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Summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Namibia (2017–2023)

Executive summary

An evaluation of the country strategic plan for Namibia for 2017–2023 was conducted in 2022 to serve the dual purpose of accountability and learning and to inform the design of the next country strategic plan for Namibia. To align the current plan with the extension of the United Nations partnership framework announced in January 2023, WFP has extended the country strategic plan until November 2024.

The country strategic plan was designed to strengthen government capacity with regard to national policy frameworks and the monitoring and evaluation of social programmes, and coordinate stakeholders in the area of food security and nutrition. The evaluation found that the plan was relevant and aligned with government priorities; it was also adapted to address contextual changes and national needs and facilitated strategic thinking about partnerships and funding opportunities in a challenging funding environment. A number of food systems initiatives were also piloted under the plan.

The evaluation found that WFP's response to external shocks was mostly effective. Despite significant delays and severe underfunding, WFP made a significant contribution to policy frameworks concerning social safety nets and food and nutrition security. WFP also helped to build national capacities and develop new tools and approaches in the areas of disaster risk management and social safety nets, but similar efforts in relation to school feeding were not effective and food system pilot projects have yet to show results. Gender issues were prioritized in some areas, but competing priorities and limited internal capacity impeded comprehensive

In line with WFP evaluation policy (2022) (WFP/EB.1/2022/4-C), to respect the integrity and independence of evaluation findings the editing of this report has been limited and as a result some of the language in it may not be fully consistent with the World Food Programme's standard terminology or editorial practices. Please direct any requests for clarification to the Director of Evaluation.

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gender mainstreaming. The potential for sustainability is high for capacity strengthening activities at the policy and institutional levels but more fragile at the activity level.

As well as external factors beyond the control of WFP, performance was affected by internal factors including limitations in financial and human resources and gaps in intervention design, monitoring and evaluation, and knowledge management.

The evaluation made four recommendations: enhance strategic planning, activity design and project implementation; strengthen knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation systems and their use in improving activity design and links to country capacity strengthening objectives; continue to build partnerships strategically so as to maximize their contribution to the achievement of the strategic goals of the country strategic plan; and improve the integration of cross-cutting issues into the design, planning and implementation of interventions.

Draft decision*

The Board takes note of the summary report on the evaluation of the country strategic plan for Namibia (2017–2023) (WFP/EB.2/2023/6-A/8) and management response (WFP/EB.2/2023/6-A/8/Add.1) and encourages further action on the recommendations set out in the report, taking into account the considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the decisions and recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

Introduction

Evaluation features

1. The evaluation of the Namibia country strategic plan (CSP) for 2017–2023 was commissioned by the WFP Office of Evaluation. It serves the dual purpose of accountability and learning and is expected to support the design of the second-generation CSP for Namibia due to be presented for approval at the 2024 second regular session of the Executive Board. The evaluation offers WFP stakeholders an independent assessment of the organization's performance, opportunities and challenges and makes recommendations aimed at improving the work of WFP in Namibia.
2. The principal users of the evaluation are the Executive Board, the Namibia country office, the Regional Bureau for Southern Africa, various divisions at WFP headquarters in Rome, the Government of Namibia, donor agencies, project beneficiaries and other WFP partners such as non-governmental organizations and those in the private sector and academia.
3. The evaluation adopted a theory-based, mixed-methods approach, drawing on monitoring data, a literature review, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with beneficiaries. Gender and other cross-cutting issues were integrated into the evaluation design. Particular attention was paid to developing a methodology for the assessment of country capacity strengthening (CCS), a core objective of the CSP.

Context

4. Located on the Atlantic coast of southwest Africa, Namibia is the driest country in sub-Saharan Africa. With a population of 2.3 million people,¹ which is growing by 1.4 percent per year², it is the second least densely populated country in the world with just three people per square kilometre.³
5. In 2021, Namibia had a gross domestic product (GDP) of USD 12.24 billion and a GDP per capita of USD 4,729.⁴ The country is classified as an upper-middle-income country. According to the national statistics agency, its Gini coefficient is 0.576, making Namibia one of the most unequal countries in the world. A 2021 study of multidimensional poverty concluded that 43.3 percent of the population are multidimensionally poor, with higher rates of poverty in rural areas (59.3 percent) and among households headed by women (46 percent).⁵
6. In the 2022 Global Hunger Index, Namibia ranked 78th of 121 countries, with a score of 18.7 indicating a level of hunger that is considered "moderate".⁶ The latest available data (2013) indicate a high prevalence of stunting (22.7 percent) and wasting (5.3 percent).⁷ Limited agricultural production and high vulnerability to shocks and climate change are among the drivers of food insecurity.

¹ Namibia Statistics Agency. 2017. *Namibia Inter-censal Demographic Survey 2016 Report*.

² World Bank. 2022. [Population growth \(annual %\) – Namibia](#).













³ World Bank. 2021. [Population density \(people per sq. km of land area\) – Namibia](#).

⁴ Bank of Namibia. 2022. *Economic Outlook Update – February 2022*.

⁵ Namibia Statistics Agency. 2021. *Namibia Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) Report 2021*.

⁶ Global Hunger Index. 2022. [Namibia country page](#).

⁷ World Bank. [Namibia country page](#).

TABLE 1: SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS			
	Indicator	Value	Year
	Total population (million) (1)	2.3	2016
	Rural population (% of total population) (1)	52.1	2016
	Life expectancy at birth (years) (2)	63.7	2019
	Under-5 mortality rate (per 1,000 births) (2)	42.7	2019
	Income inequality: Gini coefficient (3)	0.576	2016
	Population in multidimensional poverty (%) (4)	43.3	2021
	Global Hunger Index (rank and score) (5)	78 of 121 18.7	2022
	Prevalence of moderate and severe stunting (% of children under 5) (2)	22.7	2013
	Weight-for-age (wasting – moderate and severe), (% of children age 0–5) (2)	7.1	2013
	Prevalence of HIV, total (% of population age 15–49) (6)	11.6	2020
	Global Gender Gap Index (rank) (7)	8 of 145	2022
	Agriculture, forestry and fishing value added (% of GDP) (8)	6.4	2021

Sources: (1) Namibia Statistics Agency. 2017. *Namibia Inter-censal Demographic Survey 2016 Report*; (2) World Bank. *Namibia country page*; (3) Namibia Statistics Agency. 2016. *Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey (NHIES) 2015/2016 Key Poverty Indicators*; (4) Namibia Statistics Agency. 2021. *Namibia Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) Report 2021*; (5) Global Hunger Index. 2022. *Namibia country page*; (6) United Nations Joint Programme on HIV and AIDS *Country factsheets. Namibia 2022*; (7) World Economic Forum. 2022. *Global Gender Gap Report 2022*; (8) Bank of Namibia economic outlook updates.

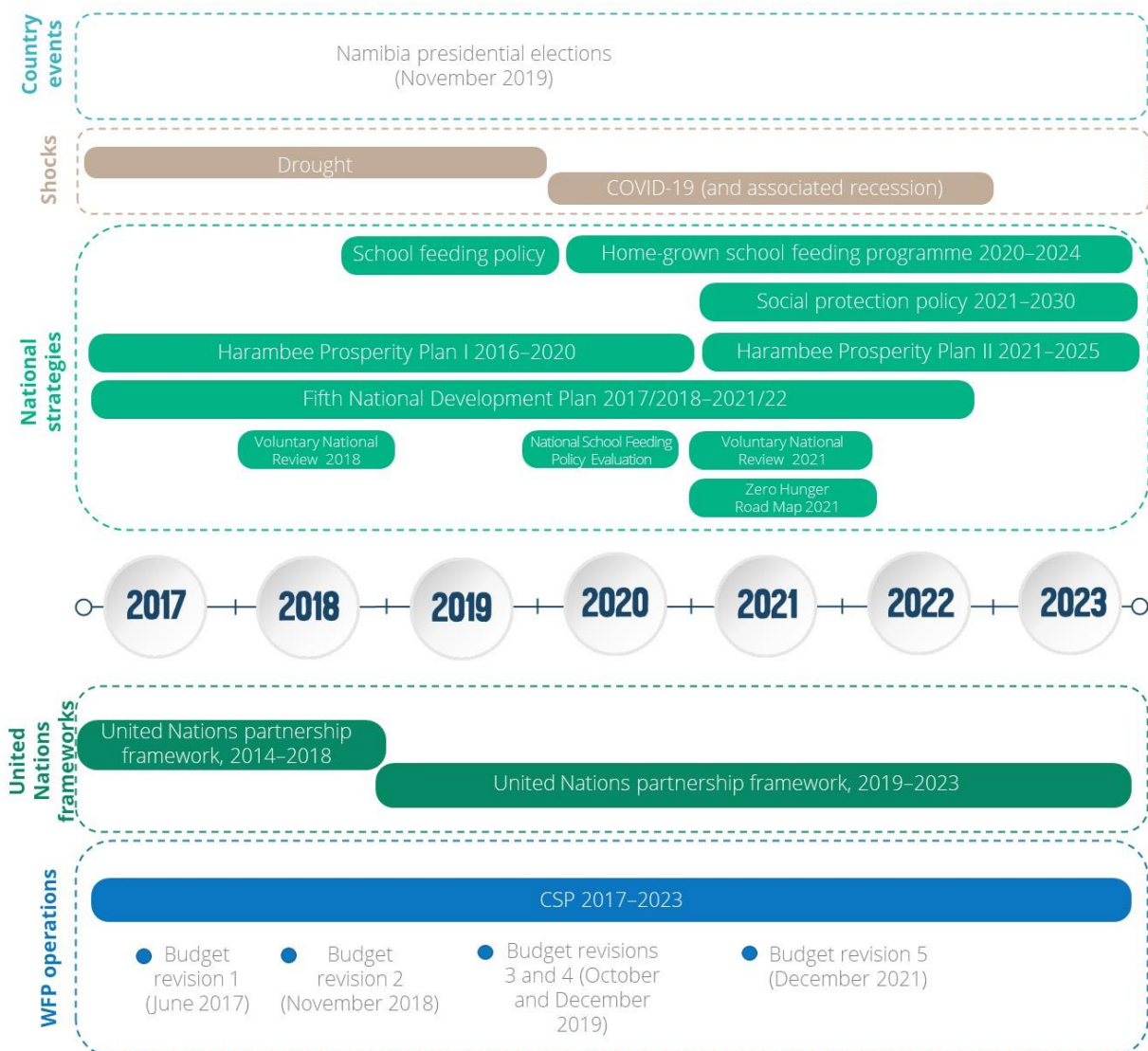
WFP country strategic plan

- WFP has been present in Namibia since 1990. The design process for the CSP under evaluation started in 2016, making Namibia one of the first countries to engage in a comprehensive country planning process including the development of a zero hunger strategic review.⁸ The process was led by the Government at the highest level, with the support of WFP.
- The first CSP for Namibia covered the period from 2017 to 2022 and was approved by the Board in June 2017. It was designed to contribute to the attainment of Sustainable

⁸ WFP. 2018. *Strategic Evaluation of the Pilot Country Strategic Plan Pilots - Evaluation Report*.

Development Goals (SDGs) 2, 4 and 17 and to WFP strategic results 1 (access to food), 4 (sustainable food systems), 5 (capacity strengthening) and 6 (global partnerships). The original CSP had two strategic outcomes and four activities focused on CCS and evidence creation in the area of food security and nutrition. In December 2021, a fifth budget revision expanded the scope of the CSP to five strategic outcomes and eight activities: six activities on capacity strengthening, one on direct emergency response to severe drought conditions and the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), and one on support for the development of food systems. The timeframe of the CSP was extended to December 2023.⁹ The Government of Namibia is WFP's main partner in CSP implementation. Figure 1 shows the evolution of the CSP together with the main external changes taking place.

Figure 1: Evolution of the country strategic plan and changes in the external environment, 2017–2023



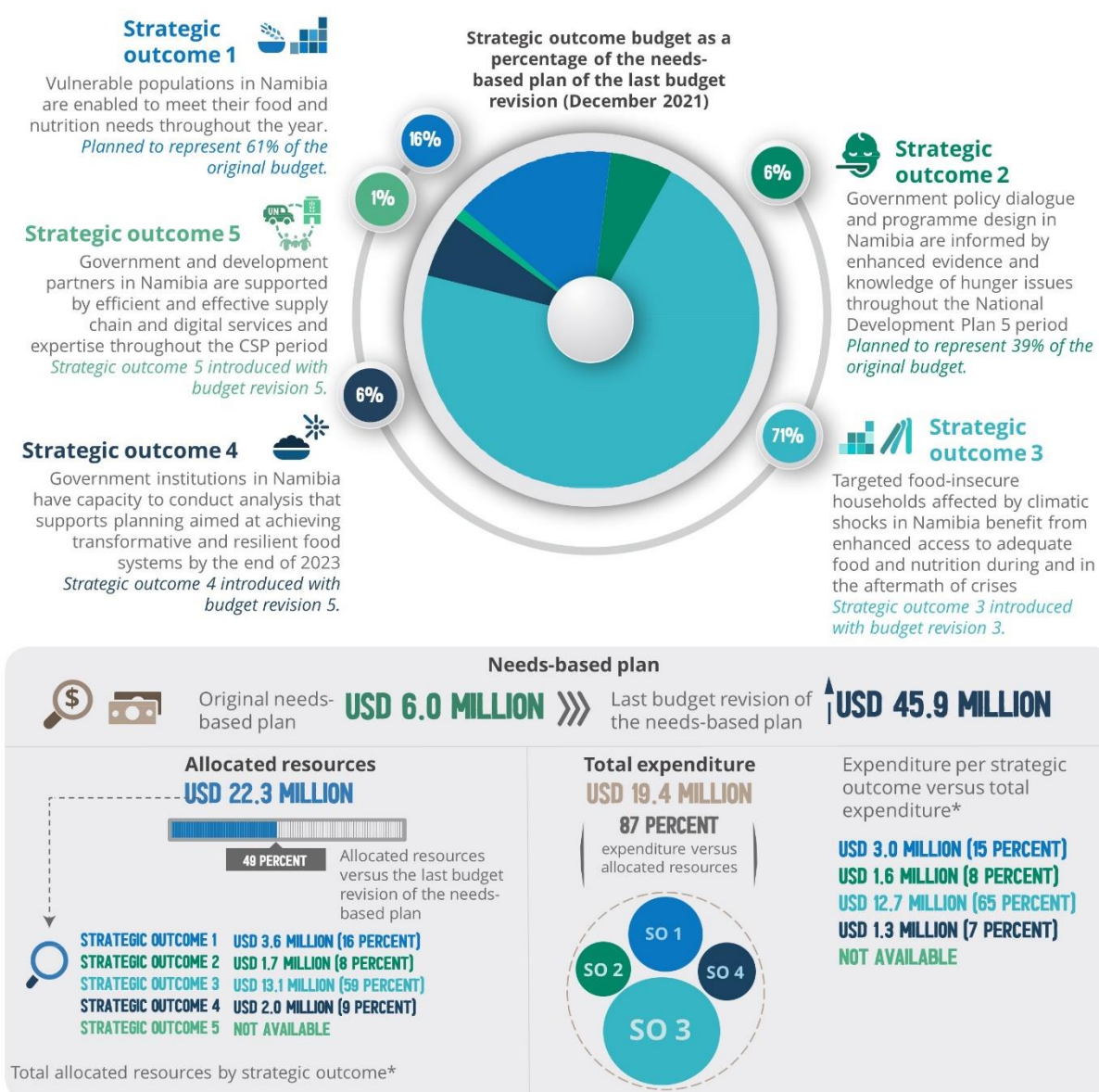
Financial overview

9. The CSP was originally approved with a needs-based plan of USD 6 million. In 2019 that plan was scaled up to USD 23.8 million with the introduction of strategic outcome 3 and activity 5 in response to the drought affecting the country. In December 2021, the needs-based plan

⁹ Under CSP revision 6 the CSP was extended to December 2024 to bring it in line with the United Nations partnership framework, and the budget was increased to USD 51,187,510.

was increased to USD 45.9 million¹⁰ with the introduction of two new strategic outcomes, 4 and 5, and three new activities, 6, 7 and 8, focused on nutrition, food systems and supply chain interventions and the provision of digital services. Implementation of activities 6 and 7 began in 2022; implementation of activity 8 had not started at the time of the evaluation. As of October 2022, USD 22.3 million (49 percent of the needs-based plan) had been allocated to the CSP¹¹ and the overall expenditure against those allocated resources was 87 percent (figure 2).

Figure 2: Namibia country strategic plan (2017–2023) strategic outcomes, budget, funding and expenditures



* Percentages of allocated resources and expenditures by strategic outcome do not add up to 100 percent because resources were also allocated to and spent on non-strategic outcome purposes.

Sources: Revision 5 of the Namibia country strategic plan (2017–2022) and corresponding budget increase and country portfolio budget resources overview (extracted 31 October 2022; internal document).

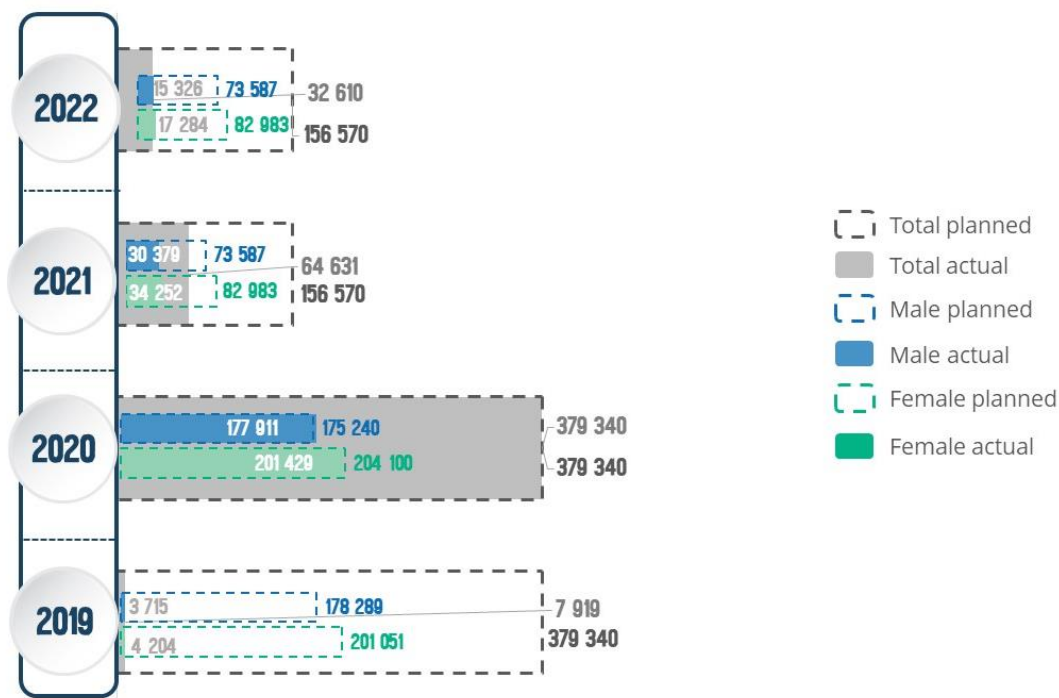
¹⁰ A sixth budget revision was approved by the regional director in June 2023. It is not included within the scope of the evaluation.

¹¹ WFP Namibia country office. 2022. *CSP Namibia 2017–2023 resource situation*, 27 June 2022 (internal document).

Beneficiary overview

10. Distributions to direct beneficiaries were planned only from 2019 onwards. The numbers of direct beneficiaries reached with in-kind food distributions or cash-based transfers (CBTs) have been highly variable (figure 3); in 2019, WFP reached only 7,919 beneficiaries (4,204 of whom were women), or 2.1 percent of the planned number; in 2020, it reached 379,340 beneficiaries (201,429 women); in 2021, it switched to providing CBTs and reached 64,631 beneficiaries (34,252 women); and in 2022 it reached 32,610 beneficiaries (17,284 women). Paragraph 26 explains this fluctuation.

Figure 3: Actual versus planned direct beneficiaries by sex, 2019–2022*



Sources: [Annual country reports for 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022](#).

* In 2017 and 2018 there were no direct beneficiaries.

Evaluation findings

To what extent is the country strategic plan evidence-based and strategically focused to address the needs of the most vulnerable?

Relevance to needs and alignment with national priorities and the United Nations partnership framework based on comparative advantages

11. The CSP was designed based on the Namibia zero hunger strategic review – a participatory exercise led by the Government with technical support from WFP and aligned with Namibia’s fifth national development plan.¹² The review used the evidence and data available in order to ensure the CSP’s relevance to national priorities. It identified institutional gaps with regard to policy frameworks, capacity and monitoring and evaluation, fragmented social programmes, and weak coordination in the area of food security and nutrition. Accordingly, the CSP identified “upstream” interventions aimed at strengthening government capacity.

¹² Government of Namibia. 2017. *Namibia’s 5th National Development Plan (NDP5): Working together towards prosperity 2017/18–2021/22*.

12. The CSP is well aligned with the priorities of the Government in its efforts to achieve the SDGs in the areas of WFP's comparative advantage such as school feeding, disaster risk management, food and nutrition security and social protection. WFP is contributing to the outcomes of the United Nations partnership framework in those areas, and the CSP's alignment with that framework has been strengthened through WFP's participation in the United Nations country team.

Strategic positioning adapted to circumstances

13. WFP was strategically well positioned to contribute to new policies in areas such as social protection, nutrition and food security and disaster risk management. It appropriately adjusted its strategic positioning and programming in response to changes in the operating environment and external shocks, including food assistance needs arising from droughts and the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, WFP provided technical support for the Government's revised national food and nutrition security policy.¹³ At the Government's request, WFP adapted its approach to CCS by moving away from "upstream" policy work to more "downstream" interventions such as the piloting of food system demonstration projects and the digitization of national social protection systems.¹⁴

Internal coherence

14. The initial CSP design provided a coherent structure for WFP's interventions in Namibia and clarity on WFP's strategic objectives, activities and partners. The new outcomes and activities introduced over the course of CSP implementation in response to changing circumstances and evolving government priorities resulted in some loss of internal coherence among interventions, limiting the scale of results. Opportunities to create synergies were not consistently exploited. Combined with the pilot approach to food systems, which entailed many stand-alone interventions involving various partners, this loss of coherence led to increased fragmentation and a more "siloed" approach to CSP implementation over time.

What are the extent and quality of WFP's contribution to country strategic plan strategic outcomes in Namibia?

15. A specific methodological approach was developed for this evaluation to allow a coherent analysis of WFP's contributions to CCS across strategic outcomes and activities, capturing WFP's efforts in four overarching thematic areas: support for social safety nets; school feeding; disaster risk management; and food systems. Accordingly, the structure of the response to this evaluation question is organized around those four areas rather than the strategic outcomes of the CSP.

Social safety nets

16. WFP has contributed to the building of government capacity and the development of a policy framework for social safety nets through work under strategic outcomes 1 and 3. WFP supported government policies and strategies by providing technical inputs and generating evidence. WFP also conducted pilot projects to demonstrate specific approaches or tools for managing social protection programmes. Although some of those pilots did not achieve the foreseen objectives, they encouraged the Government to develop domestic solutions with the assistance of WFP. For example, the piloting of WFP's digital beneficiary information and transfer management platform helped to address challenges with the registration of participants in social safety net programmes. The Government subsequently requested WFP's support in building a similar, but nationally owned system, which was being developed under strategic outcome 5 in 2022 at the time of the evaluation.

¹³ Government of Namibia. 2021. *Revised National Food & Nutrition Security Policy*.

¹⁴ WFP Namibia country office. 2021. *Framework for zero hunger* (internal document).

School feeding

17. Since the beginning of CSP implementation, under strategic outcome 1 WFP worked on strengthening the policy environment, enhancing information management and generating evidence for the national school feeding programme. In July 2021, a pilot home-grown school feeding programme was launched with the support of WFP. The pilot is being implemented in 29 schools and seven regions, involves 13,915 learners and is funded mainly by the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. Its expansion to a similar number of additional schools is currently under discussion. The evaluation found that almost all school staff and regional officials see home-grown school feeding as being beneficial to schools and local communities. However, the financial sustainability and scalability of the pilot are challenging owing to the Government's budget constraints and implementation capacity. Those challenges were not comprehensively analysed at the CSP design stage, and consequently they have undermined the effectiveness of WFP's engagement in and the viability of the home-grown school feeding pilots.

Food security, nutrition and food systems

18. Under strategic outcome 2 WFP helped the Government to develop a strong policy framework for food security and nutrition. WFP was also instrumental in integrating a food systems approach into government policies, but its support for the Government in reviewing and addressing the elements of national food systems that impede the linking of smallholder farmers to sustainable markets is less robust. The piloting of food system projects under strategic outcome 4 started in 2022 and it is too early to expect results. However, the evaluation identified a number of design weaknesses with the potential to impede effectiveness, such as inadequate governance structures and gaps in quality assurance.

Disaster risk management and shock response

19. WFP's response to external shocks (drought and COVID-19) under strategic outcome 3 has been mostly effective. For instance, monitoring data indicates that, following distributions, WFP-supported population groups have significantly higher food consumption scores than the baseline value and targets. In addition, a significantly lower number of households have poor food consumption scores compared with the baseline, although that cannot be attributed to WFP alone.¹⁵ WFP made a significant contribution to disaster risk management by supporting the development of a national disaster risk management framework and action plan and a related awareness and communication strategy. However, these were not adopted owing to competing political priorities. WFP has been effective in building government capacity in the supply chain-related dimensions of shock response and in assessing and monitoring vulnerability in the context of early warning systems under strategic outcomes 4 and 5.

Cross-cutting aims

Gender

20. WFP worked with the Government on mainstreaming gender considerations in the food and nutrition security policy, which contains a strategy for addressing inequality in access to food and nutrition. WFP also promoted the participation of women in decision-making. However, competing priorities and limited internal capacity constrained systematic gender mainstreaming.

¹⁵ WFP. 2021. *Namibia annual country report 2021*, p. 19; WFP. 2022. *Post distribution monitoring report, Kunene, Oshana and Omusati regions, February 2022* (internal document).

Protection and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse

21. Protection challenges¹⁶ included the distances to distribution points, transport costs, threats to physical safety and post-distribution theft. Although additional distribution points were put in place, WFP had limited scope for addressing protection issues because of insufficient data collection. WFP also worked with the United Nations Population Fund to train local partners in protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

Accountability to affected populations

22. The evaluation found gaps in accountability to affected populations, for example the lack of a complaints mechanism to allow beneficiaries to contact WFP directly during distributions. Beneficiaries also received insufficient information about the assistance. Technical advice from the regional bureau on the establishment of communication platforms was yet to be acted upon at the time of the evaluation.¹⁷

Environmental considerations

23. While environmental sustainability was a consideration for work on disaster risk management, the evaluation found that WFP did not consistently incorporate environmental aspects in the overall design and implementation of interventions.

Humanitarian–development nexus

24. WFP has contributed to work at the humanitarian–development nexus through CCS support for the Government in early warning systems and through projects that address climate, energy, water and food issues (the “climate–water–energy–food nexus”). Such projects can help to build resilience and mitigate future crises, but WFP’s planning did not consistently integrate humanitarian action and long-term development cooperation. The peace element of the nexus has little relevance in the context of Namibia.

Sustainability of interventions

25. The potential sustainability of upstream CCS activities is high at the policy and institutional levels, but it is inherently dependent on external factors such as government funding and priorities. The potential sustainability of downstream activities, including pilot projects with direct beneficiaries, is in some cases limited by design weaknesses and gaps in evidence generation and handover strategies.

To what extent has WFP used its resources efficiently in contributing to country strategic plan outputs and strategic outcomes?

Timeliness

26. Most emergency response and distribution operations and some food system projects experienced delays, which reduced the efficiency of the assistance. In 2019, for example, a combination of late funding, limited WFP response capacity and lengthy procurement processes due to COVID-19 resulted in a five-month delay, with drought-affected people consequently lacking assistance during the lean season (see discrepancy between planned and actual beneficiary numbers in 2019 in figure 3 above). Elsewhere, funding shortfalls, restrictions related to COVID-19 and the shift to CBTs in 2021 also caused delays.

¹⁶ *Ibid*; interviews with beneficiaries.

¹⁷ Regional Bureau for Southern Africa. 2021. *Programme and supply chain cash-based transfer technical support in the Namibia country office. September 2021 report* (not available online).

Targeting and coverage

27. The targeting and coverage of WFP activities were not well documented, but the data available indicated appropriate targeting of vulnerable locations and groups. However, the beneficiary lists were drawn up by the Government and in some cases contained exclusion or inclusion errors, which were partially mitigated by WFP through its validation process.

Cost-efficiency

28. Despite data limitations, CBTs appear to be a more efficient modality than food distributions in Namibia (see table 2). The high cost of CBTs in 2021 compared with 2022 was due to delays and the cost implications of introducing new systems. While the size and geographic dispersion of WFP interventions contributed to increasing implementation and transactional costs over time, WFP has not collected sufficient data to fully assess or demonstrate cost-efficiency of the various transfer modalities.

Activity 5	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Food value (USD)	668 682	6 795 648	-	-*	7 464 330
Food costs (USD)	77 280	2 229 444	178 404	49 044	2 534 172
Food costs/food value (%)	12	33	-	-	34
CBT value (USD)	-	-	527 416	577 972	1 105 388
CBT costs (USD)	-	-	241 489	38 676	280 165
CBT costs/CBT value (%)			46	7	25

Source: Country portfolio budget plans vs. actual report 31 October 2022 (internal dataset).

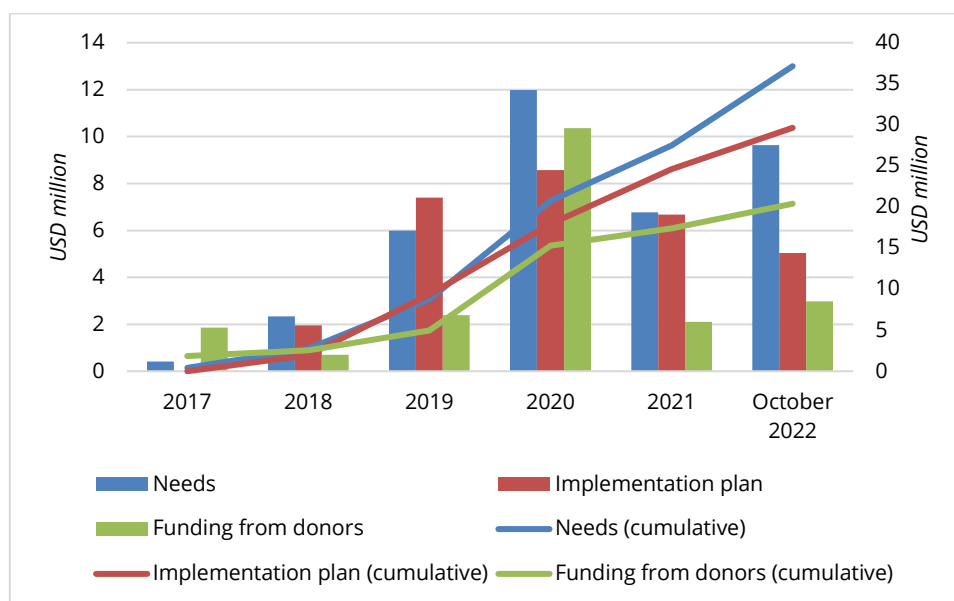
* The food value includes the costs of moving food to distribution points. Cash distributions were used in 2021 and 2022 only.

What are the factors that explain WFP's performance and the extent to which it has made the strategic shift expected under the country strategic plan?

Funding

29. The CSP was on average 49 percent funded as of October 2022. However, funding was unequally distributed over the duration of the CSP, with 2020 being almost fully funded for the drought and COVID-19 responses and the remaining years receiving lower funding (see figure 4). WFP has pursued funding opportunities, but resourcing has been unpredictable and contributions have been heavily earmarked (72 percent at the activity level) and unevenly distributed among the strategic outcomes and activities, albeit in line with needs (figure 5). WFP addressed some of those challenges successfully, implementing coherent projects with funding from various sources. New partnerships are also being explored, with some success in the mobilization of government resources.

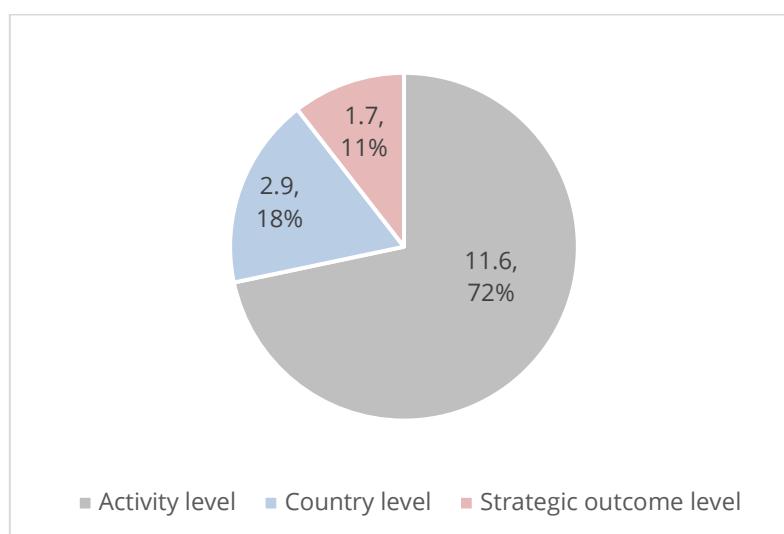
Figure 4: Funding flows, needs-based plans and implementation plans, 2017 to October 2022 (USD million)*



Sources: Country portfolio budget plan vs actual; data extracted on 31 October 2022 (internal source).

* Figures exclude indirect support costs.

Figure 5: Earmarking of contributions to the country strategic plan (USD million)



Sources: Distribution and contribution forecast statistics for Namibia 2017–2023, data extracted on 31 October 2022 (internal source).

Monitoring

30. Monitoring and evaluation systems provide only a partial picture of the results of the CSP, partly owing to weaknesses in corporate indicators, as in the case of CCS activities. Learning from CSP implementation has been challenging due to inconsistent monitoring and evaluation for interventions, with baselines and a comprehensive monitoring framework lacking. Knowledge management and data collection and analysis related to cross-cutting issues have not received sufficient attention from the country office. The lack of monitoring and reporting from the demonstration pilot projects impedes learning from the results and weakens decision-making regarding the potential for scaling up such projects.

Partnerships

31. With a predominant focus on CCS, the original CSP prioritized a range of high level government partnerships such as with the Office of the Prime Minister; the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare; and the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture. WFP has also been an active participant in the United Nations country team. Since 2021, the organization has successfully developed many new strategic and operational partnerships, particularly with the Government and the private sector in relation to food systems, but some of these are too recent to show results. Successful external communication has helped to raise WFP's profile in Namibia, but the large number of partners generates a substantial workload for the country office because of the time and resources needed to manage the partnerships.

Human resource capacity

32. While staffing has increased during the CSP period and the gender balance has improved, the volume of short-term contracts and the high turnover of staff – a result of funding constraints – have hindered CSP implementation. The technical profiles needed to implement CSP activities were not always in place, and the capacity for managing gender and other cross-cutting issues was insufficient. At the time of the evaluation, the country office had embarked on a review of its staffing structure.

Factors explaining progress towards the strategic shift

33. Over the evaluation period, WFP's strategic shift to capacity strengthening in support of government partners was constrained by internal factors, including the lack of a clear articulation of how the various activities would contribute to broader objectives; inconsistent attention directed to a number of design, implementation and monitoring elements; and a lack of coherence between staffing profiles and skills and intervention needs. External factors, including funding constraints and recent public spending and recruitment caps, have also impeded the intended shift.

Conclusions

34. The evaluation found that overall the CSP remained relevant to the needs of the people of Namibia and was aligned with government priorities throughout the period under review. The plan also facilitated strategic thinking about partnerships and funding opportunities in a challenging funding environment. It has delivered some significant benefits for the Government, and ultimately for affected populations, by building government capacity and piloting innovative tools and approaches in relation to the development of policy frameworks for food security and nutrition, social safety nets and disaster risk management. WFP has also been instrumental in integrating a food systems approach into government policies.
35. WFP's response to external shocks, including drought and COVID-19, has been aligned with needs and mostly effective, improving food consumption for affected people and communities and making strategic use of the response operations to build national supply chain capacity. WFP also made a significant contribution to the development of the policy framework in relation to social safety nets. However, home-grown school feeding activities and the food system pilot projects that seek to link smallholder farmers to sustainable markets have yet to show results. The timeliness of implementation was mixed, with delays in some cases reducing the relevance and utility of assistance. The country office introduced more cost-efficient approaches to implementation but cost efficiency gains cannot be demonstrated because of inadequate data collection.

36. As well as external factors beyond the control of WFP, performance was affected by a combination of internal factors related to limited financial and human resources, intervention design, monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management, which impacted the achievement of expected outcomes. WFP was flexible and responsive to changes in circumstances, for example by scaling up and providing direct response to emerging humanitarian needs and moving into the area of food systems following the Government's request, which required significant agility. However, WFP's strategic shift from the provision of direct food assistance to capacity strengthening for government partners has also been hampered by its own funding and human resource limitations and national financial and human resource constraints.
37. WFP prioritized gender considerations, promoting women's participation in projects and decision-making groups, but gender has not been fully mainstreamed throughout the CSP portfolio. Other cross-cutting issues, such as protection and accountability to affected populations, received less attention. The country office received support from the regional bureau, but that support was not sufficient to ensure the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues during CSP implementation. WFP contributed to work at the humanitarian-development nexus by providing capacity strengthening in early warning systems and engaging in work at the climate-water-energy-food nexus, although its planning did not consistently integrate humanitarian action with long-term development cooperation.
38. The country office has recognized the importance of new partnerships and has successfully diversified the number and type of partners during CSP implementation, especially since 2021. It is also exploring innovative types of partnership, such as with the private sector. Strong communication has supported this process and helped to position WFP as an important partner in areas such as food systems. While work on partnerships has been guided by the CSP and strategic thinking regarding certain stakeholders, such as those in the private sector, WFP has not yet encapsulated that thinking in a partnership strategy with clear and measurable objectives. The coordination and management of partnerships have required significant investments in terms of WFP staff time and effort, putting pressure on human resources.
39. Weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation and knowledge management limited WFP's ability to report on and learn from CSP implementation. In particular, the existing corporate indicators do not capture outcome results in relation to CCS, hindering effective monitoring, evaluation and learning in that area. The competing priorities and financial constraints faced by the country office also brought tension between responses to an expanding set of – often urgent – needs and the making of large investments in monitoring and evaluation capacity. Furthermore, knowledge management systems have been inadequate in preserving and storing evidence so that it can be used in the design of future interventions.
40. While WFP has used evidence to inform CSP design and interventions in Namibia, it has not always been able to map synergies across interventions or explain how interventions contribute collectively to broader goals, including when working with partners in areas such as CCS. Moreover, there are cases where the performance of WFP in CCS, the main focus of the CSP, has been affected by a limited assessment of capacity gaps for guiding the design of WFP interventions.

Recommendations

41. Operational recommendations refer to aspects that have to be integrated into the routine operations of WFP. Strategic recommendations refer to higher-level aspects of WFP's work, often related to planning.

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
1	Enhance strategic planning, activity design and project implementation.	Operational	Country office	Regional bureau (programme unit)		
1.1	Undertake a capacity needs assessment in key areas of country capacity strengthening to identify existing gaps and potential bottlenecks that should be taken into account during project design or targeted during implementation.	Operational	Country office		High	January 2024
1.2	Considering funding and capacity challenges, the country office should be selective and coordinate closely with partners when engaging in country capacity strengthening interventions. This would help to manage the impact of funding constraints.	Strategic	Country office		High	January 2024
1.3	As part of the design of the next country strategic plan, develop an intervention logic for the various areas of country capacity strengthening, articulating the main objectives and how interventions contribute – individually or collectively – to those objectives. The country capacity strengthening mapping used in this evaluation (provided in annex VI of the full evaluation report) could be used as a model.	Operational	Country office		Medium	February 2024
1.4	With a view to the design of the next country strategic plan, explore the options for developing a simpler country strategic plan structure that contains fewer activities, provides more flexibility for implementation, simplifies management and reporting, increases internal coherence and reduces geographic dispersion. The option of a “dormant” strategic outcome on emergency response could be explored as a way of facilitating country strategic plan adjustments in the event of unexpected shocks.	Strategic	Country office	Regional bureau	Medium	March 2024

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
1.5	Given the challenges in the funding of core positions, WFP should explore options for dealing with human resource-related capacity constraints in Namibia, in consultation with the regional bureau and headquarters. This problem is also likely to affect other country offices focusing on country capacity strengthening in similar settings. For example, explore cost-sharing agreements with other country offices in the region, and ways of obtaining greater access to capacity within WFP through centres of excellence or other structures and departments.	Operational	Country office	Regional bureau and headquarters	High	March 2024
2	Strengthen knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation systems and ensure that the evidence generated by those systems contributes to improving future activity design and facilitates linkages with country capacity strengthening objectives.	Operational	Country office	Headquarters and regional bureau		January 2024
2.1	Increase evidence generation and make it more effective by integrating a monitoring and evaluation plan into each intervention at the design stage, linking it to indicators from the corporate results framework where feasible. The plan should indicate what evidence to collect, by whom, how often and for what purpose.	Operational	Country office		High	February 2024
2.2	Develop standard operating procedures for knowledge management indicating the documents to be generated during the project cycle (proposals, reports, monitoring, etc.) and how those documents should be stored. At the activity level, the standard operating procedures should be part of the monitoring and evaluation plan described under sub-recommendation 2.1.	Operational	Country office		Medium	January 2024

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
2.3	Strengthen the monitoring framework for country capacity strengthening by exploring the opportunities provided under the new corporate results framework and start to explore country specific indicators, building on the experience of other countries and keeping in mind the next country strategic plan. This is a sizeable task that cannot be undertaken by the country office alone and requires support from other WFP offices.	Operational	Country office	Headquarters and regional bureau	High	March 2024
2.4	Explore the options for increasing efficiency in monitoring and evaluation. In the meantime, increase the implementation efficiency of geographically dispersed activities by following alternative approaches such as joint monitoring and supervision missions or increased reliance on community-based monitoring.	Operational	Country office	Regional bureau	Medium	May 2024
2.5	Given the predominant focus on country capacity strengthening in Namibia, the context and the size of the country office, in consultation with the regional bureau and headquarters, the country office should explore the trade-offs between corporate reporting to headquarters and the value-added by, and resources available for, a more tailored analysis of evidence at the country level.	Strategic	Country office	Headquarters and regional bureau		May 2024

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
3	Continue building partnerships in a strategic way that maximizes their contributions to the country strategic plan and broader strategic goals.	Strategic and operational	Country office	Regional bureau and headquarters (Partnerships and Advocacy Department)		January 2024
3.1	Develop and implement a partnership action plan for building, monitoring and managing strategic partnerships related to resource mobilization goals. Each partnership should be informed by its intended contribution to the country strategic plan, a clear set of objectives, actions and expected results and a clear description of potential risks and mitigation measures.	Strategic and operational	Country office	Regional bureau and headquarters (Partnerships and Advocacy Department)	High	February 2024
3.2	Improve the country office's plan for private sector engagement by clearly articulating the various models of engagement with the private sector and what each party has to offer and stands to benefit from. This work should build on the analysis of ongoing and planned partnerships. This sub-recommendation could be integrated with sub-recommendation 2.1.	Strategic	Country office	Regional bureau and headquarters (Partnerships and Advocacy Department)	Medium	March 2024
3.3	Adopt a more ambitious and longer-term resource mobilization strategy to help manage funding constraints and the lack of flexible funding. The strategy should include the allocation of staff time to prioritizing and guiding engagement with donors, government partners and the private sector. This sub-recommendation could be integrated with sub-recommendation 2.1.	Operational	Country office	Regional bureau	High	February 2024

#	Recommendation	Recommendation type	Responsible WFP offices and divisions	Other contributing entities	Priority	Deadline for completion
4	Improve the integration of cross-cutting issues into the design, planning and implementation of interventions.	Operational	Country office	Regional bureau	Medium	April 2024
4.1	Allocate staff time to, and develop terms of reference for, the appointment of an experienced, senior-level focal point on cross-cutting issues.	Operational	Country office		Medium	March 2024
4.2	With the regional bureau, explore opportunities within WFP to build capacity through participation in regional and global working groups and initiatives. Implementation of this sub-recommendation should follow the implementation of sub-recommendation 3.1.		Country office	Regional bureau	High	February 2024
4.3	Facilitate the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues into intervention design by including expected results for each relevant cross cutting issue.	Operational	Country office		Medium	May 2024

Acronyms

CBT	cash-based transfer
CCS	country capacity strengthening
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
CSP	country strategic plan
GDP	gross domestic product
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
T-ICSP	transitional interim country strategic plan