



WFP EVALUATION

Evaluation of WFP's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic



World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

February 2022

First Regular Session of the Executive Board

Summary of findings: adaptation of WFP systems and capacities for the response



Long experience/expertise in emergency response

But

- No **global emergency response** framework/preparedness systems still being built
- **Human capacity** limitations
- **Advance financing** mechanisms developing
- **Risk systems** maturing
- **Partnerships** enhanced

And

- Weak **knowledge management**
- Gaps in **gender equality & AAP**
- Debate re: **balance humanitarian-development** activity



How well did systems & capacities adapt?

Overall, swiftly & well



- **L3** not expeditious – but attention, financing & flexibility
- **Strategic frameworks** swift
- **Data & analysis** - global public good
- **Fundraising** novel & responsive (but country variance/late contributions/earmarked)
- **'No regrets'/risk management** balanced
- **HR/wellness** systems adapted but immense strains faced by workforce

Challenges (but mostly navigated)



- **HQ** in emergency mode; **Regional Bureaux** as interface HQ-CO
- Diverse global experience = no **shared understanding**
- Strains on **response decision-making/unclear accountabilities**
- **Global surge** coped but challenging start
- **Remote working** at first
- **Knowledge transfer** experiential

How well did partnerships and strategic positioning adapt?

Overall – partnerships expanded, positioning changed

- Scale up **Common Services** = learning curve, but international respect
- Praise for **Logistics & ETC clusters**
- Some tensions in **UN partnerships** in the early stages of the response
- Overall aligned behind **government responses** - though testing at times
- **CPs** praised WFP shift
- Expanded **private sector** partnerships
- Expanded **global/national advocacy**



How did programming adapt to meet needs?



Overall – Stayed to deliver; agile & flexible

- **Biosecurity measures implemented**
- **CSPs adapted**
 - Emergency shift
 - Adapting targeting incl. urban
 - Cash/social protection expansion
 - Increased capacity strengthening/technical advice
 - Supply chain & logistics to governments
- **Supply chain sustained**
- **AAP – communications kept open**



But

- Challenges in CSPs with **no emergency outcome**
- **Budget Revision** slow
- **Timeliness** mixed
- No increased corporate investment in **gender/social protection**

What did the response achieve?

No significant deterioration in food security and nutrition status

Maintained

- Knowledge management
- Corporate investment in gender and social protection
- Roles of HQ, RB, COs in structures of response



Expanded

- Global surge system
- Generating data & analytics
- Social protection activity
- Capacity strengthening support
- Supply chain & logistics services
- Common services
- Partnerships – UN, govt, private sector
- Staff wellbeing



New initiatives/innovation

- Strategic frameworks
- Financing requests and internal arrangements
- Remote working
- Urban targeting
- Communications modalities



Pivoted

- Remote working
- Emergency focus within CSPs
- Management arrangements
- Estimating needs
- Human capacities to respond
- Risk management system
- Supply chain
- Gender at country level
- Cooperating partner relationships



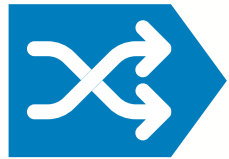
Institutional systems and capacities



Conclusions



WFP Stayed to deliver – but high human cost



Agile, adaptive & effective overall



Enhanced profile – WFP as systems enabler



Lack of formal knowledge management systems a constraint



Lack of shared understanding impeded organisational coherence/decision-making



Limited central investment in gender/social protection restricted transformational change

Issues for consideration



Reposition WFP in post-COVID-19 recovery

- Articulate WFP's role in medium-term responses
- Clarify intersections in WFP's response to structural vulnerabilities and emergencies



WFP as a “systems enabler”

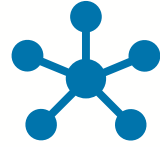
- Expand ‘service offer’ to other humanitarian actors
- Define capacity needs
- Provide consistent external communications



Upscale advocacy

- Food security and nutrition aspects of socio-economic recovery
- Skills training for staff
- Leverage partnerships

Issues for consideration



Shared overview/review management arrangements

- Common understanding of diverse emergency contexts
- “Empowered decentralisation”



Resilient but adaptive systems

- Stress test of/contingency planning
- Enhanced KM systems



Ethos of staff care

- Workplace culture/management skills
- Contractual basis
- Debriefing/harnessing experience