • Comprehensive food security vulnerability analysis (CFSNA) and food security assessments • Government of Liberia policies, strategies, plans, etc. 	N/A
Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 57 Interviews with different stakeholder groups in Monrovia, Bong, Montserrado, and Nimba; see Annex XIII for a further breakdown of interviews 	107 key informants (84 men and 23 women)
Focus groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 focus groups in Bong, Montserrado, and Nimba; see Annex XIII for a further breakdown of focus groups 	343 participants (164 men and 179 women)

Source: Evaluation team

28. For qualitative data, the evaluation used content analysis to identify key themes in responses between interviews and focus groups, based on a coding of important issues and analysis to determine qualitative trends. Quantitative data were interpreted using descriptive statistics to determine the performance and efficiencies of available quantitative indicators related to strategic outcomes. This was enriched by stakeholder feedback provided in exit debriefings, and preliminary findings and validation workshops.

29. The evaluation explored to what extent and how CSP design and implementation addressed the differential needs and barriers faced by women, men, boys and girls, as well as persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups. Focus groups primarily involved mixed groups of men and women and, where relevant, women-only groups. Analysis explored differential results, as well as specific results of activities aimed at promoting women and girls' equal access and rights.

Ethical considerations

30. All aspects of the evaluation conformed to the 2020 UNEG Ethical Guidelines. Ethical considerations, including the WFP confidentiality statement and ethical safeguards, were embedded and adhered to throughout the evaluation. Interviews and focus groups with all participants were based on informed prior consent, and data management protocols ensured interviewee anonymity and confidentiality in line with WFP data protection standards. The evaluation team also used translators, allowing beneficiaries to express themselves in their local language. Stakeholders were informed of their right to participate and of their prerogative to terminate an interview at any point.

2. Evaluation findings

2.1. EQ 1: To what extent and in what ways is the CSP evidence-based and strategically focused to address the needs of the most vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity?

EQ 1.1: To what extent was the design informed by credible evidence and strategically and realistically targeted to address the food security and nutrition situation in the country?

Finding 1: The CSP was largely informed by credible evidence, relying on a variety of stakeholder consultations, corporate assessments and other data sources, although direct engagement with affected populations during the CSP design was limited.

31. The design of the CSP was largely informed by credible evidence, relying on a variety of stakeholder consultations, corporate assessments and data sources, including the 2017 Zero Hunger Strategic Review (ZHSR), which identified areas for priority action (Table 5).

Table 5: Key priority actions identified through ZHSR and CSP alignment

ZHSR priority action	CSP alignment
Create employment opportunities, including in the agriculture sector	Resilience activities focused on agricultural development of smallholders
Empower women (in agriculture)	Strong focus on women in resilience activities
Organize farmer-based organizations	Resilience activities focus on collective agriculture through farmer-based organizations
Broaden access to education	Provision of school meals and THR
Establish and invest in a national HGFS programme	Initial prioritization of HGFS (constrained by funds), and eventual shift towards HGFS from conventional school feeding
Strengthen access to markets	Markets created through local procurement for HGFS
Expand social protection programmes	Crisis response through CBT, e-voucher and in-kind food assistance
Strengthen partnerships	Enabling role with government and partnerships with UNCT and CPs

Source: Evaluation team

32. The results of the Government of Liberia's 2018 Comprehensive Food Security Vulnerability Survey (CFSNS) were used for targeting specific counties and populations and served as baseline data across CSP outcomes. The CSP cites evaluations and monitoring activities that were relevant to its design and implementation, but integration of key findings and recommendations into implementation was limited in practice (see Table 46 in Annex X).

33. As part of CSP design, the country office review of data sources was complemented by internal and external consultations to define strategic outcomes, thematic areas, prioritization and feasibility assessments for CSP activities. Interviews with WFP stakeholders indicated that internal consultations included CSP "bootcamps" and "strategy workshops" – at regional office, country office and sub-office levels. Additionally, interviews across stakeholders noted that consultations were also carried out with government agencies (the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), Ministry of Education (MoE), etc.) to help identify national priorities in food security and nutrition. Stakeholders involved with coordination on food security and nutrition issues in the country were also engaged, including donors, United Nations agencies (the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), etc.) and non-governmental organization (NGO) partners.

34. The evaluation found that local communities and beneficiaries were not directly consulted in the CSP design process.⁶⁶ WFP engaged with affected populations through programmes implemented through the T-ICSP, and the lessons drawn from the experience did help ensure that programming was representative of needs on the ground. In addition, data sources used in the design of the CSP, such as the ZHSR, involved extensive consultations in communities across Liberia.

Finding 2: At the design stage, county-level targeting was satisfactorily carried out using food assessment data. District- and community-level targeting was generally effectively undertaken through consultations with relevant stakeholders. The WFP COVID-19 response in Liberia faced both inclusion and exclusion errors, and school feeding assistance (including take-home rations) could be improved through greater focus on out-of-school children.

35. To support alignment with national systems and responsiveness to localized needs in designing programmes, WFP drew on a combination of national food security assessments, nutrition data, sector-specific data and partner and community consultations. Food assessment data such as the 2018 CFSNS data and 2022 rapid food security assessment data were used to determine which counties have the highest food security needs – except for crisis-driven localized emerging needs. Figure 11 shows that key WFP programmes – school feeding and crisis response⁶⁷ – targeted Maryland, Liberia’s most food insecure county. Other programmes – school feeding, resilience and crisis response – targeted Nimba, Lofa and Bomi (other counties with high levels of food insecurity).⁶⁸ While some counties with high levels of food insecurity (such as River Gee and Grand Kru) do not currently fall under WFP programming, these were previously being targeted by conventional school feeding (before the programme was suspended due to limited funding)⁶⁹ and some are now currently being covered by partners.⁷⁰

Figure 11: Mapping of food security situation in 2018 (left) and WFP presence (right)



Sources: 2018 CFSNS and WFP country office

⁶⁶ Interviews with WFP country office stakeholders familiar with design process, with triangulation through focus groups with beneficiaries.

⁶⁷ Response to the effects of war in Ukraine.

⁶⁸ As noted under EQ 1.3 integration within SO1 was limited because counties targeted by resilience programming were often located in counties where WFP had no school-based activities (see Table 16).

⁶⁹ Under conventional school feeding up to 2022, WFP covered nine counties in Liberia including Grand Gedeh, River Gee, and Grand Kru counties.

⁷⁰ For instance, Save the Children is currently covering River Gee, Grand Kru, and Grand Gedeh.

36. Initial county- and district-level targeting – informed by the CFSNS and other food assessments – was then validated with government partners such as the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Agriculture – to help ensure contextual relevance and alignment with needs. Government partners at the district level also participated in community and site selection as a strategy aimed at safeguarding operational relevance. However, the evaluation notes that lack of input from implementing partners in targeting of resilience activities also resulted in issues related to site selection (for example, sites prone to flooding, sites without active farmers’ groups).

37. At the community level – for all strategic outcomes – the country office targeting strategy relied on community-based targeting corporate guidance⁷¹ adapted to the Liberian setting. While it was difficult for the evaluation team to assess how accurately targeting guidelines were applied across the programming portfolio in the early years of the CSP, the evaluation did find that the WFP COVID-19 response in Liberia faced both inclusion and exclusion errors due to the urgency of scale-up, limited registries and fragmented data (see EQ 2.1). Following a 2023 audit recommendation addressing inconsistencies in previous methods, the country office targeting strategy was strengthened with the introduction of standard operating procedures (SOP) in October 2023.⁷² These included general targeting guidance, as well as specific procedures adapted to resilience, school feeding and crisis response.⁷³ Through focus groups with community beneficiaries the evaluation team found that through these improved community-driven approaches for beneficiary targeting, assistance across all strategic outcomes largely reaches the most vulnerable – women and girls, youth, households headed by women, persons with disabilities, the elderly, etc.

38. Despite improvements in targeting (as explained below under EQs 1.3 and 2.1), school feeding and take-home rations did not fully include out-of-school children (for example, by explicitly targeting assistance to specific sub-groups of vulnerable households likely to include out-of-school children, like: widows, young mothers, households headed by children, etc.). In addition, existing financial barriers to education are still preventing many children from going to school (especially children from vulnerable households); this reflects some need for more inclusive and poverty-sensitive targeting and programme design that directly addresses economic barriers.

EQ 1.2 To what extent and in what ways was the CSP designed to support national priorities, the United Nations cooperation framework and the SDGs, leveraging the comparative advantage and strategic positioning of WFP to add value to the larger humanitarian and development ecosystem?

Finding 3: The CSP strategic outcomes and activities reflected and responded to overarching national development plans, as well as sectoral strategies, plans and priorities in the areas of agriculture, education, health and social protection.

39. The CSP is broadly aligned with past and current Liberia national development plans. The WFP HGSP programme, for example, directly supports the education and agriculture pillars of the recently launched ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development⁷⁴ by providing nutritious meals sourced from local farmers, contributing to or supporting improved learning outcomes while strengthening rural livelihoods and local food systems. Together with its crisis response, capacity strengthening and health supply chain work, WFP also contributes to the agenda’s social protection, institutional development and health

⁷¹ WFP. 2015. [Community-Based Targeting Guide](#).

⁷² See: the WFP Liberia – Monrovia country office – Targeting Strategy, SOP for Beneficiary Targeting for Crisis Response Programme, SOP for HGSP Programme, and Beneficiary Targeting SOP for Enhancing Food Security and Livelihoods for Vulnerable Communities in Liberia.

⁷³ SO2 beneficiary caseload was a combination of a residual caseload of the 8 percent severely food insecure population according to the Rapid Food Security Livelihoods Nutrition and Markets Assessment 2022 and a projected number of vulnerable persons who may need WFP assistance in the aftermath of an emergency. See: WFP, Liberia country strategic plan, BR3.

⁷⁴ Government of Liberia, 2025, National Development Plan 2025–2029: [ARREST Agenda for Inclusive Development](#), United Nations Country Team–Liberia.

priorities. Further, the 2024 National Agricultural Development Plan⁷⁵ underscores the need for self-sufficiency in food production, identifying lowland rice production as a primary investment area.

40. While Liberia's school feeding policy has not been updated since 2019, school feeding was included in Liberia's Education Sector Plans – 2017-2021⁷⁶ and 2022-2027.⁷⁷ WFP school feeding activities align with these orientations by helping promote access to education for all Liberian children through school meals and take-home rations.⁷⁸ Further, school feeding – and especially HGSF – is a growing priority for the Government of Liberia, as evidenced by recent commitments in the sector. This includes a plan to revise the national school feeding policy in 2025,⁷⁹ which WFP plans to support. The Ministry of Education has also included USD 1 million for school feeding in the national budget and is supporting WFP in efforts to secure funding for school feeding.⁸⁰

41. WFP management of the “central medical store” and delivery of essential medical supplies help address major national needs identified by development and humanitarian partners (that is, health supply chain reliability, infrastructure, accountability, “last-mile” delivery and emergency preparedness).⁸¹ These initiatives complement the Government of Liberia's efforts to strengthen national health supply chains.⁸²

Finding 4: The CSP most closely aligns with those aspects of the United Nations frameworks that support food security and rural livelihoods.⁸³ The comparative advantages of WFP in Liberia are rooted in its expertise in HGSF, and local procurement with integrated post-harvest support. In addition, WFP logistics and supply chain capacities are key assets in supporting the provision of important common services.

42. Within the broader framework of Liberia's United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) (2013-2017)⁸⁴ and the United Nations Sustainable Development and Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) (2020-2024), the work of WFP primarily contributed to promoting economic sustainability through rural livelihoods, and to human development through increased access to education and improved social protection. National and international partners cited WFP capacities in HGSF as a comparative advantage (see HGSF food systems matrix in Table 52 in Annex XI). WFP is a standard-bearer for many HGSF activities in the country. WFP is also the only school feeding partner implementing an exclusively home-grown approach to school feeding. Further, the global (and regional) capacity building experience of WFP in school feeding provides a reservoir of expertise (for example, standardizing school feeding practices, engaging in capacity strengthening with government partners) for partners to draw on.

43. A key strength of WFP is its ability to connect local procurement for HGSF. The scale and purchasing power of WFP local procurement creates stable, high-volume markets for smallholders, reducing income uncertainty and encouraging investment in production. In addition, WFP technical expertise can be leveraged for important backstopping and quality assurance support, helping suppliers to meet procurement standards and strengthen their capacity for broader market participation. To this end,

⁷⁵ Government of Liberia, MoA [National Agriculture Development Plan 202-2030](#), p. IV.

⁷⁶ Government of Liberia MoE. 2016. [Getting the best education Sector Plan – Concise Version 2017-2021](#).

⁷⁷ Government of Liberia MoE. [Education Sector Plan 2022/23 – 2026/27](#)”.

⁷⁸ Government of Liberia. [2019. National School Feeding Policy](#).

⁷⁹ A commitment reinforced through the School Meals Coalition, of which both the Government of Liberia and WFP are members. [“Liberia School Meals Coalition National Commitment”](#).

⁸⁰ It is unclear how or if a funding budget would be approved or allocated, but government interviews indicate that it is a priority.

⁸¹ Interviews with UNCT, cooperating partners and donors, and secondary data. A [2019 Audit Report of Global Fund Grants in the Republic of Liberia](#), for example, found that weak supply chain governance and leadership was affecting the timely availability of quality assured commodities.

⁸² Government of Liberia [MoH Supply Chain Master Plan 2023-2028](#). Government of Liberia. 2022. [Essential Package of Health Services for Universal Health Coverage Liberia 2022](#).

⁸³ United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and United Nations Sustainable Development and Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF).

⁸⁴ UNCT in Liberia. 2012. [Liberia UNDAF 2013-2017](#).

the evaluation found that WFP made important technical contributions related to post-harvest management (PHM), as exemplified by the support for drafting of the national Zero Post-Harvest Loss Strategy. The resulting value proposition provides a package of assistance that integrates market support and post-harvest management – two key needs of smallholder farmers in Liberia.

44. WFP work in resilience building and school feeding is complemented by a flexible portfolio of crisis response capacities, shifting between changing lives and saving lives. Over the period of the CSP, WFP responded to COVID-19, flooding and caterpillar infestations in a way that few organizations are able. In particular, WFP has developed and refined cash-based transfer delivery systems, building on crisis response experience to develop resilience programming (notably, cash assistance for assets and take-home rations to support school feeding). For example, WFP has developed mobile money distribution channels in partnership with national mobile money platforms, which allow tracking, verification and reporting of cash-based transfers via digital beneficiary management and payment systems that work across the development-humanitarian nexus. Although other actors (for example, UNICEF, the World Bank and international NGOs) also contribute significantly to social protection and support of cash-based transfers, none currently match the WFP combination of national reach, delivery infrastructure, digital systems and operational readiness – giving WFP a comparative operational advantage.

45. WFP is widely recognized for its operational capacity to manage and deliver logistics support, particularly in emergencies and remote areas.⁸⁵ Funding challenges have prompted WFP to significantly shrink its logistics and supply chain services in Liberia over the course of the CSP. However, the country office maintains capacities in supply chain and logistical support, currently exemplified through activities related to the management and supply of health commodities. The strong performance of the WFP health supply chain programme (see EQ 2.1) is underscored by past work in this area in Liberia. WFP supported Liberia's central medical store during and after the Ebola crisis. During the COVID-19 response, WFP also delivered vaccines, personal protective equipment and essential medicines to hard-to-reach health facilities. The WFP health commodity programme in Liberia, where WFP manages the main health commodity warehouse in a country, is the only one of its type internationally.

EQ 1.3. To what extent is the CSP design internally coherent and based on a theory of change, with realistic assumptions?

Finding 5: The CSP logic was generally sound and well aligned with Liberia's context. Although resilience and crisis response were not integrated, some linkages were made by connecting smallholder farmers to the school feeding programme. These remained limited – initially due to the distance between farmers and schools, and later because procurement shifted to cooperatives. Several design assumptions, including those on funding, staffing and monitoring capacity, also proved overly optimistic.

46. The work of WFP in Liberia is based on a portfolio of activities that focus on resilience (through work with farmers' groups and schools), while maintaining flexible, short-term emergency response capacity to emerging needs. The key pathway for WFP contributing to zero hunger in Liberia is increasing food security for vulnerable Liberians through funds, food and production capacities. The CSP prioritizes boosting agricultural productivity under SO1, recognizing that agricultural productivity in Liberia is low. The CSP programming portfolio was designed to create connections between agricultural production and provision of school meals via an integrated approach to HGSP under SO1. In practice, integration was limited to resilience programming in counties where WFP had school-based activities (Bong and Nimba), while many counties where resilience projects were located (Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Bomi, Lofa and Grand Bassa) did not have any school-based programmes, as shown in Table 16.

47. Smallholder farmers supported by WFP in counties that had school feeding were linked to HGSP markets through direct purchases in 2022-2023, while those operating in other counties were not (see Table 16 under EQ 2.1). Eventually, WFP shifted its local procurement model to purchases through cooperatives, eschewing direct purchases from the farmers' groups it was supporting. Cooperatives still

⁸⁵ Interviews with government, UNCT and cooperating partners.

source agricultural goods from smallholder farmers, though they are not required to buy from WFP-supported farmers. Thus, the change in procurement strategy is a move away from an integrated resilience programming model designed under SO1; but it may also provide more scalable and sustainable alternative to WFP Liberia’s more resource-intensive resilience building interventions (as explained under Finding 10).

48. SO2’s focus on short-term crisis response complements development goals by stabilizing food access during crises. However, while humanitarian interventions targeted farmers, those receiving assistance were outside the WFP resilience programming.

49. Capacity strengthening activities were meant to contribute to the CSP logic through intermediate outcome SO3, with capacity strengthening acting both as an independent outcome and as a “strategic change enabler” for other outcomes (SO1 and SO2). The approach is based on strengthening national and subnational systems, institutions and human resources of national partners (both governmental and non-governmental), consequently contributing to CSP results. The logical causal pathway is that improved capacity leads to better system performance, which in turn supports improved service delivery, and then better outcomes. The logic leverages the enabler role of WFP, calling for investments in national partner capacity as a pathway to greater national ownership and sustainability. This logic is reflected in WFP transition strategies in countries like Liberia.

50. SO4 originally focused on the provision of common services – such as transport, warehousing and storage, internet and communications infrastructure – that integrated into support crisis response under SO2. The strategic outcome (SO4) now focuses on the management and distribution of public health commodities. SO4 sits largely outside of the theory of change logic related to SO1 to SO3, as activities under these strategic outcomes are not related to health supply chains. The shift is contextually appropriate, reflecting evolving national and partner needs and drawing on WFP comparative advantages (see EQ 1.2).

51. A summary analysis of assumptions within the CSP is available in Annex X. Assumptions related to alignment of national priorities and WFP comparative advantages were realistic, as were those related to adequate leadership and commitment at WFP country office. However, assumptions related to such elements as levels or consistency of staffing, internal and monitoring systems, resources to support capacity strengthening and uptake or absorption of frameworks, tools and guidance were overly optimistic, as Liberia is a country with a limited donor pool (see EQ 4.1). It also cannot be assumed that adequately complementary activities are being provided by other actors, with resource constraints affecting all partners in Liberia. The CSP recognized this gap, noting “seeking and strengthening strategic partnerships” as a priority.

EQ 1.4. To what extent and in what ways did the CSP (and its consecutive budget revisions) adapt and respond to evolving needs and priorities to ensure continued relevance during implementation in the context of funding shortfalls and repeated crises, including COVID-19, climate change, devaluation of currency, and the ripple effects on food security related to the war in Ukraine?

Finding 6: The CSP was designed to shift from direct implementation to an enabling role for WFP. WFP focus was reoriented towards humanitarian response to the COVID-19 pandemic, before a return to development-focused programming through an integrated resilience-based approach and a shift towards common service provision that addressed emerging health-sector needs through the management and delivery of health commodities.

52. The CSP was established to transition from humanitarian assistance provided during the Ebola virus disease epidemic to the shifting needs of Liberia, with the role of WFP in the country transitioning from an implementer to an enabler. However, impacts from the global COVID-19 pandemic led to food insecurity⁸⁶ and overall vulnerability across the country. In response, WFP operations pivoted to respond to

⁸⁶ Prior to the pandemic, 18 percent of Liberian households were food insecure, with an additional 42 percent on the brink of food insecurity (CFSNS 2018).

the pandemic, including the provision of common humanitarian services.

53. Interviewees noted that the pandemic disrupted domestic food production, with market closures and movement restrictions hindering the ability of smallholders to sell produce. A 2021 FAO report found that almost two-thirds of surveyed households reported having resorted to some form of coping strategy – with half adopting multiple coping strategies.⁸⁷ In response to growing humanitarian needs, BR1 (May 2020) appropriately scaled up emergency assistance. Notable was the COVID-19 Household Food Support Programme (COHFSP), which provided food assistance to 2.5 million vulnerable individuals.

54. BR1 also included increased support to humanitarian and development partners to have access to common services (SO4), including logistics and supply chain-related services. Later, work under SO4 shifted to focus on health commodity management and supply chain support, which addressed several critical needs within the Liberia's fragile health system, working to strengthen the availability, accessibility and delivery of essential health commodities.

55. As COVID-19 school closures disrupted school feeding, WFP operations pivoted to take-home rations, highlighting the flexibility and adaptability of the WFP school feeding approach during the pandemic. Although take-home rations faced implementation challenges (see analysis under EQ 2.1), they provided continued support for vulnerable children, including cash transfers, enabling caregivers with limited options to purchase food.

56. As the pandemic ebbed, Liberia shifted from acute emergency towards recovery. The second WFP budget revision (BR2, June 2022) shifted from COVID-19 response to post-COVID-19 development work. BR2 refocused on an integrated resilience-based approach centred on agriculture and education. Local procurement increased throughout the CSP, supporting educational outcomes through HGSF while revitalizing market linkages damaged through COVID-19 to strengthen local food systems. This effort was aligned with shifting national objectives (emphasizing agricultural self-sufficiency).

2.2. EQ 2: What difference did the CSP make to food security and nutrition in the country?

EQ 2.1: To what extent did WFP achieve its coverage and outcome targets, and in what ways did this link to programme outcomes?

57. Note: EQ 2.1 is structured around the three main strategic outcomes SO1, SO2 and SO4, with SO3 treated as an intermediary outcome and integrated into analysis of the other outcomes.

SO1: Resilience work related to agricultural development and school feeding activities⁸⁸

Finding 7: Agricultural resilience programming has shown successes in rehabilitating productive assets to support improved production, with evidence of improved yields for vulnerable farmers, though this did not translate into progress towards multi-dimensional, long-term food security outcomes, which can take time to consolidate.

58. The focus of asset creation was inland valley swamps, where agricultural land benefited from new and rehabilitated irrigation schemes. Table 6 indicates that asset creation targets fell significantly short of what was planned for 2020. Many smallholder farmers were primarily engaged in economic recovery efforts other than agricultural activities, which decreased production capacity and reduced the number of hectares cultivated. In 2022 and 2023, the number of new and rehabilitated inland valley swamp irrigation schemes increased significantly as asset creation, resilience and livelihood support provided to smallholder

⁸⁷ FAO. 2021. [Liberia. Agricultural livelihoods and food security in the context of COVID-19.](#)

⁸⁸ Includes analysis of EQ 2.1a: To what extent did HGSF activities provide an innovative and integrated platform across food systems to tackle chronic and relevant gender and inclusion issues in education, agriculture, nutrition, and social protection?

farmers increased.⁸⁹ In 2024, asset creation fell, partly due to delays in funding disbursement⁹⁰ and in implementation of resilience and livelihood activity associated with SO1.⁹¹ Reasons cited by interviewees for the delays included issues in engaging local partners, accessibility challenges due to the rainy season and waiting for the launch of the Government's new national development plan to help ensure alignment between programming.⁹²

Table 6: Assets created (new and rehabilitated inland valley swamps and irrigation schemes)

Year	Planned (ha)	Actual (ha)
2020	200	43
2021	20	40
2022	200	159
2023	200	248.5
2024	200	112

Source: COMET report CM-O004, OOP vs Actual (CSP) dataset

59. The evaluation found that the WFP food and cash assistance for assets model has been effective in supported areas, providing incentives for smallholder farmers to collectively rehabilitate unproductive inland valley swamps. Interviews with Ministry of Agriculture staff and focus groups with farmers reported that, prior to WFP support, most farmers were working less productive upland plots.⁹³ Even farmers engaged in lowland farming were generally doing so at subsistence levels on undeveloped individual plots and using unproductive traditional agricultural practices – that is, not engaging more productive organized farming.

60. Combining asset creation with capacity strengthening for smallholders and farmer-based organizations (for example, provision of improved agricultural inputs,⁹⁴ training⁹⁵) and in some cases the provision of agricultural equipment (for example, threshers, power tillers, rice mills) helped increase crop yields, with many farmers undertaking a second harvest of rice.⁹⁶ The majority of production was rice, with smallholder farmers reporting that they also planted small quantities of vegetables and other agricultural commodities.⁹⁷ Interviews with cooperating partners providing assistance to smallholder farmers estimated that supported farms yielded an average of 2 mt of rice per hectare. Estimates made by smallholder farmers themselves during focus groups suggested an annual yield of around 2-2.5 mt per hectare. The national average annual yield per hectare is estimated at 1.26 mt per hectare. Despite higher expenditure levels for SO1 (as indicated in Figure 7 above), monitoring data show that resilience programming did not contribute to progress in key outcomes. Despite the reported yield increases, the number of households using negative coping strategies since the baseline increased considerably in 2024 (Table 7).

⁸⁹ Part of the difference in output measures may also be attributable to the revision of this indicator in the WFP Indicator Compendium (2022-2025).

⁹⁰ Almost 23 percent of contributions received in 2024 were confirmed during the last quarter.

⁹¹ WFP. 2024. Annual Country Report 2024.

⁹² Local partners did not meet WFP standards resulting in extended negotiations with BRAC, an international partner.

⁹³ The nonperennial upland plots most farmers were cultivating are usually limited to a single harvest during the rainy season, while the inland valley swamps model is based on perennial developed or rehabilitated swamps that offer potentially 2-3 harvests.

⁹⁴ Especially short duration rice varieties, which can be harvested every three months, as opposed to the 6-7 months it takes to harvest other rice varieties, allows for more harvests in a single year.

⁹⁵ For example, training in the application climate-smart agriculture practices, training in using improved in water management practices, training in the application of post-harvest techniques, training in organizational and financial management.

⁹⁶ To strengthen agricultural value chains in the areas of aggregation, PHM, processing and marketing, WFP supported two agricultural business centres in Bong county. The evaluation found that, although the centres were well-constructed and well-equipped, they faced challenges related to inadequate planning, limited community involvement, and locations that were not well suited to serve farmers' needs. The short implementation period limited capacity building and support. At the time of the evaluation, farmers expressed concerns that the centres were being underused, and the evaluation team found signs of equipment deterioration consistent with these concerns.

⁹⁷ Typically growing these on small plots or undertaking intercropping within rice production.

Table 7: Smallholder farmer households reporting livelihood coping strategies for food security

		Year	Male	Female	Overall
Percentage of households using crisis coping strategies	Baseline	2019	10%	12%	9.3%
	Follow-up	2023	9.5%	11.4%	10.1%
		2024	29.2%	43.5%	36%
	CSP target	2024	≤7.5	≤8	≤7
Percentage of households using emergency coping strategies	Baseline	2019	12%	15%	10.1%
	Follow-up	2023	12.4%	12.50%	12.5%
		2024	9.3%	25%	17.5%
	CSP target	2024	≤5	≤6	≤5
Percentage of households using stress coping strategies	Baseline	2019	16%	18%	14.8%
	Follow-up	2023	14.20%	19.31%	15.95%
		2024	22.2%	18.3%	20.2%
	CSP target	2024	≤10	≤10.5	≤10
Percentage of households not using livelihood-based coping strategies	Baseline	2019	62%	55%	58.5%*
	Follow-up	2023	63.90%	56.81%	61.47%
		2024	25%	27.5%	26.3%
	CSP target	2024	>77.5	>75.5	>78

* In considering this analysis, the evaluation notes potential issues with data quality, as overall figure of 68.5% should not be above the male and female figures. Hence, the overall figure was disregarded in favour of an average of the male and female figure in the table bringing the overall figure to 58.5%.

Source: COMET report CM-L008b, ACR 2023

61. Lack of progress towards food security outcomes shown in Table 7 above can be explained by a combination of reasons. First, beneficiaries met confirmed the impact from rising food prices on household budgets, with growing portions of household expenditures continuing to be allocated to food. Second, interviewees suggested that, even although rice yields grew on average, they were limited by key implementation challenges, including operational delays (see EQ 3.1), short duration of resilience projects (see EQ 2.3) and site selection issues (due either to flood-prone water catchments or to the relatively poor performance of chosen farming sites).⁹⁸

Finding 8: Providing school meals and take-home rations contributed to increased enrolment, attendance and other outcomes such as improved food consumption, lower financial burden on parents, increased attention and academic performance of learners. However, a portion of enrolment growth in WFP schools was due to already-schooled children moving from nearby non-government schools without school feeding programmes. Some schools also saw sharp enrolment increases that were not matched by additional food supplies, teachers or educational resources.

62. WFP school feeding has evolved from a traditional model (2019-2022) predominantly based on imported food commodities, to one focused on HGSF (2023-2024). On-site school feeding targets for number of schools assisted were met or neared, with the exception of 2021 (see Table 8). In 2021, the country office planned to increase the number of schools to a total of 400, a target it was reportedly unable to achieve due to funding constraints,⁹⁹ as also reported in annual country reports (ACRs).¹⁰⁰ In response, smaller grants (for example, with support of the MasterCard Foundation) were provided to a reduced number of schools in Nimba and Maryland counties.

⁹⁸ Collective farming requires fixed plots and long-term planning, whereas individual farming allows smallholder farmers to manage their own plots independently; see: Fouladbash, L. 2013. Agroforestry and Shifting Cultivation in Liberia: Livelihood Impacts, Carbon Trade-offs, and Sociopolitical Obstacles (Master's thesis). University of Michigan.

⁹⁹ Correspondence with WFP country office.

¹⁰⁰ For instance, the ACR 2021 notes that "most of the funding allocated for school feeding was received at the end of 2021, [and as a result] WFP was unable to provide school feeding assistance throughout the year to all targeted beneficiaries". WFP. 2021. Annual Country Report 2021. p. 10.

Table 8: Number of schools assisted by WFP (on-site)

Year	Planned	Actual
2020	400	397
2021	400	201
2022	400	400
2023 (HGSF)	283	283
2024 (HGSF)	289	288

Source: COMET report CM-O004, OOP vs Actual (CSP) dataset

63. Feeding days as a percentage of total days generally increased over the CSP period, reaching 60 percent in 2023 and 95 percent in 2024 in line with general increases in expenditures for SO1 in these years (see Figure 7).

Table 9: Feeding days as percentage of total schooldays

Year	Planned	Actual
2020	100%	38%
2021	100%	26%
2022	100%	44%
2023	100%	60%
2024	100%	95%

Source: COMET report CM-O004, OOP vs Actual (CSP) dataset

64. Outcome-level data indicate overall positive increases in educational outcomes related to HGSF. This finding is supported by primary research that documents the role of school feeding in contributing positively to school enrolment, attendance, retention and improved food consumption. These findings are also broadly consistent with findings of other school feeding evaluations.¹⁰¹

65. Parents consulted confirmed that the availability of daily school meals provided an incentive to enrol children in school and motivation for children to attend regularly. The majority of students surveyed also reported that the food provided was good (76 percent) and of sufficient quantity (65 percent).¹⁰² Table 10 indicates that overall enrolment showed positive increases, though with variation¹⁰³ over the years of the CSP. In 2021, 2022 and 2024, the country office exceeded its overall and sex-disaggregated targets for this indicator. Enrolment of girls was higher than attendance of boys for those years.¹⁰⁴ The annual enrolment target of 5 percent across all years of the CSP – for both boys and girls – reflects a cautious approach to targeting – possibly intended to accommodate external uncertainties (for example, funding constraints, school closures). Taking into account actual performance, which often exceeds these targets, the evaluation finds that it may serve as a baseline expectation rather than a performance ceiling based on an adaptive, data-informed and sex-disaggregated targets that better reflect school feeding programme outcomes and annual shifts.

¹⁰¹ WFP. 2021. [Summary report on the strategic evaluation of the contribution of school feeding activities to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals](#) (WFP/EB.A/2021/7-B, 21–25 June).

¹⁰² WFP Liberia Third-Party Monitoring.

¹⁰³ Despite follow-up with WFP country office regarding possible explanations for variations in enrolment data – for example, potential temporary programming challenges (and drops in enrolment) in 2023 as programming transitioned from conventional school feeding to HGSF – it is still unclear why such variation exists.

¹⁰⁴ While efforts were made to follow up with the WFP country office to determine the reasons for overall and sex-disaggregated fluctuations in annual change in enrolment – especially decreases in 2020 and 2023 – as of the last revision of this report, no clarification has been given.

Table 10: Annual change in enrolment for schools receiving school feeding

Year	Target			Follow-up		
	Male	Female	Overall	Male	Female	Overall
2020	5%	5%	5%	1.8%	0.6%	1.2%
2021	5%	5%	5%	18%	22%	19%
2022	5%	5%	5%	12%	16%	14%
2023	5%	5%	5%	2%	2%	4% ¹⁰⁵
2024	5%	5%	5%	12%	13%	13%

Source: COMET report CM-L008b

66. Similarly, attendance rates increased from an overall baseline of 83.8 percent¹⁰⁶ to 90 percent and over in 2023-2024 (Table 11).¹⁰⁷ School feeding also generally supports high retention (see Table 12), though generally at levels slightly lower than at annual targets, and with no meaningful increase over baseline figures (outside of 2022).

Table 11: Annual attendance rate for schools receiving school feeding

Year	Target			Follow-up		
	Male	Female	Overall	Male	Female	Overall
Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A	83.8	85.4	84.6
2023	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
2024	90%	90%	90%	92%	93%	92%

Source: COMET report CM-L008b

Table 12: Annual retention rate for schools receiving school feeding

Year	Target			Follow-up		
	Overall	Male	Female	Male	Female	Overall
Baseline	N/A	N/A	N/A	92.2%	92.1%	92.2%
2021	98.7%	96.7%	96.7%	92%	91%	91.5%
2022	98.7%	96.7%	96.7%	98.8%	98.7%	98.8%
2023	96.7%	98.7%	97.6%	90.6%	87.5%	89.7%
2024	96.7%	98.7%	97.6%	93%	94%	93.5%

Source: COMET report CM-L008b, 2023 ACR

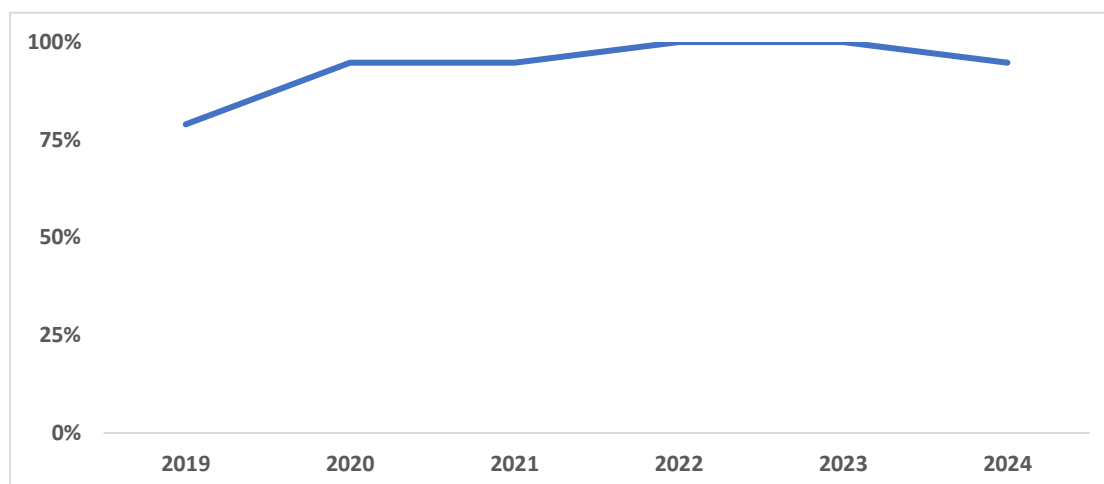
67. In terms of measures of improved food consumption, Figure 12 documents 80-100 percent achievement of multi-fortified meal days per year. Learners received a reliably diverse and fortified diet to support alertness and academic performance. School officials and beneficiaries also reported that school feeding increased the quantity and diversity of food that children consume, often providing vital nutrients they may not receive at home due to poverty or seasonal food shortages. In addition to these outcomes, focus groups with school authorities also pointed to the lower financial burden on parents that free meals provide, and to increased attention and academic performance of learners (that is, student alertness, attention and ability to retain knowledge).

¹⁰⁵ The overall percentage values do not correspond to the average of male and female figures. As no clarification was available from the country office, the variation may reflect data quality or reporting inconsistencies rather than true differences in enrolment trends.

¹⁰⁶ Attendance data for non-WFP schools are not available.

¹⁰⁷ Years for which monitoring data were collected.

Figure 12: Achievement rate of multi-fortified meal days per year



Source: ACRs 2020-2023, COMET report CM-O004

68. While school feeding activities contributed positively to key educational outcomes, the evaluation noted two unexpected negative outcomes. First, across all schools visited during fieldwork, the evaluation found that WFP programming was attracting pupils from neighbouring schools that were not supported by WFP and partners with school meals.¹⁰⁸ Targeting out-of-school children and encouraging them into education was not apparent to the evaluation.¹⁰⁹ WFP enrolment data do not currently capture enrolment due to switching of schools versus out-of-school children. While the finding that school feeding programmes were attracting pupils from nearby non-feeding schools is robust across interviews and focus groups carried out with educational stakeholders, estimates varied in terms of what percentage of new students are non-out-of-school children.

69. Second, while enrolment data indicate that on average enrolment increases were modest, the evaluation found individual schools that experienced exceptionally high enrolment increases.¹¹⁰ While these represented a small minority of school feeding sites, interviewees and focus groups reported that even though school roll data are frequently monitored, food supplies are not increased to match enrolment increases. Hence, some schools lacked sufficient supplies of food commodities to satisfactorily feed all newly enrolled students across an entire term. Increased enrolment is also not being met with corresponding increases in resources or teaching staff – especially trained, qualified and remunerated government teachers, of which there is a shortage in Liberia¹¹¹ – or corresponding increases in other

¹⁰⁸ Two issues contribute to this dynamic: 1) neither WFP nor partners support non-government schools with school feeding; and 2) there can be large discrepancies in terms of the number of schools covered in districts. Out of the two issues noted above, the first is likely more important, as fieldwork found pupils are being attracted from neighbouring schools even in districts where WFP has full coverage of government schools.

¹⁰⁹ A small number of focus groups with out-of-school children reported that, although the additional school meal and having their children educated and away from home (thus potentially freeing parents up for other domestic activities or livelihood and income generation activities) was a strong pull factor, it was insufficient to overcome the additional informal cost of sending the children to school (informal fees charged by schools, costs for school equipment, uniforms, shoes and sometimes chairs) and sometimes of having their older children work.

¹¹⁰ Key informants in Nimba county gave the example of Charles B. Harris Public Elementary School, which had 175-200 students in 2022-2023 and now has more than 400 students. In addition, Zokehseh Public School planned for around 90 children in 2022-2023 and now has an estimated 440 students.

¹¹¹ Ginsburg, M. et al. 2018. "Where have all the (qualified) teachers gone? Implications for measuring sustainable development goal target 4.c from a study of teacher supply, demand and deployment in Liberia". <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1208498.pdf>.

educational resources.¹¹² Stakeholders within the educational system indicated that in schools with high enrolment increases, the schooling system is becoming overstretched, leading to overcrowding, stretched infrastructure and potentially lower learning outcomes – ultimately weakening the long-term impact of access-oriented interventions like school feeding.

Finding 9: The adaptation by WFP of school feeding to take-home rations during the COVID-19 pandemic enabled broader coverage than planned in 2020 and 2021 but food security outcomes among beneficiary households remained below target throughout the CSP. Many households used take-home rations cash assistance to cover urgent non-food expenses such as school fees and uniforms, which diluted its impact on food security outcomes but supported improved school enrolment and education access.

70. Due to the shift from on-site school feeding to take-home rations during COVID-19 the actual number of schools assisted with take-home rations was higher than planned in 2020 and 2021 (Table 13). Later, in 2024, funding shortages led to a decrease in take-home rations.¹¹³ Distribution in 2024 was carried out in the first quarter of that year, after which take-home rations were suspended due to a planned assessment exercise and verification of beneficiaries aimed at ensuring proper targeting of the needed beneficiaries.

Table 13: Number of schools assisted by take-home rations

	Planned	Actual
2020	150	263
2021	150	201
2022	150	N/A
2023	216	289
2024	285	154

Source: Office of Evaluation, COMET report CM-O004, OOP vs actual (CSP) dataset

71. Table 14 indicates that, despite the national decline in food security data during the COVID-19 pandemic, the overall percentage of households receiving take-home rations with acceptable food consumption scores (FCSs) was below the annual target of 67.6 percent, remaining consistent at around 50 percent, with the exception of 2023 when it fell to about 25 percent.

Table 14: Percentage of households with acceptable food consumption scores for households receiving take-home rations

Year	Target			Follow-up		
	Male	Female	Overall	Male	Female	Overall
2020	72.7%	55.6%	67.6%	57%	43%	53%
2021	72.7%	55.6%	67.6%	64.5%	40%	52.5%
2022	72.7%	55.6%	67.6%	56.2%	49.3%	51.1%
2023	72.7%	55.6%	67.6%	25.4%	25%	25.3%
2024	72.7%	55.6%	67.6%	55.6%	58.3%	57%

Source: Office of Evaluation, COMET report CM-L008b

¹¹² Stakeholders indicated that prior to certification all public schools are required to have appropriate classroom sizes, adherence to regulated student-teacher ratios, adequate infrastructure and facilities. However, they also state that many government schools do not currently meet all of these requirements.

¹¹³ Correspondence with WFP country office.

72. Table 15 shows that the coping strategy index (CSI) tripled between 2020 and 2021, indicating an increase in negative coping strategies that households were using to maintain food consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic (as shown in Table 14). The coping strategy index fell considerably in 2022 (before rising steadily in 2023).

Table 15: Coping strategy index (average) for households receiving take-home rations

Year	Target			Follow-up		
	Male	Female	Overall	Male	Female	Overall
2020	4.3	6.2	4.9	5.4	5.4	5.4
2021	4.3	6.2	4.9	16.4	15.5	16.1
2022	6.24	4.27	4.86	6.8	8.1	7.7
2023	5.2	3.3	3.9	8	10.4	8.8
2024	4.3	6.2	4.9	14.5	13.5	14

Source: COMET report CM-L008b

73. The evaluation found that take-home rations were used by beneficiaries both for food purchases and to cover non-food expenses. This negatively affected the overall contribution take-home rations had to food security outcomes. Beneficiaries reported spending cash distributed for take-home rations on such items as school fees, uniforms and books. While take-home rations were intended primarily to supplement food consumption and reduce negative coping strategies, WFP documents note that “support was [also] designed to help students purchase textbooks and uniforms, easing financial burdens that may have prevented school attendance”.¹¹⁴ Households face competing urgent needs, especially in contexts of poverty or school-related costs. Thus, they may choose to reallocate the take-home rations to pay for educational expenses, which dilutes overall gains to food security outcomes, but supports educational outcomes. Interviews with parents of out-of-school children often noted that the main impediment to enrolling children was the financial barriers associated with school expenses. Further, take-home rations recipient interviewees noted that, because the provision of school meals helped meet the food security and nutrition needs of their children, cash from take-home rations could be redirected to school-related expenses.¹¹⁵

Finding 10: Local procurement through HGSF stimulates local agricultural productivity and local economies, expanding markets and profit-making opportunities for local farmers. However, integration between resilience programming and HGSF was limited, as WFP moved to a model that sources food commodities from cooperatives. Cooperatives are currently supporting smallholder farmers through technical training, input provision and financial management, providing a scalable and sustainable alternative to the more resource-intensive resilience building interventions of WFP.

74. HGSF supported rural economies through local procurement, ensuring that smallholder farmers had a stable market for their produce (Annex XI). However, integration between resilience programming and HGSF was limited. This was partly because counties in which resilience and HGSF interventions were being implemented differed, with limited overlap. Throughout the CSP, resilience building support for farmers’ groups has been spread across many counties (see Table 16), including those where WFP is not providing school meals. The evaluation found that, in counties where both programmes were operating, WFP-supported farmer-based organizations had, at times, been commissioned to supply HSGF. However, this was not reported to have been a planned strategy.

¹¹⁴ 2023 ACR, p. 3.

¹¹⁵ Focus groups with school stakeholders and THR recipients.

Table 16: Overlap between school feeding and resilience activities

Stakeholder type	School feeding	Peacebuilding Fund land governance project	Integrated food security project
Counties supporting school feeding and resilience activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nimba Bong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nimba 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nimba Bong
Counties not supporting both school feeding and resilience activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maryland Montserrado 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grand Cape Mount Gbarpolu Bomi 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lofa Grand Cape Mount Grand Bassa

Source: Evaluation team

75. WFP has shifted to a model that relies on cooperatives to supply agricultural commodities based on a commodity voucher model,¹¹⁶ moving from buying directly from farmers' groups (including those that had participated in resilience interventions). The shift came as WFP also moved to exclusively HGSP in 2023. The rationale for the shift to cooperatives is that cooperatives are able to aggregate produce from multiple smallholder farmers, enabling WFP to procure larger volumes more efficiently. Notwithstanding implementation challenges noted below, the evaluation found that this approach increases the supply of agricultural commodities, decreases transaction costs and simplifies logistics more effectively than making direct local purchases from numerous scattered individual farmer-based organizations. In addition, sourcing through a small network of cooperatives is meant to help ensure required quality standards, as food supplied by cooperatives require certification by the Liberian Standards Authority (LiSA).¹¹⁷ However (as noted under the next finding), local procurement through cooperatives faced numerous challenges in meeting quality and quantity standards.

76. Cooperatives selling to WFP reported two important benefits over selling in local markets: (1) WFP offers a stable market and a price premium for the goods it buys, increasing the incomes of the vulnerable smallholder farmers; and (2) without the need to bring goods to market, sellers avoid transport and wastage costs, and save time for other productive or domestic roles. The result is increased overall profits for cooperatives. Some cooperatives indicated a willingness to invest in organizational capacities (for example, staff and equipment) and expand agricultural production, with some moving into new commodities (for example, pulses).¹¹⁸ As a way of expanding supply, cooperatives are providing support to smallholder farmers to boost productivity (for example, technical training, provision of agricultural inputs, short-term financing, support for organizational and financial management).¹¹⁹ Although such arrangements were in place before cooperatives began supplying WFP for HGSP, support for smallholder farmers has expanded following local purchases by WFP, as cooperatives strive to meet demand for school feeding. Pro-smallholder farmer business models used by cooperatives mirror the resilience activities of WFP but are driven by market forces. Through local procurement for HGSP there is an opportunity to incentivize sustainable improvements in smallholder productivity at scale. While support provided to farmers' groups through agricultural development has improved the capacities of vulnerable farmers (see EQ 2.1), significant investments are required and their scale is limited when compared to national levels of production and WFP procurement activities (see EQ 2.3).

¹¹⁶ Schools receive vouchers to procure food directly from local cooperatives, rather than relying on centralized in-kind distribution.

¹¹⁷ LiSA provides conformity assessment services for WFP, testing and inspection services for the HGSP programme to ensure that food outsourced from farmers and cooperatives are safe and meet quality standards for school-going children.

¹¹⁸ However, some cooperatives reported that bean varieties requested by WFP were not well suited to the local production context and that smallholder farmers and cooperatives would prefer pulse varieties better suited to local taste acceptance.

¹¹⁹ Support cooperatives provision to smallholder farmers can extend beyond this; for example, one cooperative indicated supporting smallholder farmers with farming equipment (such as a thresher and destoner), while another said that they are working with smallholder farmers to build their capacities in the production and PHM of pulses.

Finding 11: Cooperatives continue to face challenges in meeting local production demands – especially for rice – due to capacity limitations and last-minute distribution plans. Cooperatives are often reassigned to distant schools, increasing costs and delivery delays, particularly for hard-to-reach areas. Open-ended contracts without specified quantities also prevent cooperatives from securing financing or investing in production and storage.

77. Although WFP carried out an assessment of cooperatives to ensure adequate capacity¹²⁰ to meet school feeding demands, most stakeholders (including cooperatives) acknowledged concerns related to the capacity of cooperatives to meet demands for locally produced food, especially rice.¹²¹ These capacity gaps led to significant shortfalls that contributed to delays and shortfalls in the delivery of food items.

78. Monitoring data capture several instances where suppliers were unable to deliver food at all. School administrators and suppliers cited delays in receiving delivery mandate or orders from WFP (for example, “WFP didn’t mandate them sooner” and “WFP did not order on time”). In addition, supplier-side constraints were noted, including:

- vehicle-related issues (for example, "supplier cited vehicle constraints");
- commodity shortages (for example, "insufficient rice to supply all of the schools," or "rice and beans were not sufficient"); and
- operational and scheduling lapses (for example, "supplier didn't meet commitment," or "repeated rescheduling," "supplier didn't show up on scheduled date").

79. Food management committees consulted through the evaluation confirmed that food deliveries continue to face shortfalls or delays, with food sometimes arriving days or weeks after a term begins. Deliveries to hard-to-reach schools are especially prone to delays. Checks of waybills at schools visited during the evaluation confirmed that commodities were delivered only after the school term had commenced, and at many schools rice was not delivered or only delivered in part. When low-performing cooperatives experience shortfalls in supply, other higher-performing cooperatives may be reassigned to additional schools. This has led to situations where cooperatives are delivering to dispersed and sometimes very distant schools, increasing transport costs and causing delays due to unfamiliarity with transport routes. Alternatively, cooperatives may make only a partial delivery of rice based on what they are able to supply, leaving schools without adequate supplies. In other cases, cooperatives may delay delivery of rice, while providing other commodities on time. School authorities noted that, if deliveries come after money on SCOPE cards¹²² has expired, rice purchases cannot be made, leaving schools without rice.¹²³

80. The evaluation found that weaknesses in WFP capacity assessment of cooperatives and distribution planning contributed to supply shortfalls and delivery delays. Currently, the country office reports that, of the 21 cooperatives registered in the WFP vendor network, only 12 are active. According to the country office, even active cooperatives face various challenges with limited processing and production capacities, including limited transport and storage and that “their success has been fluctuating”. By comparison, the country office indicates that “successful cooperatives” (for example, Gbedin and Kwakese in Nimba) have made significant efforts to scale up their enterprises and ensure the timely delivery of quality food.

¹²⁰ This included gauging their capacity: to produce quantities and qualities needed, to aggregate and transport, and even to increase in production potentially if there is any expansion of HGSP.

¹²¹ Fieldwork in Nimba county found that: in one district, 3 out of 6 schools did not have rice; 2) in another district 3 out of 14 also did not receive rice, 1 school in 41 did not receive the full amount of rice they were entitled to; and 3) 4 in another district of 42 schools were missing some or all of the rice that should have been delivered to them.

¹²² WFP SCOPE cards are part of the WFP SCOPE platform, a digital beneficiary and transfer management system. The SCOPE card itself functions much like a smart debit or identity card, enabling recipients to securely receive and redeem different forms of assistance – including food, cash or vouchers – under WFP programmes.

¹²³ Unless WFP does an “offline payment”, the school will go without rice for term because of late delivery.

81. A second organizational factor contributing to supply shortfalls relates to the contracts between WFP and its cooperative partners. These contracts are open-ended and do not specify the quantities that cooperatives are meant to deliver – this is specified in a changing distribution plan that is provided with each distribution. However, the evaluation found¹²⁴ that distribution plans are generally communicated only one to seven days before distribution is scheduled – limiting cooperatives’ ability to forecast and meet demand in a timely manner. Open-ended contracting also prevents cooperatives from using their supply agreements with WFP as collateral, meaning they cannot access important financing to make short-term and long-term investments. For example, with financing for oil and bulk storage tanks, a food item like oil with a long storage life could be stocked in advance of each school year, or in advance of seasonal rains. In addition, oil could be purchased when prices are low (March-July) creating efficiencies through local procurement.

Finding 12: Locally procured food for HGSF had quality issues, lowering the taste, nutrition and safety of food available to schoolchildren, undermining food security, nutritional and other outcomes of HGSF.

82. Available third-party monitoring (TPM) data indicated that 23 percent of students believe the quality of meals needs improvement.¹²⁵ The evaluation’s own fieldwork found quality issues related to foods locally procured for school feeding. Discussions with food management committee members noted numerous incidents involving foreign particles or contaminants in locally sourced foods, commodities tainted by dirt, stones, insects, etc., with examples shown to the evaluation team (see Figure 13). Monitoring data (see Table 17) confirmed multiple instances of quality challenges among cooperatives, with pest infestations and dusty conditions noted as a general problem at multiple schools that WFP is supplying with school feeding. Pulses were seen as particularly prone to quality issues due to storage or processing vulnerability challenges.

Table 17: Third party monitoring quality issues in locally procured commodities

School	Issue type	Issue detail
Kpingbah Town Public School	Infested pulses	Affected all March–April stocks
Boniken Public School	Spoiled pulses	Affected 10 bags
Karloken Demonstration Public School	Spoiled pulses	Affected 22 bags
Susannah P. Brewer ECD/KG Public School	Spoiled pulses	Affected 47 bags
Pleebo Demonstration Public School	Rotten rice	Affected 10 bags
General warehouse conditions	Pest infestation, dusty	Various schools
Dobli Island Public School	Pest/rodent infestation	Pulses contain bugs and very dusty
Kpingbah Town Public School	Pest infestation	March–April 2024 stocks are infested
Nuqay Public School	Insect contamination	1 bag of pulses contaminated with insects
Nyehn Public School	Foreign debris	Warehouse debris, enabling pest breeding

Source: Third party monitoring data, extracted on 9 November 2024

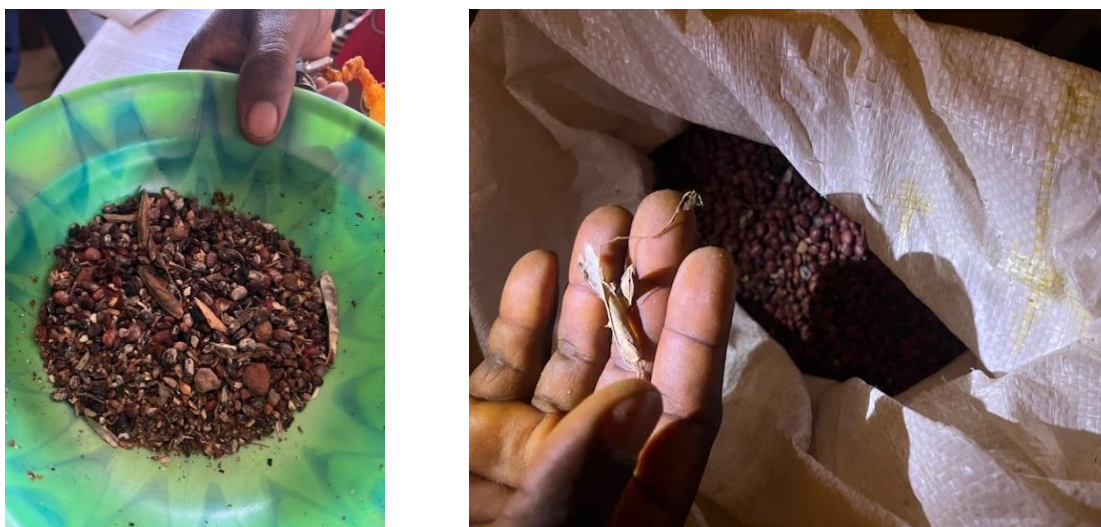
83. Quality issues were also reported to WFP staff, to the WFP community feedback mechanism (CFM), to government partners and to cooperatives themselves.¹²⁶ Discussions with beneficiaries indicated that complaints about quality would be noted but would not lead to corrective response – such as replacement of low or poor quality food – although such responses were often promised. One school visited by the evaluation, for example, had been storing a bag of pulses since 2023 based on a promise from WFP that they would be reimbursed for it.

¹²⁴ Interviews with WFP and focus groups with cooperatives.

¹²⁵ Available TPM data for 2024.

¹²⁶ Focus groups with food management committees and cooperatives, and interviews with WFP and MoE.

Figure 13: Debris found in school feeding food commodities



Source: Evaluation team

84. The evaluation found quality issues were due to gaps in controls and standards related to food safety and quality.¹²⁷ For example, a cooperative working with WFP brings in samples only to secure a contract, and testing ceases once that contract is given. For the 2024-2025 school year, there had not been any testing of school feeding commodities reported at LiSA. Further, the standards authority currently relies on cooperatives to bring samples for testing, which they self-select (likely choosing those of higher quality), as LiSA does not have logistical capacities to visit cooperative sites.

85. Two other factors are key to food safety and quality. First, cooperatives and the smallholder farmers they source from, have limited technical knowledge of post-harvest management practices, proper storage and packaging facilities and limited processing capacities. This factor creates quality issues – at the same time as increasing post-harvesting losses. Second, capacity issues are exacerbated by gaps in timely communication of distribution plans, limiting the time that cooperatives have for quality control. Focus groups indicated that cooperatives are, at most, able to carry out only superficial visual inspections with no capacity for rigorous testing and quality control.

Finding 13: Capacity strengthening support for the formulation of policy and legislation to the Government of Liberia was largely in agricultural development. There are further potential opportunities for capacity strengthening at the national level of policy and institutional frameworks for school feeding.

86. Despite the limited validity of capacity strengthening indicators to demonstrate WFP contributions to national capacities, the evaluation found that important contributions were made. WFP made meaningful contributions to the capacity strengthening of both government and non-government partners during the CSP, with results visible in such areas as food security analysis, agricultural development and school feeding. This was despite low overall funding for capacity strengthening under SO3.

87. In the agriculture sector, WFP supported national systems by providing technical and financial assistance for the formulation of key policies and strategies (Table 48 in Annex X), including the Zero Post-Harvest Loss Strategy and inputs into the National Agricultural Development Plan. Stakeholders confirmed that WFP engagement helped improve policy coherence and guided national prioritization in post-harvest loss reduction.

88. In the area of food security monitoring, WFP Liberia's partnership with the Government of Liberia contributed to enhanced organizational capacity to collect and analyse data through instruments such as

¹²⁷ Interviews with WFP country office and government partners.

the CFSNS and price monitoring systems. These improvements informed effective programme design and targeting by both WFP and government partners. Although outcome-level corporate results framework indicators are limited, improvements in targeting and evidence use were reported by interviews across ministries, suggesting WFP capacity strengthening support played a contributory role.

89. While Liberia's school feeding programme is still largely partner-led, WFP did provide equipment and devices such as laptop computers to the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture and the National Food Assistance Agency, as part its support towards strengthening national capacities. The evaluation did note, however, that high turnover of government staff – including in technical positions such as directors – disrupted institutional continuity and weakened retention of skills built through WFP capacity strengthening efforts. Frequent staff turnover prevented institutionalization of acquired skills, undermining sustainability and forcing WFP to repeatedly retrain new counterparts instead of advancing to higher-level systems support.

90. The evaluation also elicited from partners priorities for the Government in the near-to-medium term, where WFP is well positioned to work with the Ministry of Education to strengthen the policy and institutional frameworks for school feeding. One government priority is the review, development and implementation of the national school feeding policy. Other priorities include standardization of menus, operating procedures, and the building of government capacity in planning, budgeting, coordination and monitoring of school meals programmes.¹²⁸

91. WFP trained food management committees and school staff at the community level in food storage, hygiene, stock management and reporting – that is, providing capacity strengthening to non-governmental community structures in the organizational and individual domains (see Table 49 in Annex X). Over the CSP period, these trainings were delivered to food management committee members across participating schools, enabling schools to more reliably manage food commodities and improve reporting compliance, though gaps remain in food management committee capacity (see EQ 2.3).

92. As part of HGSF, WFP also piloted school gardens¹²⁹ and School Connect in two high-performing schools.¹³⁰ The evaluation found that school gardens faced key challenges – limited local buy-in and poor water infrastructure. School Connect had little uptake due to faulty tablets, a lack of data and inadequate training. Thus, the capacity strengthening gains in these areas have contributed little to overall outcomes in school feeding.

93. HGSF local procurement indirectly built the capacities of cooperatives and farmers, by providing stable market access, building technical skills and promoting organizational development. WFP offers farmers a predictable buyer when it sources food locally, reducing market uncertainty and encouraging investment in improved production practices. Local procurement was also frequently linked to support for cooperatives and farmers' groups. Cooperatives serve as intermediaries that aggregate supply, distribute inputs and provide technical assistance to smallholders. This strengthened both local capacities and collective marketing abilities.

94. In support of smallholder farmers and farmers' groups, WFP capacity strengthening work included

¹²⁸ Currently, each partner has unique: menus, ration sizes, strategies to engage cooks, hygiene good practices, approaches to distributing non-food items, etc.

¹²⁹ School gardens were piloted in two high-performing schools. However, field visits indicated that challenges such as poor seed quality, inadequate irrigation infrastructure, delayed payments to gardeners, insufficient water access (faulty equipment, low-power pumps), and low community motivation following unmet expectations.

¹³⁰ School Connect (a web-based application designed to digitize data on student attendance, meal consumption, and inventory management in schools – which has been implemented successfully in other contexts) has also been piloted as part of HGSF. However, implementation has faced challenges including limited user training, poor connectivity and faulty equipment, which have hindered early uptake in schools; see: ECOWAS et al. 2024. [Empowering the Future: ECOWAS HGSF for Human Capital Development and Economic Growth](#).

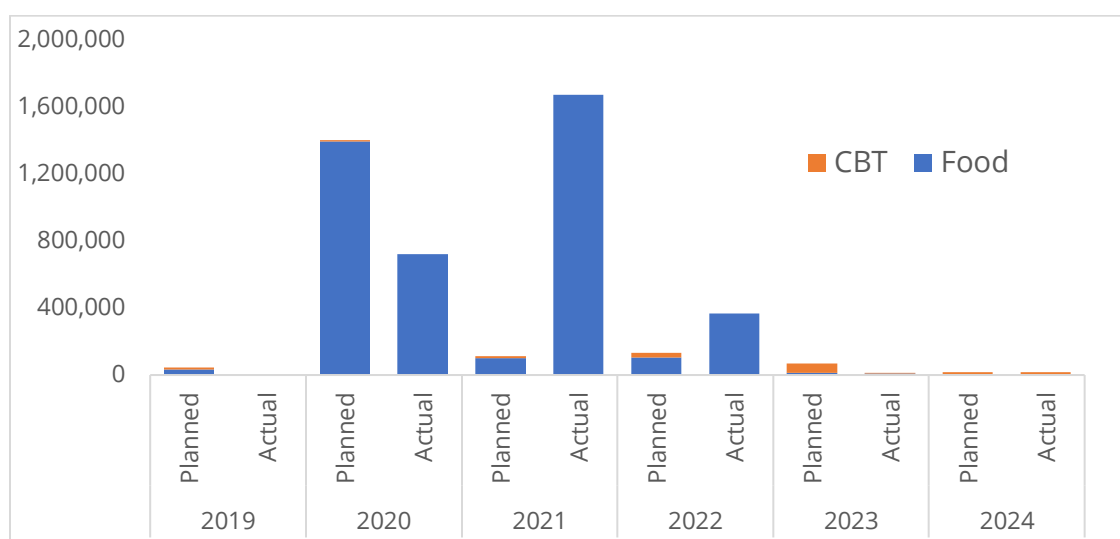
hands-on training,¹³¹ provision of improved rice seed varieties and support with mechanized processing equipment (for example, threshers, rice mills, power tillers). These efforts were designed to build both individual and institutional resilience across the rice value chain. While qualitative evidence suggests increased production capacity among some smallholder farmers, overall productivity gains were constrained by delayed input provision, short project durations and high post-harvest losses, indicating that the benefits of capacity strengthening interventions were not fully realized.

SO2: Crisis response

Finding 14: Crisis response helped prevent further deterioration of food security conditions in vulnerable households during the COVID-19 pandemic. Results were undermined by operational challenges related to logistics, targeting and coordination.

95. During COVID-19 (2020-2021), WFP provided emergency food assistance to 2.5 million vulnerable individuals (roughly 568,000 households) across all 15 counties through the COHFSP. This initiative was co-funded by the World Bank (USD 5 million) in partnership with the Liberian Government (USD 25 million) with WFP funding transportation and distribution.¹³² As shown in Figure 14, the programme primarily focused on food transfers during the COVID-19 outbreak and, post-COVID-19, reverted to cash-based transfer as the main modality for supporting vulnerable households.

Figure 14: SO2 Beneficiary numbers by modality (food and cash-based transfer)



Source: COMET report CM-R015a, extracted 15 April 2025

96. Through COHFSP, households across Liberia, especially among vulnerable populations,¹³³ received food rations for several months. This short-term assistance was designed to meet critical short-term food needs – resulting from COVID-19-related market shocks and harvest shortfalls from pandemic lockdowns and restrictions. However, data show that the implementation of COHFSP did not have an overall impact on acceptable food consumption scores, which were far below targets in 2020 and 2021. Table 18 indicates a steep upward trend in the prevalence of poor food consumption scores. Lack of comparison data (for example, on baseline food consumption scores of beneficiaries or on food consumption scores of comparable groups not receiving food aid) makes it difficult to evaluate the role of food assistance in

¹³¹ Training aspects included: climate-smart agriculture practices, improved water management, training in climate-smart agriculture practices, post-harvest techniques and organizational and financial management.

¹³² Transportation and distribution cost approximately USD 3.60 per person and were covered under the WFP budget.

¹³³ For example, the elderly and disabled and households headed by women as well as those informal sector workers and daily wage earners, who were especially affected by job losses.

relation to the overall rising food insecurity in Liberia.¹³⁴

Table 18: Food consumption score before and during COVID-19 response¹³⁵

Year	Acceptable FCS	Target (%)	Change vs. target	Borderline FCS	Poor FCS
2019 (Baseline)	81.5%	81.5%	—	12.8%	5.8%
2020 (COVID-19 peak)	53%	81.5%	▼ 28.5%	36%	11%
2021	48.7%	81.5%	▼ 32.8%	19.6%	31.7%

Source: COMET Report, CM L008b

97. The evaluation finds that progress towards food security outcomes was hindered by operational challenges that undercut the effectiveness, timeliness and efficiency of the response.¹³⁶ Some challenges and impacts were highlighted by stakeholders:

- **Insufficient local produce and ration discussions caused delays and inefficiencies.** Unsuccessful attempts to source food assistance locally and discussions over ration scales and family sizes added to delays in procurement¹³⁷ – extending what was to be a three-month response (launched May 2020) to over a year (distribution phase completed July-August 2021).¹³⁸
- **Poor coordination and communications with stakeholders led to inefficiencies and local tensions.** The evaluation found that COHFSP and the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance's COVID-19 responses¹³⁹ were not well coordinated and distinctions between the responses were not understood by affected populations due to insufficient information provision and communications with beneficiaries and their representatives. This led to reputational damage for WFP and cooperating partners, division, significant tension and security risks for cooperating partner staff.¹⁴⁰

98. **There was insufficient human resource capacity in the WFP country office to deliver on the COVID-19 response due to funding shortages and human resource cuts that preceded the pandemic** (see Figure 6 and Table 32).¹⁴¹ The country office had to respond to the COVID-19 emergency without counting on adequate local presence of staff in most regions and across departments. Resourcing constraints contributed to issues with implementing vulnerability targeting and validation, determined based on consultation with several national institutions.¹⁴² This reportedly resulted in some exclusion and inclusion errors, as indicated to the evaluation by country office staff, although the evaluation could not triangulate such reports given the amount of time that had elapsed. Country office staff

¹³⁴ MoA. Liberia. 2020. [COVID-19 Food Security Response Situation Report](#) – April 19, 2020. It should be noted that while the food basket provided during the COVID-19 response and for emerging crisis was the same, food assistance was provided during the pandemic response, while response to emerging crises relied on cash and e-vouchers. As each modality has its own strengths and weaknesses, they are not fully comparable.

¹³⁵ Data used in table are from COMET report, which has discrepancies in ACR data; at time of reporting discrepancies were pending country office clarification.

¹³⁶ Interviews with WFP country office and sub-office staff, government partners, cooperating partners, and secondary sources (see: 2020 ACR, November 2020 Country Brief, etc.).

¹³⁷ WFP had a limited fleet of cars, which required the use of private transporters with limited quality control.

¹³⁸ WFP requested and received no-cost extensions to extend the intervention into 2021.

¹³⁹ As part of the USAID-funded Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance's COVID-19 food assistance, a smaller number of beneficiaries received 25 kilograms of rice, 3.7 kilograms of pulses and 1.84 litres of vegetable oil. Many of the same beneficiaries also received COHFSP, which allocated beneficiary households 50 kilograms of rice, 10 kilograms of pulses, and 4.5 litres of vegetable oil.

¹⁴⁰ This is in line with the [WFP. 2024. Liberia. Cash-Based Transfers Pilot 2021: Evaluation](#).

¹⁴¹ Interviews with current and former staff at WFP country office.

¹⁴² The Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Services, the National Food Assistance Agency and local community leaders were key partners in identifying and registering vulnerable households based on a set of predefined criteria and tools endorsed by the COHFSP steering committee. (ACR 2021).

interviewees noted that staffing limitations¹⁴³ also constrained the amount of oversight on food assistance during transportation or at the community level before reaching intended beneficiaries, which led to some reports of interference from local community leaders on food assistance, or manipulation of government distribution lists to favour specific groups, raising oversight concerns registered with the Office of the Inspector General.¹⁴⁴

Finding 15: Although the delivery of cash-based transfers faced a number of operational challenges, largely linked to registration and technical errors, and fell short of good practice standards, beneficiaries preferred cash to e-voucher assistance due the greater flexibility and choice it offered. E-voucher food assistance had limitations such as poor retailer coverage, transport challenges and higher transaction costs for beneficiaries, especially in remote areas.

99. Post-COVID-19, the Liberia country office continued to respond to emerging crises that affected Liberia – flooding, caterpillar infestations and the effects of war in Ukraine – through cash-based transfers and e-voucher food assistance.¹⁴⁵ As shown above in Figure 14, the beneficiary numbers reached through these responses (in 2022-2024) were much lower than those reached through food assistance distributed during the pandemic. Still, beneficiaries of responses to these emerging crises indicated that assistance¹⁴⁶ helped meet food needs at times of significant vulnerability and high food insecurity.¹⁴⁷ Where cash was given, it was almost entirely used to purchase food. Only in very limited cases were small amounts reported to have been used to pay school-related costs, or health or housing repairs (notably, for those affected by flooding). Nevertheless, Table 19 suggests that the crisis response provided in 2022-2024 post-COVID-19 (after the Liberian economy and food systems had recovered from the pandemic) contributed to improving food security (as measured by food consumption scores). Thus, despite the assistance provided by WFP, households with acceptable food consumption scores increased between 2022 and 2024 but still fell short of CSP targets. Progress towards food security outcomes was undermined by implementation challenges. Interviews with WFP country office staff and focus groups with beneficiaries indicated that some households who were entitled to receive cash-based transfers and e-vouchers were not accurately registered. In addition, WFP data indicated that registered beneficiaries failed to redeem a portion (or all) of their entitlements due to a lack of access to retailers and a lack of timely communication regarding distribution. For instance, during the caterpillar infestation response, WFP could not find retailers to service beneficiaries in Bong and Gbarpolu counties, and had to bring two retailers from Montserrado, which created access issues and led to non-redemption of food entitlements.¹⁴⁸ Access issues were exacerbated by a lack of field staff: instead, staff had to rely on phone calls to community leaders to communicate on their behalf to beneficiaries, a system which was often unsuccessful due to miscommunication and poor network. There were also unsuccessful transfers across phases, mostly due to technical errors; this included: incorrect phone number recording; unregistered SIMs for mobile money; and mismatches between beneficiary names and account details. Some beneficiaries had active SIMs but were not properly registered for mobile money, or had accounts in the wrong currency (Liberian Dollars instead of USD), etc.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴³ Programme and policy staff decreased 26 percent from 2020 to 2021, during which time there was only one research, assessment and monitoring (RAM) staff member in the country office covering monitoring and assessment (see Table 33).

¹⁴⁴ The Office of the Inspector General for Intelligence (OIGI) confirmed that the issues described were reported to its office.

¹⁴⁵ Analysis in this section considers the WFP response to these different crises together and integrates analysis of similar findings that relate to the THR programme that was also delivered through CBT and demonstrated similar issues.

¹⁴⁶ Crisis response assistance was reported to be USD 45, as calculated for a food basket (25 kilograms rice, 3.7 kilograms pulses, and 1.84 litres oil), throughout the CSP, despite significant price increases.

¹⁴⁷ Focus groups with crisis response beneficiaries.

¹⁴⁸ In the first cycle of the caterpillar infestation response, 92 people from 2,482 total beneficiaries across three counties did not redeem the e-vouchers. In the second cycle 451 people did not redeem them – mostly in Bong county. By the time most beneficiaries got mobilized with these issues, the cycle had expired.

¹⁴⁹ Interviews with WFP country office staff and focus groups with beneficiaries.

Table 19: Food consumption score post-COVID-19 response

Year	Acceptable FCS	Target (%)	Change vs. target	Borderline FCS	Poor FCS
2022	51.1%	81.5%	▼ 30.4%	15.9%	33%
2023*	64.7%*	81.5%	▼ 16.8%	66.7%*	65.3%*
2024**	64%	81.5%	▼ 17.5%	21.9%	14.1%

*2023 figures look inconsistent (male and female values do not average to the overall value).

**Follow-up survey, December 2024

Source: COMET Report, CM L008b, extracted 11 March 2025

100. Overall, beneficiaries of the WFP crisis response preferred cash-based transfers over e-vouchers. Mobile money transfers offer beneficiaries flexibility to purchase food items from different types of vendors¹⁵⁰ for better quality, prices or service than e-vouchers. With e-voucher assistance, beneficiaries were limited to a restricted number of WFP-contracted retailers, at times providing low quality goods that beneficiaries were obligated to accept. E-voucher assistance also involved problems with transactions, long waits and sometimes overcrowded retail points (at times at a considerable distance from rural home communities). Importantly, e-vouchers also involved a cost and time burden for some vulnerable groups, in accessing retailers and transporting heavy food items. Beneficiaries with mobility issues (such as the elderly and people with disabilities), pregnant women and women who headed households with young children had to arrange for others to collect the ration on their behalf. Interviewees reported that this occasionally necessitated informal payments or sharing of the goods.¹⁵¹

101. The evaluation stakeholders indicated that the transfer value was not aligned with the differing prices of food and transport costs around the country, which led to households in some more remote districts and counties failing to receive the same food basket assistance as elsewhere.^{152,153} Further, WFP did not adjust food basket values in accordance with rising food prices. Even though WFP research indicated that year-on-year food inflation was 25.5 percent in 2023-2024,¹⁵⁴ price increases in food baskets did not meet the minimum threshold of 20 percent increase overall needed to trigger adjustment.

Finding 16: WFP capacity strengthening support to the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) contributed to improvements in the quality and speed of post-crisis assessments in the short term, including better data collection tools and digitization efforts. However, these outcomes were not sustained after support ceased, and NDMA's post-crisis assessment capacity has since diminished due to funding, staffing and equipment constraints.

102. In the area of crisis response, WFP provided targeted capacity strengthening support to NDMA to improve post-crisis assessment quality and efficiency (see Table 50 in Annex X). This included the deployment of an international consultant and provision of information technology equipment (such as tablets) to support the digitization of rapid needs assessments. According to interviewees and available documentation, this support led to short-term improvements in data collection methods and assessment efficiency, reducing reliance on paper-based systems and enhancing real-time data capture. This contributed to improved data accuracy and reduced time required for field assessments.

103. NDMA reverted to manual data collection methods following the cessation of technical and financial support from WFP in 2021 (primarily due to funding constraints). During the 2023 flood response,

¹⁵⁰ CBT in theory allows purchases direct from food producers, or in local informal daily or weekly food markets but most households used small and medium sized retailers.

¹⁵¹ Focus groups with beneficiaries.

¹⁵² Overall, the cost of transport is the main factor contributing to the significant difference between wholesale prices in remote rural areas and those in Monrovia. See: Government of Liberia. 2018. [Liberia National Rice Development Strategy II 2018-2030](#).

¹⁵³ The decentralized evaluation presented examples of where THRs in some locations (including Pleebo and Saclepea) were effectively halved due to the implications of higher prices leading to situations where beneficiary households had to halve and share 25 kg bags of rice, impacting negatively upon household and community relations; see WFP. 2024. [Liberia, Cash-Based Transfers Pilot 2021: Evaluation](#).

¹⁵⁴ WFP and Government of Liberia. 2024. Market Monitoring Bulletin, April.

assessments were again conducted on paper, leading to data entry errors, inclusion errors and the need for two rounds of verification. These operational inefficiencies indicate that the gains in efficiency and data quality were not sustained. Further, not all data tablets remain functional, and NDMA continues to face severe resource constraints (limited staff, transport and IT infrastructure).

104. While interviewees provided qualitative insight into the loss of capacity, the evaluation also reviewed recent NDMA assessment reports and the role of WFP in data cleaning and validation. The evaluation confirmed that the WFP research, assessment and monitoring (RAM) unit remained actively involved in processing NDMA data, suggesting that national ownership and institutionalization of these functions has not occurred. The lack of sustainability is linked not only to funding shortfalls but also to an absence of a formal exit or transition strategy, limited institutional anchoring of digital systems, and insufficient contingency planning for equipment maintenance and staff retention. This points to the need for a more deliberate design of capacity strengthening efforts, with sustainability measures embedded from the outset.

SO4: Health commodity stock management and supply chains

Finding 17: WFP improved distribution frequency, accountability and inventory accuracy by shifting its common services focus towards health commodity supply chain management. These improvements have enhanced medicine availability and contributed to health system performance, though challenges remain with cold chain infrastructure, data systems and transport logistics.

105. Beginning in May 2020, WFP played a key enabling role in Liberia’s humanitarian and health response, providing essential common services to government institutions and humanitarian partners. Support included digital platforms for beneficiary management, warehousing, transportation and broader logistics and supply chain support.

106. Cargo transported under SO4 during the CSP fluctuated between fewer than a hundred metric tons in 2021 to more than 700 in 2024 (Table 20). In 2022 and 2023 WFP provided the logistics backbone for the national response to the COVID-19 pandemic – supporting the distribution of personal protective equipment, vaccines and medical equipment. The comparative advantage of WFP stemmed from its established logistics infrastructure and ability to rapidly deploy services in coordination with government and health actors. As a result, the organization helped ensure timely and equitable distribution of critical medical supplies across the country during the pandemic.

Table 20: Cargo transported (metric tons) under SO4

	Planned	Actual
2021	100	91.5
2022	100	435
2023	2,500	305
2024	3000	710.3

Source: Liberia output results per strategic objective over the CSP period

107. The role of WFP in cargo transport continued beyond the immediate pandemic period, supporting the health supply chain system through services such as last-mile delivery and warehouse management for health commodities. The closure of the WFP Zwedru field office, however, marked a reduction in localized logistics and field-level support in southeastern Liberia. This drawdown reflected a strategic shift in the WFP service portfolio, refocusing efforts on addressing structural gaps in national health commodity supply chains. As a result, 2023 data in Table 20 show a substantial drop against a high planned target. In 2024, the increase from 2023 was linked to more frequent distributions and growth in the supply of health commodities. Despite drawing down important common services infrastructure, WFP was able to refocus to supply health commodities in Liberia at increased levels. Notably, in its first year managing health commodities in 2023, WFP was able to achieve three distribution cycles in a year - up from only two the previous year. By 2024, WFP achieved four distribution cycles.

108. A key area of intervention was WFP support to the central medical store. WFP provided technical support in improving inventory management, storage conditions and dispatch operations. Support

addressed key systemic gaps in Liberia’s health supply chain – ranging from poor visibility and forecasting to inadequate storage and dispatch practices – helping to establish a more reliable, transparent and efficient system for managing essential health commodities. WFP support targeted standardized procedures¹⁵⁵ and enhanced the visibility of stock flows across the supply chain. This effort produced important outcomes, including more accurate inventories of commodities, regular updates of commodity data, no product losses and fewer expiries (see Table 21).

Table 21: SO4 Key performance indicators 2023-2024

KPI	Target	Q4-2023	Q1-2024	Q2-2024	Q3-2024	Q4-2024
Product handling (damage)	<0.1%	0.000008%	0.000001%	0.00004%	0.00004%	0.00051
Product count accuracy/accuracy of stock on hand information	95%	40%	40%	61%	82%	86%
Product expiry	<5%	11%	7%	0.13%	0.74%	0.22%
Shipment received and inputted timely into WMS (mSupply)	72 hrs	14%	56%	50%	88%	100%
Product loss	<5%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Source: Country office key performance indicator (KPI) SO4 monitoring data.

109. WFP also supported the roll-out of digital inventory systems such as mSupply or OpenLMIS. Shipments received and inputted into mSupply within 72 hours increased from 14 percent in 2023 (Q4) to 50 percent in 2024 (Q2), assisting real-time tracking of commodities, reducing stockouts and improving data for forecasting.¹⁵⁶ The improved information systems support accountability measures enacted by WFP through more accurate inventory and better stock management measures made a considerable contribution to accounting for and saving stocks of important health commodities in Liberia. At the time WFP took over central medical store operations, for example, interviewees reported that the warehouse contained an estimated USD 2-3 million in inventory while an inventory later led by WFP discovered USD 20 million worth of health commodities.

110. WFP also played a pivotal role in strengthening last-mile and long-haul delivery – last-mile delivery in Montserrado and Margibi counties and long-haul delivery in 13 counties.¹⁵⁷ This intervention was intended to ensure that essential medicines, reproductive health kits and other medicines reached county health teams and peripheral health facilities. Prior to this support, transport planning was often fragmented, with limited coordination between national and county levels, resulting in delays, missed deliveries and inefficiencies in distribution. WFP addressed these challenges by offering technical assistance in logistics planning, route optimization and delivery scheduling, working with private transport partners to create more structured and predictable distribution models. The country office pursued three important strategies to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of transporting health commodities: (1) sharing a distribution plan with the Ministry of Health ahead of time for delivery considering road conditions and the rainy season; (2) increasing delivery using private transporters to support WFP light vehicles; and (3) significantly improving the communication with Ministry of Health focal points in the field to address any challenges on time and prevent shortage whenever possible.

111. Interviews with health sector stakeholders indicated that regular feedback and updates provided by WFP helped partners with planning. For example, if government partners failed to make requests for their quarterly quota of health commodities, WFP proactively pursued that request to ensure that programmes at the Ministry of Health made timely requests to access life-saving drugs. “[The programme] has surely contributed to health outcomes in the different programmes it supports. But of course, this is in the context of the broader health system,” explained one interviewee. “If [a patient] is able to get access to a health facility and getting a proper diagnosis – assuming that happens – they can now more probably get

¹⁵⁵ See: WFP standard operating procedures for central medical stores management.

¹⁵⁶ WFP Warehouse KPI Q4-2023 and WFP Warehouse KPI Q1-2024.

¹⁵⁷ WFP transports health commodities across the country via two legs: 1) last-mile, which distributes to all health facilities in Margibi and Montserrado counties; and 2) long haul, which distributes commodities to depots in the 13 remaining counties.

the right quality medication, and then it can [contribute to] improve health outcomes.” Research – both from west Africa¹⁵⁸ and elsewhere on the continent¹⁵⁹ – confirms that supply chain optimization can enhance health outcomes.

Finding 18: Most capacity strengthening activities supporting health commodity common services were focused on training local staff and creating systems to support health commodity supply chains. Although these are currently managed and operated by WFP, work done during the CSP sets the stage for a potential handover based on stronger government capacities within the public health system.

112. As part of its support to Liberia’s central management store and health commodity supply chain activities, WFP has been strengthening stock management and supply chain systems. While these activities remain under WFP operational control, they are being undertaken as part of a long-term effort to enhance the operational effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of national health commodity stock and supply systems.

113. These activities fall within capacity strengthening in the organizational domain (see Annex X), in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. WFP provides extensive technical assistance in areas such as forecasting and quantification of medical commodities, inventory and warehouse management and distribution planning for essential supplies. To improve information flow and decision making, WFP has supported the deployment and strengthening of digital systems, while also training national pharmacists and county-level staff in real-time stock tracking and reporting. Since WFP assumed management of the central management store there has been an 84 percent increase in local staff – Liberian pharmacists were hired and trained to work in the central management store.¹⁶⁰ WFP also plays an active role in health supply chain coordination platforms through technical working groups and annual review workshops, contributing to coordination and planning. While WFP interviewees indicated intentions to begin implementing an exit or transition plan by June 2025, the evaluation found limitations in handover planning, fundamentally in how to determine whether the system will be handed over to the Ministry of Health or another private entity and addressing subsequent transition challenges.¹⁶¹

EQ 2.2. To what extent did WFP contribute to the achievement of cross-cutting aims of empowering women and girls and advancing equality and protection and accountability to affected people, and nutrition integration into programme activities?

Finding 19: The country office was successful in ensuring equal access and participation of women and girls, and other vulnerable groups across its programmes. Progress on addressing the underlying structural barriers and social norms that perpetuate inequalities between men and women – and contribute to food insecurity – was more limited.

114. The country office consistently worked to ensure that women and girls, and other vulnerable groups had equal access to and participation in programme activities. Most interventions, however, focused on inclusion and access rather than addressing structural inequalities or social norms that perpetuate food insecurity.

115. Across livelihoods and resilience building activities, the country office prioritized women in activities supporting enhanced livelihoods, income generation and financial autonomy. As shown in Table 22, 64.1 percent of programme participants were female, meeting or slightly exceeding planned targets across all major programme areas. Stakeholders attributed the increased participation of women and girls in smallholder agriculture and school feeding to the country office’s awareness raising efforts and targeted messaging on the importance of women and girls’ inclusiveness in programming.

¹⁵⁸ Chung, T et al. 2022. Decision-Aware Learning for Optimizing Health Supply Chains: <https://arxiv.org/abs/2211.08507>

¹⁵⁹ Steele, P. et al. [The Role of the Health Supply Chain in Facilitating Universal Health Coverage Across East Africa.](#)

¹⁶⁰ WFP Warehouse KPI Q4-2023 and WFP Warehouse KPI Q1-2024.

¹⁶¹ In addition, the programme’s success has created interest from USAID in expanding support to include vaccine and bed-net supply chains, which would delay an eventual exit strategy.

116. Women smallholder farmers during focus groups reported increased income and greater financial independence in their households, as well as enhanced confidence and more active participation in community-level discussions. In a few cases, these changes contributed to shifts in household dynamics and access to credit and markets.

Table 22: Percent of female beneficiaries by programme area (2019-2024)

	Programme area	Planned		Total	% of Female	Actual		Total	% of Female
		Female	Male			Female	Male		
SO1	Resilience / asset creation and livelihood	105,750	59,250	165,000	64.1%	39,013	20,794	59,807	65.2%
	School meals	231,350	213,650	445,000	52%	672,245	487,629	1,159,874	58%
	Smallholder agricultural market support activities	82,990	84,660	167,650	49.5%	22,633	20,610	43,243	52.3%
SO2	General distribution	1,471,458	980,972	2,452,430	60%	1,955,410	1,317,391	3,272,801	59.8%

Source: Annual country reports (2019 to 2024)

117. The evaluation found that considerable efforts have been made through resilience activities to include women within the executives of farmer-based organizations – a key domain for decision making in agriculture that is typically dominated by men. Estimates made by WFP staff – confirmed through sampling carried out during focus groups with farmers – are that the current participation of women in executive roles reaches around 30 percent. Further, cooperatives supported through local procurement for HGSF were also inclusive of women, and a few cooperatives (for example, War Affected Women and Destiny Women) were led by women. According to WFP reporting, by 2024 the number of women-led cooperatives supplying food for school meals had tripled. These cooperatives procured over 1,313 metric tons of rice, pulses, *garri* (a type of flour) and palm oil from 15,110 smallholder farmers, injecting more than USD 1.6 million into the local economy, much of it generated and controlled by women. Despite these gains, the extent of women’s influence within farmer-based organizations varied.

118. In school feeding, available third-party monitoring data indicate that 52 percent of WFP Liberia HGSF schools have food management committees where at least one third of the leadership are women.¹⁶² Overall, school feeding activities are implemented to benefit both girls and boys. To support girls' participation, WFP coordinated with school authorities to align distribution schedules with attendance patterns and carried out awareness campaigns to encourage families to keep girls in school.

119. In addition, WFP has taken a lead in promoting the use of energy-efficient stoves (eco-stoves) in 16 schools with the intention to expand to all existing 180 schools. Other school feeding actors were reported by interviews to rely on traditional stoves. Though the improved eco-stoves have only been distributed recently, they offer numerous benefits to women cooks. Eco-stoves reduce cook time, as well as the time and physical burden of firewood collection for women and girls. They also lower exposure to harmful smoke during cooking.

120. Despite these gains in empowering women and girls and advancing equality related, the school feeding programming lacked complementary components such as community engagement to address differential expectations around education for boys and girls (for example, social norms, socioeconomic factors and structural barriers that shape access, retention and learning outcomes for girls) or unpaid care burdens for men and women. Focus groups noted that cooking responsibilities in supported schools were carried out exclusively by women volunteers. While some women reported gaining social recognition from these roles, they were unpaid and involved increased workload, limiting their time for income-generating

¹⁶² Available TPM data for 2024.

activities. These findings point to limited attention to the broader social norms that shape women's and girls' participation. This was also reflected in WFP monitoring data, which showed that only 26 percent of the target for social behaviour change interventions relating to school feeding was achieved, indicating a missed opportunity to engage communities in shifting discriminatory attitudes and practices.¹⁶³

121. In crisis response, the country office used sex- and vulnerability-disaggregated data to prioritize assistance for households headed by women, widows, and other vulnerable groups of women who often face heightened food insecurity during emergencies. General distributions under SO2 achieved 59.75 percent participation of women and girls.

Finding 20: Across indicators on accountability to affected people, the evaluation found very high performance related to safety and relatively high performance related to access and respect. However, poor communication and engagement created gaps in beneficiaries' knowledge of targeting and selection criteria, entitlements under various programmes, implementation logic and timelines.

122. The monitoring data for accountability to affected people (Table 23) suggests very high performance across indicators related to safety. Primary data also found no evidence of safety concerns among affected populations. Monitoring data on accountability to affected people show that WFP performed somewhat less well in indicators related to access and respect, with a 10 percent gap between planned and actual outcomes. Fieldwork did surface issues related to accessing assistance for crisis response, especially food assistance distributed via e-vouchers and local retailers, which could require beneficiaries to travel long distances at considerable personal effort and cost.

123. The lowest level of performance documented in the monitoring data for accountability to affected people is related to beneficiary access to, and understanding of, information about WFP programmes. The evaluation found gaps in this regard across WFP programmes, with room for improvement in the country office communication of essential details on programming to beneficiaries (and at times cooperating partners). Beneficiaries participating in the evaluation indicated that they were often unaware of targeting and selection criteria, entitlements under various programmes, implementation logic and timelines.

Table 23: Available data for accountability to affected people indicators as of 2024

	Planned	Actual
Beneficiaries reporting no safety concerns as a result of their engagement in WFP programmes	99%	100%
Beneficiaries who report they experienced no barriers to accessing food and nutrition assistance	98%	89%
Beneficiaries who report being treated with respect as a result of their engagement in programmes	98%	87%
Beneficiaries reporting they were provided accessible information about WFP programmes (inc. protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA))	73%	80%

Source: COMET CM-L009b, extracted 11 March 2025

124. One important achievement in the area of accountability to affected people during the CSP period was the creation of a formalized community feedback mechanism hotline,¹⁶⁴ which was established by the country office in 2023.¹⁶⁵ Staff indicate that awareness raising campaigns and posters have been used to inform beneficiaries – as well as wider communities – about the community feedback mechanism and its purpose. The evaluation found that general knowledge of the community feedback mechanism – that it exists, its purpose, and how to access it – was limited among beneficiaries. Further, there were no signs of posters or other publicly located visual tools promoting the community feedback mechanism at any of the sites sampled during fieldwork. Community feedback mechanism contact information is available on SCOPE

¹⁶³ Monitoring data for indicator E.4.1.

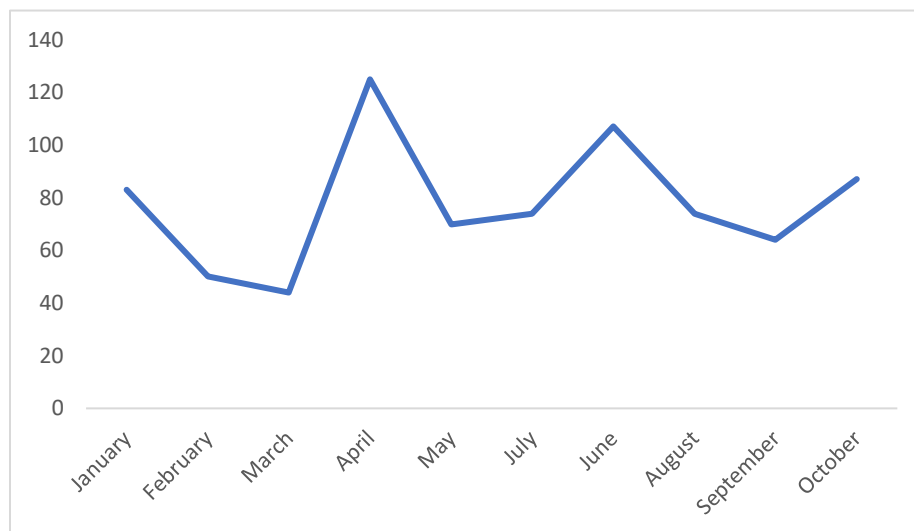
¹⁶⁴ In the form of a toll-free number where WFP representative could be reached directly on Orange and MTN networks.

¹⁶⁵ WFP. 2023. Annual Country Report 2023.

cards,¹⁶⁶ though these cards are usually kept and controlled by the leadership of food management committees.

125. Data on community feedback mechanism calls in Figure 15 show considerable month-to-month fluctuation in the use of the hotline, but no discernible increase of overall use during 2024 (the only year for which data were available). This is consistent with evaluation findings from interviewees - that beneficiaries usually prefer direct communication with WFP or cooperating partner staff, as opposed to using the community feedback mechanism.¹⁶⁷

Figure 15: Monthly number of community feedback mechanism hotline calls (2024)



Source: CFM 2024 data provided by country office

Of the 780 total calls received through the community feedback mechanism between January and October 2024, around three quarters (76.5 percent) were information requests and the remainder (23.5 percent) complaints. Troublingly, 51.9 percent of complaints were related to fraud. The next highest category of complaints fell into the broad category of assistance requests (41 percent). Focus groups with beneficiaries noted that, among those who did use the community feedback mechanism, there were many instances when complaints were left unanswered. This lack of response by WFP was said by interviewees to disincentivize further use of the hotline.

EQ 2.2a To what extent did WFP adhere to humanitarian principles in its humanitarian response?

Finding 21: There is evidence that CSP activities, including activities in humanitarian and crisis response, broadly adhered to humanitarian principles. However, the evaluation found concerns around the principle of humanity, particularly the importance of communicating or engaging with affected populations. Regarding impartiality, risks related to the inclusion and exclusion of certain groups undermined the equitable delivery of assistance.

126. Humanitarian principles – humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence – underpin all WFP operations. The evaluation focused on the principles of humanity and impartiality as the most relevant principles to the CSPE. In terms of the humanity principle, WFP work aimed to give attention to populations most susceptible to food insecurity across its resilience and crisis response activities. A lack of proper communication and beneficiary engagement (see EQ 2.2), however, undermined application of the principle by not sufficiently respecting and preserving the dignity of those assisted. Failures to clearly communicate expectations for implementation and a lack of sufficient engagement of communities throughout

¹⁶⁶ More recently, two major telecommunications carriers are printed on the back of SCOPE cards.

¹⁶⁷ As a result, most feedback was channelled informally through community leaders or implementing partners, leading to inefficient, undocumented and untracked communication chains.

interventions, reduced beneficiaries' full participation as rights-holders and partners in programming – leading to frustration, mistrust and a sense of exclusion.

127. Proactive inclusiveness of vulnerable groups helped ensure that programming was provided impartially, based largely on need, and without discrimination between or within affected populations. The inclusion and exclusion risks noted above (see EQ 2.1 and EQ 2.2), however, undercut the humanitarian principle of impartiality, as some vulnerable individuals and groups were excluded – even if unintentionally – due to factors such as physical inaccessibility to food distribution and retailers, registration issues related to cash-based transfers (see EQ 2.1 SO2) and inadequate targeting of out-of-school children (see EQ 2.1 SO1).

EQ 2.2b To what extent and in what ways did WFP contribute to expected outcomes in a manner that avoided or minimized negative environmental impacts?

Finding 22: While there was limited attention to environmental considerations in the CSP design, and no data was collected on indicators measuring progress towards environmental outcomes, the country office did make notable efforts to include climate and environmental considerations in programming.

128. The CSP indicates that: “In line with WFP’s environmental policy, activities will be screened to ensure that negative environmental and social impacts arising from such activities are avoided, minimized or mitigated.”¹⁶⁸ However, interviews with the country office indicated that proactive environmental screening or assessments were not systematically incorporated into programme design and the country office does not currently collect associated data.

129. Nevertheless, the evaluation found evidence of activities to promote environmental sustainability being implemented during the CSP. This included sensitizing farmers to climate-smart agriculture, training in sustainable land use and water conservation, and crop diversification to reduce soil depletion and reduce vulnerability to climate change. Local procurement for HGSF reduced the length of global supply chains, reducing the carbon footprint associated with reliance on imported foods that tend to be produced in high-input low-sustainability farms.

130. In some cases, cooperatives sourced food commodities at some distance from where that food was being distributed¹⁶⁹ and some commodities were not available in sufficient quantities (pulses and rice) in their localities and thus were transported from further afield and at times across borders. This supports the strategy of encouraging inland valley swamp rehabilitation for local food production.

131. Finally, the improved cooking stoves (mentioned above) distributed for school feeding offer important environmental benefits, including reduced fuel consumption (which reduces the time devoted largely by women and girls to collection of fuelwoods, and the associated protection risks) and consequent diminished environmental impact from deforestation and lower greenhouse gas emissions.

EQ 2.3. To what extent are achievements under the CSP likely to be sustainable, from the following perspectives: institutional (including capacities and systems of government and civil society actors), financial and social?

Finding 23: The sustainability of outcomes achieved under the CSP is supported by WFP efforts to institutionalize food security assessments and emergency preparedness systems, but remains constrained by Liberia’s limited institutional capacity and continued reliance on WFP and donor support to sustain key government programmes and national strategies.

132. The sustainability of the CSP is supported by its strategic shift toward systems institutional

¹⁶⁸ CSP, p. 15.

¹⁶⁹ For example, the cooperative Destiny Women, which is based in Montserrado county, sourced rice from producers in Lofa county.

strengthening and government capacity development, particularly in food security analysis and emergency preparedness. The collaboration of WFP with government partners has reportedly helped to institutionalize national food security assessments, such as the CFSNS and other rapid assessments, and strengthen rapid assessment tools and analytical systems. In recent years, support has ceased, which has, according to interviewees, negatively affected the Government of Liberia's long-term ability to respond to emerging shocks.

133. The overall institutional sustainability of the CSP is challenged by Liberia's limited institutional capacity and chronic funding constraints. Many of the government systems and programmes that WFP supports – such as the national school feeding programme, health logistics and social protection registries – still rely heavily on technical support and operational infrastructure support from WFP and partners, as well as donor funding. In key sectors, such as school feeding, national strategies remain underdeveloped or inconsistently implemented, raising questions about whether government partners can absorb and sustain WFP-supported interventions in the medium- to long-term.

Finding 24: The WFP agricultural development model focused on building community capacities through local farmers' groups. However, resilience programming is limited in its scalability, and the sustainability of resilience outcomes has been undercut by short project durations and weak organizational or financial capacities among farmer-based organizations.

134. At the community-level, WFP interventions focused on building local capacities through community structures. WFP efforts to promote smallholder production has generated positive results, which look set to continue, helping build the capacities of smallholder farmers. Both WFP stakeholders and government partners reported that farmer-based organizations “graduated” in their levels of production, organization and marketing to be able to succeed without WFP support. In two instances, the evaluation was able to visit such high-performing organizations, and farmers indicated that they have been able to expand production, maintain their equipment, and even invest in additional equipment independently of WFP support. However, there are limitations in that 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. Interviewees noted that resilience projects of six to nine months in duration are too short to enact the type of change required to effectively rehabilitate or build new productive assets, train farmers and galvanize group cohesion among farmer-based organizations, as well as build the organizational and management skills that many farmers' groups lack. Other evaluations¹⁷⁰ of resilience programming also noted challenges in mobilizing and sustaining community structures (especially due to challenges related to site selection noted under EQ 2.1), and interviews with cooperating partners still active in areas that received resilience support suggest that they have seen a drop-off in participation in many farmers' groups.

135. There are indications that achievements in supporting agricultural value chains may not be sustained due to the lack of organizational management, social cohesion and governance among farmer-based organizations. The organizations also have limited financial or management capacity for maintaining the productive assets and processing equipment provided with WFP support. Government and cooperating partner interviewees gave examples of farmer-based organizations that had been provided with agricultural equipment, but the equipment had not been maintained. More positively, as noted above (see EQ 2.1) local procurement from cooperatives for HGSF supports market-driven pro-smallholder farmer business models, providing an opportunity to incentivize sustainable and scalable improvements in agricultural production.

Finding 25: School feeding shows increasing institutional and financial sustainability due to increased prioritization of HGSF by the Government of Liberia, but without more robust monitoring and training the low capacities of many WFP-supported food management committees threaten to

¹⁷⁰ FAO. 2023. [“Evaluation of the project ‘Sustaining peace and improving social cohesion through the promotion of rural employment’”](#) and UN Women. 2023. [“Final Evaluation Report Of The Project “Sustaining Peace And Reconciliation Through Strengthening Land Governance And Dispute Resolution Mechanisms In Liberia”](#).”

undermine the social sustainability of school feeding activities.

136. As previously noted, (see EQ 1.2) school feeding has become a priority for the Government of Liberia. Interviewees reported that, in conjunction with commitments to review the national policy on school feeding, budget allocations and other commitments, the Government intends to work on legislation that commits school feeding into law. This signals an institutional commitment to sustainability, with particular interest among government stakeholders in HGSE.

137. In terms of the social sustainability of school feeding in Liberia, food management committees are critical community-level actors. However, in some schools there are weaknesses that pose challenges to the smooth running and sustainability of the programme. Although WFP carries out capacity strengthening with food management committee members at the beginning of each academic year (for example, on calculating rations, stocktaking and hygiene), stakeholders indicate that many committees continue to need ongoing close supervision and support (from third-party monitoring and WFP), as they lack the ability to administer systems related to accounting, and stock and financial management. This is partly due to limited familiarity with new technologies (and connectivity), as well as limited literacy and financial literacy needed to complete forms, track stock balances or manage financial tasks in transactions with cooperatives.

138. The evaluation found that most school authorities could not specify the number of feeding days that they were entitled to. Some were not able to indicate their account balance while others found it difficult to explain waybills. Many food management committees noted that they defer to cooperatives when it comes to understanding what stocks they are entitled to, what prices they should be paying and the state of their account (that is, funds on their SCOPE cards).

139. Recent integration of third-party monitoring (March 2024) has helped to identify and communicate problems to WFP. Focus groups with food management committees and interviews with third-party monitors suggested that, even though annual training has been carried out, there is a need for a greater investment at the school level. Importantly, focus groups with food management committees and cooperatives also suggested that schools rarely know how much of each commodity is to be supplied to them due to late – or absent – communication of the distribution plan. School and cooperative interviewees and third-party monitors report having suggested to WFP (for example, via phone calls, WhatsApp, in person at trainings) that early communication of distribution plans to schools can support overall accountability.

EQ 2.4. To what extent did the CSP build linkages across WFP humanitarian, peacebuilding and development initiatives?

Finding 26: WFP work in Liberia prioritizes long-term resilience, which is complemented by short-term emergency response, however, the evaluation found few examples of links along the humanitarian-development nexus.

140. The evaluation found limited linkages between the work of WFP along the humanitarian-development nexus. For example, while assistance programmes responding to caterpillar infestations and the effects of the war in Ukraine targeted farmers, they did not target those included in WFP resilience programmes; nor were beneficiaries targeted under crisis response then linked to resilience programming. Although peacebuilding was not a strategic outcome of the CSP, the evaluation did find that joint programming enabled WFP to work across the development-peace nexus. External evaluations of two peacebuilding projects found that WFP helped contribute to¹⁷¹ livelihoods among youth, combined with increased youth engagement in peacebuilding activities, improving social cohesion among young women

and men in the targeted areas, thereby addressing some of the root causes of conflict.^{172,173}

2.3. EQ 3: To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently?

EQ 3.1. To what extent were the CSP outputs delivered and related budget spent within a timely manner?

Finding 27: WFP Liberia faced persistent challenges in achieving output targets. While output performance improved modestly over time, overall delivery remained constrained. Underachievement was partly driven by funding delays. Operational delays, however – across procurement, crisis response, resilience activity roll-outs and school feeding deliveries – also contributed to underachievement, irrespective of resource availability.

141. Table 24 shows improvements in meeting output targets each year across the CSP. However, as indicated, the country office faced considerable challenges in achieving output targets, with only 52.8 percent of output targets reaching 90 percent or more of their target (high achievement) in 2024.

Table 24: Status of achievement¹⁷⁴ of output targets by year (for outputs with data 2020-2024)

	Low achievement	Moderate achievement	High achievement
2020	47.1%	17.6%	35.3%
2021	54.3%	11.4%	34.3%
2022	43.9%	14.6%	41.5%
2023	30.6%	25.0%	44.4%
2024	33.3%	13.9%	52.8%

Source: ACRs 2020-2024

142. SO1 and SO2 had the highest number of output indicators that reached high achievement. But overall, all strategic outcomes faced significant challenges in meeting output targets, as shown in Table 24. It should be noted that, while attainment of corporate output indicators under SO4 was low,¹⁷⁵ these indicators are not fully reflective of the CSP's focus on strengthening national health supply chain systems. As noted above (see EQ 2.1), WFP work in health commodity supply chain management improved distribution frequency, accountability and inventory accuracy.

Table 25: Budget and expenditure relative to status of achievement¹⁷⁶ of output targets by strategic objective (for outputs with data 2020-2024)

	Allocated budget (USD)	Expenditure (USD)	Low achievement	Moderate achievement	High achievement
SO1	18,944,023	14,313,092	35.4%	19%	45.7%
SO2	36,031,977	34,250,783	61%	11.7%	27.3%
SO3	818,265	650,002	35%	12.5%	52.5%
SO4	8,932,601	5,716,447	68%	10.7%	21.3%

Source: ACRs 2020-2024

¹⁷² FAO. 2023. [Evaluation of The Project: Sustaining Peace and Improving Social Cohesion through The Promotion of Rural Employment.](#)

¹⁷³ UN Women. 2023. [Final Evaluation Report of The Project: Sustaining Peace and Reconciliation Through Strengthening Land Governance and Dispute Resolution Mechanisms in Liberia.](#)

¹⁷⁴ Low achievement denotes less than 50 percent of output targets achieved; moderate achievement denotes 50-90 percent of output targets achieved, and high achievement denotes higher than 90 percent of output targets achieved.

¹⁷⁵ Notably in total cargo transported (653.35 mt delivered versus 3,000 mt planned) and emergency ICT systems established (0 achieved versus 1 planned).

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

143. SO1 showed relatively strong performance, with 45.7 percent of outputs rated as high achievement with about three quarters of utilized funds (Table 26); lower expenditure levels partly reflect late confirmation of donor contributions, which delayed activity implementation and fund utilization – as noted above, nearly 23 percent of contributions in 2024 were confirmed only in the final quarter. For SO2, there were high levels of resourcing and expenditures, but it achieved only 39 percent of outputs at moderate or high levels, indicating suboptimal resource-to-output conversion. Financial narrative data from 2020 and 2021 corroborate this finding, showing that, while SO2 received large, one-off contributions during emergency responses (for example, COVID-19), implementation was disrupted by the need to rapidly restructure CSP activities, and later by a decline in flexible funding.¹⁷⁷ Delivery was also affected by operational challenges. For SO3, the 2020 and 2021 financial narratives confirm low levels of available funding and reduced investment in institutional strengthening activities.¹⁷⁸ SO4, with the lowest utilization rate (64 percent), also showed the weakest performance (32 percent). In 2022, 80 percent of SO4 funding was received in the final quarter, intended to align with delayed implementation of government initiatives. Performance was also impacted by a prolonged wet season.¹⁷⁹

144. Output delays over the course of the CSP included:¹⁸⁰

- **Procurement delays in emergency response (the COVID-19 household food support programme (COHFSP)):** Significant delays occurred during the COHFSP, initially intended as a three-month response starting in May 2020 but extended into late 2021.¹⁸¹
- **Delays in cash-based transfer implementation:** Programming (including for take-home rations and emerging crises and resilience payments to food assistance for assets beneficiaries) faced technical errors that resulted in payment delays.¹⁸²
- **Delays in e-voucher implementation:** WFP faced several challenges during e-voucher redemptions, particularly in areas like Gbarpolu and Maryland counties where there were no local retailers, poor network connectivity and difficult terrain. In 2022, operational challenges related to the rainy season contributed to a 54 percent expenditure rate, with delivery of food to some sites taking over two months to complete (“for an operation that would typically take a maximum of two days during the dry season”).¹⁸³
- **Delays in implementation of resilience programming:** Resilience programming often suffered from delays in start-up, mobilization or formation of farmer-based organizations, training and provision of inputs, delaying farming activities (again, into rainy season). Other evaluations of resilience programming have noted operational delays.¹⁸⁴ In addition, in 2023, WFP delayed implementation intentionally to ensure alignment with pending agricultural policy.¹⁸⁵
- **Frequent delays in school-level food delivery:** Focus groups with food management committees revealed that school food deliveries were often late, sometimes arriving weeks after the school term

¹⁷⁷ 2020 ACR and 2021 ACR.

¹⁷⁸ 2020 ACR and 2021 ACR.

¹⁷⁹ 2022 ACR.

¹⁸⁰ see EQ 2.1 for more detailed discussion.

¹⁸¹ Interviews with WFP country office, government partners and ACR 2021.

¹⁸² Interviews with WFP country office, government partners and focus groups with beneficiaries; also see analysis under EQ 2.1.

¹⁸³ 2022 ACR.

¹⁸⁴ FAO. 2023. “Evaluation of the project ‘Sustaining peace and improving social cohesion through the promotion of rural employment’”: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/0496d25b-919d-482d-a2a1-0e91d78fcd25/content>. Accessed 6 January 2025 and UN Women. 2023. “Final Evaluation Report Of The Project ‘Sustaining Peace And Reconciliation Through Strengthening Land Governance And Dispute Resolution Mechanisms In Liberia’”: <https://gate.unwomen.org/EvaluationDocument/Download?evaluationDocumentID=10163>. Accessed 3 March 2025.

¹⁸⁵ 2023 ACR.

began. The assessment and selection of farmer cooperatives delayed the start of HGSF.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁶ 2023 ACR.

EQ 3.2. To what extent was the CSP delivered in a cost-efficient manner?

Finding 28: The CSP period saw significant variations in expenditure-per-beneficiary, with sharp increases in 2023–2024 due to rising operational costs.

145. Table 24 shows that most CSP funds were spent by 17 March 2025. The utilization rate ranged from almost full under SO2, to three quarters under SO1 and SO3, and 64 percent for SO4. According to interviews with country office staff, SO4 utilization was low due to delays in staffing, as well as cost savings in hiring (for example, staffing positions at lower levels of pay than anticipated). In addition, the country office notes that health commodity stock management and supply chain operations were also budgeted with “wide margins” to provide a financial buffer (rather than what appears to be underutilization).

Table 26: Utilization rate of allocated resource analysis overall and by strategic objective over CSP

SO	Focus areas	Allocated resources	Expenditure (USD)	Utilization rate
SO1	Resilience building	18,944,023	14,313,092	75.6%
SO2	Crisis response	36,031,977	34,250,783	95.1%
SO3	Resilience building	818,265	650,002	79.4%
SO4	Crisis response	8,932,601	5,716,447	64.0%
Total		64,726,866	54,930,324	84.9%

Source: Liberia country portfolio budget resource overview report as of 31 December 2024

146. For SO3, in the period between June 2020 and May 2022, WFP reprioritized direct implementation of humanitarian activities over enabling support. Even as the focus of the CSP returned to long-term resilience building and capacity strengthening post-COVID-19, capacity strengthening was limited. This meant that capacity strengthening funds that were available were not fully utilized (for example, capacity strengthening provided for NDMA during COVID-19 was discontinued as WFP shifted away from humanitarian work). In addition, the CFSNS that had been planned for 2022 (comprehensive food assessment is a key aspect of WFP capacity strengthening support in the area of data collection¹⁸⁷) was postponed until 2025 due to elections and replaced by a smaller-scale and less resource-intensive rapid food security livelihoods assessment.¹⁸⁸ Local capacity strengthening for community structures (see EQ 2.1 and EQ 2.3) was budgeted and recorded as resilience activities rather than under the capacity strengthening budget line. Hence, the capacity strengthening-specific funds appear unspent though the capacity strengthening-related work did occur.

147. Further, analysis under EQ 4.1 notes that the CSP was funded by donors, with most offering limited and short-term funding. The fragmented nature of donor contributions to the CSP has contributed to higher transaction costs relative to the total funding received. Managing multiple donor requirements entails significant administrative burdens, including tailored reporting, donor visibility efforts, coordination meetings and compliance with varied timelines and formats. This strains staff capacity in a context where the country office already faces operational delays and capacity limitations. Moreover, the lack of predictable, flexible multi-year funding hinders the ability of WFP to plan strategically, invest in systems strengthening and implement activities in a timely and efficient manner. This challenge is not unique to Liberia but aligns with broader findings across WFP operations, where fragmented funding has been shown to reduce efficiency and increase overheads relative to impact.¹⁸⁹

148. Table 26 below indicates that the annual expenditures-per-beneficiary for delivering school feeding and resilience activities and crisis response varied considerably over the course of the CSP. Overall, SO1 had lower average expenditures-per-beneficiary than did SO2, though both strategic outcomes saw expenditures-per-beneficiary considerably increased in 2023 and stay relatively high in 2024 – likely due to rising costs (for example, of food and fuel, as indicated in Section 1.2 Context of this report).

¹⁸⁷ This was one of only two activities covered by funding for SO3 in 2022.

¹⁸⁸ Government of Liberia. 2022. [Rapid Food Security Livelihoods Nutrition and Markets Assessment](#).

¹⁸⁹ WFP. 2020. [Strategic Evaluation of Funding WFP's Work](#).

Table 27: Expenditures-per-beneficiary for SO1 and SO2 (USD)

	SO1	SO2
2019	25	N/A
2020	2.9	17
2021	8	6.3
2022	9.4	5.2
2023	38.7	71
2024	23.6	24.4
Annual average	17.94	24.77

Source: COMET report CM-R015a; Liberia country portfolio budget resource overview report as of 5 April 2025

149. In Liberia and globally, WFP has shifted from food aid to food assistance in the form of cash transfers. CSP stakeholders (including beneficiaries) noted a strong preference for cash-based transfers over e-vouchers.¹⁹⁰ While e-vouchers may be preferable in areas with weak markets, the evaluation found that e-vouchers require the establishment of vendor networks, which increased administrative and logistical burdens, were less scalable and restricted beneficiary choice.

150. Table 28 indicates that cost-per-beneficiary for HGSF (implemented exclusively since 2023) is significantly higher than for traditional school feeding (implemented exclusively from 2019 to 2021). In part, this represents the higher relative cost of imported agricultural commodities versus those produced locally. Higher prices are due to limited market supply, high production and processing costs and poor infrastructure.¹⁹¹ In contrast, imported rice benefits from economies of scale, efficient logistics and lower production costs, making it more competitively priced despite transportation and customs fees.

Table 28: Cost analysis of home-grown school feeding versus traditional school feeding

	Total expenditure (USD)	Number of beneficiaries	Cost per beneficiary (USD)
Traditional SF (2019-2021)	5,588,817	948,095	5.89
Both (SF and HGSF) (2022)	1,351,853.09	143,253	9.44
HGSF (2023-2024)	5,173,021.41	173,433	29.83

Source: COMET Report CM-R015a, Extracted 19 March 2025; Liberia country portfolio budget resource overview report as of 5 April 2025

151. It should be noted that if cost efficiency was sacrificed by purchasing local food commodities for HGSF, this was done to yield greater development outcomes. This work is in line with WFP policies such as the Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy, which makes a strong case that higher procurement costs may be justifiable if programmatic objectives can be achieved through such purchases.¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ WFP. 2022. [Cash and In-Kind Transfers in Humanitarian Settings: A Review of Evidence and Knowledge Gaps](#), March 2022.

¹⁹¹ JICA. 2021. Liberia Competitiveness Analysis: Comparative Assessment of Local and Imported Rice Value Chains, Coalition for African Rice Development: https://riceforafrica.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Liberia-Competitiveness-analysis_20210808.pdf.

¹⁹² WFP. 2019. Local and Regional Food Procurement Policy (WFP/EB.2/2019/4-C, p. 15).

2.4. EQ 4: What are the critical factors, internal and external to WFP, explaining performance and results? What are the factors that explain WFP performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected by the CSP?

EQ 4.1. What extent was WFP able to mobilize adequate, timely, predictable and flexible resources to finance the CSP, and what internal or external factors have affected this (if any)?

Finding 29: While the CSP was strategically relevant, its original scope was overly ambitious relative to the resources available to the country office, in terms of staffing levels, anticipated funding, donor base, availability of long-term funding, etc. As a result, the CSP was underfunded – outside of large funding infusions for the COVID-19 response – and under-resourced. Funding shortfalls led to operational challenges, including the suspension and delayed resumption of HGFSF.

152. The CSP's broad scope required significant funding for implementation. The country portfolio needs are over USD 140 million (Table 29). Although WFP secured considerable financing through an influx of emergency funds during the COVID-19 pandemic response (Finding 14), fully funding the CSP remains difficult. About 53 percent of the CSP was funded as of 31 December 2024 with SO1 and SO3 funded below 50 percent (Table 30).

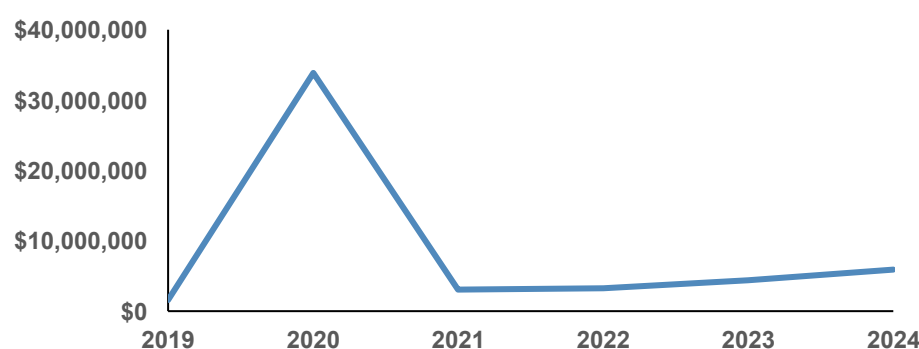
Table 29: Country portfolio funding needs overview (July 2019–February 2026)

Country portfolio analysis	USD/%
Country portfolio needs	USD 140,875,990.90
Country portfolio needs funded	USD 74,953,5409
Country portfolio needs funded %	53.2%
Shortfall (of country portfolio needs)	USD 65,922,451
% Shortfall (of country portfolio needs)	46.8%

Source: ACR1- Cumulative financial overview report and NBP-BR3.

153. Funding shortfalls through most years of the CSP have presented challenges to consistently maintain the strategic orientation of the CSP. Importantly, the WFP HGFSF programme was discontinued in 2019 in favour of the traditional school feeding (and then take-home rations were stopped in 2020 and early 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic). HGFSF was only restarted in 2022, after WFP was able to secure funding for programming that prioritized the use of locally produced commodities to replace imports in traditional school feeding. When it came to the shift by WFP towards an enabling role, financial constraints – low overall funding for the country office, coupled with relatively low donor interest in capacity strengthening specifically – inhibited the ability of WFP to implement capacity strengthening activities.

Figure 16: Funding levels throughout the CSP



Source: Annual resource situation report, extracted 28 October 2024

154. Table 30 below indicates that SO2 had the highest level of allocated contributions and is approximately two-thirds funded. Much of the funding was received as part of the COVID-19 response (see Figure 6), and overall funding during the CSP for crisis response remained low. School feeding and resilience activities (under SO1) were less than half funded relative to the needs-based plan, meaning that WFP flagship programming in Liberia faced significant resource constraints. Capacity strengthening (SO3) faced significant shortfalls relative to needs, which has limited the scope of institutional capacity strengthening activities that could be carried out with government partners over the course of the CSP. In contrast, with the highest level of funding relative to the needs-based plan, the provision of common services (SO4) had sufficient resources to support implementation, which contributed to strong performance (see EQ 2).

Table 30: Needs-based plan versus allocated contributions by strategic objective

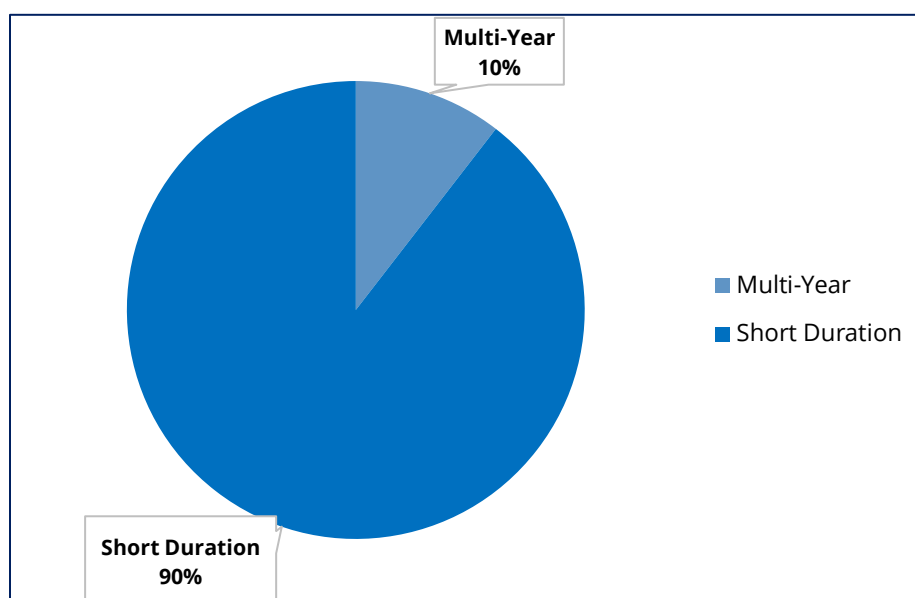
	Allocated contributions (USD)	Needs-based plan (USD)	% of needs-based plan funded
SO1	18,944,023	47,038,469	40.3%%
SO2	36,031,977	53,785,220	67.0%
SO3	818,265	305,5700	26.8%
SO4	8,932,601	16,514,908	54.1%

Source: ACR1- Cumulative financial overview report and NBP-BR3.

155. The Government of Liberia has been the largest contributor to the CSP, primarily through funding provided for the COHFSP (see Figure 6 above). Otherwise, the country office has a diversified donor base. A declining funding outlook globally (see Section 1.2 Context) is likely to impact the availability of future funding.

156. Single-year funding commitments from donors made up the vast majority of funding during the CSP (see Figure 17). This required shorter programming cycles, limiting activity duration, predictability and effectiveness of long-term resilience building and national capacity development.

Figure 17: Funding data for Liberia 2019-2024



Source: Liberia financial tracking system 2019-2024

157. Outside of the COVID-19 response, the Government of Liberia's limited fiscal space constrained opportunities for co-financing and national ownership and leadership in development activities. Internally, WFP Liberia's ability to fundraise and plan proactively was constrained by staffing limitations (notably, the country office did not have a dedicated partnerships and communications position until June 2024) and lack

of a proactive resource mobilization strategy. Such difficulties underscore the finding that effective design – and eventual implementation – of the CSP will continue to be severely constrained by the challenges of mobilizing resources in the Liberian context.

EQ 4.2. How well and in what ways did WFP establish and leverage strategic and operational partnerships with government, other development and private sector actors to maximize efficiency and effectiveness?

Finding 30: WFP prioritized strategic partnerships with the Government of Liberia at national and subnational levels. Work with other organizations prioritized short-term operational needs rather than long-term strategic partnerships. This effort focused on providing complementary programme activities in jointly implemented projects with UNCT and capitalizing on cooperating partners with community-level networks and reach.

158. A strategic shift throughout the period of the CSP was intended to ensure that government partnerships are at the core of all programming activities. Key partnerships with Government of Liberia institutions at national and subnational levels were reinforced (with the ministries of Education, Agriculture, Health and NDMA, among others) (see Table 31). Many activities were implemented in partnership with government institutions. Government ministries and agencies were also responsible for joint monitoring and reporting on the activities.¹⁹³ However, these partnerships were largely operational in nature and not consistently leveraged to promote systemic or holistic change within national systems. While there were instances of technical support – such as for food security assessments and rapid needs assessments – such efforts were often fragmented and short-term, limiting their long-term impact. As a result, some opportunities were missed for WFP to act as a more strategic enabler of national systems transformation.

Table 31: List of relevant WFP partners

Relevant SO	Government	UNCT	Cooperating partners
SO1	MoE, MoA, National Bureau of Concession, LiSA, Ministry of Gender	UNDP, UN Women, FAO	Building Resources Across Communities (BRAC), Caritas, Humanity Care Liberia, Samaritan's Purse, Private sector partners, third-party monitor
SO2	NDMA, Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information		BRAC, Caritas, Liberia Agency for Community Development, Sean Devereux Children Education and Agricultural Programme, Welthungerhilfe, Private sector partners, third-party monitor
SO3	MoE, MoA, NDMA, Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information	FAO, IFAD	BRAC, third-party monitor
SO4	MoH	UNICEF	BRAC, EDUCare, Samaritan's Purse, Private sector partners

Source: Evaluation team

159. Stakeholders noted that there have been improvements in WFP programming (for example, around geographical coverage and targeting) over the course of the CSP as a result of regular monthly planning meetings among school feeding partners (led by the Ministry of Education), in which WFP regularly and actively participates. However, the evaluation notes untapped opportunities for increased strategic and operational collaboration across the educational sector (see HGFS food systems matrix in Table 52 in Annex XI). In this regard, government stakeholders interviewed also emphasized the need for “a total package for education”,¹⁹⁴ integrating school feeding systematically alongside interventions to improve teacher training,

¹⁹³ For example, MoA provided technical backstopping for resilience programming, MoE assists with the monitoring of school feeding at supported schools and NDMA supports rapid assessments when crises occur etc.

¹⁹⁴ For example, interviewees pointed out that the Government of Liberia’s National Enrolment Drive Movement complemented school feeding work with efforts to reduce cultural and gender barriers to enrolment and cut down financial barriers that inhibit access, improving accessibility of infrastructure, etc.

nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), etc.

160. Interviewees indicated that WFP is currently working with FAO and UNICEF on an integrated proposal for school feeding. WFP would focus on providing an integrated package of school meals and support in the areas of post-harvest management and market linkage for cooperatives and smallholder farmers (key strengths of WFP, according to analysis under EQ 1.2). FAO would focus on supporting school gardens and improving production capacities of farmers, while UNICEF would provide support for nutrition. If funded, this kind of proposal would improve strategic collaboration in the area of school feeding and could serve as a flagship project, as well as an example of considered collaboration for the wider United Nations family.

161. A key success in terms of operational coordination was related to WFP Liberia's stock management and supply chain activities, which require considerable coordination with government and other partners. The Ministry of Health at both national and county levels reported good relationships with WFP. Interviewees indicated effective coordination on health commodity stock management and supply chains in partnership with the Ministry of Health, in part through a monthly technical working group that includes key health partners. In addition, after every quarter of distribution interviewees report that there is a "revision meeting" to coordinate and improve implementation. WFP activities in Liberia under SO4 are among the most ambitious (in terms of the health programmes and partners it covers) that WFP is implementing globally,¹⁹⁵ with WFP managing the central medical store (the central warehouse for medical supplies in all of Liberia) and supplying stocks across 12 health programmes and for a variety of partners (Global Fund, Plan International, USAID, UNFPA, WHO, UNICEF, Catholic Relief Services and other smaller partners). The use of private transporters is anticipated to have good localization, sustainability and exit handover results.

162. The collaboration of WFP in two United Nations peacebuilding fund projects demonstrated the agency's ability to contribute to peacebuilding outcomes (see EQ 2.4) through resilience and livelihoods opportunities as part of jointly implemented projects with other United Nations agencies. In addition, FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and other partners have collaborated to jointly undertake Cadre Harmonisé (CH) analysis, CFSNA and food security assessments. Examples include collaboration with the Government of Liberia and FAO, in the 2021 COVID-19 response and the provision by WFP of technical and financial support to develop the Zero Post-Harvest Loss Strategy.

163. Over the period of the CSP, there was a modification in partnership emphasis and mode of operation from implementation predominately alongside local and international NGO cooperating partners (see Table 31) to an increasing focus on partnerships with government. Work with NGOs principally leveraged their geographic coverage and community relationships. This was especially important given the limited subnational reach of WFP relative to many cooperating partners. Further, partners also contributed specialist experience in specific programming areas in collaboration with WFP.¹⁹⁶ Cooperating partners played a central role in the implementation of food assistance, cash-based transfers and resilience activities, particularly in counties where WFP had limited presence. They also supported community mobilization, beneficiary targeting and monitoring, contributing to the ability of WFP to reach vulnerable populations. In several cases, private transportation partners were essential in overcoming logistical challenges (for example, delivery in difficult terrain and during emergencies like COVID-19 and in the transport and supply of health commodities). In addition, operational partnerships with private sector actors such as cooperatives have been established and strengthened throughout the CSP period. Cooperatives report close communication with WFP.¹⁹⁷ However, cooperative interviewees indicate that a "problem remains in the execution of bringing solutions" to these issues (see EQ 2.1).

¹⁹⁵ For example, In countries like Angola and the Central African Republic, WFP is working primarily with the Global Fund and dealing mainly with health commodities related to tuberculosis, malaria, and HIV, rather than the broad range of programmes, commodities and partners integrated into the Liberia programme.

¹⁹⁶ For example, cooperating partners such as Volunteers for Sustainable Development in Africa (VOSIEDA) and BRAC contributed sectoral expertise in agriculture and resilience.

¹⁹⁷ For example, through a common WhatsApp group and regular communication over email, phone and in person.

EQ 4.3. To what extent did the country office have appropriate human resources capacity (for example, staffing, skills, institutional support) and appropriate institutional arrangements (for example, sufficient level of decentralization at sub-offices and field offices) to deliver on the CSP?

Finding 31: WFP Liberia operated under significant resource and staffing constraints throughout the CSP period, driven in large part by unpredictable and fragmented donor funding. Many functional areas, including programming, monitoring, budgeting, communications and partnerships, were chronically understaffed. These capacity gaps, compounded by high staff turnover and frequent shifts in senior management, severely limited the quality, timeliness and scale of programme delivery.

164. As of January 2024, WFP Liberia had 83 employees. Table 32 provides an overview of country office staffing history throughout the CSP, showing that after decreasing significantly in 2022 staffing resources have been increasing in recent years. This was a change largely driven by a substantial expansion in supply chain staff. This expansion was commensurate with the shift of SO4 to focus on the management and distribution of public health commodities.

Table 32: Country office staffing history throughout the CSP

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Administration	22	23	19	11	13	21
Programme and policy	25	23	17	11	11	18
Budget and programming	0	0	1	1	1	1
Communications	1	2	2	1	0	1
Field operations management	1	3	5	2	2	0
Finance	3	4	5	3	3	3
Human resources	2	3	2	2	3	3
Information technologies	4	4	3	2	5	1
Nutrition	0	1	0	0	0	0
Partnerships	0	0	0	1	0	0
Supply chain	13	19	21	13	30	35
Other	2	2	2	1	1	0
Total	73	84	77	48	69	83

Source: Country office

165. The staffing structure review of March-May 2018 led to a “cumulative reduction of over 60 percent in the country office’s staffing level”.¹⁹⁸ In terms of the organizational structure of the country office, a “38 percent staffing reduction was implemented, mainly as a response to funding constraints”. Over the course of the CSP, staffing levels fluctuated both overall and across various functional areas, largely in line with fluctuations in funding (see Figure 6).

166. WFP has long-standing staff who have progressed through the ranks and added considerable value, particularly in terms of historical continuity and ensuring a better understanding of field-level issues at the country office level. However, funding shortfalls throughout the CSP (see Table 30) have led to considerable resource constraints that severely limited the ability of WFP to meet operational demands and programming quality, despite the country office’s implementation of mitigation efforts (for example, re-prioritization of resources, lean field staffing, adaptive delivery models).

167. Many departments have suffered from frequent turnover (for example, programme and policy

¹⁹⁸WFP. 2019. Internal Audit of WFP Operations in Liberia - Office of the Inspector General Internal Audit Report AR/19/09.

staff), as indicated in Table 32. A 2023 internal audit noted that staffing changes “did not adequately take into consideration the minimum capacity required to implement the activities as planned, and there are staffing gaps in critical support functions such as monitoring, budgeting, programming and communications”.¹⁹⁹ Staffing constraints were considerable in the RAM unit, which experienced turnover in 2021 and was reduced to a single staff member for 2022, until additional staff were added in 2023. Interviewees indicated that understaffing negatively affected the delivery of monitoring and evidence-generation outputs, as well as impacting staff morale and increasing turnover.

168. There were turnover and staffing constraints and fluctuations in areas such as field operations management (which saw staff numbers fluctuate from one in 2019 to a peak of five in 2021 before stabilizing at two by 2023).²⁰⁰ The country office also faced turnover in senior management positions, with three country directors between June 2019 and June 2025. Programming functions faced staffing constraints throughout the CSP, with a single staff member generally being responsible for managing one or multiple strategic outcomes.²⁰¹ For most of the CSP there were two programme staff, one focusing on SO1 and the other handling SO2 and SO3, while SO4 was separate. At the time of the evaluation, SO1 activities had one dedicated staff member, while crisis response activities were being managed by staff on temporary duty assignment. There was one programme staff member (the head) at the sub-office. These staff are also responsible for managing field activities and reporting. Staffing shortages had significant impacts on programming, affecting both the quality and scale of operations, including delays in project implementation, reduced field presence and reduced capacity to engage with partners. Interviews indicated that, while half of schools are classed as high-risk, responding to issues in these schools requires considerable field office presence, which WFP currently lacks. The 2024 cash-based transfer assessment²⁰² recommended “further progress [in cash-based transfer] will be shown by hiring of a dedicated staff to manage cash-based transfer related tasks” and to “monitor and facilitate the progress of all recommendations [on a] monthly basis”.²⁰³

169. Interviews also indicated that key staffing gaps in partnerships and communications resulted in some missed funding opportunities. The responsibility for partnership work fell to already-overstretched programming colleagues. A lack of specialist training in empowering women and girls and advancing equality and inclusiveness, safeguarding, protection and PSEA within the country office limits further progress in these areas and risks reputational damage. Staff shortages have also constrained processes on accountability to affected people (see EQ 2.2). As a result, efforts to ensure inclusive communication, feedback mechanisms and safeguarding measures have often been limited, undermining effectiveness and accountability of WFP programming.

EQ 4.3a To what extent were the monitoring and reporting systems used to track and demonstrate progress towards expected outcomes and to inform management decisions and programme adaptations?

Finding 32: WFP Liberia’s monitoring systems met minimum requirements but there were notable gaps in data across strategic outcomes and years. Staffing and resource constraints at RAM, especially early on in the CSP, have negatively affected the robustness of monitoring systems. The country office made key improvements to monitoring systems as RAM staff were added during the CSP, which resulted in corresponding improvements to data availability. The addition of a third-party monitor also helped improve data collection and identified key operational issues, although staffing shortages still undermine responsiveness to known challenges.

170. There were notable gaps in outcome-level data and inconsistencies across strategic outcomes and years, as shown in Table 33 below. The table describes the extent to which the WFP country office

¹⁹⁹ WFP “Internal Audit of WFP Operations in Liberia” (AR/23/08).

²⁰⁰ Liberia staffing history 2019-2023, data as of 31 December for each year.

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² WFP 2024 “RBD CBT TDY (October–December 2024) Report & CBT Assessment”.

²⁰³ Ibid.

monitoring and reporting system tracked progress towards CSP outcomes.²⁰⁴ It is notable that as RAM staffing increased in 2024, 85 percent of outcome indicators had data compared to 63 percent in the previous year.

Table 33: Overview of outcome indicator data availability

	2019*	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Indicators with data**	28	21	22	15	12	17
Indicators with no data	1	8	7	8	7	3
% of indicators with data	97%	72%	73%	65%	63%	85%
*2019 is only baseline data						

Source: COMET report CM-L008b

171. Table 34 shows gaps in the collection of output-level data. This makes it difficult to track progress of programme implementation and assess contribution towards outcomes in order to inform strategic decisions and programming adaptations. Note, however, that as RAM staff were added in 2023 and 2024, output indicator data availability increased as well.

Table 34: Overview of output indicator data availability

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Indicators with data	30	39	39	45	40	46
Indicators with no data	21	12	12	10	15	9
% of indicators with data	59%	76%	76%	82%	73%	84%
* Applicable logframe for years 2019-2021 had 51 output Indicators and 55 output indicators for years 2022-2024						

Source: ACRs 2019-2024

172. Interviewees indicated that monitoring data are regularly used for reporting purposes. Even though minimum monitoring requirements²⁰⁵ were generally met, sampling strategies for each yearly reporting varied depending on available resources (for example, focusing on more accessible sites or those concentrated within a particular geographic area). A key constraint to consistent internal monitoring has been the staffing constraints mentioned under EQ 4.3, which cut across the country office but also specifically affected RAM. RAM staffing and resources strengthened during the CSP, helping to improve monitoring systems, notably price monitoring, the complaints and feedback mechanism, baselines for projects and third-party monitoring.

173. The introduction of third-party monitoring, however, has been important for strengthening monitoring systems, further to a 2022 operational audit recommendation. A private contractor was identified through a competitive process and contracted in March 2024 for process and outcome monitoring of school feeding operations covering 285 active schools²⁰⁶ and 19 cooperatives. This has strengthened WFP monitoring systems and has the potential to offer further opportunities for improving the standard of WFP programming, including food management committees and school feeding. Monitoring of schools by WFP prior to the introduction of third-party monitoring was limited by a shortage of monitoring and field staff and lack of sub-office coverage, whereas 30 percent of schools were set to be visited every month by the third-party monitors. As a result, in 2024, third-party monitoring identified a

²⁰⁴ The global retrofitting CSP logframe exercise (from mid-2022) may have impacted on some indicators. Some indicators were dropped with new indicators introduced in the new corporate results framework indicators and 2023 indicators compendium. (for example, data for food expenditures in 2023).

²⁰⁵ Interviews confirmed that annual monitoring was able to meet minimum monitoring requirements – indicating that at least 30 sites per activity should be monitored and every site should be visited at least once per year – for ACR reporting.

²⁰⁶ TPM originally started with 291 schools, but it was discovered that six schools that had been receiving school feeding were non-functional.

number of issues at the school level. These included some food commodities intended for students being distributed to school administrators and teachers; and in 23 percent of schools, monitors reported five or more days in the month or distribution cycle where the suppliers did not supply food to the school as per the plans. They also reported that 66 percent of schools indicated discrepancies between official school records and on-site headcounts. Updated headcounts are not used by WFP to revise school feeding, as this is a government-managed process over which WFP has limited influence or operational control.

174. Despite the improved monitoring systems, the evaluation notes that the country office response to issues noted by the third-party monitors remains constrained by lack of staffing, especially in-field staff. As a result, WFP and third-party monitors both acknowledged that the third-party monitor is currently playing a role that has also in some ways extended to providing limited operational support and guidance to beneficiaries. This capacity gap affected both the quality and scale of operations and limited the country office's ability to respond to critical issues identified through monitoring. For instance, according to 2024 data, there were a total of 133 issues – only 25 percent were noted as closed, while 40 percent are open and 35 percent are ongoing.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

3.1. Conclusions

Conclusion 1: The CSP design was based on credible evidence and aligned with key national priorities and food security objectives. Partners highlighted the comparative advantages of WFP in Liberia, where it is strategically positioned in HGSF, technical capacities in implementing digital cash transfer systems, and the provision of common services and logistics in support of health systems. Overall, the CSP has demonstrated coherence, focusing on long-term resilience work, while maintaining a flexible portfolio that worked towards both humanitarian and development outcomes. However, there was limited deliberate integration between development and humanitarian programmes (for example, through the layering and sequencing of these efforts).

175. The CSP was underpinned by credible secondary data and aligned well with national priorities. WFP incorporated community needs into the CSP by drawing on lessons from T-ICSP implementation and extensive consultations conducted during the ZHSR. While targeting decisions drew on available assessments and consultations, gaps remained in strategies for reaching specific vulnerable subgroups – particularly out-of-school children.

176. HGSF headlines a portfolio that focuses on long-term resilience building. The exclusive use by WFP of locally procured food for school feeding distinguishes its approach in Liberia and positions the HGSF model as a unique value proposition. The broader CSP portfolio also contributes to humanitarian outcomes by maintaining WFP operational presence and capacity to respond to shocks. The pivot to humanitarian response during the COVID-19 pandemic was operationally necessary, as large-scale food assistance to 2.5 million people during COVID-19 demonstrated WFP Liberia's potential in responding to national crises. Post-COVID-19, WFP leveraged its technical strengths in digital transfer systems to deliver assistance during crisis response, but programmatic linkages between emergency response and longer-term development efforts remained ad hoc, thus limiting the potential for cumulative impact.

177. WFP management of the national health commodity warehouse stands out as an operational asset, yet this singular success did not consistently translate into broader systems leadership or innovation across the portfolio. WFP supply chain activities in Liberia showcase how logistics expertise can be translated into tangible improvements in terms of health commodity management. Yet, absence of a clear transition plan and dependency on WFP management highlight the need for a structured exit strategy.

Conclusion 2: The CSP design required more realistic forecasting and planning, and its implementation was hindered by insufficient availability of funding and staffing. As a result, the country office faced significant operational challenges due to a misalignment between organizational systems and the support needed to effectively and efficiently implement programming.

178. The CSP was predicated on assumptions that proved unrealistic within Liberia's operational and funding context. Forecasts related to resource availability, staffing and systems capacity were overly optimistic, particularly in view of the country's limited and fluctuating donor base. As a result, a misalignment emerged between the ambition of the CSP, and the organizational capabilities needed to deliver it. Strategic planning did not sufficiently account for structural limitations and key enabling factors – such as capacity strengthening and internal system development – were not embedded as deliberate investments but treated as assumed inputs.

179. Insufficient funding and chronic staffing shortfalls – especially in technical and cross-cutting areas – undermined the consistency and quality of implementation across most CSP activities. Exceptions, such as the health commodity and supply chain functions, benefited from dedicated capacity and clearer

operational models. In contrast, programming in resilience, school feeding and capacity strengthening suffered from fragmented implementation, limited monitoring and constrained ability to resolve operational bottlenecks. This weakened the ability of WFP to ensure quality, adapt to emerging challenges, or fully integrate empowerment of women and girls and advancing equality, environmental safeguards and beneficiary engagement.

180. Operational inefficiencies were particularly evident in resilience activities, where late input supply, delayed communication of distribution plans, and weak food quality controls disrupted delivery and reduced effectiveness. The cumulative effect of these issues reflected systemic weaknesses in programme support functions, including forecasting, coordination and feedback loops.

181. While WFP crisis response helped mitigate food insecurity during shocks such as the COVID-19 pandemic, its effectiveness and efficiency were consistently constrained by delays in food and cash delivery, targeting inaccuracies, logistical bottlenecks and coordination gaps. Although crisis response activities achieved near-full budget utilization, only 39 percent of outputs reached moderate or high achievement levels, reflecting challenges in translating resources into timely and equitable assistance. Limited adjustments for regional price variations and weak delivery systems at times led to community mistrust and perceptions of leakage or differences in access to assistance. The evaluation highlights that, without strengthened systems and more realistic planning assumptions, WFP Liberia's crisis response risks remaining overstretched and reactive, rather than strategic and enabling.

Conclusion 3: The HGSF model is a strong strategic asset where WFP is contributing to inclusive food systems development. Even though integration between WFP smallholder farmers' support and school feeding has been limited, purchasing through cooperatives can be a scalable and sustainable alternative to the more resource-intensive resilience building interventions of WFP. Still, the effectiveness of HGSF remains constrained by low cooperative capacity and challenges related to providing timely distribution plans.

182. The WFP HGSF model has supported local market development and contributed to improved educational and nutrition outcomes. However, the limited integration between school feeding and smallholder farmers' support reflects a missed opportunity to fully capitalize on this strategic asset. Resilience building interventions, while conceptually aligned, were implemented in isolation from school-based programming, limiting synergies and constraining the local supply base. Moreover, the scalability of these interventions was restricted by fragmented implementation, short project durations and the limited organizational and financial capacities of farmer-based organizations.

183. The shift by WFP toward procuring through cooperatives, rather than directly from supported farmers, represents a pragmatic adaptation that could offer a scalable and sustainable procurement model. Yet, most cooperatives currently supplying school food are not linked to WFP-supported farmers, weakening the potential for integrated programming. Despite this, the model demonstrates promise: cooperatives often provide smallholder farmers with essential technical training, input support and financial management, creating localized value chains that mirror the resilience objectives of WFP but at lower operational cost.

184. Even if cost efficiency analysis shows that the transition to HGSF increased per-beneficiary expenditure compared to traditional school feeding, it demonstrates a deliberate choice to privilege long-term food system development over short-term efficiency. This trade-off underscores the strategic rationale of HGSF as an investment in local capacity and resilience rather than a purely cost-saving model. But to fully realize the home-grown model's strategic potential, WFP must address persistent supply chain and quality assurance challenges. Delayed and unpredictable distribution plans, open-ended contracting, and inconsistent delivery timelines have inhibited cooperatives' ability to plan aggregation and meet quality standards. The absence of systematic food safety and quality testing further compromises outcomes. While agricultural producers report benefits from selling to WFP – including price stability and bulk purchases – these gains are jeopardized by weak post-harvest handling and limited operational predictability.

Conclusion 4: Progress on cross-cutting priorities under the CSP showed varied results. While inclusive participation was achieved in several activities, the empowerment women and girls and advancing equality, environmental sustainability and community accountability were not embedded in programme design or performance frameworks. Consequently, cross-cutting priorities contributed little to the overall quality or sustainability of CSP outcomes, underscoring the need to integrate these dimensions as core enablers of effectiveness and long-term resilience.

185. The cross-cutting performance gaps mentioned above were operationalized as secondary considerations, rather than as integral dimensions of programme quality and effectiveness. Weak resourcing and limited staff capacity for cross-cutting functions further reinforced this pattern. For example, the design of most CSP activities was not informed by an analysis of social norms and roles and how they reinforce unequal power relations underpinning inequality between women and men, boys and girls, even if the WFP portfolio demonstrated broad inclusion of women and girls. Monitoring frameworks also lacked indicators capturing changes in agency, decision making, or access to resources. As a result, results for women and girls largely reflected participation rather than empowerment. Structural barriers, such as limited leadership by women in farmer-based organizations, unpaid care responsibilities, and social norms restricting women's mobility, were rarely addressed. This limited the ability of WFP to influence deeper shifts in relations between women and men, boys and girls or reduce inequality in access to livelihoods. The lack of tailored approaches for out-of-school girls, adolescent mothers and women with intersecting vulnerabilities further constrained reach, particularly among those facing the most significant access barriers.

186. Environmental considerations were weakly integrated. No systematic environmental screening or monitoring framework was in place to assess the environmental footprint or resilience outcomes of WFP interventions. Although some programmatic elements implicitly supported environmental objectives – such as local procurement and fuel-efficient stoves – these were implemented opportunistically rather than through deliberate design, and were not monitored to gauge environmental performance. Such gaps indicate that environmental sustainability was treated as an ancillary consideration rather than a core determinant of programme quality and long-term impact.

187. Accountability to affected people emerged as a persistent weakness. Despite recent efforts to establish formal feedback mechanisms, WFP engagement with communities remained superficial and uneven. Communication was largely ad hoc and often failed to reach the most marginalized groups. The lack of accessible, trusted channels for feedback undermined transparency, eroded trust and constrained the ability of WFP to adaptively manage programmes. Informal complaint pathways – while occasionally effective – were insufficiently systematic and poorly documented, leaving many issues unresolved. The weak institutionalization of accountability to affected people not only compromised the quality of programme delivery and equal access to assistance, but also risked exacerbating community tensions and diminishing the perceived legitimacy of WFP presence.

Conclusion 5: The programmatic partnerships of WFP were largely operational and underutilized as strategic enablers rather than as deliberate, outcome-oriented collaboration used to maximize the comparative advantage of WFP. There are missed opportunities in this regard, especially, across the educational system.

188. While WFP Liberia's CSP aligned well with UNDAF and UNSDCF priorities and included several productive collaborations – particularly within the United Nations system and with cooperating partners – partnerships remained predominantly operational in nature. These collaborations helped extend WFP reach to vulnerable populations and provided limited sectoral support, but they were not systematically leveraged to enhance programme quality, sustainability or policy influence.

189. The CSP design implicitly relied on the assumption that complementary activities – such as nutrition, resilience and WASH – would be adequately covered by other actors. In practice, shared funding constraints and weak coordination mechanisms meant this assumption did not hold. Moreover, the CSP treated strategic partnerships as a vehicle for implementation rather than a deliberate outcome, missing opportunities to shape and steer joint efforts around common goals. The absence of clearly defined partnership strategies contributed to fragmented programming and limited mutual accountability.

190. The comparative advantage of WFP in Liberia – particularly in HGSF, market access, post-harvest management and supply chain operations – offers clear entry points for strategic engagement. However, the evaluation found limited evidence of structured efforts to co-create solutions with partners in sectors where WFP lacks capacity or mandate, such as resilience, nutrition or education system strengthening. WFP has yet to fully activate its convening potential within the education sector, where its operational footprint, supply chain assets and global school feeding expertise position it to play a catalytic role in facilitating multi-actor collaboration.

Conclusion 6: During the CSP, WFP made some notable contributions to government capacities (for example, through policy support, food security assessments and support for rapid risk assessments). However, capacity strengthening efforts to strengthen government institutions were limited. Capacity strengthening focused on working through community-level structures to build the capacities of farmer-based organizations and food management committees. These community structures face sustainability challenges – requiring more intensive capacity strengthening to bring farmer-based organizations and food management committees to the point that each can be self-sustaining in the long-term.

191. WFP contributed selectively to the capacity strengthening of government and community actors during the CSP, but its efforts lacked strategic coherence and scale. While notable inputs were made – such as policy support in agriculture, coordination of food security assessments and early-stage technical assistance to the NDMA – these contributions were fragmented and constrained by limited resources and short-term engagement. Support to NDMA, for example, ceased mid-CSP due to funding constraints, highlighting the fragile foundation on which institutional gains rested.

192. Efforts to strengthen national systems underpinning HGSF were incremental but insufficient to shift ownership from partners to government. Liberia's national school feeding programme remained largely externally managed, with minimal investment in strengthening the institutional architecture required for government leadership. Opportunities to support national capacity in food safety, quality assurance and procurement systems – such as through collaboration with the Liberia Standards Authority – were identified but not fully leveraged.

193. At the community level, WFP focused on strengthening local structures such as farmer-based organizations and food management committees. However, capacity gaps persisted across key operational domains, including financial literacy, post-harvest handling and organizational governance. These limitations directly affected programme delivery and posed a risk to the sustainability of results. For example, the functionality of food management committees – critical to linking schools, communities and cooperatives – was undermined by inconsistent training, insufficient support tools and weak integration with education structures. Without a more systematic and sustained approach to local capacity strengthening, these entities remain vulnerable to collapse under the pressures of transition to community-led models.

194. WFP contributions to the health commodity supply chain filled critical gaps in public systems by ensuring storage and delivery of essential health supplies. However, the limited involvement of Ministry of Health personnel in operational roles and the lack of a clear handover plan has slowed progress in the sustainability of these achievements. Across domains, capacity strengthening was too often delivered as a discrete set of activities rather than as a sustained strategy, limiting its potential to catalyse institutional change.

3.2. Recommendations

Table 36: Evaluation recommendations

Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
Recommendation 1: Refine and consolidate the HGSF programming model, improving planning and using support for cooperatives as a means of building integrated smallholder farmer resilience.	Strategic and operational	Country office	Cooperatives, Liberian Standards Authority (LiSA), global headquarters	High	June 2028
1.1 Incentivize agricultural cooperatives – through technical support (in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture) and financial market opportunities – to provide training, inputs, market linkages and other assistance to smallholder farmers within their networks as a scalable model for boosting the productivity and resilience of farmers.			Cooperatives, Ministry of Agriculture		
1.2 Ensure the timely provision of distribution plans to all stakeholders based on a school feeding needs forecasting mechanism and connect specific cooperatives to schools to enable a timely supply of food to schools by cooperatives.			Cooperatives, regional office, headquarters in Rome		
1.3 Implement multi-cycle procurement contracts that specify delivery requirements (including quantities) for cooperatives that consistently meet supply targets and high quality standards.			Headquarters in Rome, cooperatives, LiSA		

Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<p>Recommendation 2: Strengthen WFP’s support for national and community capacity, systems and structures in areas where it adds distinct value, including school feeding, crisis response and health supply chains.</p>	Operational	Country office	Global headquarters, NDMA, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Health, TPM	Medium	June 2030
<p>2.1 Enable a gradual and sustainable handover of school feeding by supporting the Government in developing and operationalizing national school feeding policies and standardized procedures while simultaneously strengthening the capacity of food management committees through targeted refresher training, practical tools and frequent joint monitoring with the Ministry of Education and TPM.</p>			Global headquarters, Ministry of Education, TPM		
<p>2.2 Support the NDMA in working to strengthen sustainable rapid assessment capacity for emerging crises, for instance by supplying tablets and training on survey, information systems and database management.</p>			NDMA		
<p>2.3 Support the sustainability of the operations of Liberia’s central medical store by developing and implementing a clear capacity strengthening and transition plan for the future handover of the management of the store and related supply chain roles to national partners, featuring activities such as staff training, job shadowing and post-exit consulting.</p>			Ministry of Health		

Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
<p>Recommendation 3: Strengthen strategic programming partnerships and joint resource mobilization and policy development across the education sector, aligning the complementary capacities of partners with WFP's comparative advantage in school feeding in order to enhance education, nutrition and food systems outcomes.</p>	Strategic	Country office	FAO, UNICEF, LISA, global headquarters, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, International Fund for Agricultural Development	Medium	December 2029
<p>3.1 Establish a formal partnership framework to guide collaboration in areas where WFP has limited comparative advantage, such as water, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition-specific programming, agricultural production and food safety and quality systems, allowing WFP to focus on its core strengths in local procurement and school meal provision.</p>			Ministry of Education, Ministry of Agriculture, FAO, UNICEF, LISA, global headquarters		
<p>3.2 Develop a targeted resource mobilization strategy that aligns funding opportunities with WFP's comparative advantages and partnership priorities, ensuring predictable financing for integrated, multi-year programmes that leverage complementary partner capacities.</p>					

Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
Recommendation 4: Strengthen organizational capacity and operational systems to facilitate the achievement of CSP ambitions.	Operational	Country office	Global headquarters, TPM, Ministry of Education	High	June 2030
4.1 Strengthen monitoring systems by responding to issues identified through third-party monitoring.			TPM, Ministry of Education		
4.2 Strengthen internal technical capacity on empowering women and girls and advancing equality and on the environment by ensuring regular training for programme and research, assessment and monitoring staff at the country office and suboffice levels, for example through support from the regional office and headquarters in Rome on empowering women and girls and advancing equality; safeguarding; protection; minimum standards for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse; and expertise on using indicators that can track differential outcomes in monitoring and evaluation systems.			Global headquarters		
4.3 Fully implement the 2024 community engagement strategy so that affected people receive continuous information and engagement as part of programming and are thus informed and empowered.			Global headquarters		

Annex I. Summary terms of reference

The ToR can be accessed here: https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000159731/download/?_ga=2.169725538.2122711029.1742812591-842884915.1739355478

Annex II. Evaluation timeline

195. Table 37 presents the timeline of the key milestones for the evaluation.

Table 37: Timeline of key milestones

Phase 2 - Inception			
	Inception briefings and inception mission	Evaluation manager (EM) + team leader (TL)	Aug-Sept 2024
	Submit draft inception report (IR)	TL	25 Oct 2024
	Evaluation manager (EM) circulates final IR to WFP key stakeholders for their information + posts a copy on intranet.	EM	End Dec 2024
Phase 3 – Data collection, including fieldwork			
	In-country / remote data collection	Team	13-31 Jan 2025
	Exit debrief (PowerPoint presentation)	TL	30 Jan 2025
	Preliminary findings debrief	Team	20 March 2025
Phase 4 - Reporting			
	Submit high-quality draft evaluation report to Office of Evaluation (OEV) after the company's quality check	TL	24 Mar 2025
	Office of Evaluation quality feedback sent to TL	EM	24-31 Mar 2024
	Submit revised draft evaluation report to Office of Evaluation	TL	7 April 2025
	Office of Evaluation quality check	EM	7-8 April
	Any revisions made by evaluation team	TL	9-10 April 2025
	Seek clearance prior to circulating the evaluation report to internal reference group (IRG) (Deputy Director of Evaluation (DDoE) review)	Director of Evaluation (DoE) /DDoE	11-18 April 2025
	Revisions made by evaluation team based on DDoE review	TL	21-22 April
	EM+ Quality Assurance (QA)2 check whether DDoE comments have been adequately addressed	EM+ risk assessment (RA)+QA2	23 April
	Seek clearance prior to circulating the evaluation report to IRG	DoE/DDoE	25 April
	Office of Evaluation shares draft evaluation report with IRG for feedback	EM/IRG	28 April
	Stakeholder workshop (in country or remote)	TL + EM	12 May
	Submit final draft evaluation report to Office of Evaluation	TL	TBC
	Seek final approval by DoE/DDoE	DoE/DDoE	TBC
	Draft summary evaluation report	EM	TBC
	Office of Evaluation circulates summary evaluation report (SER) to WFP Executive Management for information upon clearance from Office of Evaluation's Director	DoE/DDoE	TBC
Phase 5 - Executive Board (EB) and follow-up			
	Submit SER/recommendations to Corporate, Planning and Performance (CPP) for management response + SER to EB Secretariat for editing and translation	EM	TBC - July-Aug 2025
	Tail end actions, Office of Evaluation websites posting, Executive Board (EB) round table etc.	EM	TBC - July-Aug 2025
	Presentation and discussion of SER at EB round table	DoE/DDoE and EM	TBC-25 Nov 2025
	Presentation of summary evaluation report to the EB	DoE/DDoE	TBC-26 Feb 2026
	Presentation of management response to the EB	DoCPP	TBC- Feb 2026

Source: Evaluation team.

Annex III. Methodology

196. The evaluation used a theory-based, mixed-methods, utility-focused, and participatory approach. The approach used assessed the appropriateness and logic of the CSP design decisions and, to the extent possible (in the time and budget available), determined how these decisions played out operationally and in the different beneficiary, community and geographic and market contexts (across counties of operation). The evaluation also assessed and compared the effectiveness and appropriateness of the differing modality and delivery mechanisms deployed.

197. All data were triangulated, allowing for consideration of the nuanced perspectives of different stakeholder groups through a variety of analytical methods. The methodological approach of the evaluation was overlaid on the evaluation matrix (see Annex X), which brings together the evaluation questions, dimensions of analysis, lines of inquiry, indicators, data sources, data collection techniques, etc. to assure systematic coverage of each evaluation question.

198. While the overall methodology was implemented across all aspects of the evaluation, the evaluation also identified particular areas that required targeted approaches in terms of sampling and analysis. Firstly, HGFSF is a key learning theme and focus area for this evaluation. To this end, EQ1.2a is dedicated to examining the effectiveness of the home-grown model, by asking: “To what extent did HGFSF activities provide an innovative and integrated platform across food systems to tackle chronic issues in education, agriculture, nutrition, and social protection?” Importantly, the sampling of counties, communities and stakeholders had a large focus on HGFSF activities. In addition, the evaluation engaged these stakeholders to profile and map HGFSF food systems in the three countries sampled for fieldwork, consolidating this analysis into a “national” food system profile and map for home-grown activities in Liberia (see: guidance on HGFSF food systems analysis provided below).

199. In addition, unique analytical approaches were identified to understand two other key elements of WFP work in Liberia: strategic positioning and capacity strengthening. Strategic positioning is identified as a key learning theme for this evaluation (as captured through EQ 1.2), while the evaluability assessment has identified the limited validity of indicators for WFP work (which falls under EQ 2.1); (see below for more methodological guidance in these two areas). With regards to strategic positioning, the evaluation looked at the comparative advantage of WFP according to three dimensions of its strategic positioning.²⁰⁷ The outputs of data collection and analysis are findings that represent the strategic positioning of WFP in Liberia based on its: 1) unique value proposition; and 2) joint activities. With regards to capacity strengthening the data were analysed according to key domains of action (for example, enabling environment, organizational domain and individual domain), as well as key capacity strengthening pathways for capacity change (that is, policy and legislation, institutional effectiveness and accountability, strategic planning and financing, programme design and delivery, and engagement of non-government actors).²⁰⁸ The outputs of data collection and analysis are a completed capacity strengthening matrix for SO1, SO2, and SO4 (Annex III).

Data collection methods

200. Data collection methods incorporated primary and secondary sources. In terms of secondary sources, the evaluation drew on monitoring data, as well as already completed endlines and evaluations. In addition to the secondary sources mentioned above, the evaluation also (where relevant) considered reports, evaluations, data, etc.

²⁰⁷ WFP. 2024. Mid-Term Evaluation of WFP's Strategic Plan (2022–2025), Centralized evaluation report OEV/2023/019, September.

²⁰⁸ WFP. 2022. CCS policy update, 2022 https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000145195/download/?_ga=2.191817442.95004207.1731326155-1657431286.1730986597. Accessed 3 March 2025.

201. The inception phase included an in-depth evaluability assessment and critical assessment of data availability, quality and gaps (building on an initial evaluability assessment conducted by the Office of Evaluation during the CSPE preparation phase²⁰⁹) to inform its choice of evaluation methods and techniques. This included an analysis of the results framework and related indicators to validate the pre-assessment made by the Office of Evaluation on available data from 2019 to 2022, adding to that an evaluability analysis of data in 2023. Key evaluability issues that arose were as follows:

- consistency of measurement, reporting at different level of results, and validity of data;
- limited monitoring data on cross-cutting indicators;
- high turnover of stakeholders;
- limited access to WFP intervention sites;
- logistical constraints and short timeframe to conduct fieldwork; and
- CSP and CSPE timeframe and implementation.

202. To overcome the data-related challenges mentioned above, the evaluation needed to largely utilize primary research to collect qualitative data. These included:

- interviews with stakeholders, both internal (mainly WFP country office and sub-offices) and external (mainly government, UNCT, donors and cooperating partners at national and county levels); and
- focus groups with beneficiaries both direct (for example, transfer recipients, farmer-based organizations, etc.) and indirect (for example, parents, food management committees, etc.), combined with observation (where possible) to triangulate data from focus groups, with emphasis placed on observing those issues identified at particular sites through third party monitoring.

203. Primary research for the evaluation took place at several levels. Initially, remote data collection for the evaluation included remote interviews with former WFP country office managers and staff and cooperating partners employed within the CSP period. In-person interviews in Liberia were carried out with existing internal WFP country office stakeholders and key national-level partners based in Monrovia. After fieldwork activities in Monrovia, interviews were conducted with field staff in the WFP sub-offices. Additional interviews and focus groups were also undertaken with stakeholders located at the subnational level, in Bong, Montserrado and Nimba counties. Additional consideration was made for accessing stakeholders (both internal and external) working or located in remote counties (for example, Grand Cape Mount, Maryland).

Sampling of counties and communities

204. The selection rationale of sampled counties was informed by: 1) coverage of the range of programming available in each county; 2) counties with unique or innovative programming activities; and 3) counties where there is integration between activity areas, especially to gauge cooperation, collaboration and coordination across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus at the community level to ensure collective outcomes on the basis of joined-up, coherent, complementary and risk-informed analysis, planning and action; 4) seasonal and other accessibility issues and feasibility in the time and resources available. Using these criteria, it was determined that Montserrado, Bong, and Nimba would be prioritized for field visits, while Maryland and Grand Cape Mount would be covered remotely. Montserrado, Bong and Nimba were the focus of primary research, as these counties offer a mix of programming activities (for example, HGSP, including integrated smallholder farmer support and agri-livelihood activities), school gardens, and crisis response (for example, caterpillar infestations and the effects of war in Ukraine). Nimba has activities across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus so can provide a useful geographic location to look at actual or potential linkages across nexus activities. Each county selected for fieldwork was expected to be accessible during fieldwork (in January). Maryland was chosen as a remote county (with

²⁰⁹ ToR.

HGSF and crisis response programming) and Grand Cape Mount was chosen due to the array of programming there (that is, peacebuilding fund, cross border and agri-livelihood).

205. The selection of individual research sites and communities was undertaken following consultation with WFP and cooperating partner stakeholders using criteria similar to those noted above, but at the community level. For instance, the selection of sampled communities was informed by: 1) the range of programming activities undertaken in or around that site or community; 2) specifically where integration across activities occurs; 3) other considerations, such as - sites with long-standing projects (where impact is more likely to have been felt), sites with innovative programming modalities, very remote programming sites, sites that have demonstrated particular successes or challenges (for example, those schools or cooperatives rated as high- or low-risk by third party monitoring), sites where there are women cooperatives, etc.; and 4) logistical considerations such as the ease of access to the research sites or communities, based on time available to conduct fieldwork.

Sampling of participants for interviews and focus groups

206. The sampling of participants was developed to ensure a cross-section of perspectives for different stakeholder types regarding WFP performance in relation to the CSP 2020-2024. To sample stakeholders for the evaluation, the evaluation categorized the CSPE stakeholders into different types. Table 38 describes the non-probability sampling strategy for each stakeholder type, along with the approximate sample size for each stakeholder category.

Table 38: Sampling strategy by stakeholder type

Stakeholder type	Research site	Description of sample	Sample size	EQs of focus
WFP stakeholders at Liberia country office	Monrovia and remote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposive sample of senior managers (current and former) and key technical staff taken from programme and support activities that fall under the CSP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 10-12 interviews with WFP Liberia country office management and staff (current and former) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EQ1 EQ2 EQ3 EQ4
WFP stakeholder at sub-offices	Saclepea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposive sample of sub-office managers, as well as technical staff taken from key sectors, such that programme activities under each SO are accounted for within each sub-office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 4-5 interviews WFP with sub-office management and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EQ1 EQ2 EQ3 EQ4
Government of Liberia at the national level	Monrovia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposive sample of key government partners from ministries and government entities at the national level directly working with WFP under each SO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 10-12 interviews with government partners at the national level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EQ1 EQ2 EQ3
Government of Liberia at the county level	Nimba, Bong, Montserrado, Maryland, and Grand Cape Mount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposive sample of key government partners from ministries and government entities at the county level directly working with WFP under each SO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 8-10 interviews (some in groups as necessary) with government partners at the county level across counties (including 2-3 remote interviews in Maryland and Grand Cape Mount) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EQ1 EQ2 EQ3
UNCT	Monrovia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposive sample of appropriate technical and policy staff representing UN organizations that WFP works closely with either as implementing partners or in key strategic areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 3-4 interviews with UNCT partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EQ1 EQ2 EQ4

Stakeholder type	Research site	Description of sample	Sample size	EQs of focus
CPs, NGOs and other public and private sector partners	Monrovia and select counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposive sample of these types of partners that are involved in implementation of WFP activities or knowledgeable of these 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 5-7 interviews with CPs at national or county levels as appropriate based on the location of each partner (including 2-3 remote interviews in Maryland and Grand Cape Mount) Approximately 2-3 interviews with women's organizations, organizations of people with disabilities (PWD), etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EQ1 EQ2 EQ4
Donors	Monrovia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposive sample of donors Some may be carried out remotely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 4-5 interviews with key donors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EQ1 EQ2 EQ4
Direct beneficiary groups	Nimba, Bong, and Montserrado	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposive samples of direct recipients of WFP assistance under SO1 and SO2. Members of marginalized groups were identified with the assistance of WFP staff, CPs, and/or community stakeholders, as required per research site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 4-5 focus groups with farmer-based organizations supported through WFP resilience programming (members sampled from same farmer-based organization) Approximately 2-3 focus groups with farmer-based organizations/cooperatives supported through WFP local procurement (members sampled from same farmer-based organization) One focus group with a women's cooperatives supported through HGSP Approximately 6-7 focus groups with food management committees (members sampled from same food management committee) Approximately 4-5 focus groups with transfer recipients (members sampled from same community, with considerations made to include different transfer modalities between focus groups) Approximately 3-4 focus groups with recipients of THR (members sampled from same community) Approximately 2-3 focus groups with parents of out-of-school children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EQ1 EQ2 EQ4

Source: Based on documents review and inception stage interviews

207. Further, the evaluation attempted to gather perceptions at different levels, including beneficiaries and their local community representatives as to the effectiveness of programming for key vulnerability groups. This was achieved through triangulation of the perceptions of differing stakeholder types on the intended and unintended effects on beneficiaries, their communities and on different men, women, boys and girls and vulnerable groups through different focus groups with direct and indirect beneficiaries. Consultation with beneficiaries focused on obtaining the perspectives of apex actors within the different CSP components (for example, along the agricultural value chain, within the social protection system, within the education system, and within emergency response teams). As alluded to above, stratification according to sex, vulnerability, location, type of modality and delivery mechanism complemented by booster sampling, helped ensure that the sample was representative of the target population.

Data analysis

208. Applying various forms of qualitative and quantitative methods allowed the evaluation to triangulate findings across each, comparing data across different methods and sources to check for consistency. At the end of the field phase, the qualitative data were added to secondary material collected by the evaluation, again organized by evaluation question. Qualitative data were analysed using content analysis that identified key themes in responses between interviews and focus groups to give meaning to the data. Qualitative analysis involved coding important issues and using these to determine qualitative trends to complement quantitative data from secondary sources.

209. Quantitative data were used to supplement and validate the qualitative findings that made up the bulk of primary research. Statistical analysis was used to interpret quantitative data using mostly descriptive statistics (frequencies, cross-tabulations, central tendencies, etc.) to determine the performance of available quantitative indicators related to strategic outcomes (EQ2). Quantitative analysis was also used to examine the efficiency of CSP implementation by analysing fund allocations, expenditures, costs, coverage, etc., as well as levels of absorption, disbursement rates versus allocated funds, funding levels and allocation, and main cost drivers (EQ3). Analysis of available quantitative data is presented as statistics, tables, graphs, and figures to complement primary research collected throughout the evaluation.

210. Exploration of results in relation to empowering women and inclusion and advancing equality are largely confined to EQ 2.2. The evaluation also responds to issues affecting populations facing multiple, systemic and complex intersectional vulnerabilities (that is, those not otherwise covered by cross-cutting measures). The evaluation considered the how programming addressed differential needs and access of women and men, girls and boys and differential outcomes. Where most relevant, the evaluation assessed the results using a framework²¹⁰ to help in categorizing the analysis of results of the specific interventions on empowering women and girls and advancing equality. Categories were applied against the database of triangulated evaluation evidence where relevant. terminologies as adapted in WFP,

211. All elements of the evaluation were carried out in a manner that acknowledged the different needs, interests and realities of women, men, girls and boys; for example, the evaluation assessed the quality of the analysis undertaken before the CSP was designed to understand the different needs, interests and realities of women, men, girls and boys and factors, and whether the results of the analysis were appropriately integrated into the CSP design, as well as implementation. The evaluation also included analysis of the degree to which changes in social norms and addressing inequalities between men and women or boys and girls were included. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect this analysis, unless otherwise deemed unnecessary.

212. Analysis in the areas of HGSP (EQ 2.1b), strategic positioning (EQ 1.2), and capacity strengthening (under EQ 2.1) required unique analytical approaches.

²¹⁰ UNDP "The Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES): A Methodology Guidance Note": https://erc.undp.org/pdf/GRES_English.pdf; WFP "Gender Equality Terminology": docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000156856/download/.

Guidance on home-grown school feeding food systems analysis

213. The evaluation considered WFP HGSF activities from a food systems perspective.²¹¹ This perspective gives the evaluation team a way of analysing HGSF using “a way of thinking and doing that considers the food system in its totality, taking into account all the elements, their relationships, and related effects”.²¹²

214. A food systems approach involves recognizing and taking account of:²¹³

- the activities and actors in different sectors throughout food systems;
- the connections between these different sectors and stakeholders; and
- outcomes – both positive and negative – of implementing interventions in one part of the food system for other parts.

215. In other words, it looks at WFP activities to provide locally procured school meals to address root causes of food insecurity and hunger through an integrated effort across agricultural value chains, schools (and environments), and key stakeholders (parents, children, and local communities), in collaboration with the work of governmental and non-governmental partners, and private sector actors.²¹⁴ Figure 18 provides an example of a HGSF system and key entry points.

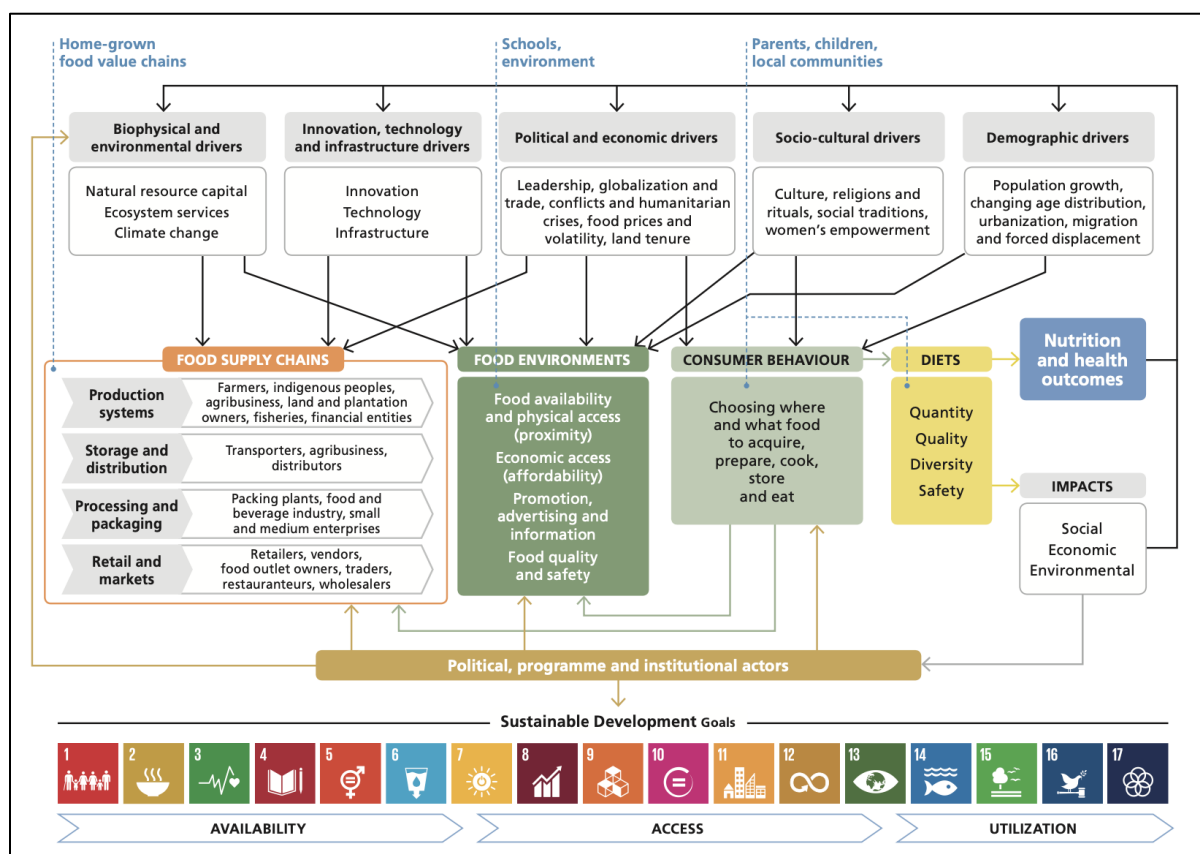
²¹¹ Food systems encompass the entire journey of food from production, to aggregation, to processing, to marketing, to distribution, to consumption and finally disposal of food products that originate from agriculture and other food-related industries, connected to the broader economic, societal and natural environments in which they are embedded: see: Von Braun, Joachim, et al. 2020. Food Systems – Definition, Concept and Application for the UN Food Systems Summit, A paper from the Scientific Group of the UN Food Systems Summit Draft, October 2020: https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2020/12/food_systems_paper-draft_oct-25.pdf.

²¹² FAO. 2018. Sustainable Food Systems: Concept and Framework: <http://www.fao.org/3/ca2079en/CA2079EN.pdf>.

²¹³ K. Parsons, C. Hawkes, and R. Wells. “What Is the Food System? A Food Policy Perspective, brief 2 in ‘Rethinking Food Policy: A Fresh Approach to Policy and Practice’” (London: Centre for Food Policy. 2019).

²¹⁴ FAO and WFP. 2018. Home-Grown School Feeding Resource Framework: Synopsis: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/b1c248bf-c8e1-4969-acce-8020cbe4b2d1/content>. Accessed 12 December 2024.

Figure 18: Illustration of food systems with home-grown school feeding entry points



Source: FAO and WFP, 2018, HGSF Resource Framework: Synopsis.

216. Using a food systems approach increases the possibility of identifying where the underlying causes of food insecurity, hunger, poor nutrition and other problems really lie to help identify the portfolio of interventions needed – by WFP and its partners – to support HGSF in Liberia.²¹⁵ Unlike traditional approaches that often tend to have a narrowly defined focus that leads to short-term and localized initiatives, food systems thinking encourages work that proactively and holistically engages with multiple points along the food system, maximizing the potential for procurement and programming undertaken in an integrated manner to advance healthy diets and nutrition, while also advancing prosperity and protecting the environment.

217. By applying a food systems approach as a key analytical tool for understanding HSGF, this evaluation seeks to gain an in-depth and holistic understanding of key entry points into the food systems associated with WFP home-grown activities (and that of its partners) by:

- mapping home-grown food value chains to determine the key bottlenecks in HGSF crop production, post-harvest and processing by farmers' groups;
- assessing demand-side elements of HGSF in schools and surrounding environments (for example, food procurement, preparation, feeding, and management) and the provision of complementary services (for example, in the areas of education and WASH);
- profiling activities oriented at children, parents, and communities (for example, social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) in the areas of nutritional and capacity strengthening with community structures); and

²¹⁵ Dekeyser, K, et al. 2020. "The Food Systems Approach in Practice: Our Guide for Sustainable Transformation".

- evaluating work done to build the capacities of institutional partners at national and county levels.

Each of these elements were captured in a HGSF food system matrix (see Table 41 in this annex and Table 52 in Annex XI). The matrix captures key elements for each key entry point in the HGSF food system, as well as key actors and WFP support (outcomes, strengths, challenges) and key partnerships and collaborations (and gaps) in order to understand the strategic positioning of WFP as a function of: 1) its unique value proposition; and 2) joint action.

Table 41: Home-grown school feeding food system matrix

Entry point	Food system element	Key actors (and their roles)	WFP support	Strengths (including effective modalities)	Challenges	Partnerships and collaborations	WFP strategic positioning (unique value proposition)	WFP strategic positioning (joint action)
Home-grown agricultural value chains	Production							
	Post-harvest/processing							
	Aggregation and procurement							
Schools	Food preparation and distribution							
	Food/stock accounting and management							
	Education system, WASH, and other complementary services							
Institutional actors	County institutions							
	National institutions							

Source: Evaluation team

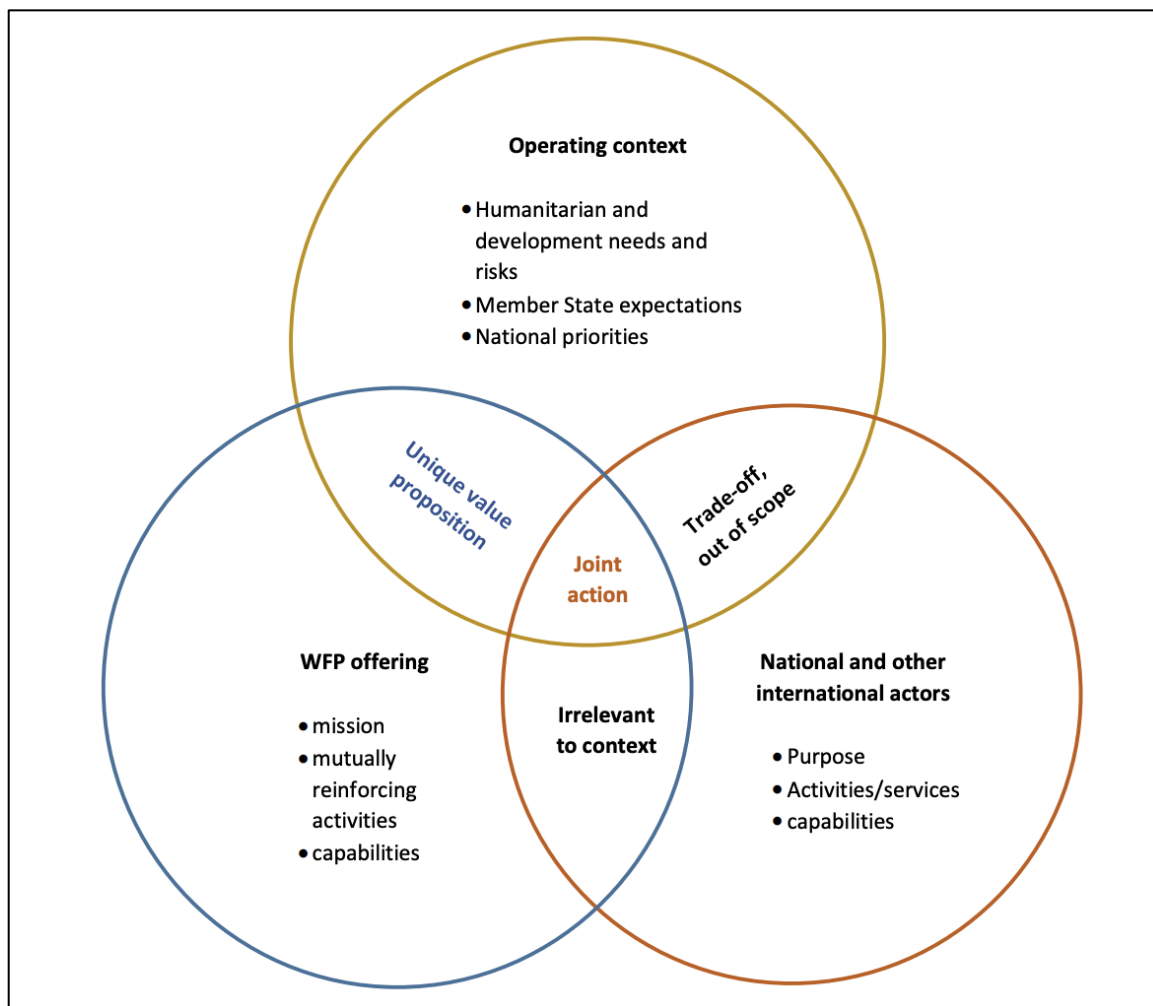
218. A HGSF food systems analysis was primarily used to answer the following evaluation question:
- EQ 2.1a To what extent did HGSF activities provide an innovative and integrated platform across food systems to tackle chronic issues in education, agriculture, nutrition, and social protection?
219. The analysis also provided insights into the following evaluation questions:
- EQ 1.2 To what extent and in what ways was the CSP designed to support national priorities, the UN cooperation framework, and the SDGs leveraging WFP's comparative advantage / strategic positioning to add value to the larger humanitarian and development ecosystem?
 - EQ 2.1 To what extent did WFP achieve its coverage and outcome targets and in what ways did it contribute to the expected outcomes of the CSP?
 - EQ 2.1b Were there any unintended outcomes, positive or negative?
 - EQ 4.2 How well and in what ways did WFP establish and leverage strategic and operational partnerships for joint action government, other development, and private sector actors to maximize efficiency and effectiveness?
220. Analysis and findings informed the recommendations related to the activities in support of the HGSF for the next CSP with regards to key entry points and food systems elements where WFP is best strategically positioned to support HGSF – either through its unique value proposition or joint action.
221. The expected outputs of data collection and analysis are a HGSF matrix for each county it samples during fieldwork (that is, Nimba, Bong, and Montserrado) compiling data collected through interviews and focus groups (and where necessary, seeking additional input from key stakeholders: Government of Liberia, cooperating partners, farmers' groups, food management committees, SMCs, etc.) to complete these. Individual county matrixes were compared and consolidated into an overall mapping and profiling of the HGSF food systems.

Guidance on strategic positioning

222. The evaluation team's approach to examining the strategic positioning of WFP and its partnerships looked at to what extent and how WFP Liberia's partnership strategy and specific partnerships (government, private sector, international financial institutions and non-traditional development partners) have facilitated or hindered the achievement of CSP outcomes based on the "potential comparative advantage" of WFP according to three dimensions of WFP strategic positioning²¹⁶ (see Figure 19 below).

²¹⁶ WFP. 2024. Mid-Term Evaluation of WFP's Strategic Plan (2022–2025), Centralized evaluation report OEV/2023/019, September.

Figure 19: Dimensions of strategic positioning



Source: WFP 2022, adapted from Porter, 1996; Porter 2001 and Johnson, 2008

223. The Mid-Term Evaluation of WFP's Strategic Plan (2022–2025) concludes that the WFP comparative advantage will be determined by context and will be situated somewhere at the intersection of the saving and changing lives spectrum and the delivery and enabling functions, based on: 1) things that WFP can potentially offer and do; 2) the broader context WFP is operating in; and 3) what partners are doing and how. Where there is an overlap between the national context and the “WFP offering” (mission, activities, and capabilities), WFP provides a unique value proposition. Where context and the WFP offering also overlap with the offerings of national and other international actors, there is an opportunity for joint action.

224. The expected outputs of data collection and analysis are findings that represent WFP's strategic positioning in Liberia based on its: 1) unique value proposition, and 2) joint activities.

Guidance on capacity strengthening analysis

225. The 2022 WFP Country Capacity Strengthening Policy Update provides a framework for understanding WFP capacity strengthening activities.²¹⁷ The policy update aligns with and builds on relevant WFP policies and strategies to present a forward-looking perspective on how capacity strengthening connects to the strategic plan and WFP work long-term. In particular, it identifies domains of intervention and pathways to change by which WFP capacity strengthening activities and their outcomes can be identified and analysed.

226. It notes that country capacity change can occur through interventions in the following domains:

- enabling environment;
- organizational domain; and
- individual domain.

227. These domains represent areas where WFP engages in capacity strengthening.

228. Further, WFP identifies abilities, needs and demands regarding five critical aspects of governance known as the five pathways:

- policy and legislation;
- strategic planning and financing;
- institutional effectiveness and accountability;
- programme design and delivery; and
- engagement of non-government actors.

²¹⁷ WFP. 2022. [CCS Policy Update 2022](#):

229. Both domains and pathways are captured in the following matrix for analysing capacity strengthening activities.

Table 42: Matrix for analysing capacity strengthening activities

	Enabling environment	Organizational domain	Individual domain
Policy and legislation			
Strategic planning and financing			
Institutional effectiveness and accountability			
Programme design and delivery			
Engagement of non-government actors			
Other potential pathways			

Source: WFP. 2022. Country Capacity Strengthening Policy Update

230. For the purposes of this evaluation, the evaluation team used data collection to identify WFP capacity strengthening activities, mapping these onto possible pathways. The pathways help the evaluation team identify areas where outcomes can be expected in from WFP capacity strengthening activities. Taken together, the domains and pathways provide a robust framework for assessing existing capacities and evaluating the performance of local actors and development-humanitarian outcomes of the Government of Liberia and non-governmental actors.

231. The expected outputs of data collection and analysis are a completed capacity strengthening matrix for SO1, SO2, and SO4.

Annex IV: Ethical considerations, risks, assumptions and quality assurance

Ethical considerations

232. The evaluation was guided and abided by the United Nations values of integrity, humanity, commitment, inclusion and collaboration; the 2020 UNEG Ethical Guidelines; and the 2014 Guidelines on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations. This included ensuring informed consent, protecting privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of stakeholders (safeguarding and preventing unwanted disclosure of sensitive information), and respecting cultural sensitivities and the

Phases	Ethical issues	Risks	Safeguards
	Protection of privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reputational damage to WFP or/and evaluation participants Potential retribution to evaluation participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement stringent measures to protect privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity Address concerns related to potential embarrassment or retribution to evaluation participants Ensure strict adherence to safeguarding and best practice principals in the conducting of any interviews with children/students
	Data security and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data breaches and unauthorized access Low risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement robust data security measures and encryption protocols to prevent data breaches and unauthorized access Data analysis will only be conducted by evaluation team members, experts who are cognisant of the Scientific Rule and Ethical Consideration. The evaluation includes a specialist in quality assurance, who oversees ethical compliance For survey data, personal or institutional identifiers will be replaced with codes and definition of those codes will only be known by the evaluation team leader. Upon finalizing data collection, the data will be reviewed, verified and validated
	Stakeholder engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate representation and engagement of stakeholders and incomplete understanding of stakeholder perspectives and needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure appropriate and inclusive representation and engagement of all stakeholder groups in the evaluation process – ensure CPs well briefed in site and participant selection rationale, Brief and train national and any CP staffs involved etc. Allocate sufficient time and resources for meaningful stakeholder involvement
Reporting and dissemination	Inaccurate presentation of analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reputational damage to WFP Strategic decisions made on erroneous analysis, findings, recommendations , etc. Objectivity – low risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uphold TL's credentialed professional standards and leverage team experience Use evaluation team quality assurance and WFP CEQAS to ensure the accuracy of reporting <p>Data analysis will only be conducted by evaluation team, experts who are cognisant of the Scientific Rule and Ethical Consideration. The evaluation includes a specialist in quality assurance, who will oversee ethical compliance</p>

Source: Evaluation team, based on documents review and inception stage interviews

Risks and assumptions

234. Table 40 summarizes critical risks associated with the evaluation, accompanied by their anticipated risk rating and recommended mitigation strategies. The risk level refers to the likelihood of the risk occurring (classified as low, medium, or high), and the potential magnitude of the adverse impact (categorized as low, medium, or high) the risk would have on the overall quality of the evaluation in addressing the evaluation questions.

Table 40: Risk management

Risk	Risk rating	Impact	Mitigation measures
Unclear expectations	Medium	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of ToR and prioritization of EQs and key priorities from CSPE (where possible) in close consultation with the EM and country office during inception Ensure that expectations are established and communicated early and clearly and that prioritization of areas of research is clearly understood and documented.
Evaluability limitations	Medium	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the inception phase, the evaluation team has identified evaluability limitations. The evaluation design and methods (see the evaluation matrix in Annex IX) have been designed to address data gaps by employing a mix of primary methods to complement existing secondary data and to reduce dependency on this single source The evaluation team will also conduct periodic reviews of data availability and quality to ensure that risks associated with potential gaps are mitigated as it progresses in the evaluation
Political instability risk	Low	Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the country office to understand the political landscape If in-person interviews and focus groups are deemed impractical, unsafe, or impossible, these will be conducted using remote tools. In addition, the evaluation team will remain in constant contact with the EM to adapt and adjust the methodological approach and timelines in the event of major events

Risk	Risk rating	Impact	Mitigation measures
Country office does not engage or participate fully in the evaluation process	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The evaluation team initiated engagement with the country office during the inception mission to start building a relationship with the country office and ensuring that the country office understands its roles in the evaluation
Stakeholders do not engage or participate in the evaluation process or attempt to bias/unduly influence	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The evaluation team initiated engagement with key stakeholders during the inception mission and will further work with the country office to engage key stakeholders for the CSPE
Changing timelines for carrying out the CSPE	Low/medium	Low/Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research runs the risk of changing implementation timelines. the evaluation team will sustain contact with the EM to adapt and adjust its approach and timelines where necessary. From the evaluation team end, the evaluation team will implement strict project management and monitoring techniques
Participants have concerns about confidentiality	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluators will ensure that confidentiality is maintained during the implementation of the fieldwork. The contracting and work assignment process required all members of the team sign a pledge of ethical conduct including an agreement to protect anonymity and confidentiality of interviewees. This includes anonymity of data and paying attention to safe and private settings. Further, analysis would be done at an aggregate level to protect the confidentiality of evaluation participants.
Stakeholders worry about validity, credibility, etc.	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To mitigate the threat that analysis conducted for the evaluation may not be transparent and evidence based, roles and responsibilities of employees and consultants will be clearly defined; an evaluation matrix will be transparently used to link evidence (through use of

Risk	Risk rating	Impact	Mitigation measures
			triangulation) with findings, conclusions and recommendations.
Access to stakeholders in the field and security: Security and seasonal road conditions and other concerns limit access to beneficiaries	Low	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The transport and accessibility situation of field sites may vary, but current seasonal and political timing appears favourable. Selection of sites to be visited will be taken in close cooperation with the country office, CPs and their logistics staff. The evaluation team will use our own, WFP and the UN risk management tools to identify risk alerts
Limited access to certain institutions and stakeholders: Sample selection bias, loss of contextual data and evidence	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experienced evaluation team with previous experiences working together in Liberia. Reliable national consultant, experienced in data collection in communities. Flexibility for phone interviews and data incorporation even after the main mission

Source: Evaluation team, based on documents review and inception stage interviews

Quality assurance

235. The WFP CEQAS was systematically applied and in addition to the data quality assessment and peer review of deliverables conducted within the team, an additional review by the evaluation team's quality assurance specialist (QAS) acts as a quality assurance mechanism.

236. The evaluation team comprises evaluators who are very familiar with the context and upheld the principles of impartiality, rigour and participation throughout the evaluation process. These principles allowed the team to foster open discussions with all stakeholders and to substantiate key findings as they arose and permitted the team to build robust evidence around lines of inquiry as the evaluation unfolded. Thus, several activities were built into the methodology to ensure data quality, reliability, consistency and accuracy.

237. The senior national consultant and any research assistants contracted during fieldwork underwent training given by the evaluation team to ensure they had a clear understanding of the objectives of evaluation, ethical and safeguarding and gender and vulnerability considerations, and the intention behind each question in the interviews and focus groups tools which were tested and piloted in at least one live interview and modified accordingly.

Annex V. Data collection tools

Key informant interview guide

238. Table 43 provides examples of key informant questions that can be drawn on for different stakeholders. Specific protocols to guide open-ended discussions for interviews were customized for each interview, following a review of each interviewee's background, position and connection to the CSP, so that questions were aligned with the interviewee's experience. The evaluation team took a non-linear, iterative approach to designing and refining interview protocols - adding, adjusting or removing questions as appropriate, as information is gathered throughout the data collection phase. The 16 sub-questions and related indicators in the evaluation matrix were used to structure interviews and focus and discipline the evaluation team's inquiries.

Table 43: Key informant question set

Questions	WFP	GoL	UNCT	CP	Donor
EQ 1. To what extent and in what ways is the CSP evidence-based and strategically focused to address the needs of the most vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity?					
1.1. To what extent was the CSP design informed by credible evidence and strategically and realistically targeted to address the food security and nutrition situation in the country?					
<i>What key sources of evidence inform the CSP at the design stage?</i>	X	X	X	X	
<i>Were key stakeholders consulted as part of the CSP at the design stage?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Were counties and communities most in need targeted appropriately? Is there a standard approach for targeting counties and communities? If so, is it effective?</i>	X			X	
<i>Were the most vulnerable and those most in need at community-level targeted appropriately? Is there a standard approach for targeting counties and communities? If so, is it effective?</i>	X			X	
<i>Were any people in need or specific vulnerable groups missed and if so, why?</i>	X				
<i>Was geographic and community-level targeting appropriate given the COs available funding resources and capacities?</i>	X	X		X	
1.2. To what extent and in what ways was the CSP designed to support national priorities, the UN cooperation framework, and the SDGs leveraging WFP's comparative advantage / strategic positioning to add value to the larger humanitarian and development ecosystem?					
<i>Do WFP programmes reflect hunger challenges, the food security and nutrition issues prevailing in Liberia crises and in relation to the country context and broader context? Are there any gaps?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>How relevant is WFP's programme for Liberia's national priorities and achievement of SDGs?</i>	X	X			X
1.3. To what extent is the CSP design internally coherent and based on a ToC, with realistic assumptions?					
<i>In what ways was the CSP and programming internally coherent or not (e.g., with integration across activities, outputs, and outcomes in the ToC)?</i>	X		X	X	

Questions	WFP	GoL	UNCT	CP	Donor
<i>In what ways was the CSP externally coherent and coordinated with other actors? Presence of synergies and complementarities, mutually reinforcing with integrated activities to promote intended outcomes?</i>	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Looking at the assumptions for the CSP ToC, which if any assumptions were less appropriate?</i>	X				
<i>How does the CSP builds on or depart from the previous activities under the T-ICSP? Have the envisaged strategic changes have taken place? If so, what have their long-term changes been as of today?</i>	X				
<i>How effective has the strategic shift between the CSP and T-ICSP been, and what long-term changes that have happened in the lines of work that continued as part of the CSP?</i>					
<i>How does the CSP reflect WFP's global strategic plan?</i>	X				
<i>Has coherence improved as the CSP has progressed (esp., with the focus on integration through HGSF)?</i>	X				
1.4. To what extent and in what ways did the CSP (and its consecutive budget revisions) adapt and respond to evolving needs and priorities to ensure continued relevance during implementation in the context of funding shortfalls and repeated crisis including COVID-19, climate-change, devaluation of currency, and the ripple effects on food security related to the war in Ukraine?					
<i>How effectively has WFP programming shifted throughout the CSP, changing national capacities and needs, and in response to changing contextual?</i>	X	X		X	X
<i>in what ways did programming adapt to, fail or adapt less well to, evolving shocks and needs and why?</i>	X	X		X	
EQ2. What difference did the CSP make to food security and nutrition in the country?					
2.1. To what extent did WFP achieve its coverage and outcome targets and in what ways did it contribute to the expected outcomes of the CSP?					
<i>To what extent did WFP achieve its coverage targets?</i>	X			X	
<i>How well did indicators set under SOs meet their designated targets?</i>	X				
<i>To what extent did WFP achieve its outcome targets for different SOs/activities? Where they were unable to, could this be explained by challenges in activities/outputs?</i>	X			X	
<i>Extent to which positive results were identified that were; articulated as outcomes or not; or captured/ not expected or not captured by strategic objective indicators set in the CSP Results Framework. OR What other unexpected positives were there from programming?</i>	X				
<i>Extent to which capacity strengthening worked (directly or indirectly) across different domains (e.g., 1) enabling environment, 2) organizational, and 3) individual)</i>	X	X	X	X	
<i>Extent to which capacity strengthening contributed (directly or indirectly) across different pathways (e.g., 1) policy and Legislation, 2) institutional effectiveness and accountability, 3) strategic planning and financing, 4) programme design and delivery, and 5) engagement of non-government actors.)</i>	X	X	X	X	
<i>Have there been any unintended outcomes (positive or negative) of WFP programming during the CSP period? If there have been negative outcomes, have these been addressed/mitigated?</i>	X			X	
<i>In 2019, the CSP shows significant fewer actual beneficiaries compared to planned, with more than a 50 percent shortfall in some case. What are the reasons for this?</i>	X			X	
<i>In 2020, there is a sharp increase in planned beneficiaries corresponding to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, suggesting a scale-up in response to increased</i>	X			X	

Questions	WFP	GoL	UNCT	CP	Donor
<i>needs. However, actual numbers still fell short of the ambitious targets. What are the reasons for this?</i>					
<i>In 2021, the actual beneficiaries exceeded the planned numbers significantly; in 2022 actual beneficiaries again exceeded planned beneficiaries, but by a much smaller margin than in 2021. What are the reasons for this? (e.g., if it shows a possible stabilization of the situation or changes in needs assessment and funding?)</i>	X			X	
<i>Across all four years, children (especially those aged 0-23 months and 24-59 months) and older adults (60+ years) had relatively high percentages in 2021 and 2022 but saw a sharp decline in 2023. The 18-59 age group showed the highest percentage in 2021 (2235.8 percent) but also experienced a significant drop by 2023 (44.4 percent). What are the reasons for this?</i>	X			X	
<i>What are the total number of schools assisted by WFP each year of the CSP?</i>	X				
<i>Under SO1, what are the different elements of the HGSG food system (refer to HGSG food systems matrix in Table 41 of the inception report).</i>	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Feeding days as a percentage of total days have generally increased over the CSP, but are still well short of the targets. What are the reasons for the shortfall?</i>	X			X	
<i>Under SO1, what were the reasons for the drop in acceptable FCS in 2023, as well as impediments to achieving the CSP targets?</i>	X			X	
<i>Under SO1, what were the reasons for the fluctuations in coping strategy index in 2021, as well as impediments to achieving the CSP targets across most years?</i>	X			X	
<i>Under SO1, what were the reasons for the increases in annual enrolment in 2021 and 2022?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Under SO1, what are additional potential outcomes of school feeding (e.g., those not defined by current outcome indicators: lower financial burden on parents, increased attention and academic performance of students)?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Under SO1, schools assisted through THR decreased between 2020 to 2021, with no data in 2022 and 2023, what are the reasons for these fluctuations?</i>	X				
<i>Under SO1, the number school feeding on-site rations and THR provided in 2022 far exceeded those provided in other years, why?</i>	X				
<i>Under SO1, what are additional potential outcomes of THR (e.g., improved nutrition of students and households)?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Under SO1, how does WFP's comparative advantage align with its core focus on school feeding, and especially HGSG?</i>				X	
<i>Under SO3, what are additional potential outcomes of capacity strengthening to schools, food management committees, cooks, etc.</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Under SO1, what are additional potential outcomes of asset creation (e.g., increased short-term in food security (through cash-based transfers) and improved productivity through rehabilitated inland valley swamps)?</i>	X			X	
<i>Under SO1, what are additional potential outcomes of support to farmers groups (e.g., those not defined by current outcome indicators: improved productivity, strengthened livelihoods and improved incomes, improved food security, improved crop diversification, and stronger agricultural value chains (including processing capacities))?</i>	X			X	
<i>Under SO1, what are additional potential outcomes of local procurement of agricultural commodities</i>	X				
<i>Under SO1, schools assisted through THR decreased between 2020 to 2021, with no data in 2022 and 2023, what are the reasons for these fluctuations?</i>	X				
<i>Under SO1, the number school feeding on-site rations and THR provided in 2022 far exceeded those provided in other years, why?</i>	X			X	
<i>Under SO2, what have been the numbers of food/cash-based transfers provided each year of the CSP and has the met targets?</i>	X			X	
<i>Under SO2, what were the reasons for the drop in acceptable FCS in 2023, as well as impediments to achieving the CSP targets?</i>	X			X	

Questions	WFP	GoL	UNCT	CP	Donor
<i>Under SO2, what were the reasons for the fluctuations in coping strategy index in 2021 and 2023, as well as impediments to achieving the CSP targets?</i>	X			X	
<i>Under SO2, what are the reasons for rising food expenditure share, and has this been continuing in recent years?</i>	X				
<i>Are there potential overlap between smallholder farmers supported under SO1 and SO2 in terms of the target group under asset creation?</i>	X				
<i>The indicator tracked on SBCC changed, how did this affect monitoring out SBCC outputs for SO1 and SO2?</i>	X				
<i>Was there a proactive and coherent SBCC strategy? How did this (or lack thereof) affect outputs and outcomes for SBCC?</i>	X				
<i>Under SO2, there were significant SBCC activities occurring in 2022, what were these?</i>	X				
<i>Under SO2, explore short-/long-term improvements in food security for food assistance /cash-based transfers.</i>	X			X	
<i>Under SO3, what is the number of trainings and technical assistance provided during the CSP as well as their nature and outcome? (e.g., output indicators under SO1 note the following: government staff participating in WFP-facilitated South-South Cooperation and national institutions benefitting from embedded or seconded expertise as a result of WFP capacity strengthening).</i>	X				
<i>Outputs under SO3 also include support of national coordination mechanisms. What is the extent and nature of these and their outcomes?</i>	X	X	X		X
<i>Under SO3, number of assets/infrastructures handed over to national stakeholders, shows an increase from 2020 to 2021. What is the value of assets/infrastructure handed over 2022 and 2023?</i>	X				
<i>Under SO3, what was type of assets/infrastructure handed over? (e.g., output indicators under SO1 note the following: energy-efficient stoves and cooking devices provided to schools, kitchen utensils distributed (plates, spoons, cooking pots etc.) and motorbikes/vehicles distributed).</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Under SO3, what are additional potential outcomes of capacity strengthening in school feeding (e.g., those not defined by current outcome indicators: stronger policies, institutions, and organizational and individual capacities)?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Under SO3, what are additional potential outcomes of capacity strengthening in smallholder support (e.g., those not defined by current outcome indicators: stronger policies, institutions, and organizational and individual capacities)?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Under SO3, what are additional potential outcomes of capacity strengthening in crisis response (e.g., those not defined by current outcome indicators: stronger policies, institutions, and organizational and individual capacities)?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Under SO3, technical assistance and training was highest in 2020, what was this?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Under SO3, there was a plan of 100,000 USD in 2022 and 2023, but the ACR and outputs dataset note actual achievement why?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Under SO4, cargo transported indicates considerable fluctuations 2021-2023. What are the reasons for these fluctuations and their outcomes?</i>	X				
<i>Outputs under SO4 also include emergency telecoms and information and communications technology systems established and fixed storage services provided. What is the extent and nature of these and their outcomes?</i>	X				
<i>Under SO4, what are additional potential outcomes (e.g., those not defined by current outcome indicators: regular distribution of health commodities, more timely distribution, quality of commodities (e.g., expired products are being disposed of), less diversion of commodities, regular updates of commodity data, etc.?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Under SO4, what are additional potential outcomes (e.g., those not defined by current outcome indicators: regular distribution of food commodities, more timely distribution, quality of commodities (e.g., expired products are being disposed of), less diversion of commodities, regular updates of commodity data, etc.?</i>	X	X		X	

Questions	WFP	GoL	UNCT	CP	Donor
<i>Under SO4, how do outcomes/effectiveness of 'long haul' and 'last mile' modalities compare?</i>	X				
<i>Under SO4, what is the effect of capacities of transport providers on provision of quality health commodities and health outcomes?</i>	X				
2.1a To what extent did HGFSF activities provide an innovative and integrated platform across food systems to tackle chronic issues in education, agriculture, nutrition, and social protection?					
<i>Extent to which WFP HGFSF model/modalities were coordinated with and played a leading role in national school feeding ecosystem (i.e., to what degree incorporated into national standards, guidelines, models, etc and were coordinated and integrated with related programmes, activities and actors.)</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Extent to which HGFSF activity created synergies to multiply outcomes across education, agriculture, nutrition, and social protection?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Have purchases from smallholder farmers (both quantities, values, and as a percentage of WFP food purchases) increased 2021-2023 from 2020-2021 levels?</i>	X			X	
2.1b Were there any unintended outcomes, positive or negative? (please give examples and describe degree of impact)					
<i>Extent to which negative impacts were monitored, noticed, acted upon, successfully/partially/or not addressed by WFP</i>	X			X	
2.2. To what extent did WFP contribute to achievement of cross-cutting aims of GEEW and inclusion, protection and AAP, and nutrition integration into programme activities?					
<i>What differential outcomes for men and women (or gender specific outcomes) were observed for each of the SOs (assess where they are positioned along the GE continuum/scale)?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>What gender, disability, vulnerability or protection and safeguarding assessments were undertaken/referred to at design and other stages and as a result what adaptations in programming were made?</i>	X			X	
<i>Extent of enhanced and equitable participation, strengthened leadership and decision making, strengthened protection to ensure safety, dignity and meaningful access.</i>					
<i>Extent to which assisted people and their communities and representatives were consulted AND kept informed about programming decisions?</i>	X			X	
<i>Extent to which assisted people and their communities and representatives had access to adequate and appropriate response and CFM?</i>	X			X	
<i>Without mentioning any specific names, were there any types of access, exclusion, safety, dignity or safeguarding or protection challenges arose? Were these responded to adequately and future modifications made?</i>	X			X	
<i>Extent to which nutrition-sensitive approaches were integrated across programming?</i>	X			X	
<i>Extent to which gender-inclusive and transformative approaches were integrated into HGFSF programming? Please give examples of gender or disability transformative achievements or weaknesses?</i>	X			X	
<i>What SBCC activities have been implemented as part of the different activities in SO1 (e.g., asset creation, school feeding (on-site), etc.)?</i>	X			X	
<i>Are there opportunities for further mainstreaming nutrition-sensitive modalities across programmes?</i>	X			X	
2.2a To what extent did WFP adhere to humanitarian principles (humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence) in its humanitarian response?					
<i>Extent to which WFP adhere to humanitarian principles (humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence) in its humanitarian response</i>	X	X		X	

Questions	WFP	GoL	UNCT	CP	Donor
2.2b To what extent and in what ways did WFP contribute to expected outcomes in a manner that avoided or minimized negative environmental impacts?					
<i>Extent to which WFP programmes led to environmental degeneration/harm</i>	X			X	
<i>Proportion of activities for which environmental risks have been screened and, as required, mitigation measures undertaken.</i>	X			X	
<i>Extent to which elements of environmental sustainability are integrated into WFP programming</i>	X			X	
2.3. To what extent are achievements under the CSP likely to be sustainable, from the following perspectives: institutional (including capacities and systems of government and civil society actors), financial, and social?					
<i>Existence of WFP transition and exit plans that assure sustainability of achievement for each of the key activities and commitments made under the CSP</i>	X	X		X	
<i>Resources such as financial, staffing, skills, hardware, etc. were made available and allocated by key national partners (esp., GoSL) to that take responsibility for key activities and progress made under the CSP</i>	X				
<i>Is there community and household ownership and support for WFP programmes (especially under SO1)²²⁰?</i>	X	X		X	
2.4. To what extent did the CSP build linkages between WFP's humanitarian, peacebuilding, and development initiatives?					
<i>Extent to which the CSP and its related programming activities promoted integrated (and synergistic) resilience and nexus outcomes</i>	X			X	
<i>Extent to which the programmes contribute to local level peacebuilding outcomes</i>	X	X	X	X	X
EQ3. To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently?					
3.1. To what extent were the CSP outputs delivered and related budget spent within a timely manner?					
<i>Was delivery of goods, activity, or outputs timely compared to a timeframe of reference. What are the factors that explain the time required?</i>	X			X	
<i>What were consequences (positive or negative, intended or unintended) of the time spent and the measures taken to save time?</i>	X				
<i>Extent that approved grants were utilized and assigned budgets fully disbursed by the country office?</i>	X				
<i>Extent that budgets committed by donors and by the Government of Liberia implementation partners were made available on time?</i>	X				X
<i>While crisis response activities under SO2 – particularly food and nutrition assistance – neared a full utilization rate, the support services under SO4 have noticeably lower utilization. Does this low rate indicate operational efficiencies or implementation delays?</i>	X				

²²⁰ E.g., “The long-term sustainability of HGSP programmes often depends on community and household ownership and support, with evidence showing significant parental contributions of resources and labour. However, these contributions tend to overburden women, reinforcing social norms and limiting their economic opportunities. Challenges remain to ensure a balance between ownership and appropriateness to local capacities and socioeconomic conditions of households”; see: WFP, 2024, *WFP Evaluation Summary of Evidence: Home-Grown School Feeding*, September.

Questions	WFP	GoL	UNCT	CP	Donor
3.2. To what extent was the CSP delivered in a cost-efficient manner?					
<i>What are the main cost drivers under the CSP?</i>	X				
<i>Extent of efficiency losses compared to reference prices and acceptable loss standards and factors that influence prices and losses</i>	X				
<i>Were the programming modalities used for the CSP the most cost efficient?</i>	X	X		X	X
<i>How is cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness of CSP activities analysed, monitored and reported?</i>	X	X			X
<i>Utilization rate during CSP</i>	X				
<i>What were the expenditure-per-beneficiary for each strategic objective?</i>	X				
<i>Extent to which country office succeed in (or failed to) eliminate operational redundancies across programming/support activities</i>	X				
<i>Role of modality and Delivery mechanism and use of a school platform in efficiency gains/losses?</i>	X			X	
<i>Are there other modalities that could have provided better value-for-money? What is the evidence for this? Where could there have been savings made in efficiencies?</i>	X	X		X	
<i>How does the cost-effectiveness of local purchases from smallholder farmers/cooperatives compare to imports? How does cost-effectiveness of purchases from WFP-supported farmers groups compared to other local purchases?</i>	X	X			
<i>Were there synergies or multiplier effects gained through integration of different elements of the home-grown model.</i>	X	X			
4. What are the critical factors, internal and external to WFP, explaining performance and results? What are the factors that explain WFP performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected by the country strategic plan?					
4.1. To what extent was WFP able to mobilize adequate, timely, predictable, and flexible resources to finance the CSP, and what internal/external factors have affected this (if any)?					
<i>How well do CSP SOs reflect donor priorities in Liberia?</i>					X
<i>How timely, flexible, and/or sufficient is donor funding to implement planned interventions of the CSP?</i>	X				
<i>What factors affect donor diversity and predictability in donor funding?</i>	X				
<i>Ratio of needs-based plan to actual contributions received</i>	X				
<i>Level of donor earmarking of funding and implications for the country office's ability to respond in a flexible way to changing needs</i>	X				X
<i>Extent that WFP budgeting process supported strategic shift in CSP</i>	X				
<i>Specific actions to mobilize resources from donors and others including private sector</i>	X				X
<i>The minimal change between the original and revised needs-based plans for SO1 suggests a stable assessment of required resources for school feeding programmes. However, the funding level of around 24 percent shows significant underfunding relative to the identified needs. Does this reflect potential challenges in resource mobilization or reallocations driven by emergent priorities elsewhere?</i>	X				
<i>SO4 reflects an increased focus on enhancing common services. Does the significant rise in the revised plan suggests an acknowledgment of greater-than-anticipated</i>	X				

Questions	WFP	GoL	UNCT	CP	Donor
<i>needs, increased funding opportunities, or some other factor?</i>					
4.2. How well and in what ways did WFP establish and leverage strategic and operational partnerships for joint action government, other development, and private sector actors to maximize efficiency and effectiveness?					
<i>Extent that CSP has supported effective collaboration and new partnerships to complement WFP's comparative advantage and promoted ownership and localization.?</i>	X	X	X	X	
<i>Extent that WFP Liberia's Partnership Strategy promoted partnerships and collaborations?</i>	X	X	X	X	
<i>Level of satisfaction of government, donor and other external stakeholders with country office partnership performance</i>		X	X	X	X
<i>Extent to which HGSF was used as a programming platform for multi-sectoral partnerships and collaboration?</i>	X	X	X	X	
4.3. To what extent did the country office have appropriate human resources capacity (e.g., staffing, skills, institutional support, etc.) to deliver on the CSP?					
<i>Ratio of full-time staff to total expenditures (overall and per programme)</i>	X				
<i>Sufficient staffing levels / gaps in key programme/support positions?</i>	X			X	
4.3a To what extent were the monitoring and reporting systems used to track and demonstrate progress towards expected outcomes and to inform management decisions and programme adaptations?					
<i>Adequate availability and use of monitoring data to track progress and inform decision-making: Existence of monitoring and tracking systems and validity and reliability for predicting expected outcomes?</i>	X			X	
<i>Availability of monitoring and reporting data for timely decision-making?</i>	X			X	
<i>Extent of use of monitoring data by management to inform decisions?</i>	X				

Focus group discussion guide

Hello,

Hello, my name is _____ and I am part of the independent evaluation team carrying out an evaluation of WFP activities in Liberia between 2019 and now. The purpose of this discussion is to get your views about the implementation and the results of those activities.

The discussion will last 60-90 minutes. Your name will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shown to other persons. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shown to other persons and we will not link your name to any answers. We cannot provide you with any direct benefits for your household, or promise any specific development for your community. We can give you some refreshments for your participation today.

We are gathering data to better understand the situation in your community and in this district. We will make sure that what you tell us today will be communicated to WFP and its partners so that they can try to help communities such as this one.

We would appreciate your participation. Do you have any questions about any of the things that I just mentioned?

Participation in this focus group is completely voluntary. If I ask any question that you do not want to answer, let me know and you will not have to answer. You can end your participation in the focus group at any time.

However, I hope you will participate since your views are very important to understanding how we can improve the lives of young children in this community and others like it.

Did the respondents give consent?

- Facilitator should introduce themselves and the notetaker, and explain why they are taking notes and what is being noted.
- Participants should introduce themselves.
- Conduct an ice breaker.

Have participants set ground rules, for example:

- One person speaks at a time.
- Raise hand to be recognized.
- Let everybody speak.
- Respect others' opinions
- Turn off phones.
- No talking to person beside you
- One person speaks at a time.

Focus group questions:

1. What activities have been carried out in this community by WFP and its partners and when? (Probe if necessary: school feeding, smallholder farmer/coop support, cash-based transfers / food assistance, etc.)
2. Have any of these activities contributed positive changes for you, your household, or your community in any way? If so, how? (Probe, if necessary: from potential individual or household outcomes to economic, resilience, nutrition, inclusion, and others).
3. Did the activities Did the most vulnerable people in the community that were most in need receive the assistance or not? Were any people in need or specific vulnerable groups missed and if so, who and why? (Probe, if necessary: timely delivery, activities not fully delivered, etc.). How could this be improved?
4. Were there any challenges in the implementation of these activities? If so, which ones? (Probe, if necessary: from potential individual or household outcomes to economic, resilience, nutrition, inclusion, and others).

5. Did WFP communicate well and coordinate with your community leaders and local representatives about the programme? (Probe: at design, during implementation, and before/while exiting)
6. Were there any effects on this community from any WFP activities or those of its partners? (Probe, if necessary, challenges related to: communication/feedback related to activities, inclusiveness and timeliness/completeness of delivery, treatment of beneficiaries, allocation of resources, conflict over project benefits, etc.)
7. Did WFP take any steps to reduce negative effects? If so, did WFP or its partners successfully address this? How could problems like this be prevented in the future?
8. If people in this community want more information or make a complaint about WFP activities, how do they do this usually? (Probe: knowledge and use of CFM) Are there requests/complaints usually handled successfully?
9. Without referring to any names or specific events, do you know if anyone in your community that felt disrespected or unsafe as a result of involvement in this WFP programme? If so, did WFP or its partners successfully address the issue? How could problems like this be prevented in the future?
10. From all the positive changes discussed above, are there any you think will continue if WFP was to stop its activities (and why)? Which ones will not continue if WFP was to stop its activities (and why?) (Probe: any sustained capacity strengthening for community structures)
11. Based on what we have discussed, do you have anything to add that has not been covered or needs to be explained further?

Annex VI. Theory of change

239. The CSP line of sight and results framework (see Annex VII) serve as the basis for the CSP's theory of change (ToC), which was reconstructed in consultation with the WFP country office and Office of Evaluation. The theory of change illustrates the results chains from activities to outcomes, in consideration of WFP contribution in Liberia to SDG 2 to create a world free of hunger by 2030 and associated key SDG Targets 2.1 and 2.2, which are supported by work towards partnerships for the goals under SDG 17, Target 17.9.

240. The key pathway towards contributing to zero hunger in Liberia is oriented around increasing access to food and nutrition for vulnerable Liberians by: providing food or cash-based transfers and nutritional awareness to food insecure school children in selected schools and their households and caregivers (SO1); building capacities of local producers to increase and diversify food and nutritious food production (SO1a); and by providing food or cash-based transfers to crisis-affected populations (SO2). The support through funds, food, and production capacities is expected to contribute to the improvement of nutrition and food security of vulnerable Liberians. Additional outcomes from SO1 may include improvements in enrolment, attendance, retention, increased attention and academic performance of students, and lower financial burden on parents, while additional outcomes under SO1a may include improved productivity, strengthened livelihoods and improved incomes, improved food security, improved crop diversification and stronger agricultural value chains (including processing capacities).

241. Increasing access to food is also supported by the provision of social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) aimed at improving nutritional knowledge and practices. Nutrition activities are designed under the CSP to cut across SO1 and SO2, but interviews have revealed that these activities have not always been implemented consistently. The logic of change that underpins nutritional SBCC activities suggests that access to food is not sufficient to achieve nutritional outcomes. The right knowledge is also needed to change eating habits and other nutritional and nutrition-related practices (for example, hygiene and sanitation), as this relates to improved food security.

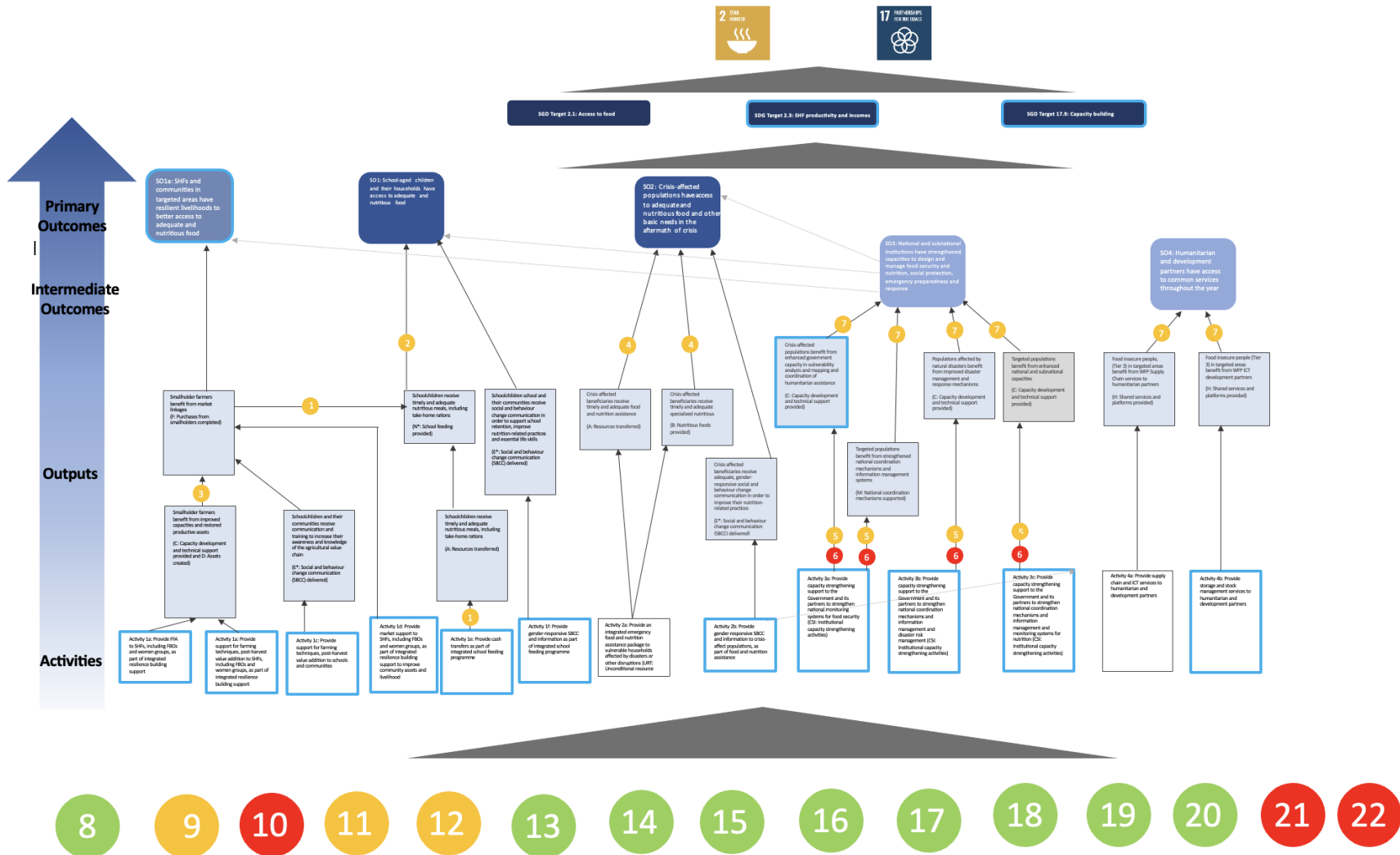
242. Capacity strengthening is another key outcome strategy that contributes to the CSP through the intermediate outcome SO3, which facilitates the transition by WFP from an implementing to an enabling role. The logic of SO3 operates to strengthen the systems, institutions and human resources of national partners – national and subnational government institutions (for example, the Ministry of Education) and community structures (for example, food management committees) – with the aim of sustaining and compounding improvements over the long-term based on the assumption that doing so is essential to enhancing the outcomes, effectiveness and sustainability of the development and humanitarian efforts of WFP and its partners. SO3 acts both as an outcome in itself and as a “strategic change enabler” for other outcomes (SO1 and SO2).







243. SO4 is oriented at strengthening the provision of common services for WFP and its partners and for the wider humanitarian-development community. It now focuses on the management and distribution of public health commodities but has also included food storage and distribution for other school feeding actors (for example, Save the Children).

244. The CSP also pursues important points of integration across WFP work in Liberia whereby change in one activity area reinforces change in other areas; generally, integration is used to reinforce HGSF. Notably, agricultural production (SO1a) is marketed for HGSF (SO1).

245. Further, there are key assumptions underlying the internal capacities of WFP to do the right thing at the right time that are a key dimension of the scope of the evaluation; these are presented below following the reconstructed theory of change figure.

Figure 20: Reconstructed theory of change



strategic objective-specific assumptions		Legend	
1	Food pipeline and cash flow remain healthy all year round (SO1)	Mostly within country office's control	
2	Other non-food items and complementary services are provided by other partners (Government of Liberia, other United Nations agencies and NGOs) (SO1)	Somewhat within country office's control	
3	Smallholder farmers and cooperatives have sufficient capacity to produce enough quantity and quality (SO1)	Not within country office's control	
4	Complementary services and items such as healthcare, water, sanitation, hygiene, protection, non-food items, among others, are provided by the Government of Liberia and other United Nations agencies and NGOs (SO2)	Highlights new addition	
5	Availability of resources to support the implementation of capacity strengthening activities (SO3)	Linkages within SOs	
6	Turnover of staff at national and subnational institutions is not too frequent to undermine the intended effects of capacity strengthening activities (SO3)	Linkages between SOs (integration)	
7	Complementary activities are undertaken by the Government (including leadership and coordination), other United Nations agencies, NGOs and private sector institutions (SO3 and SO4)		
General assumptions			
8	WFP interventions represent WFP's comparative advantage		
9	WFP interventions aligned with Government of Liberia priorities		
10	Stability of prices and exchange rate		
11	Adequate, flexible and timely funding is available		
12	Adequate and continuous staffing with the right skills		
13	Beneficiaries engaged in a manner that reflects their views and preferences		
14	Beneficiaries engaged in a manner that ensures and promotes their safety, dignity, and integrity		
15	Programming undertaken in a manner that promotes empowerment of women and girls and advancing equality		
16	Programming undertaken in a manner that does not harm the environment		
17	Internal systems are in place to effectively and efficiently support programming		
18	Adequate leadership and commitment at WFP country office to support the CSP design and implementation		
19	Evidence and monitoring systems are sufficient for informing, targeting and adapting the delivery of programming		
20	Sufficient, relevant and consistent corporate support of uptake and absorption of critical frameworks, tools and guidance		
21	No disruptive outbreak of communicable diseases such as Ebola virus disease, diarrhoea, etc., in programme intervention areas (SO1)		
22	Security situation remains stable; and target groups and intervention areas are accessible (SO2)		

Annex VII. Results framework and line of sight

246. The CSP's retrofitted line of sight is depicted in Figure 21 below.

Figure 21: Retrofitted line of sight for Liberia CSP (2019-2026)

LIBERIA COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLAN (2019-2023)			
SR 1 – Everyone has access to food (SDG Target 2.1)	SR 1 – Everyone has access to food (SDG Target 2.1)	SR 5 – Countries strengthened capacities (SDG 17.9)	SR 8 – Enhance global partnerships (SDG 17.16)
RESILIENCE BUILDING	CRISIS RESPONSE	RESILIENCE BUILDING	CRISIS RESPONSE
OUTCOME 1: Food-insecure populations including school-aged children in targeted areas have access to adequate and nutritious food including food produced locally by 2030	OUTCOME 2: Crisis-affected populations in targeted areas are able to meet their basic food and nutrition needs during and in the aftermath of crises	OUTCOME 3: National and sub-national institutions have strengthened capacities to design and manage food security and nutrition, social protection, emergency preparedness and response, and disaster risk management systems by 2030	OUTCOME 4: Humanitarian and development partners have access to common services throughout the year
BUDGET SO 1: \$ 40 063 171	BUDGET SO 2: \$ 42 580 986	BUDGET SO 3: \$ 3 027 077	BUDGET SO 4: \$ 3 860 173
OUTPUTS: 1.1. Children attending school (Tier 1) receive timely and adequate nutritious meals including take-home rations for adolescent girls linked to local purchase (output category A1) in order to meet their food and nutrition requirements, support school attendance and retention and improve gender parity (SDGs 4, 5) 1.2. Adolescent girls attending school (Tier 1) receive social and behavior change communication (SBCC) (cat. E) in order to support school retention, improve nutrition-related practices and essential life-skills to help break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition (SR 2, SDG 4) 1.3. School children and their communities (Tier 2) receive communication and trainings on small-scale agriculture (output category E) in order to increase their participation in the agricultural value chain (SR3) 1.4. Smallholder farmers and their communities (Tier 1) benefit from improved capacities and restored productive assets (cat. C) to sustainably improve their productivity, resilience and access to local markets including through home-grown school meals	OUTPUTS: 2.1. Crisis-affected beneficiaries (Tier 1) receive timely and adequate food and nutrition assistance (output category A1) in order to meet their food and nutrition requirements 2.2. Crisis-affected beneficiaries (Tier 1) receive adequate social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) (output category E) in order to improve nutrition-related practices 2.3. Crisis-affected beneficiaries (Tier 1) receive timely and adequate specialized nutritious food to prevent and treat malnutrition (output category B) 2.4. Crisis-affected populations (Tier 2) benefit from enhanced government's capacity in vulnerability analysis and mapping, coordination of humanitarian assistance in order to receive timely food and nutrition assistance	OUTPUTS: 3.1. Populations affected by natural disasters (Tier 3) benefit from improved disaster management and response mechanisms (output category C) in order to receive timely, adequate, equitable, consistent and predictable assistance from the Government, WFP and partners 3.2. Targeted populations (Tier 3) benefit from strengthened national coordination mechanisms and information management systems (output category M) in order to track progress towards zero hunger (SR5) 3.3. Targeted populations (Tier 3) benefit from enhanced national and sub-national capacities in order to manage the Scaling Up Nutrition Initiative (output category C)	OUTPUTS: 4.1. Food insecure people (Tier 3) in targeted areas benefit from WFP Supply Chain services to humanitarian and development partners (output category H) in order to promptly receive life-saving food assistance (SR8) 4.2. Food insecure people (Tier 3) in targeted areas benefit from WFP ICT services to humanitarian and development partners (output category H) in order to promptly receive life-saving food assistance (SR8)
ACTIVITY 1: Provide an integrated, inclusive and gender-transformative school meals package to food and nutritionally vulnerable school children including take-home rations to adolescent girls in a way that relies on and stimulates local production (home-grown school meals) [Activity category 4; Modality: Food/CBT/CS]	ACTIVITY 2: Provide an integrated emergency food and nutrition assistance package to vulnerable households affected by disasters and/or other disruptions [Activity category 1; Modality: Food/CBT/CS]	ACTIVITY 3: Provide capacity-strengthening support to the Government and its partners to strengthen national coordination mechanisms, information management and monitoring systems for food security and nutrition, and disaster risk management [Activity category 9; Modality: CS]	ACTIVITY 4: Provide supply chain and ICT services to humanitarian and development partners [Activity category 10; Modality: SD]

Source: WFP Liberia Country Strategic Plan 2019-2023.

Annex VIII. Evaluation matrix

247. The evaluation matrix includes the four evaluation questions identified in the terms of reference. An edit has reduced a small degree of repetition where issues arose under multiple questions, and where necessary recommending revisions based on the evaluation team’s understanding of the evaluation objectives and priorities (as identified during the inception phase). The “lines of inquiry” column has been superseded in place of a more evidence-based indicators column and the “data sources” column has been merged with a “data collection techniques” column, which gives a more detailed and clear description of methods and data sources to be used.

Table 44: Evaluation questions, sub-questions, and preliminary comments and discussion from the evaluation team

Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection techniques/sources	Data analysis	Comments/discussion
EQ1. To what extent and in what ways is the CSP evidence-based and strategically focused to address the needs of the most vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity?				
1.1. To what extent was the design informed by credible evidence and strategically and realistically targeted to address the food security and nutrition situation in the country?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design was based on food security and nutrition needs assessments (and works through modalities, esp., in the case of THR/CBT) targeting most vulnerable counties/communities Community-level targeting informed by vulnerability assessments to identify the most vulnerable people and their needs (in light of the available country office resources and capacities) Degree to which design and targeting were informed by an analysis of the differential needs and access barriers of men, women, boys and girls and were responsive to affected populations', (men, women, boys and girls as relevant) needs <u>and priorities</u> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review (vulnerability assessment mapping (VAM), multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS), CFSNA, rapid food security assessments, CH data, and vulnerability assessment tools/guidance deployed by WFP/CPs, etc.) Interviews with WFP managers and staff Interviews with government, donors and CPs Focus groups with direct beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of food security data from secondary sources at county-level Analysis of tools/guidance to assess vulnerability Content analysis across interviews, focus groups to triangulate targeting data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The “most vulnerable” is a category that will need to be operationally defined by the evaluation team, to be useful in the evaluation. Categories referenced in sub-Q 1.4 may be useful EQ 1.1 focuses on evidence use for design and targeting of CSP (based on the food security and nutrition situation in the country), while EQ 1.4 looks at how the CSP was adapted throughout its lifecycle

Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection techniques/sources	Data analysis	Comments/discussion
<p>1.2 To what extent and in what ways was the CSP designed to support national priorities, the UN cooperation framework, and the SDGs leveraging WFP's comparative advantage / strategic positioning to add value to the larger humanitarian and development ecosystem?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the CSP was well coordinated and designed to support national priorities • Extent to which the CSP was designed to support the UN cooperation framework, and the SDGs • Degree to which WFP portfolio of programmes provided effective development and humanitarian response, in response to national needs and crises and in relation to the country context and broader context. • Extent to which WFP offering (unique value proposition) overlapped with operating context • Extent to which WFP worked jointly to complement its unique value proposition to support needs and priorities and UNSDCF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review (relevant WFP documents, national policies/strategies, UNSDCF, etc.) • Interviews with WFP managers and staff • Interviews with government, UNCT and CPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of government policies and UNSDCF to assess alignment with CSP. • Content analysis across document review and interviews to assess/triangulate alignment CSP with national policies, UNSDCF, and SDGs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to the normal review of government policy, partnerships, framework agreements, etc., the evaluation team will look closely at the unique roles that WFP plays in Liberia (e.g., managing health sector functions) which other actors tend to perform in other similar contexts (assuming that much of this is spill-over from the Ebola virus disease and COVID-19 responses, where WFP took a lead in the health sector as a provider of common services). Analysis here will be forward-looking; exploring how/if this aspect of the CSP can remain relevant and strategic for WFP. The rapid scale-up and scale-down that is required for effective emergency response in a small country office like Liberia will be a recurring theme in the analysis
<p>1.3. To what extent is the CSP design internally coherent and based on a theory of change (ToC), with realistic assumptions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reconstructed ToC (with clear causal pathways and integration between activities, outputs, and outcomes) indicates that programme design and logical framework was coherent to needs identified. • Presence of synergies and complementarities, mutually reinforcing with integrated activities to promote intended outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review (CSP, programme documents ACRs, etc.) and assessment of alignment of CSP implementation against reconstructed ToC • Interviews with WFP and CP managers and staff and other relevant persons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis across document review, and interviews, to assess/triangulate CSP against reconstructed ToC. • Assess based on the gender results effectiveness scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As is common for CSPs, the Liberia CSP has no ToC. This is not a requirement for CSPs, and the strategic logic is captured in the logical framework, which includes assumptions, even if not explicit articulation of each pathway of change required for achievement of the envisioned results. The evaluation team has worked with OEV and the country office to reconstruct at ToC based on the CSP's logical framework

Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection techniques/sources	Data analysis	Comments/discussion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General²²¹ and specific assumptions (as identified in the analysis of the ToC) are appropriate and realistic 			
<p>1.4. To what extent and in what ways did the CSP (and its consecutive budget revisions) adapt and respond to evolving needs and priorities to ensure continued relevance during implementation in the context of funding shortfalls and repeated crisis including COVID-19, climate-change, devaluation of currency, and the ripple effects on food security related to the war in Ukraine?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which the CSP made relevant adaptations to respond to evolving needs and priorities (considering dimensions of differential needs and access for women, men, boys and girls and vulnerable groups in programming) in the operational environment Extent to which adaptations were strategically targeted in the light of country office resources and capacities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review (CSP, BRs, ACRs, financial data, etc.) Interviews with WFP and CP managers and staff Interviews with government Interviews and focus groups with beneficiaries and their representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content analysis across document review and Interviews to assess/triangulate CSP adaptations, needs and priorities Assess based on the gender results effectiveness scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The original EQ 3.2 (To what extent and in what ways did the country office reprioritize its interventions to optimize limited resources and ensure continued relevance and effectiveness in view of funding gaps and crises/ shocks?) was deleted because analysis of the ways country office re-prioritized during CSP is sufficiently covered under EQ 1.4.

²²¹ In relation to country staffing and resourcing context in relation to CSP design.

Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection techniques/sources	Data analysis	Comments/discussion
EQ2. What difference did the CSP make to food security and nutrition in the country?				
2.1. To what extent did WFP achieve its coverage and outcome targets and in what ways did this link to programme outcomes.?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent that WFP achieved its coverage and outcome targets and whether this differed by different subgroups Extent to which positive results were identified that were; articulated as outcomes or not; or captured/not captured by strategic objective indicators set in the CSP results framework (e.g., outcomes related to food security, livelihoods, income, etc. of farmers' groups under SO1a in the reconstructed ToC in Annex VI) Extent to which CCS contributed to outcomes in line with the WFP CCS framework, especially in relation to CCS efforts to strengthen government emergency preparedness and food security and nutrition information management through activities in different CCS domains and pathways Extent to which CCS directly or indirectly contributed to outcomes under SO1 and SO2 through activities in different CCS domains and pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document/data review (ACRs, programme evaluations/assessments/reports, monitoring data, output data, TPM data, etc.) Interviews with WFP managers and staff Interviews with government, UNCT, donors, and CPs Focus groups with direct beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution analysis Analysis of monitoring data against targets Content analysis across document review, interviews, and focus groups to assess/triangulate CSP performance Assess based on the gender results effectiveness scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The original question EQ 2.1 in the ToR has been usefully simplified, with separate sub-question developed related to HGSF, CCS and unintended outcomes.
2.1a To what extent did HGSF activities provide an innovative and integrated platform across food systems to tackle chronic and relevant gender and inclusion issues in education,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which WFP HGSF model/modalities were coordinated with and played a role in the national school feeding ecosystem (e.g., they were incorporated into national standards, guidelines, models, etc. were coordinated and integrated with related programmes, activities and actors) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document/data review (ACRs, programme evaluations/assessments/reports, monitoring data, output data, TPM data, global evaluations of HGSF, etc.) Interviews with WFP managers and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of monitoring data against targets Comparative analysis of HGSF modalities Content analysis across document review, interviews, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question addresses a key learning theme.

Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection techniques/sources	Data analysis	Comments/discussion
agriculture, nutrition, and social protection?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which HGSF activity created synergies to multiply outcomes across education, agriculture, nutrition and social protection Extent to which HGSF activities contributed to gender-responsive and gender-transformative results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interviews with government, UNCT and CPs Focus groups with direct beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and focus groups to assess/triangulate WFP HGSF performance Assess based on the gender results effectiveness scale 	
2.1b Were there any unintended outcomes, positive or negative?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presence and impact unintended positive outcomes with significant contribution from CSP activities and outputs Extent to which negative impacts were addressed by WFP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document/data review (ACRs, programme evaluations/assessments/reports, monitoring data, TPM data, etc.) Interviews with WFP managers and staff Interviews with government, UNCT and CPs Focus groups with direct beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content analysis across document review, interviews, and focus groups to assess/triangulate unintended outcomes and responses 	
2.2. To what extent did WFP contribute to achievement of cross-cutting aims of GEEW and inclusion, protection and AAP, and nutrition integration into programme activities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which GEEW and inclusion and protection lens was integrated into programmes (including gender assessments as part of programming design) Extent of: Enhanced and equitable participation, strengthened leadership and decision making, strengthened protection to ensure safety, dignity and meaningful access Extent to which assisted people were consulted and informed about programmes and have access to adequate and appropriate response, complaints and feedback mechanisms (including CFM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document/data review (ACRs, programme evaluations/assessments/reports, monitoring data, TPM data, CFM data, etc.) Interviews with WFP managers and staff Interviews with government, UNCT and CPs Focus groups with direct beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of monitoring data against targets Analysis of CFM data and response Content analysis across document review, interviews, and focus groups to assess/triangulate performance in achieving cross-cutting aims Gender results effectiveness scale 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are several questions bundled together in the original question EQ 2.2 in the ToR. Sub-questions have been developed with separate Indicators for the various dimensions listed, which help parse out the EQ.

Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection techniques/sources	Data analysis	Comments/discussion
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of targeted people receiving assistance without safety/dignity/access challenges • Extent to which nutrition-sensitive programming was cross-cutting across programming • Extent to which HGSP programming integrated approaches which were responsive to the differential needs of men, women, boys and girls as relevant and addressed the structural inequalities that contribute to food insecurity 			
2.2a To what extent did WFP adhere to humanitarian principles in its humanitarian response?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adherence of CSP implementation to each of the Liberia context-specific core humanitarian principles of humanity and impartiality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with WFP managers and staff • Focus groups with direct beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis across interviews and focus groups to assess/triangulate adherence to each humanitarian principle 	
2.2b To what extent and in what ways did WFP contribute to expected outcomes in a manner that avoided or minimized negative environmental impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which targeted communities benefit from WFP programmes in a manner that does not harm the environment • In what ways and proportion of activities for which environmental risks have been screened and as required, mitigation actions identified • Extent to which elements of environmental sustainability are integrated into WFP programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document/data review (ACRs, programme evaluations/assessments/reports, monitoring data, TPM data, etc.) • Interviews with WFP managers and staff • Focus groups with direct beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document/data review to assess if WFP programmes implemented in a manner that does not harm the environment • Content analysis across interviews and focus groups to assess/triangulate if WFP programmes designed and implemented in 	

Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection techniques/sources	Data analysis	Comments/discussion
			environmentally sustainable manner	
2.3. To what extent are achievements under the CSP likely to be sustainable, from the following perspectives: institutional (including capacities and systems of government and civil society actors), financial, and social?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of WFP transition and exit plans that assure sustainability of achievement for each of the key activities and commitments made under the CSP Resources (financial, staffing, skills, hardware, etc.) available and allocated by key national partners (esp., Government of Liberia) that take responsibility for key activities and progress made under the CSP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document/data review (ACRs, financial data, etc.) Interviews with WFP managers and staff Interviews with government, UNCT, donors and CPs Focus groups with direct beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content analysis across interviews and focus groups to assess/triangulate if WFP programmes designed and implemented in institutionally/financially sustainable manner 	
2.4. To what extent did the CSP build linkages between WFP's humanitarian, peacebuilding, and development initiatives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which the CSP and its related programming activities promoted integrated (layered, sequenced and synergistic) resilience and nexus outcomes Extent to which the programmes contribute to local level peacebuilding outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review (ACRs, programme evaluations/assessments/reports, etc.) Interviews with government, UNCT, donors and CPs Focus groups with direct beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content analysis across document review, interviews, and focus groups to assess/triangulate WFP integration across humanitarian, peacebuilding, and development activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question has been revised for clarity/simplicity

Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection techniques/sources	Data analysis	Comments/discussion
EQ3. To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently?				
3.1. To what extent were the CSP outputs delivered and related budget spent within a timely manner?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent that delivery of goods, activity, or outputs timely compared to a timeframe of reference, and are the factors that explain the time required Extent of consequences (positive or negative, intended or unintended) of the time spent and the measures taken to save time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document/data review (ACRs, financial data, etc.) Interviews with WFP managers and staff Interviews with government, donors and CPs Focus groups with direct beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of data for timeliness of expenditures Content analysis across document review and interviews to assess/triangulate timeliness of expenditures and challenges in implementation 	
3.2. To what extent was the CSP delivered in a cost-efficient manner?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent of efficiency losses compared to reference prices and acceptable loss standards and factors that influence prices and losses Utilization rate during CSP Expenditure-per-beneficiary Extent to which country office succeeded in (or failed to) eliminate operational redundancies across programming/support activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document/data review (ACRs, financial data, etc.) Interviews with WFP managers and staff Interviews with government, donors and CPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of data for cost efficiency, including comparative analysis across programmes Content analysis across document review and interviews to assess/triangulate cost efficiency. 	

Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection techniques/sources	Data analysis	Comments/discussion
EQ4. What are the critical factors, internal and external to WFP, explaining performance and results? What are the factors that explain WFP performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected by the country strategic plan?				
4.1. What extent was WFP able to mobilize adequate, timely, predictable, and flexible resources to finance the CSP, and what internal/external factors have affected this (if any)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ratio of needs-based budget to actual contributions received Level of donor earmarking of funding and implications for the country office's ability to respond in a flexible way to changing needs Extent that WFP budgeting process supported strategic shift in CSP Specific actions to mobilize resources from donors and others including private sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document/data review (ACRs, NBP, BRs, financial data, etc.) Interviews with WFP managers and staff Interviews with government, donors and CPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of data for funding levels, earmarking, long/short-term funding, etc. relative to needs Content analysis across document review, and interviews to assess/triangulate funding availability, timeliness, predictability, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question was formulated to look at WFP performance in mobilizing adequate funds to finance the CSP. It is assumed that internal and external factors are included as part of this analysis
4.2. How well and in what ways did WFP establish and leverage strategic and operational partnerships for joint action government,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent that CSP has supported effective collaboration and new partnerships to complement the WFP comparative advantage and promoted ownership and localization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review (ACRs, programme evaluations/assessments/reports, Liberia's partnership strategy, memoranda of understanding, long-term agreements, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content analysis across document review, and to assess/triangulate extent that strategic partnerships promote synergies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The question has been revised to refocus on efficiency and effectiveness strategic partnerships Added indicator also explicitly incorporates aspects of learning theme related to HGSF activities

Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection techniques/sources	Data analysis	Comments/discussion
other development, and private sector actors to maximize efficiency and effectiveness and promote ownership and localization?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent that WFP Liberia's partnership strategy promoted partnerships and collaborations • Evidence of overlaps or gaps with other actors • Extent to which interventions designed with and/or use existing systems and structures, such as coordination mechanisms • Level of satisfaction of government, donor and other external stakeholders with country office partnership performance • Extent to which HGSP was used as a programming platform for multisectoral partnerships and collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with WFP managers and staff • Interviews with government, UNCT and CPs 	that contributed to efficiency and effectiveness of programmes	
4.3. To what extent did the country office have appropriate human resources capacity (e.g., staffing, skills, institutional support, etc.) and appropriate institutional arrangements (e.g., sufficient level of decentralization at sub-offices and field offices) to deliver on the CSP?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratio of full-time staff to total expenditures (overall and per programme) • Staffing levels/ gaps in key programme/support positions • Staff retention and turnover rates • Perception of availability of experienced staff in relation to CSP activities and identified needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review (organigramme, human resources documents, etc.) • Interviews with WFP managers and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content analysis across document review, and interviews to assess/triangulate how human resources capacities have affected CSP delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aspects of the original question overlap with many other EQs. The following elements have been removed, with rationale given for adjustments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Effective targeting and prioritization' are covered sufficiently under EQ 1.1 • 'Programme integration at design stage and during implementation' is an issue of internal coherence that is covered under EQ 1.3 • 'Ability to mobilize funding' covered under EQ 4.1. • 'Ability to leverage national and community capacities' is sufficiently covered under EQ 4.2 • 'Ability to leverage partnership and complementary services provide[d] by other actors' is sufficiently covered under EQ 4.2 • 'Infrastructure' is a very broad term, and it is uncertain what this question would be analysing or value such analysis dedicating a

Evaluation sub-questions	Indicators	Data collection techniques/sources	Data analysis	Comments/discussion
				<p>EQ to analysis of this topic would add. Analysis of infrastructure will be integrated into other EQs (e.g. EQ 2.1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Management response' is also a vague term and the aim and added value of analysis is unclear. • ET has focused on two questions that have been identified as key issues through the inception mission (and which are not sufficiently covered in other EQs): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate human resource levels and capacities • Availability and use of monitoring data to track progress and inform decision making.
<p>4.3a To what extent were the monitoring and reporting systems used to track and demonstrate progress towards expected outcomes and to inform management decisions and programme adaptations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate availability and use of monitoring data to track progress and inform decision making: Existence of monitoring and tracking systems and validity and reliability for predicting expected outcomes. • Availability of monitoring and reporting data for timely decision making, disaggregated by gender and other relevant sub-categories where appropriate • Extent of use of monitoring data by management to inform decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document/data review (ACRs, programme evaluations/assessments/reports, monitoring data, output data, TPM data, etc.) • Interviews with WFP managers and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis across datasets to assess monitoring/reporting data availability. • Content analysis across document review, and interviews to assess/triangulate monitoring/reporting availability and use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See comments pertaining to EQ 4.3 above.

Source: Evaluation team

Annex IX. Fieldwork agenda

248. The following table outlines the expected activities and responsibilities during data collection. Fieldwork consisted of two teams: Team 1 made up of the team leader and a research assistant, and Team 2 made up of the senior evaluator and the senior national consultant. These two teams were able to carry out evaluation activities separately, when required. Survey activities were undertaken concurrently in Nimba and Bong counties, with both teams eventually finishing in Montserrado county.

Table 45: Field mission schedule for evaluation team

Day	Date	Activity	Location	Team members	Number of research activities
<i>Su</i>	12 Jan	Arrival and preparation for fieldwork	Monrovia	TL, Senior Evaluator, and Senior National Consultant	
<i>M</i>	13 Jan	Interviews with WFP country office	Monrovia	TL, Senior Evaluator, and Senior National Consultant	4-5 interviews in Monrovia
<i>T</i>	14 Jan	Interviews with WFP country office	Monrovia	TL, Senior Evaluator, and Senior National Consultant	4-5 interviews in Monrovia
<i>W</i>	15 Jan	Interviews with interviews with WFP country office/Government of Liberia partners	Monrovia	TL, Senior Evaluator, and Senior National Consultant	4-5 interviews in Monrovia
<i>Th</i>	16 Jan	Interviews with Government of Liberia partners	Monrovia	TL, Senior Evaluator, and Senior National Consultant	4-5 interviews in Monrovia
<i>F</i>	17 Jan	Interviews with UNCT, CPs, donors, etc.	Monrovia	TL, Senior Evaluator and Senior National Consultant	4-5 interviews in Monrovia
<i>S</i>	18 Jan	Preparation for field	Monrovia	TL, Senior Evaluator and Senior National Consultant	
<i>Su</i>	19 Jan	Travel	Nimba/Bong	TL, Senior Evaluator, Senior National Consultant and Research Assistant	
<i>M</i>	20 Jan	Interviews with sub-office / interviews with Government of Liberia partners and CPs	Nimba/Bong	TL, Senior Evaluator, Senior National Consultant and Research Assistant	4-5 interviews in Nimba 3-4 interviews in Bong
<i>T</i>	21 Jan	Interviews with Government of Liberia partners and CPs /	Nimba/Bong	TL, Senior Evaluator, Senior National Consultant and Research	3-4 interviews in Nimba 2-3 focus groups in Bong

		focus groups with beneficiaries		Assistant	
<i>W</i>	22 Jan	focus groups with beneficiaries/focus groups with beneficiaries	Nimba/Bong	TL, Senior Evaluator, Senior National Consultant and Research Assistant	2-3 focus groups in Nimba 2-3 focus groups in Bong
<i>Th</i>	23 Jan	focus groups with beneficiaries/GDs with beneficiaries	Nimba/Bong	TL, Senior Evaluator, Senior National Consultant and Research Assistant	2-3 focus groups in Nimba 2-3 focus groups in Bong
<i>F</i>	24 Jan	Interviews with Government of Liberia partners and CPs and focus groups with beneficiaries	Montserrado	TL, Senior Evaluator, Senior National Consultant and Research Assistant	3-4 interviews in Montserrado 2-3 focus groups in Montserrado
<i>S</i>	25 Jan	focus groups with beneficiaries	Montserrado	TL, Senior Evaluator, Senior National Consultant, and Research Assistant	4-6 focus groups in Montserrado
<i>Su</i>	26 Jan	Preliminary analysis	Monrovia	TL, Senior Evaluator and Senior National Consultant,	
<i>M</i>	27 Jan	focus groups with beneficiaries	Montserrado	TL, Senior Evaluator, Senior National Consultant and Research Assistant	4-6 focus groups in Montserrado
<i>T</i>	28 Jan	Interviews with women's organizations, PWD organizations, etc. and interviews with UNCT, CPs, donors, etc.	Monrovia	TL, Senior Evaluator and Senior National Consultant	4-5 interviews in Monrovia
<i>W</i>	29 Jan	Interviews with UNCT, CPs, donors, etc.	Monrovia	TL, Senior Evaluator and Senior National Consultant	4-5 interviews in Monrovia
<i>Th</i>	30 Jan	Interviews with UNCT, CPs, donors, etc.	Monrovia	TL, Senior Evaluator and Senior National Consultant	4-5 interviews in Monrovia
<i>Fri</i>	31 Jan	Travel			

Source: Evaluation team

Annex X: Additional analysis

Evaluations and monitoring used in CSP

249. The following table demonstrates the evaluation team’s analysis of the use by WFP of evaluations and monitoring activities for CSP design and implementation.

Table 46: Utilization of evaluations and monitoring activities for CSP design and implementation

Evaluation	Strategic implications for WFP	Analysis of uptake of strategic implications
2017 Decentralized evaluation of WFP activities in Liberia funded through the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program	Improved synergies and collaboration with other development actors in supporting the school meals programme are the cornerstone of Liberia’s social protection programme	Overall coordination, collaboration and standardization among school feeding partners were low through the CSP (see EQ 1.2), but more recently have increased through government-led coordination meetings
Process monitoring in respect of the pilot HGSP programme in 2016	Profiling exercise needed to identify partners with the capacity to aggregate and transport commodities to final distribution sites and to target capacity building efforts according to farmers’ local needs	Profiling of cooperatives has been carried out, though many still lack the capacity to aggregate and transport commodities at sufficient quantities/qualities to meet school feeding demand/standards (see EQ 1.2a)
2016 Evaluation of Liberia’s Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) 200550	Called on WFP to “...apply relevant learning from the PRRO experience and to help address gender sensitivity [sic] gaps within the country programme...”	WFP programmes on the whole support inclusion of women and girls through a focus on female beneficiaries (see EQ 2.2)
2016 Evaluation of the WFP Policy on Capacity Development	Country office needs strategic approach to allow for a progressive shift from direct delivery to CCS for government institutions, leading to a takeover of activities by government partners	While CSP design was oriented towards the enabling role of WFP, emerging humanitarian needs due to COVID-19 (see EQ 1.4) and funding constraints (see EQ 4.1) limited CCS support for government institutions
Evaluation of WFP’s Level 3 response to the Ebola virus disease crisis in West Africa in 2014-2015	WFP needs to ensure that the minimum standards for gender equality and empowerment of women were applied in all its activities under the T-ICSP and the CSP, including through the disaggregation of data by sex and age and gender and age analyses	WFP monitoring data is largely sex-disaggregated, though many programmes lack gender/age analyses as part of design (see EQ 2.2)

Source: CSP document and evaluation team analysis

CSP alignment with Sustainable Development Goals

250. The CSP most directly aligns with SDG 2 (zero hunger) by supporting school feeding programmes, providing livelihoods support, and crisis response. Under Target 2.1,²²² WFP provides emergency food assistance and school meals to vulnerable populations, while under Target 2.3²²³ WFP supports smallholder farmers with training, market access and climate-resilient agricultural practices. Both of the aforementioned targets are explicitly mentioned in the CSP. The evaluation team finds that the CSP also contributes to Target 2.4²²⁴ through WFP support for community asset-building, good agronomic practices, and climate-smart agriculture, etc.

251. Looking at other SDGs, the CSP also directly contributes to SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals) under Target 17.9,²²⁵ through its support for the Liberian Government in country capacity strengthening in various domains. In addition, through the CSP, WFP works with donors, United Nations agencies, NGOs, and private sector partners to strengthen food systems under Targets 17.16 and 17.17.²²⁶ Moreover, resilience programmes also connect to SDG 1 (no poverty) and Target 1.5,²²⁷ promotion of climate-smart agricultural practices among farmers also contributes to SDG 13 (climate action) and in particular Target 13.3.²²⁸ Support for women's empowerment initiatives in agriculture and economic activities connects to SDG 5 (gender equality), through Target 5.1.²²⁹ Finally, school feeding programmes to increase enrolment, attendance and retention rates support SDG 4 (quality education), through Target 4.1.²³⁰

Theory of change assumptions

252. Table 47 presents additional analysis of theory of change assumptions.

Table 47: Analysis of key assumptions in the reconstructed theory of change

Assumption	SO	Analysis
Food pipeline and cash flow remain healthy all year round	SO1	Food pipeline was not consistently produced under expected quantity and quality (EQ 2.1) nor was cash flow (i.e., funding) consistently available
Other non-food items and complementary services are provided by other partners	SO1	Non-food items and complementary services are provided by other partners in an ad hoc manner, and WFP can do more to facilitate strategic partnerships across resilience activities (see EQ 2.1 and EQ 4.2)
Smallholder farmers/cooperatives have sufficient capacity to produce enough quantity and quality	SO1	Smallholder farmers/cooperatives often lack capacity to produce enough quantity and quality (see EQ 2.1)
Complementary services and items are provided by the Government and other United Nations agencies and NGOs	SO2	Complementary services and items are provided by other partners in an ad hoc manner, and WFP can do more to facilitate strategic partnerships across resilience activities (see EQ 2.1 and EQ 4.2).
Availability of resources to support the implementation of capacity strengthening activities	SO3	Funding shortfalls have affected programming across the WFP portfolio, including under SO3 (see EQ 4.1)

²²² End hunger and ensure access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food all year round.

²²³ Double the productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers.

²²⁴ Ensure sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices.

²²⁵ Enhance international support for capacity building.

²²⁶ Both targets aim to enhance multi-stakeholder partnerships.

²²⁷ Build resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations.

²²⁸ Improve education and awareness on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

²²⁹ End all forms of discrimination against women and girls.

²³⁰ Ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education.

Turnover of staff at national and subnational institutions is not too frequent to undermine the intended effects of capacity strengthening activities	SO3	Considerable turnover of staff and national institutions have affected programming across the WFP portfolio, including under SO3 (see EQ 2.3)
Complementary activities are undertaken by the Government (including leadership and coordination), other United Nations agencies, NGOs and private sector institutions	SO3 and SO4	Complementary activities are provided by other partners in an ad hoc manner, and WFP can do more to facilitate strategic partnerships across resilience activities (see EQ 2.1 and EQ 4.2)
WFP interventions represent the WFP comparative advantage	Cross-cutting	Activities related to HGSF, food safety and quality, PHM, market linkages, and logistics/supply chain related to health commodities all represent key WFP comparative advantages (see EQ 1.2)
WFP interventions aligned with government priorities	Cross-cutting	WFP interventions are aligned with Government of Liberia priorities (see EQ 1.2)
Stability of prices/exchange rate	Cross-cutting	Prices and exchange rates have fluctuated considerably during CSP (see Introduction 1.2 Context)
Adequate, flexible, and timely funding is available	Cross-cutting	Funding shortfalls have affected programming across the WFP portfolio (see EQ 4.1)
Adequate and continuous staffing with right the skills	Cross-cutting	Staffing shortages and turnover has affected programming across the WFP portfolio (see EQ 4.3)
Beneficiaries engaged in a manner that reflects their views/preferences	Cross-cutting	Key gaps remain in WFP adherence to AAP and CFM under the CSP (see EQ 2.2)
Beneficiaries engaged in a manner that ensures and promotes their safety, dignity and integrity	Cross-cutting	Key gaps remain in WFP adherence to AAP and CFM under the CSP (see EQ 2.2)
Programming undertaken in a manner that promotes empowering women and girls and advancing equality	Cross-cutting	Programming has elements that are gender-inclusive, but gaps remain and efforts rarely addressed social norms and structural barriers that perpetuate food insecurity for women, men, boys and girls (see EQ 2.2)
Programming undertaken in a manner that does not harm the environment	Cross-cutting	Programming has elements that are of environmental risk protection, but not in a way that is systematically integrated into programming (see EQ 2.2b)
Internal systems are in place to effectively and efficiently support programming	Cross-cutting	Some internal systems are in place to effectively and efficiently support programming, though payment, monitoring and other systems have gaps (see EQ 2.1 and EQ 4.3a)
Adequate leadership and commitment at WFP country office to the CSP design and implementation	Cross-cutting	The country office has shown considerable leadership and commitment to the CSP design and implementation despite challenges (see EQ 2 and EQ 4)
Evidence and monitoring systems are sufficient for informing, targeting and adapting the delivery of programming	Cross-cutting	Evidence and monitoring systems inform targeting of programming, but CFM gaps and key staffing constraints inhibit their utility in adapting the delivery of programming (see EQ 4.3a)
Sufficient, relevant and consistent corporate support of uptake/absorption of critical frameworks, tools and guidance	Cross-cutting	Where possible, the country office has sought corporate support for uptake/absorption of critical frameworks, tools, and guidance particularly for CBT (see EQ 1, EQ 2, and EQ 4)
No disruptive outbreak of communicable diseases such as Ebola virus disease, diarrhoea, etc., in programme intervention areas	General	The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted programme intervention, but also presented opportunities to secure funding (see EQ 1.4 and EQ 2.1)
Security situation remains stable; and target groups and intervention areas are accessible	General	Security situation remains stable; and target groups and intervention areas are accessible (see Introduction 1.2 Context)

Source: Evaluation team

Capacity strengthening

253. Table 48 presents additional analysis of capacity strengthening aspects of resilience activities.

Table 48: Matrix for capacity strengthening aspects of resilience activities

	Enabling environment	Organizational domain	Individual domain
Policy and legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero Post-Harvest Loss Strategy National Agricultural Development Plan 		
Strategic planning and financing			
Institutional effectiveness and accountability			
Programme design and delivery		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CH analysis CFSNA Food security assessments 	
Engagement of non-government actors		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asset creation Provision of inputs Provision of agricultural equipment Training in organizational and financial management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training in improved agricultural inputs climate-smart agriculture practices Training in using improved water management practices Training in PHM
Other potential pathways			

Source: Evaluation team

254. Table 49 presents additional analysis of capacity strengthening aspects of school feeding activities.

Table 49: Matrix for capacity strengthening aspects of school feeding activities

	Enabling environment	Organizational domain	Individual domain
Policy and legislation			
Strategic planning and financing			
Institutional effectiveness and accountability			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equipment /devices such as laptop computers to MoE, MoA, and National Food Assistant Agency
Programme design and delivery		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination with MoE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training for district focal points (DFPs)
Engagement of non-government actors		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of food management committees Local procurement with cooperatives Piloting of School Connect Piloting of school gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training of cooks
Other potential pathways		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for farmers groups through 	

	Enabling environment	Organizational domain	Individual domain
		cooperatives providing smallholder farmer-friendly production models	

Source: Evaluation team

255. Table 50 presents additional analysis of capacity strengthening aspects of crisis response activities.

Table 50: Matrix for capacity strengthening aspects of crisis response activities

	Enabling environment	Organizational domain	Individual domain
Policy and legislation			
Strategic planning and financing			
Institutional effectiveness and accountability			
Programme design and delivery		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination during emerging crisis • IT resources (e.g., tablets for data collection) • Consultant and training for post-crises assessments and data collection 	
Engagement of non-government actors			
Other potential pathways			

Source: Evaluation team

256. Table 51 presents additional analysis of capacity strengthening aspects of health commodity activities.

Table 51: Matrix for capacity strengthening aspects of health commodity activities

	Enabling environment	Organizational domain	Individual domain
Policy and legislation			
Strategic planning and financing			
Institutional effectiveness and accountability			
Programme design and delivery		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination with MoH • Building national systems (though still controlled by WFP) 	
Engagement of non-government actors		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination with health partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training of national pharmacists and other staff • Engagement with private transporters
Other potential pathways			

Source: Evaluation team

Empowering women and girls and advancing equality

257. The following are examples of outcomes related to empowering women and girls and advancing equality achieved through the CSP:

- Leadership examples vary, from some occasions where women showed signs of being merely represented on committees to a good number of examples where women in farmer-based organizations and cooperative leaders demonstrated strong leadership, decision making and held power and esteemed positions as well as demonstrating signs of having gained substantial increases in income, financial inclusion and empowerment.
- Equally, but to a lesser degree, women smallholder farmers (some of whom were women who headed households, widows or elderly) also reported that the involvement in decision making and increases in income gained from engagement in programme activities had led to transformations in household, livelihood and financial decision making and financial inclusion benefits as well as other community leadership and empowerment gains (such as feeling able to speak up and be heard within the household and community). These changes have led to transformation within their own domestic household relationships and their livelihood outcomes, on occasion transforming social norms and power dynamics (for example, resulting in increased access to markets and credit, as well as increasing decision making and empowerment etc).
- Increased proportions of women over men have been involved in activities across SO1/SO2/SO3 such as: COVID-19 and emerging crises responses; HGSF agricultural and resilience activities (and associated capacity building); and the formation of organizations and committees, their support and capacity building activities. The inclusion of good proportions of women in farmers' groups and cooperative leadership positions resulted in increased women's participation on leadership committees with added voice and decision making roles that have impacted on local attitudes to women in decision making and leadership positions. Some peacebuilding fund project activities targeted youths but, although there were young women and men involved in smallholder farmer activities, these were not reported to have been deliberately targeted.
- Crisis response activities were specially targeted to have equal participation of women and girls with focus groups reporting good proportions of inclusion from women, the elderly and people with disabilities. Indeed, targeting has not only favoured women and people with disabilities in a general way across programming but has at times effectively targeted women through the inclusion of women, not just as beneficiaries, but also by targeting women for inclusion within leadership roles (within food management committees, farmer-based organizations and cooperative leadership, for example). This has led to some substantial gains in terms of increasing the capacities of those women and disabled persons, and gains in their status and empowerment, as well as in ensuring that the voices and needs of women and people with disabilities are considered within programming and in communications with WFP and other stakeholders.
- The presence of women within farmer-based organization executive committees was generally good. The presence of women within cooperative leadership roles was mixed (as discussed above), with some cooperatives populated almost wholly with women (although with men in key roles showing signs of key decision making and powerful positions), and others with fairly equal numbers of men and women (but where the women were clearly decision making and in positions of power) and other cooperatives where women were equally present but did not speak up²³¹ and showed signs of not being heard or actively involved.
- Local procurement through HGSF has several important gendered benefits - WFP buys at a better price, increasing the incomes of vulnerable women farmers, who also benefit equally

²³¹ Even when encouraged to.

from the additional savings because bulk buying reduces transport and wastage costs. Bulk purchases also lower the time needed to regularly bring produce to market, which is typically done by women in addition to the many other economic, social and domestic responsibilities that they carry out in Liberian households. There were some concerns, however, that the resilience activities may have contributed to additionally burdening women (particularly women who head households) who already carry a significant domestic role burden.

- Focus groups at WFP-supported school feeding schools found that cooking responsibilities are run exclusively by women volunteers and have increased the amount of work for these women, without providing remuneration. This has left them with less time for domestic tasks and childcare. That being said, fieldwork also found that some women reported status and empowerment benefits from their roles as school cooks. Focus groups indicated that eco-stoves reduced smoke emissions that previously impacted the health and well-being of exclusively women cooks, and significantly reduced the time that cooks devote to cooking, and women and girls spend collecting firewood. This can free up time for other productive activities such as education, income generation, childcare, or community participation. However, cooks also indicated that at times, the poor quality of food commodities received from cooperatives also greatly increase the time required for preparation (for example, cleaning food of foreign particles).

Gender and age marker (GaM) analysis

258. The areas of WFP work with the highest numbers of GaM M 4 codes are: gender targeted; benefits; coordination and partnerships.. Also, contrary to the findings of the CSPE: beneficiary participation; gender-based violence; and “problems, challenges and unintended impacts”.

259. GaM analyses indicate a general increase in the number of activities achieving a GaM M code of 4, but the results for 2021/2022 were often better than those in later years and should be considered as overly inflated and positive. Indeed, the results for 2024, do appear to be much more realistic and in line with CSPE findings.

260. The areas with the lowest (and more recently no score) numbers of GaM M 4 codes are: accountability to affected people; the community feedback mechanism; and satisfaction, which coincide more with the findings of the CSPE. (In 2024 there were no scores across almost all optional components, notably: gender-based violence; community feedback mechanism; accountability to affected people; satisfaction; and problems, challenges and unintended impacts all achieved no score). GaM scorings were found to be stronger across SO1 and SO2 and weaker across SO3 (capacity strengthening). The SO1 activities focused on empowering women, increasing girls' enrolment in schools, supporting women-led farmer cooperatives, and promoting sustainable livelihoods for women and vulnerable groups. “The programme’s impact on gender equality and empowerment of women was evident as enrolment for girls in supported schools increased by 13 percent, higher than the 7 percent increase seen in non-supported schools. Retention rates for girls were also 93 percent, which was 3 percentage points higher than in non-assisted schools. These outcomes highlight the programme’s positive effect on girls' education and its role in reducing gender disparities in food security and education.”²³² “The THR approach contributed to increasing girls' enrolment by 15 percent in supported schools, compared to 13 percent in non-THR schools.”²³³ Of the smallholder farmers engaged in SO1, 60 percent²³⁴ were women, however this remains a low figure given: a) the large proportions of women usually engaged in agriculture; and b) the high proportions of households headed by women and widows in Liberia,²³⁵ particularly in some of the more hard-to-reach and vulnerable and food insecure areas.

261. The GaM reporting was found to be overly positive or overstated across many components

²³² Additional contextual text provided by country office and Office of Evaluation.

²³³ Additional contextual text provided by country office and Office of Evaluation.

²³⁴ Additional contextual text provided by country office and Office of Evaluation.

²³⁵ Recent data availability is limited, however interview and anecdotal evidence back this.

(mandatory and optional). An example of the overly positive reporting include that some of the following “mandatory components” of gender targeted actions were identified, but which were not in evidence: “development of a gender and age-sensitive beneficiary feedback mechanism”; “transfers to women in safe houses/shelters (and their children)”; and “technical support / capacity building for the formulation or revision of social protection policies, into which gender equality is mainstreamed”. Equally statements such as “establishment of school gardens to reduce women's workloads” indicate a lack of understanding of the additional work burden on those households involved (predominantly women and in households headed by women).

Annex XI: Home-grown school meal food system matrix

262. Table 52 presents the HGSF food system matrix compiled during data collection.

Table 52: Home-grown school meal food system matrix

Entry point	Food system element	Key actors (and their roles)	WFP support	Strengths (including effective modalities)	Challenges	Partnerships and collaborations	WFP strategic positioning (unique value proposition)	WFP strategic positioning (joint action)
Home-grown agricultural value chains	Production	Farmers' groups	Resilience programming	Improved yields and CCS of farmers' groups	Low overall productivity	Partners such as FAO and IFAD		Collaboration with FAO's comparative advantage in production
	Post-harvest/processing	Farmers' groups Cooperatives	Resilience programming	Continued challenges in terms of post-harvesting losses	Continued food safety and quality challenges		Support of cooperatives in PHM/food safety and quality	
	Aggregation and procurement	Cooperatives Private transporters	Local procurement	Increased profits for cooperatives, and use by some of smallholder farmer-friendly business models	Overall inability to meet quantity and quality demands, partly due to contracting/planning challenges		Procurement through cooperatives, especially in support of smallholder farmer-friendly business models	
Schools	Food preparation and distribution	Cooks	Training of cooks	Schools have community-based cooks, and some with eco-stoves	High time burden on cooks and lack of systematic SBCC		Continued rollout of eco-stoves	
	Food/stock accounting and	Food management committees	Training of food	Yearly investment in	Considerable remaining gaps	TPM	Continued CCS of food	Work with TPM to support monitoring

Entry point	Food system element	Key actors (and their roles)	WFP support	Strengths (including effective modalities)	Challenges	Partnerships and collaborations	WFP strategic positioning (unique value proposition)	WFP strategic positioning (joint action)
	management		management committees and School Connect	training of food management committees			management committees	and CCS of food management committees
	Education system, WASH, and other complementary services	Parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and schools			Limited partnerships currently	Partners such as UNICEF, Lifewater, Living Water, etc.		Proactive partnerships with actors working in complementary services
Institutional actors	County institutions	District educational officers and district focal points	Support for data collection	County included in WFP activities	Collaboration can be ad hoc			Work with District focal points to support monitoring and CCS of food management committees
	National institutions	MoE	Coordination		Increasing coordination with MoE and partners	Mary's Meals, Save the Children, and Mercy Corps	Technical support for development of policy, standard operating procedures, standards, etc.	

Source: Evaluation team

Annex XII. Mapping of findings, conclusions and recommendations

263. Table 53 presents a mapping of recommendations, conclusions and findings.

Table 53: Mapping of recommendations, conclusions and findings

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Conclusions</i>	<i>Findings</i>
Recommendation 1: Reinforce comparative advantage in HGSE	Conclusion 1	Finding 1, Finding 2, Finding 5, Finding 6, Finding 7, Finding 27, Finding 29
	Conclusion 3	Finding 5, Finding 10, Finding 11, Finding 27, Finding 28, Finding 29
Recommendation 2: Reinforce capacity strengthening	Conclusion 5	Finding 3, Finding 8, Finding 12, Finding 14, Finding 16, Finding 25, Finding 26
Recommendation 4: Strengthen strategic partnerships	Conclusion 6	Finding 4, Finding 13, Finding 31
Recommendation 4: Strengthen organizational capacity and operational systems	Conclusion 2	Finding 17, Finding 18, Finding 19
	Conclusion 4	Finding 20, Finding 21, Finding 22, Finding 23, Finding 24, Finding 30, Finding 32

Annex XIII. Overview of interviews and focus groups

264. The following table provides an overview of interviews and focus groups completed during data collection.

Table 54: Overview of interviews and focus groups

	Male	Female	Inception
National level (Monrovia and remote)			
WFP country office (current and former)	13	4	Included
MoA	3	1	Included
MoE	2	1	Included
MoH	5		Included
NDMA	2	5	
LiSA	1		
UN WOMEN	1		Included
UNDP	1		Included
WHO	2		
FAO			Included
IFAD	1		
UN Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO)			Included
Mary's Meals	1		
CARITAS Cape Palmas	2		
WHH	1	1	
BRAC	3		
VOSIEDA	1		
Private transporters	4	1	
TPM	2	1	Included
Plan International	3		
Save The Children			Included
USAID			Included
United Nations Peacebuilding Fund	1		
Subtotal	49	14	
Bong			
MoA	2	1	
MoE	4		

37 Interviews

MoH	3			
CARI	2	2		
Third party monitoring	2			
Third party monitoring	1			
Agricultural business centre	2			
Subtotal	16	3		8 Interviews
Nimba				
MoA	3			
MoE	4			
MoH	2			
Third party monitoring	1			
Third party monitoring		1		
GERAD	3	1		
Subtotal	13	2		7 Interviews
Montserrado				
MoA	2	1		
MoE	1			
MoH	1	3		
Third party monitoring	2			
Subtotal	6	4		5 Interviews
Total interviews	84	23	107	57 Interviews
Bong				
Farmers' group	4	9		
Farmers' group	3	7		
Cooperative	1	6		
Cooperative	5	6		
Food management committee	6	4		
Out-of-school children	5	5		
Food management committee	5	6		
THR	10	10		
Food management committee	5	5		
School garden	4	1		
Crisis response	10	13		
Subtotal	58	72		12 Focus groups
Nimba				
Farmers' group	6	2		

Farmers' group	5	5		
Farmers' group	8	2		
Cooperative	6	4		
Cooperative	6	3		
Food management committee	5	6		
Out-of-school children	5	5		
Food management committee	4	5		
Food management committee	3	6		
Take-home ration	4	6		
Subtotal	52	44		10 FGDs
Monsterrado				
Cooperative	6	1		
Food management committee	5	6		
Take-home ration	5	8		
Food management committee	5	3		
Take-home ration	5	1		
Out-of-school children		10		
Cooperative	6	3		
Food management committee	5	5		
School garden		4		
Crisis response	5	7		
Crisis response	5	6		
Crisis response	7	9		
Subtotal	54	63		14 FGDs
Total focus groups	164	179	343	36 FGDs

Source: Evaluation team

Annex XIV. Bibliography

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Annex XV. Acronyms and abbreviations

Acronym	Full Term
AAP	Accountability to affected people
BR	Budget revision
BRAC	Building Resources Across Communities
CBT	Cash-based transfer
CCS	Capacity strengthening
CFM	Community feedback mechanism
CFSNS	Comprehensive food security vulnerability survey
CH	Cadre Harmonisé
COHFSP	COVID-19 household food support programme
COMET	Country office tool for managing effectively
CO	Country office
COVID-19	Corona virus disease of 2019
CP	Cooperating partner
CSI	Coping strategy index
CSP	Country strategic plan
CSPE	Country strategic plan evaluation
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DoE	Director of Evaluation
EM	Evaluation manager
EQ	Evaluation question
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCS	Food consumption score
FGD	Focus group discussion
GaM	Gender and age marker
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEEW	Gender equality and empowerment of women
GRES	Gender Results Effectiveness Scale
HGSF	Home-grown school feeding
IR	Inception report
IRG	Internal Reference Group
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KPI	Key performance indicator
LISA	Liberian Standards Authority
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
NBP	Needs-based plan
NDMA	National Disaster Management Agency
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OEV	Office of Evaluation
PHM	Post-harvest management
PRRO	Protracted relief and recovery operation
PTA	Parent-teacher association
PWD	Person with disabilities
SBCC	Social and behaviour change communication
SDG	Sustainable development goal

Acronym	Full Term
SHF	Smallholder farmer
SO	Strategic outcome
SO1,2,3,4	Strategic outcome 1, 2, 3, 4
SOP	Standard operating procedure
THR	Take-home ration
T-ICSP	Transitional interim country strategic plan
TL	Team leader
ToC	Theory of change
ToR	Terms of reference
TPM	Third-party monitoring
UNCT	United Nations country team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development and Cooperation Framework
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAM	Vulnerability analysis and mapping
WACARO	Western and Central Africa Regional Office
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
ZHSR	Zero-Hunger Strategic Review

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