



WFP EVALUATION

Corporate Emergency Evaluation of WFP's Response in Myanmar 2017-2022

October 2023

Round Table



WFP
World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

WFP CSP 2018-2023

Beneficiaries

5.8 million targeted 2018-2023
2.76 million reached in 2021

Four strategic outcomes



67%^a

Emergency response

S01



21%

Country capacity strengthening,
School feeding &
Asset creation

S02



11%

Country capacity strengthening,
prevention and
treatment of
malnutrition

S03



2%

Humanitarian services

S04

^{a)} Percent of needs-based plan as per Budget Revision 9

Evaluation methodology



Theory-based and mixed-methods approach, combining primary and secondary data collection techniques:





- 1. Document review** of main WFP and external sources
- 2. Around 250 semi-structured interviews**, incl. former/current WFP RBB and CO staff; UN agencies; donors; Cooperating partners; and others
- 3. Case studies** for five intervention sites using individual and group interviews, direct observation, survey data and other methods

Modular approach with regular debriefings

Gender-sensitive and ethical evaluation approach

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Q1. Strategic positioning vis-à-vis evolving needs

-  Strong assessment capacity, but constrained by access challenges in conflict-affected areas
-  Following main shocks, WFP responded to changing conditions, extending services to humanitarian actors and expanding coverage – multiple shifts in methods & modalities
-  Geographic targeting adjusted flexibly to meet the expanding crisis. Tracking IDPs a challenge – WFP can rely on its network of local partners
-  Delivery modalities (in-kind, cash-in-envelopes, E-cash) flexibly adjusted over CSP period, to maximise coverage and efficiency while adjusting to context

Q2. Contribution to strategic outcomes



SO1: Sharp increase in actual beneficiary numbers in 2021 (+/- 2 million vs. +/- 300,000 in 2020), largely due to inclusion of peri-urban Yangon (1.7 million). Composite food consumption scores met annual targets. Half the beneficiaries increased food expenditure: over 90% bought greater variety of food



SO2: Some progress in developing social protection programme, but interrupted by the military takeover. Asset creation likely helped improve food security for participants



SO3: Outcome target achievement high for Moderate Acute Malnutrition treatment, but beneficiary target achievement low across the years. CBTs to people living with HIV and TB patients have largely met beneficiary & outcome targets



SO4: Reliable common services considered 'vital' by humanitarian community during COVID



Consistent efforts to implement **gender** sensitive programming. **Disability** & chronic medical conditions factored into assessments and programme design where possible

Q3. Connectedness of WFP's assistance



Engagement with affected populations adequate attention to needs, though constrained by external factors. Where no cooperating partners (CPs) available, WFP sometimes implements activities directly



Close and collaborative relationship with CPs at the Sub-Office level but more limited at national level



Narrow conceptualization of resilience, with limited consideration of capacities to respond to shocks at community and systems level. Likely significant peace contributions, but little measured



New 2021 corporate guidance on environmental and social safeguards may improve tracking of risks and mitigation measures

Q4. Partnerships and coordination with the wider humanitarian sector



Full integration of WFP into the humanitarian assistance frameworks and coordination mechanisms



Somewhat improved relationships with the authorities during COVID-19 pandemic; limited to humanitarian issues after military takeover in line with UN Principles for engagement in Myanmar



Extensive and highly versatile collaboration with different non-governmental partners, reflecting priority given to delivery



Transparent relations with donors and humanitarian partners. Diverse risks faced by the operation and by some cooperating partners, require enhanced risk management

Q5. Humanitarian principles, protection and accountability to affected populations



Consistent and multiform efforts on “do no harm” by increasing tensions/risks for the population



All four humanitarian principles respected; humanity prioritized
'Best effort' due diligence to avoid WFP assistance benefits parties to conflict
Limited formal guidance or support from HQ



Detailed and nuanced protection risk analyses and mitigation planning



Progressive expansion of Community Engagement Mechanism, but still limited by low beneficiary awareness in newer locations, limited meaningfulness of quantitative data, and unsatisfactory software

Q6. Efficiency and management of risks



Significant staff increase over evaluation period in main offices. Recruitment of specialized staff challenging (difficult working conditions and visa delays). High pressure conditions: good attention for wellbeing



Adequate financial resources for emergency response; strong investment in donor relationships. Earmarking (especially geographic) limits flexibility



Flexible, innovative and problem-solving approach facilitated smooth and timely operation. Access restrictions have constrained and delayed all types of assistance.



Low supply chain losses, prudent financial management and improved information & data analysis and technology, allowed for economies of scale.



High risk environment: Consistent and appropriate response with increasingly detailed analyses and measures. Attentive oversight & advisory role of RBB but limited HQ guidance

Conclusions (1/2)



C1: Adaptation and scaling up

- WFP achieved major scale-up in response to several overlapping crises, being flexible and responsive
- WFP's experience and ability recognized by donors; helped resource mobilization
- Decentralised decision-making + regular RBB guidance were critical



C2: Relations to partners and management of risks

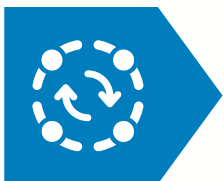
- Amid simultaneous crises, WFP played growing role prudently and effectively
- Close coordination and complementarity with key UN partners
- Difficult ethical and practical choices around principles with limited guidance from HQ
- Careful protection risk management; cooperating partners lack support to manage risks transferred to them by WFP in some areas

Conclusions (2/2)



C3: Targeting, communication and accountability with affected populations

- High quality of needs assessments and engagement with affected populations in accessible areas
- Qualitative information gained at Sub-Office levels not easily shared across the whole CO structure
- Humanitarian needs in inaccessible areas likely underestimated → coverage gaps
- Blind spots in community feedback



C4: Integration of emergency response, resilience & sustainability

- Multiple shocks have diverted from original CSP goal of state-led development. WFP continued to support livelihoods, nutrition and school feeding, mostly in emergency response mode
- Resilience building insufficiently geared towards the way communities & systems absorb, adapt to, and transform themselves as a result of shocks and stressors

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1** **Adaptation and scaling up:** Maintain and enhance capacity to work at scale, with special attention to financial resources, flexibility and staff wellbeing
- 2** **Inclusive, principled, and risk-sensitive approach:** Maintain consistency in decision-making processes around humanitarian principles and risk management, with adequate guidance and support from RBB and HQ, giving fuller consideration to the role of local partners and widening efforts to communicate on WFP's humanitarian positioning
- 3** **Information and feedback systems:** Enhance collection, presentation and analysis of qualitative and community-based information for decision making
- 4** **Integrating resilience in the emergency response:** Test and gradually integrate a wider resilience perspective throughout the programme to address structural vulnerabilities focusing on communities and systems