



Strengthening India's National Evaluation Capacity to Achieve SDG-2

India implements 3 large food-based safety net programmes, reaching a billion people. Mega-schemes provide subsidized food grains (rice, wheat), cooked meals and nutritious take-home-rations to targeted beneficiaries in a life-cycle approach. Mandated under the National Food Security Act 2013 (NFSA), implementation of the food safety nets requires huge public expenditure, amounting to USD ~29 billion in 2020-21. This is a significant increase over the last decade.

Beneficiaries under Government food-based safety nets		
Targeted Public Distribution System Vulnerable HHs	Integrated Child Development Services PLW and young children	Mid-Day-Meal at Schools School-going children
~800M	~87.5M	~108M

Rising public expenditure, stagnating outcomes. The prevalence of childhood stunting in 2015-16 (38.4%) increased or stagnated across 18 out of 22 states by 2019-20

(NFHS-5). The global State of Food Security and Nutrition Report 2021 estimates 208.6 million people in India to be undernourished. The Government's SDG performance report shows that SDG-2 is lagging behind other SDGs and not on track to reach their 2030 targets.

Dearth of evidence to inform decision-making at National and State levels. National monitoring and evaluation systems remain supply focussed and internal, relying on less frequent national surveys to understand the status of food security and nutrition (FSN) in the country. States, operating in the federal setup, bear the dual responsibility of last-mile service delivery for central initiatives as well as their own food security programmes. But most states lack capacities to monitor the FSN sector, and to undertake evaluations that generate critical evidence on FSN.

WFP is partnering with the National and State governments to strengthen evaluation capacities, fill FSN evidence gaps, and enable strategic decision-making for improved outcomes. Initiatives aim to transform national and state evaluation systems, and increase the focus on national and state-led evaluations in FSN sector.

WFP'S TECHNICAL COLLABORATION WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

The Development Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO) under the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), is the apex government organization in India, tasked with monitoring and evaluating public programmes and policies. DMEO plays a critical role in improving public service delivery by undertaking evaluations for priority sectors and recommending course-corrections. WFP India and DMEO entered into a technical collaboration for National Evaluation Capacity Development (NECD) in February 2020.

Support provided to DMEO includes secondment of dedicated WFP staff to support various NECD activities, as well as access to WFP's knowledge, technical resources, and expert networks.

1 Developing a national evaluation policy (NEP)

With the objective of increasing multi-sectoral demand for evidence, especially around FSN, WFP has supported a consultative drafting of case studies on good practices of NEP for 10 countries and is supporting the policy development and a strategy for DMEO to strengthen the national evaluation ecosystem.

2 Capacity strengthening (staff and system)

In order for national and state governments to have greater capacity to plan, implement and use evaluations for decision making, WFP is drafting national evaluation curriculum and competencies for the government staff and is reviewing evaluation systems and capacities across states (i.e., pilot in Rajasthan) in support of strengthening state evaluation systems.

3 Joint studies/ evaluations on FSN

WFP is supporting the Joint evaluation of the flagship NFSA as part of the 2021-22 evaluation cycle of the government, to address various evidence gaps in the FSN sector and provide strategic recommendations for achieving SDG-2 targets.

4 Building knowledge networks & facilitating cross-exchanges

So far, WFP has anchored knowledge dissemination sessions on FSN studies and trainings on new evaluative approaches for DMEO staff; hosting a dedicated panel on FSN in the national M&E conference by DMEO; and other evaluation workshops/seminars. WFP also continually shares relevant global toolkits/technical guidance notes with DMEO.

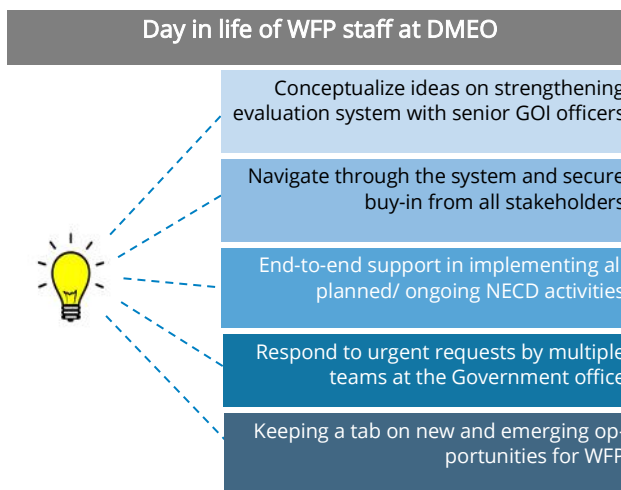
Collaboration and expected results

National M&E strategy paper drafted, articulating the national vision for evaluation

Ongoing joint evaluation of the flagship inter-ministerial NFSA, to generate critical FSN evidence for learning and accountability

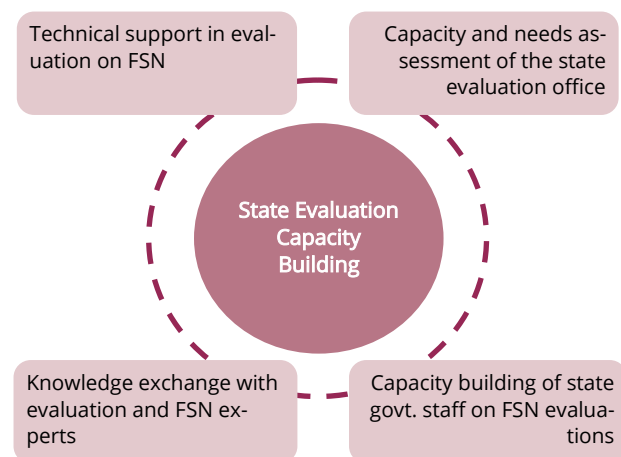
Panel on FSN with govt and WFP officials as part national monitoring and evaluation conference

Evaluation curriculum and competency drafted, for national and state governments



WFP'S SUPPORT TO STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES OF STATE GOVERNMENT

WFP is supporting the state governments of Rajasthan and Odisha to strengthen in-house evaluation capacities and systems. Ongoing technical collaboration and support to both states on the following aspects:



Rajasthan

Capacity assessment of the state evaluation office undertaken at two levels— individual and organization. Strategic recommendations for strengthening evaluation capacities shared with key stakeholders.

Knowledge exchange between key stakeholders in the government of Rajasthan, DMEO, and the government of Karnataka on systemic approaches for strengthening state evaluation capacities. Challenges, mitigation measures, and good practices for evaluations discussed.

Evaluation workshop in collaboration with DMEO undertaken for all government staff in the state evaluation office.

Odisha

Support in revamping of the state evaluation office. Feedback and learnings shared with key stakeholders in the state. Consultations being held to discuss the next set of capacity building initiatives.