

## **Progress in accelerating global actions for a world without poverty and implementation of the System-wide Plan of Action for the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018-2027): WFP, June 2019**

This report discusses contributions of the World Food Programme to the implementation of the interagency, System-wide Plan of Action for the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018-2027) in 2018 in five thematic areas.

### **1) Expanding social protection systems to underpin inclusive poverty-reducing development**

- WFP directly supported over 40 million beneficiaries through programmes that can be considered social protection, including school feeding, lean season support, malnutrition prevention and cash-based safety nets.
- In addition to direct assistance, WFP also provided technical support in over 70 countries to strengthen the capacity of national social protection systems to improve access to food for poor and vulnerable households. Technical support has included facilitating the development of social protection policy, guidance on deploying social protection programmes in fragile and forced displacement contexts, strengthening beneficiary information management systems and improvements in payment and delivery systems, amongst other areas of support.
- The organization assisted governments in establishing and maintaining nationally owned programmes that are part of social protection frameworks contributing to the achievement of many SDGs - particularly SDG 2 on hunger; but also, SDG 1 on poverty, SDG 4 on education, SDG 5 on gender equality, SDG 17 on partnerships and potentially SDG 16 on peace and justice. In 2018, WFP completed the transition of school feeding to national ownership in Kenya while it continues to provide technical assistance to the Ministry of Education to implement the national Home-Grown School Meals Programme (HGSM), which provides fresh meals to 1.2 million children. In Bangladesh, WFP continues to support the government in the implementation of a sustainable nationally owned school feeding programme through its technical assistance portfolio while it continues to handover its direct beneficiaries; in 2018, 62,000 pre-primary and primary school children were handed over to the government and are now integrated into the national school feeding programme. WFP's support to Bangladesh government is lauded as a benchmark for the successful implementation of a sustainability strategy. In Bhutan, WFP is focusing on systems building, policy advice, technical assistance and capacity strengthening that have enabled the Government to take over, fully manage and implement the school feeding programme in 2018 after more than 44 years of WFP assistance. The successful handover of WFP operations to governments, signals that WFP's school feeding policy and new strategy are being successfully implemented (leading to a total reduction of 2.5 million children in 2018 compared to 2017 in countries like Zambia, Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan, and Cambodia)
- Linking to SWAP policy focus area (g) 'Fighting poverty in fragile and humanitarian contexts', WFP actively contributes to conceptualizing the role of social protection in 'the nexus' and advancing understanding on how appropriate linkages between humanitarian action and social protection can be pursued. In 2018, WFP engaged widely with this discussion, including by convening an inter-agency learning event on the topic, with key UN agency and donor partners; publishing a joint paper with the World Bank; and managing a technical assistance facility to drive country-level inter-agency cooperation. This dialogue has helped to shape priorities and approaches for using government systems as mechanisms for asset transfers and coordination in emergency response.

### **2. Human capability development: addressing the non-income forms of poverty**

- WFP-supported school feeding programmes that provided food to 16.4 million schoolchildren, resulted in higher retention rates for both girls and boys, and served as a platform for community resilience, social cohesion and stability. About 3.4 million were reached in active Level 3 and Level 2 emergencies.
- WFP Centre of Excellence in Brazil strengthened national school feeding programmes policies, programmes, and systems in 30 countries
- In 2018 WFP operated a variety of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive programmes in 66 countries. WFP's nutrition-specific programmes address the direct causes of malnutrition – poor diet and disease – while its nutrition-sensitive programmes address the underlying causes of malnutrition such as a lack of access to nutritious foods or suboptimal child care practices. WFP's nutrition-specific activities, which included treatment programmes for vulnerable groups suffering from acute malnutrition, including children age 6–59 months, pregnant and lactating women (PLW); acute malnutrition prevention

programmes; stunting-prevention programmes; and programmes addressing micronutrient deficiencies, reached 15.8 million beneficiaries. In 2018, WFP continued to integrate social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) into nutrition programmes globally, reaching over 4 million people through WFP-supported nutrition messaging and counselling. WFP continues to pursue innovative approaches in nutrition programmes and launched SCOPE CODA (conditional on-demand assistance) in 2018, for use in malnutrition treatment programmes. SCOPE CODA enables digital beneficiary registration and tracking and allows for on-demand provision of entitlements, and was piloted in South Sudan, Tajikistan and Uganda in over 50 project sites by the end of the 2018.

### **3. The future of food and sustainable agriculture**

- Empowered and resilient smallholder farmers hold the key to a world free from hunger. However, despite producing most of the food in the developing world, all too often their livelihoods can only support meagre and unhealthy diets. Their poor incomes are a result of numerous constraints such as lack of profitable markets, low productivity, high post-harvest losses, limited information and poor infrastructure. WFP recognizes that supporting smallholders to increase their productivity and incomes and building stronger food systems through inclusive agricultural and economic development are key to achieving food security.
- In response, WFP has developed models that combine wide partnerships, innovative solutions and context-specific support for smallholders and their national governments, with systemic impact in agricultural value chains and broader food systems. These efforts are more than just traditional hand-outs of “food-aid” but rather an enormous range of projects and platforms that empower the most vulnerable to access nutritious food. They include approaches such as the market access-oriented Smallholder Agricultural Market Support (SAMS) initiatives, Farm to Market Alliance and Virtual Farmers’ Market, livelihood-oriented Food Assistance for Assets (FFA), as well as post-harvest loss reduction efforts to strengthen food supply chains.
- In 2018, WFP implemented assets creation and related training programmes that benefitted 10 million people across 55 countries through cash or food-based transfers to address their immediate food needs, while they rehabilitated assets, such as constructing a road, water related assets, reforestation activities or rehabilitating degraded land, that will improve their livelihoods by creating healthier natural environments, reducing risks and impact of shocks, increasing productivity, and strengthening resilience to natural disasters.
- Along with other partners, facilitated country-led, multi-stakeholder and consultative *Zero Hunger Strategic Reviews* that helped 70 countries to determine priority actions for making zero hunger a reality by 2030, if not earlier. Through the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative, reached over 87,000 farmers in six African countries with integrated climate risk management support and approximately 6,000 farmers indirectly with insurance products valuing USD 10.3 million, thus ensuring 545,000 people were protected against the risk of drought.
- Over 10 years of successfully connecting smallholders with markets, WFP has demonstrated that when farmers have an assured market for their crops, they can forge stronger livelihoods and become key players in local food systems. Building on the lessons learned under the Purchase for Progress pilot, this now translates into a portfolio of Smallholder Agricultural Market Support initiatives, where smallholders are provided with an entry point into formal markets. WFP uses innovative and context-specific solutions to catalyse investments and partnerships across the value chain and works closely with governments to forge strong linkages between smallholders and private and public sector buyers. Over the next five years, WFP aims to connect farmers to markets in over 40 countries.
- Continued to strengthen markets by removing supply chain inefficiencies and deploying strategies to improve retail prices, access, quality and service to the world’s hungry.
- Connected over 250 small-scale traders in Kenya - both refugees and local Turkana - to local producers and distributors to help them access a better and larger variety of nutritious food items; and in Bangladesh, increased the number of people assisted through Cash Based Transfers (CBTs) by 135,000 and in partnership with UNICEF piloted a programme allowing beneficiaries to buy non-food items to meet their essential needs

### **4. Addressing climate change and the intensification of natural hazards**

- Piloted the Africa Risk Capacity (ARC) Replica initiative in Mali and Mauritania. The initiative aims to increase the number of people covered by sovereign insurance against drought and support national institutions with relevant technical assistance.

- Developed a comprehensive set of environmental and social standards and a related risk screening tool, the latter developed to ensure that environmental and social risks are identified during the design of activities, and that risks are adequately avoided, reduced or mitigated. The screening tool and indicator will be mandatory in 2019 for all Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) activities as well as operations funded through the Green Climate Fund and Adaptation Fund.
- Commenced a new strategic partnership with the Green Climate Fund that will strengthen countries' access to climate finance; and supported Senegal, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to mobilize approximately USD 28 million in climate funds to strengthen their food systems' resilience to climate change.

## **5. Fighting poverty in fragile and humanitarian contexts**

- 16.4 million schoolchildren were provided with meals in 61 countries, including about 3.4 million children in active Level 3 and Level 2 emergencies.
- 10 million people across 55 countries benefitted from assets creation and related training programmes
- Distributed over 3 million metric tonnes of food and approximately USD 1.2 billion in cash-based transfers.
- Began implementation of the global IFRC-WFP National Society Capacity Strengthening Initiative in Burundi, Pakistan, Sudan and the Dominican Republic.
- Established a Rapid Response Mechanism in Yemen to assist newly displaced people and ensure their most basic needs were met.
- Worked to meet the urgent needs and build resilience in countries facing conflict or recurrent shocks, including in Yemen where 393,589 children in primary and secondary schools benefitted from school feeding programme delivered alongside complementary interventions to address the multi-sectoral needs of schools; Mali where 163,000 schoolchildren were provided fresh meals through cash transfers to the school. An impact evaluation of the programme school feeding contributed to an overall increase in enrolment rates of 15 percent among boys and girls in addition to improvements on absenteeism and attainment; programme receipt triggered adjustments in child labour especially among girls; positive impacts were particularly pronounced in households receiving two forms of food assistance particularly general food distribution and school feeding.
- Scaled up resilience-building programmes in the Sahel region to effect transformative change in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger where recurrent climate shocks, underinvestment in development and peace agendas intersect.
- Successfully completed the first year of implementation of a joint Rome-based Agencies (RBAs) programme to strengthen the resilience of livelihoods in protracted crises in DRC, Niger and Somalia, with a specific focus on vulnerable women and children through multi-year financing. The programme represented an unprecedented effort to support and invest in the same vulnerable communities over five years through integrated, context-specific and gender- and nutrition-sensitive assistance packages.