

Decentralized Evaluation

Mid-Term Evaluation of McGovern-Dole-supported School Feeding Programme in Bangladesh (FFE-388-2014/048-00)

October 2014 – September 2016

12 June 2017 (final report)
WFP Bangladesh Country Office
Evaluation Manager: Denise Brennan

Prepared by
Iqbal Sobhan, Team Leader
Rita Bhatia, Senior Evaluator (Public Health Nutrition)
Christine M. Berger, Research Analyst/Evaluator



World Food Programme



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Evaluation Team expresses its gratitude to all informants, including school children, teachers, parents, government officials at national, provincial and upazila levels, as well as to staff of various international development agencies, who kindly took the time to meet us and give us their view of the school feeding programme in Bangladesh. Their support, time, and hospitality is highly appreciated.

A special thanks goes to the WFP Country Office staff, especially Mr. Ezaz Nabi, the focal point for this evaluation, for assisting with the planning and facilitation of the evaluation mission, and for supplying the necessary documentation.

The Evaluation Team wishes to express its appreciation to the WFP Sub-Office in Rangpur, especially Ms Hafiza Khan, Ms Shaheen Sultana, and Mr Mamunur Rashid, for taking great care of us during the week of field visits in Gaibandha. Thanks also to Mr Ashfaq for his translation services during the field visit.

Thank you to Clare Mbizule, former Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Advisor at the Regional Bureau in Bangkok (RBB), and to WFP's Evaluation Manager, Denise Brennan, for their roles in mobilising the evaluation and facilitating the evaluation process.

Finally, we wish to thank Mokoro's Technical Evaluation Manager, Stephen Lister, for his professional oversight, and Stephen Anderson for the additional Quality Support.

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Currency and Fiscal Years

The national currency is the Bangladeshi Taka (BDT)

As of 30 June 2016, USD 1 = BDT 77 approximately.

Fiscal years:

WFP	01 January – 31 December
USDA	01 October – 30 September
Government of Bangladesh	01 October – 30 September

Executive Summary

Introduction

1. This is the mid-term evaluation (MTE) of a school feeding (SF) programme implemented by the World Food Programme (WFP) in Bangladesh with the support of the McGovern-Dole (MGD) Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The value is USD 26 million for a three-year period from October 2014. Commissioned by the WFP Country Office (CO), this MTE covers the period to September 2016; it was coordinated with MTEs of MGD operations in Laos and Nepal.

2. The MTE objective was to assess performance of programme interventions for purposes of accountability and learning. The primary users of this report are stakeholders directly involved in implementing the programme. These include the WFP CO and its main implementing partners, wider stakeholders in education, nutrition and related services, and NGOs and other bodies at national and local level. The principal Government of Bangladesh (GOB) stakeholder is the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) which has the main responsibility for GOB SF programmes and policy.

3. The MGD-funded programme in Bangladesh involves SF for about 163,000 primary school pupils in one northern district (Gaibandha). However, it has wider educational and nutritional objectives and therefore also provides support for various activities to raise community awareness and support the quality of education. It contributes, along with other agencies, to an "essential learning package" that links education, school health, nutrition and hygiene; it also aims to support the strengthening of a national SF strategy. For WFP it is part of a bigger programme of support to SF in Bangladesh, and it fits within broader national SF programmes operated by the GOB. School feeding in turn has to be seen within the context of national strategies for education, health, nutrition and social safety nets.

4. Bangladesh has made substantial economic progress and is now a lower middle income country, but an estimated 28 million of its 161 million population remain in extreme poverty. Near-universal enrolment in primary education has been achieved, but the quality of teaching is poor, as are literacy scores. Many children drop out before secondary school, reflecting issues such as early marriage for girls and boys' need to contribute to family income. There are high levels of stunting, wasting and micronutrient deficiency.

5. About three million children in poverty-prone districts benefit from SF, based on the daily provision of high energy biscuits (HEB), which are fortified so as to provide about two-thirds of the daily recommended intake of micronutrients. The HEB are manufactured by private sector firms in Bangladesh; WFP manages procurement and quality control for the entire national SF programme. The USDA-donated wheat provided for Gaibandha is exchanged for HEB through a competitive procurement process. GOB also provides wheat in kind for the SF programme.

Methodology

6. The evaluation used mixed methods, combining desk review and analysis of documents and data with semi-structured interviews, focus groups and observations during field visits. At the core was an analysis of the underlying theory of change (ToC) of the programme. The project design included a results framework, but not a full-fledged ToC, which was developed by the evaluation team (ET) at the inception stage. Evaluation questions (EQs) were developed, linked to the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness (and potential impact), efficiency, sustainability and coherence (internal and external). Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (GEEW) was mainstreamed. Between 28 November and 09 December 2016, the MTE team visited 15 schools in Gaibandha, selected to illustrate a range of types (Government- and NGO-run, and at different performance levels) and conducted meetings with various other stakeholders at national and local levels.

7. The principal focus of the field mission was to gather qualitative data rather than extensive visits. Interviews were conducted with head teachers, teachers, school management committees, storekeepers, parents, and pupils. Where possible, men/boys and women/girls were interviewed separately. The supply chain including storage and distribution of food was inspected, as well as school gardens, latrines and other sanitation and hygiene facilities.

8. A significant limitation on the MTE concerned the availability of adequate quantitative data to assess performance. It is premature to assess outcomes even where the 2016 outcome survey has provided performance data to compare with the 2015 baseline. It is not straightforward to attribute the changes to the SFP, aside from the fact that there are also weaknesses in the basic data on outputs. Accordingly the MTE's assessment of results is the section for which direct evidence is weakest. This was partly mitigated by the availability of some rigorous impact evaluations of the HEB SF modality that is being emulated in Gaibandha; these were used as pointers to likely results – see ¶11 below.

Key Findings

9. **Appropriateness:** The MGD-funded operation, as designed, was relevant against all the dimensions considered. Thus, its approach was, and remains, appropriate to the needs of the targeted food-insecure population. Gaibandha is an exceptionally poor area, subject to climate stresses, and with weak nutrition indicators and low educational performance, and equity objectives are reinforced by assisting NGO-run schools and madrassas as well as government primary schools. Project design appears to take account of global evidence about how benefits from SF can be achieved; it is particularly relevant in reflecting rigorous impact evaluation evidence from Bangladesh about the effectiveness of HEBs.

10. Moreover, the SFP is generally coherent with national policies and strategies on education, food security, nutrition, and gender, and is consistent with UN-wide system strategies and policies. It is also well aligned with WFP's overarching policies on SF and nutrition. At national level WFP has worked with other development partners and GOB to ensure complementarity between the various elements of the SFP and the many other interventions supported by other agencies in these sectors. However, coordination at national level is not always reflected in operational collaboration in the project area. The MGD SFP is broadly in line with WFP's gender policy but no written gender analysis has been conducted recently.

11. **Results:** Beneficiaries are very convinced of the value of SF, and previous evaluations strongly suggest that the operation, if well-implemented, will have positive effects on school attendance, attentiveness and the nutritional status of school-children. However, as already noted, this is the question for which direct evidence is weakest, because of weaknesses in reporting as well as the short elapsed time since implementation began. The link from SF to improved literacy depends on many intermediate factors in the school environment; an SF project may contribute to, but cannot determine, such results. Specific points on MGD results:

- a) The core SF activity has reached almost the number of beneficiaries planned, but a gap between actual and planned numbers of snacks delivered has not been well analysed or explained in the course of project reporting; analysis for the MTE explains the shortfall mainly in terms of loss of school feeding days (school closures due to strikes and flooding, especially in the early stages of the programme) and over-optimistic projections of attendance rates.
- b) As regards complementary activities: those directly related to the delivery of the SF have generally met targets, while those complementary activities to promote literacy etc. have lagged (partly due to delay in contracting the implementing partner NGO).
- c) The results framework expects partner activity to support school facilities. Compared with the baseline, the 2016 outcome survey shows significant improvements in the availability

of library facilities, school gardens, water supplies and toilets. Nevertheless, field visit observations showed that many schools still lack essential facilities.

- d) Attendance data in Bangladesh are suspect because of incentives to over-report. However, reasons for absence and seasonal patterns in absences should be monitored more closely.
- e) WFP has faced some difficulties in attaining the set targets for capacity development work with school management committees (SMCs) and community mobilisation (again said to be due to delay in contracting an implementing partner).
- f) At national level, WFP has continued to support MOPME and other stakeholders to develop a national SF policy and strategy. WFP facilitated a national workshop in 2015, and has participated in regular reviews of SF capacity. The latest review (August 2016) showed that implementation and coordination capacity is more advanced than the other dimensions monitored (reflecting an established coordination platform and increasing GOB responsibility for the SF programme), but the national strategy has been delayed.
- g) The programme treats girls and boys equally, and seeks to strengthen women's roles (e.g. in SMCs). Sex-disaggregated data show near-parity in enrolments, but, community sensitisation work –which is an important opportunity to address issues such as dowry and early marriage– has lagged, and the ET found gender is still mostly seen as a women's issue.
- h) As regards efficiency: the project began on time, using buffer stocks, and WFP and RDRS (the NGO responsible for HEB distribution) are regarded as performing their respective roles efficiently. There were significant savings, through lower-than-expected shipping costs and a more favourable "exchange rate" of wheat for HEB, which enabled an expansion of geographical coverage. HEB are a very cost-effective SF modality, and much simpler to administer than hot meals. This has facilitated the expansion of the national SF programme, and needs to be borne in mind when considering future SF strategy.

12. **Factors affecting results:** Positive factors include WFP's expertise, its long experience of SF delivery, and, in Bangladesh, its high reputation and strong three-way, long-term partnerships among WFP, GOB and major NGOs. Among the constraints: high-level coordination with international agencies, including the UN family, is not always reflected in practical cooperation on the ground; similarly, despite a generally positive national policy environment, local level coordination among GOB ministries and agencies is often weak. Ability to improve the MGD-funded operation in the short term and learn useful longer-term lessons is constrained by the M&E weaknesses the MTE identified.

13. The external operating environment has at times made implementation of SFP activities difficult; e.g. strikes and floods, as well as socio-cultural norms such as dowry and early marriage, impaired the achievement of MGD objectives. The national political and policy environment was largely conducive to the programme's performance, but two downsides are pervasive corruption and weak coordination amongst GOB ministries and agencies. WFP's SFP has not been impaired by any limitations on the agreed MGD funding for the operation; in this case, with the HEB modality, receiving in-kind donations of wheat is not especially problematic. Government funding (also in-kind) is a notable indication of commitment, but funding (external and domestic) is likely to be a significant constraint for future SF.

14. None of the key assumptions in the theory of change (ToC) are completely invalid, but there are numerous problematic assumptions that constitute an agenda for strengthening the effectiveness of SF in future.

15. **Sustainability:** The HEB-based SF modality in Bangladesh has proven effectiveness, and strong GOB ownership is reflected in GOB financing for and management of its expansion; WFP's SF operations are being progressively handed over. WFP support to national capacity development, partly facilitated by MGD, has been valuable. A continuing technical support role for WFP could help to assure sustainability of the programme. Conversely, maintenance and expansion of SF benefits could be threatened by insufficient funding and/or by a premature

move towards a more complex and expensive hot meals modality.¹ The operation has made incremental contributions to positive changes in gender relations, rather than any major difference. These incremental changes are likely to persist even after completion of the MGD SFP.

Summary Conclusions

16. The MTE's overall assessment is that the direct SF component of the MGD-funded SF operation has many very positive features; it also gives rise to some concerns. On the positive side, the core activity of providing nutritious daily snacks, appears to be well-designed, well-implemented and effective. Its strengths include relying on a school biscuit modality that has proven effectiveness in Bangladesh, dovetailing with the GOB-supported national SF programme and drawing on WFP's well established partnerships with GOB and other players. Linked to the project, WFP has played a valuable role in supporting GOB's SF strategy and its policy development, although the formulation of a national SF policy is taking longer than anticipated.

17. There can be less confidence about the complementary activities that accompany the HEB, on a number of levels. Their ability to leverage the wider and long-term benefits envisaged in the results framework is constrained by factors outside the direct control of WFP and its implementing partners, including systemic weaknesses and resource constraints affecting the basic education system, and gaps in the provision of complementary inputs to enhance the school environment and support health and nutrition objectives. And those complementary activities that are included within the project have been subjected to delays and are provided on a limited scale.

18. The operation's most obvious weakness, which affects both core and complementary activities, is in the quality of reporting and monitoring, which is overly cumbersome without being sufficiently informative.

19. The MTE review of the underlying theory of change, and of the assumptions on which it depends, confirms this summary assessment, which is reflected in the practical recommendations which follow.

¹ Since 2013, separately from the MGD programme, WFP has been supporting a hot meals pilot for about 20,000 children in Jamalpur and Barguna districts; the pilot supports local production of food and is intended to enable a systematic evaluation of this modality.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Specific action and timing	Responsible
R1. Improve the monitoring and evaluation function, with rationalisation and streamlining of the indicators used, and improvements to the table used for reporting against plans and targets.	Revise the reporting format to make presentation clearer and provide more explanation of trends and variances; substantially reduce the number of the indicators; in doing so, take account of management information needed in the short term, as well as data needed to support the end-line evaluation. <i>(before next six-monthly report)</i>	WFP CO, USDA
R2. Ensure that the reasons for any shortfalls in the planned number of snacks provided are tabulated and explained in regular monitoring reports.	Include a table in the six-monthly reports which shows whether any shortfalls in delivery of snacks have occurred, and, if so the extent to which they are due to each contributing factor (unexpected school closures; interruptions to delivery of HEB; differences between planned and actual enrolments; difference between projected and actual attendance rates). <i>(next six-monthly report and ongoing)</i>	WFP CO
R3. Retention/dropouts in schools remain a concern. WFP and partners should, first of all strengthen recording and analysis of attendance and dropout, then follow up on the dropout of boys (due to child labour) and girls (due to child/early marriage) and consider supporting vulnerable communities in a more holistic approach.	This is a nation-wide issue, but for Gaibandha specifically it would be useful to strengthen recording of school attendance and drop-out so as to allow a more granular analysis of patterns and the reasons for them. Take this analysis into account in any future phase of the SFP in Gaibandha. <i>(during 2017 and beyond)</i>	WFP and development partners, GOB
R4. Also, in any future phase of SF support, pay additional attention to the handover process, and the provision of complementary support to handed-over schools, especially NGO schools.	To be taken into account in the design and review of any continuation of the present MGD operation. <i>(immediate and during 2017)</i>	WFP USDA GOB NGO partners
R5. Both in the remainder of the current operation and in the preparation of future operations, pay particular attention to the theory of change assumptions that this MTE has identified as problematic.	The key assumptions of the theory of change are not all equally within WFP's and USDA's influence or control, but WFP and USDA should nevertheless seek to mitigate any adverse influences on the programme's effectiveness, taking these factors into account in the design of future programmes as well as the continuing implementation of the current one. <i>(ongoing)</i> Specific actions are summarized here, but detailed in Table 17 of the main report: Continue technical support to national school feeding programme; launch local capacity development activities early enough and intensify their implementation; strengthen national-level partnering arrangements with key agencies; seek specific local-level agreements for complementary inputs from such agencies when SFPs are rolled out to new areas; continue advocacy for WASH and deworming programmes, and for education, nutrition and social protection to be priorities by the relevant GOB and international agencies; continue to report findings from its SFP and maintain advocacy in national education forums.	WFP, USDA GOB, and NGO partners as appropriate

Recommendation	Specific action and timing	Responsible
R6. In the next phase of MGD support, reconsider WFP's direct role in supporting complementary activities that are not linked to its core competences.	To be taken into account in the design of and review of any continuation of the present MGD operation. <i>(immediate and during 2017)</i>	WFP USDA
R7. With support from GOB and other development partners, WFP should continue to provide strategic support to SF in Bangladesh.	WFP to continue its support into piloting and rigorous evaluation of alternative SF modalities. GOB to (continue to) contract WFP services for HEB procurement and other technical support to the national SFP. <i>(ongoing, feed into country strategy/plans)</i>	WFP GOB other DPs
R8. Ensure that the choice of future SF modalities (HEB vs. hot meals) is based on rigorous evaluation of the hot meals pilot, and takes full account of equity considerations as well as the proven effectiveness of school biscuits.	To be taken into account when considering future phases of USDA support and the wider WFP SFP. Finalisation of the national SF strategy should not pre-empt the findings of the forthcoming evaluation of the hot meals pilot. <i>(ongoing)</i>	GOB WFP USDA other SF donors

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview of the evaluation

1. This Evaluation Report (ER) presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the school feeding programme (SFP) implemented by the World Food Programme (WFP) in Bangladesh with the support of the McGovern-Dole (MGD) Food for Education Programme of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). It covers the period from October 2014² to September 2016. USDA has already invited, and WFP has prepared, a proposal for a further phase of MGD support to school feeding (SF) in Bangladesh.

2. The evaluation was commissioned by the WFP Country Office (CO) for Bangladesh. Its timing and approach are designed to meet USDA requirements for interim evaluations of MGD operations (USDA, 2013) while also complying with WFP evaluation policies. WFP is rolling out a new corporate approach to decentralised evaluations, and this MTE has been conducted alongside similar MTEs of MGD operations in Lao PDR and Nepal. WFP's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok (RBB) coordinated this process.

3. The MTE's main objective (see Terms of Reference (TOR) in Annex A) is to assess and report on the performance of the programme and associated interventions, for the dual purposes of accountability and learning, providing evidence-based findings to inform operational and strategic decision-making as well as ongoing and subsequent operations. For USDA the evaluation is also an opportunity to critically review the project and discuss necessary modifications or mid-course corrections in order to effectively and efficiently meet the stated goals and objectives (TOR, ¶6).

4. The primary users of this ER are stakeholders directly involved in the implementation of the programme. These include the WFP CO and its main implementing partners; the RBB; USDA; WFP Headquarters (HQ); WFP Office of Evaluation (OEI); the WFP Executive Board (EB); and the Government of Bangladesh (GOB). In addition, external stakeholders, such as the UN country team (UNCT), the wider NGO and donor community and other actors, including local suppliers, school administrators and local communities might have an interest in the ER. The ER will be of direct interest to the participants in the Internal Evaluation Committee (IEC) and External Reference Group (ERG); their membership is shown in Annex I (Table 48 and Table 49). As described in section 1.4 below the MTE has adopted a consultative approach, so that the views of all stakeholders, including beneficiaries, have been taken into account in the MTE's findings and recommendations.

5. The scope of the MTE complies with the requirements of the TOR (Annex A, ¶21 - ¶22). The MGD-funded programme in Bangladesh involves SF for about 163,000³ primary school pupils in one northern district (Gaibandha). However, it has wider educational and nutritional objectives for its direct beneficiaries, and also aims to support the strengthening of a national SF strategy. For WFP it is part of a broader programme of support to SF in Bangladesh, and it fits within the broader national SF programme operated by the GOB. School feeding in turn has to be seen within the context of national strategies for education, health, nutrition and social safety nets. The next section therefore describes the project context before section 19 describes the MGD operation itself.

² The first tranche of wheat from USDA was delivered in March 2015, however, the programme activities started in October 2014, pre-financing the HEB from different sources.

³ Revised from original average of 137,000.

1.2 Context

Country context

6. **Poverty, Food Security and Nutrition.** With a population of 161 million and a per capita income estimated at USD 1,190 (2015, World Bank data) Bangladesh has become a lower middle income country. However, an estimated 28 million people remain under extreme poverty.⁴ Poverty is more prevalent in rural areas where 29.4 percent live on less than USD 1.25 a day (Ahmed, 2016), where the population often does not own any land and does not have easy access to social, health or education services (Sarker, 2013). Due to its landmass being less than 12 metres above sea level, Bangladesh is also particularly prone to flooding.⁵

7. The nutrition situation remains precarious. In 2014, 36 percent of children under five were stunted, 33 percent underweight and some 15 percent wasted (NIPORT et al, 2016). Bangladeshi children suffer from micronutrient deficiencies, particularly vitamin A, iron, iodine and zinc.

8. Food insecurity also has significant gender dimensions (WFP, 2016h, Sraboni et al, 2014).⁶ While women's nutritional status has improved in the last ten years (percentage of undernourished women (BMI<18.5) has declined from 34 percent to 19 percent between 2004 and 2014), 31 percent of ever-married women between the ages of 15 to 19 years are still undernourished. Early marriage and teenage pregnancy are major causes of child undernutrition/stunting (Ahmed, 2016). Recent data (Ahmed, 2016) also suggests that the nutritional status of men is poor, with the prevalence of underweight being higher among men, except for the elderly.⁷

9. **Education.** The national literacy rate, according to a 2011 survey, was 50.5 percent (11-45 years); among 11-14 year olds, 19.5 percent were illiterate and 10.4 percent were only semi-literate (BBS, 2011). Although Bangladesh is close to achieving universal primary education (see Annex J for MDG status), remaining challenges for MDG2 include “attaining the targets of primary education completion rate and the adult literacy rate” (UNDP, n.d.)⁸. Although current enrolments are near parity there is a legacy of gender gaps in education. For example, only 34.1 percent of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 41.3 percent of their male counterparts (UNDP, 2015a). The Government's and development partners' (DPs') concentrated focus on education has resulted in significant progress in increasing access and gender equity at the primary level, but retention remains a problem. The continuing challenge of early marriage of girls, typically terminating their education, the effect of girls' and boys' burden of (household) labour on their regular attendance at school (for primary school-aged children this is particularly a problem for boys) remain pertinent issues (Ahmed et al., 2016).

10. **Gender.**⁹ Gender-based poverty continues to be a key issue in the health and education sectors despite significant improvements in recent years and is reflected in poor nutrition, maternal mortality and child mortality indicators – as well as gaps in primary and secondary enrolment versus completion rates, low achievement levels and high levels of adult female illiteracy (see ¶9 above). The Government has recognised the need for a gender-specific development policy and outlined its goals in the National Women Development Policy 2011

⁴ Under revised estimates using USD 1.90 as the cut-off point (World Bank Development Update 2016)

⁵ It is estimated that approximately 10 percent of the country would be flooded if the sea level was to rise by 1 metre creating the possibility of 20 million ‘climate change refugees’ (UNEP & GRID Arendal, 2005).

⁶ IFPRI's latest survey results from 2015 show that 35.2 percent of the girls and 39.9 percent of the boys are stunted. In the poorest quintile of the population, however, there is no difference between boys and girls, half of all the children are stunted (48.7 percent boys and 49.1 percent girls) (Ahmed, 2016).

⁷ However, there is no explanation as to why this might be.

⁸ Other issues are exclusion of most physically and mentally challenged children from the schooling system and the quality of education across the education system. (UNDP, n.d.)

⁹ See also the more extensive gender analysis undertaken by this evaluation, reproduced in Annex G.

(GOB, 2011).¹⁰ Gender-based violence is also increasingly understood to be a serious problem in Bangladesh, and female poverty and its specific vulnerabilities are also reflected in the thousands of especially women and children, but also men (for forced labour) trafficked each year to neighbouring countries and beyond (US DOS, 2016)¹¹. However, since “less than 10 percent of children are registered at birth, it is difficult to track whether children’s rights are being protected” (UNICEF, n.d.).

11. **Government objectives and policies.** The Government’s current Seventh Five Year Plan (2016–2020) envisages (among other objectives) a net enrolment rate of 100 percent in primary and secondary education; 100 percent of children reaching grade 5 (from 80 percent); the reduction in under five mortality rate from 46 (in 2015) to 37 (in 2020) per 1,000 live births; reduction in maternal mortality rate from 170 (in 2015) to 105 (in 2020) per 100,000 live births; reduction of underweight children under five from 33 percent (in 2014) to 20 percent (in 2020). To this end, the GOB has outlined specific policies that include the National Nutrition Policy (GOB, 2015a), the National Education Policy (CPD, 2007), and the National Social Security Strategy, July 2015 (GOB, 2015b).¹²

12. **International assistance.** Aid dependence is low: net Official Development Assistance (ODA) was only 1.2 percent of Gross National Income (GNI) in 2015; the top five donors in 2014–2015 were the World Bank, Japan, Asian Development Bank, United Kingdom and United States.¹³ A significant part of international assistance to Bangladesh has been programmed into agriculture, poverty alleviation, infrastructure and energy. The country has also received a significant amount of external emergency assistance as a consequence of recurring natural disasters. Prominent partners in the education, health, nutrition and family planning sectors have been the European Union (EU), USAID, the World Bank (WB) and other partners. Both WFP and the EU have been in the forefront of providing emergency assistance.

WFP and school feeding in Bangladesh

13. WFP started operations in Bangladesh in 1974. WFP’s current portfolio in Bangladesh includes a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) to support Rohingya refugees from Myanmar (since 1992), but is dominated by a five-year Country Programme (CP 200243) which operates in 15 districts (see Map 3 in Annex D). School feeding is one of four components of the CP; the others focus on Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition (MCHN), enhancing resilience to natural disasters and climate change, and strengthening government safety nets. WFP implements this programme under Strategic Objective 4 of its Strategic Plan 2014–2017 to “reduce undernutrition and break the intergenerational cycle of hunger” (WFP, 2013c).

14. WFP first introduced an SFP in chronically food-insecure areas of the country in 2002, with the objective to increase enrolment, reduce drop-out rates, bridge the gender gap and assist with children’s concentration. Based on WFP’s model, the Government of Bangladesh launched its National School Feeding Programme in Poverty-Prone Areas (NSFPPPA) in 2011, initially offering micronutrient-fortified high energy biscuits (HEB) to 55,000 children.

15. The SFP is one of the GOB’s social security programmes (see Box 9 in Annex J), receiving approximately 2 percent of the national social security budget (GOB, 2015b: 9). It is currently implemented (as an annually funded project) through the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME), with WFP supporting the GOB by handling the procurement of

¹⁰ The Policy includes 83 objectives to improve the situation of women and girls in 11 areas, including employment of women, poverty elimination, sports and culture, education and training, child development.

¹¹ The GOB is not yet a Party to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which supplements the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and has been in force since 25 December 2003 (UN Treaty Collection).

¹² For the achievement of the MDGs, see Annex J, **also** UNDP, n.d. and UNDP, 2015a.

¹³ https://public.tableau.com/views/OECDACAidataglanbyrecipient_new/Recipients?:embed=y&:display_count=yes&:showTabs=y&:toolbar=no&:showVizHome=no, accessed January 2017.

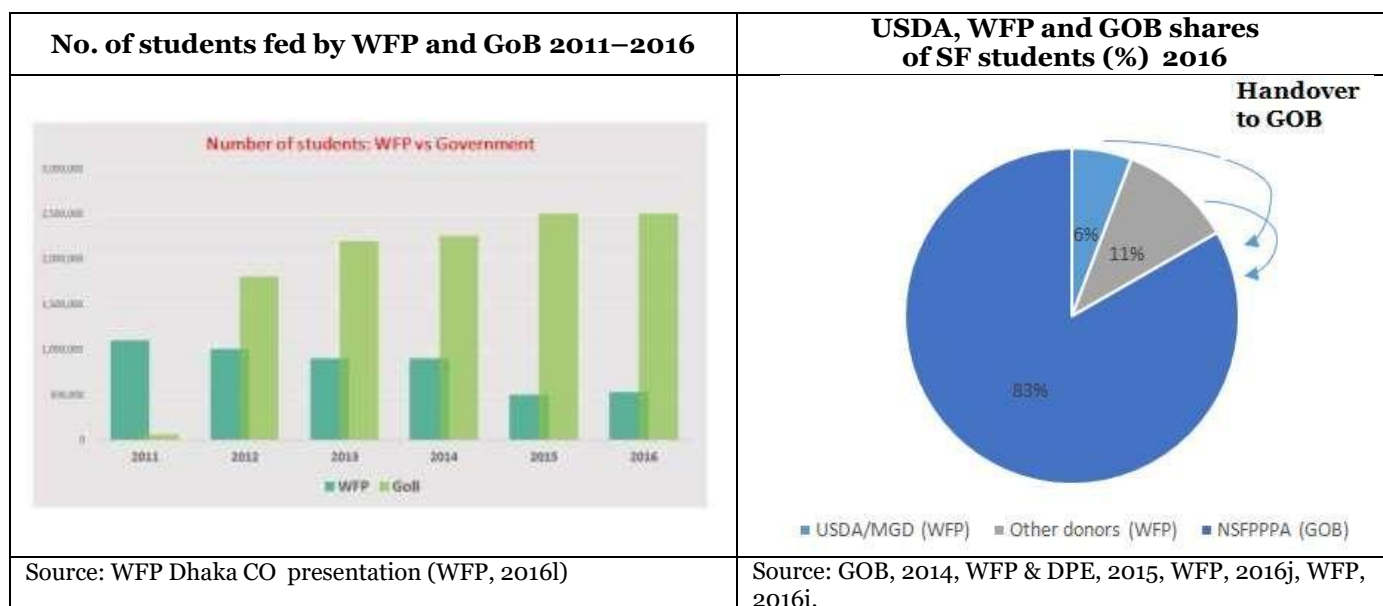
HEB. An NGO, the Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service (RDRS) has been engaged as a service provider for storing and delivering the biscuits nation-wide.

16. A dedicated SF unit was established in the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) under the MOPME in September 2011 and WFP has provided technical support to it. In addition, a capacity support unit was established in the MOPME in the reporting period October 2015 – March 2016, with the aim to help develop a national SF policy and implementation strategy. In partnership with the Government, WFP also launched a joint school meals initiative in 2013, designed to test an alternative to HEB; this provides students with a cooked meal of fortified rice, pulses and oil, and vegetables procured locally. This pilot programme operating in Jamalpur and Barguna districts (see Map 2 of Annex D) reaches approximately 20,000 school children and at the same time helps local women, as some work as cooks while others sell their garden produce to WFP (WFP, , WFP, 2014i).

17. The main donors for the WFP's SFP are USDA, GOB (which provides wheat in kind), Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Saudi Arabia, and Unilever. Their contributions are shown in Figure 6 of Annex B.

18. Overall, about 3 million pre-primary and primary school children in Bangladesh currently receive support through the distribution of HEB, 20,000 of them receive a hot meal (see ¶16 above). The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) through the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), and with technical support from WFP, continues to implement the NSFPPPA and currently reaches approximately 2.5 million students in 72 upazilas in 27 districts of the country with HEB. WFP operates in approximately 20 upazilas in six districts and reaches half a million students, also piloting the hot meals initiative mentioned above. (GOB, 2014; WFP & DPE, 2015, WFP, 2016j¹⁴). Map 2 in Annex D shows the geographical locations.¹⁵

Figure 1 School Feeding Coverage by USDA, WFP and the Government



19. Figure 1 above shows the clear increase of the GOB NSFPPPA since 2011, together with USDA's contribution to SF in Bangladesh as a percentage of the total number of beneficiaries

¹⁴ Several of these sources give figures of 3 million (GOB) and 3.5 million (GOB+WFP). The CO has advised that the lower figures of 2.5 million (GOB) and 3 million (GOB+WFP) are correct.

¹⁵ Note that Map 1 and Map 2 differ slightly in terms of coverage as WFP has handed over GOB-run schools in certain upazilas to the GOB, while still supporting NGO-run schools.

supported, with the arrows indicating that WFP's programmes are intended to be handed over to the GOB as well.¹⁶

1.3 Overview of the MGD programme under evaluation¹⁷

20. **Design and objectives.** USDA has been supporting SF in Bangladesh since 2006. The operation under review is one element within the SF component of WFP's CP (¶13 above). USDA signed the MGD commitment letter for the SFP in Bangladesh on 24 September, 2014 and allocated USD 26 million for commodities, transportation, and financial assistance for a three-year period. Table 1 below shows what percentage of the CP, and what percentage of the overall SFP MGD has funded.

Table 1 MGD Contributions to WFP SF in Bangladesh 2012–2016

Programme	MGD Funds 2012 - 2016	USD	Percent of overall CP	Percent of overall SF
Overall CP		163,929,766		
Overall SF		76,000,000	46%	
	McGovern-Dole Fund 1	23,000,000	14%	30%
	McGovern-Dole Fund 2	26,000,000	15%	34%
Source: WFP Bangladesh CO				

21. The three-year MGD programme was initially designed to provide SF assistance to an average of 137,000 pre-primary and primary school children per year in four upazilas (sub-districts), Gobindaganj, Saghata, Sundarganj and Fulchhari, of the poverty-prone district of Gaibandha in North-West Bangladesh,¹⁸ and to support a critical phase of the handover of SF to the Government of Bangladesh (for details see Annex B). In line with the national SF programme, students receive a 75 gram packet of micronutrient-fortified high energy biscuits (HEB) each day they attend school (approximately 240 days per year). Recipients include children in NGO-run schools and madrassas that follow the national curriculum as well as government primary schools (USDA, 2014a).

22. As set out in its results framework (see Figure 8 in Annex B), the MGD-funded SFP has two overarching strategic objectives (SOs): Improved School Literacy of School-Age Children (SO1) and Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices (SO2). These are to be achieved by the core SF activity combined with: (a) supporting activities that promote education, literacy and health among pre-primary and primary school children; (b) supporting capacity development both in Gaibandha and, at national level, to support the strengthening/finalization of the national SF policy and the subsequent implementation strategy. Capacity building at both local and national level is intended to support sustainability and handover, and is reflected by the inclusion in the results framework of various "foundational results", which are included in Table 2 below, along with MGD's strategic objectives and expected outcomes.

¹⁶ Note that WFP is still responsible for managing the procurement of HEB under the NSFPPA.

¹⁷ See Annex B for a more detailed description.

¹⁸ From October to December 2014 supported upazilas were Gobindaganj and Saghata, while SF started in Sundarganj and Fulchhari in January 2015 (see Annex B).

Table 2 Summary of MGD Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

MGD Strategic Objective	MGD Expected Outcome
MGD SO 1: Improved Literacy of School-Age Children	MGD 1.1 Improving Quality of Literacy Instruction MGD 1.2 Improving Attentiveness by reducing short-term hunger (MGD 1.2.1) and increased access to nutritious food (MGD 1.2.1.1, 1.3.1.1) MGD 1.3 Improving Student Attendance
SO 1 Foundational Results	MGD 1.4.1 Increased Capacity of Government Institutions MGD 1.4.2 Improved Policy and Regulatory Framework MGD 1.4.3 Increased Government Support MGD 1.4.4 Increased Engagement of Local Organisations and Community Groups
MGD SO 2: Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices	MGD 2.1 – 2.3 Improved Knowledge of Health and Hygiene Practices, Safe Food Prep and Storage Practices, Nutrition MGD 2.4-2.6 Increased Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services, Preventative Health Services, and Requisite Food Prep and Storage Tools and Equipment
SO 2 Foundational Results	MGD 2.7.4 Increased Engagement of Local Organisations and Community Groups

23. A summary of MGD SFP objectives, activities and WFP's (strategic and implementing) partners is provided in Table 3 below.¹⁹ The detailed results framework is included in Figure 8 of Annex B. The project documents do not include an explicit theory of change (ToC); the team therefore developed an inferred ToC during the inception phase, which is reproduced as Figure 10 in Annex E (see methodology, section 1.4 below).

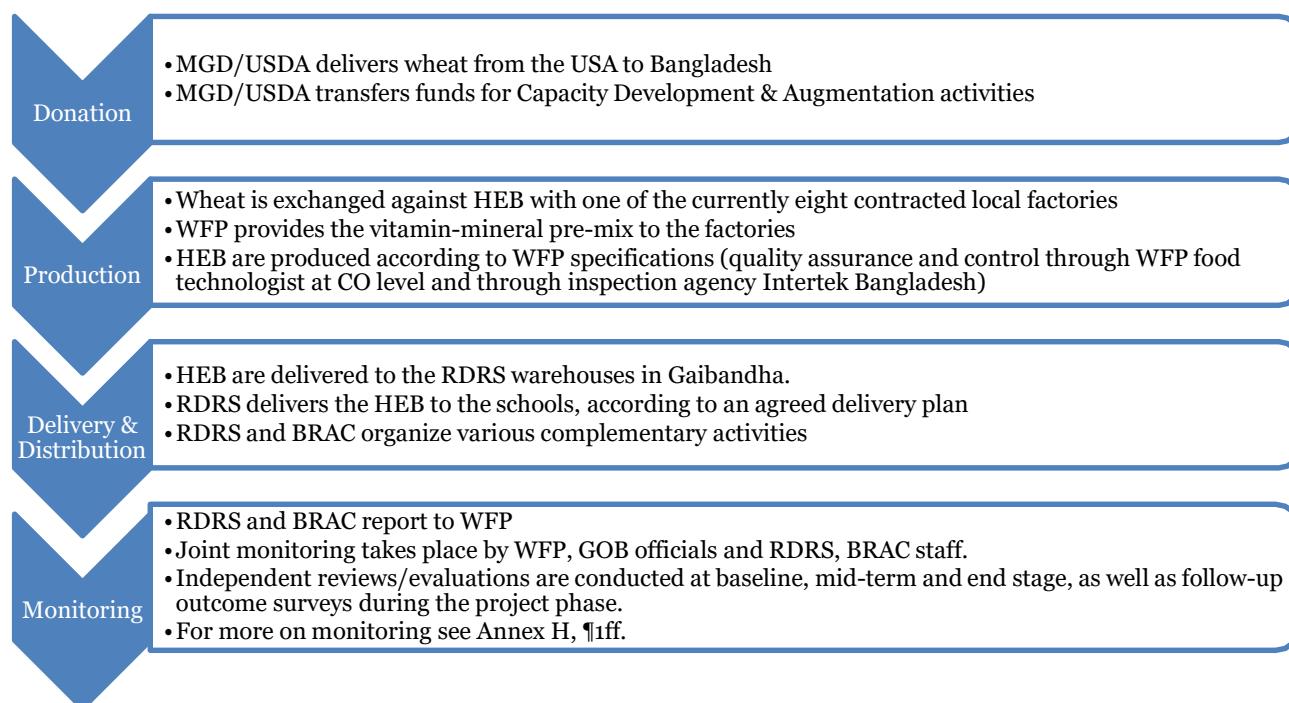
Table 3 Summary of MGD SFP objectives, activities and partners

Strategic Objectives	Activities	Partners
MGD SO 1: Improved Literacy of School-Age Children	• Providing micronutrient-fortified biscuits in the first hour of school/providing school meals • Promote teacher attendance • Training for teachers and school administrators • Providing school supplies and literacy instruction materials • School gardens • Economic incentives through school meals and complementary GOB stipend programme • Raise community awareness on benefits of education • Repair school infrastructure	• Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) • Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) • Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) • Ministry of Food, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) • Ministry of Finance (MoF) • United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) • Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO) • World Health Organisation (WHO)
MGD SO 2: Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices	• Deliver health and hygiene awareness education • Deliver nutrition training as part of “essential learning package” • Provide and maintain clean water and sanitation facilities • Complementary GOB deworming campaign • Training on safe food prep and storage practices to factories and warehouses	• Building Resources Across Communities (BRAC) • Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service (RDRS) <i>BRAC and RDRS are WFP's implementing partners (WFP & BRAC, 2016 and WFP & RDRS, 2016). For a brief summary of the Field Level Agreements (FLAs), see Table 26 of Annex B. See Annex E, ¶20 and Figure 11 for a summarized stakeholder analysis.</i>

¹⁹ Annex B, ¶24-34 provides more detail on both RDRS and BRAC.

24. **Implementation and modifications.** Logistically, the MGD-funded SFP works as summarized in Figure 2 below (also see ¶35ff in Annex B). Although the first tranche of wheat arrived in March 2015, project implementation started in October 2014 with funds used from another source.

Figure 2 Implementation Cycle – Summary



25. USDA approved a first amendment to its programme and signed a revised version on 24 June 2016,²⁰ extending programme coverage to an additional upazila, Gaibandha Sadar, and enhancing literacy activities (as baseline reading abilities turned out to be well below expectations), and activities to further improve hygiene and dietary practices. The SFP now reaches almost 173,000 students in the upazilas Gobindaganj, Sunderganj, Saghata, Fulchhari and Sadar.²¹ A second amendment was submitted at the beginning of January 2017.²² Table 4 below lists the agreement and amendment dates.

²⁰ WFP had submitted a modification request in mid-2016 as a response to the first year's USDA consignment of wheat not being fully utilised. This was due to a number of factors: (a) disruptions in distribution because of closed schools during general strikes in early 2015; (b) severe flooding in the area in August 2015; (c) a more favourable exchange rate of wheat-to-biscuits than expected (2.37 MT wheat per 1 MT biscuits as compared to the expected 4 MT wheat per 1 MT biscuits); (d) although attendance rates were in line with estimations, the number of children in the school catchment areas, and hence enrolment, was lower than expected; (e) also, the second yearly consignment of wheat was 2,000 MT larger than expected due to lower transport costs (USD 145/MT vs. USD 215/MT).

²¹ After the first three months, the GOB-run schools in Gobindaganj were handed over to the Government and MGD operations started in Fulchhari upazila in January 2015.

²² WFP is requesting to increase assistance to an additional 310,000–315,000 students in 20 upazilas over a nine-month period from April – December 2017. WFP further suggests to increase the cost category Capacity Development & Augmentation by USD 1 million and to reduce Other Direct Operating Costs by the same amount. This is mainly to strengthen ongoing engagement on the formulation of the school feeding policy and strategy, and helping the GOB define the transition from HEB to hot meals. At the time of writing this modification request is still pending.

Table 4 Agreements and Modifications

Agreement/Amendment	Submitted	Approved
CP 200243 (2012 – 2016)	8 September 2011	November 2011 ²³
CP 200243 budget revision	21 May 2014	June 2014 ²⁴
MGD Agreement		24 September 2014
MGD Modification I		24 June 2016
MGD Modification II	January 2017	pending
WFP proposal to USDA for follow-up SFP FY2018-FY2020	pending	

26. **Gender Dimensions.** The MGD SFP seeks to build on earlier achievements made in the area of gender parity and to further promote it among students through an essential learning package and among the wider community through awareness-raising and community sensitisation activities which focus on relevant social issues, such as the importance of girls' and boys' education, the impact of dowry, child marriage and early pregnancy. In addition to these advocacy activities, mentoring on gender sensitisation is included (WFP, nd-a). Women are encouraged to take up leadership roles in school management committees to ensure women's participation in decision making. The programme's results framework was also designed to measure access using net enrolment rates by sex. Since programme design WFP has updated its Gender Policy (2015–2020, WFP, 2015a) and is working on integrating gender-sensitive monitoring across all programmes, including the SFP. The gender assessment (for internal WFP use only) which informed the CP programming identified various issues regarding behavioural change and increased participation of women in decision-making roles for further action (see Annex G, Box 16).

1.4 Evaluation methodology and limitations

27. The evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining desk review and analysis of documents and data with semi-structured interviews and focus groups and observation during the field visits. At the heart of it is an analysis of the inferred ToC underlying the design of the MGD programme (see the detailed description of methodology in Annex E and the ToC diagram at Figure 10, also see ¶22 above). Rigorous contribution analysis was not practical due to the early stage of implementation and the small scale of the operation relative to its wider objectives.

28. The team developed a series of evaluation questions (EQs), guided by (but not restricted to) the four key questions in the TOR:

- 1) How appropriate is the operation?
- 2) What are the results of the operation?
- 3) What factors have affected the results?, and
- 4) To what extent does the intervention's implementation strategy include considerations for sustainability?²⁵

29. The EQs are set out in a full evaluation matrix in Annex F, while Table 35 in Annex E cross-references the questions to the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, impact and coherence. The final column of the evaluation matrix specifies the

²³ At the Executive Board session.

²⁴ At the Executive Board session

²⁵ The proposed questions were reviewed and approved by the Evaluation Reference Group.

approach to triangulation for each EQ. Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (GEEW) was mainstreamed throughout.²⁶

30. In consultation with the CO, a field visit programme was prepared that enabled the team to visit 15 schools (run by GOB and NGOs) in sub-districts (upazilas) of Gaibandha district in the north of Bangladesh (see Figure 3 below, for bigger map see Annex D), as well as to conduct interviews with various other stakeholders (see Annex I). The schools were selected from schools included in the baseline (Kimetrica, 2015) and follow-up surveys, ensuring coverage of schools falling within WFP's three performance categories, and schools run by the GOB and by NGOs. Given the time constraint, schools within a reasonable distance were chosen for the ET to cover within the time available. Table 5 below details the selection criteria (also see Annex E).

Figure 3 Location of MGD-funded SFP



²⁶ An extensive gender analysis was included in the Inception Report (Mokoro, 2016b) and is reproduced as Annex G.

Table 5 Site selection criteria

Criteria	Description	As implemented
Sampled schools from baseline survey	The first selection criterion for schools was that should have been sampled schools included in the baseline and follow-up outcome surveys. The baseline survey methodology followed a quantitative data collection approach, consisting of a cross-sectional survey of a sub-sample of programme primary schools and beneficiaries. In June 2015, data were collected from 95 formal schools in two sub-districts of Gaibandha (Sundergonj and Fulchhari) and 40 on formal schools in The reference period for the school survey was the academic year 2014-15, starting in January 2014 and ending in December 2015. Given the time constraint, schools within a reasonable distance were chosen for the ET to cover within the time available. A secondary focus would be NGO-run schools most of which are likely to be non-formal schools which have been provided with nutrition support but no education support. To ensure greater coverage of schools the ET will split into two groups for the coverage of schools.	The CO pre-selected a list of schools in the upazilas Sundarganj and Fulchhari from the list of schools covered under the baseline and the follow-up surveys. The ET then randomly selected schools from the list (see Table 38 below) by drawing the names of schools from a pot and double-checking that all three performance categories were represented equally (2xA, 3xB, 3xC). The visited schools are highlighted in blue in Table 38 of Annex E. In addition five informal, i.e. NGO-run schools were visited. The team stayed together for three school visits, and split for the other 12.
School feeding modalities	WFP has been providing 75 gm packet of micronutrient fortified high energy biscuits to all children for 240 days. The biscuits are produced in Bangladesh by local producers with wheat provided by MGD-USDA. Although the same modality has applied across all MGD schools, cooked meals are being provided elsewhere under a WFP pilot programme; ET visits to a small number of schools providing cooked meals was envisaged if these had been located in the same district as that of MGD (Gaibandha), which according to the CO they are not.	ET visits to a small number of schools providing cooked meals were envisaged if these had been located in the same district as the MGD SFP (Gaibandha). Since they are located in Jamalpur and Barguna, this was not possible.
Performance	To understand the factors influencing school feeding, schools that perform well and schools that perform less well will be included. WFP has categorized schools into three performance categories: A,B, C with A being the best. These categories are based on the performance of the schools in relation to the quality of education provided, management of school feeding activities and general management of schools.	The team visited schools from all three performance categories as envisaged (2xA, 3xB, 3xC). This was done by randomly drawing the names of schools from the provided list and double-checking that all three performance categories were represented equally.
Other variances	The SF programme is implemented by GOB, and NGOs. Different types of schools have been selected.	As planned, both GOB (8)- and NGO (5)-run schools under the MGD SFP were visited. In addition, two schools that have already been handed over to the GOB were also visited in the upazilas of Gobindaganj and Saghata.

Criteria	Description	As implemented
Access	Given the tight and rigid time-frame of the evaluation, travel time will be minimised as far as possible without compromising other selection criteria.	Travel times were as short as possible without compromising the other criteria, however, they were still long enough to have to reduce the number of schools.

31. The principal focus of the field mission was to gather qualitative data rather than visiting as many locations as possible. Interviews were conducted with head teachers, teachers, school management committees, storekeepers, parents, pupils. Where possible, men/boys and women/girls were interviewed separately. The supply chain including storage and distribution of HEB was inspected, as well as school gardens, latrines and other sanitation and hygiene facilities. Meetings also took place with education authorities at national, district, and upazila levels, NGO staff, other UN agencies and donors (Table 47 in Annex I lists interviewees).

32. The MTE took note of relevant **previous evaluations**, several of which are summarized in Annex C; they are referred to as appropriate in explaining findings. Two evaluations of particular importance are an impact evaluation of SF in Bangladesh (Downen et al, 2011) and a mid-term evaluation of WFP's current CP (Downen et al, 2015). The baseline study for the MGD operation (Kimetrica, 2015), alongside data from the first outcome survey²⁷ (DMA, 2016), is also fundamental.

33. As spelled out in Annex E, the evaluation complied with all relevant **ethical standards**, including those concerning contacts with children. Reports have been subject to Mokoro's internal independent **quality assurance**, as well as the quality reviews undertaken through WFP's Decentralised Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS). Both the draft Inception Report and the draft Evaluation Report were reviewed independently and certified as meeting the DEQAS quality standards before being circulated for further comment.

34. **Limitations.** The main limitations were:

- a) *Constraints on field work:* Travel times in Dhaka and in Gaibandha district were often longer than anticipated. Given the approved time and budget for this MTE, and longer than anticipated travel times in the field, the number of schools visited had to be reduced from an initially planned 22 to 15. The team split in both locations to be able to cover all meetings and used time set aside for internal briefings to ensure meetings could take place. The return flight from Saidpur to Dhaka was delayed, making the visit of the biscuit factory impossible that day; however, by splitting up, the team managed to visit the factory the following day. No other obstructions (political or weather) were encountered and the evaluation mission went smoothly.
- b) *Data limitations:* Other constraints were the short period of implementation (October 2014 to September 2016) that could be reviewed and data limitations (see Annex G and the discussion in section 2). As noted in Annex E, there are concerns about both the reliability, and in some cases the validity, of available data. Findings on EQs where quantitative data are most pertinent are therefore not as strong as for EQs where findings can rely on more qualitative sources, including project and policy documents, interviews and focus groups. This is reflected in the final column of Table 55 in Annex K, where we provide an assessment of the strength of evidence for the findings against each of the 22 EQs.²⁸ At the level of the four key questions our assessments are:

- 1) Appropriateness: evidence is generally strong.

²⁷ Preliminary data from the first outcome survey were received on 28th November 2016, however, the first outcome survey report was still under preparation at the time of writing and only limited draft sections were made available on 3 March 2017.

²⁸ Based on a simple scale from 1 to 4: 1 (strong), 2 (more than satisfactory), 3 (indicative, not conclusive), and 4 (weak).

- 2) Results of the operation: evidence on outputs and outcomes is more indicative than conclusive, and overall evidence on results ranges from indicative to weak.²⁹
- 3) Evidence on factors affecting results is generally satisfactory.
- 4) Evidence on sustainability is also generally satisfactory.

2. Evaluation Findings

2.1 Introduction

35. This chapter focuses on the findings of the evaluation. These are presented around the four key questions posed by the TOR and the 20 sub-questions as elaborated in the evaluation matrix in Annex F. Table 55 in Annex K shows in more detail how the findings map onto the EQs.

2.2 How appropriate is the operation?

Box 1 Key findings on appropriateness

- The MGD-funded school feeding programme is generally coherent with national policies and strategies on education, food security, nutrition, and gender.
- The programme is consistent with UN-wide system strategies and policies. It is also well aligned with WFP's overarching policies on SF and nutrition.
- The project design appears to take account of global evidence about how benefits from school feeding can be achieved; more particularly it reflects the findings and recommendations of a major impact evaluation of SF in Bangladesh.
- At national level WFP has worked with other development partners and GOB to ensure complementarity between the various elements of its MGD SFP and the many other interventions supported by other agencies in these sectors. However, coordination at national level is not always reflected in operational collaboration in the project area.
- The MGD SFP's strategies were and broadly remain appropriate to the needs of the targeted food-insecure population.
- The MGD SFP is broadly in line with WFP's Gender Policy but no written gender analysis has been conducted recently.

Coherence with relevant national policies/strategies (EQ1³⁰)

36. The programme is in line with elements of overall national Government policies as reflected in the principal policy documents for the two sectors: the National Education Policy (CPD, 2007), and the National Nutrition Policy (GOB, 2015a), as well as the National Social Security Strategy (GOB, 2015b).³¹ The education policy articulates the Government's approach to supporting 'education for all', the eradication of illiteracy and improvements in the quality of education. Inasmuch as the MGD operation aims both to encourage participation in basic education and to help improve its quality, it is clearly in line with national education objectives.

²⁹ A significant challenge is that even where designated outcome indicators can be compared with baseline figures, this does not necessarily demonstrate a causal relationship between the SFP and the change in outcomes. However, there is strong historical and parallel evidence on the effectiveness of the HEB modality in Bangladesh (see Box 3 in section 2.3).

³⁰ EQ1 = How coherent are the operation's objectives, targeting and activities with relevant stated national policies and strategies on education, food security and nutrition, including gender?

³¹ There is a constitutional requirement, that "the State shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and improvement of public health as among its primary duties" (GOB, 2008-2015), and successive five-year development plans have included interventions in the nutrition and the education sectors.

37. The National Nutrition Policy (GOB, 2015) identifies five strategic objectives: (i) improve the nutritional status of all citizens, including children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers; (ii) ensure availability of adequate, diversified and quality safe food, and promote healthy feeding practices; (iii) strengthen nutrition-specific, or direct nutrition, interventions; (iv) strengthen nutrition-sensitive, or indirect, nutrition interventions; (v) strengthen multi-sectoral programmes and increase coordination among sectors to ensure improved nutrition. The MGD SFP's integrated approach to education and nutrition/health is well aligned with this multi-sectoral approach.

38. GOB does not yet have a formal SF strategy (see ¶98ff below), but the MGD-funded programme is fully coherent with the NSFPPA. GOB also regards SF as part of its social security strategy, accounting for approximately 2 percent of the national budget for social security programmes (GOB, 2015b: 9); mapped against the lifecycle it is one of four social security programmes for school-aged children, along with the GOB stipend programme (which provides cash payments to reward school attendance), an orphan programme and child maintenance payment for abandoned children.

Coherence with relevant WFP and UN-wide system strategies, policies and normative guidance (EQ3³²)

Coherence with UN strategies

39. Both the MGD operation itself and the overall WFP SFP within which it is nested are consistent with UN strategies and objectives in Bangladesh. The GOB and the UN agencies agreed on a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF, 2011). The 2012–2016 framework identified seven pillars under which twelve outcomes were to be achieved by 2016. Table 53 in Annex J³³ provides an overview of the 2012–2016 UNDAF and also shows the national priorities and the relevant MDG the UNDAF was aligned to. Under Pillar 6 it states that:

"WFP will support the Government in achieving its education goals, particularly in improving enrolment and attendance in primary schools and achieving greater completion rates, especially for children from very poor families in urban slum catchments. WFP will assist the Government through the School Feeding programme and will work closely with Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, and other development partners. WFP will also contribute to strengthening the Government's capacity to implement its national school feeding programme to assist poor children." (UNDAF, 2011, p. 26)

40. The UNDAF 2017–2020 lists "coverage of primary school children in poverty-prone districts under the school feeding programme" as an "agency/specific or output level" indicator to be monitored (UNDAF, 2016: 13).

Coherence with WFP policies and strategy

41. The MGD programme aligns with the WFP Corporate Strategic Objective 4 "Reduce Undernutrition and Break the Intergenerational Cycle of Hunger" (WFP, 2013c) and is aligned with WFP policies on nutrition (WFP, 2012b), school feeding (WFP, 2013e), and gender (WFP, 2009b, WFP, 2015a).³⁴

42. The MGD programme is consistent with both WFP's SF policy and WFP's Nutrition Policy. The revised SF policy characterises its new emphases as follows:

"While continuing to advocate for the universal adoption of school feeding programmes that help increase children's access to learning opportunities and improve their health and nutrition status, WFP will focus

³² EQ3 = To what extent were the operation's objectives and targeting coherent at the design stage with relevant WFP and UN-wide system strategies, policies and normative guidance (including those on gender), and how far have they and the operation's activities remained coherent with them?

³³ Annex J also reproduces the CP MTE's assessment of WFP's overall alignment with the UNDAF (Downen et al, 2015).

³⁴ Alignment with WFP gender policy is included in the response to EQ5 below (¶55ff).

increasingly on helping countries to establish and maintain nationally owned programmes linked to local agricultural production." (WFP, 2013e)

Although the policy's emphasis is on supporting "access to learning opportunities", the policy also states that "in line with the global emphasis on improving the quality of education, WFP will help ensure that school feeding contributes to learning", which resonates with MGD SO1. As explained in sections 1.2 and 19 above, the MGD programme fits within an ongoing process of handover to GOB. Although the MGD support is linked to wheat imports rather than national agricultural production, wheat is also contributed by the Government to WFP.

43. WFP's Nutrition Policy (WFP, 2012b) focuses on five distinct but related areas, one of which is to strengthen "the focus on nutrition in programmes without a primary nutrition objective and, where possible, linking vulnerable groups to these programmes" (WFP, 2012b: 7-8). School feeding falls under this category. Nutrition support in SF is viewed in terms of the provision of the target group's nutrient needs. A package of 75 grams of HEB significantly reduces micronutrient deficiencies, and the HEBs in Bangladesh conform to WFP normative guidance on the nutritional standards for mid-morning snacks (MMS) (also see Box 5 below).

Global and country evidence

44. WFP's revised School Feeding Policy (WFP, 2013e) proposes social protection as an overarching framework for a number of possible outcomes.³⁵ The WFP School Feeding Policy evaluation (Mokoro, 2011a) included a thorough review of the evidence base for the various benefits of SF that are commonly proposed: its conclusions are summarised in Annex C, ¶43-47. These benefits can include a direct safety net function (value transfer), educational benefits (through incentives for enrolment and attendance, and by enhancing the ability to learn), and nutritional benefits (by alleviating short-term hunger and improving children's nutritional status, particularly when food is fortified and accompanied by deworming). It also notes school feeding's potential to support gender equality, and school feeding as a "platform" for pursuing wider benefits, including supporting small-scale agriculture through Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF).

45. Whilst these objectives are similar to the ones under the MGD grant, the MGD results framework does not explicitly frame them through a social protection lens. More importantly, the potential benefits are not automatic: in most cases they depend on context and on complementary activities. For example, SF may increase attentiveness by mitigating short-term hunger, but it will not lead to more effective learning if the quality of teaching is poor. The MGD project shows awareness of this issue and incorporates various activities and inputs to complement the school feeding. In that sense it is consistent with international evidence; however, the evaluation returns to this issue of complementarity in considering (section 2.3) whether potential results have been realised in practice, and (section 2.4) the underlying factors that explain performance. In both cases, the assumptions highlighted in the inferred theory of change (Annex E, Figure 10, and Table 36) are a key point of reference.

46. A school feeding impact evaluation (Downen et al, 2011, summarised in Figure 8 ¶48-72) provides the most rigorous direct evidence on the effectiveness of SF in Bangladesh. It reviewed the HEB-based SF programme over the period from 2001–2009. Using a mixed-methods approach which included an extensive survey of schools within the SF programme vs. controls, its conclusions included: there was a positive effect on enrolment and attendance; school feeding "was a strong incentive for parents to keep children in school especially for those households concentrating in the most vulnerable categories"; the micronutrient, protein and energy contents of school biscuits contributed substantially to improving the nutrition of participating children; the HEB constituted a significant value transfer for poor households,

³⁵ This was true also of the earlier school feeding policy which was evaluated in 2011 (Mokoro, 2011a).

significantly augmenting the value transfer of the education stipend. The impact evaluation also noted, however, that:

"The achievement of learning outcomes arises from a complex set of interrelated factors, of which school biscuits are one input. While the evaluation showed some positive impacts on attendance and drop-out rates, there is no consistent pattern of the effect on overall performance in programme schools relative to control schools. This limited impact on critical education outcomes reflects shortcomings in the education system – limited contact hours, high student-to-teacher ratios, large class sizes, poor infrastructure, etc. – and economic pressures on households."

47. The MGD design clearly resonates with both the global evidence and the impact evaluation findings from Bangladesh. Its effectiveness in practice is considered in section 2.3.

Needs of the food-insecure population (EQ4³⁶)

48. The programme has appropriately focused on an area which is acknowledged to be one of the poorest in the country (WB, 2016). Its people face risks that exacerbate poverty and food insecurity: located along the banks of the Jamuna river, the district is subject to regular flooding in addition to river erosion that renders thousands of people homeless. According to the latest data, approximately half of Gaibandha's population live in poverty, with 30.3 percent living in extreme poverty (WB, 2016). Educational performance in the area is below the national average. Students are less likely to successfully complete fifth grade than anywhere else in the country. The Department of Primary Education (DPE) has singled out the char areas (alluvial mud flats and river islands) in Kurigram and Gaibandha as particularly lagging behind the rest of the country in primary completion rates (WFP & DPE, 2012). In addition, children's achievement levels are reported to remain far below the national targets and only about half the primary school graduates in the targeted communities achieve the minimum national curriculum competences (WFP & DPE, 2012). According to recent WB data, 62 percent of the 2,365,117 people living in Gaibandha district are illiterate (WB, 2016a). Issues such as child marriage or the importance of educating girls and boys, remain pertinent in the communities and require concerted efforts to bring about change and development. The MGD SFP's targeting of this particularly food-insecure and poor area in Gaibandha district through HEB distribution, as well as community sensitisation and mobilisation, is therefore appropriate. Also see section 1.2 above.

49. The relevance and importance of the WFP-supported SFP to children's needs was confirmed at all levels through stakeholder meetings, and within visited schools through interviews with head teachers, teachers and parents. Including NGO schools and madrassas extends the inclusion of very poor households.³⁷

Complementarity with Government and DPs' interventions (EQ2³⁸)

50. At operational level, the MGD programme intersects with or aims to be complemented by various other programmes in a number of ways. The school feeding element is thoroughly integrated with wider national programmes; it extends the national SFP to Gaibandha using the same MMS modality as applied elsewhere, and using the same logistics (WFP and RDRS) to deliver the HEB. The project design envisages various complementary activities to enhance the direct effects of SF. Most of these are incorporated within the concept of an "essential learning package" (ELP – see Box 12 in Annex B) for children, parents, teachers and community members, whose content is based on best practices and lessons learned from a joint WFP, FAO and UNICEF Millennium Development Goals Fund (MDG-F) project (see

³⁶ Were the operation's strategies appropriate to the needs of the food insecure population and community at design stage, and have they remained appropriate?

³⁷ This is in line with the impact evaluation recommendation on "expanding the provision of school biscuits to schools outside the current coverage area, including to religious schools..." (Downen et al, 2011, Recommendation 7).

³⁸ EQ2 = To what extent have the operation's objectives, targeting and activities sought complementarity with the interventions of relevant government and development partners?

Jeddere-Fisher, 2012). These activities are to be further enhanced by the Government's deworming campaign implemented by the MOPME and the Ministry of Health, with technical assistance from WFP and WHO.

51. Complementary programmes of the Government, supported by UN development partners provide an additional dimension to the coherence of the MGD programme with SDGs. The Third Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP-III) 2011-2016, a sector-wide programme supported by a consortium of donor agencies, but led and administered by the Government, aims at providing quality education to Bangladesh's children by establishing an efficient, inclusive and equitable primary education system (grades 1-5) and delivering effective and relevant child-friendly learning (ADB, 2012).

52. Similarly, on nutrition, WFP in partnership with the MOPME, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) and the WHO established a deworming programme to complement SF in 2005. Deworming tablets were distributed in all assisted primary schools twice a year accompanied by educational activities for parents and children. Since 2008, the MOPME and MOHFW have continued management and implementation of the campaign with WFP and WHO providing limited technical support. Further, four UN Agencies (FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, partnering as UN REACH³⁹) and five leading donors (EU, DFATD Canada, DFID, USAID and World Bank) have joined together in a common coordinated approach towards addressing nutrition for the Seventh Five Year Plan (UN REACH, 2014).

53. Since 1999 a complementary programme with a significant impact is the Government's Primary Education Stipend Project targeting all primary school students in rural areas. The stipend of BDT 100/month (which is equivalent to approximately USD 1.30) is distributed to all primary school students registered in Government schools. The stipend, along with the provision of the HEB is intended to act as an incentive for parents to send their children to school. As noted above, the SF impact evaluation (Downen et al, 2011) found that the stipend and SF through HEB reinforce each other well, although the MTE of WFP's CP notes that the value of social transfers (HEB as well as the stipend) has been eroded by increasing prices and wages (Downen et al, 2015, ¶107, ¶112).⁴⁰

54. The programme design thus appears to avoid duplication and to link as much as possible to existing national and local programmes. We consider in sections 2.3 and 2.4 the extent to which there is evidence of effective operational complementarity on the ground.

Gender Focus (EQ5⁴¹)

55. Programme design was partially in line with WFP's corporate gender policies. When the programme was designed, the 2009 WFP gender policy was still in force (WFP, 2009b). This policy introduced a shift from a women-centred approach to a broader analysis of the challenges and opportunities in the lives of the women, men, girls and boys. WFP's most recent corporate gender policy, 2015-2020 (WFP, 2015a), was adopted during project implementation. It supports a gender- rather than a woman-focused approach and calls for programmes to be designed to support women, men, girls and boys in reaching their potential. WFP's Asia-Pacific gender implementation strategy, developed some time after the design of the Bangladesh MGD SFP, focuses on creating awareness within WFP, to develop improved partnerships to enhance WFP's effectiveness on gender, and mobilise additional resources (WFP, 2016e).

³⁹ An evaluation of UN REACH in Bangladesh is summarised in Figure 8.

⁴⁰ Downen et al, 2015 estimate that the transfer value of the biscuit decreased from around 10 to 20 percent of a poor household's income in 2001 to about three percent of its income in 2015.

⁴¹ EQ5 = Were the operation's strategies based on a sound gender analysis that considered the distinct needs and participation of boys and girls (and as appropriate within the context of the school meals programme, women and men), and have they continued on that basis?

56. It is important to note that ‘gender’ is not a synonym for women. The different needs and challenges faced by both women/girls and men/boys need to be considered and men/boys involved in the empowerment of women. In Bangladesh, the drop-out from primary school concerns especially boys (see the MTE's gender analysis in Annex G). While the MGD-funded SFP thus seems to be broadly in line with WFP's gender policy, no structured written analysis has been done for the MGD SFP.⁴² WFP complies with the gender policy in collecting sex- and age-disaggregated data which is a starting point for designing (and correcting) appropriate actions.

57. While the SFP provides girls and boys the same nutrition support, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women is pursued through awareness-raising activities that focus on pertinent social issues, such as the importance of girls' and boys' education, the impact of dowry, child marriage and early pregnancy, as well as training activities/workshops (see section 1.2, ¶48 above, and Box 16 in Annex G). The SFP conducts women's leadership training sessions for impactful participation in school management committees (SMCs). Furthermore, training sessions for male and female members of the SMCs on gender sensitisation, education and advocacy are implemented to develop behavioural change and to encourage women's participation in decision making,⁴³ which in turn has a positive impact on the wellbeing and development of communities (Ahmed, 2016).⁴⁴

58. The MGD-funded SFP complements the Government of Bangladesh's formal commitments towards gender equality and efforts to mainstream gender into the national planning processes. Guidelines to this effect have been included in the National Social Security Strategy (GOB, 2015b) and the National Education Policy 2010 (GOB, 2010a). Government initiatives such as the free and compulsory primary education and the education stipend programmes have resulted in improved access to schools and achieved virtual parity in primary school enrolments.

2.3 What are the results of the operation?

Box 2 Key findings on results

Assessing the results of the programme is challenging, because of the complex set of reporting indicators in use (and shortcomings in M&E which are reviewed in 2.4 below, ¶119-122) as well as the early stage of project implementation. The MTE used qualitative approaches to supplement the available data, and also drew on relevant previous evaluations as pointers to likely results, but findings on results are nevertheless constrained.

- The core SF activity has reached almost the number of beneficiaries planned, but there is a shortfall in actual against planned number of snacks delivered which has not been well analysed or explained in the course of project reporting.
- As regards complementary activities: those directly related to the delivery of the SF have generally met targets, while those related to complementary activities to promote literacy etc. have lagged (partly due to delay in contracting the implementing partner).
- The results framework looks to partner activity to support school facilities (and therefore results observed cannot be directly credited to the MGD operation). Compared with the baseline, the 2016 outcome survey shows significant improvements

⁴² WFP conducted a gender analysis to inform the design of its CP (2012–2016) for internal use in 2011, but, no written analysis has been done since.

⁴³ A WFP internal rapid gender assessment in late 2010 includes recommendations to this effect and WFP has considered these in the SF programming. See Annex G, specifically Box 16 and Box 17.

⁴⁴ The cooked meals pilot (see Box 5 in section 2.3 below), though not funded by MGD, aims to empower women by buying produce from local women producers and therefore increasing their economic opportunities.

in the availability of library facilities, school gardens, water supplies and toilets. Nevertheless, field visit observations showed that many schools still lack essential facilities.

- As regards outcomes, there is strong evidence from SF impact evaluations that HEB are an effective SF modality in Bangladesh, in terms of incentivising school attendance from poor families, increasing attentiveness by reducing short term hunger, and reducing micronutrient deficiencies. Although quantitative monitoring data are not, and realistically could not have been, strong enough to prove such results at mid-term for the operation presently being evaluated, informants strongly believe that these benefits do also apply to the MGD operation.
- Intermediate outcomes for which credible data could, in principle, have been available, concern the effects of the programme on attendance, both by students and by teachers. However, the available data are not conclusive, and in any case attendance data in Bangladesh are suspect because schools have incentives to over-report. There should be better monitoring of reasons for student absence and of seasonal patterns in their absences.
- Available evidence on trends in children's literacy attainment, and in the quality of literacy instruction is, not surprisingly, inconclusive.
- WFP has faced some difficulties in attaining the set targets for capacity development work with SMCs and community mobilisation (again said to be due to delay in contracting an implementing partner).
- At national level, WFP has continued to work closely with MOPME and other stakeholders on the development of a national SF strategy. It facilitated a national workshop in 2015, and has participated in regular reviews of SF capacity using the SABER methodology. The latest review (August 2016) showed that implementation and coordination capacity is more advanced than the other dimensions monitored (reflecting an established coordination platform and increasing GOB responsibility for the SF programme), but the formulation of a national strategy has been delayed.
- The programme treats girls and boys equally, and seeks to strengthen women's roles (e.g. in SMCs). Data are sex-disaggregated and show near-parity in enrolments. However, as noted, community sensitisation work –which is an important opportunity to address issues such as early marriage– has lagged, and the ET found that gender is still most often viewed as a women's issue.
- As regards efficiency: the project began on time, using buffer stocks, and WFP and RDRS are regarded as performing their respective procurement and distribution roles efficiently. There were significant savings, through lower-than-expected shipping costs and a more favourable "exchange rate" of wheat for HEB, which enabled an expansion of geographical coverage.
- HEB are a very cost-effective SF modality and much simpler to administer than hot school meals. This has facilitated the expansion of the national SF programme, and needs to be borne in mind when considering future SF strategy.

Sources and Quality of Evidence

59. The evidence base for reporting on results of the MGD-funded operation is limited. At mid-term there would, in any case, be limited reporting on outcomes,⁴⁵ and this is exacerbated by the delay of some of the project activities. Annex H reviews the M&E framework and presents all the data the MTE was able to collate against the performance indicators specified.

⁴⁵ And, in the absence of a control group it is not straightforward to attribute outcomes to the SFP, especially over a very short period of implementation.

However, as is apparent from the summary tables of beneficiaries, outputs and outcomes (Table 41, Table 42, and Table 43 respectively) reporting against the indicators is often problematic. Semi-annual reports by WFP to MGD provide the best source of such data, but there are gaps in the data reported and whilst each report provides data from the previous reporting period, there is little narrative analysis relating this to the targets.

60. There have been changes to indicator-specification during the project's implementation, and there are also variances between the indicators used in the semi-annual reports and in the SPRs; better cross-tabulation would have been helpful. It has not always been possible to trace clear written explanations of the variations in the data. Certain targets were revised in the Modification I commitment letter; these revisions are indicated in the tables in Annex H.⁴⁶ Inconsistencies and errors in reported data are a further complication.

61. The limitations of quantitative data mean that the MTE's interim assessment of results has had to draw strongly on qualitative assessments, drawing on documentary reviews, and, particularly, on interactions with beneficiaries and other stakeholders during the field visit (as described in Annex I). We also took account of the findings of previous evaluations (Annex C) in assessing whether results at outcome level are likely.

Attainment of Planned Outputs (EQ6⁴⁷)

School Feeding Coverage and Beneficiaries

62. Table 6 below shows 2016 coverage in terms of the number and types of schools participating, as well as the number of students (by sex), in the respective upazilas, while Table 8 below shows the recorded numbers of beneficiaries over time, both in terms of enrolments, and in terms of the number of snacks served.

63. All students enrolled in the participating schools are counted as beneficiaries (hence the matching totals in the final columns of the two tables). The number of students in September 2016 was about 6,500 (3.6 percent) below the FY2016 target.⁴⁸ The target anticipated the number of girls to be 4 percent higher than the number of boys; the actual difference was 7 percent. Table 7 below shows enrolments by school type. Only six madrassas are supported, with fewer than 1,000 students, but NGO schools account for 12 percent of all beneficiaries. NGO schools are typically much smaller than GOB schools (average sizes under 40 and over 250 students respectively) and have a higher percentage of girl students (56 percent vs. 51 percent).

Table 6 Number of schools and number of students by upazila, 2016

Upazila	Number of Schools				Number of Students		
	GOB	NGO	Madrassa	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Sundergonj	258	40	4	302	36,294	37,650	73,944
Fulchori	115	84	1	200	15,558	16,390	31,948
Shaghata	0	112	0	112	1,707	2,347	4,054
Gobindhagonj	0	167	0	167	2,331	2,993	5,324
Sadar	220	169	1	390	27,482	30,024	57,506
Total	593	572	6	1,171	83,372	69,404	172,776

Source: WFP SO presentation on 29 November 2016 (WFP, 2016)

⁴⁶ Further revisions are proposed in the second modification request WFP submitted to USDA at the end of November 2016 and which at the time of writing was still pending. These revisions have not been included, as they concern FY 2017 which falls outside the evaluation period.

⁴⁷ EQ6 = To what extent have planned outputs, including capacity development activities, been attained? (Note: we consider capacity development outputs and outcomes together in a separate section below.)

⁴⁸ The ET was informed that this was because the school-age population had been overestimated.

Table 7 Number of students (by sex) by school type

Upazila	GPS	Students			Mad rassa	Student			NGO	Student			Total	Grand Total Student		
		Boys	Girls	Total		Boys	Girls	Total		Boys	Girls	Total		Boys	Girls	Total
1 Sundargonj	258	35,235	36,297	71,532	4	306	296	602	40	753	1,057	1,810	302	36,294	37,650	73,944
2 Fulchhari	115	13,600	14,053	27,653	1	95	117	212	84	1,863	2,220	4,083	200	15,558	16,390	31,948
3 Shaghata	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	112	1,707	2,347	4,054	112	1,707	2,347	4,054
4 Gobindagonj	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	167	2,331	2,993	5,324	167	2,331	2,993	5,324
5 Gaibandha Sadar	220	24,649	26,688	51,337	1	40	32	72	169	2,793	3,304	6,097	390	27,482	30,024	57,506
Total	593	73,484	77,038	150,522	6	441	445	886	572	9,447	11,921	21,368	1,171	83,372	89,404	172,776

Source: WFP SO presentation on 29 November 2016. (WFP, 2016i)

64. Table 8 below shows a significant discrepancy in snacks provided: actual numbers were only 58 percent and 53 percent of revised targets for FY2015 and FY2016 respectively. See below for discussion of explanatory factors.⁴⁹

Table 8 Beneficiaries: selected summary data

	Targets			Results			
	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	10/2014- 03/2015	04/2015- 09/2015	10/2015- 03/2016	04/2016- 09/2016
boys	58,185	87,812	90,507	113,396	58,185	58,185	83,372
girls	62,317	91,488	94,293	117,767	62,317	62,317	89,404
Total	120,502	179,300	184,800	231,163^a	120,502	120,502	172,776
Comment	Initial targets set for boys differ significantly: FY2015: 100,127; FY2016: 67,475 and FY2017: 69,523 Initial targets set for girls differ significantly: FY2015: 103,932; FY2016: 70,229 and FY2017: 72,360 Targets shown for FYs 2015, 2016 and 2017 are drawn from WFP's six-monthly progress reports to USDA. ^a Includes Gobindaganj, which was handed over to GOB in the next period.						
No. of snacks provided to school-age children	33,933,900^b	43,032,000	43,712,880	9,277,686 total, year to 09/2015 19,759,051 (58% of FY2015 target)	10,481,365 total, year to 09/2016 23,009,364 (53% of FY2016 target)	11,062,587	11,946,777
Implied portions per pupil ^c	282	240	237	40	87	92	69
Comment	The initial targets were as follows: FY2015: 48,974,160; FY 2016: 33,048,960; FY 2017: 34,051,920. ^b This is as per USDA Modification I commitment letter, however, in WFP's semi-annual reports it remains the original 48,974,160. ^c The target figures are annual, whereas the result calculations are for 6 months.						

Source: WFP semi-annual reports (WFP, 2015–2016). Table 41 in Annex H is a comprehensive presentation of all beneficiary data reported.

65. Table 9 below lists the distributed quantities of HEB in the respective upazilas between 1 October 2014 and 30 September 2016. The total of snacks served (Table 8) matches the tonnage of HEB distributed (Table 9).⁵⁰

⁴⁹ The baseline survey highlighted the need for better verification/triangulation of data on delivery and consumption of HEB (see Kimetrica, 2015 and the discussion in Annex C, ¶82ff).

⁵⁰ The aggregate of snacks served (Table 8) is 42,768,415. At 75g per portion this amounts to 3,208 mt, which matches the figure for total HEB distribution in Table 9; also see Table 44 and Table 45 in Annex H.

Table 9 HEB Distribution from 01/10/2014 – 30/09/2016

Period	Quantity received (mt) ^a	Expected distribution (mt) ^b	Actual distribution (mt)	Actual as % of expected	Actual as % of received	Distribution Area	Beneficiaries
01/10/2014 – 31/12/2014	404.730	826.438	404.731	49%	100%	Sundargonj, Saghatta, Gobindagonj	204,059
01/03/2015 – 31/03/2015	521.235	584.914	291.095	50%	56%	Sundargonj, Fulchhari, Saghatta, Gobindagonj	114,689
01/04/2015 – 30/09/2015	715.526	898.565	786.102	87%	110%	Sundargonj, Fulchhari, Saghatta, Gobindagonj	120,502
01/10/2015 – 31/12/2015	423.563	497.259	394.643	79%	93%	Sundargonj, Fulchhari, Saghatta, Gobindagonj	120,502
01/01/2016 – 31/03/2016	508.320	500.826	435.051	87%	86%	Sundargonj, Fulchhari, Saghatta, Gobindagonj	115,270
01/04/2016 – 30/06/2016	275.600	364.980	351.242	96%	127%	Sundargonj, Saghatta, Gobindagonj, Fulchori	115,270
01/07/2016 – 30/09/2016	574.703	578.652	544.766	95%	95%	Sundargonj, Saghatta, Gobindagonj, Fulchori & Gaibandha Sadar	172,776
Total	3,423.677	4,251.634	3,207.630	75%	94%		

Source: WFP semi-annual reports (WFP, 2015-2016)

Notes:

(a) This refers to the amount of biscuits delivered to the WFP warehouse in Gaibandha. In cases where deliveries to the warehouse were lower than actual distribution, this was due to balances at school level. Deliveries are carried out as required and are based on up-to-date information from schools and the warehouse (through the cooperating partner).

(b) This is based on targets set during the design stage.

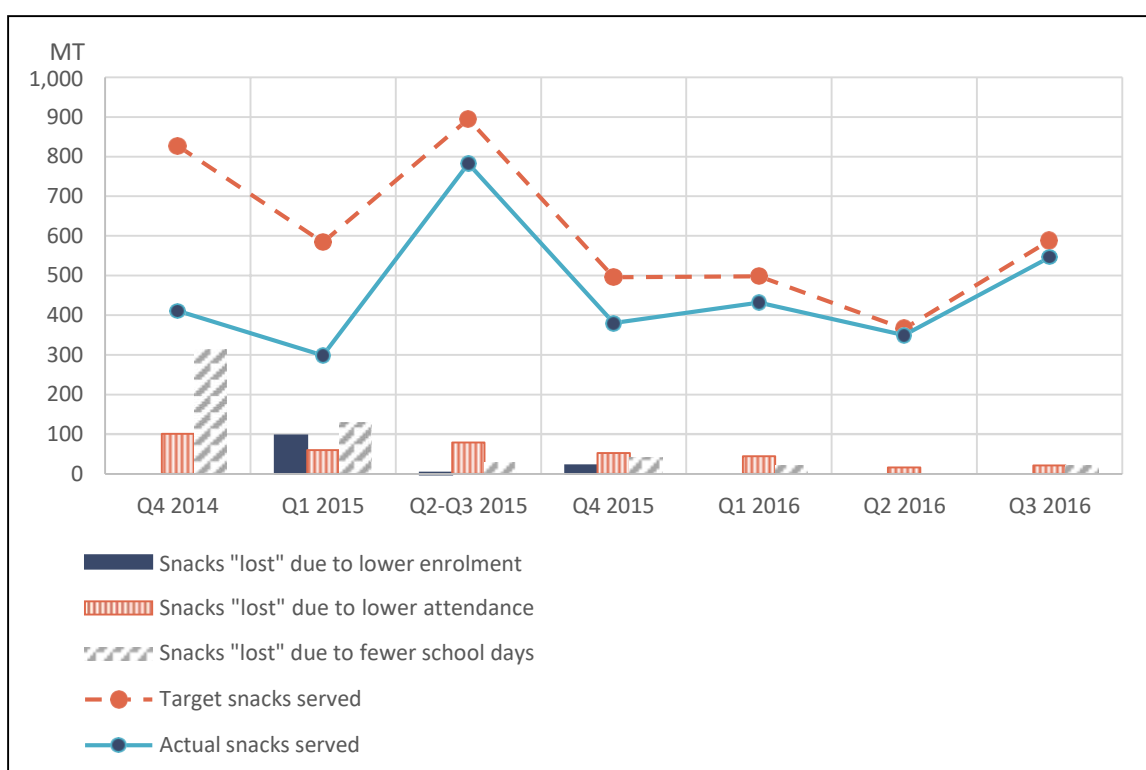
66. Table 9 shows that distributions in the first two quarters were only half of what was planned; this has risen to 95 percent in the last six months, but the aggregate distribution over the entire period is only 75 percent of the target. Reasons for the shortfall are mentioned in narrative reporting by the project, but the MTE sought to go further and quantify the various factors involved. The CO provided Table 10 below, which shows which factors affected the different reporting periods. There were three main drivers, namely the lower than expected number of students, the lower than expected number of actual school feeding days and lower than expected attendance rates. Their relative importance is shown in Figure 4 below.

Table 10 Factors affecting HEB utilisation

Period	Students assisted expected	Students assisted actual	SF days expected	SF days actual	Attendance Expected %	Attendance actual %
Q4 2014	204,059	204,059	60	34	90	79
Q1 2015	137,371	114,689	63	44	90	79
Q2-Q3 2015	120,502	120,059	110	106	90	82
Q4 2015	120,502	115,270	61	55	90	80
Q1 2016	115,270	115,270	64	61	90	82
Q2 2016	115,270	115,270	47	47	90	86
Q3 2016	115,270	115,270	80	77	85	82

Source: e-mail from WFP CO, 2 May 2017.

Figure 4 Utilisation of HEB and explanatory factors



Source: From data in Table 10 above; see detailed calculations in Annex H Table 45.

67. The analysis shows that utilisation rates improved strongly as the project proceeded. Early shortfalls, as explained in the first amendment request, were mainly due to disruptions in distribution because of closed schools during general strikes in early 2015, and by severe flooding in the area in August 2015. This was corroborated by accounts of some parents who mentioned that due to inaccessibility of schools (because of the flooding) they could not send their children to school for an extended period. Enrolments were generally close to projections, but attendance rates throughout were significantly lower than those used for planning purposes.

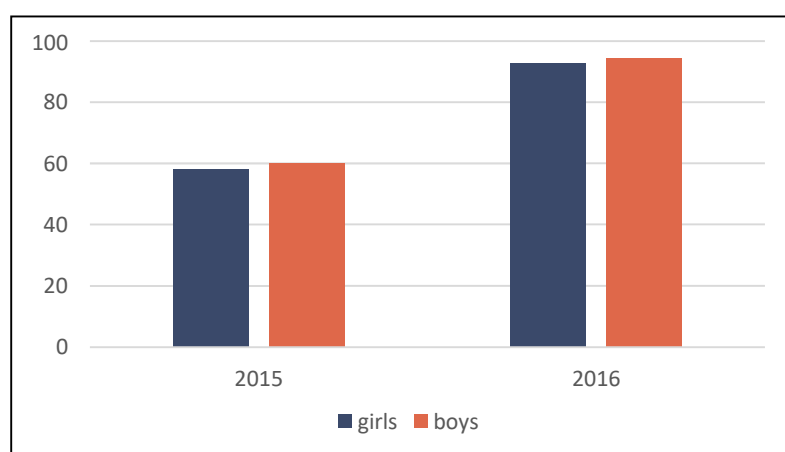
68. Lower than projected utilisation of HEB contributed to a large projected balance of unutilised HEB at the end of the project; Table 44 of Annex H shows utilisation of 3,207.63mt, and a balance of undistributed biscuits of 4,164.37mt as at end-September 2016. The surplus is partly due to under-utilisation of HEB and partly due to larger than expected availability of HEB because of lower-than-expected shipping costs (so an extra 2,000mt of wheat were shipped), and a better-than-expected exchange rate of HEB for wheat. WFP has submitted a modification request to USDA for the utilisation of the surplus. According to the utilisation request, WFP plans for an extension of the project period from October to December 2017 and also proposes to cover new areas between April and December 2017 (WFP, 2017b). At the time of writing, this modification was pending approval from USDA.

69. A key issue in targeted feeding programmes is whether the food provided is actually consumed by the intended beneficiary.⁵¹ WFP monitors this at baseline and follow-up survey through the indicator “percent of students in target schools who regularly consume a meal

⁵¹ The baseline survey report raised this as a serious concern – see Table 32 in Annex C.

during the school day”.⁵² Recurring discussions of the palatability of the HEB (see, for example, recommendation 1 of the 2015 workshop (Table 34 in Figure 8) and Downen et al, 2015), suggest that consumption by the intended child cannot be taken for granted.⁵³ The workshop organised by WFP and the DPE, also refers to a danger of misuse of commodities (see workshop recommendation 4 in Table 34 in Figure 8). However, as illustrated in Figure 5 below, data from the first outcome survey (DMA, 2016) show an increase in consumption of 34.3 percent for boys (from 60 at baseline to 94.3 at outcome) and of 34.9 percent for girls (from 58 percent at baseline to 92.9 at outcome) (see MGD 1.2.1 of Table 43 of Annex H). This is a significant increase. However, it cannot be assumed that this represents a trend: the indicator has only been monitored at two points in time, and the outcome survey took place immediately after floods which may be linked to the apparent reduction in dietary diversity discussed in ¶92 below. It is possible that increased consumption of HEB in September 2016 was linked to a scarcity of other foods in the children's households; if so, this would demonstrate the positive role of the SFP in safeguarding children's nutrition in times of stress.

Figure 5 HEB consumption at baseline and outcome survey



Source: Data from Baseline and First Outcome surveys (Kimetrica, 2015 and DMA, 2016)

70. WFP seeks to ensure and improve quality standards of HEB producers. According to WFP’s semi-annual monitoring reports, 75 percent of compliance and quality check visits to factories that report implementation of safe food production practices were completed in the latest reporting period. The goal set is 95 percent. In addition, 85 percent out of the targeted 100 percent were found to have improved food preparation and storage equipment. The ET visited one HEB-producing factory outside Dhaka and was shown very clear quality guidelines, which the guided tour through the factory on that day seemed to be implementing. The reported feedback and changes that had reportedly taken place within the (management of) the factory were very positive. While this is by no means a statistically significant sample, it seems to suggest that changes take place because of the quality support provided through WFP.

Complementary activities and outputs

71. Table 41 and Table 42 in Annex H provide comprehensive information (to the extent it is available) on activities and outputs that accompany the MGD school feeding in Gaibandha. Such activities include the establishment of reading corners in classrooms, training of head

⁵² It is not clear why the HEB are referred to as a meal. This can be confusing because some, though very few students, consume an actual meal that they bring from home (direct observation and interviews). The student questionnaire for baseline survey (reproduced in Kimetrica, 2015, p53-58) had a series of distinct questions about meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner) and snacks (including biscuits).

⁵³ The MTE observations do not allow any conclusive comment on this, as all school children interviewed in the limited sample of schools reported that they receive a package of biscuits every day.

teachers and assistant teachers, cooking demonstrations, and the establishment of school gardens. Most of these activities are organised by NGO partners, RDRS and BRAC, but some are expected to be provided separately, without necessarily being funded by USDA or WFP. Reportedly WFP also has an agreement with UNICEF to deliver health and hygiene awareness to children through teachers and SMC training (WFP, 2015-2016). However, UNICEF does not yet have a presence in Gaibandha district, which is not a priority district in their country programme (source: interview with UNICEF).⁵⁴

72. Table 11 below highlights selected indicators for FY2016. Some notable features:

- a) The lagging indicators (highlighted in red) all concern activities to reinforce the quality of education, including training of teachers and school administrators.
- b) Activities more directly related to the delivery of SF (training of PTAs and those responsible for food storage) have met their targets. In this connection, see also Table 12 below.
- c) Creation of school gardens has proceeded rapidly, with targets revised upwards. This is mostly done by community effort, with little material input from WFP/MGD.

73. According to comments in the WFP's semi-annual reports to USDA (WFP, 2015-2016), those indicators related to training activities seem to be underperforming because of the delayed approval of the modification request which increased several of the targets, as well as the delay in signing the FLA with implementing partner BRAC.⁵⁵

74. Another indicator, not included in WFP's regular monitoring is the "percent of schools with a library or library corner for students". The baseline (Kimetrica, 2015) measured 68 percent, which increased to 98.9 percent in late 2016 (DMA, 2016) (also see ¶80 below). The MTE found that all schools visited had a library corner of sorts, sometimes this meant a handful of books in the corner, in other cases it was more elaborate.

75. There are no actual data in the semi-annual reports on MGD objectives 1.1.2 "Better access to school supplies & materials" and to MGD 1.1.3 "Improved literacy instructional material". The results framework indicates that these results will be achieved through partner activities. Implementing partner RDRS provides quarterly reports to WFP. These reports, however, do not separate the MGD programme from the overall SFP implemented by WFP with the support of various donors, including MGD.

76. It was also reported that WFP has assisted schools to organize remedial classes, starting from October 2016, attended by children identified as slow learners and taught by trained teachers. These happen before or after regular school hours. Parents also mentioned remedial classes and talked about additional costs where these had to be arranged by the families themselves.

⁵⁴ No formal partnership agreement exists. According to CO staff, agreements have been made through an exchange of letters.

⁵⁵ FLAs with RDRS were signed in July 2014, June 2015, and January 2016. FLAs with BRAC were signed in April 2015 and January 2016. The first FLA with BRAC was about eight months later than the first FLA with RDRS.

Table 11 Selected activity/output indicators for FY2016

	(red) less than half of target achieved		(orange) over half of target achieved			(green) target (almost) achieved or exceeded
	Indicator	Target FY2016	Actual FY2016	Actual % of target	Comment	
1.	Establishing School Gardens (Number of school gardens established)	160	280	175%	Assumes numbers are cumulative. According to WFP's semi-annual report (March 2016), 183 out of the then 199 gardens were established by students, teachers and the SMCs without any budgetary support from WFP. Considering the positive response and reaching more than double the target, WFP revised its targets for 2016 and 2017. This was reflected in the submitted modification request. Original targets were 90 for FY2016 and FY2017.	
2.	Promoting Teacher Attendance (Number of Directorate Primary Education (DPE) Officials, Upazila Primary Education Officers (UPEO) and Assistant Upazila Primary Education Officers (AUPEO) officials trained in monitoring and reporting)	28	13	46.4%	Assumes 6-monthly figures are cumulative, however, no one was trained in the reporting period Oct 2015-March 2016.	
3.	Promoting Teacher Attendance (Number of teachers benefiting from Community Mobilization Workshops)	620	191	30.8%	Assumes 6-monthly figures are cumulative.	
4.	Training: Teachers (Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance)	2,200	1,358	61.7%	Assumes 6-monthly figures are cumulative. According to WFP's semi-annual report (September 2016), this increased target (from 210 to 2,200) was planned for all five upazilas, but could not be achieved due to a delayed start of implementation of the approved modification request.	
5.	Student Recognition (Number of students benefiting from "student recognition")	11,000	3,265	29.9%	Assumes 6-monthly figures are cumulative.	
6.	Organizing Extra- Curricular Activities (Number of students who participate in one or more extracurricular activity)	1,300	36,806	2831.2%	Assumes 6-monthly figures are not cumulative. Extracurricular activities refer to activities such as the creation of wall magazines, story writing and telling, or an art competition, for example.	
7.	Training: School administrators (Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance)	550	175	31.8%	Assumes 6-monthly figures are cumulative. According to WFP's semi-annual report (September 2016), this increased target (from 150 to 550) was planned for all five upazilas, but could not be achieved due to a delayed start of implementation of the approved modification request.	
8.	Training: School administrators (Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance)	440	94	21.4%	WFP's semi-annual report (March 2016) states that all trained school administrators and officials trained demonstrated satisfactory use of new techniques and tools. However, there is no output data available for this indicator for the reporting period October 2015 to March 2016.	
9.	Raising Awareness on the Importance of Education (Number of Community Mobilization Workshops held)	62	18	29%	Less than a third of the planned community mobilisation workshops have taken place.	

	Indicator	Target FY2016	Actual FY2016	Actual % of target	Comment
10	Training: Parent- Teacher Associations (Number of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) or similar “school” governance structures supported as a result of USDA assistance)	350	338	96.6%	Assumes 6-monthly figures are cumulative.
11	Training on Food Preparation and Storage Practices (Number of people trained on food preparation and storage practices)	350	302	86.3%	Assumes 6-monthly figures are cumulative.
12	Training: Commodity Management (Number of GoB officials, implementing partner staff, storage staff, and WFP national staff trained in commodity management)	32	30	93.8%	No training took place between October 2015 – March 2016.
13	Capacity Building (Local, Regional, National Level (Number of workshops/trainings/discussion sessions held in school feeding sustainability, design and implementation (stage 1))	7	25	357%	Assumes figures are cumulative.

Sources: See Table 41 and Table 42 in Annex H.

Table 12 Food preparation and storage: baseline and follow-up

Indicator	Baseline	Follow-up Survey I
Percent of storekeepers trained on safe food preparation and storage practices	15	54.7
Percent of schools with dedicated storeroom for storage of biscuits	28	40
Percent of schools where food is stored off the ground	94	100

Source: Kimetrica, 2015 and DMA, 2016.

Attainment of Planned Outcomes (EQ7⁵⁶)

Evaluation approach

77. The highest level of the results framework (Figure 8 in Annex B) has two intended results, concerning literacy and health/nutrition respectively, but they are phrased quite differently: while MGD SO1 is “improved literacy of school-aged children”, MGD SO2 is not “increased health and nutrition” but “increased use of health and dietary practices”. WFP’s semi-annual reports to USDA include a “performance indicators – results” tab on the report spreadsheet which presents outcome-level information, but this does not include all the outcomes shown in the results framework. Assessing the attainment of the planned outcomes is challenging both because of the relatively short implementation period elapsed and because it is not straightforward to attribute changes in indicators to the project itself. Our approach involves

- (a) taking account of previous evaluations’ findings about the effectiveness of SF interventions in Bangladesh;

⁵⁶ EQ7 = To what extent have planned outcomes been attained?

(b) considering the availability of baseline information and any subsequent updates;⁵⁷ and

(c) paying particular attention to the intermediate outcomes (the second level of results in Figure 8), where it is more likely that the project can make a measurable difference in a relatively short period.

Past evaluation findings

78. Box 3 below highlights impact evaluation findings which show that HEB-based SF is an effective approach in Bangladesh, with demonstrable benefits in terms of providing income-support to very poor families, creating a corresponding incentive for school enrolment and attendance, and raising the nutritional status of participating children. Findings from these earlier studies are not conclusive, because achievement of similar benefits today might be confounded by changes in context (e.g. in the relative value of the social transfer embodied in the HEB) or by differences in the way the programme is implemented. However, they are strongly suggestive that, if well-implemented, the SF project is likely to achieve worthwhile outcomes.

Box 3 Key findings from SF impact evaluations in Bangladesh

The IFPRI impact evaluation (Ahmed, 2004), based on work in 2003 found, inter alia that:

- SFP has raised school enrolment by 14.2 percent, reduced the probability of dropping out of school by 7.5 percent, and increased school attendance by about 1.3 days a month. These results are obtained from econometric models that captured the impact of the SFP alone, isolating the effects of income and other factors.
- SFP improves children's diets. Calories consumed from SFP biscuits are almost entirely (97 percent) additional to the child's normal diet. The child's family does not give him or her less food at home for eating the SFP biscuits at school. Even poor households do not substitute child calorie intakes from SFP biscuits. These findings are based on a specifically designed experiment and an econometric model to assess the impact of SFP on child energy intake.
- An extremely high percentage of mothers report several positive effects of the SFP on their children. They note that children's interests in attending school and concentration on studies have increased; they are livelier and happier than before, and their incidence of illness has declined.
- SFP improves child nutritional status. It increases the body mass index (BMI) of participating children by an average of 0.62 points. This represents a 4.3 percent increase compared to the average BMI of schoolchildren in the control group—a sizable increase that is partly due to the fact that most participating children were malnourished to begin with.

⁵⁷ We have drawn on the 2016 outcome survey data (DMA, 2016) received at the end of November 2016, and the partial draft survey report provided in March 2017 (WFP, 2017a).

The WFP impact evaluation (Downen et al, 2011) reviewed the period from 2001–2009 and undertook field work in 2011. Among its findings:

- Overall attendance rates in programme schools are higher than control schools. In the NW, attendance rates in programme schools are 6 to 8 percentage points higher than in control schools.
- Overall, the gender patterns for educational outcomes suggest that the presence of the biscuit has contributed to female primary education. [...] With respect to the grade attrition rate, however, it appears that girls are as likely as boys to cut short their education prior to finishing primary school, regardless of the presence of the biscuit.
- School feeding was a strong incentive for parents to keep children in school especially for those households concentrating in the most vulnerable categories.
- The micronutrient, protein and energy contents of school biscuits contributed substantially to improving the nutrition of participating children.
- The value transfer of HEB is a significant incentive. (When the value of school biscuits is combined with the annual education stipend provided by the Government, the financial incentive for the most vulnerable families rises to 10 percent of annual income in the northwest.)

Sources: for a more extensive summary of the studies cited, see Annex C.

Reported outcomes

79. Outcome-level targets and performance data are shown in Table 43 in Annex H. The main indicators, including intermediate outcomes, are discussed below.

80. *School Infrastructure (MGD 1.3.35⁸)*. The results framework indicates that improved school infrastructure is an outcome supported through partners. The baseline survey (Kimetrica, 2015: 16) found that schools supported through the MGD SFP had varying facilities available, but the follow-up survey (DMA, 2016) records significant progress (Table 13 below).

Table 13 School infrastructure comparison baseline and follow-up

Indicator	Baseline 2015	Follow-up 2016
Percent of schools that have library facilities	68	98.9
Percent of schools that have a school garden	32	73.7
Percent of schools that had a safe source of drinking water near the school, with the main source of drinking water being a tube well	99	100
Percent of schools that had toilet facilities for students, with on average one toilet for 179 enrolled students during the baseline and 130 enrolled students during the outcome survey	85	95.8
Percent of the schools that had separate toilets for girls and boys	28	57.9

Source: Kimetrica, 2015 and DMA, 2016

81. Nevertheless it was clear from the field visits that there is considerable need for further improvements. The ET found a range in terms of quality and availability of facilities at the visited schools. Some schools appeared to be in good shape but others appeared poorly maintained and in a state of disrepair. In one school a few classrooms could not be used because the roof was in danger of collapsing. Not only do most schools observe two shifts, there is still not enough room in the classrooms to provide sufficient (desk) space for each child. Desks and chairs are not always available and children in some classrooms sit on the floor. The ET also observed that GOB-run schools have far more permanent structures than NGO-run schools. NGO schools tend to be wooden or corrugated sheet walls and tin roofs with limited

⁵⁸ Sanitation also appears as MGD 2.4.

to no furniture (benches/desks) and no designated space for the teacher to work. The students sit on the floor while writing and reading. Although the toilets were present in all the GOB-run schools visited, they are not sufficient for the number of students and the quality varied. Not all schools have separate girls and boys toilets. In informal schools, there is only one classroom and either a toilet in a rented building, or, in some schools, students reported using a neighbour's toilet. In all focus group discussions with parents, teachers and the SMCs the necessity of improving the school infrastructure was mentioned. Most schools have adequate teaching supplies, and, as per GOB policy (CPD, 2007), textbooks are available to all children. Notebooks, stationery and uniforms are provided by the parents.⁵⁹ It is worth noting that children in NGO schools have access to GOB text books in addition to BRAC materials.

82. *Improved Literacy of School-Age Children (MGD SO1)*. The main indicator to measure this is the “percent of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text”. According to the Kimetrica baseline survey 26 percent of girls and 25 percent of boys were able to do that. The target set by the MGD SFP is 50 percent of school children (both boys and girls). Preliminary results from the first outcome survey (DMA, 2016) suggest a slight increase for both sexes, with boys reaching 27.7 percent and girls 27.1 percent. In terms of detecting an effect that can be credited to the MGD programme, this evidence is inconclusive, and standards remain very low.⁶⁰

83. *Improved Quality of Literacy Instruction (MGD 1.1)*. According to the baseline survey (Kimetrica, 2015), average **teacher attendance** was high at 92 percent. However, teacher attendance is not the only determinant of contact time with pupils. The ET found that in most schools, there is more than one shift in the same classroom, to keep up with primary school enrolment and to make up for the insufficient numbers of schools and teachers. Grades 1-2 usually for three hours, while the higher grades (3-5) attend the afternoons shift for about three hours. The same teachers take classes in both shifts in double shift school. Most NGOs follow the one-school-one teacher model with 30 students to one teacher and one three to four hour shift.⁶¹ In addition to contact time, the **quality of instruction** is an important aspect in improving the quality of education, and the indicator “teachers reported to use new techniques and tools” has been added for this purpose. Table 14 below indicates the frequency of usage of various techniques by teachers found in baseline and outcome survey observations. While only 20 percent of teachers used participatory teaching techniques at baseline, over 50 percent used them at the time of the outcome survey, when teacher training sessions had been organised through the MGD SF programme. The use of audio-visual aids and active engagement with students has also risen. These data indicate a positive trend, which further training is expected to encourage.

Table 14 Teaching and learning techniques used by teachers

Techniques used by teachers during class	Frequency in % (baseline)	Frequency in % (outcome)
Participatory teaching techniques	20	52.6
Using audio-visual aids	31	46.3
Engaging actively with students	70	89.5
Teachers using at least one of these two techniques	39	66.3

Source: Baseline and Outcome surveys (Kimetrica, 2015 & DMA, 2016)

⁵⁹ The evaluation team noted large variations in what different children bring to school in terms of notebooks, stationery etc.

⁶⁰ By way of illustration, where appropriate the ET asked individual students to read the title of their school books, for example, and often found that they were not able to do so.

⁶¹ The MTE noted that in schools with only one shift, students often attend school all day; this implies that they have twice as much classroom time as students attending double-shift school. This is worth further investigation.

84. *Improved attentiveness (MGD 1.2).* Another education-related outcome indicator is the target “percentage of students in classrooms identified as inattentive by their teachers” which is shown as 10 percent (MGD1.2). In the baseline survey (Kimetrica, 2015) 28 percent of girls and 30 percent of boys were identified as inattentive. Subsequent WFP monitoring (not disaggregated by sex) reports 21 percent at the end of September 2016 (WFP, 2015-2016). The outcome survey reports a drop in student inattentiveness, namely 23.4 percent of girls and 18.5 percent of boys identified as inattentive (DMA, 2016). Generally, not much weight can be put on an indicator which is inherently subjective; however, during the field visit School Management Committees, parents and teachers unanimously suggested that consumption of nutritious biscuits combined with the teaching methods and the quality of teachers have had a positive impact on the attentiveness in the class and the students’ performance. Previous evaluations (including e.g. Downen et al, 2011) report a similarly strong consensus that SF improves attentiveness.

85. In principle, the timing of the snack could be important, especially if students arrive without having eaten that day. However, the baseline survey (Kimetrica, 2015) found that 95 percent of the girls and 93 percent of the boys consumed a meal before the school day, but only 58 percent of the girls and 60 percent of the boys had a meal⁶² during the school day. According to WFP’s latest semi-annual report (WFP, 2015-2016), 95 percent of students regularly consume a meal before or during the school day. WFP monitoring does not differentiate between meal times. The outcome survey reports that 96.7 percent of the girls and 95.2 percent of boys consumed a meal before the school day, and 92.9 percent of girls and 94.3 percent of boys consumed a “meal” (according to the baseline and outcome surveys – Kimetrica, 2015, DMA, 2016, this refers to the HEB) during the day.

86. Most students interviewed during the MTE school visits reported having had breakfast, mostly a simple staple meal of roti (flat bread) or rice, approximately half the children reported having eaten vegetables or dhal with it, and very few reported having eaten an egg.

87. *Improved student attendance (MGD 1.3).* Since net enrolment rates are very high, there is limited scope for SF to increase them,⁶³ but there is scope to increase attendance rates. However, attendance rates are difficult to interpret in Bangladesh (see Box 4 below).

Box 4 School attendance rates in Bangladesh

As shown in the graph below, there are no clear trends in national attendance rates. However, there are reasons to treat reported attendance rates with scepticism.

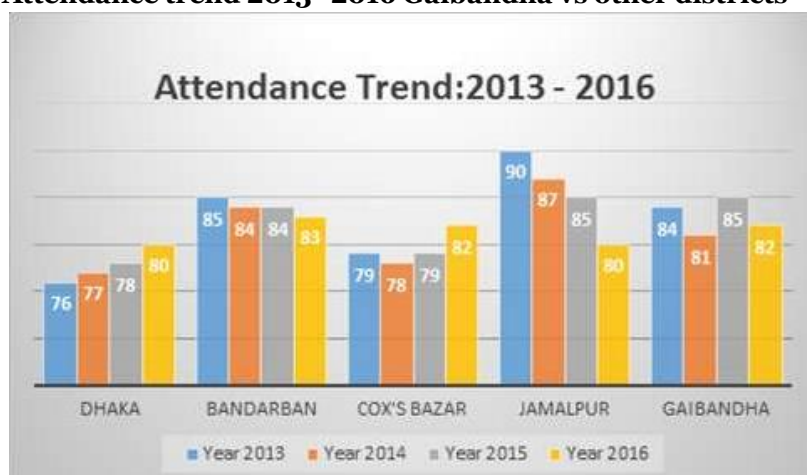
The Kimetrica baseline survey (Kimetrica, 2015: 20) points out that “student absenteeism might also be more severe than what is reflected in the quantitative findings”, further stating that “even when the students miss school days, teachers can fabricate the attendance records to keep average attendance at around 85 percent”, which is required to ensure payment of the government allowance to students.

The WFP CP MTE also suggests that there may be a negative bias when comparing attendance in WFP-supported schools with others, as the regular monitoring of enrolment and attendance in WFP-assisted SF areas by WFP and cooperating partners may result in more accurate statistics than for non-WFP-assisted schools (Downen et al, 2015, ¶107).

⁶² Consumption of a meal during the day refers to the consumption of HEB (Kimetrica, 2015, DMA, 2016), although the student questionnaire contains detailed questions about different meals (see footnote 52).

⁶³ Though of course SF may be a factor in maintaining high enrolments.

Attendance trend 2013–2016 Gaibandha vs other districts



The graph shows attendance rates between 2013 and 2016 in five districts of Bangladesh. Attendance rates vary considerably and no clear trend can be observed. This is true of Gaibandha, where overall attendance rates have fluctuated without a clear trend.

Source: WFP Bangladesh CO (sent by email on 8 December 2016)

Note: Based on the percentage of pupils recorded as present at least 80% of school days.

88. Regular student attendance, i.e. students who attended ≥ 80 percent of school days, in general remained at the same level, 78 (boys) and 80 percent (girls), meaning a one percent increase in boys' attendance (from the survey data in Table 15 below). While WFP does not monitor absences due to illness on a regular basis, the baseline and outcome surveys include an indicator “average number of school days missed by students due to illness from each school and in aggregate).⁶⁴

Table 15 Attendance Rate (%) 2015 and 2016

	Baseline % (2015)	Outcome % (2016)
Total	79	79.1
Boys	77	78
Girls	80	80
Sundorganj	80	78
Fulchhari	73	81.9

Source: Outcome Survey I – preliminary data (DMA, 2016).

89. Available data do not address the fact that attendance varies according to seasons, with the harvest and monsoon seasons reportedly being the ones with the lowest attendance. During the monsoon season, rainfall is heavy, some roads become impassable and even schools get flooded. In one of the schools visited, parents reported that they could not send their children to school for almost three months due to inaccessibility (also see ¶67 above). It was also suggested by informants that NGO-run schools – which are one-classroom schools in the communities, are established as an alternative to support poorer families whose children would have greater tendency to drop out due to economic reasons (including the costs of uniform, stationery etc. for school attendance). While most parents expressed their commitment to education for both their daughters and their sons (interviews with parents and SMC members), informants (head teachers, parents, students) also mentioned that children drop out, boys especially to help provide income for the family, and girls often to be married. The incentive of HEB and the GOB stipend reportedly diminishes as the children reach higher

⁶⁴ The indicator is included in the results framework (Figure 8 in Annex B) and was covered by the baseline and the outcome survey, however, with very low figures (baseline: boys 1.2 and girls: 1.4; outcome: boys: 0.99 and girls: 0.96). “During the baseline survey pre-testing, there were no school records on days missed due to illness. Data was collected on average number of school days missed per student due to illness in last 30 days preceding the survey during the interview of ten randomly selected students and their parents from each sample school.” (DMA, 2016)

primary school grades (interviews with WFP, NGO staff and school authorities). This presents a major challenge because while the HEB and stipend attract students to school, they do not keep them there until they finish even class 5 as this is insufficient for the poorest and most marginal households to offset the cost of keeping a child in school as compared to having them work. A gender impact appears to take place with the percentage of girls being higher than boys towards the end of the primary school stage, classes three to five. While girls do not tend to drop out as early as boys, early marriage remains an issue and was frequently discussed in the interviews (also see Ahmed et al., 2016).⁶⁵

90. *Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices (MGD SO2)*. The results framework indicates that three out of the six outcomes in support of MGD SO2 will be supported through partner activities, but WFP measures some of them (see Table 43 in Annex H).

91. Studies have shown that the provision of micronutrient-fortified HEB, along with deworming interventions, can lead to a significant reduction in the prevalence of anaemia (WHO & WB, 2003) in children. WFP outcome and impact studies (Ahmed, 2004 and Mustafa, 2010 cited in Downen et al, 2011) found significant differences in the nutritional status of children receiving HEB in comparison to a control group. The study also found that mothers reported their children to be happier, livelier and more physically active and attentive, and less often sick. Provision of micro-nutrients is more important where the quality of diet is poor. According to the September 2016 semi-annual report (WFP, 2015-2016), only 43 percent of school-age girls and boys receive a minimum acceptable diet; the set target for this indicator is 70 percent. Although MGD activities do not directly influence this indicator, the continuing low score shows the likely importance of the HEB to adequate nutrient intake for the recipients. Echoing previous impact evaluations (Box 3 above), the ET found a general consensus among teachers, SMCs, and parents that the biscuits help reduce hunger. WFP partners, teachers, SMC and parents also noted that the health of the children had improved referring to reduction in skin diseases, better skin colour and generally more energy in their children. They also made the link that if children are healthy, cheerful and attentive the quality of learning improves. The ET found that parents, children and teachers all considered HEB to be nutritious, and students were especially knowledgeable about the HEB composition in terms of vitamins and minerals.⁶⁶

92. The baseline and outcome surveys also collected data on household dietary diversity scores (HDDS) – included in Table 43 in Annex H.⁶⁷ The baseline found a mean DDS of 5.2 out of a maximum score of 10, with little variation by gender or sub-district. The 2016 survey found an average DDS of 4.3 (with no gender difference), but with a sharper drop in Fulchhari (from 5.1 to 4.0) than in Sundarganj (from 5.0 to 4.4). The outcome survey report notes that the flooding in early September that caused a delay in data collection may have had a negative impact on food consumption for the period during which data were collected (WFP, 2017a). As noted in ¶66 above, the same survey found a significant increase in reported consumption of HEB, which may be evidence of the SFP's role in mitigating nutritional stress.

⁶⁵ Also see discussion in Annex G on e.g. economic participation and opportunity.

⁶⁶ The indicator for "increased knowledge on nutrition" (MGD 2.3) is the percent of students in target schools who can name at least three good nutrition and dietary practices". The baseline survey recorded girls 44% and boys 39%; the outcome survey (DMA, 2016) found much higher scores: girls 81%, boys 78%, in line with the target of 80%.

⁶⁷ But based on 24 hour recall, whereas 7 day recall is regarded as a much more robust measure.

Capacity development⁶⁸

Overview

93. Almost all elements of the SFP have a capacity-building dimension (e.g. training teachers to perform better, raising standards of commodity management, etc.). However in the present discussion, we focus particularly on the foundational results (FRs) within the MGD results framework (Figure 8), and on WFP's role in achieving them. Three of the FRs focus mainly on central government (MGD 1.4.1 – increased capacity of government institutions; MGD 1.4.2 – improved policy and regulatory framework; and MGD 1.4.3 – increased government support). The fourth FR focuses on the local level, with "increased engagement of local organisations and community groups" appearing as both MGD 1.4.4 and MGD 2.7.4, thus supporting both SO1 and SO2. The aim is to capacitate the Government, in tandem with other local stakeholders, to completely take over the SFP in the future and run it successfully.

Local capacity development

94. Local capacity development is aimed not merely at supporting the delivery of SF per se, but more broadly at enhancing the support for literacy and better quality education, as well as strengthening women's participation. Local-level capacity development activities are managed by implementing partners. In accordance with GOB education policy (CPD, 2007), all schools are supposed to have a SMC, which is the principal strategy for community involvement in schools. The SMC is meant to be representative of the households in the area. The SMC on average has eleven members,⁶⁹ including at least four women (this was found to not always be the case). The main responsibility of the SMCs is to manage the smooth functioning of the schools. Their activities, as reported to the ET, include monitoring teacher attendance, ensuring the HEB gets to their school from the distribution point, improvement in school infrastructure, encouraging parents to send their children to school, especially the poorest families. Data collected at baseline and first outcome survey show that 96 percent and 86.2 percent of schools respectively have an SMC, however only 23 percent (at baseline) and 20 percent (at outcome survey) report an SMC that is highly engaged in the SFP, while 40 percent (at baseline) and 28.4 percent (at outcome survey) say their SMCs are highly engaged in other aspects of school management (Kimetrica, 2015, DMA, 2016). Between baseline and outcome surveys, there was thus an apparent decline in the quality of SMC engagement.

95. MGD-linked targets for "increasing engagement of local organisations and community groups" included the provision of training for SMCs, as well as school administrators and officials, together with organising community mobilisation workshops (CMWs) which highlight the importance of education and raise social issues (e.g. early marriage) which affect participation and drop-out rates (also see discussion in Annex G, particularly Box 16).

96. At the level of reported output indicators (see Table 41 and Table 42 in Annex H). WFP has faced some difficulties in attaining the set targets. School administrators/head teachers, who were trained, reported that they are more confident in leading their schools, providing support to the assistant teachers and ensuring quality education for students by using new techniques and teaching materials. However, the length of the training of two days was reported to be insufficient and informants desired refresher courses (interviews with head teachers, teachers and implementing partners). The achieved numbers are still moderate; in the most recent reporting period, approximately 23 percent of the targeted 550 school administrators were trained and approximately 21 percent of those trained used new techniques or tools. The number of training sessions exceeded plans, but with fewer than

⁶⁸ Under this heading we consider both outputs (EQ6) and outcomes (EQ7) of capacity development, and also address EQ9 (How fully are the operation's activities dovetailed with those of other donors and agencies in building GOB capacity to manage and implement SF?).

⁶⁹ SMCs at NGO schools consist of 7 members.

planned participants, but the number of CMWs did not reach original or revised targets. Almost 90 percent of school governing committees received support through the MGD SFP.

97. These moderate overall achievements are reported to be due to the delayed implementation of the modification request, and a delay in signing the Field Level Agreements (FLAs) with BRAC (WFP semi-annual report March 2016 and September 2016, WFP, 2015-2016).

National capacity development

98. WFP's capacity development support to GOB on school feeding pre-dates this MGD operation. Since 2011 WFP has been working closely with MOPME on the roll-out of its programme for National School Feeding in Poverty Prone Areas (NSFPPA – WFP & DPE, 2012). As shown in Figure 1 in section 1.2 above, GOB has progressively assumed responsibility for most SF beneficiaries. WFP has seconded staff to a Capacity Support Unit (CSU)⁷⁰ working within the DPE to support the development of national SF strategy.⁷¹ Continued support to national capacity was specified in the MGD commitment letter as including assistance with drafting a national SF policy (expected to be completed by 2015 and to be followed by legislation in 2017) and with mainstreaming SF within the PEDP (so as to give it a more secure budget line than it has as a discrete project). As regards implementation: "WFP will implement this directly through its country office and the CSU. WFP will also collaborate strategically with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), PEDP-III donors, UNICEF, MoA and FAO as well as MOPME" (USDA, 2016).

99. WFP organised a national level workshop in 2015, attended by over 300 stakeholders, including the Minister and the Secretary of MOPME, DPE, donors' representatives, UN agencies and NGOs (WFP & DPE, 2015 – recommendations are reproduced in Annex C, Table 34). Subsequently, an outline of the policy was prepared and a zero draft of the policy is with the MOPME to be shared with the wider audience through another consultation.⁷² It is expected that the policy draft will be ready in early 2017. Efforts to incorporate SF within the PEDP were not successful, and PEDP–III is anyway due to close shortly (ADB, 2012). WFP has enlisted support to Bangladesh from the WFP Centre of Excellence against Hunger in Brazil.

100. Progress in strengthening national SF capacity is reviewed annually using the SABER (Systems Approach for Better Education Results) tool for school health and school feeding (SABER, 2012). During the most recent SABER workshop (August 2016), a road map was prepared, identifying key outcomes for each of the five policy goals.⁷³ The workshop conclusions are reproduced in Annex J, Figure 12.

Gender equality and protection (EQ8⁷⁴)

101. The programme's results framework was designed to measure access using net enrolment rates by sex. The MTE paid particular attention to gender differences in the achievement of outputs and outcomes. Although current enrolments and attendance are near parity there is a legacy of gender gaps in education (see section 1.2 above). Disaggregated data

⁷⁰ This is the terminology used in the TOR (Annex A) and in the proposal for a further phase of MGD support (WFP,); it is referred to in Downen et al, 2015 as a Project Liaison Unit.

⁷¹ However, the MTE was informed that formulation of the national SF policy is being led from a higher level within MOPME.

⁷² A technical committee consisting of members from the Ministries of Finance, and of Food, Agriculture and Planning, WFP, UNICEF, the Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE) and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) was formed. This was confirmed by senior officials from the MOPME. (WFP, 2015-2016 and meeting with MOPME officials).

⁷³ SABER's five policy dimensions for school feeding are: Policy Frameworks; Financial Capacity; Institutional Capacity and Coordination; Design and Implementation; and Community Roles. On a scale from latent to emergent to established to advanced, all dimensions are rated as emergent, except for institutional capacity and coordination, which is rated as established.

⁷⁴ EQ8 = How adequately has the operation addressed gender equality and protection issues?

show that attendance rates have remained constant from 2015 (Kimetrica, 2015) to 2016 (DMA, 2016) (see Table 43 in Annex H). However, the data available so far do not allow a meaningful granular analysis of trends in boys' vs. girls' enrolment and attendance rates.

102. The MGD SFP seeks to build on earlier achievements made in the area of gender parity and to further promote it among students through the ELP. Together with partners, awareness-raising and community sensitisation activities were organised which focus on relevant social issues, such as the importance of girls' education, the impact of dowry, child marriage and early pregnancy. In addition to these advocacy activities, mentoring on gender sensitisation is included. Women are encouraged to take up leadership roles in SMCs to ensure women's participation in decision making. This was a point of weakness identified in the rapid gender assessment in late 2010 (WFP, 2011a), and from the limited observations, interviews and literature review, the active participation of women in decision making is still relatively weak (also see Annex G, Box 16 and Box 17). In the course of field visits, the ET explored the quality of women's involvement in local school feeding management and support committees. Though women were present and part of the SMCs, it was often reported (especially by men) that they do not attend the meetings or do not voice their opinion (due to power structures within the committee); the continuing challenge of early marriage of girls, typically terminating their education; the effect of the girls' burden of household labour on their regular attendance at school (and the different pressures on boys to join the labour force); the problems older girls face in reaching often remote secondary schools; and the status of women teachers, many of whom do not have permanent posts. Most often, gender was still viewed as a women's issue. As regards protection, community mobilization aims to increase awareness of, and mobilise communities to act on, issues such as the importance of education for girls and boys, raising issues such as early/child marriage, dowry, child sexual harassment, trafficking, child labour, school safety.

Efficiency (EQ10⁷⁵)

General efficiency considerations

103. **Timeliness.** Although the first shipments of grain were later than expected, WFP was able to commence operations in Gaibandha on time by making use of buffer stocks (see Table 44 in Annex H). On the other hand, delay in reaching an FLA with BRAC meant a late start to supporting activities. Both HEB procurement (by WFP) and distribution (by RDRS) are regarded as efficient. The CP MTE reported that "the DPE stated WFP procurement of the biscuits is a tremendous help, as government bureaucratic procurement processes take much longer" (Downen et al, 2015:¶100). This view was confirmed during interviews and discussions with government officials at various levels.

104. **Coverage.** As noted in ¶62ff above, there was a substantial shortfall in the number of snacks delivered which was not adequately explained in project reporting; however, as discussed above, this was mainly due to strikes and to logistic problems (flooding) beyond the project's control.

105. **Unit costs** of the programme were lower than expected, arising from two factors: (a) a more favourable exchange rate of wheat-to-biscuits than expected (an average of 2.37 MT wheat per 1 MT biscuits as compared to the expected 4 MT wheat per 1 MT biscuits); (b) the second yearly consignment of wheat was 2,000 MT larger than expected due to lower transport costs (USD 145/MT vs. USD 215/MT).

⁷⁵ EQ10 asks "How efficiently has the operation worked with the GOB towards handover, and how likely is the GOB to continue to implement an effective SF programme following WFP withdrawal?" However, to avoid repetition, we discuss the second part of the question in section 2.5 (sustainability), while in the present section we also consider wider aspects of efficiency.

Efficiency and handover

106. Practical handover is taking place progressively, with GOB responsible for an increasing share of the beneficiaries (Figure 1 in section 1.2). However, the efficiency of this process is underpinned by continued roles for WFP and RDRS in procurement and distribution, respectively, of HEB (¶103 above).

107. There is strong evidence (globally and in Bangladesh) on the **cost-effectiveness** of the HEB modality (Gelli et al, 2006,⁷⁶ Ahmed, 2004, Downen et al, 2011). The ET was informed that the current cost of HEB in Bangladesh is BDT10 per child per day (USD 30 per year), while a school meal costs three times as much (USD 90 per year). However, there is considerable political interest in moving to a cooked meal modality (which was also confirmed in various interviews and discussions with government officials and head teachers), and WFP is working with GOB on a pilot that is intended to help establish the relative costs and benefits of different approaches.⁷⁷ This appears to be one of the issues delaying finalisation of a national SF policy, and it has obvious implications for any handover process. Considerations of practicality and efficiency are at the core of the choice of SF modality, as set out in Box 5 below, and we return to this issue in section 2.5 below.

Box 5 HEB versus hot cooked meals

The WFP CO has also been piloting a hot school meals initiative in 91 schools in Barguna and Jamalpur districts since 2013, funded by AusAid. The initiative provides hot meals prepared by community volunteers using fortified rice, pulses, fortified oil, and local vegetables, supplemented by local fruits when they are available. This responds to government interest in providing locally-sourced hot school meals. This approach is included in the CP as a means of generating evidence that will enable GOB and donors to assess the costs and benefits of an alternative SF modality (see WFP, , WFP, 2014i and Downen et al, 2015).

While a hot meal for school children sounds appealing, there are considerable challenges. WFP's choice of the HEB modality has been largely positive in terms of wide coverage, prevention of leakage, safety and supply chain, as well as costs. The HEB modality is relatively simpler to manage compared to hot cooked meals and also easier to monitor. Many SMCs, teachers, partners and GOB officials stated their belief that HEB were well suited in double shift schools as it takes little time and does not disrupt classes and teachers' time. Most local education officials endorsed the HEB modality, though a few thought they would be instructed by the GOB in the near future to implement hot cooked meals.

A point of caution in terms of providing micronutrients through fresh food items needs to be made. It would not only be expensive, but would also not be able to meet 67 percent of micronutrient requirements, as is the case with HEB. In principle, this could be overcome by the use of multi-micronutrient powder.

Experience to date shows that there are a number of challenges to achieving a successful hot meal programme. This includes ensuring kitchen facilities are in place, cooks and community volunteers are trained, water supplies are adequate, proper hygiene is practiced, regular monitoring and accountability practices are in place, and the local supply of vegetables is reliable. This would require substantial involvement from the Government, NGOs, WFP, school management and the communities.

⁷⁶ They found that when HEB are provided in FFE, only 19 percent of total project costs are non-commodity costs compared with school meals for which 41 percent of total costs are non-commodity costs.

⁷⁷ The CO shared early draft TOR for a so-called "impact study" (WFP, and WFP,) planned to take place between February and May 2017. The evaluation team is concerned that these TOR reflect a serious underestimate of the technical and methodological requirements for a credible impact study (cf. the OEV technical guidance on impact evaluation WFP,) or a credible cost-benefit analysis (cf. the OEV Technical Note on Efficiency, WFP, 2013d).

2.4 What factors have affected the results?

Box 6 Key findings on factors affecting the results

- WFP's experience in school feeding for over five decades ensures efficient and smooth processes, systems and logistics. There has been valuable flexibility in implementing the MGD project. However, the literacy components of the project are outside WFP's core competencies.
- Implementation has been facilitated by WFP's strong reputation in Bangladesh, and the quality of the three-way partnership between WFP, GOB and the NGO implementing partners (BRAC and RDRS).
- Partnerships with international agencies, including fellow UN agencies, at national level are strong, but not always reflected in practical cooperation on the ground.
- As the MTE repeatedly notes, there is considerable need to rationalise and strengthen M&E; in its current form it is a complex and heavy burden, but fails to provide enough useful analysis of key issues such as the shortfall in snacks delivered and the underlying patterns of school attendance.
- The external operating environment has at times made implementation of SFP activities difficult, e.g. political strikes, floods in the implementing area, as well as socio-cultural norms such as early marriage, which impair the achievement of the set MGD objectives.
- The national political and policy environment has been largely conducive to the programme's performance, but two downsides are pervasive corruption and weak coordination amongst GOB ministries and agencies.
- WFP's SFP has not been impaired by any limitations on the agreed MGD funding for the operation; in this case, with the HEB modality, receiving in-kind donations of wheat is not especially problematic. Government funding (also in-kind) is a notable indication of commitment, but funding (external and domestic) is likely to be a significant constraint for future SF.
- General funding constraints, however, make the implementation of an integrated long-term approach in poverty-prone areas challenging.
- None of the key assumptions in the theory of change (ToC) are completely invalid, but there are numerous problematic assumptions that constitute an agenda for strengthening the effectiveness of SF in future.

Overview

108. This section reviews internal and external factors that have influenced the results of the MGD-funded SFP. It considers explanations for both positive and problematic aspects of performance so far. It concludes with an assessment of the validity of the key assumptions identified in the inferred theory of change.

Project design and WFP processes (EQ11⁷⁸)

109. While the focus on improving education quality is one of the main objectives of the MGD SFP, WFP's involvement in literacy activities extends beyond that of its **core competencies** and arguably stretches the organisation's capacity.⁷⁹ In the past, the education focus of WFP's SFP was almost entirely on enrolment and retention; the literacy component was introduced as part of the MGD programme. It is important to note that literacy interventions require a level of specific expertise and institutional capacity at various levels (national to local). Since WFP does not have in-house capacity to implement this

⁷⁸ EQ11 = How significant have internal WFP process, system and logistical factors been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?

⁷⁹ This point is relevant to EQs 11,12 and 13.

component of the SFP, it has engaged implementing partners RDRS and BRAC, an effective strategy as both NGOs are well positioned to implement these activities (and partners at national and local level reported smooth implementation and cooperation practices).

However, while WFP's almost unrivalled expertise in logistics puts it in a strong position to monitor, and, if necessary provide technical support to, the logistic functions subcontracted to RDRS, it does not have the same technical capacity to supervise and support the literacy support activities that it subcontracts to BRAC and RDRS.

110. **Flexibility.** A clearly positive factor has been the responsiveness to experience of the project design. The current project design also includes revisions approved by MGD in June 2016 that respond to operating requirements of the project and opportunities that have arisen (see section 19 and Annex B). In particular, the ability to cover an additional upazila, the ability to use local partners to provide inputs into literacy and training materials development are good examples of the flexibility in the design and implementation.

111. **WFP's experience/logistics.** WFP has operated in-kind school feeding programmes in many countries for over five decades. Its long presence in Bangladesh (since 1974), during which it has become a close partner of the GOB, and its expertise in implementing the school feeding programme, not only in Bangladesh (since 2001) but around the world, means that the MGD phase under review here could start with established systems and procedures which have continued to operate efficiently. No logistical challenges were reported, neither by WFP, GOB, nor NGO staff nor the beneficiaries.

112. The ET observed that WFP has dedicated staff at the field level and is respected for its expertise, both in Dhaka and the field. They have close interactions with the respective GOB officials which has built excellent collaboration and cooperation. The supply chain of HEB was reported to work smoothly and efficiently. USDA's trust in WFP's efficiency in managing the MGD project can also be seen as a positive factor.

WFP's internal institutional and governance arrangements (EQ13⁸⁰)

113. WFP's established institutional and governance arrangements are founded on long experience and are appropriate for this task of the current MGD SFP (§111 above). Beyond the provision of an institutional backbone for the operation, they have not been a significant factor in enhancing or impairing the operation's performance. Of more significance is the cooperation with the GOB, WFP's implementing partners, as well as strategic partners (see §117 below). Within WFP itself, given the complex and relatively heavy monitoring load, much depends on efficient communication between the M&E unit and the school feeding unit. While the teams both at CO and sub-office level are highly dedicated, their capacity is stretched with the various activities being implemented.⁸¹

114. Discussions with WFP field staff show that their responsibilities are restricted to implementation, monitoring and reporting within a centralised organisation. Strategic debate and decisions are taken at CO level. Given limited staff numbers, this may be inevitable. However, field staff naturally have a wealth of experience and insights that could play a bigger role in influencing the strategic direction of the operation.

⁸⁰ EQ13 = How significant have WFP's internal institutional and governance arrangements been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?

⁸¹ Observations in this paragraph are based on field observations and interviews.

WFP's partnership and coordination arrangements (EQ14⁸²)

115. The CP MTE reported that:

WFP's collaboration and good standing with partners has allowed for positive programme results and impact. According to WFP's main government counterpart, the External Relations Division of the Ministry of Finance, the government views WFP as a trusted partner. This was confirmed by other government counterparts in interviews at the central and district levels. Donors share this view and note that WFP maintains good communication at all levels. ...

WFP is highly regarded in Bangladesh for its longstanding presence, coverage and programming. Its operational coverage has contracted considerably, to where it is smaller now than some of the major NGOs, yet it retains influence due to its history and the ongoing quality of its technical work. (Downen et al, 2015: ¶190-191).

116. The present MTE similarly observed that WFP's partnerships have mostly been effective. First, the partnership with NGOs has included the Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Society (RDRS) specifically for operating and maintaining an effective supply chain in the provision of biscuits to schools.⁸³ It has also included the partnership with BRAC with respect to the provision of training for officials at the MOPME, Head Teachers, other school teachers and SMC members which has been critical in pursuing the programme's wider objectives. Feedback on BRAC and RDRS was found to be positive from all involved stakeholders. The strength of the partnership lies in the three-way trusting relationship between WFP, NGOs and GOB. As the CP MTE noted:

WFP has chosen well-known local NGOs to implement programmes that have aligned missions to address poverty, undernutrition and food insecurity. Many of WFP's local NGO partners have worked with WFP in more than one CP and tend to retain their staff for many years. The government has demonstrated the same faith in these local NGOs, and in WFP's selection, by contracting them to continue activities handed over by WFP, such as SF. (Downen et al, 2015: ¶69).

117. Second, the partnership with UN agencies particularly UNICEF and FAO, is important in pursuing the essential learning package which is intended to use the SF platform to promote wider health and education benefits. However, although national-level coordination is generally good (broadly collaborating through the UNDAF – see details in Annex J, and more specifically on SF strategy – see ¶98-100 above), there is less evidence of cooperation at local level, where other UN partners are not necessarily present, with implications for the delivery of expected complementary inputs (e.g. WASH, de-worming).

118. Partnerships with strategic partners, like UNICEF, FAO, WHO and the WB currently seem to take place only at CO level. While discussions take place in Dhaka, little evidence of actual cooperation was witnessed in the field. The ET was informed that the WHO is responsible for providing technical advice to the GOB, while UNICEF mainly works in two thematic areas, namely WASH and literacy. UNICEF does not seem to have a presence in Gaibandha yet. At national level a technical committee for deworming under the GOB exists and both WFP and UNICEF are part of that. WFP would like to pursue collaboration with FAO for school gardening, though to date no specific action has been taken. According to CO staff, collaboration with the various strategic partners seems to hinge on the GOB making decisions and setting a framework, e.g. agreeing on an action plan for school gardening.

Monitoring and reporting arrangements (EQ12⁸⁴)

119. This MTE has thoroughly reviewed the monitoring and reporting framework employed for this MGD project – see in particular the commentary on performance indicators and data

⁸² EQ14 = How significant have WFP's partnership and coordination arrangements been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?

⁸³ RDRS is, in fact, partnering with the Government in maintaining the supply chain for the Government's own programme of school feeding. Annex B, ¶24-34 provides more detail on both RDRS and BRAC.

⁸⁴ EQ12 = How significant have WFP's monitoring and reporting arrangements (including the role of Government/NGO partners' involvement and support to M&E efforts) been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?

availability in Annex H. A number of factors have combined to make the reporting requirements both extraordinarily cumbersome and insufficiently informative.

120. The monitoring provisions of the MGD-funded SFP are aligned with the requirements of both WFP and the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). The Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) contains 22 indicators, partly standard, partly custom, i.e. project-specific indicators. Considering that the project data will also be used for reporting on USDA's contribution to whole-of-government initiatives such as Feed the Future (FTF), the PMP also includes an FTF performance indicator.⁸⁵ These requirements were the foundation for what has turned out to be a complex monitoring system, which in turn has meant that WFP has not collected data on all indicators on a regular basis and the indicators in the semi-annual reports do not link straight to the MGD objectives, which makes it cumbersome to trace results. In addition there are some inconsistencies (errors?) in the data. WFP's implementing partners submit reports that include the MGD operation. These reports follow WFP's corporate reporting schedule which differs from WFP's semi-annual reporting schedule to USDA. This difference makes it practically impossible to compare and cross-check figures for consistency between these reports. Interpretation of available data was often difficult: either no data were available, especially for MGD SO2 (see Table 43 in Annex H) or indicators were worded slightly differently in different documents.

121. WFP is in the process of training GOB officials in monitoring and reporting. According to the September 2016 semi-annual report (WFP, 2015-2016), roughly half of the targeted number had been trained. With an aim to increase the overall monitoring capacity of school feeding implementation, an online monitoring and reporting system is reportedly being set up which is intended to provide the DPE with an online database system for school feeding. WFP has reportedly also facilitated government preparation of quarterly and bi-annual reports. Support in organizing joint monitoring visits for high-level government officials in school feeding areas was critical to their understanding of field implementation. Visits were followed by reports and corrective circulars sent to the field. In areas where school feeding is being expanded and the Government is taking over, an overall supply chain mechanism has been established and harmonized (WFP, 2015-2016).

122. However, the administrative burden of monitoring the SFP when it is handed over to government by WFP is already a concern (see Box 7 below), and additional USDA requirements make the process in Gaibandha even more burdensome. Of course, monitoring is crucial to ensure proper and effective use of resources, but this MTE's impression is that the sheer volume of reporting that is demanded is a source of inefficiency, and that it would be better to collect less information but devote more effort to its analysis. Two examples where more analysis would be useful are in explaining the gap between target and actual snacks delivered (¶65 above), and in better understanding patterns of absence from school (¶89 above). At the same time, the CP MTE commented that "WFP needs to improve its in-house M&E capacity, particularly in measuring outcomes" (Downen et al, 2015: ¶208).

⁸⁵ Number of educational policies, regulations and/or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development: Stage 2: Drafted and presented for public/stakeholder consultation; Stage 3: Present for legislation/decreed; Stage 4: Passed/approved. (For more on Feed the Future, see <https://www.feedthefuture.gov/country/bangladesh>.)

Box 7 Issues in monitoring handed-over school feeding

The MTE of WFP's country programme made the following observations:

In areas handed over to government by WFP, upazila education officers (EO) and assistant upazila education officers (AUEO) are now solely responsible for monitoring the school biscuit programme. These officers have a heavy workload and are already overseeing a broad set of education activities, including preparing monthly accounts for teachers' salaries and administering the stipend scheme. For example, in Satkhira district, one AUEO at upazila level oversees three unions. In Tala Upazila, there are eight AUEOs and one EO to oversee 245 schools with biscuits and 330 schools in all. Few additional staff are being added at district level, potentially compromising the ability of district education staff to adequately monitor SF. (Downen et al, 2015: ¶115)

The external operating environment (EQ15⁸⁶)

123. The economic context has been generally supportive, but political turbulence and strikes (hartals) at national and sub-district level between January and April 2015 posed a challenge to the implementation of the SFP. In addition to the disruption of biscuit distribution, the political barrier also delayed the sub-recipients' implementation of literacy activities in the field. The programme targets char areas with silt landmasses regularly hit by flooding and land erosion. Recurrent floods are an impediment to students' regular attendance and occasionally disrupt the distribution of HEB in some schools.

124. Reflecting both economic and social pressures, drop-out of even primary-school-aged children remains a problem: boys often drop out in grades 4-5 to provide income for the family (either seasonal or complete drop-out), while early marriage remains a challenge for girls. While girls drop out less often during primary school, the issue is their transition to and retention in secondary school. Early marriage often came up in interviews and did not seem to be anything out of the ordinary, although many parents mentioned that they would like their daughters (and sons) to continue their schooling to have better chances in life.

125. Frequent turnover of key cooperating partner staff was mentioned as a challenge for continued quality project implementation. WFP has discussed this with cooperating partner RDRS and recommended an enhanced package to keep skilled and experienced project staff in place. Similarly, relatively frequent re-assignment of government officials and directors results in critical setbacks in the finalization of agreed outlines and timelines, not only of the school feeding policy, but also has a negative impact on capacity building activities.

126. Student-teacher ratios were observed to be very high in the visited schools. This is a known problem across the country and poses a challenge to teachers' ability to deliver quality education to their students, thus low literacy (compare Kimetrica, 2015 and section 1.2 above) is not surprising. The MOPME continues to work towards its goal of a 46:1 student-teacher ratio by recruiting new teachers, and WFP continues to support this process through advocacy. The shortage of teachers is reportedly due to long delays in appointments, as well as a reluctance of teachers to work in remote rural areas of the country. The lack of teachers means that capacity building activities would take the few teachers away from their teaching, creating a challenge for WFP and its implementing partners with regards to these activities.

⁸⁶ EQ15 = How significant has the external operating environment been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?

National political and policy environment (EQ16⁸⁷)

127. Generally, there is a high level of commitment from the GOB, schools and communities to continue the SFP in Bangladesh, whether through the HEB or a school meals modality (interviews/focus group discussions with government officials, (head) teachers, parents). The absence of an endorsed SF policy has not hindered the handover of SF in certain districts/upazilas, though WFP remains involved with the procurement of the HEB as mentioned above. As noted in section 1.2 above, education policies and strategies are generally supportive. The education stipend reinforces the incentive effect of SF, although its value has eroded. BDT 100 per month is paid to all primary school children irrespective of socio-economic status, although the amount of the stipend decreases with the number of children per family. Parents informed the ET that stipend payments often arrive late and that the amount is insufficient to provide for the various needs of their children.⁸⁸

128. A less helpful feature is the pervasiveness of corruption in Bangladesh (which was ranked 145th out of 176 on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index published in 2016). This was sometimes explicitly or implicitly mentioned in interviews, and is one of the reasons why the GOB is happy for WFP to manage the procurement/logistics of the operation, even of the handed-over part of the SFP. At a more individual level, some parents report that they do not always receive the full stipend amount from banks.

129. An important concern for all educational initiatives in Bangladesh is school governance. Like any other issue of corruption versus good governance, this concern spans politics and policy. Even though school records might not suggest it, teacher absenteeism is common. The SMCs usually comprise people involved in politics. The owner of the land the school occupies is usually part of the SMC. There are many opportunities for corruption.

130. One challenge in collaborating with the GOB reportedly was coordination and collaboration among ministries and departments within GOB; e.g. WASH facilities, including maintenance of toilets, fall under the Ministry of Public Works while school infrastructure falls under MOPME. Converting the joint framework and action plan on mutual collaboration among the ministries and departments into a sustainable agreement with clarified roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder remains a challenge and affects the achievement of objectives of the MGD SFP which require complementary interventions to be coordinated.

Domestic and external funding factors (EQ17⁸⁹)

131. MGD support for the SFP is the most adequate and reliable funding that WFP has had in its country programme up to now. Moreover, given the effectiveness of the HEB modality, the provision of commodity aid in the form of wheat has not been a particular disadvantage in this case.⁹⁰ Broader funding constraints have, however, affected the project, especially lack of funds for inputs such as school infrastructure, WASH etc.

132. Looking ahead, mobilising funding for SF may become more difficult. The UNDAF 2017-2020 notes that “direct service delivery for development is a declining area for UN programming in Bangladesh”, which “will be limited to addressing the resilience gaps that persist on the ground among the most vulnerable and those in extreme poverty” (UNDAF, 2016: 18). Therefore, WFP and the GOB need to think strategically about further steps towards sustainable handover. In general WFP in Bangladesh faces funding challenges, with

⁸⁷ How significant has the national political and policy environment been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?

⁸⁸ Other DPs also commented on the low amount of the stipend.

⁸⁹ How significant have domestic and external funding factors been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?

⁹⁰ The situation would be different if hot meals became the dominant modality. Some informants argued that wheat could be more cheaply procured locally: this would imply, as is commonly the case, that in-kind support is less valuable than cash, but not that it distorts the national programme of SF.

contributions from donors fluctuating. This seems to be partly due to the fact that Bangladesh is moving from a low income towards a middle income country and requires less of WFP's typical food assistance than other countries around the globe.

133. The GOB as noted earlier, shows high commitment to the SFP, and makes substantial in-kind contributions of wheat (Figure 6 in Annex B), but obtaining sufficient matching funds to leverage its use is a challenge (WFP,) and the GOB budget for this activity remains limited (2 percent of the national social security budget, see ¶38 above, GOB, 2015b). The GOB's funding, staffing and technical capacities are still far from the levels at which the GOB could support the national SFP, based on the preferred integrated approach, without external assistance, especially bearing in mind that present coverage is quite limited (approximately 3 million out of nearly 20 million primary school-aged children). It remains to be seen whether undoubted political interest in expanding SF will be matched by commensurate GOB finance.

Validity of ToC Assumptions

134. Table 56 in Annex K shows the MTE findings against each of the implicit assumptions in the ToC, shows which EQs feed into the assessment of each assumption, and rates each assumption as valid, problematic or invalid. Table 16 below summarises this assessment, and includes details of the findings for the assumptions that were assessed as problematic.

135. No assumptions were found to be completely invalid. Approximately half of the key assumptions are problematic (they are not necessarily blocking ToC pathways completely, but they are significant constraints on the achievement of project results), and half are valid. The problematic assumptions can be viewed as an agenda for action to strengthen future effectiveness of school feeding (we return to this point in Chapter 3 below).

136. The inferred ToC (illustrated in Figure 10 in Annex E) was prepared during the MTE inception phase. There are many ways it could be nuanced in the light of the ET's subsequent learning, but generally the ET considers it has been a very useful frame of analysis. However, in retrospect, it would have been useful to include an assumption related to the resourcing and quality of the education system.⁹¹ This too would have to be assessed as problematic, thus:

Assumption:

Constraints on the resourcing of basic education would not be so great as to nullify the possibility of effective learning when school attendance is facilitated by SF.

Finding:

Constraints on the primary education system in the project area continue to be severe, notably reflected in high student-teacher ratios and the widespread use of a double-shift system, and can be assumed to limit the learning that might otherwise be facilitated by SF.

Table 16 **Validity of ToC Assumptions**

Valid assumptions

2. Continued support and commitment by the GOB for a national school feeding programme (NSFP).
3. Stable food pipeline and good management of significant logistical challenges.
5. Adequate GDP growth, controlled inflation, currency stability and an adequate flow of remittances.
6. Adequate response to natural disasters.
7. Private business engaged and supportive.
9. Government willing to work on developing and implementing a NSFP.
11. Causal assumptions about the influence of SF and related measures on student attentiveness are correct.
17. NGO Partners, and by extension all relevant elements of the Bangladesh NGO sector, are adequately capacitated and institutionally stable.
19. Programme able to achieve degree of institutional competence and readiness to hand over SFP in 2 districts at end of programme.

⁹¹ This would resonate with the impact evaluation finding (Downen et al, 2011), quoted in ¶46: "... limited impact on critical education outcomes reflects shortcomings in the education system – limited contact hours, high student-to-teacher ratios, large class sizes, poor infrastructure, etc. – and economic pressures on households."

Problematic assumptions	Findings
1. The entire viability of the programme, as its design rightly acknowledged, depends on the assumption that work on the foundational results receives sufficient attention and is implemented as thoroughly as the rest of the programme.	Work on local-level FR has been limited by delays to the programme and in agreeing a partner FLA. However, WFP has focused strongly on national level capacity support. Evidence from impact evaluations suggests the basic design of HEB-based SF is robust .
4. The programme links at many points with the inputs and activities of other donors. It was assumed that these other donors would maintain a strong, cooperative, coordinated presence.	Coordination and collaboration with other donors/stakeholders (e.g. UNICEF, FAO) has been adequate at national level, less so at local level.
8. Programme design noted the problems of staff turnover and (re)deployment. The ToC therefore notes the assumption that these personnel changes will not be at a level that diminishes the effectiveness of staff and institutional capacity development.	Staff turnover continues to be a constraint (e.g. requiring training for public sector personnel to be frequently repeated). cf. Downen et al, 2015, ¶117: "Realistically, unless the government transfer system changes, there must be regular training in order to maintain local level government capacity to monitor the programme."
10. Given the importance of health and nutrition objectives for the programme, and the generally difficult sanitation and hygiene situation in many parts of the country, a clear implicit assumption was that sanitation and hygiene initiatives would be implemented sufficiently to prevent the health benefits of SF being diminished by poor sanitation and hygiene at schools.	The MTE's field observations suggest that this assumption remains problematic and that supporting WASH and hygiene initiatives need strengthening,
13. An important assumption in the causal design of the programme is that parents and other local community members are willing to perform the roles that the programme envisages for them.	The MTE observed a general willingness, but there are constraints on community members' time and capacity which continue to need addressing.
14. More at the level of the foundational results, a basic assumption in this and many other such programmes is that policy, strategies and procedures are not only formulated but also meaningfully implemented.	MTE found no blockages though there are some constraints on implementation of education and nutrition strategies.
15. Corresponding to the programme's design emphasis on upgrading monitoring and reporting systems associated with SF, the ToC notes the assumption that the improved systems are adopted and used efficiently.	As the MTE repeatedly notes, there is considerable need to rationalise and strengthen M&E.
16. The health and nutritional benefits of the programme are dependent in part on the assumption that deworming programmes are carried out as envisaged.	Some evidence that de-worming may not be as regular and systematic as it should be.
18. It had to be assumed that the various measures taken to upgrade the awareness and competence of teachers in participating schools would lead, as intended, to more consistent teacher attendance.	It is too early to observe definite project results on this.
Invalid assumptions - none	

Note: assumptions numbered as in the original ToC diagram (cf. Table 36 in Annex E).

2.5 To what extent has sustainability been considered?

Box 8 Key findings on sustainability

Context for sustainability. With a request for a further phase of support in the pipeline, the termination date of USDA assistance is uncertain.⁹² However, the MGD project is nested within a wider SF programme, where progressive handover to GOB has been under way for a number of years. The majority of beneficiaries are already within the GOB component, although WFP procurement (and RDRS distribution) as well as other technical support continue to serve the GOB programme.

- The main factors for sustainability of an effective SF programme in Bangladesh are Government and WFP commitment, the capacities of implementing partners, the strength of the national policy framework, including appropriate design of the SF modality, and the extent of community ownership and participation. The SFP in Bangladesh is addressing all of these dimensions and the outlook for sustainability of the programme is therefore reasonably positive.
- Although GOB ownership is manifested in the GOB take-over and expansion of the NSFPPA, it is not yet certain that adequate levels of GOB funding for the national SF programme will be forthcoming in future.
- At local level, although there is strong community support for SF, there are concerns as to whether handed-over schools will be able to continue the complementary activities that are part of the MGD approach, and whether NGO schools in particular will receive sufficient support when the MGD programme phases out.
- A key issue in sustaining and scaling up SF will be the choice of modality. HEB is a modality of proven effectiveness, which is simpler to manage and much less costly per child than hot meals; with only three million children benefiting from the SF programme so far, it could be much more easily scaled up. A premature shift to hot meals could be a significant threat to the continuation of benefits from the existing school biscuit programme.
- The operation has made incremental contributions to positive changes in gender relations, rather than any major difference. Social practices such as child marriage continue to have adverse effects for many girls. However, the incremental changes observed are part of a wider process of social change, and are, in the judgement of the ET, likely to continue even after completion of the MGD SFP.

Promotion of sustainable school feeding (EQ18⁹³) and likely continuation of programme benefits (EQ19⁹⁴)

Context

137. The programme was initially designed for a three-year duration, to be completed in 2017. However, before/during the MTE, WFP prepared a new proposal for a further phase of MGD funding from FY2018. The draft proposal (WFP,) envisages a three year programme of support to SF in two districts in the south-east of Bangladesh, maintaining the HEB modality, but also including a further hot meals pilot (thus there is no expectation of further MGD support in Gaibandha); the proposal also envisages a further five years of support for WFP's technical assistance to school feeding at central-government level.

⁹² However, the draft request for further MGD support for Bangladesh (WFP, , shared with the evaluation team in March 2017) envisages that this will focus on different districts, in the south-east of Bangladesh.

⁹³ EQ18 = To what extent has the operation made explicit efforts to promote sustainable SF after programme termination?

⁹⁴ EQ19 = Are the benefits of the operation likely to continue after the programme is completed?

138. The MGD SFP is in any case nested in a wider national SFP, in which a progressive handover from WFP to GOB management is under way. WFP SF assistance has decreased from 2 million children in 2007 to about 500,000 during 2016 (WFP, 2016j). This is concurrent with a rapid scale up of the national SFP in poverty prone areas from 55,000 children in 2011 to approximately 2.5 million now (WFP, 2014j, WFP & DPE, 2015). The GOB component is already much larger than the WFP component, although WFP manages HEB procurement across the entire programme (and all HEB distribution is sub-contracted to RDRS). There is a mutual GOB-WFP expectation of continued collaboration, as reflected in the commitments in the UNDAF 2017–2020 (UNDAF, 2016) which are reproduced in Annex J; this includes a GOB commitment to provide up to 20,000 MT of support each year (though subject to annual review and availability of resources). WFP's technical support to develop national capacity and an explicit SF strategy is also oriented towards sustainability.

Key factors for sustainability

139. Sustainability of the programme depends on a number of factors of which WFP's commitment, GOB's commitment, reflected in terms of financial and staffing allocations, and the technical and institutional capacity of the implementing partners are critical. Sustainability also depends on a strong policy framework and the appropriate design of school feeding activities. A final factor with a crucial bearing on sustainability is the extent of community ownership and participation which underpins the durability of the programme.

140. **WFP Commitment.** From MTE interviews it is clear that WFP is committed to a sustainable national school feeding programme in Bangladesh, even if the programme might adopt different modalities from the current MGD operation (see Box 5 above). WFP's support to the school feeding unit of the DPE, as well as the fact that a large part of the SFP has already been handed over to the Government, both emphasize WFP's commitment to capacity building and eventual handover of all SFP activities, the MGD SFP included.

141. **Commitment by the Government.** The GOB has reflected its strong commitment by its decision to aim for a universal coverage of primary education in its Five Year Plans, as well as its commitment to the SFP, by expanding the coverage of the programme through its own resources to its National School Feeding in Poverty-Prone Areas (NSFPPA). Already in 2012 the Prime Minister went on record regarding the expansion of the programme for the whole country (see WFP & DPE, 2012). The Government expanded the support of 55,000 children in 2011 to currently 3-3.5⁹⁵ million children through its NSFPPA (WFP & DPE, 2015). While the NSFPPA currently has an ad hoc status under the Annual Development Plan, the MOPME has communicated its long-term intention to expand school feeding to cover all of its estimated 16.5 million children in primary schools in the country.

142. At the same time the handover of school feeding is continuing and it seems that implementation of the SFP through the GOB runs reasonably smoothly. The ET visited two handed-over GOB-run schools and this admittedly small sample gave a very positive impression of how the SFP is implemented (see Box 9 below).

Box 9 Case study of a school handed over in January 2015

The most significant aspect was the school's location in the remote of part of Gobindagonj with a dominant 'char' area (alluvial lands that have risen from the rivers) largely populated by a transient landless population from the mainland. The population are distinctly poorer than those of the mainland and often subjected to the recurring effects of erosion of their lands by the river, floods and cyclones, as well as occasional droughts. The GOB has its logo on the HEB packets along with WFP with no other donor. Very heartening to note GOB school feeding is still going on in a sustainable manner.

The school and students seemed clean and happy. While there was the usual shortage of classrooms and class furniture, the teachers and children had made play items and class decorations, arguably better than some of the MGD schools visited

⁹⁵ 3.5 million is the figure stated by MOPME at the 2015 workshop (WFP & DPE, 2015), but see also footnote 14.above.

While most of the char people belong to the very poor section of the community, almost 20 percent of them are without any source of income or asset and have no option but to migrate to Dhaka to seek work and earn an income. Often they take their family including their children with them, resulting in a higher rate of dropouts.

The Head Teacher reported that they have not faced any delays or problems in the supply of HEBs. RDRS were reportedly very effective in maintaining an uninterrupted supply of HEBs. The Head Teacher emphasised the importance of the HEBs noting that that was the only 'food' item that some of the children had the whole day.

The average attendance rate in the school was lower, at about 65-70%, in this area than the other areas largely as a function of their low economic position. This is further worsened during certain periods when children help their parents at work and also during the lean season when families often migrate to other areas, Dhaka etc, for temporary jobs.

Separate toilets for boys and girls are in operation and children seem to be aware of the need for hand-washing.

Students come to school from within a 2km radius. There seem to be no safety concerns as a lot of community awareness raising has been done/is being done through NGOs.

Despite the problems faced by the school, the Head Teacher feels that the SF programme will continue. While the funding for the complete literacy component of the MGD programme is unlikely to be continued, they feel that the original elements of the essential package under the WFP will continue. Considering that the school has been under GOB management for nearly two years, there is reason to be optimistic about sustainability.

Source: Interviews with head teachers, SMCs and observations during school visits, December 2016.

143. However, one outstanding issue that needs to be considered by WFP, the GOB and implementing NGOs, is the question of **sustainability of SF in NGO-run schools**. NGO-run schools (mostly run by BRAC) exist to support the most vulnerable families, children who would otherwise drop out of school, with a special focus on girls (interviews with BRAC and parents and teachers at NGO-run schools). To date, WFP continues to support SF in NGO-run schools in upazilas that have otherwise been handed over to the Government, for example in Gobindaganj and Saghata. Since children from these schools are expected to transition to GOB-run secondary schools, the GOB has an interest to support these children as well. This was addressed in the debriefing to the external reference group. BRAC representatives expressed very clearly that their schools exist in support of the GOB and that there is no interest to establish a parallel system. Since cooperation between WFP, NGOs and the GOB is close, an agreement should be worked out between these partners.

144. **Technical and institutional capacity of implementing partners.** Strong partnership at technical and implementation level between GOB and WFP, between WFP and the Cooperating Partners (NGOs) and between WFP/GOB and Development Partners (e.g. UNICEF, FAO, WHO) is important for sustainability. This is particularly relevant in light of the eventual complete ownership and funding of the SFP by the Government. While the programme thus far has indicated a level of success in its limited coverage, scaling up the programme to cover the entire country is likely to raise organisational and technical issues. Given limited Government capacity (interviews with GOB officials, WFP, IPs) to undertake implementation on such a scale, it is likely that these partnerships will need to continue for the foreseeable future.

145. **Establishment of a strong policy framework and appropriate SF modalities.** The current ad hoc basis of the NSFPPA is a threat to its sustainability; a formal national strategy is seen as a way to put SF on a more durable footing. However, one of the factors delaying the strategy is the consideration of an alternative hot meals modality. Key considerations in the choice of modality have been set out in Box 5 above. HEB is a modality of proven effectiveness, which is simpler to manage and much less costly per child than hot meals; with only 3 million children benefiting from the SF programme so far, it could be much more easily scaled up. It appears that a premature shift to hot meals could be a significant threat to the continuation of benefits from the existing school biscuit programme.

146. **WFP and GOB.** While the current support at DPE /MOPME has been a major factor in the technical strengthening of the programme both at the national and the district and upazila levels, the transition of the programme completely into Government ownership and control has raised some questions. Discussions both at the national and district levels indicate a value-added perception among government functionaries to the continued involvement of WFP in the programme.⁹⁶ In the context of complete government funding, the prospect of WFP's involvement as a service provider to GOB would need to be explored.

147. **Strong community ownership and participation.** Underlying the SFP interventions is its basic link with the community, established through community mobilisation. It acts as a direct link to build broad support and improve understanding of why educating children is crucial to a community's future. A comprehensive approach at encouraging communities not only to support school enrolment, completion and improve teacher attendance, but also discouraging regressive cultural practices such as dowry and early marriage provides a strong social underpinning to the SFP. Combined with the focus on health, nutrition, deworming, and WASH, the focus on community ownership and participation is a key for the sustainability of the message given to children. Community ownership exercised through the establishment of SMCs also bolsters an awareness and responsibility on the part of the community in the effective functioning of the schools and acts as a critical factor for the sustainability of the school feeding approach.

148. **Continuation of benefits of the existing programme.** As discussed in section 2.3 above, the programme has significant short-term benefits for participants, in terms of its social safety net dimension, its alleviation of hunger and the improved nutritional status of school children. The central long-term effect in terms of the MGD result framework, is to improve literacy (which, global evidence suggests, can confer long-term economic as well as social benefits). The review of theory of change assumptions (Table 16 above) suggests that the conditions are not in place for substantial long term benefits to be expected. Moreover, while the three-year period of MGD support may well be sufficient to ensure that the core programme of delivery of school feeding is established to the point where it can be continued under GOB management (see Box 9 above), it is a relatively short period in which to expect complementary activities to support literacy to become firmly enough established to ensure durable results. However, the SFP is part of wider efforts to strengthen the education system and achieve collateral health and nutrition benefits, and longer term benefits therefore hinge on the sustainability of the SFP itself.

Impact on gender relations (EQ20⁹⁷)

149. The operation has made little direct difference to gender relations so far. Gender parity in terms of enrolment and attendance had already been achieved at primary school level, although more needs to be done to bolster both, e.g. better sanitary facilities at school and measures to incentivize drop-outs (both girls and boys) to return to and stay in school. The ET noted that the common understanding of gender issues is in fact gender parity and since in many primary schools the number of girls actually exceeds the number of boys, many informants (from GOB officials to teachers and parents) when first asked about this seem to think there are not gender issues at all. While gender parity is certainly important, it is not enough to tackle certain deeply rooted socio-cultural and socio-economic norms that are harmful to the development of girls and boys. Even from the ET's limited interactions with communities, it quickly became clear that child marriage is still the norm in many communities

⁹⁶ WFP's involvement, by virtue of its world-wide involvement is viewed as a conduit to access the latest technical information on school feeding and as a neutral objective partner whose decisions are unlikely to be biased, specifically on issues of procurement.

⁹⁷ EQ20 = Has the operation made any difference to gender relations thus far, and is that change likely to be sustained after the programme is completed?

and while it seems that it is on the decline (see Ahmed et al., 2016), a lot more effort is required to fully achieve gender equity and the empowerment of women (GEEW) in school feeding and other areas.⁹⁸ Awareness-raising campaigns implemented under the MGD SFP (see MGD1.3.5 in Table 43 of Annex H) contribute to behavioural change. Several informants, both male and female, stated that while every SMC has women members (as per GOB directive), they are not always present at meetings or do not voice their opinion (also see ¶102 above). This echoes a finding from the WFP's internal gender assessment (WFP, 2011a), which found essentially the same situation (see Box 16 and Box 17 in Annex G). WFP is encouraging the active participation of women in leadership, e.g. as part of the SMCs, through training sessions.⁹⁹ The positive effect that the operation has had so far through its awareness-raising campaigns and training of women leaders, is likely to continue (not least because it is part of wider social movements towards change). However, behaviour and social changes take time and require continual efforts.

3. Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1 Overall Assessment / Conclusions

Summary

150. The MTE's overall assessment is that the direct SF component of the MGD-funded SF operation has many very positive features; it also gives rise to some concerns. On the positive side, the core activity of providing nutritious daily snacks, appears to be well-designed, well-implemented and effective. Its strengths include relying on a school biscuit modality that has proven effectiveness in Bangladesh, dovetailing with the GOB-supported national SF programme and drawing on WFP's well established partnerships with GOB and other players. Linked to the project, WFP has played a valuable role in supporting GOB's SF strategy and its policy development, although the formulation of a national SF policy is taking longer than anticipated.

151. There can be less confidence about the complementary activities that accompany the HEB, on a number of levels. Their ability to leverage the wider and long-term benefits envisaged in the results framework is constrained by factors outside the direct control of WFP and its implementing partners, including systemic weaknesses and resource constraints affecting the basic education system, and gaps in the provision of complementary inputs to enhance the school environment and support health and nutrition objectives. Those complementary activities that are included within the project have experienced delays and are provided on a limited scale.

152. The operation's most obvious weakness, which affects both core and complementary activities, is in the quality of reporting and monitoring, which is overly cumbersome without being sufficiently informative.

153. The MTE review of the underlying theory of change, and of the assumptions on which it depends, confirms this summary assessment, which is reflected in the lessons learned and good practices that we highlight in section 3.2 below, and in the practical recommendations we put forward in section 3.3.

⁹⁸ Ahmed reports the changes in Bangladesh due to women's increased empowerment. He concludes that women's empowerment in agriculture improves dietary diversity and helps households move out of poverty, and that it is therefore essential to attain complementary development goals. (Ahmed, 2016)

⁹⁹ There is no specific indicator for training of women leaders, there is one indicator for training sessions of SMCs: "Number of parent-teacher associations (PTAs) or similar "school" structures supported" and a related indicator: "number of SMC members who participate in community mobilisation workshops".

Conclusions against evaluation criteria and key evaluation questions

Evaluation criteria

154. Evaluation criteria cut across evaluation questions (as shown in the annexed Table 35) so there is inevitably some duplication in summarising the MTE conclusions according to criteria as well as the four key questions.

155. **Relevance.** Section 2.2 shows that the WFP operation, as designed, was relevant against all the dimensions considered, including relevance to needs of the beneficiary populations, and consistency with national planning objectives and strategies for education, health/nutrition and social security. Project design was consistent with WFP policy guidance on SF and on nutrition, and was particularly relevant in reflecting rigorous impact evaluation evidence from Bangladesh about the effectiveness of the school biscuit programme.

156. **External coherence.** The project sought complementarity with related initiatives, and is generally coherent with successive UNDAFs, and with national policies (although there is a possibility that the emergent national SF policy may emphasise HEB less and full meals more).

157. **Internal coherence.** The project is coherent with relevant WFP policies and normative guidance on SF, and also with policies concerning nutrition and gender (although not based on a recent written gender analysis).

158. **Effectiveness** (and potential **impact**). Although results data so far for this operation are inevitably inconclusive, particularly at outcome level, there is strong impact evaluation evidence from Bangladesh that the project's approach to SF is effective. However, the MTE's assessment of the validity of the assumptions underlying the implicit theory of change for the project suggests that there is significant scope for strengthening the effectiveness of this operation (although many constraints, as already noted, are not within the control of WFP and its implementing partners).

159. **Efficiency.** The project was affected by some initial delays, but generally scores well on most dimensions of efficiency. The HEB modality is cost-effective compared with other SF modalities. Actual project costs were lower than planned (the wheat donated translated into more HEB than anticipated), and this allowed an expansion of geographical coverage. Procurement and distribution (by WFP and RDRS respectively) is regarded as efficient.

160. **Sustainability.** Sustainability of an SFP and its benefits depends on the development of both national and local level capacities to maintain and operate such a programme. There is room for cautious optimism, since GOB is progressively taking over SF responsibilities, and the SF programme has continued in handed-over schools. However, it is not certain that GOB will continue funding the programme and provide adequate finance to maintain and expand it when external funding is no longer available, and there is a risk that a premature transition to a full meals modality could compromise the benefits (and coverage) of SF in Bangladesh.

161. **Gender** dimensions are factored into the project design and it conforms with national gender commitments and policies. It has sought to understand and respond to differences in needs and roles of boys/men and girls/women. However, there is scope to take this further in future, e.g. with more explicit gender analysis, a focus on understanding and addressing reasons for dropout and a strengthening of the community mobilisation element.

Key evaluation questions.

162. **Appropriateness of the operation.** MTE findings mirror those on relevance (¶155 above) – i.e. the operation was appropriately designed and benefited from being able to replicate a proven approach.

163. **Results.** This is the question for which available evidence is weakest, because of weaknesses in reporting as well as the short elapsed time since implementation began. Beneficiaries are very positive about its effects, and previous evaluations strongly suggest that

the operation, if well-implemented, will have positive effects on school attendance, attentiveness and the nutritional status of school-children. However, the link from SF to improved literacy depends on many intermediate factors in the school environment; an SF project may contribute to, but cannot determine, such results.

164. **Factors affecting results.** Positive factors include WFP's expertise, its long experience of SF delivery, and, in Bangladesh, its high reputation and strong three-way, long-term partnerships among WFP, GOB and major NGOs. Among the constraints: high-level coordination with international agencies, including the UN family, is not always reflected in practical cooperation on the ground; similarly, despite a generally positive national policy environment, local level coordination among GOB ministries and agencies is often weak. Ability to improve the MGD-funded operation in the short term and learn useful longer-term lessons is constrained by the M&E weaknesses this MTE has identified.

165. **Sustainability.** The HEB-based SF modality in Bangladesh has proven effectiveness. Strong GOB ownership has, since 2011, been reflected in GOB financing for and management of its expansion, while WFP's SF operations are being progressively handed over. WFP support to national capacity development, partly facilitated by MGD, has been valuable. A continuing technical support role for WFP could help to assure sustainability of the programme. Nevertheless, maintenance and expansion of SF benefits could be threatened by insufficient funding and/or by a premature move to a more complex and expensive hot meals modality.

3.2 Lessons Learned and Good Practices

Good practice

166. Rigorous evaluations of SF interventions can yield country-specific evidence that is invaluable in assessing their benefits and designing future interventions. The plans by GOB and WFP to continue this practice (e.g. in respect of the hot school meals pilot) are to be commended, provided evaluations are conducted with sufficient rigour.

167. Increasing national efforts to locate SF within broader, coordinated strategies and programmes concerning education, health and nutrition, and social protection also represent good practice.

Lessons for WFP and USDA

168. Some issues raised in this report are of general relevance when future SF collaborations between USDA and WFP are under consideration:

- a) There are usually reasons to regard commodity aid as inferior to cash assistance.¹⁰⁰ In the case of Bangladesh, provision of wheat for HEB manufacture in the context of an already well-established HEB-based SF programme has fewer drawbacks than apply in other country contexts. (Although some stakeholders argued that the financial costs of local procurement would be lower, the MGD wheat complements wheat provided by GOB and does not distort the design of the programme.)
- b) Good monitoring and reporting of results is extremely important, but including too many indicators in the reporting requirements can be counterproductive. It increases the likelihood, especially in contexts where local M&E capacity is constrained, that the reporting system as a whole will be unreliable. There needs to be a focus on better analysis of fewer indicators.
- c) School feeding is legitimately linked to wider educational, nutrition and other objectives. But while it is important to link SF to complementary programmes, such as those addressing the quality of teaching, nutrition education, school gardens and so forth (by UN partners like UNICEF and FAO for example), SF programmes (and WFP itself) do not

¹⁰⁰ This point is made strongly in the parallel MTEs of MGD operations in Nepal and Laos.

have a comparative advantage in directly managing such programmes themselves. SF programme design should first of all take account of good practice as noted in ¶167 above, and seek to align with complementary programmes, but not necessarily to incorporate them within what is primarily an operation to deliver SF.

3.3 Recommendations

169. The recommendations set out in detail in Table 17 below are focused on issues within the direct control/influence of WFP and USDA. They are clustered as follows:

- Recommendations R1 and R2, address the urgent need to rationalise and strengthen the MGD operation's reporting system.
- Recommendation R3 also requires better record keeping and analysis, in order to better understand non-attendance and drop-out (which have strong gender dimensions), so that all partners can address the issues more effectively in future.
- Recommendations R4, and R6 concern key issues for the design of any continuing phase of WFP/MGD support.
- Recommendation R5 constitutes a check-list for actions to address the issues raised in our review of theory of change assumptions, and specifically those assumptions identified as "problematic" in Table 16 above,
- Recommendations R7 and R8 concern the strategic evolution of SF in Bangladesh and WFP's role in it.

Table 17 Recommendations

Recommendation	Specific action and timing	Responsible	Rationale
R1. Improve the monitoring and evaluation function, with rationalisation and streamlining of the indicators used, and improvements to the table used for reporting against plans and targets.	In rationalising indicators and reporting formats, take account of information needs for efficient management of SF in the short term, as well as data needed to support the end-line evaluation. Revise the reporting format to: - ensure that the time frames for targets and performance are identical (for the current grant this should be six monthly targets); - include a column for the percent achievement of target; - include a column to provide an explanation or comments against any indicator which shows performance more than 15% below or above target; - substantially reduce the number of the indicators that are currently used to measure the achievement of SF activity. <i>(before next six-monthly report)</i>	WFP CO, USDA	Section 2.3 and Annex H highlight that reporting against the indicators is often problematic. Better quality reporting against fewer indicators would be more useful, as well as being a more realistic reporting system to hand over.
R2. Ensure that the reasons for any shortfalls in the planned number of snacks provided are tabulated and explained in regular monitoring reports.	Include a table in the six-monthly reports which shows whether any shortfalls in delivery of snacks have occurred, and, if so the extent to which they are due to each contributing factor (unexpected school closures; interruptions to delivery of HEB; differences between planned and actual enrolments; difference between projected and actual attendance rates). <i>(next six-monthly report and ongoing)</i>	WFP CO	The data show that the target number of beneficiaries were broadly reached while the number of snacks provided fell significantly short of target. The MTE eventually received a clear explanation of the factors accounting for this shortfall, but such analysis should be a routine part of reporting to management. See ¶66 above and Figure 4 above, as well as Table 44 and Table 45 in Annex H.
R3. Retention/dropouts in schools remain a concern. WFP and partners should, first of all strengthen recording and analysis of attendance and dropout, then follow up on the dropout of boys (due to child labour) and girls (due to child/early marriage).	This is a nation-wide issue, but for Gaibandha specifically it would be useful to strengthen recording of school attendance and drop-out so as to allow a more granular analysis of patterns and the reasons for them. Take this analysis into account in any future phase of the SFP in Gaibandha. <i>(during 2017 and beyond)</i>	WFP and development partners, GOB	High levels of enrolment have been achieved, but there are problems of drop-out that affect continuation to secondary school. Dropout is linked to poverty and social norms, with boys likely to leave school to supplement family income and girls for early marriage. The programme ought to gather systematic information on attendance and dropout, so as to develop a tailored response.

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Recommendation	Specific action and timing	Responsible	Rationale
R4. Also, in any future phase of SF support, pay additional attention to the handover process, and the provision of complementary support to handed-over schools, especially NGO schools.	To be taken into account in the design and review of any continuation of the present MGD operation. (immediate and during 2017)	WFP USDA GOB NGO partners	There are encouraging signs of willingness and ability to maintain the core SF activity after handover from WFP to GOB. However, there is less attention to ensuring complementary support that facilitates a holistic approach to securing the wider benefits of SF. This is a particular issue for NGO-run schools.
R5. Both in the remainder of the current operation and in the preparation of future operations, pay particular attention to the theory of change assumptions that this MTE has identified as problematic.	<i>Assumption</i> 1. Sufficient focus on a) Continue technical support to the national foundational results. SF programme; 4. Strong coordination and collaboration with other donors/ stakeholders (e.g. UNICEF, FAO) 10. Adequate implementation of national health and WASH programmes, so as to realise potential health benefits of SFPs 13. Adequate support from parents and local communities. 14. Effective implementation of key national policies. <i>Specific actions (ongoing)</i> b) Intensify implementation of local capacity development activities during the remainder of the current operation; c) seek to ensure that local capacity development activities are launched early and effectively in any future MGD-funded operation. a) Strengthen national-level partnering arrangements with key agencies, including UN agencies; b) seek specific local-level agreements for complementary inputs from such agencies when SFPs are rolled out to new areas. a) WFP to continue advocacy for such programmes to be priorities by the relevant GOB and international agencies. a) Further attention to community mobilisation and capacity development activities in the remainder of the current SFP. b) .. and in the design of future SFP roll-outs. a) WFP to continue active advocacy role in forums where key education, nutrition and social protection issues are addressed.	WFP, USDA, GOB, and NGO partners as appropriate	The key assumptions of the theory of change are not all equally within WFP's and USDA's influence or control, but WFP and USDA should nevertheless seek to mitigate any adverse influences on the programme's effectiveness, taking these factors into account in the design of future programmes as well as the continuing implementation of the current one. Specific actions are listed in the same order (and with the same numbering) as the "problematic" assumptions noted in Table 16 above.

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Recommendation	Specific action and timing	Responsible	Rationale
	15. Quality of monitoring and reporting. See recommendations R1 – R3 above. 16. Deworming programme is effective. a) Continued advocacy by WFP with GOB and international partners. 18. Improvements in teacher attendance. a) WFP to continue to report findings from its SFPs and maintain advocacy in national education forums.		
R6. In the next phase of MGD support, reconsider WFP's direct role in supporting complementary activities that are not linked to its core competences.	To be taken into account in the design and review of any continuation of the present MGD operation. (<i>immediate and during 2017</i>)	WFP USDA	School feeding should be designed strategically to support wider educational, social protection and nutrition objectives, but a direct role for WFP in supporting activities (e.g. education quality) that do not reflect WFP's core competencies may not be efficient or sustainable. Efforts should focus on activities directly related to the delivery of the SFP, supported by the necessary complementary programmes of other partners.
R7. With support from GOB and other development partners, WFP should continue to provide strategic support to SF in Bangladesh.	WFP to continue its support into piloting and rigorous evaluation of alternative SF modalities. GOB to (continue to) contract WFP services for HEB procurement and other technical support to the national SFP. (<i>ongoing, feed into country strategy/plans</i>)	WFP GOB other DPs	WFP is already playing a valued role in supporting the GOB SF programme, through independent technical advice and support and by managing HEB procurement. The GOB could contract WFP services that directly support the management of the SFP, while other DPs should be willing to help finance WFP's independent research, analysis and advice.
R8. Ensure that the choice of future SF modalities (HEB vs. hot meals) is based on rigorous evaluation of the hot meals pilot, and takes full account of equity considerations as well as the proven effectiveness of school biscuits.	To be taken into account when considering future phases of USDA support and the wider WFP SFP. Finalisation of the national SF strategy should not pre-empt the findings of the forthcoming evaluation of the hot meals pilot. (<i>ongoing</i>)	GOB WFP USDA other SF donors	The HEB modality has been validated by impact evaluations in Bangladesh, is particularly valuable for the poorest groups in society, and has much lower unit costs than hot meals. With SF coverage still very limited, it is important that the existing and potential benefits of the school biscuit programme are not compromised by a premature shift to hot meals.

ANNEXES

Annex A	Terms of Reference
Annex B	McGovern-Dole School Feeding Programme
Annex C	Key Findings from Previous Evaluations
Annex D	Maps
Annex E	Methodology
Annex F	Evaluation Matrix
Annex G	Gender Analysis
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Annex A Terms of Reference

This annex reproduces the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, but does not include the Annexes mentioned in the TOR.

INDEPENDENT MID-TERM EVALUATION of WFP School Feeding USDA McGovern Dole Grant FFE-388-2014/048-00 in Bangladesh

1. Introduction

1. This Terms of Reference (TOR) is for the mid-term evaluation (MTE) of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) McGovern-Dole Grant (MDG) FFE-388-2014/048-00 supported school feeding activities in Bangladesh. This evaluation is commissioned by WFP's Bangladesh Country Office and will last from August 2016 to March 2017 including internal preparation time. This evaluation will cover the start of actual implementation of the McGovern-Dole funded operation from March 2015 to the point of the mid-term evaluation, planned for September 2016.
2. The evaluation process within WFP will be managed by an evaluation manager (WFP - EM) appointed by the WFP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RB) who will be the main focal point for day to day contact during the evaluation period. The WFP – EM will be supported by an evaluation focal point not associated with the implementation of the school meals programme in the WFP Bangladesh country office. An outside firm will be contracted to carry out the actual evaluation and will appoint their own evaluation manager in accordance with normal practice. Appropriate safeguards to ensure the impartiality and independence of the evaluation are outlined within this TOR.
3. The evaluation will provide an evidence-based, independent assessment of performance of the operation and associated interventions so far, so that WFP-Bangladesh and the Cooperating Partners (CPs) can adjust the project's course as necessary for the remainder of the project term and to inform any future project design.
4. This TOR was prepared by RB for Asia based upon an initial document review and consultation with stakeholders and following a standard template. The purpose of the TOR is twofold: firstly, it provides key information to the evaluation team and helps guide them throughout the evaluation process; and secondly, it provides key information to stakeholders about the proposed evaluation.
5. The TOR will be finalized based on comments received on the draft version and on the agreement reached with the selected company. The evaluation shall be conducted in conformity with the TOR.

2. Reasons for the Evaluation

2.1. Rationale

6. The WFP Bangladesh Country Office is commissioning a mid-term evaluation of MGD supported WFP school meals activities in Bangladesh to assess performance of program operations and associated interventions for the purposes of accountability and program strengthening.

The World Food Programme (WFP) started the Bangladesh School Feeding Programme (SFP) in 2001. The Bangladesh SFP recently received a US\$26 million donation from USDA to support 137,000 children per year over the course of the three-year assistance period (financial year 2015-2017). The program covers students enrolled in 286 non-formal primary schools (supporting 9,143 students) in the two upazilas (sub-districts) of Gobindaganj and Saghata and in 269 non-formal primary schools (supporting 9,611 students) and 375 formal schools (101,748 students) in Sundorganj and Fulchori upazilas. The SFP started in Fulchari in January 2015 but has been ongoing in Sundorganj since 2007. Under the program, each student receives a 75gram packet of micronutrient-fortified high energy biscuits (HEB) each day he/she attends school (approximately 240 days per year).

As the programme is now at its mid-way point, the Bangladesh country office is keen to evaluate progress to date and receive guidance on the programme implementation. Further, a key component of the programme is to work in partnership with stakeholders and provide capacity building to government to eventually take over the programme. Therefore, an important part of this evaluation will be to assess the partnerships with the government and other key stakeholders, such as the local communities and NGOs.

This mid-term evaluation will also fulfil a requirement of USDA that McGovern-Dole funded projects carry out a midterm evaluation to critically and objectively review the progress of implementation with an eye to generating recommendations that will strengthen project implementation and inform future project design. The mid-term evaluation will also be an opportunity to evaluate whether recommendations made during the baseline evaluation were integrated into programme implementation and if so, whether these recommendations were successful in strengthening the programme.

2.2. Objectives

7. Evaluations in WFP serve the dual and mutually reinforcing objectives of accountability and learning.
8. **Accountability** – The evaluation will assess and report on the performance and results of school feeding activities.
9. **Learning** – The evaluation will determine the reasons why certain results occurred or not to draw lessons, derive good practices and pointers for learning. It will provide evidence-based findings to inform operational and strategic decision-making. Findings will be actively disseminated and lessons will be incorporated into relevant lesson sharing systems.

For USDA, the purpose of the evaluation is to critically and objectively review and take stock of the program participant's implementing experience and the implementing environment, assess whether targeted beneficiaries are receiving services as expected, assess whether the project is on track to meeting its stated goals and objectives, review the results frameworks and assumptions, document initial lessons learned, and discuss necessary modifications or mid-course corrections that may be necessary to effectively and efficiently meet the stated goals and objectives.¹⁰¹

2.3. Stakeholders and Users

Stakeholders: A number of stakeholders both inside and outside of WFP have an interest in the results of the evaluation and some of these will be asked to play a role in the evaluation process. The methodology for the evaluation will ensure that a range of beneficiary voices are captured through key informant interviews and focus group discussions (FGD) with various interest groups of both genders (parents/teachers/students).

- The methodology employed in the mid-term will follow the baseline approach that included: school questionnaires to collect school-level information through interviews with the head teacher, direct observation of the school facilities, and school records data; student questionnaires of selected pupils in each sampled school; household questionnaires for parents of the pupils; early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) administered to selected students from the third grade from each school; a teacher questionnaire to selected teachers and their teaching techniques observed; a storekeeper questionnaire administered to the person responsible for the storage of SFP food in each school as well as direct observation of the storeroom. Qualitative methods were employed to provide independent sources of information through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and in-depth Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with teachers, parents and school management committee (SMC) members.

¹⁰¹ USDA Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, 2013

- Table 1, below provides a preliminary stakeholder analysis, which should be further developed by the evaluation team as part of the inception phase.

Accountability to affected populations is tied to WFP’s commitments to include beneficiaries as key stakeholders in its work. As such, WFP is committed to ensuring gender equality and women’s empowerment in the evaluation process, with participation and consultation in the evaluation by women, men, boys and girls from different groups.

Table 1: Preliminary Stakeholder analysis

Stakeholders	Interest in the evaluation and likely uses of evaluation report to this stakeholder
INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS	
Country Office (CO) Bangladesh	Responsible for the country level planning and operations implementation, it has a direct stake in the evaluation and an interest in learning from experience to inform decision-making. It is also called upon to account internally as well as to its beneficiaries and partners for performance and results of its operation.
Regional Bureau (RB) for Asia and the Pacific based in Bangkok	Responsible for both oversight of COs and technical guidance and support, the RB management has an interest in an independent account of the operational performance as well as in learning from the evaluation findings to apply this learning to other country offices.
WFP HQ	WFP has an interest in the lessons that emerge from evaluations, particularly as they relate to WFP strategies, policies, thematic areas, or delivery modality with wider relevance to WFP programming.
Office of Evaluation (OEV)	OEV has a stake in ensuring that independent evaluations commissioned directly by WFP country offices and regional bureaux, deliver high quality, useful and credible evaluations.
WFP Executive Board (EB)	The WFP governing body has an interest in being informed about the effectiveness of WFP operations. This evaluation will not be presented to the EB but its findings may feed into annual syntheses and into corporate learning processes.
EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS	
Beneficiaries	As the ultimate recipients of food assistance, the school feeding beneficiaries have a stake in WFP determining whether its assistance is appropriate and effective. As such, the level of participation in the evaluation of women, men, boys and girls from different groups will be determined and their respective perspectives will be sought. In particular, information will be collected from the schools that are included in the sample, as well as from students, teachers and parents.
Government	The Government has a direct interest in knowing whether WFP activities in the country are aligned with its priorities, harmonised with the action of other partners and meet the expected results. The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) will have particular interest in issues related to capacity development as the direct institutional beneficiary. Issues related to handover and sustainability will also be of interest to the MoPME as well as the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Ministry of Food, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), and Ministry of Finance (MoF).

Stakeholders	Interest in the evaluation and likely uses of evaluation report to this stakeholder
UN Country team (UNCT)	The UNCT's harmonized action should contribute to the realisation of the government's developmental objectives. It has, therefore, an interest in ensuring that WFP's operations are effective in contributing to the UN concerted efforts. Various agencies are also direct partners of WFP at policy and activity level.
NGOs	NGOs BRAC and RDRS have partnered with WFP Bangladesh for the implementation of school feeding activities while also engaging in other initiatives outside of WFP. The results of the evaluation might affect future implementation modalities, strategic orientations and partnerships.
Donors including USDA Food Assistance Division (FAD)	WFP operations are voluntarily funded by a number of donors. They have an interest in knowing whether their funds have been spent efficiently and if WFP's work has been effective and contributed to their own strategies and programmes. USDA has specific interest in ensuring that operational performance reflects USDA standards and accountability requirements, as well as an interest in learning to inform changes in project strategy, results framework, and critical assumptions.
Others	A wide range of actors, such as local suppliers, school administrators and local communities, are involved in the provision of school meals and are expected to benefit from some of the capacity development activities. Their perspectives will be sought as the engagement of those actors influences the effectiveness of the programme as well as its sustainability.

10. Users The primary users of this evaluation will be:

- WFP-Bangladesh and its partners to adjust the project's interventions as necessary for the remainder of the project term and to inform any future project design
- Given RB's core functions, the RB is expected to use the evaluation findings to provide strategic guidance, programme support, oversight, and to extract lessons for sharing across the region.
- WFP HQ may use evaluations for wider organizational learning and accountability
- OEV may use the evaluation findings, as appropriate, to feed into evaluation syntheses.
- USDA will use evaluation findings to inform changes in project strategy, results framework, and critical assumptions.
- NGOs BRAC and RDRS have partnered with WFP Bangladesh for the implementation of school feeding activities while also engaging in other initiatives outside of WFP. These organizations could use the results of the evaluation to inform current activities as well as future project design.
- The government is expected to take over the management and monitoring of the school feeding program over time, therefore, information on whether the programme is yielding the desired results is of primary importance.
- Other COs may also benefit from the findings, which can contribute to corporate learning on implementation of capacity development interventions.

3. Context & Subject of the Evaluation

3.1. Context

11. Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated and disaster-prone countries in the world. Its population is estimated at over 160 million and it is classified as a least-developed, low-income, food-deficit country. It falls in the low human development category, ranking 142 out of 185 countries on the Human Development Index.¹⁰² Despite significant gains in terms of macro-economic growth and human development over the past decade, Bangladesh continues to experience high levels of extreme poverty, and high rates of food insecurity and under-nutrition. Forty-one percent of children under the age of five are stunted, 16% are wasted, and 36% are underweight¹⁰³; levels that are above public emergency thresholds. It is also **highly vulnerable to natural disasters**, such as flooding and cyclones, which exacerbates food insecurity status of millions of people.
12. Bangladesh also faces the human development challenge of **illiteracy**. The national literacy rate is 50.5% (11–45 years) and among 11–14 year olds, 19.5% are non-literate and 10.4% are only semi-literate.¹⁰⁴ In recent years, Bangladesh has made significant progress in its efforts to address illiteracy, especially with regard to increasing access to education and gender equity at the primary level, and is on track to reach the net enrolment target of Millennium Development Goal 2, universal primary education, by 2015.
13. **Targeted Beneficiaries and Regions:** The northern districts of Kurigram and Gaibandha are among the poorest in Bangladesh; in Kurigram more than 60% of the population live under the poverty line, and in Gaibandha it is between 49–60%.¹⁰⁵ These districts are affected by high levels of food insecurity, exacerbated by frequent natural disasters; in 2012 alone, three separate floods were experienced and the effects continue to be felt well into 2013. Education performance in Kurigram and Gaibandha is poor and below the national average. For example, in these districts students are less likely to successfully complete fifth grade than they are elsewhere in the country.¹⁰⁶ DPE has singled out the *char*¹⁰⁷ areas in Kurigram as particularly lagging behind the rest of the country in primary completion rates.¹⁰⁸ Also, children's achievement levels remain far below the national targets; only about half of the primary school graduates in the targeted communities achieve the minimum national curriculum competencies.¹⁰⁹
14. The baseline survey conducted in December 2015 by Kimetrica in the sub-districts of Sunderganj and Fulchari (during the 2014 academic year) found low student literacy skills, with only a quarter of students (26 percent) classified as fluent readers according to the oral reading fluency (ORF) benchmark of 45 words per minute. Further, the average Dietary Diversity Score (DDS) for children was 5.1 out of a maximum score of 10, with one in every five (18 percent) students having a high DDS (DDS $\geq$ 7).
15. WFP's MGD FY 2014–2016 project provides school feeding assistance in all *upazilas* (sub-districts) in Kurigram, and three of the seven *upazilas* in Gaibandha. Moreover, it will include one currently unreached *upazila* in Gaibandha, Fulchhari, by 2017. On the banks of the Brahmaputra River, and comprising many *char* areas, Fulchhari is highly disaster-prone and susceptible to river

¹⁰² UNDP, Human Development Report, 2015.

¹⁰³ Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey, 2011

¹⁰⁴ Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Literacy Assessment Survey, 2011

¹⁰⁵ WFP, Bangladesh Proportion of the Population Poor 2005.

¹⁰⁶ DPE, Bangladesh Primary Education Annual Sector Performance Report, May 2012.

¹⁰⁷ *Chars* are inhabited sandbanks along the Brahmaputra River that crosses Bangladesh from north to south. The *char* residents are semi-nomadic and among the poorest of the poor.

¹⁰⁸ DPE, Bangladesh Primary Education Annual Sector Performance Report, May 2012.

¹⁰⁹ DPE, Bangladesh Primary Education Annual Sector Performance Report, May 2012.

erosion. This has led to significant displacement and serious livelihoods impacts. This *upazila* also faces regular economic crises during the lean season. As such, it is of the utmost importance that this *upazila* also be prioritized for school feeding activities.

16. WFP-Bangladesh's School Feeding Programme is funded by donors, including USDA, AusAID, the Government of Spain, Unilever, and other private donors. WFP-Bangladesh also receives regular in-kind wheat contributions from GOB. The European Union, since 2009, has contributed US\$11.75 million directly to GOB to provide school feeding assistance to 230,000 children in ten *upazilas* in ten districts in southern and northern Bangladesh. The GOB strongly supports school feeding. In 2011, it established the National School Feeding Programme, thanks in part to technical support provided by WFP-Bangladesh, through its FY 2011-2013 MGD project.

3.2. Subject of the evaluation

17. The McGovern-Dole (MGD) funded school meals project was designed to provide school feeding assistance (micronutrient-fortified biscuits) to an average of 137,000 pre-primary and primary school children per year in four Upazilas (sub-districts) of Gaibandha districts in North-West Bangladesh, and support a critical phase of the handover of school feeding to the GOB. The project will use USDA food and funding to contribute directly towards MGD Strategic Objective 1 (R) and Strategic Objective 2 (Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices) by:
 - (i) supporting and implementing activities that promote education, literacy and health among pre-primary and primary school children at the national, regional, and local levels;
 - (ii) formulating, institutionalizing, and operationalizing Bangladesh's first National School Feeding Policy;
 - (iii) mainstreaming GOB's National School Feeding in Poverty Prone Areas (NSFPPA) program into GOB's five year primary education sector program (the Third Primary Education Development Program or "PEDP-III"); and
 - (iv) continuing and intensifying institutional capacity support to the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) through WFP-Bangladesh's Capacity Support Unit (CSU) located in MoPME's Directorate of Primary Education (DPE).
18. Please see **Annex 3** for **Project Level Results Framework**.
19. USDA signed the McGovern-Dole commitment letter on October 1, 2014. USDA has allocated up to \$26 million for donations of commodities, transportation, and financial assistance through McGovern-Dole Grant FFE-388-2014/048-00 for FY2014-2016. Project implementation started with the first tranche of commodities' arrival in March 2015, and the baseline assessment was conducted in July 2015.
20. USDA has recently approved an amendment to the original grant that extends the project coverage to new areas and enhances literacy activities using underutilized resources.

4. Evaluation Approach

4.1. Scope

21. The evaluation will cover the WFP Bangladesh School Feeding USDA McGovern-Dole Grant FFE-388-2014/048-00, including all activities and processes related to its formulation, implementation, resourcing, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting relevant to answer the evaluation questions. It will focus on the operational and managerial aspects of the McGovern-Dole funded school feeding activities. This evaluation, commissioned by the WFP Bangladesh Country Office, will cover the start of actual implementation of the McGovern-Dole funded operation from March 2015 to the point of the mid-term evaluation, planned for September 2016. The first 8 weeks of the evaluation will encompass desk review, planning, and inception report.

22. The school meals programme is a longstanding WFP operation that has been implemented in Bangladesh since 2001. McGovern-Dole has been one of the primary financial inputs for implementation since 2008 for the agreed target areas. A key aspect of the evaluation will be to measure the programme's progress towards achieving impact as well as the likelihood of attaining sustainability.

4.2. Evaluation Criteria and Questions

23. **Evaluation Criteria** The evaluation will use the standard evaluation criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability, and Impact.¹¹⁰ Gender Equality and the Empowerment of women (GEEW) should be mainstreamed throughout.
24. **Evaluation Questions** Allied to the evaluation criteria, the evaluation will address the following key questions, which will be further developed by the evaluation team during the inception phase. Collectively, the questions aim at highlighting the key lessons and performance of the school feeding activities, which could inform future strategic and operational decisions.

Question 1: How appropriate is the operation? Areas for analysis will include the extent to which the objectives, targeting and activities:

- Are coherent with relevant stated national policies and strategies on education, food security and nutrition, including gender.
- Seek complementarity with the interventions of relevant government and development partners.
- Were coherent at project design stage with relevant WFP and UN-wide system strategies, policies and normative guidance (including gender), and remained so over time.
- Whether the strategies (education, food security and nutrition) and project design were appropriate to the needs of the food insecure population and community, and were based on a sound gender analysis that considered the distinct needs and participation of boys and girls (and as appropriate within the context of the school meals programme, women and men), from different groups and geographical areas, as applicable, and remained so over time.

Question 2: What are the results of the operation? This will entail an analysis of outputs and progress towards outcomes expressed in the results framework (in so far as these can be assessed at the mid-term point); overview of actual versus planned outputs; efficiency issues; assessment of whether assistance reached the right beneficiaries in the right quantity and quality at the right time. Particular attention will be paid to gender disaggregation and analysis.

- The level of attainment of the planned outputs (including the capacity development activities as well the number of beneficiaries served disaggregated by women, girls, men and boys) and the extent to which the intervention delivered results for men and women, boys and girls;
- The extent to which the outputs led to the realization of the operation objectives as well as to unintended effects highlighting, as applicable, differences for different groups, including women, girls, men and boys; how Gender empowerment and equality of women (GEEW) results have been achieved;
- The extent to which gender equality and protection issues have been adequately addressed by the programme;

¹¹⁰ For more detail see:

<http://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm> and
<http://www.alnap.org/what-we-do/evaluation/eha>

- How different activities of the operation dovetail and are synergetic with what other actors are doing to contribute to the overriding WFP objective of developing the capacity of the GOB to manage and implement school feeding; and
- The efficiency of the operation and progress of capacity building of government stakeholders toward eventual handover.

Question 3: The factors affecting the results: the evaluation should generate insights into the main internal and external factors that caused the observed changes and affected how results were achieved. The inquiry is likely to focus, amongst others, on:

- Internally (factors within WFP's control): the processes, systems and tools in place to support the operation design, implementation, monitoring/evaluation and reporting; the governance structure and institutional arrangements (including issues related to staffing, capacity and technical backstopping from RB/HQ as relevant); the partnership and coordination arrangements (how have these partnerships helped/hindered implementation of the programme?); to what extent the implementation partnerships in force are relevant, sufficient and effective etc.
- Externally (factors outside WFP's control): the external operating environment; the funding climate; external incentives and pressures; etc. How has the limitation of available government funding affected the achieved results, caused the observed changes and may affect the success of the capacity development efforts in the future (post-WFP)?

Question 4: To what extent does the intervention's implementation strategy include considerations for sustainability, such as capacity building of national and local government institutions, communities and other partners?

- Are the benefits of the intervention likely to continue after the programme is completed?
- Has the intervention made any difference to gender relations thus far and is it likely to continue once the intervention is completed?

4.3. Evaluability assessment

25. Evaluability is the extent to which an activity or a programme can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion. The below provides a preliminary evaluability assessment, which will be deepened by the evaluation team in the inception package. The team will notably critically assess data availability and take evaluability limitations into consideration in its choice of evaluation methods. In doing so, the team will also critically review the evaluability of the gender aspects of the operation, identify related challenges and mitigation measures and determine whether additional indicators are required to include gender empowerment and gender equality dimensions.
26. The mid-term evaluation will draw on the existing body of documented data, as far as possible, and complement and triangulate this with information to be collected in the field. Specifically, this will include the baseline survey, the first outcome survey, government capacity assessments, previous evaluations of WFP-Bangladesh's School Feeding Program, as well as all monitoring data. The evaluation will employ both quantitative and qualitative methods including: desk review of documents and data, semi-structured interviews and focus groups (to ensure that a cross-section of stakeholders are able to participate and a diversity of views are gathered) and observation during field visits. The selection of field visit sites will be based on objectively verifiable criteria and may include stratified sampling to ensure a representative selection.
27. The results of the first outcome survey will inform the assessment of the project impact in the Mid-Term Evaluation. The first outcome survey is planned to occur in July 2016, one year after the baseline assessment conducted in June 2015. Data should be available to the evaluation team to

provide systematically generated evidence on effectiveness of the school meals programme. The full list of monitoring data available for the evaluation is provided in Annex 5.

28. The evaluation team will have access to the following information for desk review: baseline and assessment reports and data, project documents, the project level results framework (which outlines the strategic objectives, selective outputs, outcomes, and targets) and logframe, and previous evaluations. In addition, the team will have access to relevant WFP strategies, policies, and normative guidance.

4.4. Methodology

29. The evaluation team will design the methodology during the inception phase. The methodology should mirror that of the baseline evaluation. The baseline evaluation employed quantitative and qualitative data collection methods conducted in parallel. Quantitative data was collected via a cross-sectional survey of a sub-sample of SFP schools and beneficiaries. Extensive desk research complemented this process. Qualitative data was collected through focus group discussions (FGD) and Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and provided an independent source of information to triangulate and support the quantitative findings. The only exception to this methodology for the mid-term evaluation will be that data from NON-participating schools will not be included as this will be done for the final evaluation **only**. If the service provider wishes to make adjustments to the baseline methodology, this should be clearly indicated and justified. Overall, the mid-term methodology should consider the following:

- Adopt a program theory approach based on the results framework agreed with USDA. The evaluation team will review, verify, and elaborate if necessary, the theory of change preparing the framework for the mid-term evaluation. Specifically, this will include the baseline survey, government capacity assessments, previous evaluations of WFP-Bangladesh's School Feeding Program, as well as all monitoring data. The results of the first outcome survey will inform the assessment of progress towards the project impact in the mid-term evaluation;
- Draw on the existing body of documented data, and triangulate this with information to be collected in the field using the quantitative methodology as well as appropriate qualitative information; The adequacy of available CO monitoring data to inform the evaluation needs to be reviewed and the methodology adjusted depending on the findings.
- Include: a desk review, semi-structured interviews and focus groups (to ensure that a cross-section of stakeholders is able to participate so that a diversity of views is gathered) and observation during field visits. The selection of field visit sites will be based on objectively verifiable criteria and may include stratified sampling to ensure a representative selection. Field work should take approximately three weeks, however, the service provider is invited to indicate if there are circumstances that would dictate less or more time required. Exact timing of the field visits will be negotiated with the country office to ensure that there is no overlap with regular country office missions. As some of the field locations are quite remote, team members may be required to hike to field locations;
- Apply an evaluation matrix geared towards addressing the key evaluation questions taking into account the data availability challenges, the budget and timing constraints;
- Consider whether the mode of implementation will generate a sufficient understanding of how the programme is addressing the needs of boys and girls.

Impartiality and Independence: Measures are in place to ensure impartiality and independence during the mid-term evaluation. An external service provider will be hired to conduct the evaluation; WFP has appointed a dedicated evaluation manager to manage the evaluation process internally; an internal WFP evaluation committee, led by staff not directly implementing the programme at the country office level, to manage and make decisions on the evaluation; an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) (including WFP and external stakeholders) will be set up to steer the evaluation process and further strengthen the

independence of the evaluation. (**Annex 2 shows the composition of the two groups**) All feedback generated by these groups will be shared with the service provider. The service provider will be required to critically review the submissions and provide feedback on actions taken/or not taken as well as the associated rationale.

Risks: A risk to the evaluation includes a potential difference in the methodological approach used by the service provider between the baseline and mid-term evaluation. To mitigate this risk, a service provider will be chosen from among a well recommended set of evaluation firms that regularly provide services to WFP. Additionally, the inception report will be carefully reviewed and discussed by WFP and stakeholders to ensure methodology and approach are sound.

4.5. Quality Assurance

30. WFP's Decentralized Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS) defines the quality standards expected from this evaluation and sets out processes with in-built steps for quality assurance, templates for evaluation products and checklists for the review thereof. It is based on the UNEG norms and standards and good practice of the international evaluation community (DAC and ALNAP) and aims to ensure that the evaluation process and products conform to best practice and meet WFP's quality standards. DEQAS does not interfere with the views and independence of the evaluation team.
31. The evaluation team should be assured of the accessibility of all relevant documentation within the provisions of the directive on disclosure of information. ***Refer to WFP Directive (#CP2010/001) on Information Disclosure.***
32. DEQAS should be systematically applied to this evaluation and the evaluation manager will be responsible to ensure that the evaluation progresses in line with its process steps and to conduct a rigorous quality control of the evaluation products ahead of their submission to WFP.
33. The CO will designate an Evaluation Focal Point who has no involvement in the daily implementation of the school meals programme. An internal evaluation committee (IEC) will be chaired by the Country Director or his/her deputy. The IEC will ensure due process in evaluation management, providing advice the evaluation focal point and clearing evaluation products submitted to the Chair for approval.
34. The CO will further establish an evaluation reference group of WFP and external stakeholders to review the TOR, inception package, and final report to ensure appropriate safeguards for independence and impartiality.
35. WFP's OEV has developed a quality assurance checklist for its independent evaluations. This includes checklists for feedback on quality for each of the evaluation products. These checklists will be applied to ensure the quality of the evaluation process and outputs. In addition, a post-hoc quality assessment of the final decentralised evaluation report will be conducted by OEV.
36. Concerning the quality of data and information, the evaluation team should systematically check accuracy, consistency and validity of collected data and information and acknowledge any limitations/caveats in drawing conclusions using the data.

5. Phases and Deliverables

37. The evaluation will proceed through the following phases. The evaluation schedule in **Table 2** provides the proposed timeline for each phase over the full timeframe. A summary of the deliverables and deadlines for each phase are as follows:
38. **Preparation phase** (May – September 2016): The RBB Regional M&E Advisor will conduct background research and consultation to frame the evaluation; prepare the TOR; select the evaluation team and contract the company for the management and conduct of the evaluation.

According to the USDA McGovern-Dole programme requirements, draft evaluation ToRs for the mid-term evaluations must be ready for WFP to transmit to the USDA Food Assistance Division (FAD) for inputs and comments three months prior to the start of an evaluation.

39. **Inception phase** (October - November 2016): This phase aims to prepare the evaluation team for the evaluation phase by ensuring that it has a good grasp of the expectations for the evaluation and a clear plan for conducting it. The inception phase will include a desk review of secondary data, finalisation of evaluation methodology and tools and initial interaction with the main stakeholders. The quality assured inception reports must be submitted to the WFP Country Office for approval no later than *two weeks before* the evaluation begins.
- **Deliverable: Inception Report.** The Inception Reports will describe the country context, provide an operational factsheet and a map, and provide a stakeholder analysis. The Inception Reports will also describe the evaluation methodologies and the approach taken by the team to cultivate ownership and organize debrief sessions and quality assurance systems developed for the evaluation. The Inception Reports will include use of Evaluation Plan Matrices, and they will outline how the evaluation teams will collect and analyse data to answer all evaluation questions. Finally, they must include an evaluation activity plan and time line. The evaluation designs and proposed methodologies specified in the Inception Reports must reflect the evaluation plans, budgets and operational environments, and the extent to which methods lead to collection of reliable data and analysis that provide a basis for reaching valid and reliable judgments. For more details, refer to the [content guide for the inception package](#).
40. **Evaluation phase** (November/December 2016): The fieldwork will span two to three weeks and will include visits to project sites and primary (to the extent needed) and secondary data collection from local stakeholders. Accessibility to remote areas should be considered when determining sample size and travel logistics. A debriefing session will be held upon completion of the fieldwork.
- **Deliverable: Exit debriefing presentation.** An exit debriefing presentation of preliminary findings and conclusions (power point presentation) will be prepared to support the debriefings.
41. **Reporting phase** (December – March 2016): The evaluation team will analyse the data collected during the desk review and the field work, conduct additional consultations with stakeholders, as required, and draft the evaluation report. It will be submitted to the evaluation manager for quality assurance. Stakeholders will be invited to provide comments, which will be recorded in a matrix by the evaluation manager and provided to the evaluation team for their consideration before report finalisation. According to the USDA McGovern-Dole programme requirements, the mid-term evaluation reports must be finalized for WFP to transmit to the USDA FAD *within 60 days* following the evaluation fieldwork and *no more than 15 days* after the report has been completed. Quality assured final mid-term evaluation reports must be submitted to WFP COs for final comments and pre-approval *one month before* the USDA deadline.
- **Deliverable : Evaluation report.** The mid-term evaluation report will outline the evaluation purpose, scope and rationale, and the methodologies applied including the limitations that these may come with. The report must reflect the ToR and Inception Report and outline evaluation questions and the evaluation teams' answers to these alongside other findings and conclusions that the teams may have obtained. The reports will also outline interim lessons learned, recommendations and proposed follow-up actions. The evaluation report should be no longer than 25 pages, excluding annexes.
42. **Follow-up and dissemination phase** (April 2017): The final evaluation report will be shared with the relevant stakeholders. A meeting on mid-term evaluation findings and recommendations will include USDA FAD programme staff and WFP CO staff. The USDA FAD and CO management will respond to the evaluation recommendations by providing actions that will be taken to address each recommendation and estimated timelines for taking those actions. According to USDA McGovern-Dole programme requirements, the meeting should be held within 30 days of USDA

receipt of the final mid-term evaluation report. **Deliverable: Evaluation summary with power-point presentation.** As the service provider will simultaneously undertake MGD mid term evaluations in Nepal and Laos, a final briefing to WFP RB and COs will be required during which the service provider will present a summary of the evaluation findings across all three countries. Comparisons and contrasts and lessons learned should be highlighted.

43. The evaluation report will also be subject to external post-hoc quality review to report independently on the quality, credibility and utility of the evaluation in line with evaluation norms and standards. The final evaluation report will be published on the WFP public website. Findings will be disseminated and lessons will be incorporated into other relevant lesson sharing systems.
44. WFP-Bangladesh will coordinate with MoE and USDA to host an educational partners' forum to discuss the findings, and to incorporate adjustments that will strengthen implementation for the second half of the program.
45. **Notes on the deliverables:** The inception package and evaluation reports shall be written in English and follow the EQAS templates. The evaluation team is expected to produce written work that is of very high standard, evidence-based, and free of errors. The evaluation company is ultimately responsible for the timeliness and quality of the evaluation products. If the expected standards are not met, the evaluation company will, at its own expense, make the necessary amendments to bring the evaluation products to the required quality level.
46. Key dates for field mission and deliverables are provided in **Table 3**.

Table 2: Key dates for field mission and deliverables (indicative only - exact dates to be finalized with selected service provider)

Entity responsible	Phase	Activities	Key Dates
ET	Preparation	Prepare budget proposals	12 th September 2016
EM/WFP	Preparation	Selection of service provider	18 th September 2016
EM/WFP	Preparation	Signing of contract	By 26 th September at the very latest
EM/ET	Inception	Draft Inception Package	18 th October 2016
RBB	Quality assurance of draft inception report	Submit draft inception report for external quality assessment as per WFP DEQAS	19 ^h October 2016 (The report will take up to 8 days to be returned)
ET	Inception	Incorporate comments of peer reviewers	4 th November 2016
RBB	Comment on inception report	Stakeholders review and comment on final inception report draft	By 11 th November 2016 one week

Entity responsible	Phase	Activities	Key Dates
EM/ET	Finalize inception report	Final Inception Package	18 th November 2016 one week
CO/ET	Evaluation	Evaluation field mission	To start by 28 th November 2016 at the very latest
ET	Evaluation	Exit Debriefing Presentation	By 16 th December 2016. (will be dependent on time taken for field missions – assumed to be between 2 and 3 weeks depending on the country)
EM/ET	Reporting	Draft Evaluation Report	Between 16 th December 2016 and 20 th January 2017 (given holidays in between, the service provider will have 4-5 weeks to prepare the final draft evaluation report)
RBB	Quality assurance of final evaluation report	Submit final draft evaluation report for external quality assessment as per WFP DEQAS	20 th January 2017 (The report will take up to 8 working days to be returned)
EM/ET	Finalize evaluation report	Incorporate peer review recommendations and produce final draft of evaluation report for stakeholder review	30 th January 2017
RBB	Finalize evaluation report	Stakeholders review and comment on final inception report draft	13 th February 2017
EM/ET	Reporting	Final Evaluation Report	21 st February 2017
CO/RBB	Follow-up	Management Response	30 th March 2017 at the very latest
USDA	Follow-up	USDA Review of MTE	30 days following receipt of final MTE (due to be sent on or before 30 th March 2017)

6. Organization of the Evaluation

6.1. Evaluation Conduct

47. The evaluation team will conduct the evaluation under the direction of its team leader and in close communication with the WFP evaluation manager. The team will be hired following agreement with WFP on its composition.

48. The independent evaluation consultants or consulting companies will conduct and report on the evaluation according to WFP standards:
- Evaluators must have personal and professional integrity.
 - Evaluators must respect the right of institutions and individuals to provide information in confidence and ensure that sensitive data cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators must take care that those involved in evaluations have a chance to examine the statements attributed to them.
 - Evaluators must be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs of the social and cultural environments in which they work.
 - In light of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender inequality.
 - Evaluations sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Also, the evaluators are not expected to evaluate the personal performance of individuals and must balance an evaluation of management functions with due consideration for this principle.
49. To ensure the independence of the studies and the evaluations the role of Evaluation Manager is distinguished from the role of the independent evaluation team. As a result, the Evaluation Manager cannot take the role of a Study and Evaluation Team member. The main functions and tasks expected from the Evaluation Manager, the independent Study and Evaluation Teams, the WFP COs, the OMB and the USDA FAD are described below.

6.2. Team composition and competencies

50. The evaluation team will conduct the evaluation under the direction of the Evaluation Manager. The team will be hired by the company following agreement with OEV on its composition.
51. The evaluation team will comprise of a team leader and other team members as necessary to ensure a complementary mix of expertise in the technical areas covered by the evaluation. All will be independent consultants and may be national or a mix of international and national consultants. The team leader will have strong evaluation skills and experience as well as leadership skills. At least one team member should be familiar with WFP's FFE work and with the USDA monitoring and evaluation (M&E) policy. The team will be selected during a competitive bidding process in line with WFP's regulations.
52. The team will be multi-disciplinary and include members who together include an appropriate balance of expertise and practical knowledge in the following areas:
- Institutional capacity development (with a focus on handover process, cost-efficiency analysis, supply chain management, logistics)
 - School feeding, education, nutrition and food security
 - Agro-economics/rural development
 - Knowledge management
 - Gender and protection expertise / good knowledge of gender issues within the country/regional context as well as understanding of UN system-wide and WFP commitments on gender.
 - All team members should have strong analytical and communication skills, evaluation experience, and expertise or experience in the country or region.
 - All team members should have strong skills in oral and written English. In addition, given the remoteness of some field sites and their limited accessibility, all team members should be in good physical condition.
53. The Team leader will have technical expertise in one of the technical areas listed above as well as expertise in designing methodology and data collection tools and demonstrated experience in

leading similar evaluations. She/he will also have leadership and communication skills, including a track record of excellent English writing and presentation skills.

54. Her/his primary responsibilities will be: i) defining the evaluation approach and methodology; ii) guiding and managing the team; iii) leading the evaluation mission and representing the evaluation team; iv) drafting and revising, as required, the inception report, exit debriefing presentation and evaluation report in line with EQAS; .
55. The team members will bring together a complementary combination of the technical expertise required and have a track record of written work on similar assignments. At least one member of the evaluation team should have gender expertise.
56. Team members will: i) contribute to the methodology in their area of expertise based on a document review; ii) conduct field work; iii) participate in team meetings and meetings with stakeholders; iv) contribute to the drafting and revision of the evaluation products in their technical area(s).

6.3. Security Considerations

57. Security clearance where required is to be obtained from the Bangladesh duty station.
 - As an ‘independent supplier’ of evaluation services to WFP, the evaluation company is responsible for ensuring the security of all persons contracted, including adequate arrangements for evacuation for medical or situational reasons. The consultants contracted by the evaluation company do not fall under the UN Department of Safety & Security (UNDSS) system for UN personnel. Consultants hired independently are covered by the UN Department of Safety & Security (UNDSS) system for UN personnel, which cover WFP staff and consultants contracted directly by WFP.
58. However, to avoid any security incidents, the Evaluation Manager is requested to ensure that:
 - The WFP CO registers the team members with the Security Officer on arrival in country and arranges a security briefing for them to gain an understanding of the security situation on the ground.
 - The team members observe applicable UN security rules and regulations – e.g. curfews etc.

7. Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders

59. The Bangladesh Country Office:

The Bangladesh Country Office management will be responsible for:

- **Timely provision of comments and inputs on all deliverables.** WFP COs will appoint a McGovern-Dole Focal Point, who will review main quality assured deliverables and share these with CO management and programme staff, as appropriate, to solicit comments and inputs and to consolidate and return these to the Evaluation Manager. The CO Focal Point will facilitate CO participation in teleconferences, briefings and debriefings relating to all deliverables.
- An internal evaluation committee chaired by the Country Director(CD)/Deputy Country Director(DCD) will approve Terms of Reference, budget, evaluation team, inception and evaluation reports, which helps to maintain distance from influence by programme implementers.
- A wider Evaluation Reference Group **chaired by the CD/DCD** with representation from different stakeholder groups will be involved in review of draft ToR and inception and evaluation reports— safeguarding against undue influence and bias in reporting.
- **Acting as Key Informants and providing documentation on school meals programmes for baseline studies, and evaluations.** The WFP CO MGD Focal Point and other staff, as required, will be available to act as Key Informants and provide the documentation and data sets required

for production of the midterm evaluation. The WFP CO MGD Focal Point will facilitate site visits and meetings for the evaluation mission.

- Organise security briefings for the evaluation team and provide any materials as required
- **Endorsing all deliverables (draft and final) before submitting these to the USDA FAD through the WFP Washington Office.** The WFP COs will pre-endorse all deliverables before transmitting these for final approval or comments to the USDA FAD through the WFP Washington Office.
- **Provide management response to evaluation findings and recommendations for follow-up action** and participate in debriefings and teleconferences to discuss study and evaluation findings.

60. **The WFP Washington Office will be responsible for:**

- **Managing all communication with the USDA FAD relating to Performance Management** including USDA FAD provision of comments on deliverables and organization of FAD participation in stakeholder discussions of evaluation findings and project-level follow-up;

61. **The Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RB).** The RB management will be responsible to:

- Field and manage selection of independent evaluation consultants, and contract agreement for these services.
- Comply with the evaluations policy's provisions and safeguards of impartiality at all stages of evaluation process: planning, design, team selection, methodological rigor, data gathering, analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations.

62. Assign a Focal Point to support the evaluation.

63. Brief evaluation team, provide technical oversight to the country office, and participate in all debriefings and teleconferences..

64. Provide comments on the TOR, inception report and the evaluation report at the request of the Country Office.

65. Coordinate the management response to the evaluation and track the implementation of the recommendations.

66. **USDA Food Assistance Division (FAD)**

- Provide inputs and comment on all draft mid-term and final evaluation draft ToR.
- Participate in discussions of findings and recommendations that suggest changes in the project strategy, results frameworks and critical assumptions.

67. **Headquarters** Some HQ divisions might, as relevant, be asked to discuss WFP strategies, policies or systems in their area of responsibility and to comment on the evaluation TOR and report.

68. **The Office of Evaluation (OEV).** OEV will provide technical oversight as required to ensure quality assurance standards are maintained.

8. Communication and budget

8.1. Communication

69. To ensure a smooth and efficient process and enhance the learning from this evaluation, the evaluation team should place emphasis on transparent and open communication with key stakeholders. This will be achieved by ensuring a clear agreement on channels and frequency of communication with and between key stakeholders:

- The Evaluation Manager will submit all final deliverables to the WFP COs for pre-approval. Upon pre-approval of deliverables, the WFP COs will forward the deliverables

to WFP's Washington Office with the Bangkok Regional Bureau in copy. WFP's Washington Office will transmit deliverables to the USDA FAD for comments and inputs. All communication with USDA will be transmitted via WFP's Washington Office including invitations to the FAD programme staff to participate in teleconferences to discuss CO management responses to evaluation findings and recommendations.

- The service provider will deliver an evaluation report. USDA comments on final draft report will be taken into consideration by the evaluation team in addition to comments from all external stakeholders in the evaluation reference group. The evaluation team will produce an excel file indicating all comments received and how these were addressed. Exit debriefings will follow all field visits. A final presentation on the overall findings will be delivered to the RBB and the CO.

8.2. Budget

70. **Funding Source:** The evaluation will be funded by the WFP Bangladesh Country Office using the M&E budget allocation in the McGovern-Dole grant funds.

71. **Budget:** The service provider will outline their budget in a financial proposal to WFP as part of their response to the Request for Proposals (RfP). For the purpose of this evaluation the company will:

- Include budget for domestic travel and for all relevant in-country data collection
- Hire and supervise any and all technical and administrative assistance required (including in-country)
- Follow the agreed rates for decentralized evaluations as provided for in your Long Term Agreement (LTA) with WFP.
- Not exceed a budget of USD 120,000 – this should include any foreseen primary data collection and analysis.

Annexes

Annexes to the TOR are not reproduced here. They were:

Annex A – Map (see Annex D in this report)

Annex B – Evaluation reference groups (see Annex I in this report)

Annex 3 – Project Level Results Framework (see Annex E in this report)

Annex 4 – Key characteristics of the operation (see expanded description in Annex B of this report)

Annex 5 – MGD 5 Year Evaluation Map (cf. Table 40 in Annex H in this report)

Annex B McGovern-Dole School Feeding Programme

Introduction

1. This annex provides basic information about McGovern-Dole-supported School Feeding Programme (FFE-388-2014/048-00) in Bangladesh from 2014 to 2017. It includes summaries of the programme's original design (with the original results framework appearing at the end of this Annex – see Figure 8), of its implementation, and of its monitoring and evaluation prior to this MTE.

School Feeding Context

2. WFP started operations in Bangladesh in 1974. In collaboration with the MOPME WFP first introduced a school feeding programme in chronically food-insecure areas of Bangladesh in 2002, with the objective to increase enrolment, reduce drop-out rates, bridge the gender gap and assist with children's concentration.

3. Based on WFP's model, the Government of Bangladesh launched its National School Feeding Programme in Poverty-prone Areas in 2011, offering micronutrient-fortified high energy biscuits (HEB). The same basic approach to SF, based on HEB, is supported in different parts of the country as shown in Table 18 below (see also Map 2 in Annex D).

4. A dedicated school feeding unit was established in the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) under the MOPME in September 2011 and WFP has provided technical support to it. An overall budget revision to the CP was approved in May 2014. This budget revision proposed to scale up the SFP, to continue assistance until 2016 and to expand its capacity building to the Government, with the aim to assist in developing a National School Feeding Policy and Strategy. (For additional details of the SF component of WFP's CP, see Annex J.)

5. In partnership with the Government, WFP also launched a joint school meals initiative in 2013; this provides students with a fresh meal made from fortified rice and oil, protein-pulses and locally procured vegetables. This programme reaches approximately 20,000 school children and at the same time helps local women by offering employment opportunities and buying their garden produce.

Table 18 WFP School Feeding in Bangladesh – location and donors

Division	SL District	District	SL No. Upazila	Upazila	Donor
Dhaka	1	Dhaka	1	Demra	In-kind donations from the GOB, twinning funds from AUSAID and YUM Brand ¹¹¹
			2	Dhanmondo	
			3	Gulshan	
			4	Mirpur	
			5	Mohammadpur	
			6	Motijheel	
			7	Tejgaon	
	2	Jamalpur	8	Islampur	AUSAID
Chittagong	3	Bandarban	9	Alikadom	
			10	Lama	
			11	Roma	
			12	Nikhongchori	
			13	Roangchori	

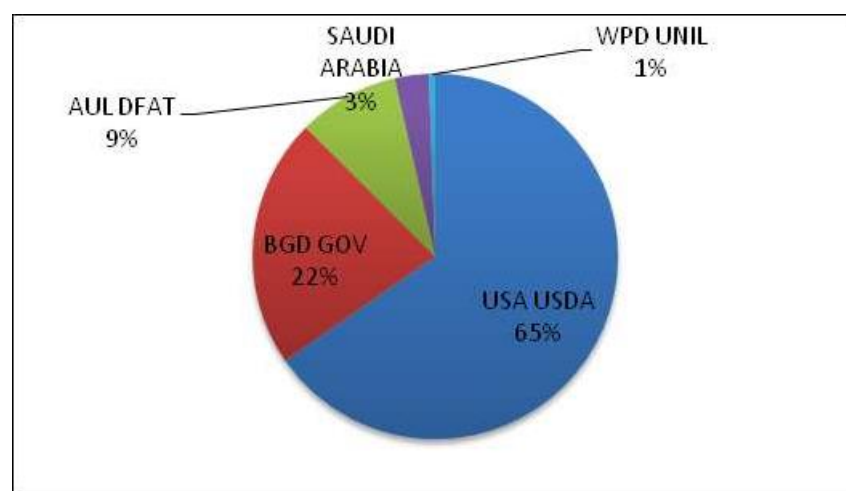
¹¹¹ Twinning funds are needed to cover the associated financial costs (e.g. for transport and storage) associated with an in-kind donation. The September 2016 Country Brief noted: "Out of 10,500 mt of the Government's in-kind wheat, 7,922 mt has been twinned till date under the School Feeding programme. WFP is waiting for the confirmation of USD 500,000 from the high-forecasted YUM BRAND to twin the remaining wheat for the production of micronutrient-fortified biscuits." (WFP,)

	4	Cox's Bazaar	14	Teknaf	AUSAID
			15	Ukhia	
			16	Pekua	
			17	Kutubdia	
			18	Moheshkhali	
Barisal	5	Barguna	19	Bamna	USDA
Rangpur	6	Gaibandha	20	Sundarganj	
			21	Fulchhari	
Source: GOB, 2014					

6. The main donors for the CP School Meals Programme are USDA, the Government of Bangladesh (which also provides wheat in kind), Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Saudi Arabia, and Unilever (WPD UNIL).¹¹² Their contributions are shown in Figure 6 below. Contributions received for the CP's overall SFP as of May 2016: USD 76 million, which was approximately 46 percent of contributions to the overall CP of USD 163,629,766). McGovern-Dole contributed USD49 million under the CP,¹¹³ which is 65 percent of the total requirements. Table 19 below lists the MGD contributions to school feeding under the WFP CP between 2012 to 2016. The subject of this evaluation was the second MGD-funded programme only.

7. Since 2009 the European Union has contributed USD 11.75 million directly to the Government to provide school feeding assistance to 230,000 children in ten upazilas in ten districts in southern and northern Bangladesh. The Government of Bangladesh strongly supports school feeding and, with technical support provided through the MGD-funded SFP, the Government established the National School Feeding Programme in poverty-prone areas in 2011.

Figure 6 USDA and other contributions to WFP school feeding in Bangladesh



Source: WFP TOR (WFP, 2016g)

¹¹² Unilever has funded the SFP in Shyamnagar, Assasuni, Tala and Kalaroa upazilas of Satkhira district (see Annex J).

¹¹³ USDA/MGD first contributed to WFP's SF in 2006; the total of USDA's annual contributions since 2006 is USD88.7 million (source: WFP Washington). The current MGD grant is for USD 26 million.

Table 19 MGD Contributions to WFP SF in Bangladesh 2012 - 2016

Programme	MGD Funds 2012 - 2016	USD	Percent of overall CP	Percent of overall SF
Overall CP		163,929,766		
Overall SF		76,000,000	46%	
	McGovern-Dole Fund 1	23,000,000	14%	30%
	McGovern-Dole Fund 2	26,000,000	15%	34%
Source: WFP Bangladesh CO				

Programme Design

Location of programme activities

8. The MGD-funded SFP initially only operated in Gobindaganj and Saghata upazilas of Gaibandha district. After three months (October – December 2014), formal schools in Gobindaganj and Saghata were handed over to the Government, whereas informal schools continued to receive support.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, the MGD SFP started to support schools in Fulchhari and Sundarganj¹¹⁵ upazilas from January 2015. In August 2016, upazila Sadar – also located in Gaibandha district – was added. This brought the number of upazilas where MGD supports school feeding up to five: Gobindaganj, Saghata, Fulchhari, Sundarganj, and Gaibandha Sadar (See map in Annex D below.) Table 20 below shows the number and type of schools supported in each of these upazilas.

Table 20 Geographical location, implementing partners, types and number of schools

District	NGO	Upazila	Types of School	No. of school
Gaibandha	RDRS*	Fulchhari	GPS	115
Gaibandha	RDRS	Fulchhari	Eb. Madrasha	1
Gaibandha	RDRS	Fulchhari	NGO	84
Gaibandha	RDRS	Sundarganj	GPS	258
Gaibandha	RDRS	Sundarganj	Eb. Madrasha	4
Gaibandha	RDRS	Sundarganj	NGO	40
Gaibandha	RDRS	Gobindaganj	NGO	167
Gaibandha	RDRS	Saghata	NGO	112
Gaibandha	RDRS	Gaibandha Sadar	GPS	220
Gaibandha	RDRS	Gaibandha Sadar	Eb Madrasha	1
Gaibandha	RDRS	Gaibandha Sadar	NGO	169
			Sub total	1,171

Source: WFP CO

¹¹⁴ Formal schools are GOB-run pre-primary and primary schools and madrassas (Islamic religious schools). Informal schools are NGO-run schools.

¹¹⁵ School Feeding in Sundarganj has been ongoing since 2007, but the current MGD support started in January 2015.

Objectives and Activities

9. The MGD programme was designed to provide school feeding assistance to an average of 137,000 pre-primary and primary school children per year in four upazilas (sub-districts) of the poverty-prone district of Gaibandha in North-West Bangladesh, and also to support a critical phase of the handover of school feeding to the Government of Bangladesh.

10. The programme covers students enrolled in 286 non-formal primary schools (supporting 9,143 students) in the two upazilas (sub-districts) of Gobindaganj and Saghata and in 269 non-formal primary schools (supporting 9,611 students) and 375 formal schools (101,748 students) in Sundorganj and Fulchhari upazilas. The SFP started in Fulchhari in January 2015 but has been ongoing in Sundorganj since 2007. Under the programme, students receive a 75 gram packet of micronutrient-fortified high energy biscuits (HEB) each day they attend school (approximately 240 days per year).

11. The overall objective of the CP's SFP is to assist the Government of Bangladesh to achieve universal primary education by increasing enrolment and attendance with nutritional inputs and by providing technical support to the Government.

12. The specific strategic objectives and activities under the MGD-funded part of the SFP are summarised in Table 21 below. The MGD programme places particular emphasis on its literacy component. The specific goal of this MGD-funded SFP is to contribute directly towards MGD Strategic Objective 1 (Improved School Literacy of School-Age Children) and Strategic Objective 2 (Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices) by:

- supporting and implementing activities that promote education, literacy and health among pre-primary and primary school children at the national, regional, and local levels;
- formulating, institutionalising, and operationalising Bangladesh's first National School Feeding Policy (NSFP);
- contributing to the integration of the Government's National School Feeding in Poverty Prone Areas (NSFPPA) programme as an element into the Government's five-year primary education sector programme (the Third Primary Education Development Program or "PEDP-III"); and
- continuing and intensifying institutional capacity support to the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) through WFP Bangladesh's Capacity Support Unit (CSU) located in MoPME's Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) through capacity strengthening as the Government launches and expands its own school feeding programme including the school meals initiative for cooked meals as an alternative to the current use of micronutrient fortified HEB.

13. Table 21 below summarizes the strategic objectives and activities under the MGD-funded SFP. WFP implements this programme under Strategic Objective 4 of its Strategic Plan 2014–2017 to "Reduce undernutrition and break the inter-generational cycle of hunger" (WFP, 2013c).

Table 21 Strategic Objectives and Activities of the MGD-funded SFP

MGD STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES		ACTIVITIES
MGD SO 1:	Improved Literacy of School-Age Children	• Promote teacher attendance • Training for teachers and school administrators • Providing school supplies and literacy instruction materials • Providing micronutrient-fortified biscuits in the first hour of school • providing school meals • School gardens • Economic incentives through school meals and complementary GOB stipend program • Events to raise community awareness on benefits of education • Repair school infrastructure
MGD SO 2:	Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices	• Deliver health and hygiene awareness education • Provide training on safe food prep and storage practices to biscuit producers • Deliver nutrition training as part of “essential learning package” • Provide and maintain clean water and sanitation facilities • Complementary GOB deworming campaign • Training on safe food prep and storage practices to factories and warehouses

Source: WFP TOR (see Annex A above);

Outputs and planned beneficiaries

14. Table 22 below summarises the planned outputs at design stage and achievements by the end of the evaluation period, September 2016. More details can be found in Annex G.

Table 22 Planned Outputs

PLANNED OUTPUTS & ACHIEVEMENTS		
	Initial	Revised
Planned beneficiaries	137,000	163,000 ¹¹⁶
Planned food requirements	In-kind food: 29,200 MT Cash and vouchers: N/A	In-kind food: 23,740 MT Cash and vouchers: N/A
USD requirements	USD 26m	USD 26m

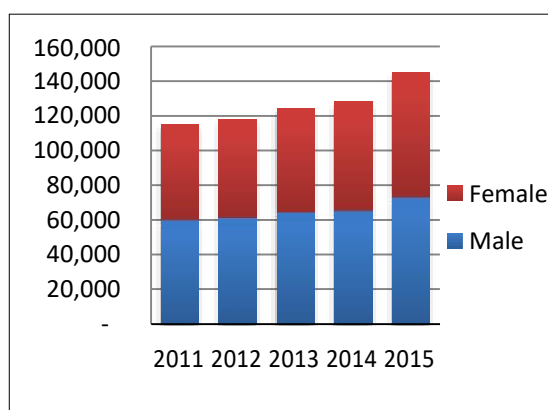
Source: WFP TOR (WFP, 2016g) and USDA Commitment Letter (USDA, 2016)

15. Figure 7 below displays planned beneficiaries by sex at design stage. According to the initially planned figures, slightly more male than female beneficiaries were planned. This, however, was reversed in further targets, as actual enrolment figures showed a higher enrolment of girls than boys.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Figures according to the commitment letter, however, figures disaggregated by sex do not add up to the overall sum.

¹¹⁷ It could also be a mistake in the reporting.

Figure 7 MGD SFP planned beneficiaries (by sex)



Source: WFP TOR (WFP, 2016g)

Outcomes

16. Table 23 below summarises the main expected outcomes relating to the MGD school feeding programme. These are further detailed in the MGD results framework reproduced in Figure 8 below. The MGD objectives and foundational results, as shown below, refer specifically to improved literacy and dietary practices.

Table 23 Summary of MGD Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

MDG Strategic Objective	MGD Expected Outcome
MGD SO 1: Improved Literacy of School-Age Children	MGD 1.1 Improving Quality of Literacy Instruction MGD 1.2 Improving Attentiveness by reducing short-term hunger (MGD 1.2.1) and increased access to nutritious food (MGD 1.2.1.1, 1.3.1.1) MGD 1.3 Improving Student Attendance
SO1 Foundational Results	MGD 1.4.1 Increased Capacity of Government Institutions MGD 1.4.2 Improved Policy and Regulatory Framework MGD 1.4.3 Increased Government Support MGD 1.4.4 Increased Engagement of Local Organisations and Community Groups
MGD SO 2: Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices	MGD 2.1 – 2.3 Improved Knowledge of Health and Hygiene Practices, Safe Food Prep and Storage Practices, Nutrition MGD 2.4-2.6 Increased Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services, Preventative Health Services, and Requisite Food Prep and Storage Tools and Equipment
SO2 Foundational Result	MGD 2.7.4 Increased Engagement of Local Organisations and Community Groups

Planned outputs and outcomes

17. For planned and actual outputs and outcomes see Table 41, Table 42, and Table 43 of Annex G.

Implementation and Revisions

18. USDA signed the McGovern-Dole commitment letter for the SFP in Bangladesh on 24 September 2014 and allocated USD 26 million for donations of commodities, transportation, and financial assistance for a three-year period. Project implementation started immediately,

with HEB pre-financed from other sources until the arrival of the first tranche of commodities in March 2015.¹¹⁸

Table 24 Agreements and Modifications

Agreement/Amendment	Submitted	Approved
CP 200243 (2012 – 2016)	8 September 2011	November 2011 ¹¹⁹
CP 200243 budget revision	21 May 2014	June 2014 ¹²⁰
MGD Agreement		24 September 2014
MGD Modification I		24 June 2016
MGD Modification II	January 2017	pending
WFP proposal to USDA for follow-up SFP FY2018-FY2020	pending	

19. USDA specifically approved and signed (on 24 June 2016) an amendment to the original MGD grant that extends the project coverage to new areas and enhances literacy activities, using underutilised resources. WFP had submitted a modification request in mid-2016 as a response to the first year's USDA consignment of wheat not being fully utilised. This was due to a number of factors: (a) disruptions in distribution because of closed schools during general strikes in early 2015; (b) severe flooding in the area in August 2015; (c) a more favourable exchange rate of wheat-to-biscuits than expected (2.37 MT wheat per 1 MT biscuits as compared to the expected 4 MT wheat per 1 MT biscuits); (d) although attendance rates were in line with estimations, the number of children in the school catchment areas, and hence enrolment, was lower than expected; (e) also, the second yearly consignment of wheat was 2,000 MT larger than expected due to lower transport costs (USD 145/MT vs. USD 215/MT). This amendment was further revised and approved on 12 October 2016.

20. In addition to the geographic expansion, including Gaibandha Sadar, the donations not utilised were proposed to be re-allocated to fund enhanced literacy activities (as baseline reading abilities turned out to be well below expectations), and activities to further improve hygiene and dietary practices.

21. In January 2017 the Bangladesh CO submitted a further modification request. Specific revisions include the expansion of school feeding over a nine-month period (April – December 2017) which would increase the total number of beneficiaries to 483,000 – 488,000, as well as increased capacity development activities up until March 2018 with the goal to strengthen ongoing engagement on the formulation of the school feeding policy and strategy, and to assist the Government to define a gradual transition from HEB to hot meal¹²¹ (WFP, 2017b). At the time of writing this modification request is still pending.

¹¹⁸ This is what was communicated and confirmed by the CO and SO, although the TOR and other documentation state the start dates as March 2015, with the arrival of the first tranche of wheat.

¹¹⁹ At the Executive Board session.

¹²⁰ At the Executive Board session

¹²¹ However, the MTE understands that a transition from HEB to cooked meals is not yet an agreed policy. As the main report makes clear, there is strong evidence that HEB remains an efficient and effective modality.

Partners and Complementary Activities

22. WFP Bangladesh partners with government institutions as well as UN agencies, other donors, NGOs and private partners, as summarized in Table 25 below.

Table 25 Partners under the MGD-funded SFP in Bangladesh

Government	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME), Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Ministry of Food, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), and Ministry of Finance (MoF).
UN agencies	UNICEF, FAO, WHO
NGOs	BRAC, RDRS ¹²²
Private Partners	HEB manufacturers (see ¶36 below),

Source: WFP TOR (WFP, 2016g)

23. Table 26 below provides a brief summary of WFP's FLAs with BRAC and RDRS, followed by further detail extracted from presentations and reports (RDRS, 2014, RDRS, 2015, RDRS, 2016a, RDRS, 2016b, BRAC, 2016a, BRAC, 2016b) as well as the FLAs.

Table 26 Summary of WFP Partner FLAs

Partner	Agreement number	FLA dates	Activity	Cost attributable to WFP (BDT)	Cost attributable to WFP (USD)	Project name
RDRS	2014/006.02/SF/RDRS	01/07/2014 – 31/12/2014	Activities as per original FLA from 2013 in Kurigram and Gaibandha		66,759	School Feeding Programme as part of CP200243
RDRS	2015/005/SF/RDRS This agreement was not seen by the MTE.	01/01/2015 – 31/12/2015			193,207	School Feeding Programme as part of CP200243
RDRS	2015/005.01/SF/RDRS (First Amendment)	01/01/2015 – 31/12/2015	Not clear because the MTE saw only an amendment but not the original FLA and the amendment only includes the revised budget but no details about activities		223,017	School Feeding Programme as part of CP200243
RDRS	2016/010/SF/RDRS	01/01/2016 – 31/12/2016	Literacy, education, community awareness raising, commodity delivery		276,857	School Feeding Programme as part of CP200243

¹²² The MTE also found NGO GUK (Gram Unnayan Karma) as a partner (inasmuch as it was running a school supported by the MGD programme); its website at <http://gukbd.com/> shows both BRAC and WFP among its partners; however, WFP has not signed an FLA with GUK.

Partner	Agreement number	FLA dates	Activity	Cost attributable to WFP (BDT)	Cost attributable to WFP (USD)	Project name
BRAC	2015/033.01/SF/BRAC	01/05/2015 – 31/12/2015	Provision of technical support/capacity building with the goal to improve learning from pre-primary to grade 5	8,126,997	104,293	School Feeding Programme as part of CP200243
BRAC	2016/013/SF/BRAC	01/01/2016 – 31-12-2016	Literacy, education, community awareness raising, capacity development	30,610,536		School Feeding Programme as part of CP200243

Source: WFP FLAs with BRAC and RDRS (WFP & RDRS, 2014, WFP & RDRS, 2015, WFP & RDRS, 2016, WFP & BRAC, 2014, WFP & BRAC, 2015 and WFP & BRAC, 2016)

RDRS Background (<http://www.rdrsbangla.net>)

24. RDRS was established in 1972 as the Bangladesh Field Programme of the Lutheran World Federation, to support Bangladeshi refugees in the North-West of the country implementing relief and rehabilitation work for war-affected people. From 1997 it became a fully Bangladeshi organization, while remaining part of the Lutheran World Federation Associate Programme.

RDRS vision

25. The rural poor and marginalized achieve meaningful political, social and economic empowerment, quality of life, justice and a sustainable environment through their individual and collective efforts.

RDRS mission

26. RDRS works with the rural poor and their organizations to

- Help them establish and claim their rights as citizens
- Build their capacity and confidence to advance their empowerment and resilience to withstand adversity
- Promote good governance among local institutions and improved access by the marginalized to opportunities, resources and services necessary to fulfil a decent life.

27. RDRS first started cooperating with WFP on School Feeding in 2006 and started working on the MGD-funded SFP in Gaibandha in October 2014.

Table 27 Basic Information about MGD-funded SFP via RDRS

Duration	1 October 2014 – 30 September 2017
Upazilas	Gobindaganj, Saghata, Fulchhari, Sundarganj, Gaibandha Sadar
Number of Schools	1,171
Number of Students	172,776 (83,372 boys and 89,404 girls)
Total HEB received up to November 2016	1,811.408 MT
Target HEB distribution	1,547.346 MT
Total HEB distributed up to October 2016	1,516.057 MT

Per month requirement	242.183 MT
Partnering with	BRAC (technical support), GOB Officials at district and upazila levels ¹²³ (overall guidance)

Source: RDRS, 2016b

Box 10 Anticipated Coverage through RDRS

Anticipated Coverage

The intervention area covers a total 153,510¹²⁴ Primary school children in Gaibandha district. RDRS will not only improve education of target groups, but also develop broader knowledge base among children, parents, and community through training/awareness campaign and establishing school gardens.

Source: WFP & RDRS, 2016

Activities

- HEB (and Dates) Storage and Distribution
- School monitoring
- Classroom observation and feedback
- School Vegetable Gardening
- Cooking Demonstration
- Wall Magazine Creation
- Print rich Materials Development for Schools
- Organize Extra Curricular Activity
- Students Recognition and Orientation
- Training for School teachers
- Community Mobilization Workshop
- Formation of Little Agriculture Team
- Activation of Little Doctor
- Enhanced SMC Women Leadership Training
- Remedial Class Operation
- SRM (Supplementary Reading Materials) Activities
- Little ICT Group Management
- Home visits

BRAC Background (www.brac.net)

28. Founded in 1972 as the Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee and subsequently as Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), the NGO now operates across 11 countries, “dedicated to empowering people living in poverty”.

29. BRAC has worked with WFP on school feeding since 2013. As per the latest FLA between BRAC and WFP, BRAC provides technical support to ensure quality primary education.

Vision

30. A world free from all forms of exploitation and discrimination where everyone has the opportunity to realise their potential.

¹²³ District Primary Education Officers, Upazila Primary Education Officers, Assistant Upazila Primary Education Officers.

¹²⁴ Beneficiary numbers change according to coverage of schools and actual enrolment/attendance at schools.

Mission

31. To empower people and communities in situations of poverty, illiteracy, disease and social injustice. BRAC's interventions aim to achieve large scale, positive changes through economic and social programmes that enable men and women to realise their potential.

Table 28 Basic Information about MGD-funded SFP via BRAC

Duration	1 April 2015* – 30 September 2017
Upazilas	Fulchhari, Sundarganj, Gaibandha Sadar
Total number of GPS in Gaibandha	596
Partnering with	RDRS (implementation), GOB Officials at district and upazila levels ¹²⁵ (overall guidance)

Source: BRAC presentation

* FLA was signed in April 2015, and project start was 1 May 2015.

Box 11 Anticipated Coverage through BRAC

Anticipated Coverage

6517 school children in Jamalpur and technical assistance will be provided in Gaibandha district for school feeding programme.

Source: WFP & BRAC, 2016

Objectives

- Increase enrollment, attendance rate and completion rates in primary schools
- Involved staffs are well aware of ensuring an interactive classroom and follow up
- Contribute in improving the learning ability, specially the reading capacity of (I-V)
- To develop capacity of teachers and school management

Activities

- Coordinate and conduct training for assistant teachers of GPS (Teaching Methods & Techniques)
- Coordinate and conduct training for head teachers (Management and Pedagogy)
- Coordinate training for head teachers and assistant teachers only in Gaibandha Sadar
- Distribute supplementary reading material for 264 primary schools.
- Conduct (refresher) training for capacity development for RDRS
- Supervise and monitor schools
- Distribute best student awards
- Prepare and update training modules
- Coordinate with WFP, GOB and RDRS officials

Impact

32. Both BRAC and RDRS are competent implementing partners whose objectives complement WFP's objective well. Based on limited observation in the field, meetings and document/report reviews, both partners are pro-active and make continued efforts to achieve the set goals. Their reports and monitoring feed into WFP's reporting and monitoring system.

33. RDRS quarterly reports from 2014 to 2016, report on a variety of activities, explain underachievement if necessary and include challenges and mitigation matters. Their activities

¹²⁵ District Primary Education Officers, Upazila Primary Education Officers, Assistant Upazila Primary Education Officers.

also include home-visits to sensitize communities to pertinent social and cultural issues and the importance of education.

34. For BRAC only one quarterly report was made available to the ET, however, it also reflects high commitment on the side of BRAC, with 100 percent of the set training targets achieved and monitoring and school supervision during the reporting period ongoing.

Recommendations from RDRS

- Need more initiatives of capacity building for the respective stakeholders
- Arrange exposure visit to enhance knowledge and skills for the staff and teachers
- Sufficient budgetary allocation for effective programme implementation
- Exchange visit especially for technical and managerial staffs

Recommendations from BRAC

- Refresher training for teachers
- Training arrangement for the resource teachers who conduct remedial class
- Enhancement of activities of the SMCs member (encourage more participation in school level activities)

HEB Production and Distribution

35. According to WFP guidelines, the HEB are produced to certain technical specifications which meet international standards of four Codices Alimentary (WFP, 2013f). The MGD SFP provides a 75g daily portion of fortified biscuits containing 338 calories and 66 percent of the recommended nutrient intake (RNI) of essential vitamins and minerals for a school-age child, including vitamins A, B1, B2, Niacin, Pantothenic acid, folic acid, vitamins B6, B12, C, D, E, calcium, magnesium, iron, and iodine (WFP, 2013f). Children are supposed to receive the biscuits 240 days per year. The ration is designed with the assumption that other sources of food consumption will be accessed by children.

36. WFP Bangladesh procures from WFP-approved suppliers (<http://foodquality.wfp.org>) and stores the required quantity of the vitamin and mineral premix in Dhaka. The HEB producers are then responsible for transporting it to their premises.

37. The WFP SFP exchange of wheat for biscuits started in September 2001.¹²⁶ WFP launched a request for proposals (RFP) and short-listed a number of suppliers. There are currently eight local biscuit-producing factories who were selected through a competitive bidding process. These are: New Olympia Biscuit Factory (Pvt) Limited, Resco Biscuit & Bread Factory (Pvt) Limited, Mona Food Industries, PRAN-RFL Center, Hoogly Biscuit Company, Masafi Bread and Biscuit Industries Ltd., Central Marketing Company, Dimond Biscuits Ltd (WFP, nd-f).

38. The procurement process follows WFP's corporate procedures from tendering to contracting. Once the in-kind contribution of wheat has been received from the donor, it is exchanged against HEB from the contracted suppliers who receive the required vitamin-mineral premix from WFP. There are three possible modalities concerning the release of wheat: a) 100 percent release of wheat before the delivery of biscuits, b) 50 percent release of wheat before the delivery of biscuits; c) 100 percent release upon completion of delivery of biscuits.

39. The biscuits are then delivered to the service-delivering NGO's warehouse where they are stored until they are delivered to the schools. RDRS which is the selected service provider,

¹²⁶ WFP Bangladesh CO used to term this 'barter'.

is responsible for preparing a delivery plan, checking attendance and distribution, inspecting the schools for good storage practices, hygiene and sanitation and for reporting back to WFP.

40. WFP has a system in place to improve hygiene and monitor the quality of production and storage through a food technologist at the CO and an inspection agency (Intertek Bangladesh) who are responsible for quality assurance and control.

Essential Learning Package

41. To enhance the effectiveness of the school feeding programme, the distribution of fortified HEB is accompanied by an “essential learning package” that aims to benefit the whole community. The essential package includes a set of complementary activities within the areas of protection, nutrition education, and school health (see Box 12 below).

Box 12 Essential Learning Package

PROTECTION

- **Community Mobilization:** Community mobilization aims to increase awareness of and mobilize communities to act on issues such as the importance of education for girls and boys, raising issues such as early/child marriage, dowry, child sexual harassment, trafficking, child labour, school safety.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

- **Regular health checks** (‘Little Doctors’)
- **Awareness raising on nutrition**
- **Deworming:** Based on the high prevalence of worm infestations (**survey by MOHFW and WHO, 2005**), WFP in collaboration with the World Health Organization, and the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), launched a deworming activity as part of the SFP. This is a routine intervention conducted in all schools by the MOHFW.
- **School Gardens:** Vegetable gardens were first introduced in 2007. School children/‘Little Agriculturalists’ learn sustainable agriculture practices, to use limited space, rotation of crops, preservation of seeds and possible methods for pest control. The idea is that children also take this knowledge home to encourage their families to do the same. If successful, families benefit from additional nutritious home-grown vegetables in the diet, or can generate extra income if they sell vegetables at the market. The activity is implemented in collaboration with the Government Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) in partnership with FAO.

SCHOOL HEALTH

- **Awareness raising on health, hygiene, sanitation (WASH):** Cooperating NGOs have been carrying out this activity among parents, teachers and children. Negotiation is ongoing with UNICEF to build partnerships under its project ‘Better Health and Better Education’.

Awareness raising on HIV/AIDS: HIV/AIDS is an issue in Bangladesh. In collaboration with UNAIDS awareness-raising is conducted through community mobilization workshops.

Monitoring and Evaluation

42. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation arrangements are described in Annex G, while summaries of selected previous evaluations can be found in Figure 8.

Resource requirements and funding situation

43. The MGD contribution for the requested three-year period is USD 26 million, with the planned breakdown shown in Table 29 below.

Table 29 MGD total budget

Commitment Item	Total MGD funding (USD)
Commodity	6,528,600
External Transport	4,166,600
Land Transport Storage & Handling (LTSH)	1,874,900
Other Direct Operational Cost (ODOC)	5,427,500
Capacity, Development & Augmentation	3,100,000
Direct Support Cost	4,379,316
Indirect Support Cost	1,619,314
Total:	26,000,000

Source: WFP Bangladesh CO (received 31 January 2017)

44. Table 30 below provides a summary of the operational facts.

Table 30 Factsheet MGD-funded SFP

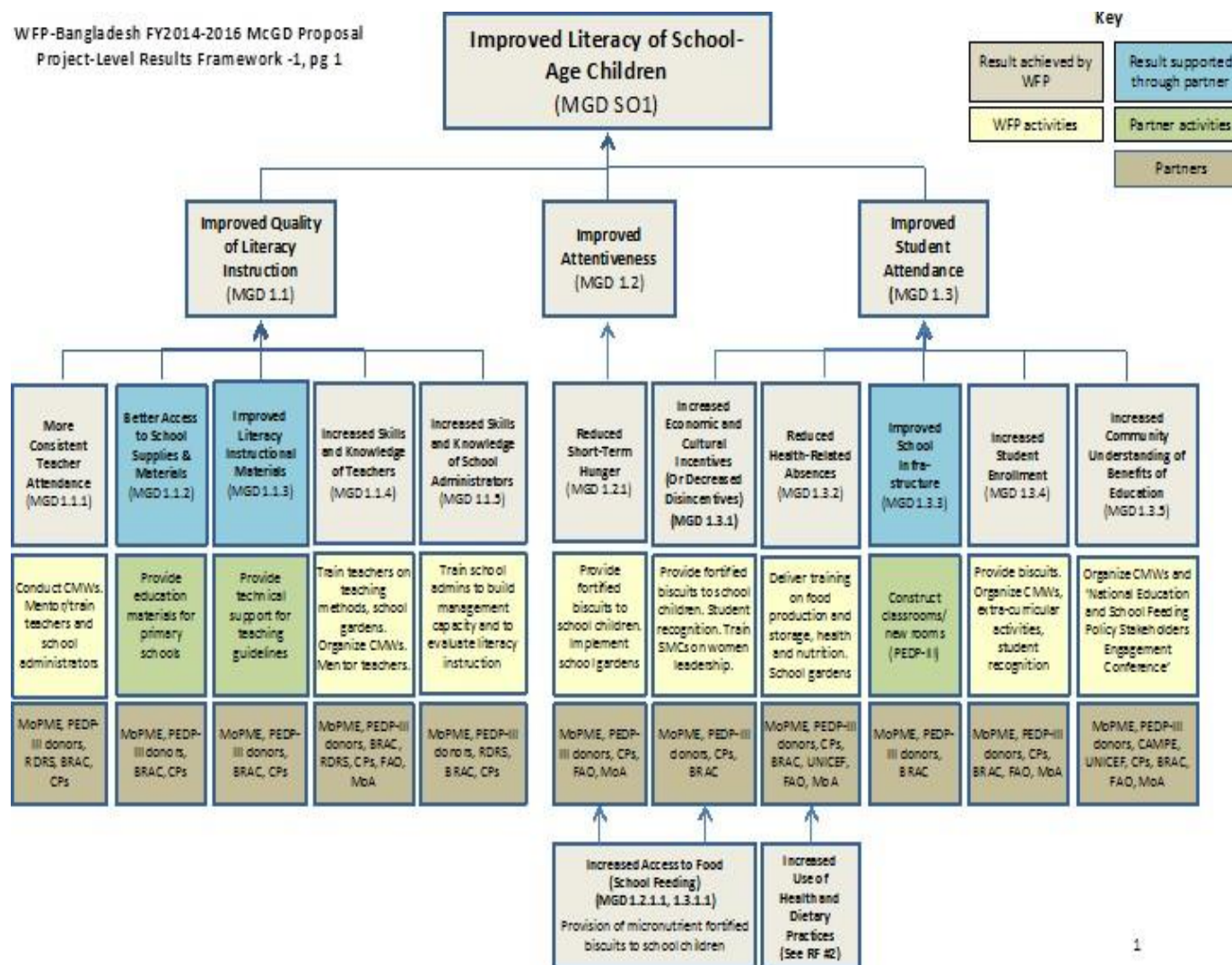
OPERATION		
Approval	USDA signed the commitment letter on October 1, 2014.	
Amendments	A first amendment was approved and a revised version signed by USDA on 24 June 2016, extending coverage to an additional upazila and enhancing literacy activities. A second amendment was submitted on November 28, 2016, which is still pending.	
Duration	Initial: 3 years	Revised: N/A
Start date	Initial: October 2014	Revised: N/A
End date	Initial: March 2017	Revised: N/A
Location¹²⁷	Initial: Two upazilas of Gaibandha district: Gobindaganj and Saghata. After the first three months, operations were handed over to the Government and MGD operations transferred to Fulchhari and Sundarganj upazila. Saghata was added.	Revised: Another upazila, Gaibandha Sadar, was added to Fulchhari, Sundarganj, and Saghata and Gobindaganj.
Planned beneficiaries	Initial: 137,000 Male/Female: As per attendance in schools, usually very close to 50/50	Revised: 163,000 Revised Male/Female: N/A
Planned food requirements	Initial: In-kind food: 29,200 MT Cash and vouchers: N/A	Revised: In-kind food: 23,740 MT ¹²⁸ Cash and vouchers: N/A
Food distributed	Planned (overall): 23,740 MT Planned (by 30 September 2016): 4,251.634 MT	Actual (overall) (by 30 September 2016): 3,207.630MT
Beneficiaries reached	Planned (overall): 163,000 (revised figure) Planned (by 30 September 2016): [no information]	Actual by 30 September 2016: 172,776
USD requirements	Initial: USD26,000,000 The SFP under evaluation is solely and fully funded by MGD-USDA.	Revised: N/A
USD spent	Planned (overall): USD26,000,000 Planned (by 30 September 2016): [no information received]	Actual by 30 September 2016: [no information received]

¹²⁷ A map of the project location is provided in Annex D.

¹²⁸ Food requirements (for the whole project period) lower due to the favourable conditions mentioned under 'Approval' and re-allocation of savings from in-kind wheat to cash.

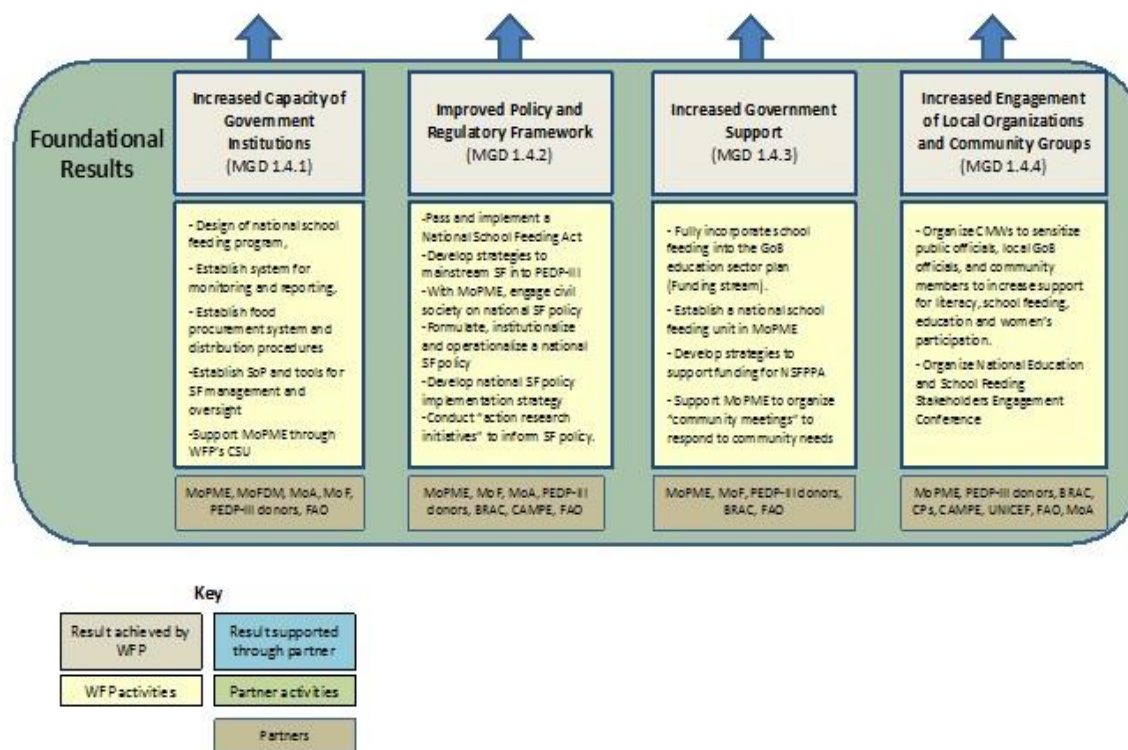
Figure 8 The Original Results Framework

MGD Bangladesh Results Framework, page 1/3



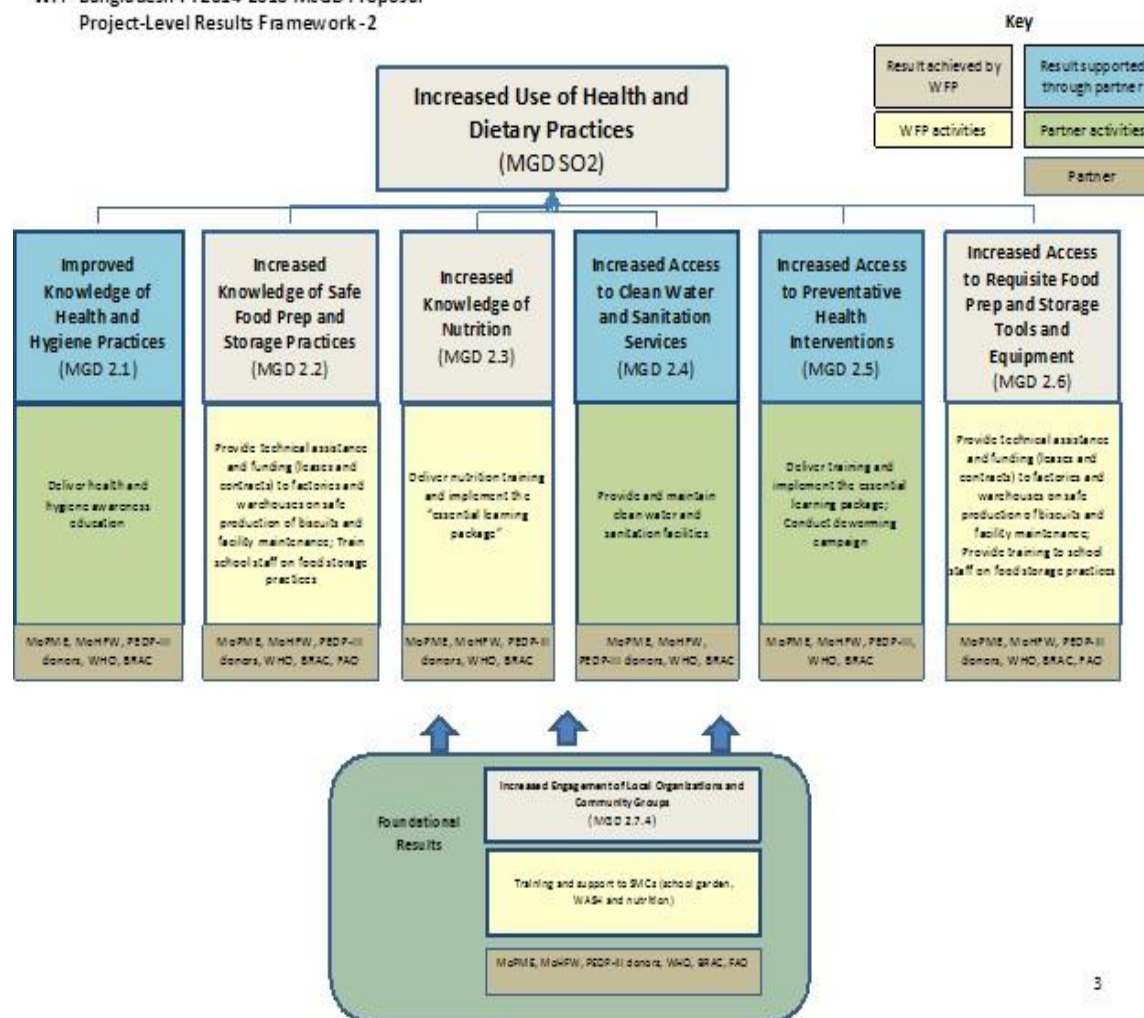
MGD Bangladesh Results Framework, page 89

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Proposal
Project-Level Results Framework -1, pg 2



MGD Bangladesh Results Framework, page 90

WFP-Bangladesh FY2014-2016 McGD Proposal
Project-Level Results Framework -2



Annex C Key Findings from Previous Evaluations

Introduction

1. This annex provides a summary of the key findings from relevant previous evaluations and reviews (as listed in the table below). The most important were the SF impact evaluation (Downen et al, 2011), the MGD baseline survey (Kimetrica, 2015) and the mid-term evaluation of WFP's CP (Downen et al, 2015).

Table 31 Significant previous evaluations and reports

Date	Subject	Ref.
2004	IFPRI evaluation of the SFP in Bangladesh	Ahmed, 2004
2009	Bangladesh CP evaluation (SF component)	WFP, 2009c, Mokoro, 2011c
2011	Evaluation of WFP's School Feeding Policy	Mokoro, 2011a
2011	Impact evaluation of school feeding in Bangladesh	Downen et al, 2011
2015	Evaluation of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement in Bangladesh	Mokoro, 2015a & Mokoro, 2015b
2015	Joint Evaluation of Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Under-nutrition (REACH) 2011-2015	Mokoro, 2015c & Mokoro, 2015d
2015	Kimetrica baseline survey report for MGD-funded SFP	Kimetrica, 2015
2015	Bangladesh Country Programme 200243. Operation Evaluation	Downen et al, 2015
2015	Workshop report on 'School Feeding & its Achievements' – 15 October 2015	WFP & DPE, 2015
2016	DMA first outcome survey data for MGD-funded SFP	DMA, 2016, WFP,

IFPRI evaluation of the SFP in Bangladesh (Ahmed, 2004)

The following paragraphs were the Executive Summary of this report.

2. In July 2002, in order to diminish hunger in the classroom as well as to promote school enrolment and retention rates, the Government of Bangladesh and the U.N. World Food Programme launched the School Feeding Program (SFP) in chronically food-insecure areas of Bangladesh. SFP is the first effort in Bangladesh to provide incentives directly to primary-school children themselves, as opposed to cash or food to parents for sending their children to school.

3. The SFP provides a mid-morning snack consisting of eight fortified wheat biscuits to some one million children in approximately 6,000 primary schools in highly food-insecure rural areas, plus four slum areas in Dhaka City. At a cost of U.S. 6 cents per packet of eight, the biscuits provide 300 kilocalories and 75 percent of the recommended daily allowance of vitamins and minerals.

4. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of the School Feeding Program (SFP) in Bangladesh. The evaluation is based on a number of surveys at the household, school and community levels in addition to achievement tests for the schoolchildren, carried out in late 2003. Some of the major findings are highlighted here.

5. SFP has raised school enrolment by 14.2 percent, reduced the probability of dropping out of school by 7.5 percent, and increased school attendance by about 1.3 days a month. These

results are obtained from econometric models that captured the impact of the SFP alone, isolating the effects of income and other factors.

6. SFP improves children's diets. Calories consumed from SFP biscuits are almost entirely (97 percent) additional to the child's normal diet. The child's family does not give him or her less food at home for eating the SFP biscuits at school. Even poor households do not substitute child calorie intakes from SFP biscuits. These findings are based on a specifically designed experiment and an econometric model to assess the impact of SFP on child energy intake.

7. After rice, SFP biscuits are the most important source of energy, protein, and iron in the diet of program participants. Average energy intake of participating students are 11 percent and 19 percent higher in rural and urban slum areas, respectively, than energy intake of primary school students in corresponding control areas. Participating students also appear to share SFP biscuits with younger siblings and sometimes other household members. Sharing creates an interesting spillover effect: energy from SFP biscuits account for 7 percent of total energy intake of children ages two to five in beneficiary households in the rural area.

8. An extremely high percentage of mothers report several positive effects of the SFP on their children. They note that children's interests in attending school and concentration on studies have increased; they are livelier and happier than before, and their incidence of illness has declined.

9. SFP improves child nutritional status. It increases the body mass index (BMI) of participating children by an average of 0.62 points. This represents a 4.3 percent increase compared to the average BMI of schoolchildren in the control group—a sizable increase that is partly due to the fact that most participating children were malnourished to begin with. Most of the program children had been eating SFP biscuits every school day for more than a year before the IFPRI surveys.

10. SFP improves academic performance. Participation in the SF program increases test scores by 15.7 percent points. Participating students do especially well in mathematics. Students from urban slums do better in achievement tests than do students from rural areas, probably due to the difference in quality between urban and rural primary schools.

11. Urban slums are underserved. SFP is the only national intervention that operates in urban slums, but it only covers four slum areas in Dhaka City. This evaluation shows that about half of all primary school-age children in control, and 41 percent in program, urban slums do not go to school. The corresponding figures in rural areas are 15 percent and 6 percent. In control urban slums, only about half of those who enter primary school stay to complete it. Direct and opportunity costs of schooling are likely to be the main causes for children from poor households in slums not to attend school. Besides low enrollment and high dropout rates, urban slum children are threatened by violence and other social disruptions. Some of these threats can be mitigated if children can be drawn to school.

12. The encouraging findings of this study suggest that the SFP could well be scaled up to benefit many more children—but care must be taken with targeting. To achieve maximum benefit for the cost, the program should cover those areas where undernutrition is a serious problem, school enrolment and attendance rates are low, and dropout rates are high.

13. Urban slums are promising areas for expansion. In rural areas, the Primary Education Stipend Program—a cash-for-education incentive program—is already active throughout the country. For SFP expansion in rural areas, geographical targeting methods—such as Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM)—could be refined to better identify places with the highest concentration of undernourished children and lowest educational attainment.

Bangladesh CP mid-term evaluation 2009 (SF component) (Mokoro, 2011c)

14. A qualitative evaluation of the Bangladesh SFP was conducted as part of a CP evaluation; it covered the SFP between 2007-2008; Details:

Title: *Country Programme Bangladesh CP 10410.0 (2007 - 2010). Final Report. (WFP, 2009c)*

Author(s): *Janet Gardener, Marzella Wüstefeld, Muhammad Taher, and Mirella Mokbel Genequand.*

Date: *October 2009.*

15. The following summary of its SF observations was prepared as part of the evaluation of WFP's school feeding policy (Mokoro, 2011a).

Overall scope

16. The study evaluates the WFP's Country Programme in Bangladesh, which aims to support the Government of Bangladesh in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by improving the food security of ultra-poor households, their nutritional well-being and their livelihoods. The CP was devised to last from 2007-2010, with target beneficiaries totalling 8.9 million. By March 2009, the budget stood at USD 266.9 million.

17. The CP consists of five components:

- Enhance food consumption and livelihoods of ultra-poor women – the Vulnerable Group Development component.
- Enhance the nutrition and health of vulnerable children, mothers and adolescents – the Community Nutrition component.
- Enhance learning and nutrition of school-age children – the FFE component.
- Enhance community resilience to disasters – the Enhancing Resilience component.
- Strengthening national capacity to manage food assistance and hunger reduction programmes – the Capacity-building component.

18. Specifically, the evaluation looks at the relevance and appropriateness of the operation design, efficiency of outputs and implementation processes, as well as results, in terms of effectiveness, impact and sustainability. It then draws conclusions and makes recommendations.

School feeding element

19. Basic data on the SF element

Time period covered

2007 – 2008.

Type(s) of SF involved

The micronutrient fortified high energy protein biscuits.

Numbers of beneficiaries

The FFE programme reached 600,000 beneficiaries over the evaluation period. It supplied all pupils in all 2,821 primary schools in 17 upazilas in three districts.

Financial value of the programme

22% of the USD 266.9 million budget was directed toward the FFE element of the country programme, representing a spend of USD 58.7 million.

Other implementation details

(e.g. involvement of other agencies, links with which government ministries etc.):

20. NGO service providers facilitate transportation and distribution of biscuits from the warehouse to respective primary schools according to letters of agreement. Working arrangements with NGO partners appear effective although there are continuing problems involving delay in the contracting process with the Government of Bangladesh.

21. Overall management of the CP is coordinated through the Economic Relations Division of the Ministry of Finance. The Planning Commission and Finance Division are responsible for the budgetary allocation of cash and commodities. The Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Division receive overall programme accounts and reports.

22. There are long-standing and clear institutional arrangements for the implementation of FFE programmes with the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and Ministry of Women and Children Affairs. The Government of Bangladesh is also planning a national SF programme and is actively considering an up-scaling of the FFE biscuit modality.

23. At community levels, the CP is also developing improved relationships between communities, NGOs and local governments. For example the School Management Committees provide opportunity to empower poorer communities within local governance forums.

24. WFP also has a formal relationship with UNICEF for nutrition and school-feeding.

Stated objectives of the SF programme

25. The FFE component aims to:

- i) Increase primary school enrolment, attendance and reduce dropout rates.
- ii) Improve the attention span and learning capacity of students by alleviating short-term hunger.
- iii) Sensitise and build up capacities of local communities to operate the FFE programme.

Stated targeting criteria

26. Geographical targeting of the CP uses Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping, which targets highly food insecure and poverty prone upazilas where extreme poverty rates exceed 34 % of households. In addition, the FFE targets upazilas with low net enrolment and school attendances, supplying all pupils in all 2,821 primary schools in 17 upazilas in three districts.

Approach to evaluation of SF

Methods used to evaluate SF

27. The evaluation relies on qualitative methods supported by evidence from analysis of quantitative data available from secondary sources, largely provided by Office of Evaluation and the Country Office. The evaluation also involved a three-day briefing mission to Bangladesh for the Team Leader and a four week team mission. Given the limitations of time available for the Evaluation compared with the scale of WFP's operations in Bangladesh, the methods adopted for the field mission were qualitative, aimed at triangulating reports and data, and cross-checking with data and analysis available in other reports or intimated by stakeholder interviews. The principal tools used were interviews and focus group discussions.

28. The efficiency of FFE specifically was determined through confirmation of whether the target number of beneficiaries was reached, established through a review of reports, interviews and focus group discussions. The effectiveness of FFE was gauged through changes in pre-primary and primary school enrolment and attendance, drop-out rates, and learning levels at

primary schools, which was again established through a review of reports, interviews, and focus group discussions.

Acknowledged limitations in the methods used

29. The evaluation was constrained by time and the inability to visit many of the programme sites. However, the mission team considers that it has been possible to visit a sufficient sample of sites to review examples of CP activities, interview an adequate range of stakeholders and complete the qualitative assessment required.

30. The evaluation relied on qualitative methods supported by evidence from analysis of quantitative data available from secondary sources, largely provided by Office of Evaluation and the Country Office.

31. The recent change in government has meant that many of the senior government officials responsible for various aspects of the programme have been changed. Detailed discussion of the Government of Bangladesh's experience of the programme was somewhat constrained.

Findings of the SF evaluation

Educational issues and effects (e.g. influence on attendance, concentration and performance, drop-out)

32. The FFE component has been seen to perform well. There has been an increase in school enrolment (the average increase in WFP assisted-schools was 3.8% at primary level and 31.1% at pre-primary level in 2008), and an increase in school attendance (overall attendance rate was 82% in 2008). The increase in absolute enrolments in grade 5 expressed as percentage of grade 1 enrolment (reduction in drop-outs) shows a slower increase.

33. All teachers in schools visited had observed a positive change in the pupils' attentiveness in class and pupils' cognitive and learning abilities. However, this and the success rates in achievement tests cannot be assessed through regular monitoring and will be documented through the follow-up survey.

34. Although FFE is universal in the direct benefit of fortified biscuit, it is found to be an effective contributor to girls' enrolment, by enabling them to attend school. What is more, the FFE component is found to have promoted the participation of women in school management committees, which has increased steadily and reached an average of 20% during 2008.

Nutritional issues and effects

35. The nutritional outcomes of the programme have not been measured consistently. A report in 2007 indicated that the fortified biscuits help to reduce anaemia. However, the overall effectiveness of the micro-nutrient fortification and the combination with de-worming is not known.

SF as a safety net (e.g. value transfer to households)

36. The evaluation made no reference to the FFE component of the programme acting as a safety net. Rather, the vulnerable group development was portrayed as the primary safety net programme of the government.

SF as a stimulus to the local economy

37. The evaluation does not appear to have addressed this.

Costs and cost-effectiveness

38. The average cost of providing fortified biscuits to primary school children under the FFE programme was estimated at USD10.86 per child per year in 2006. Gelli et al 2006 concluded that the biscuit modality is highly cost-efficient in terms of delivery of food outputs, compared

with other FFE modalities such as school meals. They found that when high energy biscuits are provided in FFE, only 19% of total project costs are non-commodity costs compared with school meals for which 41% of total costs are non-commodity costs.

What was the overall assessment?

39. In terms of relevance and appropriateness, it is concluded that the FFE component does not directly meet the CP goal ‘to support the Government of Bangladesh in achieving the MDGs by improving the food security of ultra-poor households, their nutritional well-being and their livelihoods’. It is however directly relevant to the challenge of maintaining progress in school enrolment and addressing drop-out rates, and increasing learning capacity among children from poor population groups.

40. In terms of effectiveness, the FFE component continues to perform well in increasing enrolment and attendance although reduction in drop-out rates has slowed. The nutritional outcomes of the programme have not been measured consistently and thus the effectiveness of the micronutrient fortification is not known. Understanding this may allow adjustments and possible cost-reductions within the programme.

41. A key issue for the FFE programme is the need for coordination with the quality education initiatives within the Government of Bangladesh’s primary education sector programme, in order to avoid the risk of poor quality education available to newly-enrolled children. Without this, performance of the programme in terms of educational achievement is beyond the control of the programme.

Recommendations of the SF element

42. The following recommendations were made:

- a) The Country Office needs to focus still further on integration of the programme as a whole to improve synergy, impact and cost-effectiveness. Specifically, the recommendation is made to ensure co-location of the full vulnerable group development component, the community nutrition component and the FFE programme.
- b) It is essential that overall programme performance can be assessed regularly and that it is possible to determine effectiveness of all parts of the programme. To ensure that the performance of each part of the programme is assessed and that added-value and effectiveness of WFP inputs are known, it is recommended that better analysis of nutritional impacts of programme is undertaken, specifically concerning the micro-nutrient fortified biscuits.
- c) Generally, the evaluation concludes that the Country Office should place greater emphasis on the long-term aim of enabling the Government of Bangladesh to manage food-based programmes. It is recommended that it should develop for each component, including FFE, a strategy which identifies possible areas of handover, the thresholds required for handover to take place, the benchmarks along the way; as well as develop a comprehensive capacity-building strategy and programme.

Evaluation of WFP's School Feeding Policy (Mokoro, 2011a)

43. The Mokoro evaluation summarised the evidence relating to the objectives of the policy as follows. Although the Policy was subsequently revised (see WFP, 2013e), the evaluation's summary of the evidence-base related to the different benefits claimed for school feeding remains relevant.

44. On **educational benefits**: there is no doubt that school feeding can act as an incentive for enrolment and attendance. It can be targeted effectively to girls through on-site feeding and take-home rations (THR). However, the fact that such effects have often been demonstrated does not mean that they are inevitable (this is a key finding from recent impact evaluations).

Effects further along the causal chain are more controversial. Attendance may be necessary for learning to take place, but it is never sufficient. Learning depends on the presence and quality of teachers, together with other aspects of the learning environment, and there may be little return on investment if children drop out early. School feeding may have undesirable or paradoxical effects on the education system as a whole. For example, it may exacerbate overcrowding and strain inadequate facilities. It has been empirically demonstrated that short-term hunger can impair concentration and cognitive performance, but impact evaluations have found it much more difficult to demonstrate a corresponding performance improvement attributable to school feeding. (This is not wholly surprising, in view of the complementary factors that contribute to learning.)

45. On **nutritional benefits**: the WFP School Feeding Policy (the Policy) acknowledged the importance of the “first thousand days”, which are not directly covered by school feeding. The Policy highlighted the potential importance of school feeding programmes not only in alleviating child hunger in school, but also in enhancing the nutritional status of children particularly when the food is fortified with micronutrients, and referred to the potential cognitive – and hence educational – benefits that may derive from this. There is indeed strong evidence that school feeding can bring such benefits: a large number of studies agree on the direction of effects, but their scale is less clear. At the same time, recent evidence in two areas has tended to strengthen the nutritional relevance of school feeding. The first relates to the spillover effect (the benefits of school feeding that extend to other members of the household), and the second to evidence about the potential positive influence of school feeding on adolescent girls from a life-cycle perspective. The Policy does not mention the latter case, though WFP’s Strategic Plan does.

46. Framing school feeding as a **social protection** measure does not introduce new benefits; it is more a matter of looking at the same effects in a different way.¹²⁹ For example, it highlights the significance of the value transfer that provides the incentive for increased enrolment or for a lower drop-out rate in times of stress. The Policy drew attention to two very important pieces of “pragmatic” evidence: i) as countries develop, they tend to maintain school feeding systems; and ii) school feeding can often be scaled up rapidly (a major lesson of the 2008 crisis). These factors suggest that school feeding should indeed be taken into account when considering the range of available social protection measures. On the other hand, the Policy tends to understate the difficulties in the way of school feeding being seen as the optimal intervention. School feeding may be at a disadvantage because of its high administrative costs and its limited targeting. Its strengths may include an ability to scale up and the low opportunity cost if resources are provided as food aid (though WFP is rightly seeking to make resources more fungible).

47. As regards **Home-Grown School Feeding** (HGSF), the dimension of the local economic benefits derived from it is the hardest to bring within the “social protection” framework, though it can be reconciled with WFP’s broader mandate. It is certainly true that food procurement can be a stimulus to local agriculture, and there are conspicuous examples (including the United States of America and Brazil) where this has contributed to the development of established national school feeding systems. These collateral benefits can attract political support, which reinforces the sustainability of school feeding. The Policy, however, tends to oversimplify the mechanisms through which school feeding may be able to contribute to local economic development.

¹²⁹Indeed, WFP’s 2009 *Rethinking School Feeding* introduced the safety net element. In 2013 WFP’s *Revised School Feeding Policy* announced a “new approach of supporting government-led programmes, and outlined innovations” such as “alignment... with safety net and nutrition policies” although both of these remain problematic in SF in Lao PDR as paragraphs b and c explain.

School Feeding in Bangladesh (2001-2009): A Mixed Method Impact Evaluation (Downen et al, 2011)

This summary is extracted from the Evaluation Brief (WFP, 2011c).

Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation

48. The evaluation used a mixed methods approach that combined 1) a literature review of WFP school feeding policy and programs, and past evaluations and assessments; 2) a quantitative survey of 80 schools; 3) a quantitative survey of 1,890 households in the catchment areas of the sampled schools; and 4) an in-depth qualitative appraisal of 22 communities and schools. Both programme and control areas were surveyed. The evaluation covers the period from 2001 to 2010 and includes observations during the field work in 2011.

Key Findings and Conclusions

49. **Livelihoods** The variability of household livelihoods affects the outcomes and impact of school feeding. Level of vulnerability is relative in Bangladesh, with even those classified as least vulnerable earning a monthly income of US\$45. The income of the more vulnerable households barely covers the minimum estimated costs of food. Even the most vulnerable households invest in private tutoring as a way of addressing problems with the quality of education received in school. Given these additional investments, the share of household income required to cover the combined costs of food and education exceeds monthly income.

50. **Educational Outcomes.** Overall attendance rates in programme schools are higher than control schools. In the NW, attendance rates in programme schools are 6 to 8 percentage points higher than in control schools. In the southern coast, overall attendance in programme schools is nearly 10 percent higher than in control schools.

51. In the NW, class 1 enrolments have increased over the last ten years, in both programme and control schools, while class 4 and class 5 enrolments have decreased, and at higher rates in programme areas. The grade attrition rate is particularly marked in Class 4 and Class 5 in both programme and control schools over the last three years. In the Southern coastal schools, Class 1 enrolments have also increased, but in the programme schools, since 2008, the grade attrition rates have decreased relative to the control schools, especially in Class 2 and Class 4. It is quite possible that the presence of the biscuit has contributed to this reduction; however, the attrition rate at Class 5 is similar to that of the NW with no difference between programme and control schools. All in all, these findings indicate that the attrition rate is a major educational challenge and in every year, biscuit or not, fewer students are enrolled in the subsequent grade.

52. Overall, the gender patterns for educational outcomes suggest that the presence of the biscuit has contributed to female primary education. In 2010 in programme schools, the gender ratio (females to males) was 1.06 compared to 1.01 in the control areas. With respect to the grade attrition rate, however, it appears that girls are as likely as boys to cut short their education prior to finishing primary school, regardless of the presence of the biscuit.

53. The evaluation found that school feeding was a strong incentive for parents to keep children in school especially for those households concentrating in the most vulnerable categories.

54. Transition rates to secondary school for children who complete primary education are very high. Transition to and success in secondary school are strongly influenced by two factors: the education level of the household head, and the household's vulnerability status. Few of the most vulnerable households have a member who has completed secondary school; interviews suggest that the financial burden of secondary school is a serious obstacle.

55. **Nutrition.** The evaluation collected evidence about the diets of school-age children and found that the diets of most primary school-age children in the programme areas were

deficient in energy, vitamins A, B1 and B2, and iron. The evaluation also found that micronutrient, protein and energy contents of school biscuits contributed substantially to improving the nutrition of participating children.

56. There was a general consensus from schools, School Management Committees and mothers in the NW that the biscuit reduces hunger for children at school. They reported that the biscuits reduce hunger, lessen the incidence of skin diseases and alleviate weakness and dizziness in children, which parents believe improves the children's ability to learn. They made the link that if children are attentive and cheerful, the quality of learning improves. Parents and teachers all considered the biscuits to be nutritious and good for their children, some describing them as a helpful substitute to fish and meat that they were unable to provide for them.

57. **Value Transfer.** The biscuits contribute about 4 percent of annual stated household income, and reduce the daily food bill by 4.4% for the most vulnerable households. When the values of school biscuits is combined with the annual education stipend provided by the Government, the financial incentive for the most vulnerable families rises to 10 percent of annual income in the northwest and 8 percent in the southern coast. Certainly, while the benefit would be marginal in economic terms, it is critical to emphasize that these households live on the edge of marginality where a small sum of money saved indeed does make a difference in the lives of both children and parents. The vulnerable households face daily challenges, and the assurance that a child will receive a nutritious bit of food in school is highly important.

58. The school biscuit has been integrated as a resource into the household economy. As such, it becomes one of the many strategies that vulnerable households juggle to survive. For these households, minimal amounts of cash have a significant impact, and the biscuit does reduce the overall food bill of households.

59. **Conclusions.** The achievement of learning outcomes arises from a complex set of interrelated factors, of which school biscuits are one input. While the evaluation showed some positive impacts on attendance and drop-out rates, there is no consistent pattern of the effect on overall performance in programme schools relative to control schools. This limited impact on critical education outcomes reflects shortcomings in the education system – limited contact hours, high student-to-teacher ratios, large class sizes, poor infrastructure, etc. – and economic pressures on households.

60. Parents and teachers perceive school biscuits as an important input; in addition, they help attract children in lower grades to school, and provide a critical supplement to a nutritionally inadequate diet. In spite of the commitment to education expressed by most households, children drop out because they are needed to contribute to the precarious household economy especially for the most poor and vulnerable families. Thus, the value of the biscuit is diminished as the child grows and becomes a more important economic asset to the household. This livelihood reality presents a major challenge because while the biscuit attracts students to school, it does not keep them there.

61. School biscuits also provide an important value transfer, although this is insufficient for the poorest and most marginal households to offset the cost of keeping a child in school as compared to having them work. There is need to examine the school feeding programme strategy and alternative modalities to help offset these factors for older children.

62. Value transfer and other impacts are reduced if pipeline breaks mean that planned school biscuits are not actually delivered and consumed. Actual delivery ranged between 74.2 percent and 91.8 percent of planned from 2007-2010. #

63. The major problem identified in this evaluation has been the lack of impact of school feeding on dropout in the higher grades, completion rates and transition to secondary school.

64. Given the success of the primary school enrolment effort, the evaluation suggests that a priority for Bangladesh is to create the environment for enhancing completion of primary school and transition to secondary school, so that children are able to acquire the skills needed to improve their livelihoods.

Recommendations

65. **Recommendation 1:** Continue to develop integrated and complementary programmes that target the poorest households in the school feeding areas, in alignment with WFP's country programme.

66. **Recommendation 2:** Use policy dialogue to support a strategy designed by the Government and other education bodies to address the issue of quality in schools.

67. **Recommendation 3:** Develop a hand-over strategy for school feeding, in cooperation with the Government.

68. **Recommendation 4:** Adopt a comprehensive approach to school feeding in primary education, with targeted goals for different age groups, including pre-primary, primary and older students in classes 4 and 5.

69. **Recommendation 5:** Support the Government's design of a specific strategy to assist children in the transition to secondary school; it should include a food-for-education component.

70. **Recommendation 6:** Ensure that the micronutrient content of the biscuit meets the WFP objective that 70 percent of the recommended nutrient intake be provided.

71. **Recommendation 7:** Work with the Government to give full consideration to expanding the provision of school biscuits to schools outside the current coverage area, including to religious schools (primarily *madrasahs*) and ethnic-minority schools.

72. **Recommendation 8:** Expand its monitoring and evaluation system to focus on grade attrition in primary school and the reasons for low primary completion rate.

Evaluation of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement in Bangladesh (Mokoro, 2015a and Mokoro, 2015b)

73. Bangladesh was a country case study within the Independent Comprehensive Evaluation of the SUN Movement 2012 - 2015.

74. The evaluation concludes that SUN has made only modest progress in Bangladesh for predictable political, institutional and social reasons. SUN has achieved some valuable awareness raising in civil society, UN and development partner circles and government – probably in that order – but no sustainable results yet. Sustainable progress in Bangladesh will take a lot longer than three years.

Joint Evaluation of Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Under-nutrition (REACH) 2011-2015 (Mokoro, 2015c and Mokoro, 2015d)

75. This evaluation assessed the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of REACH activities and results in Bangladesh among other countries. It also assessed the REACH secretariat's role, processes, coordination arrangements, governance and partnerships. Conducted between January and June 2015, it covered activities implemented from 2011 to 2015. Key findings are summarised below.

Relevance of REACH in Bangladesh

76. Alignment with the national nutrition priorities could not be definitively assessed given that the National Nutrition Policy was not yet approved. However, in a broad sense, given that

Bangladesh is increasingly endorsing global concerns with stunting and an emphasis on nutrition during the first 1,000 days of life, REACH is in line with national priorities. Coherence, alignment and complementarity were challenged in Bangladesh since national nutrition priorities are addressed through two largely parallel planning and management mechanisms. The country implementation plan (CIP) did not mention ‘equity’, though it did set out gender issues in national nutrition challenges. The design of REACH actions only mentioned REACH’s potential to contribute to better understanding of the influence of gender on nutrition outcomes.

Performance at country level

77. **Effectiveness:** REACH efforts at country level were primarily a series of processes, which were flexible, adaptive and to some extent unpredictable. In Bangladesh, REACH made some valuable progress towards achieving the four outcomes – notably outcome 1, through contributions to stakeholder mapping exercises, development of a common narrative, and an advocacy and communications strategy (not approved at the time of the evaluation). Less progress was made towards outcome 2 in terms of drafting the National Nutrition Policy, though REACH did facilitate and support SUN, systematising participation at country level (although it did not become strongly effective). Limited progress was made towards outcome 3, although some coalition and advocacy training was undertaken at district level. Work towards outcome 4 was not fully possible given the absence of the national nutrition policy and a lack of UN agency commitment to coordinated action. However, support to SUN to develop the monitoring framework for the Country Investment Plan arguably enhanced efficiency and REACH contributed to development of a UN/government paper on participatory monitoring for accountability.

78. **Equity:** REACH’s work in Bangladesh has made little direct reference to equity issues, though advocacy and communications have served to raise awareness and strengthen opportunities to explore the issue.

79. **Efficiency:** Implementation of any development intervention efficiently is challenging in Bangladesh, and the political instability during the period under review severely affected operations. Efficiency has been affected by, *inter alia*, the bureaucratic structure of government, factions and divisions between different actors, high staff turnover, and a long delay between drafting of the CIP and posting of the international facilitator. One result of the constraints on efficiency was underspend of the budget – allowing for a no cost extension. The REACH International Facilitator period of engagement was extended to mid-2015.

Contributing factors

80. The political and operational context in Bangladesh was significant in determining REACH’s performance against outcomes. Despite challenging circumstances, achievements were credited to the REACH facilitators’ industrious and tenacious efforts to build incremental progress in both UN co-ordination and enhanced nutrition governance.

Sustainability

81. There is little evidence that the results of REACH are sustainable in Bangladesh, and the consensus is that REACH is leaving too soon. In the absence of REACH, there is concern among some stakeholders that SUN will become less active or collapse. At the time of the evaluation country mission (as of 18 May 2015), no sustainability strategy or transition plan was in place but there were plans to draft one.

Baseline survey report for the MGD-funded SFP – 2015 (Kimetrica, 2015)

82. The objective of this survey of the Bangladesh SFP was to collect baseline data on all of the approved key performance indicators, to serve as a benchmark for subsequent assessment of SFP performance through outcome surveys tracking the same set of indicators. The baseline

survey collected data on education, food security, nutrition and other indicators at the individual, household and school levels. It also collected data on a range of other variables including school infrastructure, school location, teacher attendance, etc. that could potentially affect or explain programme outcomes.

83. A first follow-up outcome survey was conducted by Data Management Aid (DMA) in late 2016 (DMA, 2016). At the time of finalising this Evaluation Report, the report of the outcome survey was still being prepared by the CO, but available data to date have been included in Table 43 of Annex G (also see ¶101 below).

84. The baseline survey report raised a number of issues concerning data quality that have implications for the subsequent assessment of SFP performance. Some of the main ones are reflected in the baseline recommendations which are reproduced in Table 32 below. Thus, in particular:

- a) School record-keeping is poor. This affects data on student and teacher attendance, among others, and also means that record keeping on biscuit distribution is poor (cf. Recommendation 5 in the table). It had been hoped to calculate school feeding attainment (SFA) scores that could later be correlated with other dimensions of performance, but the baseline notes that poor record-keeping meant that "some of the SFAs had to be calculated with sub-optimal data", and, in any case "there is insufficient variation in the SFA scores to allow for meaningful impact attribution at this point".
- b) The baseline found large discrepancies in data on distribution and consumption of biscuits – as spelled out in the text of Recommendation 4 (see the table below).

85. Table 32 below presents the recommendations that were made by the Kimetrica baseline (Kimetrica, 2015), comments on these and references related MTE recommendations.

Table 32 Baseline Recommendations and follow-up

S/N	Recommendation	MTE Findings	MTE comments
1	Revise final target for Strategic Objective 1: Improved literacy of school-aged children, measured as <i>Percentage of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text</i>. The final target of 80 percent of students with fluency and comprehension by 2017, is highly ambitious and is unlikely to be achievable with the existing project activities and resources. We recommend that WFP to approach USDA to revise the final target downward. We also recommend that WFP share these findings with the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME) in Bangladesh and look for strategic partnerships with other organizations aiming at improving literacy status of early grade students.	WFP revised the final target from 80 percent to 50 percent through the first modification, approved by USDA (USDA, 2016); see Table 43 in Annex G	WFP seems to be stretched in its capacity to implement literacy activities. It has wisely chosen implementing partners who are competent in this field. Given the limited data available on this it seems unlikely that even a target of 50 percent will be achieved within the three-year timeframe of the project. Changes like this take time and a concerted effort among development partners in the education sector and the GOB is expected to help reach the goal of improving literacy in the long run.
2	Agree on a final target for Strategic Objective 2: Increased use of health and dietary practices, measured as Average Dietary Diversity Score of school aged children. This indicator was updated during the design stage and, as such, does not have a target defined. We recommend that WFP Bangladesh, with support from the Regional Bureau and	The indicator used in the baseline "Average dietary diversity score of school aged children" is not used in regular monitoring. The indicators used are "Percent of school-age children receiving a minimum acceptable diet (male/female)" and "Percent of target schools	It is suggested that the logframe is revisited and the number of indicators, as well as the wording is reviewed and simplified.

S/N	Recommendation	MTE Findings	MTE comments
	WFP Washington, approach USDA to agree on a reasonable final target, keeping in mind that the baseline average DDS is very low, perhaps as a result of WFP's intentional targeting of poor and food insecure communities.	that use a pest management plan for their food storage facilities" (see Table 43 in Annex G). The DDS was recorded in the first outcome survey; there was a sharp detrerigorqatin between the baseline in 2015 and the outcome survey in 2016, but this may have reflected disruptions in food supply due to floods which occurred just before the outcome survey (see main text ¶92 and ¶66).	
3	Invest in school infrastructure: Both toilets and classrooms in the sampled schools are not sufficient when compared to the national guidelines. Furthermore, very few schools have separate toilet for boys and girls. This clearly indicates the need for increased investment in building/rehabilitating school infrastructure, especially classrooms and toilet facilities. We recommend that WFP share these findings with the relevant ministries in the Bangladeshi government and establish strategic partnerships with organizations working in the WASH sector.	School infrastructure still needs to be improved and under the MGD there are no provisions for this. However, in conversation with WFP staff, an action plan to use MGD funds to repair certain facilities is under development and expected to be finalized in consultation with USDA in the first quarter of 2017.	A concerted effort among development partners and the GOB is needed to ensure the right infrastructure is in place to create a conducive learning environment.
4	Verify/triangulate consumption data: Although schools reported regularly delivering sufficient quantities of biscuits to around 89 percent of students and WFP monitoring reports showing that at least 90 percent of students consume biscuits in schools, only 59 percent of students reported regularly consuming biscuits. Many students reported that they do not regularly consume the biscuits because they are not hungry or they give them to someone else. This suggests that consuming the biscuits is not a priority for many students. We recommend further verification and triangulation of consumption data in order to better understand the discrepancies between data sources and in order to identify ways to maximize consumption. This will allow to explore further some of the aspects not covered by the current baseline survey (i.e. make sure children has not missed out classes during the six days recalling period, if the children gave the entire packet of biscuits to others or partly, reasons why students give biscuits to someone else etc).	The MTE did not collect any quantitative data . However, while most students in conversation said that they eat their biscuits at school and do not share with anyone, there were some who admitted taking some home for siblings and at least in one instance an ET member observed a girl sharing a few biscuits with her dad, a fisherman who had come to the focus group discussion. The MTE noted that the outcome survey in 2016 did collect some information on consumption of biscuits. There was an apparent increase between baseline and outcome survey data, but the reasons for this are not clear (the dip in DDS suggests that it may have been a response to temporary scarcity of other food sources following the flooding. – see main text ¶66).	The baseline recommendation for better verification and triangulation of consumption data has not been adequately followed up, and this issue reappears as one of the main recommendations of the MTE.

S/N	Recommendation	MTE Findings	MTE comments
5	Ensure proper record keeping at the school level: There is insufficient variation in the SFA scores to allow for meaningful impact attribution at this point. Furthermore, the fact that many formal schools (58 percent) do not have complete school attendance and biscuits delivery/distribution records over the 17 months means that some of the SFAs were calculated with sub-optimal data. We recommend that WFP work with the MoPME and other necessary stakeholders to ensure that school records for food delivery and attendance are complete and properly maintained.	Anecdotally, the MTE found that school records are not accurate.	Further awareness-raising of GOB officials, as well as communities and training of teachers and SMCs is needed.

Source: Recommendations are replicated from the Kimetrica baseline survey (Kimetrica, 2015)

Bangladesh Country Programme 200243 – Mid-Term Evaluation (Downen et al, 2015)

Scope and methodology

86. This independent evaluation of WFP Bangladesh’s Country Programme 200243 (2012–2016) was a mid-term evaluation with the goal to assess and report on the CP’s performance and mid-term results, and to provide evidence-based findings to inform future decisions on implementation, design and strategy.

87. The evaluation questions were: 1) how appropriate is the operation; 2) what are the results of the operation; and 3) what factors affected the results? The ET’s rationale for a mixed-methods approach was to ensure triangulation across different types of data sources. The ET employed desk review, observation, and a qualitative study, which built on a CO-supported quantitative outcome survey conducted prior to the qualitative work. This approach increased the ET’s ability to verify findings across varied data sources, and allowed the qualitative study to draw on findings from preliminary quantitative results

88. The outcome survey (Oct/Nov. 2014) was a follow up to the baseline and utilised the same methodology as baseline. During the qualitative field mission (April/May 2015), the team observed activities at schools, community clinics and resilience activity sites. The team used in-depth structured and semi-structured key informant interviews with 140 people including WFP, government, partner staff and donors, and conducted 90 focus group discussions. The ET selected four of 17 active programme areas to assess progress: Kurigram (north), Cox’s Bazar (coast), Satkhira (southwest) and Dhaka. Field sites were selected in consultation with the CO based on baseline criteria agreed by the ET and CO. The ET was not able to visit the school meals pilot due to time and logistic constraints.

89. To understand the dynamics of gender equity and to verify the nature and extent of women’s participation, the qualitative team interviewed women in groups and individually. Data collection processes observed ethical principles for evaluators such as informed consent, systematic inquiry and respect for people. There were no limitations to data quality. The challenge of political volatility caused delays for data collection, but both the quantitative and qualitative work could be adjusted to deliver a timely evaluation.

Key findings

90. **Appropriateness of the operation.** The CP’s objectives and design were found to be appropriate to the country context in that they were responsive to a changing context and coherent with the policies and strategies of external stakeholders, to the needs of the target population of the poor and ultra-poor in remote areas and urban slums, and to addressing the

need to strengthen government capacity and national safety nets. The programme originally aligned with the WFP Corporate Strategic Objectives 2, 4 and 5 and was realigned with WFP Strategic Plan 2014-2017, and with WFP policies on nutrition, SF, disaster risk reduction and management, humanitarian protection and gender.

91. **Results: Outputs and outcomes.** At mid-term the CP reached beneficiary targets at an annual attainment rate ranging from 87-98 percent. IMCN targets for beneficiaries were scaled down to 19 percent of the original target in 2014, partly to comply with new CMAM protocols and also due to resource shortfalls and limited local capacity for implementation. The targeted supplemental feeding programme (TSFP) faced no pipeline breaks. SF beneficiary targets were largely met or exceeded, though the number of feeding days was affected by delays in biscuit production and political crises. The ER¹³⁰ component exceeded targets each year for the proportion of female participants, and when donor contributions declined in 2014 the government provided the cash equivalent of rations. For SGSN,¹³¹ based on the revised programme of work, 100 percent of target beneficiaries were reached in 2013 and 2014.

92. Among notable outcome results, the TSFP achieved recovery rates well above Sphere Standards and showed significant reductions in wasting among children 6-23 months as compared to the control group. **Beneficiaries have learnt new knowledge and skills through behaviour change communication (BCC) but BCC effectiveness is limited by the inability of young mothers to apply their new knowledge and influence household practices.** The follow-up survey showed positive results for the enrolment and completion rates in WFP-assisted schools as compared to baseline. **Attendance rates for WFP-assisted schools are high but slightly below control and government-assisted schools, which can be attributed to the fact that WFP-assisted schools are in the poorest and most remote areas, to a decrease in the value of social transfers as wages and prices rise, and to more accurate monitoring data collected at WFP-assisted schools.** ER support has enabled women and their families to increase household food consumption, reduce coping strategies and invest in productive assets. Nearly two-thirds of ER-only communities have improved capacity to manage climatic shocks and risks. ER Plus has provided an excellent opportunity for women to earn and manage their own cash, which has improved their status and empowerment within their households and community.

93. **Factors affecting results.** The main internal factors that limited the effectiveness of the programme were: the lack of synergy between components, though pilots and research initiatives offer more synergies such as the integration of school feeding and nutrition with livelihood activities in the Enhancing Food Security (EFS) pilot; **the need to strengthen partner staff capacity; and the funding approach, which the ET finds is not meeting the CO's need to respond to the changing donor and development context and the concomitant changes this requires in WFP's role.** The main external factors that have supported positive CP results overall are WFP's standing as a valued partner of government, government ownership of programmes, and strong, trusted external relationships. There is a need for more female NGO staff to interact with female ER participants on topics like women's empowerment, and for recruitment of male nutrition worker/volunteer staff to mobilise youth and religious/community leaders.

Conclusions

94. **Relevance:** The CP was relevant at the time of design but in a rapidly changing context, donor priorities shifted from traditional CP designs, and resource levels declined. WFP's future

¹³⁰ Enhancing resilience to disasters and the effects of climate change.

¹³¹ Strengthening Government Safety Nets.

relevance in Bangladesh would in part depend upon its ability to test innovative approaches, to provide support to policy decisions and to build government capacity to implement existing programmes more efficiently. The **CO had demonstrated its willingness to test approaches of interest to government and donors**, such as the transfer modality research initiative (TMRI) and food security for the ultra-poor programme (FSUP). Inclusion of urban areas was highly relevant; **scale-up should incorporate deeper context analysis and greater synergy between its own activity streams.** (§11)

95. **Efficiency:** WFP is trusted by the Government and other stakeholders, who feel that it is transparent in its communications, which helps ensure accountability in programmes. The CP is somewhat unique in that the **government provides financial or material support to some interventions**, which has enabled WFP to continue to serve beneficiaries. WFP support to government and private sector efforts to locally produce fortified products used in IMCN and vulnerable group development (VGD) will help increase overall cost-effectiveness of these interventions. The staff time required to obtain support for short term programmes and to test innovative approaches increases the workload, and could be addressed more efficiently with internal programme development funds. (§12)

96. **Effectiveness:** The CP has been effective in achieving the changes sought in line with WFP corporate objectives, with nuances as noted in the results section above. **An important aspect of WFP's effectiveness has been its accountability practices, which are recognized and valued by the government and donors.** Going forward, **more comprehensive outcome measurement is needed to provide evidence of the efficacy of new approaches and capture progress of WFP's efforts in government capacity building.** (§13)

97. **Impact:** While WFP's direct coverage has contracted considerably, its collaborative design and implementation of new concepts and approaches with government and other stakeholders is highly valued, and **WFP is able to leverage its experience and skills into policy influence at ministry level and a longer-term capacity-building role with government.** The pilots, research and capacity building WFP undertakes are **helping government to improve how resources are channelled to the poor, such as the evidence generated through the TMRI research on which transfer modalities work best for the ultra-poor.** There is scope for a stronger WFP voice to push forward the multi-sectoral nutrition agenda and to link its successful results on rice fortification, TMRI, nutrition-sensitive safety net support and effective BCC models to the broader agenda. (§14)

98. **Sustainability:** Many of WFP's contributions are sustainable as they are part of or closely connected to the Government's own programmes, and some are financially supported in part by government. **WFP's capacity building with ministries supports sustainability by strengthening national and local capacity to manage development programmes.** Government key informants see more scope for WFP capacity building support, particularly in safety nets and disaster response. (§15)

99. **Gender:** The CP has integrated gender considerations by primarily targeting women and, in **school feeding, by promoting equal access to education;** the ER and SGSN pilots have focused on empowerment of ultra-poor women. **Evidence of successful gender-sensitive programming includes school enrolment at or near gender parity and increased mobility,** and in the WFS pilot, a stronger role for women in household decision-making, and more engagement by husbands in domestic tasks. However, the IMCN and ER components, and EFS within SGSN, demonstrate a need for more gender-specific approaches, including better targeting and greater inclusion of men for BCC messages,

and stronger gender-sensitive staffing for trainings for women and awareness-raising activities for men. (¶16)

Recommendations

Table 33 Recommendations of CP 200243 mid-term evaluation

Operational recommendations
R1: Consolidate IMCN activities in the current targeted focus areas and further develop the capacity of government and community clinics to manage the programme in Kurigram and Satkhira. There is an opportunity for greater collaboration with the health ministry and reinforcement of nutrition mainstreaming at the field level. (CO, short-term)
R2: Reassess the duration of ER activities and the quality of trainings to enhance sustainability and synergy. WFP should engage with government to ensure adequate support and monitoring to ER Plus participants, facilitate a higher-quality mapping exercise of ER, and review training messages. (CO, medium-term)
R3: Strengthen CO staff technical expertise and funding development capacity, and invest in capacity building for field staff, which requires headquarters and regional assistance. (CO, RB and HQ, medium term)
R4: Continue technical support and policy guidance to the government to support the timely and effective institutionalisation of SF, including development of hot meals, adequate district support, and biscuit palatability to retain students. (CO, short and medium term)
R5: Take action with Department of Women Affairs partners to improve systems for community participation, ownership and monitoring of VGD. (CO, medium to long term)
R6: Continue to build evidence for future programming, including revising the M&E system and improving CO capacity to perform robust outcome measurement. Promote the learning from select research projects to focus on scaling up. (CO, medium-term)
Strategic Recommendations
R7: Develop a clear strategy and role for WFP in supporting nutritional outcomes through a comprehensive multi-sectoral/synergistic approach, done in collaboration with key partners. (CO, medium to long term)
R8: Enhance the BCC strategy to address undernutrition of children under two years and the barriers to changes in practice by integrating new approaches, involving the whole community and learning from TMRI and pilots. (CO, short and medium-term)
R9: Examine effective approaches and options for urban programming and develop a clear strategy in collaboration with community and other stakeholders to address the high rates of undernutrition and school drop-outs amongst the urban poor. Engage non-traditional actors and the private sector to explore workplace-based programmes. (CO, medium-term)
R10: HQ should review instruments and consider providing a funding mechanism that invests in research, design and proposal development. The RB should provide leadership to the CO to better understand the donor landscape, analysing donor opportunities and positioning WFP for future funding in the MIC context. (WFP HQ and RB, medium to long term)

Workshop report on ‘School Feeding & its Achievements’ – 15 October 2015 (WFP & DPE, 2015)

100. A national level progress sharing workshop on school feeding was jointly organised by the DPE and WFP in October 2015. Table 34 below reproduces the workshop's recommendations together with a brief commentary by the MTE team.

Table 34 Workshop Recommendations - 15 October 2015

S/N	Recommendation	MTE Comments
1	The taste of the biscuits needs to be changed – a variety of flavours can be added, keeping food value intact.	This was mentioned by teachers, but not by any of the school children or parents. However, the same point is made in Downen et al, 2015. Teachers might reflect the feedback of the students.
2	An integrated approach to education, health, nutrition and sanitation is required for sustainable impact. The ministries of Food, Agriculture, Health and Family Welfare, UNICEF and DPHE should work together	yes, see main text ¶115ff
3	Currently children do not have direct access to stipend money; in future if possible to ensure direct benefit to children, stipend could be transferred to expand SF.	It was clarified that the government issues the stipend money to the name of the mother of the child and it is the mother who directly receives the money, not the student. The CO also mentioned that it is difficult to confirm this money is spent on education or other family urgency. This is why till 2015 when this workshop was held, the Government thought about transferring the stipend fund to school feeding as it directly reaches the students. However, since 2017 the government has introduced mobile cash transfer to the mother and the fund did not transfer to SF. The Government is considering a larger allocation for SF separately.
4	To prevent the misuse of biscuits, the attendance record should properly be maintained based on actual head count.	See recommendation on M&E
5	School Feeding should consider acting under a wider vision of quality education, creating an active workforce through removing micronutrient deficiencies among children and contribute to a hunger free society.	The MGD operation is consistent with this vision.
6	The necessary steps towards a nationalisation of school feeding should be taken as it is an important contributory factor for enhanced learning environments.	See main text section on sustainability.
7	Major stakeholders need to identify action points to agree on an order to proceed further with the preparations for a School Feeding Policy draft.	According to WFP and the GOB (interviews), the School Feeding Policy draft is expected to be shared with a wider audience in early 2017.
8	DPE and WFP are encouraged to organize fund raising workshops, if possible with the presence of the Honourable Minister of Bangladesh to create a contributory trust fund for school feeding with contributions from e.g. wealthy individuals and corporations.	See paragraph ¶131-133.

S/N	Recommendation	MTE Comments
9	The impact of SF should be separated from the impact of other projects in primary education, i.e. a comparative analysis on school feeding impact between treatment schools (SF) and control schools at a current time should be carried out. It would be useful for advocacy and promoting continued investment in SF.	See ¶77.
10	For large scale SF coverage and increased quality in education, communities need to be mobilized. Parents should come forward in this regard, ensuring work is carried out by teachers, education managers, administrators and all other involved stakeholders.	The ET is under the impression that at this point in time this request might burden families more and does not appear feasible considering that most parents in Gaibandha would have a lower socio-economic status than (head) teachers or SMC members. Power relations would probably not be conducive at this point in time.
11	Different school feeding modalities and practices (fortified biscuits/hot cooked meals/bananas/guavas/eggs/milk etc.) need to be explored to suggest a feasible option prior to drafting of the School Feeding policy by MOPME.	The ET is under the impression that it is unlikely that the GOB will decide between HEB and hot meal modality within the next few months. If the school feeding policy is dependent on this, it will most likely be further delayed.
12	As the ongoing SF project ends in June 2017, MOPME should start working on the SF design, i.e. arrangements for a functioning supply chain, monitoring and evaluation and other important issues relevant to the development of a National School Feeding Programme.	The design of the National School Feeding is under discussion and in the plan according to SABER SF Roadmap from August 2016 (SABER, 2016). Simultaneously, the SF Policy finalization by 2017 is expected to provide a firm sense of direction.
13	Social Safety Net investments in school feeding, sharing the best practices from successful global and regional models should be explored in the context of Bangladesh.	See ¶44-46
14	School Feeding as a mechanism to include farmers and to boost the local economy should be investigated. It may generate entrepreneurial skills, small scale factories and the establishment of food processing plants, e.g. for milk and other commodities needed for the school meals.	The school meals pilot that is implemented by WFP in Jamalpur and Barguna includes some dimension of this, where local women can sell their vegetables to WFP for the school meals and others work as cooks. See ¶16, ¶107, Box 5. Economic stimulus of the MGD is aimed more at the biscuit producing industry.

S/N	Recommendation	MTE Comments
15	MOPME will have to work out the feasible funding solutions before taking steps to bring 20 million primary school children under SF coverage.	See ¶131-133. WFP is advocating with the MoPME on ensuring funding for the National School feeding and in the last PSC meeting (held in 2017) the Government indicated that the ministry will try to bring this activity under the revenue budget as soon as the current project ends in June 2018 under the third revision of the project. However, to be able to continue providing technical support, WFP will have to mobilize funds in line with the new approved CSP 2017-2020 (CO communication – March 2017).

Source: WFP & DPE, 2015

Note: MTE comments on recommendations 3, 12 and 15 draw on comments provided by WFP's capacity support unit in response to the first draft of this Evaluation Report.

Outcome Survey 1 for the MGD-funded SFP – 28 November 2016 (DMA, 2016, WFP,)

101. According to the M&E plan (WFP, nd-c, and revised version WFP, 2015b), an outcome survey was to be conducted a year after the baseline (compare Table 40 of Annex H) but was delayed by two months and three weeks. Field work took place in September 2016 and the data were made available to the MTE at the end of November 2016. While some draft sections of the report, which is being drafted by WFP, were made available at the beginning of March 2017 (WFP,), the complete outcome survey report was not yet available at the time of writing of the current report.

102. The survey was carried out by the Bangladeshi survey firm Data Management Aid (DMA) following the methodology used during the baseline by Kimetrica, and the survey team visited the same 95 schools in Sundarganj and Fulchhari.

103. The objective of the first outcome survey is to provide data that can then be compared to the baseline data, in order to assess the development of the indicators against target values. The available data have been included in the main text of the report, as well as in Table 43 of Annex H.

Annex D Maps

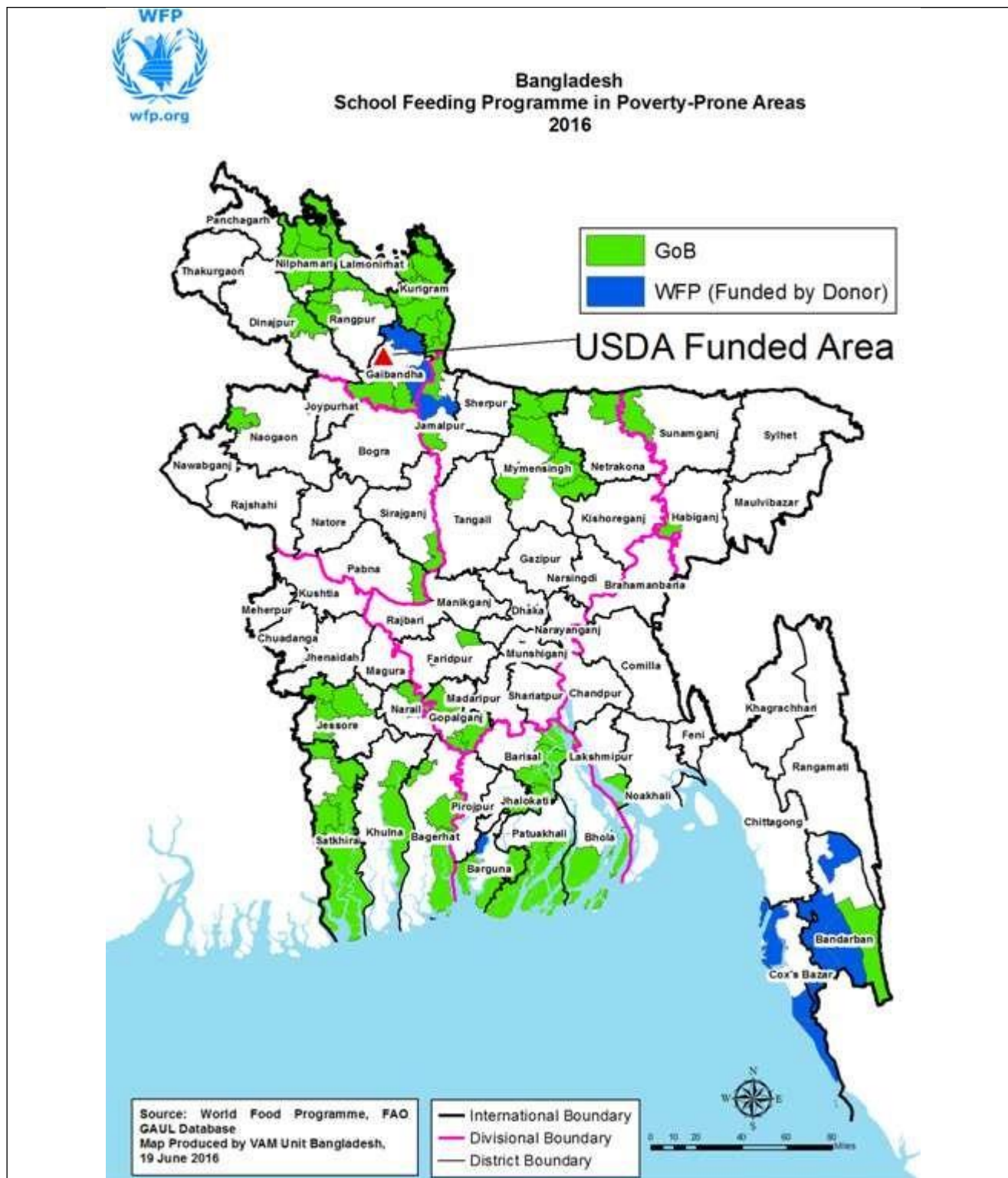
Map 1 MGD-funded SFP in Gaibandha district in Bangladesh (2014)



Source: WFP TOR (WFP, 2016g)

Note: Map 1 above shows the areas where WFP implements SF supported by USDA/MGD, while Map 2 below shows areas where SF is implemented by WFP (various donors), as well as by the GOB. Note that WFP handed over GOB-run schools in Gobindaganj and Saghatia upazilas in Gaibandha district to the GOB in early 2015.

Map 2 Geographical Coverage of School Feeding in Bangladesh (2016)



Source: WFP presentation on school feeding (WFP, 2016l)

Note: Map 1 above shows the areas where WFP implements SF supported by USDA/MGD, while Map 2 above shows areas where SF is implemented by WFP (various donors), as well as by the GOB. Note that WFP handed over GOB-run schools in Gobindaganj and Saghata upazilas in Gaibandha district to the GOB in early 2015, hence the more limited USDA coverage shown in Map 2 above.

Map 3 Priority Areas for WFP Country Programme 2012–2016



Source: Programme Document for CP (WFP,)

Annex E Methodology¹³²

Overview of Approach and Methodology

Following the Terms of Reference

1. This is one of three MTEs commissioned together and undertaken in parallel. The other two MTEs concern the MGD-funded school feeding programmes in Nepal and the Lao PDR. There are some differences in the design of the three MGD programmes, but also strong similarities. The TOR for the three evaluations are very similar, and commissioning the same firm to conduct them in parallel was intended to maximise learning across as well as within the three programmes.
2. The TOR were closely followed in developing the methodology. The methodology adopted also takes account of USDA guidance in respect of MTEs ("Interim Evaluations" in the terminology of the USDA M&E guidelines) – see Box 13 below.

Box 13 USDA M&E Policy on Interim Evaluations

The purpose of interim evaluations may vary across projects and will depend on the evaluation design outlined in the evaluation plan. In general, however, *interim evaluations should be used to assess progress in implementation; assess the relevance of the interventions; provide an early signal of the effectiveness of interventions; document lessons learned; assess sustainability efforts to date; and discuss and recommend mid-course corrections, if necessary.* A variety of methodologies may be used to carry out interim evaluations and may include external reviews, *implementation or process evaluations*, evaluability assessments, or other special studies.

All food assistance projects are required to carry out an interim evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to critically and objectively review and take stock of the project's implementing experience and the implementing environment, assess whether targeted beneficiaries are receiving services as expected, assess whether the project is on track in meeting its stated goals and objectives, review the project-level results frameworks and assumptions, document initial lessons learned, and discuss necessary modifications or mid-course corrections that may be necessary to effectively and efficiently meet the stated goals and objectives.

When conducting the interim evaluation, the project should consider *participatory approaches to involving key stakeholders* including implementing partners or sub-contractors, local and national government partners, project beneficiaries and other donor partners. The project shall also invite USDA to participate in the evaluation, particularly during discussions related to mid-course corrections or changes in strategy, results frameworks, and critical assumptions.

As the final output of the [interim] evaluation, the project is required to submit a detailed report outlining the purpose of the evaluation, methodology, primary questions, findings, lessons learned to date, and recommendations. *The final interim evaluation report should include proposed actions the project deems appropriate to address the review findings and recommendations.*

Source: USDA Monitoring and Evaluation Policy (USDA, 2013, emphasis added)

3. The Mokoro proposal did take issue with one proposed element of the TOR, as explained in Box 14 below, which also highlights the intended added value of this MTE, in terms of looking at all dimensions of the MGD programme.

¹³² The Inception Report (Mokoro, 2016b) provides a fuller description of the methodology developed for this MTE.

Box 14 Relationship between the MTE and the baseline study and its follow-up

TOR on following the baseline evaluation methodology:

The evaluation team will design the methodology during the inception phase. The methodology should mirror that of the baseline evaluation..... The only exception to this methodology for the midterm evaluation will be in that data from NON-participating schools will not be included as this will be done for the final evaluation only..... If the service provider wishes to make adjustments to the baseline methodology, this should be clearly indicated and justified. (TOR ¶35)

Mokoro comments (from technical proposal)

The TOR are very helpful and in most respects provide clear and useful guidance for the MTE. However, we consider that the presumption (TOR ¶35, quoted above) that the MTE methodology should be a "mirror" of the baseline assessment is misplaced. The MTE must certainly build on, complement and be consistent with the baseline assessment. However:

- a) The MTE has different and additional purposes compared with the baseline assessment, including the need to look at foundational results, capacity development and so forth, which, for the most part, the baseline study did not address; its main focus was on school and household indicators, not system ("foundational") indicators
- b) In any case, it is simply impractical to replicate the baseline assessment's systematic questionnaires and large sample size; the MTE has neither the time nor the resources to do it even if it were appropriate. As noted above, an outcome survey that follows up the baseline assessment is a separate exercise that is expected to feed into the MTE. However we will maximise synergy with the baseline study by:
 - visiting schools that were part of baseline sample, so as to exploit possibilities of follow-up;
 - checking follow-up of the baseline recommendations and more generally checking the quality of M&E systems as applied (including the analysis and use of M&E data).

Source: Mokoro Proposal (Mokoro, 2016a)

Evaluation criteria

4. The evaluation approach complied with the TOR in applying the standard evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact; although for the latter two criteria it was noted that it would only be possible to identify initial signals of likely performance at this mid-term stage. The ET also explicitly considered *coherence*, defined as "*The consistency of policy/programme elements with each other (do they complement each other in a positive way?)*". This can be applied as *internal coherence* to the different elements of a school feeding programme, and as *external coherence* to the consistency of the school feeding programme with other related programmes. Annex F includes definitions for all the evaluation criteria. Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (GEEW) was mainstreamed throughout.

Mixed methods and theory-based approach

5. As envisaged in the TOR, the evaluation adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining desk review and analysis of documents and data with semi-structured interviews and focus groups and observation during field visits. At the heart of it was an analysis of the **theory of change** (ToC) underlying the design of the MGD programme. See Figure 10 below, where the ET took account both of the MGD programme's own results framework (Figure 8 above) and of the ToC that underpins WFP's 2013 school feeding policy (Figure 9 below, WFP, 2013e) in elaborating the implicit ToC for the MGD programme that was evaluated.

6. The principal purpose of this approach was to analyse the understanding of causality implied in programme design and, by identifying the assumptions underlying that understanding, to determine key factors or issues likely to explain the degree to which the

programme is achieving (or likely to achieve) its objectives. Particularly through the assumptions identified in the ToC analysis, the ToC directly informed the full evaluation matrix presented in Annex F.

7. In principle, a contribution analysis approach would be relevant for a complex intervention where the MGD operation seeks to contribute to broad outcomes which depend also on other actors and interventions. However, this was not practical (a) because it is very early in the course of the intervention to assess the wider outcomes to which it may have contributed, (b) because of the small scale of the programme relative to some of the wider outcomes it seeks, and (c) because of limitations in the quality of performance data, as discussed in Annex G.

Evaluation questions and evaluation matrix

8. The team developed a series of evaluation questions (EQs), guided by (but not restricted to) the four key questions and their associated sub-questions specified in the TOR. These questions are set out in a full evaluation matrix (Annex F) and are also shown in Table 35 below, which cross-references them to the evaluation criteria.¹³³ As noted above, the EQs are directly correlated with the ToC analysis. For each EQ, the matrix shows the analysis and indicators that were used to answer it; the main sources of information for this purpose; and how the findings of each question were triangulated. Wherever appropriate, gender dimensions were factored into the sub-questions, judgement criteria and indicators for each EQ (see ¶26 below).

Table 35 Evaluation questions

Key Question 1: How appropriate is the operation?		Evaluation criteria
EQ1.	How coherent are the operation's objectives, targeting and activities with relevant stated national policies and strategies on education, food security and nutrition, including gender?	relevance
EQ2.	To what extent have the operation's objectives, targeting and activities sought complementarity with the interventions of relevant government and development partners?	relevance external coherence
EQ3.	To what extent were the operation's objectives and targeting coherent at the design stage with relevant WFP and UN-wide system strategies, policies and normative guidance (including those on gender), and how far have they and the operation's activities remained coherent with them?	relevance external and internal coherence
EQ4.	Were the operation's strategies appropriate to the needs of the food insecure population and community at design stage, and have they remained appropriate?	relevance
EQ5.	Were the operation's strategies based on a sound gender analysis that considered the distinct needs and participation of boys and girls (and as appropriate within the context of the school meals programme, women and men), and have they continued on that basis?	relevance
Key Question 2: What are the results of the operation?		
EQ6.	To what extent have planned outputs, including capacity development activities, been attained?	efficiency
EQ7.	To what extent have planned outcomes been attained?	effectiveness sustainability

¹³³ The EQs, along with the rest of the Inception Report methodology, were reviewed and approved by the internal and external reference groups prior to finalisation of the Inception Report.

EQ8. How adequately has the operation addressed gender equality and protection issues?	effectiveness sustainability
EQ9. How fully are the operation's activities dovetailed with those of other donors and agencies in building GOB capacity to manage and implement SF?	external coherence efficiency effectiveness
EQ10. How efficiently has the operation worked with the GOB towards handover, and how likely is the GOB to continue to implement an effective SF programme following WFP withdrawal?	efficiency sustainability
Key Question 3: What factors have affected the results?	
EQ11. How significant have internal WFP process, system and logistical factors been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	efficiency internal coherence
EQ12. How significant have WFP's monitoring and reporting arrangements been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	efficiency effectiveness
EQ13. How significant have WFP's internal institutional and governance arrangements been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	efficiency effectiveness
EQ14. How significant have WFP's partnership and coordination arrangements been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	efficiency effectiveness
EQ15. How significant has the external operating environment, been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	effectiveness external coherence
EQ16. How significant has the national political and policy environment been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	effectiveness external coherence
EQ17. How significant have domestic and external funding factors been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	efficiency effectiveness sustainability
Key Question 4: To what extent does the intervention's implementation strategy include considerations for sustainability?	
EQ18. To what extent has the operation made explicit efforts to promote sustainable SF after programme termination?	sustainability impact
EQ19. Are the benefits of the operation likely to continue after the programme is completed?	sustainability impact
EQ20. Has the operation made any difference to gender relations thus far, and is that change likely to be sustained after the programme is completed?	effectiveness sustainability impact

The role of theory of change analysis

9. WFP's grant application to MGD was structured in terms of a results framework that linked to the overall strategic objectives (SOs) and intended outcomes of the MGD programme. Appended to the main grant application document were diagrams of the results framework. These are reproduced in Figure 8 above.

10. The theory of change from WFP's school feeding policy (WFP, 2013e), is an important reference point and is reproduced as Figure 9 below.

11. Even if a programme has not adopted an explicit theory of change (ToC), it is increasingly recognised that elaborating its implicit ToC can be a valuable foundation for an evaluation.

12. There are some similarities between a logical framework and a theory of change, but an important distinction is that the latter also sets out *why it is expected that something will cause something else*. It opens up the black box between programmes and observed changes

(or lack of change), and makes explicit the underlying assumptions or conditions on which causal chains depend. This is important for policy-relevant or formative evaluation.

13. Theories of change consider initiatives in their contexts, which include the immediate technical environment, but also the social, political and economic contexts within which the initiative operates. This is useful for evaluating initiatives that operate in many different contexts.

14. Preparing a theory of change where an explicit theory does not already exist is a way to check whether the evaluators' understanding of a programme's or a policy's intentions and assumptions correspond with those of its protagonists. It then provides a basis for identifying key issues for the evaluation to investigate (which typically will relate to testing of the main underlying assumptions in the ToC). This in turn feeds into the questions and sub-questions identified in the evaluation matrix.

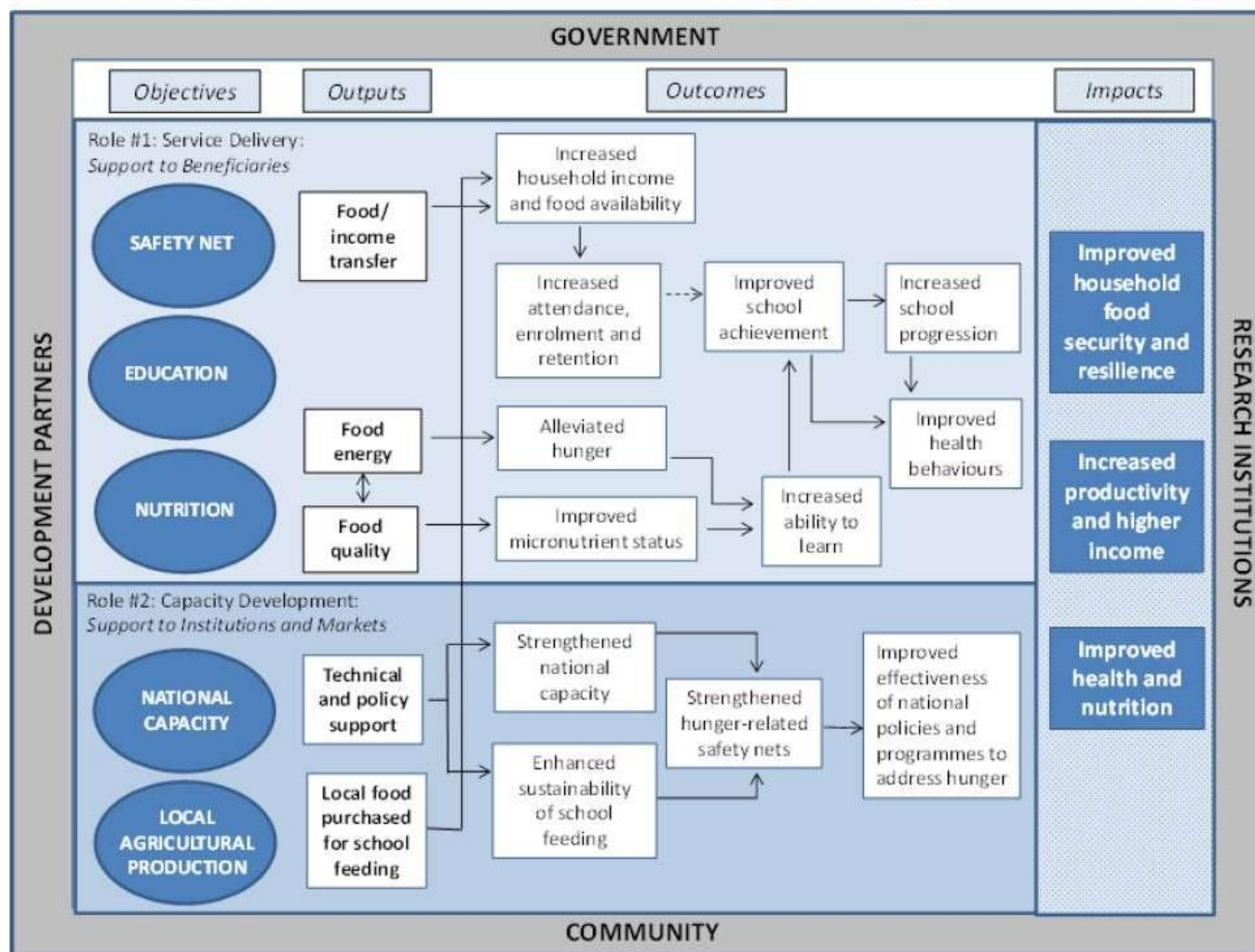
15. The ET developed an implicit theory of change for the Bangladesh MGD programme, which is depicted in Figure 10 below.

16. The small numbered boxes in the ToC diagrams in Figure 10 below represent the assumptions listed in Table 36 below. For reasons of graphical simplicity, they could not all be positioned optimally, and it could well be suggested that some of them could more meaningfully be placed elsewhere. In several cases, one assumption is shown at several places on one or both of the diagrams, indicating the multiple points in the results framework to which it is relevant.

17. Table 56 in Annex K summarises the MTE's assessment of the validity of each of the assumptions identified in the ToC.

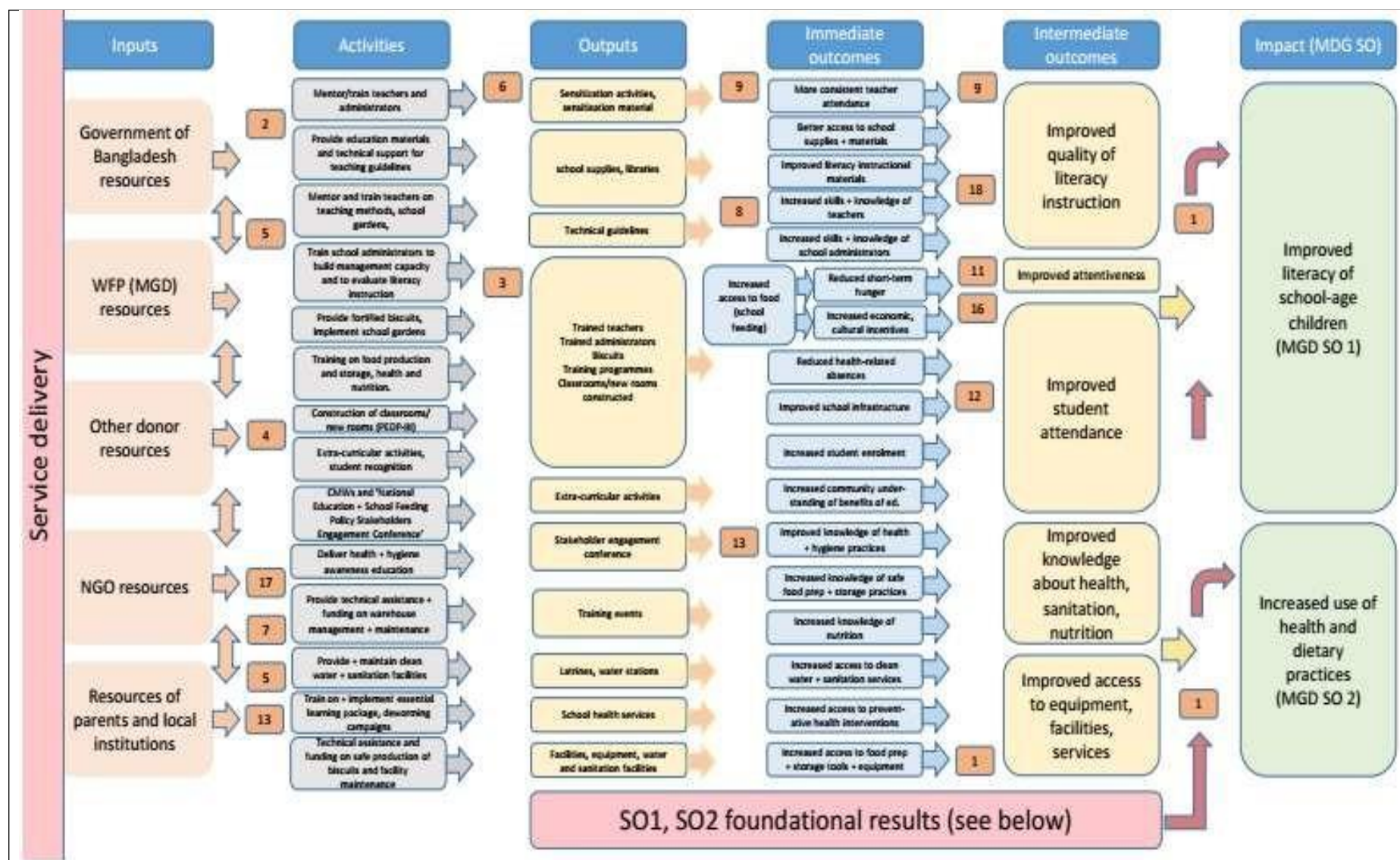
Figure 9 Theory of change for school feeding (WFP School Feeding Policy, 2013)

First Type of Results: Child Outcomes and Theory of Change for School Feeding



ANNEX I

Figure 10 MGD Bangladesh Implicit Theory of Change



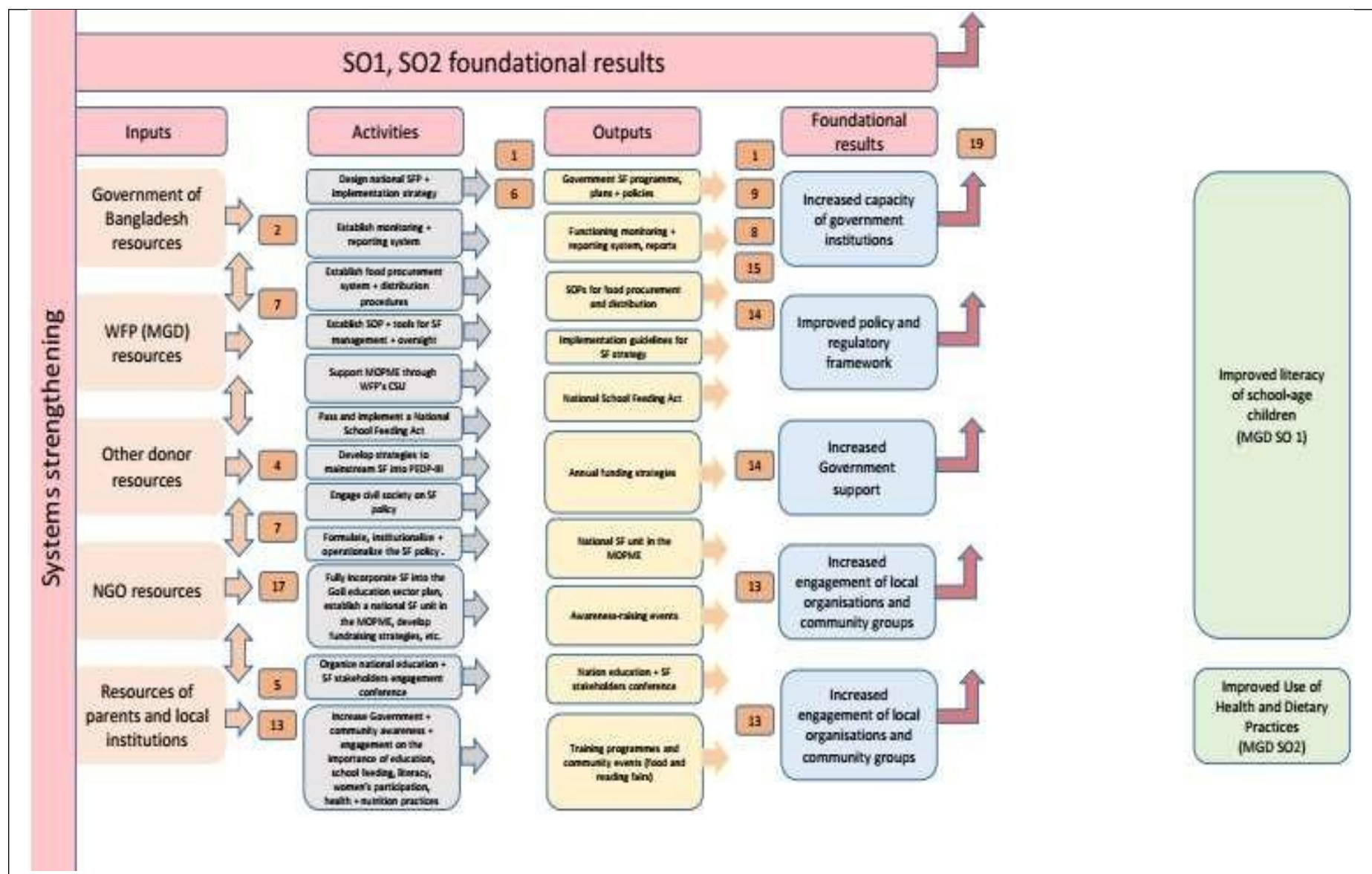


Table 36 The Theory of Change Assumptions and related EQs

Number	Assumption	Evaluation Question related to the assumption
1	The entire viability of the programme, as its design rightly acknowledged, depends on the assumption that work on the foundational results receives sufficient attention and is implemented as thoroughly as the rest of the programme.	1, 6, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 18,
2	Another basic assumption was that there would be continued support and commitment by the Government of Bangladesh for a national school feeding programme.	1, 2, 4, 10, 16, 17, 19
3	As in many WFP operations an important assumption was that the food pipeline would be stable and the significant logistical challenges could be managed.	3, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17
4	The programme links at many points with the inputs and activities of other donors. It was assumed that these other donors would maintain a strong, co-operative, co-ordinated presence.	2, 3, 9, 14, 17,
5	At the macro level, programme design assumed that there would be adequate GDP growth, controlled inflation, currency stability and an adequate flow of remittances – all factors affecting beneficiary livelihoods as well as national fiscal health.	2, 4, 7, 15, 16, 17
6	As ever in Bangladesh, it had to be assumed that there would be an adequate response to natural disasters.	15, 17
7	Given the various roles envisaged for the private sector in the programme, the grant application specified its assumption that business would indeed be engaged and supportive.	6, 7, 14, 15, 18
8	Programme design noted the problems of staff turnover and (re)deployment. The ToC therefore notes the assumption that these personnel changes will not be at a level that diminishes the effectiveness of staff and institutional capacity development.	6, 7, 9, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19
9	Design assumed that the GOB would be willing to work on developing and implementing a NSFP.	1, 6, 7, 10, 16, 17, 19
10	Given the importance of health and nutrition objectives for the programme, and the generally difficult sanitation and hygiene situation in many parts of the country, a clear implicit assumption was that sanitation and hygiene initiatives would be implemented sufficiently to prevent the health benefits of SF being diminished by poor sanitation and hygiene at schools.	1, 2, 4, 9, 14
11	Much global debate about SF has concerned the causal links between fortified biscuits and enhanced academic performance, as well as actual attendance at school. For this programme, an obvious basic assumption was that its causal assumptions about the influence of SF and related measures on student attentiveness are correct in the local context.	3, 4
12	Similarly, it was assumed that the programme's causal assumptions about the influence of SF and related measures on student attendance are correct in the local context.	3, 4

13	An important assumption in the causal design of the programme is that parents and other local community members are willing to perform the roles that the programme envisages for them.	4, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 20
14	More at the level of the foundational results, a basic assumption in this and many other such programmes is that policy, strategies and procedures are not only formulated but also meaningfully implemented.	1, 3, 4, 5
15	Corresponding to the programme's design emphasis on upgrading monitoring and reporting systems associated with SF, the ToC notes the assumption that the improved systems are adopted and used efficiently.	6, 7, 12
16	The health and nutritional benefits of the programme are dependent in part on the assumption that deworming programmes are carried out as envisaged.	6, 7, 9, 14
17	With important roles assigned to NGOs in programme design, another notable assumption is that the NGOs in question, and by extension all relevant elements of the Bangladesh NGO sector, are adequately capacitated and institutionally stable.	6, 7, 8, 12, 14
18	It had to be assumed that the various measures taken to upgrade the awareness and competence of teachers in participating schools would lead, as intended, to more consistent teacher attendance.	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15
19	Design envisaged that, by the end of the programme period, two districts could be handed over for future Government implementation of SF, with sufficient capacity developing to take over more districts soon thereafter. An important assumption is that the programme would indeed be able to achieve this degree of institutional competence and readiness.	2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19

Data collection methods and tools

Overview

18. The ET used a pragmatic mixed methods approach in addressing the EQs. This section explains the different instruments employed and the approach to triangulating evidence from different sources. The ET sought both triangulation and complementarity between methods (see Box 15 below).

Box 15 Triangulation and Complementarity

Methods can be combined in different ways:

‘Triangulation’: confirming and corroborating results reached by one method with other results reached by another method. For instance, when beneficiaries of a project's service state that they judge it good (or bad); this can be cross-checked by collecting quantitative data on coverage and accessibility of the service.

‘Complementarity’: results obtained by a method help better understand those obtained by another method. In-depth theory-based approaches may help understand reasons why a project led to unexpected results; qualitative methods may help clarify concepts and define variables; and large-scale data sets may be analysed by multivariate and case-based methods.

Source: Stern et al, 2012.

19. Quantitative data that are available were sought, but it was beyond the scope of this evaluation to collect primary quantitative data. Moreover, some of the key issues for the evaluation did not easily lend themselves to quantitative assessment.¹³⁴ This reinforced the case for careful combination of methods, linked to an elucidation of the theories of change underlying the different interventions.

Stakeholder Analysis and Interviews

20. The Inception Report (Mokoro, 2016a, see its Annex F) included a detailed stakeholder analysis and mapping, which informed the consultation strategy and identification of interviewees. Figure 11 below is an overview of the main internal and external stakeholders. The team employed a comprehensively consultative approach to the evaluation, approaching as wide a range of stakeholders (see Annex I) as time allowed and ensuring that the views of all key groups were considered, reflected and triangulated, with full attention to the gender issues involved.

21. By default, interviews were treated as confidential; they were systematically written up by team members using a standard template and shared through a compendium in a confidential section of the e-library. The compendium enables interview notes to be easily searched by topic, and facilitated triangulation of different interviewee recollections and perspectives.

Figure 11 Internal and External Stakeholders in the Evaluation

Internal Stakeholders	External Stakeholders
WFP CO: Act as an internal reference group; responsible for country level planning, providing documents, arranging field visits, meetings, and workshops, etc. WFP RBB: Act as an internal reference group, responsible for oversight and technical guidance. WFP HQ: Providing policies and strategies; interest in the lessons learnt. WFP OEV: Guidance of DEQAS; has a stake in ensuring independent and credible evaluation. WFP Washington Office: responsible for donor relations with USDA	Beneficiaries: Includes direct beneficiaries of the SFP and the schools/communities receiving support. GOB: Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, Directorate of Primary Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, to ensure alignment with national priorities. NGO partners: BRAC and RDSR are implementing the SFP and other activities. They are interested in recommendations, partnerships and strategic orientation. UN Agencies: implementing partners in areas such as education and school gardens. USDA: as the donor has vested interest in effective performance. Other Aid Agencies: working in the same field – cooperation is always key

Principal data collection

Document/ literature review and review of secondary data

22. The bibliography in Annex L is drawn from a much larger e-library of documents gathered with the support of RBB, the Evaluation Manager and the Bangladesh CO. The e-library includes a comprehensive collection of WFP's internal data, including Standard Project Reports (SPRs) and annual work plans, together with country-level data on performance in the various sectors in which WFP is engaged. The previous evaluations summarised in Annex C were especially important sources.

23. M&E data for the MGD programme are noted in Annex G. The evaluation carefully analysed available monitoring data on the programme. Important sources were CO reports on output and

¹³⁴ This applies to issues that are intrinsically difficult to quantify (e.g. capacity development) and those where causality is very complex, and cannot be rigorously proven over a short time period and with limited data (e.g. the long-term effects of school feeding).

outcome data relative to baselines, as well as WFP SPRs and – where available and reliable – M&E data from the electronic Standard Project Reporting system (eSPR). The evaluation matrix (Annex F) shows which EQs such data helped to answer.

Field visits & sampling

24. In consultation with the CO, a field visit programme was prepared that enabled the team to visit 15 schools (run by GOB and NGOs) in sub-districts (upazilas) of Gaibandha district in the north of Bangladesh (see Map 1 and Map 2 in Annex D), as well as to conduct interviews with various other stakeholders (see Annex I). The schools were selected based on sampled schools included in the baseline (Kimetrica, 2015) and follow-up surveys, ensuring coverage of schools falling with WFP's three performance categories (see Annex I for details of the country visit programme). Given the time constraint, schools within a reasonable distance were chosen for the ET to cover within the time available. Table 37 below shows the selection criteria adopted, and (in the final column) the extent to which the field visit was able to cover the intended ground). The number of schools visited was reduced from the planned 22 to 15, due to longer than anticipated travel times in the field; furthermore, the team was not able to visit a school implementing the pilot school meals programme because of geographical distances – the school meals pilot is implemented in the districts of Jamalpur and Barguna (see Map 2 in Annex D).

Table 37 Site selection criteria

Criteria	Description	As implemented
Sampled schools from baseline survey	The first selection criterion for schools was that should have been sampled schools included in the baseline and follow-up outcome surveys. The baseline survey methodology followed a quantitative data collection approach, consisting of a cross-sectional survey of a sub-sample of programme primary schools and beneficiaries. In June 2015, data were collected from 95 formal schools in two sub-districts of Gaibandha (Sundergonj and Fulchhari) and 40 on formal schools in The reference period for the school survey was the academic year 2014-15, starting in January 2014 and ending in December 2015. Given the time constraint, schools within a reasonable distance were chosen for the ET to cover within the time available. A secondary focus would be NGO-run schools most of which are likely to be non-formal schools which have been provided with nutrition support but no education support. To ensure greater coverage of schools the ET will split into two groups for the coverage of schools.	The CO pre-selected a list of schools in the upazilas Sundarganj and Fulchhari from the list of schools covered under the baseline and the follow-up surveys. The ET then randomly selected schools from the list (see Table 38 below) by drawing the names of schools from a pot and double-checking that all three performance categories were represented equally (2xA, 3xB, 3xC). The visited schools are highlighted in blue in Table 38 below. In addition five informal, i.e. NGO-run schools were visited. The team stayed together for three school visits, and split for the other 12.
School feeding modalities	WFP has been providing 75 gm packet of micronutrient fortified high energy biscuits to all children for 240 days. The biscuits are produced in Bangladesh by local producers with wheat provided by MGD-USDA. Although the same modality has applied across all MGD schools, cooked meals are being provided elsewhere under a WFP pilot programme; ET visits to a small number of schools providing cooked meals was envisaged if these had been located in the same district as that of MGD (Gaibandha), which according to the CO they are not.	ET visits to a small number of schools providing cooked meals were envisaged if these had been located in the same district as the MGD SFP (Gaibandha). Since they are located in Jamalpur and Barguna, this was not possible.

Criteria	Description	As implemented
Performance	To understand the factors influencing school feeding, schools that perform well and schools that perform less well will be included. WFP has categorized schools into three performance categories: A,B, C with A being the best. These categories are based on the performance of the schools in relation to the quality of education provided, management of school feeding activities and general management of schools.	The team visited schools from all three performance categories as envisaged (2xA, 3xB, 3xC). This was done by randomly drawing the names of schools from the provided list and double-checking that all three performance categories were represented equally.
Other variances	The SF programme is implemented by GOB, and NGOs. Different types of schools have been selected.	As planned, both GOB (8)- and NGO (5)-run schools under the MGD SFP were visited. In addition, two schools that have already been handed over to the GOB were also visited in the upazilas of Gobindaganj and Saghata.
Access	Given the tight and rigid time-frame of the evaluation, travel time will be minimised as far as possible without compromising other selection criteria.	Travel times were as short as possible without compromising the other criteria, however, they were still long enough to have to reduce the number of schools.

25. Table 38 below shows the list of schools that were pre-selected by the CO to be visited. Due to time constraints the number of schools had to be reduced. Highlighted in blue are the GOB-run schools that were visited. In addition to these ten, five NGO-run or informal schools in Sundarganj and Fulchhari were also visited.

Table 38 List of selected GOB-run Primary Schools in Gaibandha

Upazila	Union	Name of Government Primary Schools (GPS)	Performance Category
Sundarganj Visit on Thursday December 01, 2016	Dhopadanga	1. Dhopadanga GPS	A
	Saporhati	2. Sovagonj GPS	A
	Saporhati	3. Imamgonj balika GPS	A
	Sreepur	4. Matherhat GPS	B
	Sonaroy	5. Boyddonath GPS	B
	Powrasava	6. Bamonjal GPS	B
	Sorbanondo	7. Dhonierkora GPS	C
	Powrasava	8. Bekatari-1 GPS	C
	Saporhati	9. Purbo Saporhati GPS	C
	Gozaria	10. Fulchori Model GPS	A
Fulchhari Visit on Saturday December 03, 2016	Udakhali	11. Macher Vita GPS	A
	Kanchipara	12. Kanchipara-1 GPS	A
	Udaykhali	13. Galakati GPS	B
	Kanchipara	14. Sayedpur GPS	B
	Kanchipara	15. Kathkirhat GPS	B
	Kanchipara	16. Vaserpara GPS	C
	Gozaria	17. Jhanjair GPS	C
	Udaykhali	18. Singria Utterpara GPS	C
	Kamardaha	19. Caprigonj GPS	

Upazila	Union	Name of Government Primary Schools (GPS)	Performance Category
Gobindagonj (handed over to GOB) Visit on Sunday December 04, 2016 Saghata (handed over to GOB) Visit on Sunday December 04, 2016	Katabari	20. Fuloher GPS	
	Varatkhal	21. Varatkhal GPS	
	Varatkhal	22. Bhangamore GPS	

Gender Analysis

26. The gender analysis undertaken at the inception phase is reproduced in Annex G below.

27. The TOR for this evaluation require that gender equality and the empowerment of women (GEEW) should be mainstreamed throughout. The evaluation matrix at Annex F responded to this requirement. EQs 1, 3, 5, 8 and 20 demonstrate the integration of gender into the methodological approach. EQ 1 acknowledges the necessity of checking the programme's coherence with national policies, e.g. the Government's strategy for empowerment of women as outlined in its 2010 Education Policy. EQ 3 inquires about the SFP's programming coherence with relevant WFP and UN guidelines (including gender). EQ 5 asks whether the operation's strategies were based on a sound gender analysis that considered the distinct needs and participation of girls and boys (and as appropriate within the context of the SFP, women and men), and whether they have continued on that basis. Answers to EQs 6 and 7 on the attainment of outputs and outcomes were gender disaggregated. EQ 8 asks how adequately the operation has addressed gender equality and protection issues. EQ 20 asks whether the operation has made any difference to gender relations at any level thus far, and whether any such change is likely to be sustained after the programme is completed.

28. All aspects of the evaluation were viewed through a gender lens. The team recorded and reported the gender of each interviewee and ensured that full participation was accorded to women and girls in community and school settings, with separate interviews and discussions with them where appropriate. Guided by its gender specialist, the team devoted resources and effort to ensuring a gender-responsive approach.

29. In the course of these enquiries, the ET also explored the quality of women's involvement in local school feeding management and support committees; the factors contributing to boys and girls being out-of-school; the effect of girls'/boys' burden of (household) labour on their regular attendance at school; the problems older girls face in reaching often remote secondary schools; and the status of women teachers.¹³⁵ The MTE did not conduct a statistical survey, and time available for discussion with stakeholders was constrained, but this approach allowed the evaluators to posit and discuss gender/ ethnic/ age-related biases in benefits, the programme delivery implications and WFP capacity / policy strengthening work with MOPME. Findings from interviews and FGDs were triangulated with available data and secondary sources.

Ethical standards

30. There was no potential conflict of interest in the performance of this evaluation. None of the ET members has been involved in the preparation or direct implementation of the WFP MGD Bangladesh SFP.

31. The team adopted a careful and thorough approach to the ethics of the evaluation, complying with standard United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards (UNEG, 2016). While supportive and collegiate in its working relations with WFP, the team was strictly neutral and

¹³⁵ The assisted communities do not belong to an ethnic minority.

unbiased. Consent from all interviewees and focus groups was requested before proceeding with discussions, and assurance of full confidentiality was given: while informants' views may have been quoted and their names are listed in Annex I, no view or statement is attributed to a named individual, or presented in such a way that an individual can be traced as its source.¹³⁶ The team encouraged all informants to be frank and accurate in their assessments of programme performance. It fully complied with GOB and WFP guidelines on contact with children (UNEG, 2008).

Limitations and mitigation measures

32. **Timing of the MTE in the programme cycle.** A fundamental design and/or scheduling weakness of the MTE was that it took place when USDA had already drawn up its plans for a further phase of MGD support for school feeding in Bangladesh and invited applications, and when WFP had already drafted/submitted its proposal in response. This weakened the value of analysis and recommendations applying to 2018 and beyond. It can be hoped that the GOB, WFP and USDA will still be able to consider the MTE's longer-term ideas and potentially incorporate them into adjustments to the next MGD phase and/or enhanced implementation of what may be agreed. (At the time of writing it is not guaranteed that a further grant would be made to WFP rather than a different applicant.)

33. **Validity and reliability of available evidence.** The main challenge for the MTE was to identify clear performance data from the complex and sometimes inconsistent reports available. Although this report has been able to give a clear and comprehensive strategic analysis of the performance of the operation and the issues arising for the future, it has not been able to give the intended detailed and unambiguous empirical statement of performance towards planned outputs and outcomes. As noted in Annex G, there are concerns about both the reliability, and in some cases the validity, of available data. Findings on EQs where quantitative data are most pertinent are therefore not as strong as for EQs where findings can rely on more qualitative sources, including project and policy documents, interviews and focus groups. This is reflected in final column of Table 55 in Annex K, where we provide an assessment of the strength of evidence for the findings against each of the 20 EQs.¹³⁷ At the level of the four key questions our assessments are:

- 1) Appropriateness: evidence is generally strong.
- 2) Results of the operation: evidence on outputs and outcomes is more indicative than conclusive, and overall evidence on results ranges from indicative to weak. (A significant challenge is that even where designated outcome indicators can be compared with baseline figures, this does not necessarily demonstrate a causal relationship between the SFP and the change in outcomes. However, there is strong historical and parallel evidence on the effectiveness of the HEB modality in Bangladesh – see the impact evaluations summarised in Annex C.)
- 3) Evidence on factors affecting results is generally satisfactory.
- 4) Evidence on sustainability is also generally satisfactory.

34. **Logistical constraints on field work.** The MTE inception report noted that logistical difficulties are always a challenge for field work in Bangladesh due to the remoteness of many project locations (Mokoro, 2016b). The ET mitigated this by splitting into teams to cover as many schools as was possible within the timeframe given. The number of school visits was reduced from 22 to 15 (see column 3 of Table 37 above). Due to long travel times, especially due to traffic jams in Dhaka, the team also split up there and used time scheduled for internal debriefing to ensure meetings with

¹³⁶ In cases where the source of a reported viewpoint could not fail to be evident, the ET checked that informants were content for their views to be on the record.

¹³⁷ Based on a simple scale from 1 to 4: 1 (strong), 2 (more than satisfactory), 3 (indicative, not conclusive), and 4 (weak).

various stakeholders could take place. Apart from a delay in the flight from Saidpur back to Dhaka, and longer than anticipated travel times, the evaluation mission went smoothly.

Quality assurance

35. WFP has developed a Decentralised Evaluation Quality Assurance System (DEQAS –see WFP, 2016f), informed by the norms and standards for evaluations developed by UNEG. The DEQAS forms a specific set of guidance materials based on WFP’s Evaluation Quality Assurance System (EQAS) and its Evaluation Policy. The guide sets out process maps with in-built steps for quality assurance and templates for evaluation products, as well as checklists for feedback on quality for evaluation products. DEQAS has been systematically applied during the course of this evaluation, with relevant guideline documents having been provided to the ET.

36. In addition, Mokoro’s internal Quality Support (QS) System was integrated into the evaluation process in line with the company’s commitment to delivering quality products and adherence to the principles of independence, credibility and utility. Evaluation products were shared with the QS experts prior to submission. The experts have deep familiarity with WFP and EQAS, which made them well placed to review deliverables and advise on evaluation methodology, as well as to provide technical insights to complement the team’s evaluation assessments.

37. Both the draft Inception Report and the draft Evaluation Report were reviewed independently and certified as meeting the DEQAS quality standards before being circulated for further comment.

Annex F Evaluation Matrix

1. Table 39 below is the full evaluation matrix. Table 35 in the main text shows which evaluation criteria are most relevant in assessing each EQ.

2. The standard OECD DAC evaluation criteria are relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact, for which we use the following definitions.

Relevance *The extent to which the objectives of an intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners' and donors' policies.*

Effectiveness *The extent to which the intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.*

Efficiency *A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, etc.) are converted to results.*

Sustainability *The continuation of benefits from an intervention after major assistance has been completed. The probability of long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.*

Impact *Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by an intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.*

3. As regards *impact* and *results*, the evaluation followed the EQAS preferred usage in which:

- “result” and “effect” are practically synonyms, and results can be at the output, outcome and/or impact levels, while
- “impact” (as above) refers to lasting and significant effects at the goal and outcomes level of the logical framework (results-chain).

4. As regards *efficiency* and *effectiveness* the evaluation followed the technical guidance note (WFP, 2013d) which adopts the DAC definition of effectiveness as a measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives (the relationship between subsequent levels in the logical framework: activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact), and a broad definition of efficiency as a measure of the relationship between inputs and results (outputs, outcomes, and impact).

5. We employed the additional criterion of coherence as follows:

Coherence *The consistency of policy/programme elements with each other (do they complement each other in a positive way?)*

6. This can be applied as *internal coherence* to the different elements of a school feeding programme, and as *external coherence* to the consistency of the school feeding programme with other related programmes.

Table 39 Full Evaluation Matrix

Specific questions	Analysis/indicators	Main sources of information	Triangulation approach
Key question 1: How appropriate is the operation?			
EQ 1. How coherent are the operation's objectives, targeting and activities with relevant stated national policies and strategies on education, food security and nutrition, including gender?	Check of alignment of operation's objectives, targeting and activities with those stated/ prioritised in national policies on education, food security and nutrition and gender (including gender elements of sector policies)	- Programme documentation - National policy documentation - Interviews	Compare the views of GOB, WFP, DP and NGO informants
EQ 2. To what extent have the operation's objectives, targeting and activities sought complementarity with the interventions of relevant government and development partners?	- Check of alignment of operation's objectives, targeting and activities with those of GOB and DPs - Assessment of realism of design linkages between operation's FRs and the rest of its results framework	- WFP operation documentation - GOB operation documentation - DP operations documentation - Interviews	Compare the views of GOB, WFP, DP and NGO informants
EQ 3. To what extent were the operation's objectives and targeting coherent at the design stage with relevant WFP and UN-wide system strategies, policies and normative guidance, and how far have they and the operation's activities remained coherent with them?	Check of alignment of operation's design objectives and targeting (and any subsequent revisions thereof) with corporate WFP and UN strategies, policies and standards: school feeding, resilience, nutrition, gender	- Programme documentation - WFP and UN corporate documentation - Interviews	Compare the views of informants in WFP, other UN agencies, DPs and INGOs.
EQ 4. Were the operation's strategies appropriate to the needs of the food insecure population and	Assessment of needs of target population at design stage, and significant trends	Analytical data (from baseline survey and other assessments) of needs of girls, boys, women	Compare needs as summarised in formal documentation with those expressed by target group.

Specific questions	Analysis/indicators	Main sources of information	Triangulation approach
community at design stage, and have they remained appropriate?	Check of alignment of operation's strategies with those needs, at design and currently	- and men in the target population - Expressed views of target population (girls, boys, women and men) as recorded at design stage, since, and during mission field work - Analytical opinions of expert informants (local and national government, (I)NGOs, DPs)	Compare needs as interpreted in the design and implementation of the operation with the interpretation of expert analytical informants
EQ 5. Were the operation's strategies based on a sound gender analysis with regard to children and adults as relevant, and have they continued on that basis?	Analysis of operation's gender strategies and their implementation compared with national, WFP and other relevant policy and strategies	- Programme documentation - GOB, DP, WFP and UN corporate documentation - Opinions of target group on relevant gender issues, as expressed at the design, in subsequent consultations and/or during mission field work - Interviews	- Compare issues as summarised in formal documentation with those expressed by target group. - Compare the views of GOB, WFP, other UN and DP informants
Key question 2: What are the results of the operation?			
EQ 6. To what extent have planned outputs been attained?	Comparison of most recent output data with baseline and targets	WFP performance data	Cross-check recorded output data with informants in GOB and at schools visited in field
EQ 7. To what extent have planned outcomes been attained?	- Comparison of most recent outcome data with baseline and targets - Qualitative analysis by GOB, WFP, DP and NGO observers of outcome-level performance	- WFP performance data - Interviews	Cross-check recorded outcome data with informants in GOB and at schools visited in field

Specific questions	Analysis/indicators	Main sources of information	Triangulation approach
EQ 8. How adequately has the operation addressed gender equality and protection issues?	• Analysis of output- and outcome-level performance data compared with design targets • Qualitative analysis by GOB, WFP, DP and NGO observers of programme's gender equality and protection performance against WFP and GOB criteria	• WFP performance data • Interviews	• Cross-check recorded performance data with informants in GOB and at schools visited in field • Compare WFP perceptions of gender equality and protection performance with those of GOB and DP, NGO informants
EQ 9. How fully are the operation's activities dovetailed with those of other donors and agencies in building GOB capacity to manage and implement SF?	• Analysis of linkages and interactions specified in design and performance documentation of the WFP operation and of other donors' and agencies' activities in school feeding and related sectors – including assessment of causal relationship between progress towards FRs and the other objectives of the results framework • Qualitative analysis by GOB, WFP, DP and NGO observers of degree of formal linkage and of practical interaction	• Programme design and performance documentation • Interviews	• Compare design with performance • Compare WFP perceptions of dovetailing with those of other informants
EQ 10. How efficiently has the operation worked with the GOB towards handover, and how likely is the GOB to continue to implement an effective SF programme following WFP withdrawal?	• Analysis of programme reporting on the steps towards handover and sustainability (with reference to five objectives specified in s. 5 of grant applications)	• Programme performance documentation • Interviews • Focus group discussions during mission field work	• Compare the views of WFP, GOB and other policy and programme observers • Compare assessment in Dhaka with that in sample communities and schools

Specific questions	Analysis/indicators	Main sources of information	Triangulation approach
	- Analysis of programme reporting on change in community and parent capacity and attitudes - Qualitative analysis by GOB, WFP, DP and NGO observers of extent and depth of progress towards handover and sustainability (also see EQ18).		
Key question 3: What factors have affected the results?			
EQ 11. How significant have internal WFP process, system and logistical factors been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	- Assessment of WFP SPRs and other reporting for commentary on internal factors positively or negatively affecting performance: including staffing levels, financial resources, pipeline issues - Qualitative assessment by GOB, WFP and community/school level informants of positive or negative influence of internal WFP factors	- Programme performance documentation and related WFP data - Interviews	- Compare assessment of factors by WFP CO and field staff - Compare assessment of factors by WFP and GOB staff - Compare assessment of factors by WFP staff and community/school level informants
EQ 12. How significant have WFP's monitoring and reporting arrangements (including the role of Government/NGO partners' involvement and support to M&E efforts) been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation	- Analyse content, timeliness and external perceptions of monitoring and reporting arrangements - Determine whether monitoring reports are just a procedural statement of performance data or offer any analysis of issues affecting performance	- Programme performance reports and other relevant WFP reporting and data - Interviews	Compare assessment by responsible WFP personnel and views of external stakeholders and observers

Specific questions	Analysis/indicators	Main sources of information	Triangulation approach
EQ 13. How significant have WFP's internal institutional and governance arrangements been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	- Analyse WFP governance and management arrangements pertinent to this operation - Review programme performance reporting for commentary on these issues - Gather and analyse WFP, GOB, DP and NGO views of the significance, if any, of WFP institutional and governance arrangements for this operation	- Programme performance reports and other relevant WFP reporting - Interviews	Compare assessment by responsible WFP personnel and views of external stakeholders and observers
EQ 14. How significant has WFP's partnership and co-ordination arrangements been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	- Within the context of national education sector and school feeding architecture, analyse partnership and co-ordination arrangements specified at design, and their performance to date – including possible termination or launch of linkages and collaborations, and the capacity in practice of NGOs and other partner agencies - Check on performance of key complementary activities, e.g. deworming programme - Gather and analyse WFP, GOB, DP and NGO views on design quality of partnership and co-ordination arrangements and their performance to date	- Programme design and performance documentation - Documentation on institutional arrangements in education and school feeding sector - Interviews	Compare assessment by responsible WFP personnel and views of external stakeholders and observers

Specific questions	Analysis/indicators	Main sources of information	Triangulation approach
EQ 15. How significant has the external operating environment been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	- Analyse programme performance and related reporting by WFP - Review other documentation significant contextual events, trends and issues (including macro-economic factors and the stance and performance of the private sector) during the review period - Gather and analyse WFP, GOB, DP and NGOs views about influence of external environmental factors on performance of the operation	- Programme reporting and other relevant WFP documentation - Reports by GOB and other DPs on events and trends during the review period - Interviews	Compare assessment by responsible WFP personnel and views of external stakeholders and observers
EQ 16. How significant has the national political and policy environment been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	- Analyse programme performance and related reporting by WFP - Assess extent to which WFP has been able to engage meaningfully in sector forums and processes - Review other documentation of key events and trends in the political and policy environment during the review period (including staff and institutional development and management by GOB) - Gather and analyse WFP, GOB, DP and NGO views about influence of these events and	- Programme reporting and other relevant WFP documentation - Reports by GOB and other DPs on relevant political and policy events and trends during the review period - Interviews	Compare assessment by responsible GOB and WFP personnel and views of external stakeholders and observers

Specific questions	Analysis/indicators	Main sources of information	Triangulation approach
	trends on performance of the operation		
EQ 17. How significant have domestic and external funding factors been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	• Compare proposed budget and cash flow for the operation with the pattern of resource receipts to date • Review programme performance reports and other relevant WFP documentation for information on significant enhancements or constraints arising from domestic and external funding issues • Check whether GOB and third party resourcing has been provided as planned, and what the significance of any deviation is	• WFP SPRs and other reporting • Interviews	• Compare the views of WFP staff with those of GOB and DPs to assess consistency of opinions about the significance and the root causes of domestic and external funding factors
Key question 4: To what extent does the intervention's implementation strategy include considerations for sustainability?			
EQ 18. To what extent has the operation made explicit efforts to promote sustainable SF after programme termination?	• Analysis of programme reporting on the steps towards handover and sustainability (with reference to five objectives specified in s. 5 of grant applications) • Analysis of stakeholder views: GOB, WFP, DPs, NGOs	• Programme documentation • Interviews	• Assess views of different stakeholder categories (notably GOB and WFP) for congruence/divergence

Specific questions	Analysis/indicators	Main sources of information	Triangulation approach
EQ 19. Are the benefits of the operation likely to continue after the programme is completed?	- Qualitative assessment of progress achieved with planned steps towards handover and sustainability and of the conditions of receiving environment (GOB resources, institutional capacity, readiness of schools, parents, communities) - Analysis of stakeholder views: GOB, WFP, DPs, NGOs, parents, school and local authorities	- Programme documentation - Documentation on events and trends in education and school feeding sector - Interviews - Focus group discussions during mission field work	Assess views of different stakeholder categories (notably GOB and WFP) for congruence/divergence
EQ 20. Has the operation made any difference in gender relations thus far, and is that change likely to be sustained after the programme is completed?	- Qualitative assessment of progress achieved in national policy and performance, and in participating schools - Analysis of stakeholder views: GOB, WFP, DPs, NGOs, parents, school and local authorities	- Programme performance reports - Reports on GEEW in the Bangladesh education sector and more broadly - Interviews - Focus group discussions during mission field work	Assess views of women and men in different stakeholder categories (GOB, WFP, DPs, NGOs) and in schools and communities visited during mission field work

Annex G Gender Analysis

This analysis of gender dimensions was included in the Inception Report (Mokoro, 2011b). Information from a gender assessment conducted in late 2010 for internal WFP use in preparation of the CP 2012-2016 (WFP, 2011a), which was not available at the time of writing of the Inception Report, has been added.

Status of gender in Bangladesh

1. According to the 2015 Global Gender Gap Index - which measures the relative gaps between women and men across four key areas (health, education, economy and politics) – there have been improvements from 2014 to 2015 in gender equality as reflected in the assigned score for Bangladesh (0.704).¹³⁸ Improvement has been registered across all four areas, except Economic Participation and Opportunity. On the overall index Bangladesh is the region's second-most improved country. (World Economic Forum, 2015)
2. The HDR 2015 reports that 20 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women, and 34.1 percent of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 41.3 percent of their male counterparts. The average mean years of schooling for women is 4.5 years as compared to 5.5 for men. For every 100,000 live births, 170 women die from pregnancy-related causes. The adolescent birth rate is 80.6 births per 1,000 women of ages 15 to 19. Female participation in the labour market is 57.4 percent compared to 84.1 percent for men (UNDP, 2015a).
3. The Government of Bangladesh has made formal commitments towards gender equality and efforts have been made to mainstream gender into national planning processes. Guidelines to this effect have been included in the National Social Security Strategy 2015 and the National Education Policy 2010. Through government initiatives such as the free and compulsory primary education, food for education and stipend programmes, the Government has improved access to primary education and virtually eliminated gender disparity in primary schools. However, the quality of education, the educational environment, drop-outs from school, as well as gender inequality remain a major focus of concern.
4. Gender relations in Bangladesh¹³⁹ have been undergoing a process of considerable transformation over the last two decades as part of a broader process of economic transition and social change. Although progress has been considerable in many spheres, women's changing roles have also given rise to a range of new challenges that require shifts in policy making and programme implementation as well as the various social and cultural values which have informed and shaped implicit societal understandings of women's roles and responsibilities. The specific contribution of the employment of women in the ready-made garments and the involvement of the NGOs in development activities have made singular contribution to the participation of women in the labour force. In particular, whilst poverty rates in Bangladesh have decreased in overall terms in recent years, vulnerability to poverty continues to have concrete gender dimensions. Significant disparities in employment and wage rates persist, which combined with considerable gaps in asset ownership, seriously limit women's economic opportunities.
5. Gender-based capability poverty continues to be a key issue in the health and education sectors despite significant improvements in recent years and is reflected in poor nutrition, maternal mortality and child mortality indicators - as well as gaps in primary and secondary enrolment versus completion rates, low achievement levels and high levels of adult female illiteracy. The Government has recognised the need for a gender specific development policy

¹³⁸ 0.00 = inequality, 1.00 = equality)

¹³⁹ Bangladesh Gender Profile, Martin Raschen and Fabia Shah, KfW, Asia Department, March 2006.

and outlined the National Women Development Policy 2011 outlining its aims and goals. Whilst quota-based efforts have also been made to increase the number of women in the public sector, apart from the leadership of the two major political parties, there are few women in decision-making positions and even fewer in positions of political leadership. Gender-based violence is also increasingly understood to be a serious and growing problem in Bangladesh and female poverty and its specific vulnerabilities are also reflected in the sizable numbers of women and children trafficked each year to neighbouring countries and beyond.

WFP corporate gender policy

6. WFP's 2009 Gender Policy (WFP, 2009b) was in force for the majority of the evaluation review period. This policy sought to mainstream gender into WFP operations through the 2010–2011 Gender Policy Corporate Action Plan (WFP, 2009a) which specified commitment to gender across four dimensions: capacity development; accountability; partnerships, advocacy and research; and operational mainstreaming. While the Gender Policy of 2009 attempted to denote a shift from “commitments to women” to a more comprehensive understanding of gender with an examination of the interacting roles of both men and women, the subsequent Gender Policy Evaluation (WFP, 2014g) found that it failed to develop a clear, comprehensive and shared understanding of what gender means within WFP. It found that gender integration in WFP programmes had largely been a bottom-up, country-led process, rather than one influenced by a clear organisation-wide vision. While it found evidence of progress in identifying gender-based needs and priorities in many programme areas, including nutrition, it noted less evidence of WFP contributing to transformative changes in gender relations. Although it found some good examples of gender-sensitive programming, it also found that capacity development of WFP staff in gender had been inadequate and there was no shared definition of what gender means for WFP; there was still a strong focus on enhancing women's engagement in programmes or specifically targeting women, so that while it found strong evidence of increased inclusion of women and girls, this “results mainly from a vulnerability rather than a gender lens”.

7. WFP's latest Gender Policy 2015–2020 (WFP, 2015a) was adopted towards the end of the review period. The new policy addresses previous weaknesses by reinforcing a gender, rather than women-focused, approach, to establish four objectives: to adapt food assistance to the different needs of men, women, girls and boys, to pursue equal participation of women and men, to empower women and girls in decision-making regarding their food security and nutrition and to ensure the protection of men, women, boys and girls when providing food assistance.

8. Both WFP's Strategic Plans, 2008–2013 (WFP, 2008) and 2014–2017 (WFP, 2013c), also include clear commitments to gender equality. At regional level, an Asia-Pacific Gender Implementation Strategy (WFP, 2016e) has been developed which outlines the regional strategy to operationalise the new gender policy within the specificities of the Asia-Pacific context. Gender is also mainstreamed in the Bangladesh UNDAF 2012–2016.

9. The Asia-Pacific gender implementation strategy outlines WFP's corporate strategy to operationalise the Gender Policy 2015–2020 in the Asia-Pacific region by focusing on six main areas: clarifying the new gender policy and organisational aspirations, developing institutional capacity and confidence, improving information provision and knowledge management, enhancing partnerships, mobilising resources and strengthening the profile of the Gender Results Network (GRN). It also identifies the most prominent gender issues in the region and priority actions to mainstream gender in WFP programming, as well as the respective roles of WFP COs, the RBB and HQ.

10. At the end of 2010 WFP Bangladesh conducted a rapid gender assessment that included desk research, and qualitative field work of three components of its Country Programme

(Community Nutrition, Enhancing Resilience, and School Feeding). This assessment was to inform the design of its CP (for internal use only) (WFP, 2011a). For school feeding the assessment aimed at investigating: a) the decision-making influence of female SMC members; b) the effectiveness of the leadership training content, especially with regards to female leadership; c) opportunities for involvement of local government bodies in training activities, and d) the needs for building the capacity of SF cooperating partners in gender equality and women's empowerment. Box 16 below shows the findings on gender and SF of this assessment.

Box 16 SFP gender assessment (2011) findings & recommendations

Findings

Qualitative information from the gender assessment of the School Feeding activity demonstrates that:

- An increasing number of School Management Committees are now more gender-balanced.
- The increased representation of women in School Management Committees has not necessarily resulted in increased participation in decision making, and at this stage, it is hard to fully assess the influence of female members in leadership and decision-making processes.
- Male SMC members show little interest in training content because it focuses on female leadership only.
- Newly appointed SMC members (men and women) are not always trained on their roles and responsibilities in a timely manner.

Recommendations

- Continue to advocate gender balance in all SMCs under School Feeding activities. Continue to liaise with the central level Directorate of Primary Education (DPE) officials to advocate for involvement of female teachers in SMCs.
- Strengthen the assertiveness of female members to participate in both meetings and school activities (options may include more regular monitoring from NGO, refresher trainings, appreciation by local community leaders).
- Reinforce the role and responsibilities of female members by ensuring that all female members of any given SMC attend the Female Leadership Training as soon as they are appointed.
- Make Female Leadership Training mandatory for both male and female members of School Management Committees.
- Review and modify existing training content to make it more interesting for male members of School Management Committees.
- Review training topics and adjust them to the needs identified by SMC members.
- Identify all newly appointed SMC members and schedule training accordingly.
- Another option might be to train all members from one SMC at once, to make sure that both male and female members are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Explore opportunities to identify and further involve GOB representatives and community leaders in delivering key messages (including, but not limited to, gender equality and women's empowerment).
- Build the capacity of NGO staff in gender equality and women's empowerment to increase the responsiveness of all NGO staff to the needs and priorities of women, especially female members, of School Management Committees.

- Review SF checklist and other M&E tools to ensure that clear gender objectives and indicators are outlined
- Introduce more gender-sensitive indicators in the M&E process of all future School Feeding activities.

Source: *WFP Bangladesh Gender Assessment to inform the design of Country Programme 2012 – 2016 (for internal use only)* (WFP, 2011a)

11. In addition, the report contains various cross-sectoral recommendations, for gender integration into the CP, reproduced in Box 17 below.

Box 17 Cross-sectoral recommendations (2011 gender assessment)

- Build capacity of WFP staff and cooperating partners in gender equality and women's empowerment
- Review content and approach of WFP trainings (in Community Nutrition, Enhancing Resilience and SF)
- Involve family members (husbands and in-laws) in WFP activities, especially those directed at raising awareness
- Maximize opportunities for behaviour change among men and boys
- Identify and involve religious and community leaders in delivering key messages
- Increase advocacy on Violence Against Women and Early Marriage
- Strengthen relations with the Government of Bangladesh
- Review the M&E system to track changes in gender relations
- Mainstream gender in WFP Bangladesh

Source: *WFP Bangladesh Gender Assessment to inform the design of Country Programme 2012 – 2016 (for internal use only)* (WFP, 2011a)

WFP Bangladesh's approach to gender

12. The Bangladesh CP document (WFP,) reflects the fact that women are particularly disadvantaged in Bangladesh and that achieving gender equality remains a challenge. It states that there are significant disparities between men and women in health, education and income. Malnutrition is raised as a major issue, with more than two thirds of girls married before the age of 18, the risk of early pregnancy and giving birth to an underweight baby being very high. The document also states that more than 20 percent of newborn babies have a low birth weight.

13. WFP activities in country directly support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal 3, the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women.

14. In line with WFP's Gender Policy, WFP Bangladesh has incorporated cross-cutting indicators for gender for monitoring and reporting purposes, across its activities in the country.

15. Under the CP's component 2, school feeding, WFP continues to promote gender equality among students through an essential learning package, together with partners to conduct awareness-raising activities that focus on pertinent social issues, such as the importance of girls' education, the impact of dowry, child marriage and early pregnancy, and to seek the enhancement of women's leadership development for impactful participation in school management committees (SMCs). Furthermore, training sessions for male and female members of the SMCs on gender sensitisation, education and advocacy are being implemented

as they are expected to positively affect women's participation in decision-making. The SFP also continues to purchase vegetables locally from women growers to promote income-earning activities and to provide further training in collaboration with government and NGO partners.

Gender issues and approach for this evaluation

16. The TOR for this evaluation require that GEEW should be mainstreamed throughout. The evaluation matrix in Annex F responds to this requirement. It acknowledges the necessity of checking on the programme's coherence with national policy on gender (EQ 1). EQ 5 asks whether the operation's strategies were based on a sound gender analysis that considered the distinct needs and participation of boys and girls (and as appropriate within the context of the school feeding programme, women and men), and whether they have continued on that basis. Answers to EQs 6 and 7 on the attainment of outputs and outcomes will be disaggregated by sex. EQ 8 asks how adequately the operation has addressed gender equality and protection issues. EQ 20 asks whether the operation has made any difference to gender relations at any level thus far, and whether any such change likely to be sustained after the programme is completed. In the course of these enquiries, the ET will also explore the quality of women's involvement in local school feeding management and support committees; the continuing challenge of early marriage of girls, typically terminating their education; the effect of girls' burden of household labour on their regular attendance at school; the problems older girls face in reaching often remote secondary schools; and the status of women teachers, many of whom do not have permanent posts.

Annex H Performance Data

Data sources

M&E planned for this operation

1. Each MGD operation is required to supplement the basic project document (WFP, nd-a), with an overall Evaluation Plan (EP – see WFP, nd-c, and revised version WFP, 2015b) and a Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP – WFP, nd-b); the PMP sets out definitions of proposed performance indicators and the timetable/responsibilities for their collection. This annex provides an overview of M&E system/ plans, and assembles comprehensive data (to the extent possible), with commentary on quality and availability of data (tables at activity/output/outcome level).
2. According to the EP, a comprehensive quantitative baseline survey was to be undertaken by an independent agency, with two follow-up outcome surveys a year and two years after the baseline (by the same agency) in order to track changes. Survey data are to be complemented by regular project monitoring data and reports on project implementation from cooperating partners. In addition, a mid-term evaluation (i.e. this MTE) and a final evaluation were planned according to the timetable in Table 40 below, which includes planned and revised dates (where available).
3. As Table 40 shows, both the baseline study and the follow-up outcome survey took place considerably later than first planned. The baseline survey report (Kimetrica, 2015) has been a key source for this MTE, but the first outcome survey report was not available; however, some of the data tables from the outcome survey were provided to the ET in late November 2016 (DMA, 2016). This outcome survey was conducted by Data Management Aid, who also undertook the data gathering for the baseline survey; the outcome survey report is being drafted by WFP (WFP, 2017a is an incomplete draft).

Table 40 Overview of M&E plan for MGD-funded SFP

Monitoring and Evaluation	Date	Revised Date
Establishing of M&E system	September – December 2014	N/A
Baseline Study	October 2014	June 2015
Follow-up Outcome Survey - 1	November 2015	August 2016
Follow-up Outcome Survey - 2	November 2016	tbc
Midterm Evaluation	March 2016	November 2016
Final Evaluation	June 2017	tbc
Routine field monitoring and reporting	January 2014 –August 2017	N/A
Periodical capacity assessment of government under government Capacity Building	February 2015, February 2016, February 2017	N/A

Source: Evaluation Plan – WFP, nd-c (updated)

Other available M&E sources

4. At the end of each calendar year, the WFP CO submits Standard Project Reports (SPRs) to WFP HQ that use a corporately standardised template. This includes output and outcome indicators as well as a description of activities and a section on gender and protection. The SPRs report on projects as defined for WFP's corporate purposes, so the MGD operation is subsumed within overall reporting on Component 2 of the CP 200243, which is the overall School Feeding Programme in Bangladesh.

5. For the MGD project, WFP submits separate reports to USDA twice a year, covering the periods from April through September, and October through March. These reports include a narrative report and an excel spreadsheet showing quantitative data measuring performance indicators. As will become apparent below, (a) there have been changes in proposed performance indicators, (b) what is actually reported on does not always match either the original or the amended set of indicators, and (c) there are gaps in data availability for some indicators.
6. Schools also complete reports on the amount of food stored and distributed, and student attendance, as well as teacher attendance. However, inconsistencies were found during the limited field visits and record keeping is known to require improvement. For example, the baseline survey team aimed to collect data on HEB delivery/distribution and teachers and students' attendance. Only 58 percent of GOB-run schools were able to provide data for the requested 17-month period. Only 5.9 percent of schools in Fulchhari and 15 percent of the schools in Sundergonj had complete data (Kimetrica, 2015:18-20).
7. On a monthly basis, 15 schools (10 GOB-run, and 5 NGO-run) are monitored by field monitors from WFP's IP NGO BRAC.
8. Both BRAC and RDRS submit quarterly reports to WFP; however, as these cover different reporting periods, cross-checking information is not practically possible. RDRS specifically submits a monthly food distribution report as well as a quarterly report.
9. An online monitoring and reporting system is in the progress of being developed for the GOB and WFP is training GOB officials in this respect.

Overall performance data

10. In Table 41, Table 42 and Table 43 below, the MTE team has assembled as much data as was available against the operation's annual performance targets. The three tables deal successively with beneficiaries, output and outcome levels of the results framework. It is notable that the commitment letter and subsequently the semi-annual reports at times include different lists of results and indicators. The list of indicators reported on is much reduced compared with the original proposal. As can be seen from the tables below, output indicators are included in WFP's regular monitoring, while result-level indicators, are monitored on an (ideally) annual basis, at baseline, outcome and endline survey levels. Certain indicators have been excluded from the list of indicators to be monitored and where this is the case a note has been made in the comments. It also has to be noted that only formal Government-run schools are being fully monitored, not NGO schools. Table 43 links to the results framework reproduced in Figure 8 in Annex B above. It includes commentary on sources, definitions and the quality of available data.

Table 41 Beneficiaries: targets and actuals

Activity	Indicator	Targets ¹⁴⁰			Actuals ¹⁴¹			
		FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	01/10/14-31/03/15	01/04/15-30/09/15	01/10/2015-31/03/2016	01/04/2016-30/09/2016
Provide School Meals (Snacks)	Number of students regularly (80%) attending USDA supported classrooms /schools (female)	49,584	73,190	75,434	83,799	62,317	49,856	71,523
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2015: 83,145; FY2016: 59,694; FY2017: 65,124							
	Number of students regularly (80%) attending USDA supported classrooms /schools (male)	46,548	70,250	72,406	77,432	58,185	46,548	66,698
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2015: 80,101; FY2016: 57,353; FY2017: 62,570							
	Number of students enrolled in schools receiving USDA assistance (female)	62,317	91,488	94,293	117,767	62,317	62,317	89,404
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2015: 103,932; FY2016: 70,229; FY2017: 72,360							
	Number of students enrolled in schools receiving USDA assistance (male)	58,185	87,812	90,507	113,396	58,185	58,185	83,372
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2015: 100,127; FY2016: 67,457; FY2017: 69,523							
	Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance (male)	58,185	87,812	90,507	113,396	58,185	58,185	83,372
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2015: 100,127; FY2016: 67,457; FY2017: 69,523							
	Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance (female)	62,317	91,488	94,293	117,767	62,317	62,317	89,404
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2015: 103,932; FY2016: 70,229; FY2017: 72,360							

¹⁴⁰ Targets as included in USDA's modification I to the commitment letter unless otherwise specified. WFP's proposal to USDA indicates in most places that a target has yet to be established after completion of the baseline survey.

¹⁴¹ Results as per WFP's semi-annual monitoring reports.

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		Targets ¹⁴⁰			Actuals ¹⁴¹			
Activity	Indicator	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	01/10/14-31/03/15	01/04/15-30/09/15	01/10/2015-31/03/2016	01/04/2016-30/09/2016
	Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance (new)	204,059	55,000	56,650	231,920	-	22,313	57,506
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 44,207; FY2017: 48,386							
	Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance (continuing)	0	124,300	128,144	90,773	120,502	101,667	115,270
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 93,497; FY2017: 93,497							
	Number of individuals benefiting directly from USDA- funded interventions (male)	58,185	87,812	90,507	113,396	58,185	58,185	83,372
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2015: 100,127; FY2016: 67,475; FY2017: 69,523							
	Number of individuals benefiting directly from USDA- funded interventions (female)	62,317	91,488	94,293	117,767	62,317	62,317	89,404
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2015: 103,932; FY2016: 70,229; FY2017: 72,360							
	Number of individuals benefiting directly from USDA-funded interventions (new)	204,059	55,000	56,650	231,920	-	22,313	57,506
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 44,207; FY2017: 48,386							
	Number of individuals benefiting directly from USDA- funded interventions (continuing)	0	124,300	128,144	90,773	120,502	101,667	115,270
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 93,497 and FY2017: 93,497							
	Number of individuals benefiting indirectly from USDA- funded interventions	816,236	717,200	739,176	924,652	482,008	482,008	691,104
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 550,816 and FY2017: 567,532							
	Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (male)	58,185	87,812	90,507	113,396	58,185	58,185	83,372
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ significantly: FY2015: 100,127; FY2016: 67,475 and FY2017: 69,523							

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		Targets ¹⁴⁰			Actuals ¹⁴¹			
Activity	Indicator	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	01/10/14-31/03/15	01/04/15-30/09/15	01/10/2015-31/03/2016	01/04/2016-30/09/2016
	Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (female)	62,317	91,488	94,293	117,767	62,317	62,317	89,404
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2015: 103,932; FY2016: 70,229 and FY2017: 72,360							
	Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (continuing)	0	124,300	128,144	90,773	120,502	101,667	115,270
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 93,497 and FY2017: 93,497							
	Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (new)	204,059	55,000	56,650	231,920	-	22,313	57,506
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 44,207 and FY2017: 48,386							
Organizing Extra- Curricular Activities	Number of students who participate in one or more extracurricular activity	450	1,300	1,300	436	125	9,439	36,806
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 450 and FY2017: 450.							
Training on Food Preparation and Storage Practices	Number of people trained on food preparation and storage practices	180	350	350	0	180	182	120
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 180 and FY2017: 180.							
Promoting Teacher Attendance	Number of Directorate Primary Education (DPE) Officials, Upazila Primary Education Officers (UPEO) and Assistant Upazila Primary Education Officers (AUPEO) officials trained in monitoring and reporting	22	28	28	0	5	0	13
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 22 and FY2017: 22.							
	Number of teachers benefiting from Community Mobilization Workshops	210	620	620	30	120	60	131
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 210 and FY2017: 210.							

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		Targets ¹⁴⁰			Actuals ¹⁴¹			
Activity	Indicator	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	01/10/14-31/03/15	01/04/15-30/09/15	01/10/2015-31/03/2016	01/04/2016-30/09/2016
Student Recognition	Number of students benefiting from "student recognition"	6,000	11,000	11,000	175	4,788	2,005	1,260
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ significantly from those in the commitment letter: FY2016: 5,000 and FY2017: 5,000.							
Training: Commodity Management	Number of GOB officials, implementing partner staff, storage staff, and WFP national staff trained in commodity management	26	32	32	0	30		30
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 26 and FY2017: 26.							
Training: Parent-Teacher Associations	Number of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) or similar "school" governance structures supported as a result of USDA assistance	180	350	350	0	180	118	220
<i>Comment</i>	The WFP semi-annual monitoring reports set the targets for FY2016 and FY2017 as 180.							
Training: Teachers	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	210	2,200	2,200	0	210	133	1,225
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 210 and FY2017: 210							
	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants in target schools who demonstrate use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	168	1,760	1,760	0	-		1,005
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 168 and FY2017: 168							
Training: School administrators	Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	150	550	550	0	125	50	125
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 150 and FY2017: 150							
	Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	120	440	440	0	125		94
<i>Comment</i>	Targets set in the semi-annual reports differ: FY2016: 120 and FY2017: 120.							

Source: USDA Modification I to Commitment letter from 2014 (USDA, 2016)

Table 42 Outputs: targets and results

Activity	Indicator	Targets ¹⁴²			Results ¹⁴³			
		FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	01/10/14-31/03/15	01/04/15-30/09/15	01/10/2015-31/03/2016	01/04/2016-30/09/2016
Provide School Meal (Snack)	Number of daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) provided to school-age children as a result of USDA assistance	33,933,900*	43,032,000	43,712,880	9,277,686	10,481,365	11,062,587	11,946,777
<i>Comment</i>	The initial targets were as follows: FY 2015: 48,974,160; FY 2016: 33,048,960; FY 2017: 34,051,920. *This is as per USDA Modification I commitment letter, however, in WFP's semi-annual reports it remains the original 48,974,160.							
Raising Awareness on the Importance of Education	Number of Community Mobilization Workshops held	15	62	62	3	10	6	12
<i>Comment</i>	The targets for FY2016 and FY2017 set in WFP's semi-annual reports were increased significantly in the modification I commitment letter: FY2016: 15 and FY2017: 15.							
	Number of national conferences held	0	1	0	0	-	1	-
Establishing School Gardens	Number of school gardens established	90	160*	160*	17	76	199	81
<i>Comment</i>	**The initial targets in WFP semi-annual report has the following targets: FY2016: 90, FY2017: 90. According to the latest report, "an increased target was planned for all five upazilas, but could not be achieved due to modification request implementation delay".							
Capacity Building: Local, Regional, National Level	Number of workshops/trainings/discussion sessions held in school feeding sustainability, design and implementation (stage 1)	4	6	7	-	10	11 orientation workshops 2 ToTs on Commodity Management and Supply Chain for 8 ToTs 10 Review and Planning Workshops	2

¹⁴² Targets are from USDA Modification I to Commitment Letter (USDA, 2016).

¹⁴³ Results are from WFP's semi-annual monitoring reports (WFP, 2015-2016).

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		Targets ¹⁴²			Results ¹⁴³			
Activity	Indicator	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	01/10/14- 31/03/15	01/04/15- 30/09/15	01/10/2015- 31/03/2016	01/04/2016- 30/09/2016
	Number of educational policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance (stage 2)	1	1	1		1	1 national consultation workshop in October 2015	
	Number of educational policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance (stage 3)	0	0	1	0	0		
	Number of educational policies, regulations, or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance (stage 4)	0	0	1	0	0		

Source: USDA Commitment Letter

Table 43 Outcomes: targets and results¹⁴⁴

Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
MGD SO1	Improved Literacy of School-Aged Children	Percent of students who, by the end of two grades of primary schooling, demonstrate that they can read and understand the meaning of grade-level text	Girls – 50% Boys – 50%	Girls – 26% Boys – 25%	-	Girls: 26% Boys: 25%	-	Girls: 27% Boys: 28%
							DMA Outcome survey 1 – Nov. 2016: ¹⁴⁷ Girls: 27.1% Boys: 27.1	
		Number of individuals benefiting directly from USDA-funded interventions (male) ^a	90,507 (100,127)		113,396	58,918	48,960	83,372
		Number of individuals benefiting directly from USDA-funded interventions (female) ^a	94,293 (103,932)		117,767	62,682	50,409	89,404
		Number of individuals benefiting directly from USDA-funded interventions (new) ^a	315,709 (296,652)		231,920	-	22,313	57,506
		Number of individuals benefiting directly from USDA-funded interventions (continuing) ^a	252,444 (93,497)		90,773	120,502	101,667	115,270
		Number of individuals benefiting indirectly from USDA-funded interventions ^a	816,236 (816,237)		924,652	482,008	406,992	691,104

¹⁴⁴ Shaded in orange are those results supported through partners.

¹⁴⁵ Targets as included in USDA's modification I to the commitment letter unless otherwise specified. WFP's proposal to USDA indicates in most places that a target has yet to be established after completion of the baseline survey.

¹⁴⁶ Drawn from WFP's six-monthly monitoring reports to USDA.

¹⁴⁷ Data from first outcome survey (DMA, 2016).

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
		Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance ^b	2,200	-	-	210	133	1,225
		Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance ^c	1,250			125	50	125
Comment	The target set originally was 80%. The Kimetrica baseline survey report recommends for this target to be revised downward, as “The final target of 80 percent of students with fluency and comprehension by 2017, is highly ambitious and is unlikely to be achievable with the existing project activities and resources.” (Kimetrica, 2015: 24) WFP acted upon this recommendation and revised the target from 80% to 50%. ^a These indicators were not included in the proposals but have been included in the USDA Modification I Commitment Letter and in WFP’s semi-annual monitoring and reporting. Original targets are shown in brackets. ^b See MGD 1.1.4: this indicator was included in the USDA Modification I Commitment Letter and in WFP’s semi-annual monitoring and reporting under this objective. ^c See MGD 1.1.5: this indicator was included in the USDA Modification I Commitment Letter and in WFP’s semi-annual monitoring and reporting under this objective.							
MGD 1.1	Improved Quality of Literacy Instruction	Percent of teachers in target schools who demonstrate use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools	1,760	Men: 72% Women: 72.9%				1,005
							DMA Outcome survey 1 - Nov 2016: Female: 95.7% Male: 88.5	
Comment	The baseline and outcome surveys measured this by directly observing one teacher per school during lessons to assess the use of teaching and learning techniques (applying participatory teaching techniques during class, using audio-visual aids, engaging actively with students). “A teacher was identified as “using” a technique if he or she used it twice during the observational period.” (Kimetrica, 2015)							

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
MGD 1.2	Improved Attentiveness	Percent of students in classrooms identified as inattentive by their teachers	10	Girls: 28% Boys: 30%		29	no data	21
							DMA Outcome survey 1 - Nov 2016: Girls: 23.4% Boys: 18.5%	
		Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (male) ^d	61,824 (100,127)		113,396	58,185	58,185	83,372
		Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (female) ^d	66,176 (103,932)		117,767	62,317	62,317	89,404
		Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (new) ^d	284,867 (296,652)		231,920		22,313	57,506
		Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (continuing) ^d	171,536 (93,497)		90,773	120,502	101,667	115,270
<i>Comment</i>	^d These indicators are not included in the proposal, but have been included in the USDA Modification I commitment letter and in WFP's semi-annual reports. The initial final targets (in brackets) were revised, as actual enrolment was lower than initially anticipated (WFP, 2015-2016). The figures from WFP's semi-annual reports are not commented on and are somewhat difficult to interpret, as they vary significantly from the April-Sept. 2015 period to the other three periods. The reports do not comment on this.							
MGD 1.3	Improved Student Attendance	Percent of students (girls/boys) regularly (80%) attending USDA supported schools	Girls - 52,941	80%		49,854		71,523
			Boys - 96% 49,459	77%		44,802		66,698

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
							DMA Outcome survey Nov 2016: Girls: 80% Boys: 78%	
Comment	The Kimetrica survey states that “student absenteeism might also be more severe than what is reflected in the quantitative findings.” (Kimetrica, 2015)							
MGD 1.1.1	More consistent Teacher Attendance	Percent increase in average teacher attendance rate	3 ^e	Male and female: 92 ^f	no data	no data	no data	91 [*]
							DMA Outcome survey 1 – Nov 2016: Female: 91.9% Male: 91.5%	
		Percent of teachers attending ≥90% of the school days during last academic year (January – December 2014)		Overall average: 77% Female: 78% Male: 77%				
							DMA Outcome survey 1 – Nov 2016: Overall average: 70.1 Female: 71.2% Male: 69.1%	
Comment	*This target was changed from initially 15 to 3 (first semi-annual report includes a target of 15). WFP’s semi-annual report notes that teacher’s attendance dropped by 1% mostly due to flooding. (WFP, 2015-2016) fThe Kimetrica baseline survey found that only 77% of teachers attend school regularly (over 90% of school days), stating that “however, the qualitative investigation suggests that the situation might be worse than the school records suggest” Kimetrica, 2015: 20)							
MGD 1.1.2	Better Access to School Supplies & Materials	Number of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials provided as a result of USDA assistance						
Comment	The results framework indicates that this result will be achieved through partner activities. The modified commitment letter and semi-annual reports do not include data on this.							

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
MGD 1.1.3	Improved Literacy Instructional Materials	Number of target schools with supplemental reading materials available to students						
Comment	The results framework indicates that this result will be achieved through partner activities. The modified commitment letter and semi-annual reports do not include data on this.							
MGD 1.1.4	Increased Skills and Knowledge of Teachers	Number of teachers/educators/teaching assistants trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	2,200	-	-	210	133	1,225
		Percent of teachers/educators/teaching assistants who demonstrate the use of new and quality teaching techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance		Female: 72.9% Male: 72%)				
							DMA Outcome survey 1 – Nov 2016: Female: 95.7% Male: 88.5	
Comment	Also see MGD 1.1 above. “The baseline and outcome surveys measured this by directly observing one teacher per school during lessons to assess the use of teaching and learning techniques (applying participatory teaching techniques during class, using audio-visual aids, engaging actively with students). “A teacher was identified as “using” a technique if he or she used it twice during the observational period.” (Kimetrica, 2015)							
MGD 1.1.5	Increased Skills and Knowledge of School Administrators	Number of school administrators and officials in target schools who demonstrate use of new techniques or tools as a result of USDA assistance	1,000*	Female: 60% Male: 34.8% (as mentioned in DMA outcome survey 1 – no data in Kimetrica baseline survey)	no data	no data	no data	94

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶				
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016	
							DMA Outcome survey 1 - Nov 2016: Female: 85.5% Male: 84.6%		
		Number of school administrators and officials trained or certified as a result of USDA assistance	1,250			125	50	125	
Comment	⁹ This target was revised upwards from 360. The September 2016 semi-annual report states that “After receiving the training, most of the trained School Administrators (about 75%) are using the new techniques or tools.” There might be a mistake with the figure or information is missing.								
MGD 1.2.1	Reduced Short-Term Hunger	Percent of students in target school who regularly consume a meal before or during the school day ^h	85%	Before school day: Girls: 95% Boys: 93% During the school day: Girls: 58% Boys: 60%		59	98	94	
		Percent of students in target school who regularly consume a meal before the school day						DMA Outcome survey 1 - Nov 2016: Girls: 96.7% Boys: 95.2%	
		Percent of students in target school who regularly consume a meal during the school day ⁱ						DMA Outcome survey 1 - Nov 2016: Girls: 92.9% Boys: 94.3%	
		FTF Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance (male)	90,507		113,396	58,185	58,185	83,372	

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
		FTF Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance (female)	94,293		117,767	62,317	62,317	89,404
		FTF Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance (new)	315,709		231,920	-	22,313	57,506
		FTF Number of social assistance beneficiaries participating in productive safety nets as a result of USDA assistance (continuing)	252,444		90,773	120,502	101,667	115,270
		Number of daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) provided to school-age children as a result of USDA assistance	34,051,920 ^j		9,277,686	10,481,365	11,062,587	11,946,777
		Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (male)	61,824		113,396	58,185	22,313	83,372
		Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (female)	66,176		117,767	62,317	101,667	89,404
		Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (new)	284,867		231,920	-	-	57,506
		Number of school-aged children receiving daily school meals (breakfast, snack, lunch) as a result of USDA assistance (continuing)	171,536		90,773	120,502	-	115,270

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
Comment	While the baseline survey disaggregated the sexes, the regular monitoring data does not. ^h The modified commitment letter does not include this indicator under outcome results. ⁱ “This indicator was calculated as the percent of students who received WFP provided biscuits and consumed these during school hours. Consumption history over the last seven days (six school days) was taken from students; regular consumption was defined as a positive response on all six days.” (Kimetrica, 2015, also see paragraph 26 on MGD 1.2.1 – Reduced short-term hunger, WFP,). ^j This target is taken from the latest semi-annual report, target for FY2017.							
MGD 1.3.1	Increased Economic and Cultural Incentives or Decreased Disincentives	Number of parents who participate in Community Mobilization Workshops	1,390 ^k		30	100	22	241
		Number of school management committee members who participate in Community Mobilization Workshops	1,390		30	100	57	237
		Number of students benefitting from student recognition	28,000 ^l		175	4,788	2,005	1,260
Comment	^k The target was increased from the initial 310 to 1,390. ^l The target was revised upwards from 16,000.							
MGD 1.3.2	Reduced Health and Related Absences	Average number of school days missed by students due to illness (for each school and in aggregate) ^m	-	Boys: 1.2% Girls: 1.4%	no data	no data	no data	no data
							DMA Outcome survey 1 - Nov 2016: Girls: 0.96% Boys: 0.99%	
Comment	This objective, indicator and target appeared in the WFP proposal to MGD, and were included in the baseline and follow-up outcome survey, but were not reported in the semi-annual reports. ^m answer as given by school children. Parents answers are lower: for boys and for girls: 0.82; the same proportion is true for the first outcome survey, where parents report 0.63 for boys and 0.68 for girls.							

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
MGD 1.3.3	Improved School Infrastructure							
		Percent of schools with a dedicated storeroom for storage of biscuits		28%				
								DMA Outcome survey 1 – Nov 2016: 40%
		Percent of school with library or library corner for students		68%				DMA Outcome survey 1 – Nov 2016: 98.9
		Average number of classrooms in target schools		3.9				
							DMA Outcome survey 1 – Nov 2016: 4.2	
		Percent of schools with a source of safe drinking water at or near school		99%				
							DMA Outcome survey 1 – Nov 2016: 100%	
		Percent of schools with toilet facilities for students		85%				
							DMA Outcome survey 1 – Nov 2016: 95.8%	
		Average number of toilets		1.6				
							DMA Outcome survey 1 – Nov 2016: 2.9	

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
		Toilets to students ratio		179				
							DMA Outcome survey 1 – Nov 2016: 130	
		Percent of schools with separate toilets for girls		28%				
							DMA Outcome survey 1 – Nov 2016: 57.9%	
Comment	The results framework indicates that this result will be supported through partners. This objective, therefore, does not appear in the commitment letter or subsequent monitoring and reporting. The baseline and first outcome survey, however, include the above indicators.							
MGD 1.3.4	Increased Student Enrolment	Number of students enrolled in schools receiving USDA assistance	Girls – 94,293		117,767	62,317	62,317	83,372
			Boys – 90,507		113,396	58,185	58,158	89,404
Comment	The target was revised downward from the initial targets of Girls: 103,932 and Boys: 100,127 because the actual enrolment was lower than anticipated, according to the latest semi-annual report (WFP, 2015-2016).							
MGD 1.3.5	Increased Community Understanding of Benefits of Education	Number of community mobilisation workshops held	139		3	10	6	12
		Number of national conferences held	1		-	-	1	-
Comment	The March 2015 semi-annual report states that continued political unrest hindered the implementation of regular programme activities. The proposal also includes an indicator: “Number of people in target communities who participate in CMWs on education.” This indicator, however, is not included in the commitment letter or the regular monitoring and reporting.							
MGD 1.4.1	Increased Capacity of Government Institutions	Standard operating procedures and tools for management and oversight of school feeding programs by relevant government offices are operational (Y=1/N=0)	1		1		1	
Comment	WFP’s semi-annual reports indicate that WFP is very active in the area of capacity building. The latest report mentions that an online monitoring and reporting system is in progress, that WFP has facilitated government preparation of three quarterly and one bi-annual report and organised two joint monitoring visit of government officials with corrective reports sent to the field afterwards.							

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
MGD 1.4.2	Improved Policy or Regulatory Framework	FTF Number of educational policies, regulations or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance (stage 2)	3		See below			SF policy shared
		FTF Number of educational policies, regulations or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance (stage 3)	1					
		FTF Number of educational policies, regulations or administrative procedures in each of the following stages of development as a result of USDA assistance (stage 4)	2					
<i>Comment</i>	<i>The different stages here refer to the following as per WFP's proposal to USDA (WFP, nd-a): Stage 1: Analysed; Stage 2: Drafted and presented for public/stakeholder consultation; Stage 3: presented for legislation/decreed; Stage 4: passed/approved; Stage 5: passed and implementation has begun</i> <i>According to the March 2015 semi-annual reports, the draft Technical Assistance Project Proposal (TAPP) on the school feeding policy and strategy development was ready for government approval and the concept paper on SF policy development was agreed with the Ministry.</i> <i>The TAPP was reported as endorsed by the MOPME in the March 2016 semi-annual report. The September 2016 semi-annual report reports that a zero draft of the SF policy was finalized and shared for wider consultations.</i>							
MGD 1.4.3	Increased Government Support	Establishment of a national school feeding unit within the Government (Y=1/N=0)	1				1	1
<i>Comment</i>	<i>The latest semi-annual report states that a school feeding unit was established in the MOPME in 2011. This was confirmed by the CO. It is unclear why it was included as an objective under this programme, which only started in October 2014.</i> <i>The proposal includes another indicator: "Number of "community meetings" organized in target communities by government offices to receive and respond to community concerns related to local schools and education", with a target of 126 CMWs. This indicator has not been included in the commitment letter and the subsequent monitoring and reporting.</i>							

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
MGD 1.4.4	Increased engagement of local organizations and community groups	Number of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) or similar "school" governance structures supported as a result of USDA assistance	540 ^a			180	118	145
<i>Comment</i>	<i>The proposal included a single indicator “number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USDA assistance”, which was not included in subsequent monitoring.</i> <i>^aThe target was revised upwards from 432.</i> <i>According to the latest semi-annual report (September 2016), this indicator refers to trainings of PTAs through school management committees, community mobilisation workshops, women leadership meetings, and trainings.</i>							
MGD SO2	Increased Use of Health and Dietary Practices	Percent of school-age children receiving a minimum acceptable diet (male)	70%					43%
		Percent of school-age children receiving a minimum acceptable diet (female)	70%					43%
		Percent of target schools that use a pest management plan for their food storage facilities	98%	48% Fulchhari:39% Sundergonj: 52%		89%		65%
								DMA Outcome survey 1 - Nov 2016: Overall average: 65.3% Fulchhari: 57.5% Sundergonj: 68.1%
		2015 baseline survey indicator: Average dietary diversity score of school aged children ^o		Girls: 5.04 Boys: 5.1				
							DMA Outcome survey 1 - Nov 2016: Girls: 4.3 Boys: 4.3	

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
Comment	The proposal only included the indicator on pest management, while the USDA Modification I Letter and WFP's six-monthly reports also include the indicators on a minimum acceptable diet. °The baseline survey assessed the mean dietary diversity score ¹⁴⁸ (5.1 for both sexes (out of a total of 10), however, this was not included in the regular monitoring and reporting. This was taken up by the September 2015 and March 2016 reports which repeated the baseline values. The mean dietary score was not included in the commitment letter and it does not appear that data was collected to measure this, except in the first outcome survey conducted by DMA in late 2016.							
MGD 2.1	Improved knowledge of health and hygiene practices							
Comment	The results framework indicates that this result will be achieved through partner activities. The modified commitment letter and semi-annual reports do not include this.							
MGD 2.2	Increased knowledge of safe food preparation and storage practices	Percent of compliance and quality checking visits to factories that report implementation of safe food production practices	95%				70	75
Comment	The proposal also included the following indicator: “percent of warehouse visits that report standard storage practices”. This was not included in the commitment letter and subsequent monitoring and reporting. The March 2016 semi-annual report states that 80% of the targeted factories have the required equipment for food preparation available. The latest semi-annual report states that the “high turnover of technical staff remains an issue in ensuring safe food production practices.” (WFP, 2015-2016)							
MGD 2.3	Increased knowledge on nutrition	Percent of students in target schools who can name at least three good nutrition and dietary practices	80%	Girls: 44% Boys: 39%		42%		80%
							DMA Outcome survey 1 - Nov 2016: Girls: 81.3% Boys: 77.8%	

¹⁴⁸ “Dietary history of pupils was measured by interviewing parents using a 24 hours recall. Data was collected on the ten food groups recommended by USDA, as suggested in Volume 11 of the Feed the Future guidance series.” (Kimetrica, 2015: 69)

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Result Title & Description		Performance Indicator	Performance Indicator Target ¹⁴⁵	Baseline survey (06/2015)	Performance indicator results ¹⁴⁶			
					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
Comment	WFP's proposal to MGD stated the target as “percent of students in target schools who achieve a passing score on a test of good nutrition and dietary practices”, an indicator which was not subsequently included in the USDA modified commitment letter or the monitoring progresses. The March 2015 semi-annual report states that WFP will generate data on this indicator on a yearly basis. The September 2015 semi-annual report repeated the baseline data.							
MGD 2.4	Increased Access to Clean Water and Sanitation Services							
Comment	The results framework indicates that this result will be achieved through partner activities. The modified commitment letter and semi-annual reports do not include this.							
MGD 2.5	Increased Access to Preventative Health Intervention							
Comment	The results framework indicates that this result will be achieved through partner activities. The modified commitment letter and semi-annual reports do not include this.							
MGD 2.6	Increased Access to Requisite Food Preparation and Storage Tools and Equipment	Percent of target factories with improved food preparation and storage equipment	100%				80%	85%
Comment								

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					10/2014-03/2015	04/2015-09/2015	10/2015-03/2016	04/2016-09/2016
MGD 2.7.4	Increased Engagement of Local Organizations and Community Groups ^p	Number of School Management Committees that received training in vegetable gardening, health, sanitation and nutrition. ^q						
		Number of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) or similar "school" governance structures supported as a result of USDA assistance ^r	540			180	118	145
		Number of people trained on food preparation and storage practices ^s	180			180	182	120
<i>Comment</i>	^p This objective is worded the same as MGD 1.4.4 above. ^q This indicator is mentioned only in the proposal but has not been included in the USDA Modification I commitment letter or subsequent monitoring. ^r This is the same indicator as under MGD1.4.4 above. The target was revised upwards from 432 to 540. ^s This indicator is not mentioned under outcome results, but under activities in the modified commitment letter and in the monitoring reports. No final target has been set, but the target of 180 is repeated for each financial year. It is unclear whether this is cumulative or not.							

Source: USDA Modification I Commitment Letter (USDA, 2016), WFP semi-annual reports (WFP, 2015-2016), WFP proposal to USDA (WFP, nd-a)

Utilisation of wheat from the USA and understanding shortfalls in utilisation of HEB

11. The information in Table 44 below shows the utilisation of wheat from USDA (including the initial borrowing of wheat at project commencement).

Table 44 Utilisation of wheat from USDA

Period	GOB in-kind wheat (mt)	USDA in-kind wheat (mt)	Biscuits (mt) produced	Wheat-to-biscuit exchange ratio	Total utilisation of biscuits (mt)	Balance of biscuits (mt)
October 2014 - March 2015	4,000 ^a		1,546	2.6 mt = 1 mt	695.826	
April 2015 – March 2016		9,740 – 4,000 ^b = 5,740	2,396	2.4 mt = 1 mt	1615.796	
April 2016 – September 2016		12,000	3,430	3.5 mt = 1 mt	896.008	
Total by September 2016		17,740	7,372		3,207.63	4,164.37^c

Source: WFP CO (e-mail on 2 May 2017).

Notes:

a) Under an agreement between WFP and GOB in July 2014, wheat of US origin was borrowed from government stocks (WFP & GOB, 2014). The biscuits produced were packaged with the USDA logo.

b) Repayment of the earlier advance.

c) To utilize the surplus resources, WFP has planned and submitted a second modification for USDA approval. According to the modification request, WFP plans for extension of project period from October-December 2017 and proposes to cover new areas/sub-districts for the period of April to December 2017 (see WFP,).

12. Table 45 below is an expansion of Table 10 in section 2.3 of the main text. It shows the calculation of the overall shortfall in HEB distribution, as well as calculations of the impact of the three main drivers of the shortfall, namely lower student enrolment, fewer actual SF days and lower than expected attendance. Figure 4 in section 2.3 visualises the data provided here.

Table 45 HEB utilisation and shortfall calculations

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h
Period	Students assisted expected	Students assisted actual	SF days expected	SF days actual	% shortfall in school days	attendance expected	attendance actual	% shortfall in attendance rate
					=1-d/c			= 1-g/f
Q4 2014	204,059	204,059	60	34	43.33%	90%	79%	12.22%
Q1 2015	137,371	114,689	63	44	30.16%	90%	79%	12.22%
Q2-Q3 2015	120,502	120,059	110	106	3.64%	90%	82%	8.89%
Q4 2015	120,502	115,270	61	55	9.84%	90%	80%	11.11%
Q1 2016	115,270	115,270	64	61	4.69%	90%	82%	8.89%
Q2 2016	115,270	115,270	47	47	0.00%	90%	86%	4.44%
Q3 2016	115,270	115,270	80	77	3.75%	85%	82%	3.53%
Total			485	424	12.58%			

	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s
Period	target number of snacks served	actual number of snacks served	actual snacks as % of target	no. of snacks "lost" due to lower enrolm't	adjusted target	no. of snacks "lost" due to lower attendance	adjusted target	no. of snacks "lost" due to fewer school days	total snacks lost	check: snacks lost plus snacks served
	= a*c*f	= b*d*g	k as % of j	(a-b)*c*f	j-m	n*i	n-o	p*e	m+o+q	r+k=j
Q4 2014	11,019,186	5,481,025	49.74%	-	11,019,186	1,346,789	9,672,397	4,191,372	5,538,161	11,019,186
Q1 2015	7,788,936	3,986,590	51.18%	1,286,069	6,502,866	794,795	5,708,072	1,721,482	3,802,346	7,788,936
Q2-Q3 2015	11,929,698	10,435,528	87.48%	43,857	11,885,841	1,056,519	10,829,322	393,794	1,494,170	11,929,698
Q4 2015	6,615,560	5,071,880	76.67%	287,237	6,328,323	703,147	5,625,176	553,296	1,543,680	6,615,560
Q1 2016	6,639,552	5,765,805	86.84%	-	6,639,552	590,182	6,049,370	283,564	873,747	6,639,552
Q2 2016	4,875,921	4,659,213	95.56%	-	4,875,921	216,708	4,659,213	-	216,708	4,875,921
Q3 2016	7,838,360	7,278,148	92.85%	-	7,838,360	276,648	7,561,712	283,564	560,212	7,838,360
Total	56,707,213	42,678,189	75.26%	1,617,163	55,090,049	4,984,788	50,105,261	7,427,072	14,029,023	56,707,213

Sources: WFP CO email on 2May 2017 and WFP semi-annual reports (WFP, 2015-2016)

Annex I Evaluation Process

Key informant and stakeholder interviews and FGDs

1. During the inception phase the methodology was developed, extensive desk-based research was conducted on the country context and an initial analysis of the SFP done. A brief mission to the WFP Bangkok Regional Bureau took place from 10 to 12 October 2016 and included preliminary briefings with key RBB staff, an introductory conference call with the CO and work on stakeholder analysis. This fed into the inception report which was finalized on 24 November 2016.
2. The main evaluation mission took place from 28 November to 10 December 2016. The team consisted of Iqbal Sobhan (Team Leader), Rita Bhatia (Senior Evaluator - Public Health Nutrition) and Christine Berger (Research Analyst/Evaluator), accompanied by Interpreter Muhammad Ashfaq Ur Rahman, with evaluation management from Stephen Lister and Rebecca Aikman.
3. For the visits in Gaibandha, the team split into two groups to be able to visit more schools and meet more stakeholders. Table 46 below provides the detailed schedule of the evaluation mission, which combined meetings and interviews in Dhaka with field visits in Gaibandha district where MGD SFP operates.
4. Interviews and group discussions formed the main form of primary data collection. The field work included focus group discussions (FGDs) with beneficiaries (with separate groups for women/girls and men/boys) and with WFP, GOB, and other staff involved in delivering programmes. To gain the opinions and views of as many members of the focus group as possible, a participatory approach was used where appropriate.

Consultation strategy , workshops and seminars

5. The team employed a comprehensively consultative approach to the evaluation, approaching as wide a range of stakeholders as time allowed and ensuring that the views of all key groups were considered, reflected and triangulated.
6. A systematic approach to consultation during the country visit included:
 - A briefing with CO staff at the outset of the main evaluation mission. The ET briefed the staff on the work and the plans for the field mission, and sought informal feedback on issues, data, interviewees etc.
 - Also at the outset of the main evaluation mission, the team met with wider stakeholders (notably including GOB, plus other partners and NGOs that WFP engages with), for a similar briefing and a roundtable discussion.
 - On the final day of the main evaluation mission, an exit debriefing for CO staff (with RBB to join), as well as the external reference group, including the GOB took place. The evaluation team gave an informal PowerPoint presentation of preliminary findings and conclusions, and sought clarification and validation.
7. In the process of triangulation, the ET scrutinised all data, including the opinions gathered from interviews and focus groups, for consistency and potential irregularities, noting and seeking explanations for cases where different (groups of) informants described the progress, performance or influencing factors of the operation differently. Where such differences or irregularities were identified, the team analysed the data further or carried out additional enquiries to seek to resolve them – or to cast further light on causative factors by explaining why different informants expressed different views. These processes of checking and triangulation enabled the team to validate its findings and develop authoritative, well-founded conclusions.

Field visits

8. The MGD-funded schools are in sub-districts (upazilas) of Gaibandha district in the north of Bangladesh (see maps at Annex D). As explained in Box 14 above it was not appropriate for this MTE to undertake extensive field survey work. In consultation with the CO and local authorities, the team developed a programme to visit a small number of schools in the programme area. Mokoro's Inception Report (Mokoro, 2016b) provided detailed criteria to inform the sample and these are summarised in Annex E above, ¶24 and Table 37. The team had Bangla/Hindi speakers to actively engage in the interviews. The SF is implemented at sub-district level by NGOs and the GOB, with WFP directly implementing the capacity building component. Within the allocated time 15 schools in four upazilas in Gaibandha district were visited (see Table 38 in Annex E). The selection criteria for schools were based on sampled schools included in the baseline and follow-up outcome surveys, ensuring coverage of schools falling within WFP's three performance categories, A,B, C classification (with A being the best) based on the performance of the schools in relation to the quality of education provided, management of school feeding activities and general management of schools. Given the time constraint, schools within a reasonable distance were chosen for the ET to cover within the time available. In addition, schools managed by the GOB and NGOs respectively were visited to provide a bigger picture of the SFP in Bangladesh. The ET envisaged to also visit a school providing a school meal programme, however, due to long distances and time constraints it was not possible to include this in the schedule (see Annex E, especially Table 37 and Table 38). The ET, however, met with AusAID who are funding the school meals programme.

9. At school level, interviews were sought with the head teacher, the school management committee, a group of at least five fathers of pupils, a group of at least five mothers of pupils, a group of ten boy pupils and a group of ten girl pupils wherever possible. The supply chain including storage and distribution of HEB was inspected, as well as school gardens, latrines and other sanitation and hygiene facilities.

10. Where possible, men and women (boys and girls) were interviewed separately. The team conducted interviews with the local education authorities from various upazilas, specifically any officials responsible for school feeding; and with staff of NGOs and other agencies collaborating with WFP in implementation of the programme. The full list of interviewees is provided in Table 47 below.

11. Table 46 below shows the detailed timetable from the evaluation's in-country mission. This allowed for travel to project sites in the period between the 29th November and the 6th December, bookended by consultations and debriefings with the CO and other stakeholders in the capital. The ET liaised with the CO to plan the itinerary before travelling to Bangladesh.

Table 46 Field Work Schedule

Mid-Term Evaluation of MGD School Feeding Programme, Bangladesh			
Itinerary for Evaluation Team (ET)			
27 November - 09 December 2016			
Mission Members	Iqbal Sobhan Rita Bhatia Christine Berger in the field accompanied by Ashfaq Rahman as interpreter		
Key activities: Discussion with relevant WFP staff (CO and SO level) and review SF documents, field visit to schools, meeting with local level government officials of DPE, meeting with IEC, ERG, donor, relevant government officials at central level, NGO and other UN agencies and USDA			
Date/Time	Activities	Location/Venue	Participants
Sunday 27 November, 2016	Arrival of evaluation team members:	Dhaka International Airport	
Monday 28 November, 2016			

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Date/Time	Activities	Location/Venue	Participants
9:00 – 10:00	Introductory meeting with CD	CD's office	CD
10:15 – 12:00	MGD SF Project briefing followed by discussion	17 th Floor Meeting Room, WFP Office	Head of PPIS (Rezaul), School Feeding focal (Zahir & team) and Government capacity building (Shahida & team), Jessica, SS Arefeen, Ezaz, Monique, Monira, Kauser
12:00-12:45	Meeting with School Feeding Programme and SF Government Capacity Building teams and Gender Focal Point	17 th Floor Meeting Room, WFP Office	Rezaul Zahir, Lata, Shahida
14:00-13:30	Meeting with Evaluation Reference Group (ERG)	17 th Floor Meeting Room, WFP Office	Jessica, Ezaz, Rezaul, DPE, FAO, BRAC, RDRS
15:00 – 16:00	Meeting with Ministry of Finance	ERD	
16:15 – 17:00	Meeting with M&E Unit	17 th Floor Meeting Room, WFP Office	Ezaz, Oscar, Mohsin
Tuesday November 29, 2016			
09:15 – 10:00	Security briefing by WFP	WFP Focal Point	Muzahid (01755642182)
11:00-12:30	Meeting with Government Project Director and Deputy Project Director	DPE Office in Mirpur	PD, DPD
14:00	Depart for Airport		
15:15 – 17:00	Novo Flight to Saidpur, Arrival to Saidpur Airport and travel to Rangpur	Dhaka Domestic Airport	
17:00 – 19:00	Arrival in Rangpur Meeting with WFP SO	Rangpur sub-office	Hafiza (01711892228), Shaheen (01711882543), Mamunur
Wednesday November 30, 2016			
08:00 - 09:00	Travel to Sundarganj to visit NGO schools	Rangpur sub-office	Shaheen, Mamun
09:00 - 11:30	Visited three NGO schools to observe and discuss with teachers and respective NGO staff - 1 GUK school (visited together) - 2 BRAC school (team split)	Brac, GUK Rita and Iqbal visited one school; Christine and Ashfaq the other	Shaheen, Mamun
11:30 - 12:00	Warehouse visit to discuss supply chain	Gaibandha warehouse	Warehouse manager
12:00 - 13:30	Lunch at SKS Inn (<i>Name of a NGO</i>)		
14:00 - 16:30	Meeting with district and Upazila Education Officers	District Education Office (whole team)	DEO, TEO
17:00 - 18:00	Briefing on field visit plan	RDRS project office (whole team)	Shaheen, Mamun
Thursday December 01, 2016			

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Date/Time	Activities	Location/Venue	Participants
08:00 - 16:00	Visit 4 schools (split into two teams): ~ Interviews with: head teacher/teachers/SMC, a group of at least five fathers of pupils, a group of at least five mothers of pupils, a group of ten boy pupils and a group of ten girl pupils	Sundorgonj 4 primary schools (list shown below)	Teachers, students, parents, SMC
Friday December 02, 2016			
09:00 - 12:30	Meeting with RDRS staff	RDRS Project Office (whole team)	RDRS Programme Manager/Project Coordinator other staff
14:00 - 16:00	Meeting with BRAC staff	BRAC Project Office (whole team)	Project staff
Saturday December 03, 2016			
08:00 - 16:00	Visit 4 schools (split into two teams): ~ Interviews with: head teacher/teachers/SMC, a group of at least five fathers of pupils, a group of at least five mothers of pupils, a group of ten boy pupils and a group of ten girl pupils	Fulchhari Upazila 4 primary schools (list shown below)	Teachers, students, parents, SMC
Sunday December 04, 2016			
08:00 - 16:00	Visit 2 schools (split into two teams): Interviews with: head teacher/teachers/SMC, a group of at least five fathers of pupils, a group of at least five mothers of pupils, a group of ten boy pupils and a group of ten girl pupils Meeting with Head of Sub-Office	Gabindagonj and Saghata Upazila 2 primary schools handed over to government (List shown below) SKS Inn	Teachers, students, parents, SMC
Monday December 05, 2016			
08:00 - 14:00	Visit 2 NGO schools (list shown below): Interviews with: head teacher/teachers/SMC, a group of at least five fathers of pupils, a group of at least five mothers of pupils, a group of ten boy pupils and a group of ten girl pupils	Fulchhari Upazila 2 NGO schools (List shown below)	Teacher, students, parents, SMC
14:30 - 15:30	Lunch at SKS guesthouse		ET with Head of SO and SO SF staff
15:30 - 17:00	Return to Rangpur ET internal debriefing meeting	RDRS rest house	Hafiza, Shaheen
Tuesday December 06, 2016			
8:00-9:30	Travel to Saidpur from Rangpur	Saidpur Airport	
11:00-12:00	Flight to Dhaka, Novo Air	Dhaka Domestic Airport	
14:00 -14:30	Lunch at Ascott Residence		
15:30 - 16:30	Meeting with USDA	USDA office Mr. Tanvir (01713424356)	Zahir
Wednesday December 07, 2016			
11:00-12:00	Meeting with MOPME Secretary/Joint Secretary (Rita and Iqbal)	Secretariat	Iqbal and Rita
11:30 - 12:30	Meeting with Australia, DFAT (Christine)	DFAT office	Christine Berger

Date/Time	Activities	Location/Venue	Participants
11:30 - 12:30	Meeting with World Bank	World Bank office	Rezaul
14:00-19:00	Biscuit producers and a Factory (Iqbal, Christine)	New Olympia Biscuit Factory at Nabinagar, Savar	Factory Manager
15:30-16:15	Meeting with UNICEF (Rita)		Rita
11:30 - 16:30	Preparation for debriefing → time used to visit biscuit factory and meet with UNICEF. Debriefing at night		
Thursday December 08, 2016			
9:00 – 11:00	Bilateral follow-up meetings with M&E, and SF	17 th Floor Meeting Room, WFP Office	
11:30 – 13:00	Debriefing CO/International Evaluation Committee	17 th Floor Meeting Room, WFP Office	CO management, relevant project staff and IEC members
14:30-16:00	Debriefing with ERG Members and other stakeholders (including USDA)	17 th Floor Meeting Room, WFP Office	ERG
Friday December 09, 2016			
	Team members depart		

12. Table 47 below shows the names of all people interviewed in the course of this evaluation. Where names could not be obtained, for example in some focal group discussions, the number of men/women, boys/girls is provided. In total, approximately 220 people were interviewed.

Table 47 List of Informants/Interviewees

FUNCTION
WFP RBB & HQ
WFP Evaluation Manager
WFP Partnership Officer, USA
Regional M&E Adviser, RBB
School Feeding Focal Point, RBB
Cash and Voucher Focal Point
Senior Regional Programme Advisor, RBB
Regional Pacific Food Security Cluster Coordinator, (former RBB School Feeding and Gender Focal Point)
WFP Bangladesh
Sen. Programme Assistant
Sen. Programme Assistant
Deputy Country Director Operations Support
Head of Programme, Planning and Implementation
School Feeding, Capacity building
WFP, Capacity Development Support, School Feeding
Head of Field Operations Programme Support – chair of IEC
Head of Field Operations
Senior Programme Officer, M&E and MTE focal point
Head of Nutrition
Programme Officer, Nutrition
Procurement Officer
M&E, Outcome Study Officer
Sen. Programme Associate
Senior Programme Assistant, School Feeding
Assistant Project Director DPE
Project Manager, FAO (Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems)
Deputy Manager, BRAC
BRAC, Staff Researcher (Research and Evaluation Division)
Ministry of Finance
Joint Secretary, Economic Relations Division (ERD), Ministry of Finance
DPE

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FUNCTION
Joint Secretary, Project Director SF in Poverty Prone Areas
Assistant Project Director
Assistant Project Director
Assistant Project Director
WFP Sub-Office Rangpur
WFP, Programme Associate, Rangpur Sub-Office
WFP, Programme Associate, Rangpur Sub-Office
Head of WFP Sub-Office Rangpur
GUK school
Head Teacher
SMC
As a whole group
Head Teacher
7 people
SMC member
SMC member
SMC member
SMC member
SMC member
SMC member
Interviewed separately
Tonugram
Head Teacher
SMC members
RDRS, District Warehouse Supervisor
RDRS, Tally Clerk
Upazila Education Officer Sundargonj, Gaibandha
Assistant Education Officer, Saghata, Gaibandha
Education Officer, Fulchori
Upazila Education Officer, Sador, Gaibandha
Materhat GPS
Head Teacher
Teacher (total experience : 10+ ; at this school : 5 years)
Teacher (total: 3/this school: 3)
Teacher (total: 5+/this school: 2+)
Teacher (total: 8+/this school: 6)
Teacher (total: 3/this school: 3)
Teacher (total: 11/this school: 7)
President SMC
Vice President SMC
Head Teacher (Secretary) SMC
Member SMC
Member SMC
Member SMC
Member SMC
Teacher (Member, SMC)
Village doctor
Business (Agricultural equip.)
Farmer
Business (Agricultural equip.)
Farmer
Tailor
Farmer
Business (Grocery shop)
Farmer
Business (Agricultural equip.)
Business (Grocery shop)
House wife

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FUNCTION
Teacher
House wife
House wife
House wife
House wife
House wife
House wife
House wife
House wife
Dhopadanga GPS
Head Teacher
Storekeeper
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
(4 men, 3 women)
President, SMC
Vice President, SMC
Head Teacher (Member Secretary), SMC
House wife
Assistant at local community clinic
Road construction worker
Works in farms and as house hold assistant
House wife
Rickshaw puller
Business (Agricultural equip.)
Pharmacy owner
Farmer
Grocery shop owner
Purbo Saporhati GPS
Head Teacher
SMC
parents
3 classrooms
Dhonierkora GPS
Head Teacher (in charge as actual head teacher was away on training)
Assistant Teacher
SMC
parents
RDRS
Technical Officer SFP
Technical Officer SFP
Technical Officer SFP
Technical Officer SFP
Technical Officer SFP
PC
In charge, education sector
Technical Officer SFP
Technical Officer SFP
Technical Officer SFP
PC
Technical Officer SFP
DS
Programme Manager
BRAC
Jhanjair GPS

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FUNCTION
Head teacher
Assistant Teacher
4 women and 1 man
President
Member
Representing her husband who is a member of the SMC
Representing her husband who is a member of the SMC
Representing her husband who is a member of the SMC
8 mothers
House wife
House wife
Work as house hold assistant
House wife
House wife
House wife
Work as house hold assistant
8 fathers
Used to be a rickshaw puller; had severe accident and now stay at home
Fisherman
Fisherman
Fisherman
Grocery shop owner
Farmer
Farmer
Farmer
Farmer
Local Trader
Children in classrooms
Sayedpur GPS
Head teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
Teacher
House wife
House wife
House wife
House wife
House wife
House wife
House wife
House wife
House wife
Business man
Farmer
Business man
Tailor
Business man
SMC
Galakati GPS
Head Teacher
SMC
Head Teacher
Assistant Teacher
Assistant Teacher
Assistant Teacher
Assistant Teacher
Assistant Teacher

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FUNCTION
Para Teacher
SMC
parents
Gana Unnayan Kendra = GUK
Senior Coordinator –GUK Gaibanda
SF, M&E , Nutrition, Joint UN, emergency
Head of Programme SKS
Head of WFP Sub-Office Rangpur
Baratkhal GPS (not MGD)
Head Teacher
SMC
Head Teacher BRAC School Hossenpur, Fulchori
AM Gaibandha BRAC
QF BRAC
BM Fulchori, BRAC
USDA
Agriculture Specialist, Food Agriculture Service (FAS), US Department of Agriculture (USDA), US Embassy, Bangladesh
MOPME
Additional Secretary, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
DFAT Australia
Senior Education Advisor/Educational Consultant
Senior Programme Manager
Programme Officer
Olympia Biscuit Factory
Director (Development)
HR
PM
Admin
Branding
QC in charge
Accounts Officer
Quality Control Officer
Director (Operations)
UNICEF
WASH Specialist UNICEF
ERG
Interpreter for ET during field visit
BRAC – ILSC pproject, MDS
BRAC – ILSC pproject, MDS
Joint Secretary, Project Director SF in Poverty Prone Areas
Assistant Project Director DPE
Deputy Country Director Operations Support
WFP, M&E Officer
BRAC
Material Deveopment Specialist
Deputy Manager
Senior Area Manager
Trainer
Quality Facilitator
Quality Facilitator
Quality Facilitator
GUK
Senior Coordinator –GUK Gaibanda
SF, M&E , Nutrition, Joint UN, emergency
GUK school
Head Teacher
SMC
IEC
Senior Programme Assistant, School Feeding
School Feeding, Capacity building
Head of Field Operations

FUNCTION
Reports Officer
WFP, Capacity Development Support, School Feeding
Senior Programme Officer
Sen. Programme Associate
Sen. Programme Associate
Senior Programme Associate – M&E
M&E, Outcome Study Officer
Head of Field Operations Programme Support – chair of IEC
Head of Cox's Bazar Support
Programme Officer, Nutrition
WFP, M&E Officer
Interpreter for ET during field visit

Reference Groups

13. Internal and external reference groups were formed for the evaluation, with the memberships shown in Table 48 and Table 49 below. Their roles were in line with the guidance provided in the respective DEQAS Technical Notes (WFP, 2016c and WFP, 2016d).

14. The Internal Evaluation Committee (IEC) is a temporary committee that “oversees the evaluation process, by making decisions, giving advice to the evaluation manager and clearing evaluation products submitted to the Chair for approval”. The IEC is a sub-group of the ERG (WFP, 2016d).

15. The Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) “is a group of key stakeholders to the evaluation who review and provide feedback on specific outputs. The ERG members act as experts in an advisory capacity, without management responsibilities.” (WFP, 2016c). In addition this group supports “the relevance, independence and impartiality of the evaluation” (WFP, 2016d, WFP, 2016).

16. The responsible staff at the WFP Bangladesh CO were very supportive during the planning and implementation of the MTE. Informants in Dhaka and in the field were cooperative and supportive, which enabled the ET to collect valuable data and discuss ideas with various participants.

Table 48 Internal Evaluation Committee - Members

Internal Evaluation Committee - List of Members		
Name	Organization and Designation	Position on IEC
WFP Bangladesh		
Claire Conan	WFP, Deputy Country Director	Chair ¹⁴⁹
Zahirul Islam	WFP, Programme Officer School Feeding	Member
Oscar Lindow	WFP, Outcome Study Officer (M&E)	Member
Ezaz Nabi	WFP, M&E Officer	Member
Jessica Staskiewicz	WFP, Head of Programme Support	Member
RBB		
Denise Brennan	WFP MGD MTE Evaluation Manager	Member

¹⁴⁹ Claire Conan was replaced by Jessica Staskiewicz, as she left the CO during the time of the MTE mission.

Table 49 Evaluation Reference Group

Evaluation Reference Group - List of Members		
Name	Organization and Designation	Position on IEC
WFP Bangladesh		
Claire Conan	WFP, Deputy Country Director	Chair
Rezaul Karim	WFP, Head PIS	Member
Hafiza Khan	WFP, Head of Sub-office	Member
Md. Ezaz Nabi	WFP, Programme Officer, M&E	Member
RBB		
Denise Brennan	WFP MGD MTE Evaluation Manager	Member
Clare Mbizule	WFP Regional M&E Advisor	Member
External		
Shofiqul Alam	Unicef, WASH Specialist	Member
Ram Chandra Das	DPE, DSFPPPA Project Director	Member
Md. Iqbal Hossain	RDRS, SF Coordinator	Member
Shibani Guha	BRAC, SF Focal Officer	Member
Dr. Khondaker Nur	FAO, Assistant Country Director	Member

Annex J Supplementary Information

This annex provides the following supplementary information:

- status of relevant MDGs in Bangladesh;
- description of the SF component within the ongoing WFP Country Programme;
- notes on WFP alignment with UNDAF;
- a background note on Unilever support to SF;
- a summary of the 2016 SABER diagnostic on SF capacity in Bangladesh.

Achievement of Millennium Development Goals in Bangladesh

This section reproduces the latest results on the achievement of MDGs 1, 2 and 3 in Bangladesh, as presented on the UNDP web-site (UNDP, n.d.).

MDG 1 Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty

Bangladesh has made commendable progress in respect of eradication of poverty and hunger. It has sustained a GDP growth rate in excess of six percent in recent years that has played a positive role in eradicating poverty. The robust growth has been accompanied by corresponding improvements in several social indicators such as increased life expectancy and lower fertility rate despite having one of the world's highest population densities.

The inclusive growth has resulted in impressive poverty reduction from 56.7 percent in 1991-92 to 31.5 percent in 2010; the rate of reduction being faster in the present decade than the earlier ones. The latest HIES 2010 data show that the incidence of poverty has declined at an annual rate of 2.47 percent in Bangladesh during 1992-2010 against the MDG target of 2.12 percent. Bangladesh has already met one of the indicators of target 1 by bringing down the poverty gap ratio to 6.5 against 2015 target of 8.0.

The estimated figures suggest that the MDG target of halving the population living below the poverty line (from 56.7 percent to 29.0 percent) has already been achieved in 2012. Unemployment as well as underemployment is especially dominant among the young people between 15 to 24 years of age. This age group comprises nearly nine percent of the country's population and 23 percent of the labour force.

Moreover, while Bangladesh has demonstrated its capacity for achieving the goal of poverty reduction within the target timeframe, attaining food security and nutritional wellbeing still remains a challenge. The challenges with regard to reducing income inequality and the low economic participation of women also remain as major concerns.

Table 50 Status of MDG1 (Hunger and Poverty) in Bangladesh

Goal, targets and indicators (as revised)	Base year 1990/1991	Current status (source)	Target by 2015
Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger			
Target 1.A: Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people below poverty line			
1.1: Proportion of population below \$1 (PPP) per day, (%)	70.2 (1992)	43.3 (WB ^[1] , 2010)	35.1
1.1a: Proportion of population below national upper poverty line (2,122 kcal), (%)	56.7 (1992)	31.5 (HIES 2010)	29.0
1.2: Poverty gap ratio, (%)	17.0 (1992)	6.5 (HIES 2010)	8.0
1.3: Share of poorest quintile in national consumption, (%)	8.76 (2005)	8.85 (HIES 2010)	na
1.3a: Share of poorest quintile in national income, (%)	6.52 (1992)	5.22 (HIES 2010)	-
Target 1.B: Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people.			
1.4: Growth rate of GDP per person employed, (%)	0.90 (1991)	3.43 (WB 2010)	-
1.5: Employment to population ratio (15+), (%)	48.5	59.3 (LFS 2010)	for all
1.6: Proportion of employed people living below \$1 (PPP) per day	55.9 (1992)	50.1 (ILO 2005)	-
1.7: Proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment	40.1 (1996)	21.7 (ILO 2005)	-
Target 1.C: Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.			
1.8: Prevalence of underweight children under-five years of age (6-59 months), (%)	66.0	36.4 (BDHS 2011)	33.0
1.9: Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (2,122 kcal), (%)	48.0	40.0 (HIES 2005 ^[2])	24.0
1.9a: Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (1805 kcal), (%)	28.0	19.5 (HIES 2005) ²	14.0

[1] Though the MDG indicators are US\$1 (PPP), WB data are prepared based on US\$1.25 (PPP). Throughout the report, whenever WB data are shown for MDG indicators of US\$1 (PPP), it refers to US\$1.25 (PPP).

[2] HIES 2010 does not measure poverty using Direct Calorie Intake (DCI) method.

Source: UNDP, n.d.

MGD 2 Achieve universal primary education

Significant progress has been made in increasing equitable access in education (NER: 98.7 percent; girls: 99.4 percent, boys: 97.2 percent), reduction of dropouts, improvement in completion of the cycle, and implementation of a number of quality enhancement measures in primary education. Bangladesh has already achieved gender parity in primary and secondary enrolment. Initiatives have been taken to introduce pre-school education to prepare the children for formal schooling.

The government is in the process of implementing a comprehensive National Education Policy (2010) to achieve its objectives. The Constitution of Bangladesh has provision for free and compulsory primary education. The challenge under MDG 2

include attaining the targets of primary education completion rate and the adult literacy rate. A large part of physically and mentally challenged children remain excluded of the schooling system. The quality of education is also a challenge at the primary and higher levels.

Table 51 Status of MDG2 (Primary Education) in Bangladesh

Goal, Targets and Indicators (as revised)	Base year 1990/91	Current status (source)	Target by 2015
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education			
Target 2.A: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling			
2.1: Net enrolment in primary education, %	60.5	98.7 (DPE 2011)	100
2.2: Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5, %	43.0	79.5 (DPE 2011)	100
2.3: Literacy rate of 15-24 year olds, women and men, %	-	Total 74.9 Women: 81.9 Men: 67.8 (BDHS 2011)	100
2.3a: Adult literacy rate of 15+ years old population, % (proxy indicator)	37.2	59.82 M: 63.89, F: 55.71 (BLS 2010) 58.8 (SVRS 2011)	100
Source: UNDP, n.d.			

MDG 3 Promote gender equality and empower women

Bangladesh has already achieved this goal i.e. gender parity in primary and secondary education at the national level. This positive development has occurred due to some specific public interventions focusing on girl students, such as stipends and exemption of tuition fees for girls in rural areas, and the stipend scheme for girls at the secondary level. Bangladesh has made significant progress in promoting the objectives of ensuring gender equality and empowerment of women.

There has been steady improvement in the social and political empowerment scenario of women in Bangladesh. The Government of Bangladesh is committed to attaining the objective of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action and MDGs in conformity with the fundamental rights enshrined in the Bangladesh Constitution. It has adopted the

National Policy for Women's Advancement (2011) and a series of programs for ensuring sustainable development of women.

There has been a sharp increase in the number of women parliamentarians elected (20 percent of total seats) in the last national election. However, wage employment for women in Bangladesh is still low. Only one woman out of every five is engaged in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector.

Table 52 Status of MDG3 (Gender Equality) in Bangladesh

Goal, targets and indicators (as revised)	Base year 1990/91	Current status (source)	Target by 2015
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women			
Target 3.A: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015			
3.1: Ratios of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education			
3.1a: Ratio of girls to boys in primary education (Gender Parity Index = Girls/Boys)	0.83	1.02 (ACR, DPE 2011) 1.10 (BDHS 2011)	1.00
3.1b: Ratio of girls to boys in secondary education (Gender Parity Index = Girls/Boys)	0.52	1.13 (BANBEIS 2011) 1.10 (BDHS 2011)	1.00
3.1c: Ratio of girls to boys in tertiary education (Gender Parity Index = Girls/Boys)	0.37	0.66 (BANBEIS 2011) 0.60 (BDHS 2011)	1.00
3.2: Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector, (%)	19.10	19.87 (LFS 2010)	50.00
3.3: Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament, (%)	12.70	20.00 (MOWCA 2012)	33.00

Source: UNDP, n.d.

School feeding component of the WFP Country Programme 200243, 2012-2016.

The following paragraphs are extracted from project documents which describe the school feeding component of CP. Paragraph numbers are from the source documents.

From the original CP project document (WFP, –which aims to reach just over 1 million SF beneficiaries).

Component 2: School Feeding

30. School feeding is intended to contribute to the Government's goal of achieving universal primary education by 2015. It constitutes a safety net to ensure that children receive adequate micronutrients and is an incentive to parents to send children to school. The expected outcome is increased enrolment, attendance and retention.

31. School feeding will be implemented in pre-primary and primary schools in priority areas, starting from age 5. In response to growing urban poverty, support for primary schools and non-formal education centres in urban areas will be expanded. Madrassas

and schools run by NGOs that follow the government curriculum will be included because they often have a significant proportion of ultra-poor students and drop-outs from the public system.

32. On school days children will receive micronutrient-fortified biscuits providing 67 percent of the daily vitamin and mineral requirements and a supplementary caloric intake.

33. School feeding is also a platform for delivering nutrition and health interventions and addressing shortfalls in women's leadership in primary education. Children, parents, teachers and community members will receive a learning package addressing health, hygiene, nutrition, deworming, promotion of safe drinking water, women's leadership and participation in school management committees and school vegetable gardening.

34. Measuring, analysing and enhancing the effectiveness of school feeding will be a focus of CP 200243. WFP will research the additional benefits derived from school feeding such as improved learning outcomes through increased attendance and reduced prevalence of anaemia.

35. With WFP's technical assistance, the Government will launch its school feeding in poverty-prone areas in mid-2011 (see Component 4). Gradual hand-over of WFP's school feeding programme to the Government will commence during CP 200243. WFP plans to scale down from 1.2 million children in 2011 to 800,000 in 2012 to 500,000 in 2015, in coordination with the scaling up of the Government's school feeding programme.

Component 4: Strengthening Government Safety Nets

44. This component supports the Government in reforming social safety nets addressing hunger and household food insecurity. Social protection is a pillar of the Government's national poverty reduction strategy, in which safety nets are an important element for supporting the ultra-poor. WFP will complement government work in formulating new integrated safety-net models that focus on food security, redesigning and streamlining existing programmes and enhancing its institutional capacity to manage them.

45. The expected outcomes are: i) increased effectiveness of nationally owned safety nets addressing hunger and household food insecurity; ii) enhanced government policies and programme design for safety-net programmes addressing food insecurity; and iii) enhanced government systems, tools and capacities for running national safety-net programmes, particularly school feeding and VGD programmes.

48. With regard to school feeding, WFP will work with the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education as it launches and expands its own school feeding programme. The focus will be on complementing school feeding and enhancing the Government's capacity to plan and implement its operations.

From 2014 Budget Increase document (WFP, 2014i):

Component 2 – School feeding. An additional 300,000 pre-primary and primary schoolchildren will be assisted until the end of 2014 and the School Meals Initiative with local purchases will be continued until 2016, complementing the Government's long-term strategy for universal primary education.

6. *Component 2.* WFP is aligning its school feeding programme hand-over plan to prevailing operational realities. With capacity development support from WFP, the Government has made substantial progress in scaling up the programme, and has requested WFP assistance for testing cooked meals as an alternative to the current use of micronutrient-fortified high-energy biscuits (HEBs). A new School Meals Initiative was launched in 2013, which includes local vegetable purchases from small-scale women growers. The initiative will generate evidence to assist the Government in choosing the most appropriate model for its national school feeding programme.

14. The planning figures for hand-over of WFP-assisted school feeding have been updated: in 2013 WFP assisted 1 million children, 300,000 more than planned. This included assistance to 100,000 children in *madrassas* and schools run by non-governmental organizations, which were added in the final quarter of 2013.⁵ The hand-over will resume in 2015 when the new government project is ready; until then, WFP will assist a maximum of 1 million children.

15. WFP has been requested to test the use of cooked meals in place of distribution of fortified HEBs to help the Government determine the direction of its school feeding programme. In 2013, WFP launched its School Meals Initiative, based on the Home Grown School Feeding model which includes local purchase of selected foods from small-scale women growers. The initiative currently assists 18,000 children and in collaboration with FAO will engage ultra-poor women to set up productive vegetable gardens to supply fresh ingredients to the schools – providing a much-needed source of income, and contributing to women's economic empowerment. This budget revision proposes to scale up the School Meals Initiative to reach 25,000 children and to continue assistance until 2016.

16. WFP also plans to expand its capacity assistance to the Government, allocating additional funds for school feeding capacity development to support the development of a National School Feeding Policy and Strategy.

WFP alignment with UNDAF

Overview

Under this heading we provide details on alignment with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. Table 53 below is an overview of UNDAF pillars and supporting outcomes (2011). This is followed by extracts from the reciprocal commitments between GOB and WFP that appear in UNDAF 2017–2020.

The following table, reproduced from Downen et al, 2015, shows the CP MTE's assessment of WFP alignment with the UNDAF.

Table 4: CP alignment with UNDAF

Pillar 2: Pro-Poor Economic Growth with Equity	CP aligns with Outcome 2.1, to extend opportunities to rural and urban poor and protect vulnerable households from shocks, through ER and urban programming with IMCN and SF.
Pillar 3: Social Services for Human Development	CP IMCN and SF support Outcome 3.1, to target women, children and youth for increased and more equitable utilization of quality health services and education.
Pillar 4: Food Security and Nutrition	WFP as the lead agency the CP aligns with all outcomes. WFP also partners through REACH (renewed efforts against child hunger and undernutrition). ¹²¹
Pillar 5: Climate Change, Environment, DRR	WFP coordinates with UNDP in alignment through ER (see more discussion below).
Pillar 7: Gender Equality	This pillar is supported by the CP as a cross-cutting result.

Source: UNDAF Bangladesh, 2011; WFP Bangladesh, 2011. Project Document

Overview of UNDAF 2012–2016

Table 53 UNDAF 2012–2016 overview (UNDAF, 2011)

UNDAF Pillar 1 Democratic Governance and Human Rights (UNDP)	UNDAF Pillar 2 Pro-poor Growth with Equity (UNDP)	UNDAF Pillar 3 Social Services for Human Development (UNICEF)	UNDAF Pillar 4 Food Security and Nutrition (WFP)	UNDAF Pillar 5: Climate Change, Environment, Disaster Risk Reduction and Response (UNDP)	UNDAF Pillar 6: Pro-poor Urban Development (UNDP)	UNDAF Pillar 7: Gender Equality and Women's Advancement (UNFPA)
National priority: -Better Governance to Defend Rights and Tenets of Justice	National priority: - Boosting Production, Income and Reducing Poverty	National Priority: -Securing Human Resource Development -Improving Water and Sanitation	National Priority: -a) Boosting Production, Income and Reducing Poverty, b) Promoting Environmental Sustainability; c) Securing Human Resource Development	National priority: -Promoting Environmental Sustainability -Building better Energy and Other Infrastructures	National priority: -Securing Human Resource Development -Promoting Environmental Sustainability	National priority: -Realizing Gender Equality
MDG 3	MDG 1, 3, 8	MDG 2, 1, 3, 8, 4, 5, 6, 7	MDG 1, 3, 4, 5, 7	MDG 1, 3, 4, 7	MDG 1, 3, 7	MDG 2, 3
Outcome 1: Government institutions at the national and sub-national levels are able to more effectively carry out their mandates, including delivery of public services, in a more accountable, transparent, and inclusive manner.	Outcome 1: Economic growth is achieved in an inclusive manner, extending opportunities to the rural and urban poor and protecting the vulnerable from shocks	Outcome 1: Deprived populations in selected areas, particularly women, children and youth benefit from increased and more equitable utilization of quality health and education, water, sanitation and HIV services	Outcome 1: The urban and rural poor have adequate food security and nutrition throughout the life cycle	Outcome 1: By 2016, populations vulnerable to climate change and natural disaster have become more resilient to adapt with the risk.	Outcome 1: By 2016, at least three million urban poor have improved living conditions and livelihoods o realize their basic rights.	Outcome 1: Marginalized and disadvantaged women in selected districts and urban slums increase their participation in wage employment and other income-generating activities
Outcome 2: Justice and human rights institutions are strengthened to better serve and protect the rights of all citizens, including women and vulnerable groups		Outcome 2: Children, women and youth demand and benefit from effective social protection policies and improved services aimed at eliminating abuse, neglect, exploitation and trafficking		Outcome 2: By 2016, vulnerable populations benefit from natural resource management (NRM); environmental governance and low-emission green development		Outcome 2: Social and institutional vulnerabilities of women including the marginalized and disadvantaged are reduced
		Outcome 3: Deprived community members in selected areas practice key life-saving, care and protective behaviours and raise their demand for quality social services				

Reciprocal Commitments between GOB and WFP in UNDAF 2017–2020

The selected commitments reproduced below are especially relevant to food procurement and school feeding; they appear in full in UNDAF, 2016.

Commitments on contributions to WFP programmes

Government will make an in-kind contribution, up to 20,000MT annually in support of WFP's school feeding programme for the production of fortified biscuits. The in-kind contribution by Government will be confirmed on an annual basis and is subject to the availability of resources within the Government's approved budget.

Commitments on transportation of UN commodities

- Government support will include 50 percent contribution of the costs related to the Landside Transport, Storage and Handling (LTSH) of commodities that are transported in accordance with the UN programme. UN will cover the remaining 50 percent of the costs subject to availability of funds.
- Government will share the detailed expenditures for various LTSH components; port operations, internal transport, storage, and handling but not losses in any form. These expenditures will be taken into account in calculating the LTSH budget and its periodic review for the programme requirements by UN agencies.
- Government will submit periodic reports to UN agencies with a written request to settle LTSH payments.

Commitments on receiving UN commodities

- Where food commodities are purchased locally in the country for the programme, the purchase will be undertaken by WFP in accordance with the WFP rules and procedures. The Government will exempt such purchases from all local duties, VAT and taxes. In case of inspection of commodities, UN-appointed superintendents at the designated point of delivery will verify the quality and quantities of commodities.
- Relevant Government line agencies will be responsible for the issuance of customs duty and sales tax/value added tax (CDST/VAT) exemption certificates for food commodities imported for UN-assisted activities. Government shall exempt UN from all duties, VAT, and taxes for the goods and services directly purchased and/or contracted by UN agencies for the programme/operations.
- Government, through the Ministry of Food, will be responsible for overall management of cereals imported by UN agencies or purchased locally, including the tracking and delivery through the public food distribution system (PFDS) as required under this agreement. The Government shall ensure that all cereals received under the programme are merged with national stocks on arrival to Bangladesh and will make an equivalent quantity and quality of cereals available as requested by UN agencies from its depots at the nearest location to the programme implementation sites. Moreover, based on donor's preference, Government will also ensure separate storage facilities of UN agencies' cereal commodities ensuring the same wheat is used for its programme.

Unilever support to school feeding in Bangladesh

Source: <https://www.wfp.org/news/news-release/unilever-and-wfp-come-together-support-primary-school-children-bangladesh>

UNILEVER AND WFP COME TOGETHER IN SUPPORT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN BANGLADESH

Published on 15 March 2011



School Feeding Programme in Bangladesh. Photo: Shehzad Noorani

The World Food Programme and Unilever have entered into a new partnership under which 95,000 primary school students will receive a nutritional boost in school each day.

Dhaka, 15 March 2011 – The World Food Programme and Unilever have entered into a new partnership under which 95,000 primary school students will receive a nutritional boost in school each day.

The students will be provided with micronutrient-fortified biscuits in schools in the Shyamnagar, Assasuni, Tala and Kalaroa upazilas of Satkhira district.

While inaugurating the launch of the school feeding programme today at the Khorda Government Primary School in the Kalaroa upazila, WFP Bangladesh Representative said, “We are hugely grateful to Unilever, which is a key partner in our fight against hunger and undernutrition. School meals provide vital nourishment, act as a safety net for poor families and also help keep children in school. Having a full stomach helps children concentrate better in class. With Unilever’s support we are now able to scale up this programme here in Satkhira district.”

“The Unilever Sustainable Living Plan has as one of its 50 targets to help more than 1 billion people improve their health and wellbeing. To this end, we are donating \$2 million to feed school children in Satkhira, Bangladesh. This is the first donation in a major public-private partnership initiative between Unilever, WFP and UN agencies

to fight child malnutrition in Bangladesh,” said Chairman and Managing Director, Unilever Bangladesh Limited.

“We will combine the strengths of the private sector with the development knowledge of the public sector, and have a sustainable impact on the reduction of poverty and malnutrition,” he said.

The Deputy Commissioner of Satkhira, attended the event as a guest of honour and distributed biscuits among the students. “The challenges of tackling child hunger are large and complex,” he said. “Such partnerships with the private sector, the United Nations, governmental and non-governmental organisations and communities are an innovative and effective way to achieve our common objectives. I am happy to be able to roll out the school feeding programme in Satkhira today.”

Under the partnership, Unilever has committed to providing US\$2 million to WFP for the programme for the next two years. All primary school children in the four upazilas of Satkhira will get a 75-gram packet of eight biscuits, six days per week. This food ration provides 338 kilocalories per day and 67 percent of the recommended daily allowance of micronutrients.

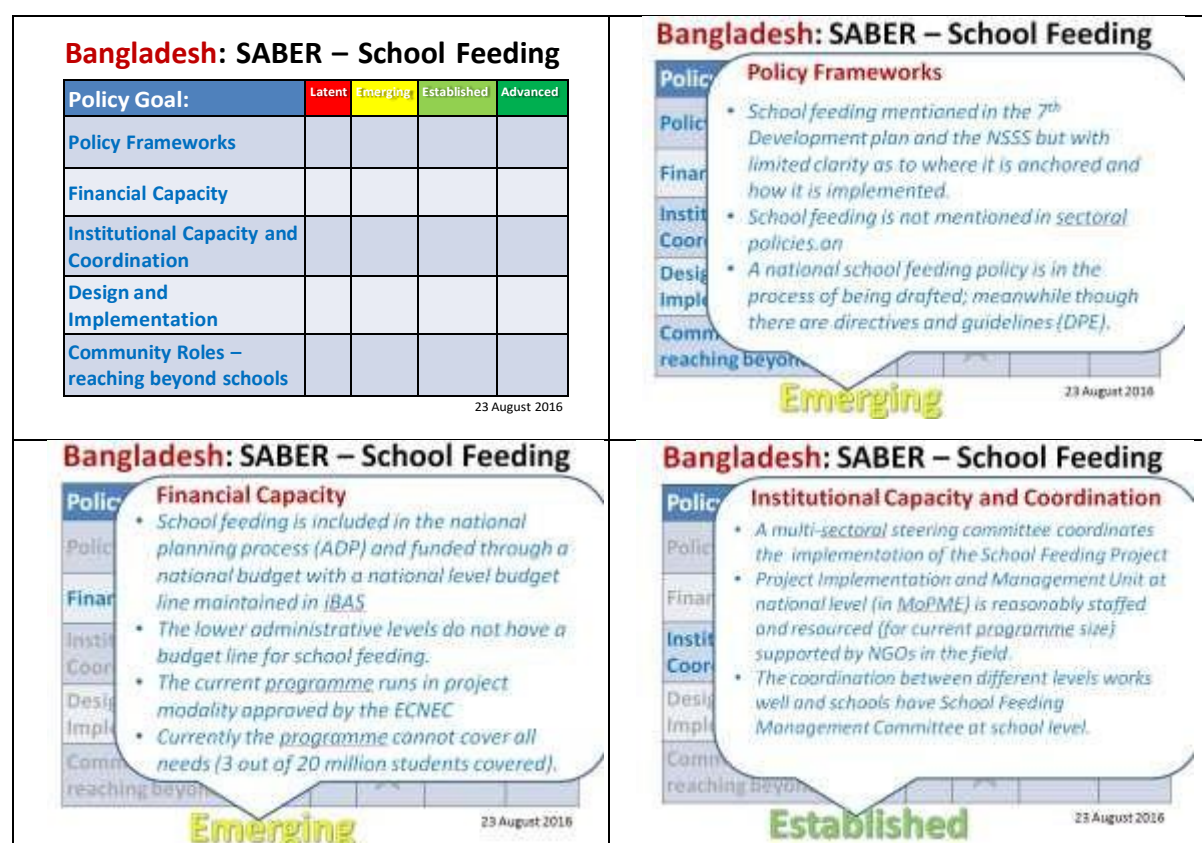
The head teacher of Khorda Government Primary School said, “I’ve been observing my students keenly and notice how often some of them complain of acute headache and stomach pains in the classes, mostly because of attending school on an empty stomach. I hope this scheme will effectively address the hunger and undernutrition of our children and improve their learning ability.”

SABER – Summary of 2016 diagnostic on school feeding in Bangladesh

In its latest report (September 2016) to USDA, WFP reports that a workshop on the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) took place in August 2016. This SABER workshop was facilitated by the WFP RBB and attended by government policy makers in relevant ministries, educational leaders, NGO partners, donors and researchers. The objective of the workshop was to facilitate discussions on current school feeding-related policies in order to contribute to the design of a sustainable school feeding programme in Bangladesh, as well as assist with the formulation of the national school feeding policy. During the workshop, a road map was prepared, identifying key outcomes for each of the five policy goals.¹⁵⁰ The point was made that there is a need for better activity tracking and results measurement. WFP planned on assisting MOPME in initiating bilateral discussions with various relevant agencies and in preparing the action plan to gradually expand and institutionalize school feeding within the government plan. (WFP, 2015-2016)

This section reproduces key points the assessment carried out in August 2016 (SABER, 2016). The SABER methodology for the school health and school feeding domain is described in SABER, 2012.

Figure 12 SABER workshop summary (Dhaka, August 2016)



¹⁵⁰ SABER's five policy goals for school feeding are: Policy Frameworks; Financial Capacity; Institutional Capacity and Coordination; Design and Implementation; and Community Roles

Bangladesh: SABER – School Feeding

Design and Implementation

- The M&E system still requires external (WFP) support; data collection is intermittently, limited use of monitoring data to improve the programme;
- Targeting criteria, methodology are under development
- National standards for the food basket and modalities are under development. Preference for meals but ad interim biscuits;
- Procurement is still managed by WFP on behalf of the Government, it takes into account costs, capacities, quality of food (health authority guidelines), and stability pipeline.

Emerging 23 August 2016

Bangladesh: SABER – School Feeding

Community roles – reaching beyond schools

- The schools have committees involving teachers, parents and community in the school feeding implementation;
- The communities monitor the appropriate utilization of the food;
- There are no mechanisms in place yet for the community to hold the school feeding programme accountable at the different levels.

Emerging 23 August 2016

Development of a Road Map towards a Sustainable National School Feeding Programme

Initial ideas and concepts

24 August 2016

Considerations

Time horizon: 2021

Ambition: all SABER levels moved up at least one level

Custodian of the Roadmap: MoPME

Details: More detailed action plans need to be worked out for this Roadmap → specific follow-up meetings

Priorities: Streamlining all modalities into one strengthened unified SF programme and development of a national SF policy

Validation and commitment to roadmap: A technical working group needs to finalize the roadmap (timeframe!) to be formally endorsed by the Government of Bangladesh

Policy Goal: Policy Framework

Outcome	Lead & support	Timeframe
Ensure full integration of school feeding in development policies (8 th plan, links to NSSS).	MoPME, collaborating with MoE, CMC, etc.	Start now, complete 2017
Development and approval of National School Feeding Policy.	MoPME & CMC (assisted: DPE, WFP, GAIN)	End 2017
Implementation strategy development and roll-out	MoPME assisted by DPE, WFP, GAIN	2017-2019

Policy Goal: Financial capacity

Outcome	Lead & support	Timeframe
Ensuring stable funding for the School Feeding Programme through: (1) Government budget, (2) Additional funding sources (CSR, parents, alumni,...)	MoPME with DPE, MoE, MoH&FW, MoA	by 2018
Ensuring timely disbursement of funds at implementation level (review and systematization with capacity development)	MoPME with DPE, MoE, CAG	by 2018

Policy Goal: Institutional Capacity and Coordination

Outcome	Lead & support	Timeframe
National School Feeding Authority	MoPME	2017-2019
Accountability framework for the NSFA	MoPME	By 2020
Multi-sectoral coordination and strong partnership (MoA, MoE, MoH, MOHFW, MoWCA, MoSWA, MoF, IPHN, BNCC, IFT, BSTI, BCSIR, BIRTAN, LGRD, UNICEF, WFP, FAO, WHO, NGOAB)supported by implementation framework	MoPME	By 2020

Policy Goal: Design & Implementation

Outcome	Lead & support	Timeframe
School Feeding M&E System integrated in national MIS	MoPME with MoH, ICT etc.	2017, to 2021
Targeting criteria and methodology in line with National School Feeding Policy (universal?)	MoPME with others	2017-2018
Strengthened use of M&E for selecting food modalities and food basket line with national food policy	MoPME with DPE, BSTI, MoI, WFP, MoA and BCSIR	2017-2018 (2019)
Efficient procurement and logistic arrangement in place used at different level	MoPME and DPE with WFP	By 2018

**Policy Goal: Community roles –
Reaching beyond schools**

Outcome	Lead & support	Timeframe
Active community participation and ownership of school feeding programme	MoPME and DPE	2018

Annex K Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Table 54 Recommendations and the text that supports them

Recommendation	Recommendation addressed to:	See main text paragraph number(s)
R1. Improve the monitoring and evaluation function, with rationalisation and streamlining of the indicators used, and improvements to the table used for reporting against plans and targets	WFP CO, USDA	59-61, 113-114, 119-122, Box 7
R2. Ensure that the reasons for any shortfalls in the planned number of snacks provided are tabulated and explained in regular monitoring reports.	WFP CO	62-70
R3. Retention/dropouts in schools remain a concern. WFP and partners should, first of all strengthen recording and analysis of attendance and dropout, then follow up on the dropout of boys (due to child labour) and girls (due to child/early marriage).	WFP and development partners, GOB	87-89
R4. Also, in any future phase of SF support, pay additional attention to the handover process, and the provision of complementary support to handed-over schools, especially NGO schools.	WFP USDA GOB NGO partners	139-143
R5. Both in the remainder of the current operation and in the preparation of future operations, pay particular attention to the theory of change assumptions that this MTE has identified as problematic.	WFP, USDA, GOB, and NGO partners as appropriate	134 - 136, Table 16
R6. In the next phase of MGD support, reconsider WFP's direct role in supporting complementary activities that are not linked to its core competences.	WFP USDA	109, 113-114
R7. With support from GOB and other development partners, WFP should continue to provide strategic support to SF in Bangladesh.	WFP GOB other DPs	49, 70, 93-100, 121-122, 129, 133
R8. Ensure that the choice of future SF modalities (HEB vs. hot meals) is based on rigorous evaluation of the hot meals pilot, and takes full account of equity considerations as well as the proven effectiveness of school biscuits.	GOB WFP USDA other SF donors	107, Box 5, 137, 145, Box 8, 165

Table 55 Where the MTE responds to each EQ

This table provides a summary of the MTE findings for each of the evaluation questions, shows where in the main text each EQ has been addressed, and indicates the strength of the evidence for each finding, based on a simple scale from 1 to 4: 1 (strong), 2 (more than satisfactory), 3 (indicative), and 4 (weak).

Key Question 1: How appropriate is the operation?	Summary of Findings	Where addressed	Strength of evidence
EQ1. How coherent are the operation's objectives, targeting and activities with relevant stated national policies and strategies on education, food security and nutrition, including gender?	Generally coherent with national policies and strategies on education, food security, nutrition, and gender.	¶36–38	1
EQ2. To what extent have the operation's objectives, targeting and activities sought complementarity with the interventions of relevant government and development partners?	Coordination at national level ongoing but not always reflected in operational collaboration in the project area.	¶50-54	1
EQ3. To what extent were the operation's objectives and targeting coherent at the design stage with relevant WFP and UN-wide system strategies, policies and normative guidance (including those on gender), and how far have they and the operation's activities remained coherent with them?	Consistent with UN-wide system strategies and policies, well aligned with WFP's overarching policies on SF, nutrition and broadly in line with WFP's gender policy	¶39-47	1
EQ4. Were the operation's strategies appropriate to the needs of the food insecure population and community at design stage, and have they remained appropriate?	The MGD SFP's strategies were and broadly remain appropriate to the needs of the targeted food-insecure population.	¶48-49	1
EQ5. Were the operation's strategies based on a sound gender analysis that considered the distinct needs and participation of boys and girls (and as appropriate within the context of the school meals programme, women and men), and have they continued on that basis?	The MGD SFP is broadly in line with WFP's Gender Policy but no written gender analysis has been conducted specifically for this programme.	¶55-58	2

Mid-Term Evaluation of McGovern-Dole School Feeding in Bangladesh 2014–2017
Evaluation Report (Final)

Key Question 2: What are the results of the operation?	Where addressed		
EQ6. To what extent have planned outputs, including capacity development activities, been attained?	Almost reached planned number of beneficiaries with HEB, but unexplained shortfall in actual against planned number of snacks delivered. Complementary activities: those directly related to the delivery of the SF have generally met targets, those related to literacy have lagged.	planned outputs: ¶62-76 capacity: ¶93-100	3
EQ7. To what extent have planned outcomes been attained?	HEB found an effective SF modality in Bangladesh, in terms of incentivising school attendance from poor families, increasing attentiveness by reducing short term hunger, and reducing micronutrient deficiencies. Given the short time-frame and lack of a control group, recent outcome survey data are indicative not conclusive.	planned outcomes: ¶77-91 capacity: ¶93-100	3
EQ8. How adequately has the operation addressed gender equality and protection issues?	Girls and boys treated equally, women's roles (e.g. in SMCs) strengthened. Data are sex-disaggregate and show near-parity in enrolments. Community sensitisation work –which is an important opportunity to address issues such as early marriage– has lagged, and gender is still most often viewed as a women's issue.	¶101-102	2
EQ9. How fully are the operation's activities dovetailed with those of other donors and agencies in building GOB capacity to manage and implement SF?	WFP works closely with MOPME and other stakeholders on the development of a national SF strategy. It facilitated a national workshop in 2015, and has participated in regular reviews of SF capacity using the SABER methodology.	capacity: ¶93-100	2

Mid-Term Evaluation of McGovern-Dole School Feeding in Bangladesh 2014–2017
Evaluation Report (Final)

EQ10. How efficiently has the operation worked with the GOB towards handover, and how likely is the GOB to continue to implement an effective SF programme following WFP withdrawal?	HEB are a very cost-effective SF modality, and much simpler to administer than hot school meals. This has facilitated the expansion of the national SF programme, and needs to be borne in mind when considering future SF strategy.	¶103-107 (also see EQ18 & EQ19 below)	2
Key Question 3: What factors have affected the results?	Where addressed		
EQ11. How significant have internal WFP process, system and logistical factors been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	WFP's experience in school feeding for over five decades ensures efficient and smooth processes, systems and logistics. There has been valuable flexibility in implementing MGD project. However, the literacy components of the project are outside WFP's core competencies.	¶109-112	2
EQ12. How significant have WFP's monitoring and reporting arrangements been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	There is considerable need to rationalise and strengthen M&E; in its current form it is a complex and heavy burden, but fails to provide useful analysis of key issues such as the shortfall in snacks delivered and the underlying patterns of school attendance.	¶119-122	2
EQ13. How significant have WFP's internal institutional and governance arrangements been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	Implementation has been facilitated by WFP's strong reputation in Bangladesh, and the quality of the three-way partnership between WFP, GOB and the NGO implementing partners (BRAC and RDRS).	¶113-114	2
EQ14. How significant have WFP's partnership and co-ordination arrangements been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	Partnerships with international agencies, including fellow UN agencies, at national level are strong, but not always reflected in practical cooperation on the ground.	¶115-118	1
EQ15. How significant has the external operating environment, been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	The external operating environment has at times made implementation of SFP activities difficult, e.g. political strikes, floods in the implementing area, as well as socio-cultural norms such as early marriage, which impair the achievement of the set MGD objectives.	¶123-126	2

EQ16. How significant has the national political and policy environment been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	The national political and policy environment has been largely conducive to the programme's performance, but two downsides are pervasive corruption and weak coordination amongst GOB ministries and agencies.	¶127-130	2
EQ17. How significant have domestic and external funding factors been in enhancing or impairing the performance of the operation?	WFP's SFP has not been impaired by any limitations on the agreed MGD funding for the operation; in this case with the HEB modality, receiving in-kind donations of wheat is not especially problematic. Government funding (also in-kind) is a notable indication of commitment, but funding (external and domestic) is likely to be a significant constraint for future SF. General funding constraints, however, make the implementation of an integrated long-term approach in poverty-prone areas challenging.	¶131-133	2
Key Question 4: To what extent does the intervention's implementation strategy include considerations for sustainability?	Where addressed		
EQ18. To what extent has the operation made explicit efforts to promote sustainable SF after programme termination?	The MGD project is nested within a wider SF programme, where progressive handover to GOB has been under way for a number of years. The majority of beneficiaries are already within the GOB component, although WFP procurement (and RDRS distribution) continue to serve the GOB programme.	¶137-147	1

EQ19. Are the benefits of the operation likely to continue after the programme is completed?	The main factors for sustainability of an effective SF programme in Bangladesh are Government and WFP commitment, the capacities of implementing partners, the strength of the national policy framework, including appropriate design of the SF modality, and the extent of community ownership and participation. The SFP in Bangladesh is addressing all of these dimensions and the outlook for sustainability of the programme is therefore reasonably positive. However, a premature shift to hot meals could be a significant threat to the continuation of benefits from the existing school biscuit programme.		2
EQ20. Has the operation made any difference to gender relations thus far, and is that change likely to be sustained after the programme is completed?	The operation has made incremental contributions to positive changes in gender relations, rather than any major difference. These incremental changes are essential and are likely to continue even after completion of the MGD SFP.	¶149	2

Table 56 TOC Assumptions and their links to EQs and evaluation findings

Note: the colour shading in the first column reflects the verdict in the final column as follows:

(red) assumption is not valid (orange) assumption is problematic (green) assumption is valid

Number	Assumption	EQ related to the assumption	MTE finding
1	The entire viability of the programme, as its design rightly acknowledged, depends on the assumption that work on the foundational results receives sufficient attention and is implemented as thoroughly as the rest of the programme.	1, 6, 9, 10, 14, 16, 18, 19, 20	Work on local-level FR has been limited by delays to the programme and in agreeing a partner FLA. However, WFP has focused strongly on national level capacity support. Evidence from impact evaluations suggests the basic design of HEB-based SF is robust.
2	Another basic assumption was that there would be continued support and commitment by the Government of Bangladesh for a national school feeding programme.	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20	GOB support continues.
3	As in many WFP operations an important assumption was that the food pipeline would be stable and the significant logistical challenges could be managed.	10, 11, 13	The MGD operation has been supported by well-established logistics, including WFP's relationship with the private sector HEB manufacturers, and the use of RDRS for in-country distribution of HEB.
4	The programme links at many points with the inputs and activities of other donors. It was assumed that these other donors would maintain a strong, co-operative, co-ordinated presence.	2, 3, 9, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18	Coordination and collaboration with other donors has been adequate at national level, less so at local level.
5	At the macro level, programme design assumed that there would be adequate GDP growth, controlled inflation, currency stability and an adequate flow of remittances – all factors affecting beneficiary livelihoods as well as national fiscal health.	15	The economic context was generally supportive.
6	As ever in Bangladesh, it had to be assumed that there would be an adequate response to natural disasters.	15	The project did experience a slight delay due to floods but it was only a temporary disruption to the project.
7	Given the various roles envisaged for the private sector in the programme, the grant application specified its assumption that business would indeed be engaged and supportive.	1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16	Assumption validated by continued effective engagement with private sector HEB manufacturers.

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Number	Assumption	EQ related to the assumption	MTE finding
8	Programme design noted the problems of staff turnover and (re)deployment. The ToC therefore notes the assumption that these personnel changes will not be at a level that diminishes the effectiveness of staff and institutional capacity development.	2, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 18, 19	Staff turnover continues to be a constraint (e.g. requiring training for public sector personnel to be frequently repeated). cf. Downen et al, 2015, ¶117: "Realistically, unless the government transfer system changes, there must be regular training in order to maintain local level government capacity to monitor the programme."
9	Design assumed that the GOB would be willing to work on developing and implementing a NSFP.	9, 10, 16, 17, 18	Work continues.
10	Given the importance of health and nutrition objectives for the programme, and the generally difficult sanitation and hygiene situation in many parts of the country, a clear implicit assumption was that sanitation and hygiene initiatives would be implemented sufficiently to prevent the health benefits of SF being diminished by poor sanitation and hygiene at schools.	2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 15, 17	The MTE's field observations suggest that this assumption remains problematic and supporting WASH and hygiene initiatives need strengthening,
11	Much global debate about SF has concerned the causal links between fortified biscuits and enhanced academic performance, as well as actual attendance at school. For this programme, an obvious basic assumption was that its causal assumptions about the influence of SF and related measures on student attentiveness are correct in the local context.	1, 3, 4	There is strong evidence from impact evaluations that the HEB modality is effective in Bangladesh (see main text Box 3), although a resulting effect on academic performance depends on the school environment etc.
12	Similarly, it was assumed that the programme's causal assumptions about the influence of SF and related measures on student attendance are correct in the local context.	1, 3, 4	As for assumption 12 above.
13	An important assumption in the causal design of the programme is that parents and other local community members are willing to perform the roles that the programme envisages for them.	4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20	The MTE observed a general willingness, but there are constraints on community members' time and capacity which continue to need addressing.
14	More at the level of the foundational results, a basic assumption in this and many other such programmes is that policy, strategies and procedures are not only formulated but also meaningfully implemented.	6, 7, 16	MTE found no blockages though there are some constraints on implementation of education and nutrition strategies.
15	Corresponding to the programme's design emphasis on upgrading monitoring and reporting systems associated with SF, the ToC notes the assumption that the improved systems are adopted and used efficiently.	6, 7, 12	As the MTE repeatedly notes, there is considerable need to rationalise and strengthen M&E.

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Number	Assumption	EQ related to the assumption	MTE finding
16	The health and nutritional benefits of the programme are dependent in part on the assumption that deworming programmes are carried out as envisaged.	2, 4, 6, 7, 9	Some evidence that de-worming may not be as regular and systematic as it should be.
17	With important roles assigned to NGOs in programme design, another notable assumption is that the NGOs in question, and by extension all relevant elements of the Bangladesh NGO sector, are adequately capacitated and institutionally stable.	2, 6, 7, 9, 14, 20	The principal NGOs involved, BRAC and RDRS are regarded as efficient and reliable, as well as stable, partners.
18	It had to be assumed that the various measures taken to upgrade the awareness and competence of teachers in participating schools would lead, as intended, to more consistent teacher attendance.	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20	It is too early to observe definite project results on this.
19	Design envisaged that, by the end of the programme period, two districts could be handed over for future Government implementation of SF, with sufficient capacity developing to take over more districts soon thereafter. An important assumption is that the programme would indeed be able to achieve this degree of institutional competence and readiness.	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19,	Although adequate capacity should never be taken for granted, there is wider evidence of the progressive assumption of responsibility by GOB (cf. Figure 1 in the main text) and the MTE's good impression of the handed-over schools it visited (Box 9).

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WFP, 2016n	<i>McGovern-Dole proposal FY17. WFP Bangladesh: 28 December 2017</i>	2.9-18

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WFP, 2016o	<i>Terms of Reference – Impact Study of School Feeding Programme.</i> WFP Bangladesh.	2.9-23
WFP, 2016p	<i>TOR – Researcher for Impact Study of School Feeding Programme .</i> WFP Bangladesh	2.9-22
WFP, 2016q	<i>Technical Note – Impact Evaluation,</i> WFP Office of Evaluation, August 2016.	1.1.12–21
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WFP, 2017b	<i>Modification request II to USDA (pending).</i> World Food Programme: January 2017.	2.9-14
WFP, 2017c	<i>One-year outcome survey of WFP’s USDA-supported School Feeding Programme. Selected Chapters from Draft Report.</i> WFP Bangladesh: 3 March 2017.	2.7-8
WFP, nd-a	<i>McGovern-Dole Main/Online Proposal Section.</i>	2.1-2
WFP, nd-b	<i>Performance Monitoring Plan</i> ["Annex 3 – Bangladesh MGD PMP 05082014"]	2.1-4
WFP, nd-c	<i>WFP Bangladesh MGD FY 2014-2016 Proposal – Evaluation Plan</i>	2.1-5
WFP, nd-d	<i>School Feeding Programme in Poverty Prone Areas - Brief on the Essential Learning Package.</i>	2.9-7
WFP, nd-e	<i>WFP Rangpur Sub-Office: presentation on the Essential Learning Package.</i>	2.9-8
WFP, nd-f	<i>List of Biscuit Factories in Active List.</i> WFP Bangladesh: provided on 23 January 2017.	2.9-15
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Acronyms

ADP	Annual Development Plan
AL	Awami League
AUEO	Assistant Upazila Education Officer
BCC	Behaviour change communication
BDT	Bangladeshi Taka (currency)
BMI	Body Mass Index
BNP	Bangladesh Nationalist Party
BR	Budget Revision
BRAC	Building Resources Across Communities (NGO)
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CBT	Cash-Based Transfer
CMW	Community Mobilisation Workshop
CO	Country Office
CP	Country Programme
CSB	Corn-Soya Blend
CSU	Capacity Support Unit
DEQAS	Decentralised evaluation quality assurance system (of WFP)
DEV	Development Programme
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DFATD	Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (Canada)
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DMA	Data Management Aid
DP	Development Partner
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
EB	Executive Board (of WFP)
ECHO	European Commission – Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection
EM	Evaluation Manager
EMOP	Emergency Operation
EO	Education Officer
EP	Evaluation Plan
EQ	Evaluation Question
EQAS	Evaluation quality assurance system (of WFP)
ER	Evaluation Report
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
ET	Evaluation Team
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization

FAS	Foreign Agricultural Service
FFE	Food for Education
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FLA	Field Level Agreement
FMC	Food Management Committee
FR	Foundational Results
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEEW	Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German aid agency)
GM	Gender Marker
GNR	Global Nutrition Report
GOB	Government of Bangladesh
GPS	Government Public School
GRN	Gender Results Network
GUK	Gram Unnayan Karma (an NGO)
HDDS	Household Dietary Diversity Scores
HEB	High-Energy Biscuit
HGSF	Home-Grown School Feeding
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Virus
HKI	Helen Keller International
HQ	Headquarters
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IEC	Internal Evaluation Committee
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
IP	Implementing Partner
IR	Inception Report
LTSH	Landside Transport Storage and handling
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCHN	Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MGD	McGovern-Dole
MIC	Middle Income Country
MMS	mid-morning snack
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

MOPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
MT	Metric Ton
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIPORT	National Institute of Population Research and Training
NSFP	National School Feeding Policy
NSFPPPA	National School Feeding Programme in Poverty Prone Areas
NSSS	National Social Security Strategy
ODOC	Other Direct Operating Costs
OEV	Office of Evaluation (WFP)
ORS	Oral Rehydration Salts
PDR	People's Democratic Republic
PEDP-III	Third Primary Education Development Programme
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRRO	Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation
PTAQS	Parent Teacher Association
RB	Regional Bureau
RBB	Regional Bureau Bangkok
RDRS	Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service (NGO)
REACH	Renewed Effort Against Child Hunger and Undernutrition – Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Partnership (FAO, WHO, UNICEF, WFP)
RFP	Request for Proposal
RNI	Recommended Nutrient Intake
SABER	Systems Approach for Better Education Results
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SF	school feeding
SFP	School Feeding Programme
SGSN	Strengthening Government Safety Nets
SMC	School Management Committee
SMP	School Meals Programme
SFA	School Feeding Attainment
SFYP	Seventh Five Year Plan
SO	Strategic Objective
SPR	Standard Project Report
SSDP	School Sector Development Plan
SSN	Social safety net
SSRP	School Sector Reform Plan
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition movement

tbc	To be confirmed
TEM	Technical Evaluation Manager
TL	Team Leader
TMRI	Transfer Modality Research Initiative
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	The joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS
UNCT	UN Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNROB	United Nations Relief Operations in Bangladesh
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
VGD	Vulnerable Group Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WORKS	Works Programme for Land and Water Development

WFP Bangladesh Country Office

[Link to website]



World Food Programme