

OPERATION EVALUATION

Mozambique, Country Programme 200286: An
evaluation of WFP's Operation (2012-2015)

Management Response

[June, 2015]



World Food Programme

wfp.org

Management response cleared by:

Country Director: Abdoulaye Balde, 12 June 2015

Section 1: Overall Response to the Evaluation

Process and outcomes of the evaluation:

The evaluation process overall was well designed and well guided by the OEV focal points. However, the evaluation suffered considerable and repeated delays and some quality issues. First, the in-country mission was postponed from March to June 2014 due to challenges in identifying suitable team members and with the initial inception report. The mission was again rescheduled to September due to persistent difficulties in putting together the evaluation team (ET). Finally, the in-country work took place in November/ December due to unavailability of government counterparts during the election period. The inception package submission was delayed from July to just before the start of the field mission in November, and repeated rounds of review and additional inputs were required to bring it to an acceptable level. Preparation of the in-country mission required significant work by the CO, while the mission itself was well conducted by the ET. The ET team leader ensured regular consultation with the CO staff throughout the process, which was very positive. By the end of the in-country phase, the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations were still very tentative with significant gaps. In January 2015, preliminary recommendations were discussed with the CO during a conference call. Submission of the evaluation report was then again delayed, and the final report only became available in May 2015.

The performance of the ET members varied, with a strong team leader, but a very weak nutrition expert who had difficulty grasping the technical issues despite repeated inputs by the CO. As a consequence, the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations regarding nutrition (CP component 3 and general assessment of relevance of chronic malnutrition activities conducted under other programmes) are not satisfactory. Also in other areas (social protection, market access, capacity development, linkages with PRRO, etc), repeated feedback was necessary to ensure quality control. There was also repeated need for the CO to brief ET members on latest corporate developments in WFP (e.g. on school feeding, capacity development) that were important to put the Mozambique experience into perspective. Familiarity of evaluation teams with key developments and concepts in WFP should be a requirement. The draft evaluation report presented numerous concerns and required substantial review also by OEV and RBJ. Several concerns about factual errors or unsubstantiated statements remain in the final evaluation report, although other comments were adequately addressed.

Key issues emerging from the evaluation:

The final recommendations are relatively general, with a degree of repetition and the meaning of some recommendations is not fully clear. As such, they provide moderate

guidance for improvements to the current CP and formulation of the next CP. Most of the recommendations can only be partially accepted by the country office.

The recommendations regarding the need to further strengthen M&E are well accepted and echo similar comments from evaluations of other CO operations. The CO will continue working with the RB in this regard. Similarly, the recommendations about the need for a more comprehensive approach to capacity development are well noted. The recent availability of expanded WFP programme guidance in this area will be very useful in this respect.

One of the key evaluation conclusions states that, in the case of this CP, WFP appears to be operating in areas and with modalities that are outside its comfort zone. It is the view of the CO that these observations and conclusions go much beyond the scope of WFP operations in Mozambique, which could have been stated more explicitly in the evaluation report.

Section 2: Detailed responses to evaluation recommendations

Evaluation Recommendations	Management Accepted, partially accepted or not accepted and COMMENT on the Recommendation, providing clear reasoning for partially accepted and not accepted	Management - Action to be taken				
		Action	Responsible CO unit	Timeframe	Further funding required (Y or N)	
<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p>In providing support to the design of the next CP during the course of 2015, the RB should work closely with the CO to ensure that this evaluation's findings regarding WFP's areas of comparative advantage are used to inform decisions on priorities. Areas of comparative advantage identified in this evaluation include: school feeding where WFP has a strong field presence and a recognized model of support, strengthening the logistics capacity of government counterparts, continuing to support implementation of SP programmes under the joint UN programme and through WFP field presence, DRR, and assisting Government in developing its M&E. By building on areas of comparative advantage, the CP will likely increase its efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability, and resource mobilization.</p>	Accepted	In 2015-2016, the CO, with support from RBJ and HQ, will undertake a Zero Hunger Strategic Review and prepare a Country Strategic Plan (CSP) that will identify WFP's strategic priorities for the period 2016-2021. The evaluation findings regarding areas of comparative advantage will be considered in this context. The new CP will be designed on the basis of the CSP and of priorities identified there.	Programme	Q3 2015 to Q1 2016	Y (for preparation of CSP and conducting Zero Hunger Strategic Review)	
<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>In designing the next CP, the CO should ensure that the priorities and activities of each of the future CP's components is based on an assessment of government capacities in that particular sector/area, and on an assessment of realistically achievable change in this area, while considering the realistic</p>	Partially accepted	Although it appears that the recommendation relates to the second conclusion, it is unclear	In line with the response to Recommendation 4, and the planned government capacity needs and gap analysis	Programme	Q1-3 2016	Y

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<p>timeframes needed for bringing about the envisioned change. The RB should work with the CO to ensure that the CP planning incorporates appropriate support within the CP (training, technical assistance, system development and corresponding budgets) to address gaps, and that targets and expectations are revised to realistically achievable levels (likely downwards).</p> <p>In terms of funding, the CO needs to encourage the allocation of adequate Government resources to enable a smooth and sustainable hand over.</p>	<p>if it concerns the design of all activities under the next CP or specifically the design of capacity development activities for the government.</p> <p>Regarding allocation of funding by the government for project implementation, the CO in its interaction with the government already regularly raises this. If the recommendation refers to government funding needed to allow handover of the programmes from WFP, this needs to be pursued through specific capacity development activities.</p>	<p>for the new UNDAF, the design of the next CP will strive to define activities based on a realistic assessment of government implementation capacity, attainable targets and objectives (“change”) and timeframes as well as support needed to strengthen implementation.</p>			
<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p>In 2015, the CO should commission a national school feeding costing assessment, including a cost-benefit analysis. This could help define the cost of a national School Feeding programme and build an investment case for school feeding. The cost-benefit analysis would also be an important input into the next CP. The evaluation team suggests that this cost-benefit assessment be planned as part of a System Approach for Better Education</p>	<p>Partially accepted.</p> <p>Both elements of the recommendation are accepted. However, the cost-benefit assessment is not part of the SABER exercise. Also, the</p>	<p>The CO will conduct a SABER exercise for school feeding and a school feeding cost/benefit analysis</p>	<p>Programme</p>	<p>Q1-3 2016</p>	<p>Y</p>

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Results (SABER) exercise, which has been influential in agenda setting in other countries.	recommendation is accepted with a different timeframe. The cost-benefit analysis should effectively take place in 2016, to take into account, not only the transition intervention in Tete province, but also the results of local food procurement implemented in the 12 pilot selected schools.				
<p>Recommendation 4:</p> <p>The WFP CO should, in the course of 2015, work with other UN agencies (as part of the new UNDAF) to develop a capacity development strategy, and engage with key government partners as a critical input into the new CP. The strategy should include a baseline, clear and specific indicators to measure the envisioned changes at the individual, group, and institutional level, and periodic measurements of progress in conjunction with Government. The strategy will improve coherence of actions with other agencies, and maximize the use of scarce resources. Improved government capacity will contribute to the impact of the CP in the medium to long term.</p> <p>In order to strengthen its approach to capacity development, the CO should plan to second skilled staff to government to provide on-the-job-support to those whose capacity it's trying to build.</p>	Accepted	WFP, as part of the UNCT, is actively engaged in the preparation of the new UNDAF. Although this work is just starting, it can safely be assumed that the next UNDAF will have significant focus on capacity development activities for the government amongst its identified outcomes. These outcomes will be defined through a systematic government	Management, Programme	2015-2016	N

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		<p>capacity needs and gap analysis and analysis of the UN's (including WFP's) comparative advantage in addressing the gaps. The UNDAF results matrix will identify indicators, baseline and target values and other details to track progress. WFP will build on this when designing its next CP.</p> <p>Out-posting of WFP staff to work directly with government institutions is already foreseen in the revised organigram of WFP Mozambique and will be further pursued under the new CP.</p>			
<p>Recommendation 5:</p> <p>The next CP should include, for each of its components, specific mechanisms which would allow beneficiaries to provide feedback to Government and WFP on WFP supported programmes. This is a requirement for the social</p>	Accepted	Options for beneficiary feedback (BFB) mechanisms will be identified and considered	Programme	2016	Y (depending on type of feedback)

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protection programmes (and will thus improve coherence with corporate policy) and a good practice for other areas of programming. It not only ensures that beneficiaries have a recourse but also constitutes a useful feedback mechanism which can feed into the efficiency of WFPs programme. Use and usefulness of these mechanisms should be monitored by the CO and the RB on an annual basis.		depending on the type and scope of the next CP activities, in consultation with the government. WFP Mozambique will build on WFP experience in BFB. For instance, for largest programmes a hotline (telephone, email) could be set up in order to register feedback into a data base. After verifications and depending on the nature and sensitivity, allegations will be followed up either by: WFP Country Office, Sub Offices or Third Party monitors. Feedback analysis will bring lessons learnt and will allow enhancing programme intervention quality.			mechanism/s)

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<p>Recommendation 6:</p> <p>WFP RB should, in the first half of 2015 and in conjunction with HQ, review available corporate guidance for country offices on the standards that need to be met in planning and implementing pilot projects at field level. It is desirable that the WFP RB also conduct a joint review with the CO to identify changes that can be made under the current CP to meet these requirements, and how these efforts can be reflected in reporting. In planning for the new CP, the RB should support the CO in ensuring that pilot projects take account of the guidance and provide feedback to HQ on areas where corporate guidance could be improved.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p> <p>It is not clear to which component the recommendation is referring.</p> <p>While RB will consult with Rome on this recommendation, the timeframe for implementation is not realistic and the RB will carry forward consultations on this throughout 2015.</p>	<p>The RB will consult with the new unit in HQ responsible for Innovation and Change Management with regard to emerging guidance on managing pilots which could ultimately contribute to the development of corporate guidance.</p> <p>The RB will also continue conducting oversight missions covering both regular and pilot projects. Reports will be widely shared with CO and HQ when need be and actions taken accordingly.</p>	All RB thematic units	ongoing	N
<p>Recommendation 7:</p> <p>At the country level, the CO management should ensure that recommendations from the recent Regional Office Monitoring Mission (October 2014) such as: ensuring adequate funding for M&E activities; collection of quantitative and qualitative gender data for regular monitoring of progress; conducting regular assessments of the utility of assets created,</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Follow up to many of the recommendations is already ongoing, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvement of data flow through the 	VAM/M&E, Programme with participation of Sub	Q3-4 2015	Y (for training)

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and setting up feedback mechanisms at all levels, are implemented and regularly monitored. This will provide ongoing feedback on progress and allow the CO to make appropriate changes to enhance the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the programme. It will also provide valuable information to the CO and RB on areas of strength/progress that can feed into dialogue with government and raising funds from donors.		<p>implementation of COMET (Country Office Monitoring and Evaluation Tools); programme data is uploaded by Sub offices (SOs) and verified at CO level, allowing faster clarifications and corrections to be done between partners and SOs as well as SOs and CO.</p> <p>- M&E budget is prepared as part of the M&E plan for the CP and shared with the RB;</p> <p>- Acquisition of tablets for improvement of data collection and access to collected data by CO through Open data kit-ODK (in use by WFP);</p> <p>- M&E focal points have</p>	Offices		

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		<p>been identified in each SO, and an additional M&E Programme Assistant is under recruitment for the CO.</p> <p>In addition, the following activities are under preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvement of M&E toolkit: the Distribution Monitoring checklists are under revision and will be part of the M&E toolkit; - Training is scheduled to be conducted from July in order to train new field monitors on familiarization of the checklists and procedures for data collection on activities implementation and assets created; - Improvement of indicators analysis and 			

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		results feedback into the programme implementation.			
<p>Recommendation 8:</p> <p>The CO should review and consolidate its M&E processes ahead of the new CP to strengthen: a) output monitoring given that accountability regarding the distribution of commodities and cash is central to WFP's credibility, and b) the assessment of the effect of capacity building activities on partner institutions.</p> <p>The ET experienced considerable difficulty in accessing a complete, accurate and consistent set of output figures, with data lacking coherence and presented differently in different reports and activities. Agreeing and adhering to a standard data reporting protocol for the CP would enhance understanding of output data and WFP's credibility in this area.</p> <p>Furthermore, given that WFP's role in Mozambique is likely to increasingly focus on capacity development, efforts to prioritize and institutionalize the regular use of capacity assessment tools are essential. This will assist WFP to better determine the effectiveness of its interventions and demonstrate accountability to its donors and partner institutions. Tools have already been developed for this purpose - these need to be used in a uniform and systematic way throughout the programme.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p> <p><u>Output reporting system:</u> Partially accepted; CO output monitoring (reporting on beneficiaries and transfers) has been consistently and systematically performed on monthly basis since the beginning of the CP. However, while CO output monitoring reports on outputs per activity, WFP corporate reporting (SPRs) used, until 2013, different beneficiary categories (based on transfer modalities), which did not properly match with CP activities. This led to some confusion. Since 2014, WFP corporate reporting has improved and SPRs now also report per activity, thus</p>	<p><u>Output reporting system:</u> Continuing to follow the corporate guidelines, COMET (Country Office Monitoring and Evaluation Tools) was launched in RBJ region in 2014, an improved corporate programme report system. The data provided by partners are uploaded by SOs, verified and approved by CO, Regional Bureau and HQ. Data were verified at all levels including with COMPASS (logistics system commodity tracking system). Based on COMET the 2014 SPR was improved, with COMET data accessible at all levels. Based on</p>	Program, VAM/M&E with inputs from Sub Offices and reconciliation with Logistics Unit	a) Continuous	Y (for training new CO staff involved in COMET upload and refreshment for other staff) Y (for workshops with counterparts)

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	<p>ensuring consistency between CO output monitoring and SPR data and providing a standard data reporting system.</p> <p><u>Capacity Development:</u> accepted.</p>	<p>lessons learned process conducted by HQ, the COMET system has been improved for a more accurate and coherent disaggregated data. Staff responsible for data entry was trained in 2014 and a refreshment is planned for 2015. The monthly distribution report will be uploaded directly in COMET starting from June. More frequent contacts between CO output focal point and SOs staff, as well as between SOs and partners are contributing to improve data quality provided by partners and uploaded in the system by SOs.</p> <p><u>Capacity Development:</u> In line with the 2014-2017 WFP Strategic Results</p>		b) Q4 2015	

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		Framework, output and outcome indicators for capacity development related to different Strategic Objectives were included in the CP logframe in 2014 and are being tracked. To compute the different National Capacity Index values for 2015, workshops/meetings with different government counterparts will be organized before the end of the year.			
<p>Recommendation 9:</p> <p>The WFP CO in Mozambique should continue to decentralize operational decision-making. This will allow the CO to capitalize on the strong and experienced staff it has at sub-office level and improve the efficiency of operations. Under current arrangements, sub-offices are disempowered and have little incentive to improve programme quality. As part of this process, the WFP CO should give sub-offices performance targets on an annual basis and support and incentivize them to meet these targets.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of words like “strong and experienced staff” is an over generalization when the Sub-Offices are mainly staffed with General Service national staff; Expressions such as “SOs are disempowered” 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Heads of Sub-Offices will be hired at National Officers’ level by September 2015. A special Field support team will be created in the CO by September 2015; Consultations will be held with the SOs to identify the functions 	Management	Q3-4 2015	Y (for hiring of new staff)

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	without providing any specifics cannot help improve a situation.	that can be decentralized by December 2015.			
<p>Recommendation 10:</p> <p>Taking into account the high levels of chronic malnutrition in Mozambique and the priorities of the Government of Mozambique which are to reduce the levels of chronic malnutrition, WFP should prioritize reducing chronic malnutrition in its next CP.</p> <p>In line with global guidance from WHO, decisions on targeting for MAM in the nutrition component of the next CP should be based on a careful analysis of inequalities among populations and focus on areas where there are clusters of large numbers of wasting children.</p> <p>Finally, in 2015, it should conduct – with external consultancy support and in coordination with other partners (government and UN) - an assessment to identify the reasons for the high levels of MAM default rates seen under the current CP and use the findings to inform the redesign of its interventions.</p>	<p>Partially accepted.</p> <p>We accept the recommendation to focus on CM.</p> <p>However, the recommendation for targeting MAM treatment seems to give more importance to children (for whom the prevalence in Mozambique is the lowest) and doesn't mention adult HIV/TB patients (for whom the prevalence is the highest). In addition, how would WFP identify the clusters of wasting children? Wouldn't it make more sense to target the provinces with a certain prevalence of MAM? How would we deal with the situation where areas with</p>	<p>WFP will consider incorporating a chronic malnutrition component in the next CP, based on assessed needs and government priorities at that time and the identification of a resourcing strategy for such activities.</p> <p>The CO will conduct an assessment of MAM default rates if additional funding becomes available to allow continuation of MAM treatment activities under the current CP.</p>	Programme Unit	<p>2016</p> <p>Q4 2015</p>	<p>Y (Sufficient resources for CM activities under the new CP)</p> <p>Y (for implementation of MAM treatment activities and to conduct the assessment)</p>

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	<p>more MAM in children do not also have more MAM in adults HIV/TB? Generally, this part of the recommendation makes little sense if WFP should in any case focus on CM for the next CP.</p> <p>The recommendation regarding the assessment of default rates is generally accepted. However, the CO will conduct this only if additional funding becomes available to allow continuation of MAM treatment activities to the end of the current CP (as per CP BR7, activities have been phased out due to lack of funding).</p>				