

Innovating in the fight against hunger



Capacity Strengthening

Overview of WFP Kenya's approach to capacity strengthening



World Food Programme



The “capacity strengthening” that WFP is offering at the national and county levels in Kenya is a continuation of WFP’s shift away from the large-scale emergency food aid responses of the past; towards assistance focussed on technical support for government-owned safety nets that address food security and nutrition, including programs for supporting poor smallholder farmers.

Capacity strengthening is the principal mechanism WFP is using to integrate programmes into the national social protection framework, and to engage with other actors to ensure that the portfolio of Kenya’s safety nets in the arid and semi-arid lands meets the needs of food insecure and vulnerable households efficiently, effectively and promotes the progression of smallholder farmers up the economic value chain.

School meals

WFP began this work in 2008, by providing technical assistance to the Government to design and establish a national school meals programme; along with a plan for transitioning schools from the WFP-supported programme to the Government’s Home Grown School Meals programme. Five years on, that hand-over continues to progress well; WFP’s implementation responsibilities continue to decrease, and the focus of the school meals team in WFP is increasingly on supporting and strengthening the Government’s programme through technical assistance: helping to develop strategies and guidelines, modeling new approaches, policy level engagement, joint monitoring and advocacy.

Nutrition

More recently, following a consistent improvement in Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) and consequently reductions in supplementary feeding clients in the semi-arid areas over the past years, in 2013 WFP began preparing supplementary feeding programmes for gradual handover to the counties. This involves counties taking on more responsibilities, in particular budgetary commitment for the programmes. Full handover is expected by 2018, after which WFP will provide only technical assistance to ensure programme continuity. However, in six counties¹ where the Demographic Health Survey confirmed GAM rates have dropped to below 5%, handover was accelerated in 2015.

Relief

Another example is the realignment carried out last year, which dramatically reduced the amount of relief assistance WFP is providing in the North. That process was initiated by an analysis of data from the Social Protection Single Registry and other programme databases that showed safety net coverage in Turkana and Marsabit exceeded the needs identified in the rains assess-

¹ Kwale, Kajiado, Kilifi, Kitui, Laikipia, Makeni



ment, and Wajir and Mandera were not far behind. The Government's safety nets programmes are expanding very rapidly, which means that demands on WFP to use relief assistance to address chronic food insecurity are decreasing. As the Government's programmes expand, WFP's relief activities can shrink. Engagement at the strategic coordination level with the Government's social protection programmes, and central role in data sharing between programmes, allowed WFP to make this transition smoothly, and going forward will allow continual adjustment and alignment of our programmes.

As Kenya continues to progress towards middle-income status, including taking increasing ownership over its safety nets system, the path that these three programmes (school meals, supplementary feeding and relief assistance) embarked upon five years ago is what all of WFP's programmes in Kenya need to follow, though the journey will be different for each. For each programme, capacity strengthening will happen at a different pace, with a different set of government counterparts, some at the national level and some at the county level. Further, as WFP positions itself within the social protection sector, a new constellation of partners emerges, along with new opportunities for collaboration. Social protection is a national function, yet counties are engaged in establishing their own safety net programmes to complement national programmes. Counties are responsible for emergency response, which is also an aspect of social protec-

tion. Strong, strategic and technical partnerships are critical to capacity strengthening—WFP will need to engage effectively with new partners, as well as articulate our changing role with established partners.

Over the next few years, WFP will focus its capacity strengthening on:

1 [Supporting strategic coordination of social protection at the national level.](#)

This work stream has been dubbed “The Complementarity Initiative” because it aims to ensure that WFP's programmes are aligned with the National Social Protection Policy, and complement the fast-growing national safety nets programme (known as *Inua Jamii*). WFP's main counterpart for the Complementarity Initiative is the Ministry of Labour and East African Community Affairs, with which we have an MOU (signed in March 2015) for four years of technical assistance. The Complementarity Initiative is formulated within the UNDAF 2014 – 2018 Social Protection outcome, which WFP leads.

2. [Capacity development for newly devolved \(county\) structures to respond to emergencies.](#)

This work stream is about supporting counties to establish emergency preparedness and response capacity. It draws on WFP's expertise in needs assessment, response analysis, programme design and implementation, including delivering relief assistance through cash transfers and in-kind food. WFP's main counterparts for this work are (naturally) County Governments, with four focus counties for 2016-2017 being: Baringo, Samburu, Marsabit, and Wajir.

3. Strengthening the asset creation programme and capacity development for transitioning responsibility to government.

This work stream involves improving the technical quality of the assets being created, evaluating their impact, and modeling new implementation approaches to provide evidence to support national and county policy on establishing a productive safety net and other support programmes for food insecure smallholder farmers - including approaches which promote integration and coordination of efforts to develop and strengthen value chains and achieve transformative impacts. WFP's main counterparts for this work are County Governments and the National Drought Management Authority. The effort will also involve working with development partners (as part of a dedicated programme of support through the ASAL Donor Group) to assist counties with planning and decision support tools for prioritizing and coordinating Ending Drought Emergencies investments, using asset creation as an essential platform for moving farmers from subsistence to commercial agriculture and to other diversified livelihoods.

4. Continuing to support the transition of the school meals programme to full national ownership.

Building on the successes of Kenya's Home Grown School Meals programme, WFP will continue to invest in enhancing programme implementation and sustainable expansion. WFP will complement national efforts in the arid lands where national capacities are still constrained, enrolment and attendance disparities are greatest and food insecurity and malnutrition are high. At county level, where the resource-



ing and implementation of school meals in early childhood development centres is taken over by county governments in January 2016, WFP will continue to provide technical assistance.

Described broadly within Component 1 of the Country Programme, capacity strengthening involves the entire country office including all of WFP's field offices. Even the refugee operation, with the emergence of new approaches in Kalobeyei, will be engaged in a shift away from implementation and towards technical assistance.

At a very basic level, capacity strengthening is about taking what WFP knows how to do and has been doing in Kenya already for many years, and helping governments to be able to do this too: identify needs, design and implement programmes, raise and account for resources. WFP has successfully mobilized resources to support these workstreams based on our strong technical capacity. As we begin to show results, we can anticipate expanding these workstreams and adding new ones. All of this within the overarching goal of supporting county and national governments to design and implement their own safety nets, and promoting an integrated approach to social protection that addresses food and nutrition insecurity.