



# WFP in India 2015 in Review

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**World Food Programme**



# **WFP in India** 2015 in Review



**World Food Programme**



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# Message from the Country Director

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WFP's engagement in India goes back more than fifty years. These decades have witnessed remarkable socio-economic development in India, and WFP has been continuously evolving to respond to the fast paced changes seen in the country.

Understanding the needs of a country as vast and diverse as India, WFP's Country Office in India is pioneering innovative projects and forging new public and private sector partnerships to help achieve food and nutrition security, in-line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), particularly SDG 2.

In 2015, WFP along with representatives from the government, civil society as well as international experts, developed a four year engagement strategy: the Country Strategic Plan, (2015-2018) which lays down WFP's priorities in-line with the country's needs.

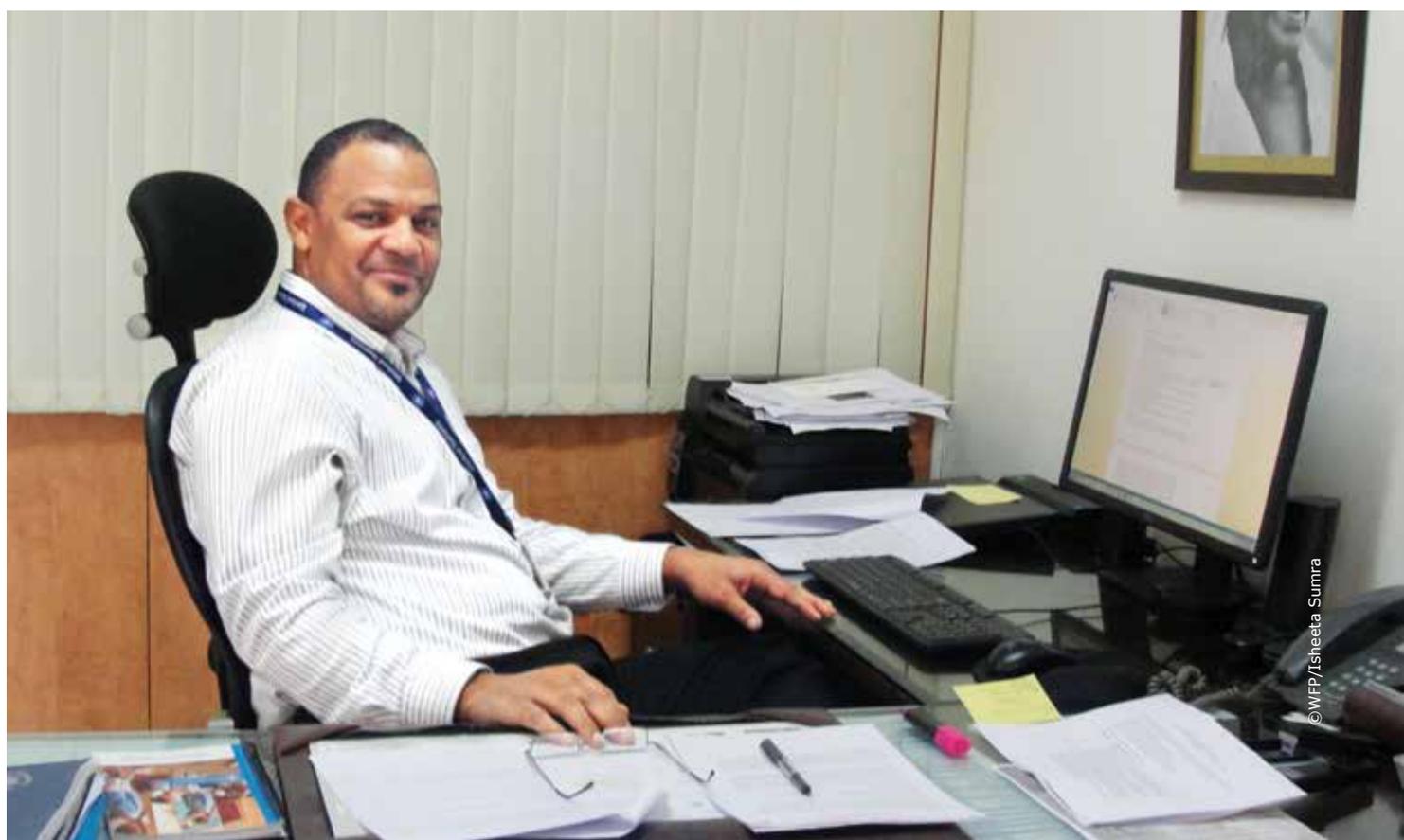
It comprises of four strategic pillars:

1. Support state governments to build a scalable implementation approach that enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of the National Food Security Act

2. Support governments to integrate nutritional enhancement and mainstreaming into safety-net reforms
3. Support establishment of an effective system of food and nutrition security analysis, research and monitoring performance towards 'Zero Hunger'
4. Support South-South Collaboration through the establishment of a Centre of Excellence on Food and Nutrition Security in partnership with the Government of India to serve as a knowledge platform based on India-specific best practices

Leveraging on its vast experience and international expertise, WFP has been offering technical support to the government at both the national and state level. Through in-field pilot projects, policy advice, and research and analysis, WFP has been supporting the Indian government to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of its food-based social safety nets.

The year was marked by further WFP support to the government in the transformation of the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). This includes the mammoth task of identifying the correct beneficiaries



who were eligible for food subsidy, automating transactions at Fair Price Shops, developing a grievance redressal mechanism so that beneficiaries can report complaints, and developing a transparency portal for effective monitoring by stakeholders.

WFP also advocated for and piloted the fortification of food served under the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Programme. WFP's rice fortification project in Gajapati, Odisha was successful in demonstrating the impact of iron-fortified rice served to school children. The project was successfully handed over to the Government, which is now working towards a state wide scale-up.

In 2015, at the request of the Government of India, WFP undertook the assessment of the Government's pilot project on Direct Benefit Transfer in TPDS, and an assessment of the supply chain of the MDM Programme. Recommendations from these assessments will enhance WFP's partnership with the Government in 2016 and beyond.

WFP's work on food and nutrition security, and longstanding partnership with the Government of India (in particular Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Ministry of Women and Child Development, and Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation) saw the conceptualization of a Centre of Excellence on Food and Nutrition Security, which we anticipate will be established during the current four year plan.

Synergizing with the private sector, WFP built new partnerships and also worked towards the creation of a Trust that would enable WFP to partner with Indian business leaders. Our collaboration with academic institutions and UN agencies helped WFP expand its work and deepen its impact in India.

2015 also ushered in new leadership, renewed energy, and focus for WFP India. Our biggest asset remains our dedicated and qualified staff working in the Country Office and the field. With a staff strength of 34, our staff come from diverse backgrounds, and bring a range of expertise as well as cumulative knowledge with them. It is their commitment to fighting hunger and ensuring food for every family, that drives WFP year after year.

If – in the words of Mahatma Gandhi “**Action Expresses Priorities**”, then 2015 has been a fruitful year for us. We have chartered new paths, and propelled ourselves towards achieving our goals and targets for the next four years. We at WFP are aware that there are huge challenges ahead. WFP is equipped and ready to evaluate, evolve and grow to meet the challenges and partner with India to reach its full potential as a food and nutrition secure nation.



**Dr. Hameed Nuru**  
Representative and Country Director  
WFP, India





# WFP in India

WFP's role in India has evolved from direct food delivery (from 1963 to 2004) to an increased emphasis on technical assistance to the Government of India, in order to respond to the changing needs of the country. The high burden of malnutrition and food insecurity despite economic growth in the last few decades has necessitated WFP to re-orient its work in India.

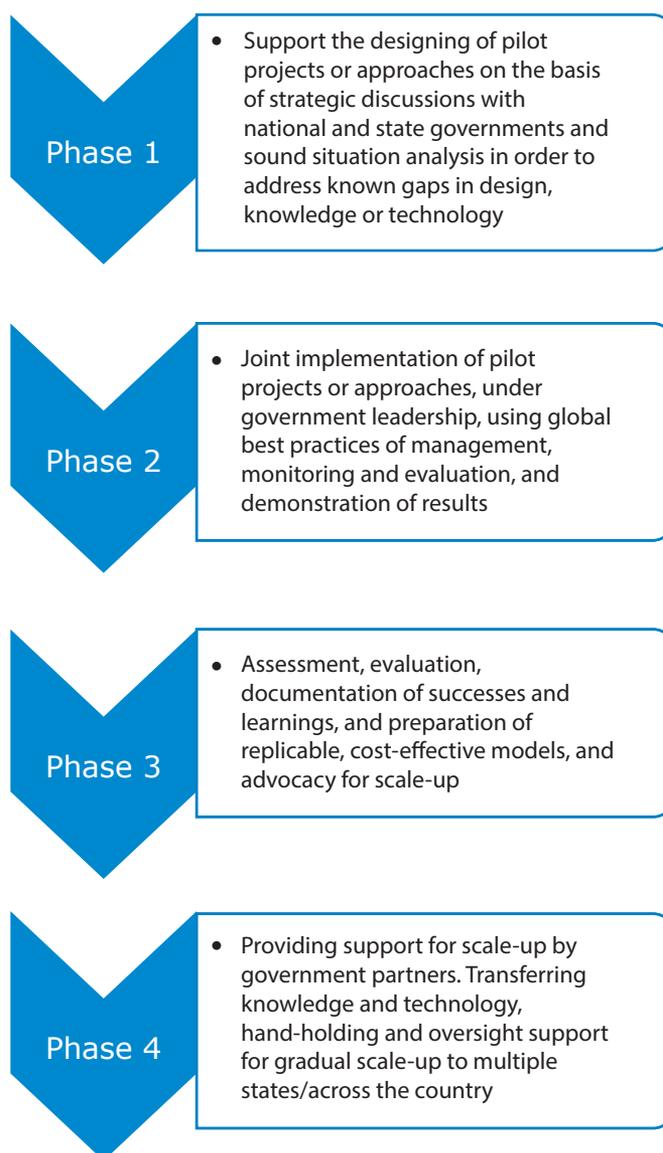
In 2015, WFP, India and the Government of India signed a Memorandum of Understanding for a four year Country Strategic Plan (CSP) covering 2015-18. Through the CSP, WFP India supports the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal-2 to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

At the national level, the focus of the CSP is on the three food-based social safety nets covered under a progressive umbrella legislation – the National Food Security Act (2013) – that makes food a legal entitlement for more than two thirds of the population of India. Through the CSP, WFP India supports the Government's Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS), Mid-Day Meal Programme (MDM-a school feeding programme) and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS-covering pregnant and nursing mothers and children less than six years of age). WFP works with the state and central governments, and other partners to strengthen service delivery systems to provide services to those who need it the most, in a way that is most efficient and nutritionally effective.

WFP appreciates the catalytic role it has to play to contribute towards a country-wide impact. A systematic, well thought through, four-phased implementation approach is being followed to ensure long lasting impacts.

**Gender equality plays an important part in achieving food and nutrition security, and WFP is committed to mainstreaming gender in all its programmes. WFP continues to strengthen the gender component of its programmes through robust monitoring, analysis and advocacy for mainstreaming.**

## WFP's four-phased implementation approach



The implementation approach highlights a strong evidence and research based methodology to contribute towards making an impact on the food and nutrition security scenario in the country. WFP and the government at the state and national level work in close collaboration through all the four phases, throughout the implementation of the CSP. Government ownership, from the design phase itself, is crucial for the successful scaling up of the initiatives.



## India facts and figures

<b>Population<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>1.24 billion</b>
<b>Human Development Index Rank<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>130</b>
<b>Global Hunger Index<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>80</b>
<b>Gross Domestic Product (PPP constant 2011 US\$)<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>7.053 trillion</b>
<b>Proportion of population living on less than US \$1.90 per day (2011 PPP), 2011<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>21.25%</b>
<b>Percentage of undernourished population<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>15.17%</b> <b>= 194.6 million</b>
<b>Percent under-5 children who are stunted<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>38.7%</b>
<b>Percent under-5 children who are wasted<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>15.1%</b>
<b>Percent under-5 children who are underweight<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>29.4%</b>
<b>Prevalence of anaemia among children aged 6-59 months old<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>69.5%</b>
<b>Prevalence of anaemia among women aged 15-49<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>55.3%</b>
<b>Prevalence of anaemia among men aged 15-49<sup>7</sup></b>	<b>24.2%</b>

<sup>1</sup> World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2014  
<sup>2</sup> Out of 188 countries – Human Development Report, 2015  
<sup>3</sup> Out of 104 countries – IFPRI, 2015  
<sup>4</sup> World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2015  
<sup>5</sup> FAO, The State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2015  
<sup>6</sup> Rapid Survey on Children 2013-14  
<sup>7</sup> National Family Health Survey-3, 2005-06



# Programme: Systems Reform

**Objective: Support Government to build a scalable implementation approach that enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of the National Food Security Act**

The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) is the largest food safety-net in the world that aims at providing safe and subsidized food grains to approximately 800 million people every month. WFP supports the national and state governments to enhance the system's efficiency, transparency and accountably through technology-based reforms.

WFP, in consultation with the Government as well as national and international experts, developed a Best Practice Solution that offers a comprehensive guide to TPDS reforms aimed at empowering beneficiaries, having better aligned Fair Price Shop (FPS) operators, and developing an effective management system for government officials. It provides a design and implementation plan to strengthen TPDS at the state level. The Best Practice Solution currently informs reforms in Kerala and Odisha.

*Know more about WFP's Best Practice Solution*

**WFP estimates that information communication technology (ICT) based reforms to TPDS could result in a potential savings ranging between US \$1.3 to 3.6 billion nationwide. These saving can be ploughed back into the system to increase the nutritional content of the food basket.**

WFP's support at the state level, specifically in Kerala and Odisha, has contributed to better targeting of beneficiaries – ensuring that the right beneficiaries get their entitlements, and 'ghost'/'bogus' cards are eliminated from the system. Use of effective technologies for digitizing the beneficiary database, computerizing the supply chain, automation of Fair Price Shops, and the development of an effective grievance redressal mechanism and transparency portal has improved the efficiency of TPDS to deliver food to those who need it the most.

## Key Achievements by December 2015

### National level:

- Support to Central Project Management Unit to facilitate nation-wide sharing of best practices.

### In Odisha, WFP contributed to:

- Registration of beneficiaries for NFSA ration distribution: 29.5 million.
- Advice on enhancement and automation of supply chain depots: 220 (out of 250).
- Number of persons trained for beneficiary identification: 18,000.

### In Kerala, WFP contributed to:

- FPS automation pilot in 17 ration shops out of the planned 22.
- Financial viability study for wholesalers and retailers to guide reforms.

## Assessing the viability of Fair Price Shops

Sustainability of TPDS reforms is dependent on financial viability of the grass root level retail distributors – the Fair Price Shop owners. WFP analyzed the situation of more than 14,000 retailers, conducted detailed meetings with the related stakeholders and presented an authorized retail dealer's viability study to the Government of Kerala. The study highlighted that only few retailers are financially viable, and suggested various models to improve their financial viability. This study facilitated advocacy at the national level for improving financial viability as a part of the National Food Security Act (NFSA) implementation.



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## Enhancing Direct Benefit Transfer in TPDS

As a technical partner to the Government of India, WFP carried out a study on the effectiveness of a Government pilot on Direct Benefit Transfer in TPDS. With expertise in managing cash based transfers globally, WFP analyzed the on-going pilot in Chandigarh and Puducherry, and made recommendations to increase the impact of the pilot.

## Strengthening Mid-Day Meal supply chain

At the request of the Government of Odisha, WFP reviewed the existing supply chain of the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Programme in the state. Leveraging on its expertise and best practices in managing complex supply chain interventions and similar school feeding programmes globally, WFP conducted a detailed analysis of the MDM supply chain, identified the main challenges and developed a set of recommendations for its strengthening. A roadmap with potential next steps to optimize the existing mechanism has also been formulated.

## Impact of WFP's work

*It was business as usual at the Fair Price Shop run by Chandeli Gram Panchayat in Rayagada district, Odisha. The shop owner was swiftly checking the new entitlements as per the NFSA ration card and distributing the ration. A stack of ration cards was kept to his right. Some beneficiaries were returning their ration cards and the panchayat member was recording the details in the register. Rudro, who came to return the card said that he is not eligible as per the exclusion criteria, but applied because of the previous advantages of the ration card such as proof of identity or getting other benefits. But when he came to know that the card is now only for food entitlements, he came to return it. The panchayat member mentioned that the clear communication by the state government helped in creating such awareness. This approach is working in reducing the inclusion and exclusion errors to make the system more efficient. WFP's contribution to finalizing the criteria for inclusion/exclusion, methodology of implementation and communication is showing positive results.*

# Programme: Nutrition

## Objective: Support Government to integrate and mainstream nutritional enhancements into safety-net reforms

Supporting the Government in strengthening the nutritional effectiveness of its food-based social safety nets, WFP is working on fortifying foods distributed under the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Programme. MDM reaches out with meals to primary and upper primary school children studying in government and government-aided schools across the country.

In Gajapati, Odisha, WFP partnered with the Government for the iron fortification of rice served under the MDM Programme. The fortified rice provided a substantial portion of the recommended dietary allowance for iron, varying between 50 percent to 63 percent depending upon the age group.

The project has been successfully handed over to the Government of Odisha which is now continuing the fortification in Gajapati and also scaling it up throughout the state.

### Impact of the project

- Generated interest in rice fortification at the national as well as state level
- Government has taken over the project and continues to provide fortified MDM in Gajapati
- High acceptance of fortified rice among children

- Significant reduction of anemia prevalence
- Increased knowledge amongst children on nutrition and good health practices
- Improved cooking practices in schools to retain nutritional content in the food

Further to this initiative, the Government of Odisha, together with WFP, will also be piloting multi-micronutrient fortification in MDM in other districts of Odisha. This is aimed at providing the state with a number of operational, scalable food fortification options that can be adopted depending on what best suits the need.

### Key Facts in Numbers

- **Number of schools covered:** 1474 (100% schools in Gajapati)
- **Number of children who consumed fortified rice under MDM:** 97,790
- **Quantity of fortified rice consumed:** 1363 mt in 2015





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Rice fortification is one of the safest, operationally most feasible and effective strategies in cases where prevalence of anaemia and micronutrient deficiencies is high.

### **WFP’s work and advocacy on food fortification is informing discussions on the incorporation of rice fortification into national policy.**

#### **Launch of multi-micronutrient fortification projects**

The Government of Odisha and WFP launched a pilot project on multi-micronutrient fortification of MDM in Dhenkanal, Odisha. Under this project, WFP will pilot two modalities of fortification-rice fortification and through use of multi-micronutrient powder. This will help to set-up two operational models for future scale-up. The pilot will reach out to school children in the district with multi-micronutrients like Iron, Zinc, Vitamin A, Thiamine, Niacin, Pyridoxine, Folate and Vitamin B12. The project will also incorporate training of staff on food safety and kitchen hygiene, and the setting up of model kitchens.

Further to this, WFP and the Government of Odisha will also pilot multi-micronutrient fortification through a centralized kitchen model.

### **Increasing the effectiveness of the Targeted Public Distribution System**

WFP conducted a study and outlined a strategy on increasing the nutritional effectiveness of the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) food basket. The study recommended the components of a nutritionally enhanced food basket, addressing nutritional gaps in the existing diet of the target population. It also considered the logistical, administrative and financial implications of such reforms. [Read the full study here.](#)

“It (iron fortified rice) comes in large yellow bags and is mixed with iron. We were informed about the benefits of consuming rice with iron. It helps the body make blood. So consuming iron will make us healthy and prevent anaemia. I eat my school meal every day, except when I am sick and cannot come to school, but I have not been sick often lately.”

*Student from Gajapati, Odisha*

# Programme: Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping, Monitoring and Evaluation

**Objective: Support establishment of an effective system of food and nutrition security analysis, research and monitoring performance towards 'Zero Hunger'**

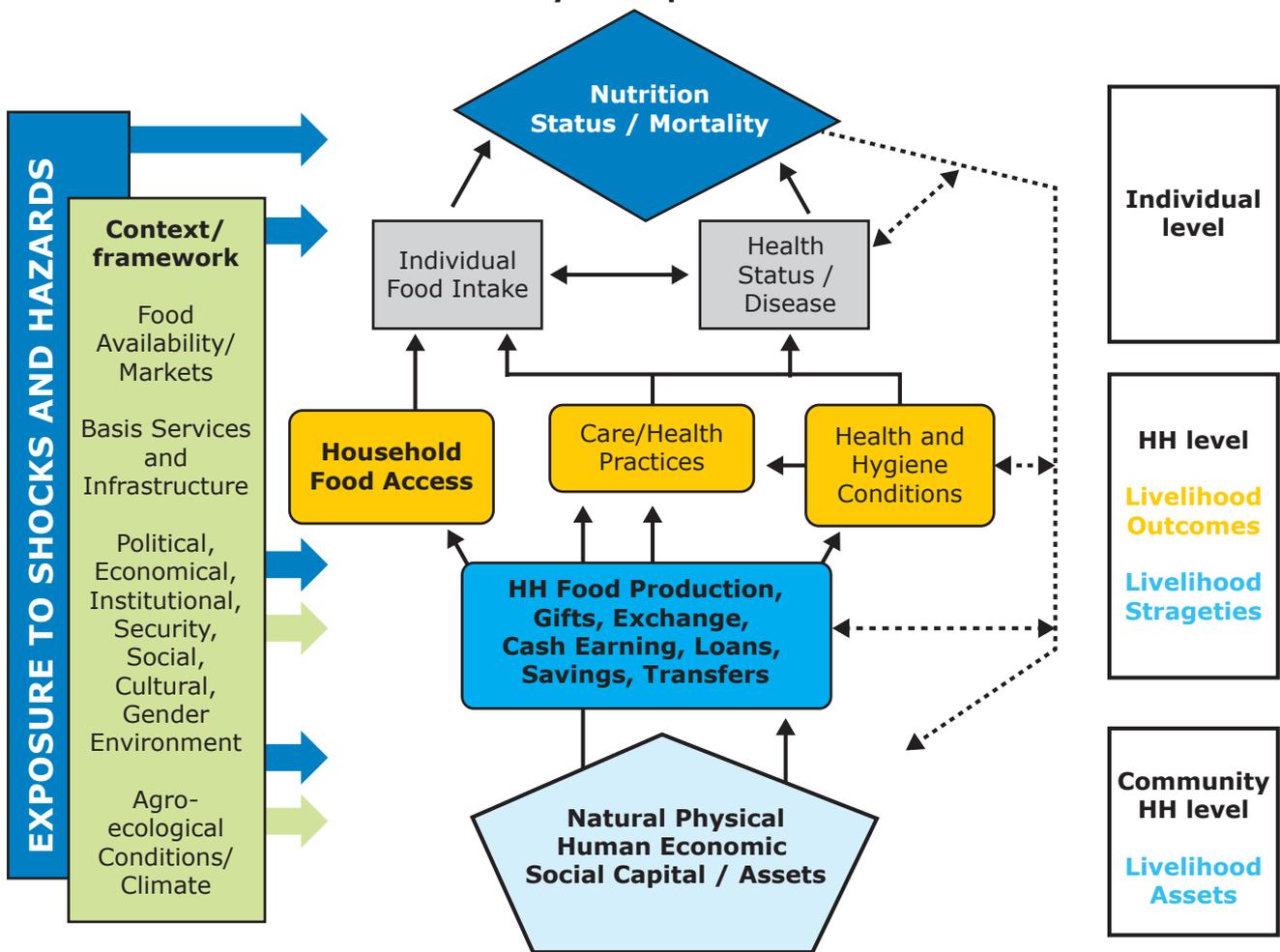
With global expertise, and experience in India in food security mapping and analysis, WFP is working with the Government of India to instill these within government systems. In 2015, WFP established partnerships with the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, and Department of Planning, Government of Odisha to initiate food security analysis work. This will help establish mechanisms to identify food and nutrition insecure geographies and populations.

WFP is supporting the Government in the analysis and identification of data gaps, assessment of various opportunities for collection of relevant data – the standard tools and instruments, and finalization

of the methodology for such analysis. Linking this information with Geographical Information Systems (GIS) will lead to the production of hunger maps of the country over a period of time. The results of the food security analysis will help national/state planning bodies and policy makers to draw a complete picture of who is at risk of hunger and malnutrition, identify food insecure pockets, and take informed and evidence-based policy decisions to ensure food and nutrition security for all. This information will provide a basis for potentially effective policy making and programme implementation, so that the intended populations are identified and targeted with tailored programmes.



## Food Security Conceptual Framework



The framework describes the causal linkages of food and nutrition security with factors at various levels. The immediate causes of a person's nutrition status being food intake and health status, which are themselves directly caused by household food access, the care and health practices in the household, and surrounding health and hygiene conditions. These are a direct result of household livelihood strategies, especially pertaining to food and income generation and the natural, physical, economic, social and human capital in households and communities. All these elements depend on the overall context, such as climatic and agro-ecological factors, institutional and policy factors, markets, etc. The framework will be adapted for Indian conditions to map data at the national, state and district level.



### Monitoring and Evaluation

WFP provides need-based support to Government food-based social safety nets to strengthen the existing monitoring and evaluation systems.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Unit also develops a monitoring and evaluation framework for all WFP programmes being implemented in India, to ensure that WFP initiatives are in-line with the overall Country Strategic Plan (2015-2018) and to also ensure efficient utilization of programme resources as well as accountability, transparency and integrity.

# Communications

## Key highlights

2015 saw the development of the WFP India Communications Strategy. The strategy positions the role of communications within the Country Office and focuses on increasing advocacy and visibility for WFP's pilot initiatives in the country. The strategy aligns the Office's communication activities towards the common goal of 'Zero Hunger'.

A number of advocacy tools were developed. These included project specific one pagers as well as a short film that showcases the partnership between WFP and the Government of Odisha on the transformation of the Targeted Public Distribution System in the state.

**Through communications, WFP aims at reaching out to its beneficiaries, giving them a voice and telling their stories.**

## Imagining a hunger free world

WFP organized a drawing competition, where children from across the world were asked to imagine a world without hunger. The competition in India was organized amongst students studying in class five, in schools in Dhenkanal district, Kamkhyanagar Block, Odisha. A student from India was amongst the 20 global winners of the competition.

*Watch the WFP short film here*

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# Programme Support

## Administration

The last quarter of 2015, saw the office requesting for an internal audit from WFP's Office of the Inspector General. The audit was aimed at furthering the efficiency of the India Office's operations, compliance and reliability of reporting structures and systems, and the overall alignment of the office goals with the WFP mission.

The audit provided reasonable assurance on the internal controls, governance and risk management processes over WFP operations in India. It successfully concluded with nine medium risk recommendations, which the India Office is committed to implement by the end of 2016.

## Human resources

WFP is a people centric organization, having its People Strategy rolled out in 2015. WFP's People

Vision is to build an engaged workforce with the right skills, in the right roles to enable WFP to continue fulfilling its humanitarian response, while also building its capabilities to address the longer-term goal of achieving 'Zero Hunger'.

The People Strategy has been put in action in the India Office through identifying and building capabilities required for varied roles such as those of researchers, monitoring and evaluation experts, nutritionists, food technologies, IT experts to reform government systems, and experts in administration, resource mobilization, communication and advocacy. The office supports its staff in their learning and development, ensuring that all staff members are performing in a coordinated and effective manner. These advancements have contributed to a more fit-for-purpose WFP India Office.



# Funding

WFP's interventions in India have lasting impact on food and nutrition security in India and globally. WFP relies entirely on voluntary contributions to finance its humanitarian and development projects.

The Government of India and the private sector are the major funding partners for WFP in India.

WFP collaborates with global partners as well as Indian companies who are committed to contributing towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2. Through the WFP Trust for India, WFP collaborates with the Indian private sector under their Corporate Social Responsibility.

## In 2015, WFP developed its resource mobilization strategy as a guide to achieve funding to drive the Country Strategic Plan (2015-2018).

The total projected budget for India under the ongoing Country Strategic Plan (2015 – 2018) is

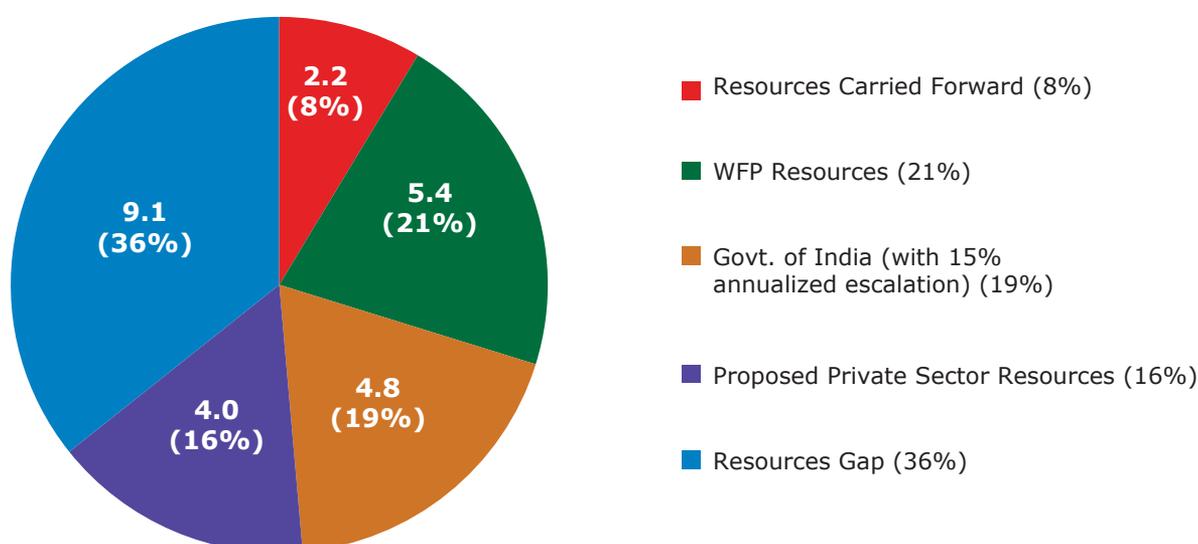
US \$25.5 million, out of which US \$16.39 million is expected to be resourced as per the outlook given below with a resource gap of US \$9.1 million.

### Contributions by Government of India towards WFP programmes in other countries

To promote South-South Collaboration, WFP India has been a facilitator for other countries to seek Indian Government aid contributions. The efforts made in 2015 materialized in WFP signing an agreement with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India for US \$1 million for WFP operations outside India.

The India Office played a pivotal role in the procurement and logistics of food and non-food relief items during the Nepal earthquake response. WFP India worked closely with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and other government counterparts for flight clearances and logistics of relief materials.

## Projected budget for WFP India (2015-2018)



# The Road Ahead – 2016

Building on the progress and impact made in 2015, WFP will continue to serve as a valuable partner to the Government of India. In 2016, WFP will aim at strengthening partnerships, and take its learnings and successes from the state to the national level.

## Starting a Centre of Excellence

Advocating for the establishment of a Centre of Excellence on Food and Nutrition Security, WFP will be working closely with the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution to bring together key stakeholders in the country to synergize and improve food and nutrition security. Acting as a supporting agency to the national and state governments in planning, implementation and evaluation of the National Food Security Act and its related food based schemes, the Centre will aim at establishing a robust technology enabled backbone for improved governance and transparency at all levels. The Centre will serve as a platform for experience sharing and cross-learning, contributing towards South-South Collaboration.

## An advocate for food fortification

Following from the success of the rice fortification project in Gajapati, Odisha, WFP will be piloting three operational models for fortification of food served to children under the Mid-Day Meal programme. The models will incorporate multi-micronutrient fortification through rice fortification as well as through multi-micronutrient powder. Fortification will be piloted in school meals – at both centralized and local kitchens.

Fortifying blended foods provided to children between 6–36 months under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), WFP will be supporting

the Government of Kerala for a pilot and scale-up of multi-micronutrient fortification of take-home rations.



With an aim to increase the nutritional impact of the nation's food-based social safety nets, WFP will continue its role as a technical adviser to the Government of India, helping in capacity building and advocating for a comprehensive fortification policy at the national level.

## Engaging the private sector

Renewing its engagement with the private sector, 2016 will see WFP leveraging the knowledge and expertise of the private sector in reaching out to vulnerable populations. WFP's partnerships with the private sector will work towards incorporating state-of-the-art technology in governance, and creating advanced networks and evolved services to reach out to the poorest of the poor. Financial partnerships with the private sector will contribute towards WFP's innovative pilot to scale up programme approach.

## Expanding state operations

2016 will see WFP expanding its operation beyond the states of Odisha and Kerala. WFP will be considering possibilities of expansion into the states of Uttar Pradesh, Assam and /or the union territory of Chandigarh. WFP will be conducting in-depth assessments of the food and nutrition security scenario in these states, and plan its strategies for intervention. WFP will take with it its expertise, on-ground learnings and global best practices, and work towards increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of their food-based social safety nets.







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