

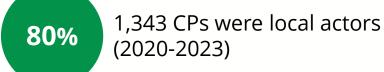
Synthesis of evidence and lessons on WFP's cooperating partners from centralized and decentralized evaluations

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)







#### **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.

**SO1** 

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

**SO2** 

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

**SO3** 

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

**SO4** 

- ✓ 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
- EquitableMutually beneficial
  - ✓ Shared responsibilities



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

### Recommendations

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

**ADOPT STRATEGIC AND TAILORED APPROACHES TO CAPACITY STRENGTHENING**: Build upon strengths in areas of joint priority for WFP and partners, applying a localization lens.

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

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

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