



WFP EVALUATION

Synthesis of evidence and lessons on WFP's cooperating partners from centralized and decentralized evaluations

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World Food Programme

SAVING
LIVES
CHANGING
LIVES

Synthesis context and scope

Cooperating Partner (CP): **non-profit entity that enters into a contractual relationship with WFP to assist in the performance of WFP's work (including government entities, NGOs and UN organizations).** (2021 AFAC Policy)

USD
3.5
BN

channeled through CPs (31% of all contributions received in 2023)

80%

1,343 CPs were local actors (2020-2023)



External frameworks

- Grand Bargain

Internal frameworks and tools



- WFP Guidance on NGO Partnerships Management
- Partner Connect Digital tool
- Field-level agreements
- Government guidance under development

Scope

47 evaluations issued between 2020-2023:

- ✓ 27 centralized evaluations
- ✓ 20 decentralized evaluations

Limitation: evaluations largely covered NGO CPs, with limited coverage of Government CPs and almost no coverage of UN CP partners.

Conclusion: CPs provide life-saving assistance, contributing to nutrition, health, education and resilience programming. Government CPs enhanced enabling environment for food security and nutrition.

S01

- ✓ Enhanced ability to reach the vulnerable and access hard-to reach areas.
- ✓ Capacity gaps on technology, gender and protection

S02

- ✓ Expanded nutrition, health & education programmes; national advocacy
- ✓ Value in beneficiary data management, monitoring, & technical assistance

S03

- ✓ Provision of local knowledge, targeting, needs assessments & managing community feedback mechanisms
- ✓ Missed opportunities in using partner's community knowledge for root causes and resilience

S04

- ✓ Government partners key for building enabling environment for programme implementation
- ✓ Contributions in advocacy for nutrition-sensitive agriculture, livelihoods systems and social protection

Conclusion: Variable attention to cross-cutting issues with inconsistencies in capacity. Enhanced attention to disability inclusion and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) needed.



Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE): Need for capacity strengthening, including gender parity in staffing. Limited use of available tools.



Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP): Protection principles difficult to operationalize. Effective use of feedback & complaints mechanisms but inadequate reporting of complaints.



Disability: Inadequate integration of disability inclusion & some exclusion from targeting.



PSEA: Codes of conducts & training on PSEA for CPs – but inadequate briefings on standards & protocols.

Conclusion: Local knowledge and technical expertise are assets but capacity gaps persist. At times, compounded by cooperating partners staff turnover.

- WFP processes help identify NGOs with relevant technical expertise, who could work with affected populations
- Capacity strengthening activities met needs

- Lack of skills in resilience, gender equality & vulnerability analysis
- Cooperating partner staff turnover, hindered programme implementation
- Financial constraints constrained CP selection in some cases

Conclusion: Efficiency of NGO management can improve, & processes for government cooperating partners requires development.

- Short field-level agreement (FLAs) hindered staff retention, while longer FLAs improved partnership quality
- Administrative delays & multiple contracts in a geographic area created inefficiencies
- WFP's capacity strengthening activities lacked a strategic approach; challenges in partner monitoring systems noted
- Tensions between 'sometimes risky' approach to serve the most vulnerable with fiduciary risk aversion and duty of care to the CPs
- Need for a strategic framework for contract negotiation & management of government cooperating partners

Conclusion: WFP advancing towards more collaborative relationships with cooperating partners, although the transition still ongoing.



Missed opportunities for deeper collaboration in joint planning and long-term collaboration



Relationships between WFP and cooperating partners:

- ✓ Transparent
- ✓ Equitable
- ✓ Mutually beneficial
- ✓ Shared responsibilities



WFP currently working towards localization, but could do more to support cooperating partner leadership

Recommendations

1

PRIORITISE SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIPS: Aim for long-term, sustainable partnerships, grounded in appreciation of cooperating partners; ethos of shared interests, mutual respect and trust.

2

ADOPT STRATEGIC AND TAILORED APPROACHES TO CAPACITY

STRENGTHENING: Build upon strengths in areas of joint priority for WFP and partners, applying a localization lens.

3

INCORPORATE PLAN FOR ENGAGEMENT THROUGHOUT CSP: Facilitate CP engagement at all stages of the CSP programme cycle design, implementation through to performance assessment.

4

STRENGTHEN ALIGNMENT WITH CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES: match clear contractual requirements with capacity strengthening opportunities.

5

IMPROVE CP MANAGEMENT: Enhance the efficiency of & learning from, CP management & administration.