IMPROVING THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN NIGERIA: SPOTLIGHT ON MEASUREMENT
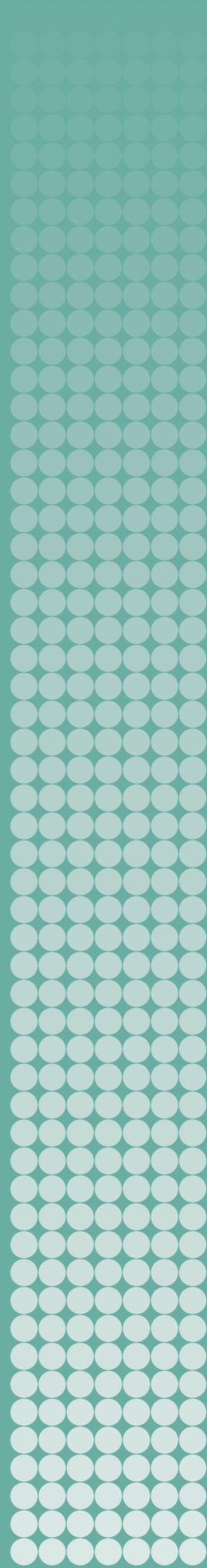
MARIE RIQUIER AND CAROLINE DELGADO

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The SIPRI–WFP Knowledge Partnership and Disclaimer

WFP and SIPRI established a knowledge partnership in 2018 to help strengthen WFP's contribution to improving the prospects for peace in the countries where it works. The research for phase I of this partnership visited four case study states—El Salvador, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan and Mali—and produced initial findings in June 2019. The evidence from these case studies indicated that some WFP programming positively contributes to improving the prospects for peace, but also identified various issues that needed to be addressed. The preliminary report made a number of general and country-specific recommendations on how WFP's contribution to improving the prospects for peace could be improved. However, further research was required to test the robustness and general applicability of the initial findings and recommendations, and to refine and add to them with more case studies. Accordingly, phase II of the inquiry was broadened by adding new states and deepened through a focus on five thematic areas. Eight states were identified for research in phase II: Colombia, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, Lebanon, Nigeria, South Sudan and Sri Lanka. The five thematic areas are climate change, stabilization, gender, cash-based interventions and measurement. The research has inquired into and reported on these areas in all eight states, and there was also a deep dive in each country into one or two of the thematic areas.

The Nigeria case study research focuses on three thematic areas: stabilization, cash-based transfers (CBTs) and measurement. The case study is divided into a series of three reports that reflect the three thematic areas which, although related, explore distinct processes and have different units of analysis. The first report (part I of the series) presents the findings from the stabilization deep dive, which explored the potential for WFP crisis response to contribute to a reduction in direct violence, enhance basic physical security and increase stability.

The CBT deep dive presented in part II of the series examines the specific modality for providing aid and how this modality could affect conflict and peacebuilding dynamics.

Part III of the series, this part, presents the findings of the measurement deep dive, which explores how current monitoring systems, internal processes and data can be adapted to capture WFP's contribution to improving the prospects for peace.

The findings and recommendations are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the positions of SIPRI or WFP, or the management, executive directors or boards of these institutions. The authors alone are responsible for any errors or omissions.

Executive summary

Armed conflict has left 3.5 million people food insecure in the states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe in north-eastern Nigeria. Alarming famine-like consumption patterns were reported in seven hard-to-reach areas of Borno state in 2021. The conflict has also displaced more than 2 million people, the majority of whom remain in Borno state where they lack access to adequate food, water and other essentials.

Armed violence has been on the rise in Nigeria since 2019, following a reduction from the height of the conflict in 2013–15. This violence is driven mainly by the Islamist armed groups collectively referred to as Boko Haram. Recent changes in leadership structures and territorial control have resulted in the group known as Islamic State of the West African Province (ISWAP) emerging as the principal force in north-east Nigeria, while expanding its territories further towards the centre of the country and its control over the Lake Chad Basin and beyond.

The World Food Programme (WFP) remains in the midst of this intersection between conflict, hunger and displacement. In 2021, it provided food assistance to close to 2.2 million people, most of whom were internally displaced persons (IDPs) or returnees. Over 86 per cent of all the people who were intended to benefit from the programme, or 'intended beneficiaries'—who in addition to IDPs and returnees included members of vulnerable host communities and refugees—received unconditional food assistance. This food assistance has an impact on conflict and peacebuilding dynamics. This series of reports analyses this impact and identifies the contribution of WFP's programming to improving the prospects for peace in north-east Nigeria. The focus is on three thematic areas: stabilization, cash-based transfers (CBT) and measurement. Each of the reports addresses one of the thematic areas.

Although related, these thematic deep dives explore distinct processes and have different units of analysis. The stabilization report (part I of the series) presents the findings from the stabilization deep dive, which explores the potential for WFP crisis response to contribute to a reduction in direct violence, enhance basic physical security and increase stability. The research is largely exploratory since WFP Nigeria does not currently leverage its programming to this end. Should WFP choose to do so, this would have important implications, not least because contributing to stability would mean addressing the highly political and sensitive drivers of violence, not least the actions of non-state armed groups (NSAGs) such as Boko Haram and the enabling environment in which these groups prosper. These, in turn, are linked to what are perceived as entrenched levels of corruption in the Nigerian state, state-perpetrated violence, widespread historical political neglect and, at times, a lack of political will and transparency. If care is not taken, such objectives would therefore risk compromising WFP's humanitarian principles.

The CBT deep dive, discussed in the second report in this series, examines a specific modality of providing aid and how this modality can affect conflict and peacebuilding dynamics. Just over half of WFP intended beneficiaries receive food aid through CBTs. This cash injection inevitably affects local economies, social relations and resilience to future shocks. Therefore, when used in conflict settings, this modality will inevitably affect conflict dynamics. The deep dive explores the potential for CBT to make a positive contribution to improving the prospects for peace, as well as the steps WFP should take to reduce the risk that CBT fuels the drivers of conflict.

If WFP seeks to leverage its programming to contribute to improving the prospects for peace in Nigeria, it must develop clear objectives that can be monitored, measured and evaluated. This third report of the series presents the findings of the measurement deep dive, which focuses on these aspects to explore how current monitoring systems,

internal processes and data can be adapted to capture WFP's contribution to improving the prospects for peace.

Taken together, the three reports conclude that WFP is well placed to contribute to improving the prospects for peace in Nigeria and makes 28 recommendations to this end. The timing could not be more pertinent set against the shifting conflict dynamics in Nigeria and in the light of broader geopolitical developments that are negatively affecting the resources available to WFP. While humanitarian needs are increasing, WFP Nigeria has been forced to reduce its assistance and even suspend food assistance in some areas due to a lack of funding. As this report was being finalized, the Ukraine war, which began when Russia invaded the country in February 2022, was having serious repercussions for humanitarian food assistance, reducing the food supplies available to WFP—especially of maize and wheat—and consequently increasing food prices, placing further constraints on the already limited financial resources available for humanitarian assistance.

Peace is a prerequisite for eliminating hunger. While WFP is not a peacebuilding agency, by intentionally seeking to contribute to improving the prospects for peace, its programming can start to break the vicious circle between hunger and conflict in Nigeria, despite the unfavourable conditions.

Objectives and methodology

This case study series explores WFP Nigeria's contribution to improving the prospects for peace through three thematic deep dives: on stabilization, CBTs and measurement. The objective of the stabilization deep dive (part I of the series) is to explore the potential for WFP crisis response to reduce direct violence, enhance basic physical security and contribute to stability. The objective of the CBT deep dive (part II) is to examine the potential for cash-based transfers to limit, mitigate or avoid the diversion of aid for uses that fuel conflict. It also explores whether there is anything distinctive about cash-based programming that promotes social cohesion or strengthens the state–citizen contract.

The objective of this measurement deep dive is to explore the readiness of WFP to manage the evidence on its contribution to improving the prospects for peace and its institutional adaptation needs by conducting an independent analysis of WFP's preparation, transmission and analysis of performance data. The study forms part of a broader knowledge partnership between SIPRI and WFP, in which Nigeria is one of 12 case study countries. The research involved a desk review of programme documents, adding specific questions to the WFP Food Security Outcome Monitoring (FSOM) survey, and in-depth interviews throughout 2021, including during field visits by local researchers to project sites in Nigeria in August 2021.

The findings of the three reports reflect the situation at that time. As in any other conflict setting, the context in Nigeria is unstable and dynamic from a political, economic and social perspective, and the report should be read with this in mind.

Overview of findings

Measurement deep dive

The measurement deep dive explores WFP's current monitoring systems and the internal processes that WFP Nigeria has launched to measure its contribution to improving the prospects for peace.

WFP Nigeria has a robust monitoring system that is well-suited to monitoring assistance, impact, efficiency and performance. Its technical units, such as the

Research, Assessment and Monitoring unit, undertake extensive data collection exercises to ensure that the delivery of assistance is guided by evidence-based programming. WFP Nigeria is mindful of the context in which it operates and highly sensitive to unfolding conflict dynamics through its real-time monitoring of security incidents. Where necessary, the mechanisms in place allow for a quick response and fast adjustments that ensure conflict-sensitive programming.

Nonetheless, monitoring, assessing and measuring WFP's contribution to improving the prospects for peace present many challenges. The previously identified challenges of attribution, intangibility, fragility and complexity of causality are also apparent in north-east Nigeria. Technical challenges and access constraints induced by the highly volatile context in deep field locations and conflict-affected areas also hamper assessments in the region. As a result, WFP's existing monitoring system requires adaptation if it is to be able to assess its contributions to improving the prospects for peace.

The research results show that WFP Nigeria contributes to improving the prospects for peace and there is ample scope to enhance this contribution. For WFP Nigeria to make a coherent and sustained contribution to improving the prospects for peace, however, it must first ensure a common understanding across the organization of what constitutes peace and set out its peace-related ambitions and boundaries of engagement. An articulate and shared understanding of peace is essential to developing a coherent and sustained contribution.

The metrics WFP Nigeria uses to assess programme performance currently say little about how WFP interventions interact with the dynamics of peace and conflict. They also say little about WFP's contributions to improving the prospects for peace. That said, much of the data that is systematically collected could be used to these ends, but this would require the allocation of dedicated resources and time. This would include building staff capacity with sound knowledge of peace and conflict in order to apply a peacebuilding lens to monitoring, analytical processes and programming, and adapting programming to changing dynamics.

In discussions with the WFP country office and partners, the research has identified specific opportunities on which WFP Nigeria can build. Its proximity to conflict and its data collection capacities, not least its comprehensive survey structure, place it in a unique position to gather much-needed micro-level data on conflict dynamics as they play out and affect communities. In this regard, its work with and through partners constitutes a crucial opportunity for WFP in Nigeria. The country office already engages and consults with partners that collect data on conflict and violence. Through more robust engagement and strategic alignment, partners could provide additional perspectives on and understanding of the environment that would help to identify and design solutions and monitor impacts.

Initiatives launched by the country office, such as the data visualization platform, the Nigeria Operations Centre, provide opportunities to manage the joint evidence base for assessing WFP's contribution to improving the prospects for peace.

Recommendations

1. WFP should define its peace-related ambitions and the boundaries of its engagement through internal reflection and identify, in a theory of change, the points in the evolution of the conflict at which WFP programming is most likely to make a positive contribution.

2. Any intended objective to contribute to improving the prospects for peace and become peace promoting must be accompanied by investment in the required human resources to monitor contributions.

3. In order to develop a more systematic approach to conflict analysis that complements and supports current analytical capacities, WFP Nigeria must strengthen relevant staff capacity and allocate more resources to conflict analysis. This will improve its ability to identify windows of opportunity for contributing to improving the prospects for peace.

4. When conducting risk assessments, WFP should apply a cross-cutting conflict lens to all risk categories to maximize the potential for these assessments to identify negative interactions between interventions and the conflict environment.

5. WFP and partner agencies must more systematically entrench interventions in local contextual knowledge. One way to do this would be to increase and systematize consultation with intended beneficiaries and local staff by building on current successful feedback mechanisms such as WFP Complaint and Feedback Mechanisms and Project Management Committees.

6. WFP should maximize the potential of the data already collected by the country office and partners by exploring innovative ways to combine, compare and contrast quantitative, qualitative and visual data, including through the Operations Centre.

7. WFP should extend operational partnerships to become knowledge partnerships, where data is shared, and joint analysis informs the different programming of WFP and partners and strengthens the ability of each actor to contribute to improving the prospects for peace within its mandate, in a coordinated and coherent manner.

8. Since peace is a process and peacebuilding is inscribed in long-term thinking, risk assessments and follow-up assessments should be approached as part of a longer-term process that goes beyond project cycles. From a longer-term perspective, WFP can use these assessments as a learning metric to assess its adaptation.

Abbreviations

BAY   Borno, Adamawa andYobe
BOWDI   Borno Women Development Initiative
CBT   Cash-based transfer
CFM   Complaint and feedback mechanism
CJTF   Civilian Joint Task Force
FFA   Food for Assets
FSOM   Food Security Outcome Monitoring
GFD   General food distribution
IDP   Internally displaced person
INGO   International non-governmental organization
IOM   International Organization for Migration
MNJTF   Multinational Joint Task Force
NGO   Non-governmental organization
NSAG   Non-state armed group
PMC   Project Management Committee
SGBV   Sexual and gender-based violence
TOC   Theory of change
UN OCHA   United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WFP   World Food Programme

1. Summary of context analysis[1]

According to the Global Risk Index INFORM, Nigeria is among the countries with the highest projected conflict risk index and at increased risk of socio-economic vulnerability and food insecurity.[2] Nigeria has faced cycles of violence since independence in 1960. The major conflict since 2010 is what is commonly referred to as the Boko Haram insurgency in the north-eastern states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (the BAY states). There is no single group known as Boko Haram, but the term is used to refer to the movement that emerged in the early 2000s and includes its splinters.

Socio-economic needs, social cohesion and trust in government

Nigeria is the largest economy in Africa but lags behind in development terms: 40 per cent of the population lives below the national poverty line, excluding the population in Borno state since as much as 85 per cent of the state is considered inaccessible for insecurity reasons. Reports that include figures from Borno state estimate poverty rates of 75 per cent but because only accessible households in Borno were included, these findings are not considered representative. Deep social and economic disparities within the Nigerian population and the resulting grievances have led to a loss of government legitimacy among much of the population in the north-east. [3]

Overview of the conflict in north-east Nigeria

The north-east is currently among the regions most affected by violent conflict. In the past 10 years, Boko Haram-related conflicts have claimed approximately 30 000 lives and caused one of the worst humanitarian crises in the history of Nigeria.[4] The group's territorial control has weakened since 2015, however, due to infighting within the group, the government's military response and the efforts of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF).

Government response: Military, stabilization and peacebuilding efforts

The government response to the conflict in north-east Nigeria has been overwhelmingly military. In addition to the Nigerian state armed forces, the MNJTF and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) have played key roles.[5] President of Nigeria Muhammadu Buhari declared a technical defeat of Boko Haram at the end of 2015 but Nigeria's security forces have struggled to consolidate control of rural areas or protect urban centres from sporadic attacks.[6]

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[1] This paper is third in a series of three papers of a Nigerian case study. The other two papers are Delgado, C. *Improving the Prospects for Peace in Nigeria: Spotlight on Stabilization* (SIPRI: Stockholm, 2022); and Tschunkert, K., *Improving the Prospects for Peace in Nigeria: Spotlight on Cash-based Transfers* (SIPRI: Stockholm, 2022). The summary presented here is condensed from the full context analysis given by Delgado in the first paper of this series.

[2] United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Humanitarian Response Plan: Nigeria*, Humanitarian Programme Cycle 2020 (OCHA, Mar. 2020).

[3] Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics, '2019 poverty and inequality in Nigeria: Executive summary', Abuja, May 2020; and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Business Case Assessment for Accelerating Development Investments in Famine Response and Prevention: Case Study, North-east Nigeria* (UNDP: New York, 2017).

[4] Hamid, N. A. et al., 'Boko Haram and humanitarian crisis in north-east Nigeria', *World Applied Sciences Journal*, vol. 35, no. 9 (2017), pp. 1777–82; and Nwankpa, M., 'Understanding the local-global dichotomy and drivers of the Boko Haram insurgency', *African Conflict and Peacebuilding Review*, vol. 10, no. 2 (2020), pp. 43–64.

[5] Ashindorbe, K., Afatakpa, F. and Owonikoko, S. B., 'Civilian Joint Task Force and Nigeria's counter-terrorism operation: A critique of the community-based approach to insecurity', *African Security*, vol. 14, no. 3 (2021), pp. 286–305.

[6] Brechenmacher, S., *Stabilizing Northeast Nigeria After Boko Haram*, vol. 3 (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Washington, DC, 2019).

Continuing attacks led to the development by the Nigerian army of the so-called super camp strategy in 2019.[7] This strategy entails uniting military personnel and resources in well-constructed super camps at fewer locations. It also means relocating people from rural areas into internally displaced person's (IDP) camps inside these towns. This has further eroded the protection of civilians in rural areas and their access to livelihoods.[8] Both the Nigerian security forces and the CJTF have been accused of human rights abuses, such as extrajudicial killings, rape and violations of the rules of military engagement.[9]

Nonetheless, improved security in parts of north-east Nigeria since early 2016 has spurred a greater focus on recovery. The Economic Recovery and Growth Plan for 2017–2020 emphasizes agriculture and food security, and the government's commitment to funding social safety nets. The focus has also shifted to conflict stabilization measures, as outlined in the 2016 Buhari Plan, which seeks to bolster legitimate state authority, reconciliation and peaceful conflict management systems.[10] In 2018, key international donors set up the Oslo Consultative Group on Prevention and Stabilization in the Lake Chad Region to coordinate their response activities.

Other actors contributing to peace

Alongside international humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors, civil society actors as well as traditional and religious leaders have also been crucial in encouraging peaceful coexistence between different religious groups.[11] However, Nigeria's patriarchal society and the related cultural, religious and socio-economic inequalities have combined with poverty to marginalize women's representation in politics and in formal peacebuilding. Nonetheless, women have acted as peacebuilders locally.[12]

Humanitarian response

As of May 2022, 8.4 million people in the BAY states are in acute need of protection and assistance.[13] Humanitarian access outside of the super camps is severely restricted.[14] In addition, international humanitarian donor support has decreased while needs have significantly increased.[15]

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[7] Zenn, J., 'The humanitarian dilemma around the military's "super camp" strategy in Nigeria', Council on Foreign Relations, 5 Sep. 2019.

[8] Samuel, M., 'Nigeria's super camps leave civilians exposed to terrorists', Institute for Security Studies, 30 Nov. 2020.

[9] Pérouse de Montclos, M.-A., 'A sectarian Jihad in Nigeria: The case of Boko Haram', *Small Wars & Insurgencies*, vol. 27, no. 5 (2016), pp. 878–95; US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2020, 'Nigeria 2020 Human Rights Report', [n.d.]; and Day, A., *Hybrid Conflict, Hybrid Peace: How Militias and Paramilitary Groups Shape Post-conflict Transitions* (New York: United Nations University, 2020).

[10] Federal Republic of Nigeria, Ministry of Budget and National Planning, 'Economic Recovery and Growth Plan, 2017–2020', Feb. 2017; and Federal Republic of Nigeria, 'The Buhari Plan: Rebuilding the north-east', Executive Summary, June 2016.

[11] World Bank, *Nigeria on the Move: A Journey to Inclusive Growth* (World Bank: Washington, DC, 2019); El-Bushra, J., Ladbury, S. and Ukiwo, U. O. 'From design to implementation: Addressing the causes of violent conflict in Nigeria', *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, vol. 3, no. 1 (2014), Part 1; Uppsala Conflict Data Program, 'Nigeria', [n.d.]; and ACLED, '10 conflicts to worry about in 2022: "Nigeria"', 2022.

[12] Imam, A., Biu, H. and Yahi, M. *Women's Informal Peacebuilding in North-east Nigeria*, CMI Brief no. 9 (CMI: Bergen, 2020); and Enapeh, O. and Yacob-Haliso, O., 'Women, peace building and the Boko Haram conflict in Nigeria', *Journal of Social Encounters*, vol. 5, no. 2 (2021), pp. 106–15.

[13] United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Humanitarian Response Plan: Nigeria*, Humanitarian Programme Cycle 2022 (OCHA, Feb. 2022).

[14] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Business Case Assessment for Accelerating Development Investments in Famine Response and Prevention: Case Study, North-east Nigeria* (UNDP: New York, NY, 2017); and UN OCHA (note 2).

[15] United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), *Humanitarian Response Plan: Nigeria*, Humanitarian Programme Cycle 2021 (OCHA, Feb. 2021).

In October 2021, 3.5 million people were projected to be food insecure at the peak of the lean season between June and August 2022.[16] Humanitarian responders to the crisis addressed food insecurity through emergency food assistance (in-kind or as cash-based transfers, CBTs) and livelihood support.[17]

At the time of writing, 2.9 million people have been internally displaced by the Nigerian army.[18] The vast majority of IDPs in the north-east remain in the region.[19]

[16] Food Security Cluster, North-east Nigeria, 'Cadre Harmonisé result for identification of risk areas and vulnerable populations in twenty (20) Nigerian States and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Nigeria 2021', 19 Nov. 2021.

[17] UNDP (note 14).

[18] Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 'Nigeria', Sep. 2021 update; and UNHCR 'Nigeria operational data portal', Sep. 2021 update.

[19] Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (note 18).

2. The Nigeria case study approach

Objectives and background

This report assesses the World Food Programme's (WFP) potential to contribute to improving the prospects for peace in Nigeria through a deep dive on measurement. The other deep dives, which explore stabilization and CBT in Nigeria, are presented in the first and second reports in this series, respectively. This measurement deep dive explores the current monitoring systems and the internal processes that WFP Nigeria has developed to measure its contribution to improving the prospects for peace.

WFP monitoring systems are extremely effective at monitoring the technical aspects of food security, delivery and performance. Peace, however, is not a technical aspect. The research on WFP's contribution to improving the prospects for peace under the SIPRI–WFP Knowledge Partnership is based on the understanding that violent conflict and peace are not two polar opposites, but complex phenomena that occur in complex social systems. The results of contributions to improving the prospects for peace are therefore not always immediate, obvious or predictable, and occur in a system that is highly dynamic, non-linear and emergent.[20] Multiple factors, drivers and channels combine to shape the prospects for peace. Untangling this intricate web of dynamics to draw conclusions about any one driver presents various analytical challenges. In such settings, it is often impossible to identify simple and objective indicators that will illustrate when a peace outcome has been achieved. Work towards more inclusive political, economic and social systems will not necessarily show signs of steady progress or achieve the predicted peacebuilding outcome.[21] Peacebuilding is fundamentally a series of experiments and a process of learning. In many ways, measuring the success of contributions to improving the prospects for peace is about identifying failures and ways in which systems can be adapted to reflect that learning.[22]

Methodology

The research involved a review of WFP programme documents and data sets, and of the literature on Nigeria, and remote interviews with WFP country office staff, as well as consultations with United Nations agencies and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs).[23] Survey questions were developed in support of the stabilization and CBT deep dives (parts I and II in this series), to be included in the WFP Food Security Outcome Monitoring (FSOM) survey. This was targeted at 2071 people intended to benefit from WFP programmes, or 'intended beneficiaries', and was carried out in June 2021.

In-country research was conducted in August 2021 by a team of three local researchers who visited project sites in Borno, Adamawa and Yobe states, and in the capital, Abuja. The local researchers gathered data through in-depth interviews with WFP intended beneficiaries and non-beneficiary community members, as well as representatives of local authorities, community-based organizations and NGOs in the BAY states. Interviews were also held with government officials in Abuja. Approximately 90 key informant interviews were held, as well as seven focus group

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[20] De Coning, C., 'Adaptive peacebuilding', *International Affairs*, vol. 94, no. 2 (2018), pp. 301–17.

[21] De Coning, C., 'Complexity thinking and adaptive peacebuilding', *Accord*, no. 28 (Mar. 2019).

[22] Campbell, S. P., *Global Governance and Local Peace: Accountability and Performance in International Peacebuilding* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2018); World Food Programme (WFP), *Nigeria Annual Country Report 2021* (WFP: Rome, 2021); and World Food Programme, 'Nigeria', [n.d.].

[23] The Covid-19 pandemic and related restrictions affected the ability to conduct in-country research and made it necessary to revise the original research design. A remote research strategy was designed that involved remote interviews, surveys and, where pertinent, the use of local researchers.

discussions. The date or location of some interviews has been withheld where this could lead to the identities of the participants being revealed.

WFP in Nigeria

WFP re-established its presence in Nigeria at the request of the Nigerian government in mid 2016, to provide food security and nutrition assistance to conflict-affected populations in the north-east of the country. According to its 2019–2022 Country Strategic Plan, WFP aims to provide life-saving assistance through General Food Distribution (GFD), both cash-based and in-kind, accompanied by gender-transformative livelihood support and nutrition-sensitive activities to promote self-reliance and resilience while reinforcing national institutional capacities.[24]

WFP is a key partner of the government of Nigeria and other UN agencies working on crisis response and achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals in the country. Based on Nigeria's development priorities, UN agencies work in three broad areas through the UN sustainable development partnership framework for 2018–2022: (*a*) governance, human rights, peace and security; (*b*) equitable quality basic services; and (*c*) sustainable and inclusive economic growth and development. WFP is also one of 28 partner organizations operating in the food security sector of the Humanitarian Response Plan, which is coordinated by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) through the Humanitarian Country Team and partners. The food security sector aims to improve access for the most vulnerable crisis-affected people to timely and appropriate food assistance, and to strengthen the resilience of crisis-affected people by re-establishing, improving and diversifying key agricultural livelihoods.[25]

[24] World Food Programme (WFP), *Nigeria Country Strategic Plan, 2019–2022* (WFP: Rome, 2019).
[25] UN OCHA (note 15).

3. The current data collection system: Challenges and opportunities

Defining peace and setting the level of ambition

The stabilization, CBT and measurement deep dives show that through its programming, WFP Nigeria does contribute to improving the prospects for peace. The research has also identified considerable scope for WFP to upgrade its contribution by, for example, reducing people's reliance on negative coping strategies, improving IDP–host community relations and stimulating local economies. However, for WFP Nigeria to make a coherent and sustained contribution to improving the prospects for peace, it must first achieve a common understanding of the contributions to peace it is able to make in Nigeria. From this starting point, it can then set and align peace-related ambitions and boundaries of engagement that align with its mandate.

WFP is a dual-mandated agency that responds to both humanitarian and development needs; it does not have a peace-related mandate. There is therefore no corporate peace objective or defined corporate strategy for contributing to improving the prospects for peace, although some individual country offices have developed such strategies. Nonetheless, in 2013 WFP published a corporate peacebuilding policy for transition settings that acknowledges the link between conflict and hunger, and the relevance of WFP's role as part of wider UN efforts.[26] The policy sets the parameters for WFP's engagement in supporting transitions to peace. In addition, as a signatory to the 2016 Peace Promise, WFP is committed to operationalizing collective action across the humanitarian, development and peace spheres to end human suffering by addressing the drivers of conflict and vulnerability, and helping to meet related humanitarian needs.[27] WFP Nigeria must carefully balance its humanitarian and development mandate with its peace-related ambitions and level of intent in a way that allows it to uphold its humanitarian principles, as far as the operational environment allows.

The research identified the need for WFP Nigeria to articulate its understanding of what contributing to improving the prospects for peace means for the organization in Nigeria; and to communicate this to the country office. In this way, WFP Nigeria can identify the peace outcomes to which it wishes to contribute, and set objectives and targets that are aligned with its dual mandate. Peace is a spectrum that extends from what is often called 'negative peace'—the absence of violence—to 'positive peace', the conditions that make peace sustainable in the long term. While negative peace can be a precondition for peacebuilding to commence, entrenched negative peace can be an obstacle to positive peace. Even in the absence of direct, physical violence and repression, social and political order might be sustained in some countries through inequitable systems and institutions that perpetuate vulnerability and the marginalization of some groups. Another term for entrenched negative peace is structural violence.[28]

Peace is also highly subjective, perceived in different ways by different people at different times in different cultures and political systems. It is often the case that peace and conflict are described in ways that are too distant from the communities that experience armed conflict. Recent efforts have sought to bring the measurement and understanding of peace closer to those experiencing it, by, for example, use of

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[26] World Food Programme (WFP), *WFP's Role in Peacebuilding in Transition Settings* (WFP: Rome, 2013).

[27] UN Peacebuilding Support Office, 'The Peace Promise: Commitments to more effective synergies among peace, humanitarian and development actions in complex humanitarian situations', [n.d.].

[28] Galtung, J., 'Violence, peace, and peace research', *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 6, no. 3 (1969), pp. 167–91. For an in-depth discussion on the critical elements for WFP to consider in defining peace, see Delgado, C. et al., *The World Food Programme's Contribution to Improving the Prospects for Peace* (SIPRI: Stockholm, 2019).

Everyday Peace Indicators.[29] Such nuances must be considered if peacebuilding interventions are to achieve the required change: within individuals, for example, in attitudes, behaviour and capacity; in relationships between people, for example, in communication and interactions; in the way institutions operate, for example, institutional policies and practices that exclude certain groups; and at the fundamental cultural level, such as in discriminatory attitudes that cut across communities.[30]

In some cases, the reduction or ending of violence may be the only actionable peace. In other cases, a 'variety of peaces' are possible, which suggests a continuum or spectrum. Sometimes peacebuilding and armed conflict can occur concurrently. The scope and nature of peacebuilding may vary across contexts from local, short-term ceasefires or negotiations for access, to short-term stabilization in a region, to negotiated settlements and peace agreements between warring parties, to longer-term confidence-building activities that promote trust and social cohesion between ethnic, religious or identity groups over years. It is conceivable that WFP Nigeria programming could contribute to improving the prospects for peace through everything from macro-level, technocratic peacebuilding interventions around state-building and good governance to localized everyday peacebuilding efforts.

However, for WFP Nigeria to contribute to improving the prospects for peace, at a minimum it must begin by defining its peace-related ambitions and undertake internal reflection on the boundaries of its engagement. In addition, the security context in north-east Nigeria is rapidly evolving and there are few signs of any improvement. Thus, WFP Nigeria must identify at which point in the evolution of the conflict its programming is most likely to make a positive contribution.

Once WFP Nigeria has identified at what level and how it intends to contribute to improving the prospects for peace, it will need to identify the root causes of vulnerability and instability. Drawing on this contextual understanding, it then needs to define a theory of change (TOC) and implement regular monitoring to stay engaged with, and most importantly adapt to, changing conditions. These processes must be inclusive, involve dedicated resources and emphasize consultation with WFP staff from the field offices, where personnel have sound knowledge of the local context and its evolution. They must also engage more directly and regularly with intended beneficiaries. Importantly, they must complement the relevant technical units such as the Research Assessment and Monitoring unit, Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping, and the Monitoring and Evaluation units, which are remote from the field and often 'stuck in a bubble in Abuja', and therefore often lack granular contextual knowledge.[31] Consultations with local WFP staff in north-east Nigeria and with intended beneficiaries prior to the design and implementation of interventions can help to refine contextual knowledge and provide a better understanding of people's visions and experiences of peace. This better tailors interventions and contributes to improving the prospects for peace.

Peace proximity and adaptation

WFP is a highly peace-proximate actor. Apart from in the case of purely natural disaster response, it is nearly always working in conflict-affected and fragile environments

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[29] Everyday Peace Indicators is a methodology through which communities themselves develop measures to assess the peace and conflict dynamics that reflect their lived experience of peace, security and conflict. Since the assessments are based on locally defined indicators, it is more likely that what is being monitored will reflect local perceptions, see MacGinty, R., 'Indicators+: A proposal for everyday peace indicators', *Evaluation and Program Planning*, vol. 36, no. 1 (2013), pp. 56–63.

[30] Lederach, J. P., *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (United States Institute of Peace: Washington, DC, 1997).

[31] Remote interview, WFP staff member, 22 Feb. 2021.
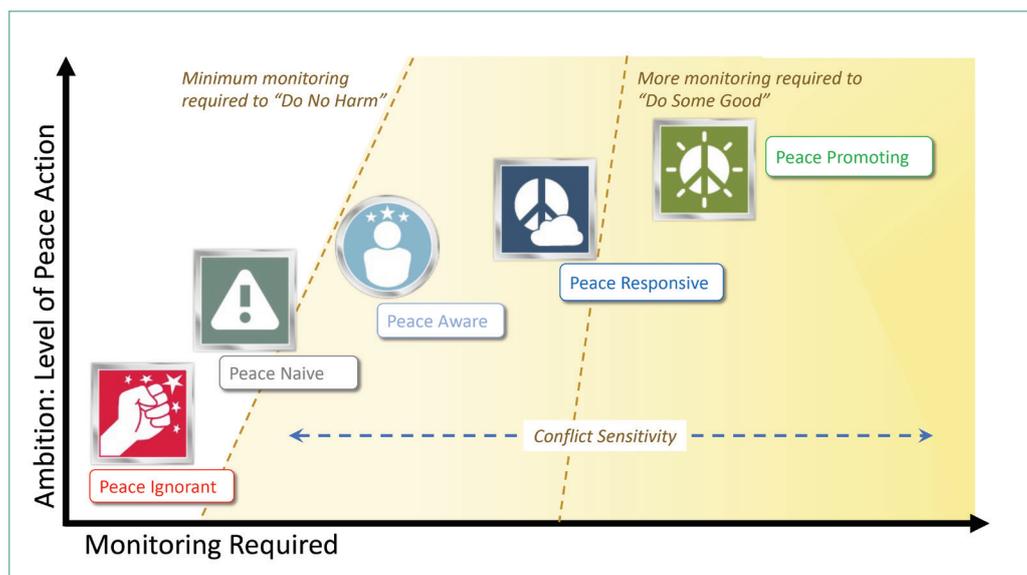
Figure 3.1. More monitoring is required to meet higher levels of ambition for peacebuilding

Sources: Original concept of 'peace responsiveness' thanks to Interpeace (see https://www.interpeace.org/peace-responsiveness/). This version was developed through collaboration in the Peace Evidence Expert Research Group as part of the WFP–SIPRI Knowledge Partnership and used in a WFP Board Room Document, presented, April 2021. See Brusset, E. and Milante, G., Round Table Document, *Measuring Peace Performance Round Table* (SIPRI and WFP: Stockholm and Rome, 2021).

with legacies of violence, trauma, weak institutions and poor service delivery, and often mistrust between people and between people and the state. As a peace-proximate actor, WFP must constantly monitor its programmes for signals that could indicate that an intervention is no longer having the desired effect or is starting to generate negative side-effects. WFP does this by upholding the principle of 'do no harm' and ensuring that its programming is conflict sensitive. Conflict sensitivity demands a sound understanding of the context and the ability to maximize the positive impacts of interventions and minimize their negative impacts. Peace awareness can increase as WFP monitors these dynamics and adapts programming to avoid contributing to the drivers of violence, getting ahead of problems before they materialize.[32] Because conflict and peace are complex phenomena, the effects of contributions to improving the prospects for peace are not always immediate, obvious nor predictable, and must take place in a system that is highly dynamic, non-linear and emergent.[33] Moving from being peace aware to being peace responsive and peace promoting, that is, making an intentional and sustained contribution to improving the prospects for peace, will require more work on both monitoring and identifying progress, and identifying opportunities for engagement (see figure 3.1).[34]

As a peace-proximate actor, WFP Nigeria needs to assess the level of its ambition across the peacebuilding spectrum. As a prerequisite, humanitarian and development actors must avoid being peace ignorant or peace naive, which means they must avoid intentionally or unintentionally providing incentives for violence. At a minimum, WFP Nigeria needs to be 'peace aware' to ensure conflict sensitivity and avoid doing harm. This requires a minimum level of monitoring. Additional monitoring is needed when and where WFP identifies opportunities to contribute to improving the prospects for peace by being peace responsive (seeing needs and addressing them) or peace promoting (proactively creating opportunities for peace). In summary, heightened

[32] Milante, G. et al., 'Measuring peace impact: Challenges and solutions', A report of the meetings of the Peace Evidence Expert Research Group, 2020–22 (SIPRI: Stockholm, 2022).
[33] De Coning (note 20).
[34] Milante et al. (note 32); see also Interpeace, 'Peace responsiveness' [n.d.].

peace-related ambitions require additional monitoring to identify opportunities for engagement, and to monitor and identify progress.[35]

Conflict analysis

Conflict analysis is a prerequisite for ensuring conflict-sensitive programming and identifying windows of opportunity for engagement that can contribute to improving the prospects for peace. In a nutshell, a conflict analysis must analyse the drivers of conflict, the underlying structural causes and the triggers of a conflict, as well as conflict actors and power dynamics, broader social trends and triggers of change. The analysis needs to be programme relevant and focus on the geographical areas where interventions take place to support humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors. In addition, to provide a broader understanding, it is key that the conflict analysis considers interactions between local, regional and national conflict dynamics. When tailored to the operational context, a conflict analysis is well placed to assess the potential interactions between operation and context. To fulfil all these roles, a conflict analysis must be a living document, and this requires regular updating that factors in emerging perspectives and contextual changes.[36] There are limits to what a conflict analysis can provide in terms of a fully accurate understanding of its dynamics. Nonetheless, a robust conflict analysis can inform protection needs, as well as programme design and implementation, which leads to more informed decisions.

The role and purpose of conflict analysis differ from those of security analysis in their strict definitions. Reporting on security incidents, which entails their registration as event data in a security database, is complemented by an analysis of such events to identify patterns and trends in the behaviour of conflict actors. This analysis serves to inform the threats and risks facing humanitarian operators and programmes. This differs from conflict analysis, which concentrates its focus on the root causes or drivers of conflict and violence, the behaviour of conflict actors, power dynamics and broader social trends, among other things. In practice, these analyses look at similar aspects but from different angles or with different intended outputs. Those responsible for conducting these analyses are usually ascribed distinct but complementary roles as security analysts and conflict analysts.

The Nigeria Country Office conducts its own security analysis, which includes real-time monitoring of security incidents and security risks to assess contextual dynamics and how its programming interacts with the conflict environment. To better understand the drivers of security incidents and their ramifications for broader conflict dynamics and WFP operations, the security unit conducts quantitative and qualitative assessments of root causes and their potential impact on WFP operations and staff. This is complemented by an analysis of power dynamics and social interactions, which assesses whether a situation is improving or degrading. WFP's analysis focuses primarily on the BAY states, which are among the most conflict-affected states in Nigeria and at the centre of WFP in-country interventions. It also carefully considers broader regional dynamics in these assessments, given the relevance of the inter-linkages between Nigeria and the broader Lake Chad Basin region. Frequent security monitoring allows WFP to quickly identify key changes in the operating environment to ensure that its analysis is process-oriented in the light of emerging contextual changes. In this way, security analysis can be extended in support of the programme units. This should be strengthened by the protection unit, which assesses risk to populations.

[35] Milante et al. (note 32).
[36] Delgado et al. (note 28).

Regular consultations with security professionals from other agencies, such as the UN Department of Safety & Security, other organizations within the framework of Saving Lives Together and the military provide a holistic view of context.[37] There is scope, however, to strengthen inter-agency cooperation on joint analysis and knowledge sharing around regional security and conflict dynamics. Whenever there is an opportunity and capacity for collaboration, the country office would benefit from more systematic consultation with analysts in neighbouring country offices and UN agencies. This could include regular updates on factors that are likely to have an impact on conflict dynamics, such as climate change, mobility patterns, pastoralism and the internal dynamics of the NSAGs in the region.

In addition to current capacities, there is a need to entrench a more systematic approach to conflict analysis if WFP Nigeria is seeking to contribute to improving the prospects for peace. Current security analyses provide an effective system for delivering WFP programming, such as GFD, livelihood support and nutrition-sensitive activities. Given that the use of violence or the threat of violence is a strategic choice by some actors, however, just as peacebuilding is, then a more robust and systematic approach to conflict analysis is needed to design peace responsive or peace promoting engagements. If WFP is to increase its peace ambitions, this will require additional monitoring, which would include conflict analysis to both monitor and identify progress and opportunities for engagement (see above and figure 3.1).[38] This research indicates that WFP assistance can exacerbate existing inequalities and grievances, such as when non-beneficiaries who are also in need perceive that they are being left out or other community members are being favoured over them. The interviews revealed that concerns around inclusion in or exclusion from assistance, together with delays in delivery, are likely to exacerbate tensions.

WFP Nigeria therefore needs to make concrete efforts to conduct more conflict and context analysis, which will require a strengthened staff capacity to build this system.[39] There is scope for this aim to be translated into a conflict analyst's position in the country office and for the allocation of more resources to carry out conflict analysis that is complementary to and supports security analysis. In this regard, WFP Nigeria could also leverage existing facilities, such as the Nigeria Operations Centre, a data visualization platform that the Security Unit can use to map security incidents (see below).

Conflict sensitivity

A robust and continual conflict analysis provides a thorough understanding of how programme activities interact with peace and conflict dynamics. This in turn informs conflict sensitivity, as a basis for working in conflict-affected settings. In this way, conflict-sensitive programming is reasserted in WFP's peacebuilding policy in transition settings.[40] At the corporate level, WFP has robust systems in place to ensure its programming is conflict sensitive. These systems include conflict analysis (see above) and risk assessments that inform programme design, prioritization and the allocation

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[37] For example, the International NGO Safety Organization (INSO), which conducts thorough analysis and provides daily information on dynamics in Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin region.

[38] Milante et al. (note 32).

[39] WFP South Sudan, which is also covered by phase 2 of the SIPRI–WFP Knowledge Partnership, has launched initiatives to assess the interactions between WFP interventions and conflict dynamics. This work is ongoing in South Sudan and there may be similar initiatives launched by other WFP country offices that have been left unexplored by this research, see Riquier, M. and Delgado, C., *Improving the Prospects for Peace in South Sudan: Spotlight on Measurement* (SIPRI: Stockholm, forthcoming).

[40] World Food Programme, 'WFP's role in peacebuilding in transition settings', Informal consultation, Rome, 20 Sep. 2013.

of resources.[41] As part of a risk awareness culture, WFP has established a concept of 'risk appetite', which communicates how the organization envisages risk. At the outset of an intervention, WFP identifies specific risks among four predefined categories of potential risk: strategic, operational, fiduciary and financial.[42] Conflict-induced risks are a sub-category of strategic risks. They comprise risks often occasioned by conflict or pervasive in such settings. There is room for WFP Nigeria to expand the scope of the analysis by applying a cross-cutting conflict lens to the other three risk categories and their sub-categories. This would allow WFP to better identify where a link between interventions and conflict exists, or where interventions either risk exacerbating conflict triggers or could contribute to improving the prospects for peace. In some instances or in some locations, the delivery of CBT or the transfer amount might exacerbate existing inequalities and grievances between intended beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries (see the CBT deep dive). By contrast, the delivery of assistance in other areas might be likely to bring people together, reduce displacement and encourage stability.

Having identified the risks, WFP establishes mitigation measures intended to reduce the likelihood or impact of a risk becoming a reality. These measures range from avoidance to the reduction, sharing or acceptance of continuation of risks. According to the context, specific mitigation activities include the visit of third-party monitors to document the movement of cash and ensure that the correct benefit is assigned to the right person, the planning of different scenarios for distribution to reduce predictability, and changes of location. Implementation of these measures is then monitored through regular risk and outcome assessments to assess their effectiveness and efficiency. This is done using internal monitoring and evaluation systems, and through feedback from cooperation partners and intended beneficiaries using complaint and feedback mechanisms (CFMs), as well as wider stakeholder engagement. Despite these efforts to identify and mitigate risks, internal consultations reveal that assessments of the effectiveness and efficiency of mitigation measures in Nigeria are perceived as ill-timed or delayed, which means that information is either unavailable or belated in some instances.[43] Pandemic-related restrictions, such as mobility restrictions, have hampered risk monitoring and assessment of mitigation measures. WFP Nigeria needs to pursue its efforts to strengthen the risk reporting and response system to ensure that information is shared with programme units in a timely manner that allows efficient risk mitigation.

Key conflict sensitivity concerns

Interviews confirmed that targeting is a sensitivity concern in Nigeria. This is consistent with findings in other country studies in the knowledge partnership.[44] Since targeting determines who does or does not receive resources, it is the most common conflict sensitivity flashpoint across all international aid.[45] The stabilization and CBT research identified several targeting concerns, many of which relate to challenging social norms, including gender norms. A case outlined in the stabilization deep dive provides an example of adaptation that shows WFP learning about possible sources of grievance, including from CFMs, and illustrates how WFP responds to conflict sensitivity concerns pertaining to targeting by changing how it operates. Through security assessments and the CFMs, WFP noted tensions between the intended beneficiaries of two different programmes: unconditional GFD and Food for Assets (FFA).

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[41] Remote interview, WFP staff member, 19 Feb. 2021; and Remote interview, WFP staff member, 24 Feb. 2021.
[42] WFP Executive Board, '2018 enterprise risk management policy', Rome, 19 Oct. 2018.
[43] Remote interview, WFP staff member, 24 Feb. 2021.
[44] Remote interview, WFP staff member, 23 Feb. 2021; and Remote interview, WFP staff member, 24 Feb. 2021.
[45] Delgado et al. (note 28).

Monitoring revealed that the community receiving FFA felt deprived in comparison with the intended beneficiaries of GFD, given that FFA is provided for a shorter period.[46] While the vulnerabilities and needs might have arguably been different, given the potential for perceived deprivation to cause tensions between the communities, WFP switched from vulnerability-based to area-based targeting. WFP Nigeria can build on this example by monitoring how often these adjustments are made, to serve as a metric for adaptation which would communicate WFP's capacity to adapt.

As this example illustrates, actual or perceived unjust or biased targeting can cause tensions and constitute an incentive to resort to violence. To limit this risk, WFP Nigeria uses an area-based targeting approach in which elected community targeting committees use specific guidelines to map the community according to observed vulnerabilities. Under the supervision and guidance of WFP protection unit and partners, these committees also determine the targeting criteria. Through this process, WFP aims to ensure a transparent and inclusive process that includes IDPs, women, people with disabilities and other minority groups, and guarantees regular engagement with affected populations to facilitate the dissemination of information and feedback. Awareness and understanding of targeting are essential to ensuring conflict-sensitive programming. Although these processes are time-consuming and require dedicated resources, one WFP staff member explained: 'this is why we are so adamant about our community-based targeting process and not letting go of this even if it is the most difficult method'.[47] Furthermore, to ensure that protection and accountability concerns are also addressed, WFP Nigeria has recruited a gender officer and a national protection officer in addition to the protection adviser who engages with working groups to ensure conflict sensitivity and protect mainstreaming.

Despite the successes outlined above, there may still be blind spots in targeting. In the interviews, the country office perceived communities to have a broad understanding and awareness of the targeting criteria. The FSOM survey, however, revealed that respondents had little awareness or understanding of the criteria (see the CBT deep dive, part II in this series). These misunderstandings around criteria could worsen relationships between intended beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, as well as between the wider population and WFP. A peace responsive innovation by WFP Nigeria could be as simple as setting a target for improving recipients' awareness and understanding of the criteria. Monitoring these perceptions through the FSOM survey over time and how WFP promotes this better understanding would be a simple metric, using existing systems to monitor contributions to improving the prospects for peace.

A second major conflict sensitivity concern identified by WFP and noted by the research is the choice of transfer modality. Through WFP's thorough monitoring system, the choice is conditioned on multiple economic and contextual assessments combined with a market analysis that investigates the security context and the potential risks arising from the type of transfer modality. Prior to the design of an intervention, these assessments inform the choice of the most expedient modality by WFP programme unit. Selection of the right transfer modality is key for WFP, which seeks to ensure that it does not substitute for or impede local markets; and to some extent also for the local economy, where adverse effects on food security and livelihoods could ultimately feed tensions and instability (as outlined in the part II in this series). This is a successful example of how WFP's thorough and continuous data collection ensures conflict-sensitive programming by identifying the opportunities and problems of cash assistance in a specific location.

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[46] Remote interview, WFP staff member, 20 Mar. 2021.
[47] Remote interview, WFP staff member, 22 Feb. 2021.

Finally, since cooperation partners work closely with WFP in the field, it is crucial for WFP to ensure that they share a common understanding of the context and principles. In addition to the primary risk to populations, inconsistencies among partners constitute operational and reputational risks to WFP. Any inconsistency between partners in beneficiary engagement, including on targeting or the provision of information, has the potential to cause tensions (see above) or mistrust between community members, WFP and partner organizations. In one instance, conflicting messaging by WFP and partners on the reasons for delays in cash transfers created mistrust of humanitarian actors (see the stabilization report, part I in this series). For this reason, being conflict sensitive for WFP means ensuring that there are no inconsistencies in partners' engagement with intended beneficiaries. Consequently, it is key for WFP to monitor the activities that partners engage in and collect feedback from intended beneficiaries and affected populations. For WFP Nigeria, it is critical to avoid problems through ensuring consistent communication among partners by strengthening existing communication and coordination mechanisms.

Assessing the contribution to improving the prospects for peace

Data collection is essential to conflict sensitivity and for operational purposes, as well as for ensuring that interventions by humanitarian, development and peace organizations are evidence based, well informed and considered. Data collection is also central to reporting and accountability to populations and donors. The technical units in WFP Nigeria undertake extensive data collection to ensure evidence-based programming. The metrics WFP uses to assess performance in delivering to the most vulnerable in the most difficult and complex places, however, focus on operational and programmatic aspects and as a consequence say little about impact on the prospects for peace.

Monitoring, assessing or measuring the contribution to improving the prospects for peace presents many challenges. Among those identified in the findings of phase 1 are challenges of attribution, intangibility and fragility, as well those linked to the complexity of causality and the constraints on data collection (see box 3.1).[48] These challenges were also apparent in the north-east Nigeria context. Nonetheless, there are ways in which WFP could adapt its current systems to begin to capture contributions to improving the prospects for peace.

This section describes the key processes and methods used by WFP to collect and process data, and suggests ways to combine existing data and data collection methods to capture contributions to improving the prospects for peace.

Surveys

Data collection exercises inform the planning, design, implementation and adjustment of programmes and activities. These include protection assessment surveys, intentions surveys, security assessments and market surveys. Such surveys help WFP to ensure that the most suitable transfer modality is selected in order to guarantee that food security needs are met while avoiding doing harm, which essentially means avoiding being peace naive.[49] The key benefits of surveys are the large number of households they reach and the opportunities for longitudinal monitoring. WFP Nigeria's comprehensive survey structure puts it in a unique position to gather much-needed micro-level data on conflict dynamics as they play out and affect communities, as opposed to security incidents (see above).

[48] Delgado et al. (note 28).
[49] Remote interview, WFP staff member, 22 Feb.2021; and Remote interview, WFP staff member, 23 Feb. 2021.

Box 3.1. The challenge of attribution

An additional challenge in peace measurement lies in the debate between assessing the contribution of an intervention and the attribution of outcomes. When investigated through a counterfactual analysis and randomized control trials, attribution isolates the impact of a specific intervention and establishes a causal link between the intervention and the impact. A contribution does not demonstrate a direct causal link between observed changes and an intervention, and acknowledges that other contextual, socio-economic, environmental and political factors might have contributed to the outcomes. Programme contributions score higher validity than attribution analysis.

In conflict and post-conflict settings, contribution analysis is more frequent given the difficulty of establishing causal links in complex environments where diverse factors and actors come into play. Experimental and scientific methods for isolating and attributing impacts to specific interventions gain more attention among bilateral actors but are less often applied than contribution analysis. Since attribution analysis requires the isolation of impacts, it usually requires the identification of a control group, which has ethical and practical implications in fragile settings where this would mean limiting the intervention to a specific group when the control group is also in need of assistance. This could also raise conflict sensitivity considerations. The alternative to attribution, however, is monitoring specific peace outcomes under the assumption that WFP contributes in some, possibly significant, way.

There are multiple ways in which WFP could circumvent this challenge. For instance, WFP Nigeria could collect data in places where it does not intervene that share strong similarities with locations where it delivers assistance, and compare these areas over time. Alternatively, natural experiments could be used for comparison. In addition, environmental and security constraints sometimes mean that WFP Nigeria is unable to access an area that it usually delivers to for a given period. It would be possible for WFP to compare conditions and dynamics in both time frames, before and after access was restricted.

Sources: Scherrer, V., *Measuring the Impact of Peacebuilding Interventions on Rule of Law and Security Institutions* (DCAF: Geneva, 2012); and Mayne, J., 'Addressing attribution through contribution analysis: Using performance measures sensibly', *Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation*, vol. 16, no. 1 (2001), pp. 1–24.

As part of this research, SIPRI added questions to the FSOM survey, which is part of WFP post-distribution monitoring, in June 2021. The questions covered perceptions of the link between violence and hunger, the role of NSAGs in service provision, the push-pull factors of recruitment into NSAGs, and awareness—and the fairness—of the targeting criteria, among other things. Despite the sensitivity of some of the questions, the response rate was high and only a few respondents preferred not to answer. Since this data is collected twice a year, disaggregated at the level of distribution points, this will allow systematic comparison with a large sample over time, and importantly the drawing out of trends at the state, local government area, ward and final distribution point levels.

The data is disaggregated between host-community, IDPs (distinguishing between IDPs in camps, in informal camp settings and in host communities) and returnees, and thus highly relevant for capturing the inter- and intra-community tensions identified in the proposed TOCs in the stabilization and CBT deep dives. Moreover, the FSOM survey already monitors coping strategies and tensions within and between communities, by capturing perceptions around these topics, and should therefore already have relevant time series data.[50] Longitudinal studies gauge change in a defined population over time through repeated measurements that can be analysed against baseline data. Since peacebuilding is fundamentally seeking to achieve change in divided societies, these studies are particularly useful for assessing the impact of WFP's interventions on the prospects for peace. Monitoring variations in perceptions in the survey data can signal contextual changes, and hence evolutions in peace and conflict dynamics. For this purpose, specific variables need not be compared across different locations but can be monitored in the same location and in the same communities over time. WFP's survey structure is well-suited to conducting these com-

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[50] The questions added to the FSOM survey by the SIPRI research explore the perceptions of intended beneficiaries by asking: Do you think there is a link between not having enough to eat and violence in your community?; Do you think that beneficiary targeting has created tensions or worsened existing tensions within your community?'; What are your top three reasons why you think people join extremist groups?; and Do you feel that violence has increased or decreased in the last year? (See the stabilization deep dive and the CBT deep dive in this series.)

parisons. For WFP Nigeria to measure contributions to improving the prospects for peace, however, it will need to carve out dedicated time and resources to carefully interpret and analyse the survey data through a peace and conflict lens.

In addition, these surveys can be complemented by methods that capture nuances in individual lived experiences of peace, security and conflict. Conceptualizations of peace can vary dramatically depending on perceptions of risk, local conditions and grievances. WFP's monitoring and evaluation systems largely use standardized metrics that allow for cross-country comparison to improve performance and operate with economies of scale. Its Corporate Results Framework provides a menu of corporate indicators from which country offices must select the most suitable for their context and country portfolio. Contributions to improving the prospects for peace, which are context-driven, can also be identified using locally identified indicators. These indicators must allow for the measurement of lived experiences of peace, security and conflict. WFP could therefore complement the survey questions with the development of indicators, in conjunction with the communities affected by the interventions, that capture local and subjective dimensions of peace, such as how individuals, households or communities navigate life in the light of current conflict dynamics. One example of the indicators that emerged from the research was marriages between members of the host community and the IDP community, which signal good intra-community relations. The stabilization deep dive shows that the willing sharing of information with the military indicates shifting perceptions of the state that are important to monitor. It should be noted that establishing community-identified local indicators of peace demands a rigorous process, which did not form part of this research. However, WFP Nigeria, through its network of field monitors, Project Management Committees (PMCs) and cooperating partners, has solid structures and processes in place to allow for the establishment and regular monitoring of community-identified local indicators.

Community-based monitoring

WFP's community-level data collection is particularly relevant for monitoring its contribution to improving the prospects for peace. Community-based participatory monitoring methods include monthly consultations with community committees, focus group discussions, partner engagement and CFMs. WFP attempts to involve intended beneficiaries in project design, transfer selection and monitoring to provide them with agency through involvement in decisions that affect their lives. Among these methods, CFMs constitute a central and unique element of community-based monitoring in the sense that these allow communities to initiate communication with WFP or its partners, as opposed to the other communication channels listed above which are initiated by the organizations directly. By capturing communities' perceptions, this mechanism has great potential to provide information on peace and conflict dynamics between and across communities.

Furthermore, CFMs can be a practical tool for building trust by providing the opportunity for communities to feel heard and seen through the ability to ask a question, receive a response and resolve issues. In the settings where WFP intervenes, trust built through CFMs primarily emanates from the organization's ability to respond efficiently, and in a timely fashion, to complaints and feedback. At the same time, trust is required if intended beneficiaries are to report using the CFMs in the first place. Communities are more likely to raise serious and sensitive concerns when trust has been established with the organization.

CFMs therefore play a significant role in monitoring. The findings from this research illustrate how CFMs and ad hoc consultations can be drivers of change when used to fine-tune interventions. For example, the feedback collected by WFP and cooperation

partners has supported the adjustment of the CBT response in north-east Nigeria. The lack of cooking fuel in the transfer value created discontent and an increased risk of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) as women had to go out to collect firewood in conflict-affected locations. To minimize these risks to communities, WFP adjusted the transfer value to include cooking fuel.[51] By addressing access to natural resources by the intended beneficiaries, WFP Nigeria mitigated protection risks connected to conflict-related SGBV. While much of the feedback received through the CFM concerns targeting and technical concerns, the mechanism could be adjusted to make WFP better able to capture evidence around contributions to improving the prospects for peace. CFMs provide an opportunity for WFP to look for other peace-related indicators that illustrate social cohesion, social tensions, community conflict and violence linked to NSAGs. CFMs can provide information around community tensions and their relation to aid, as well as impact on peace and conflict dynamics. However, data from the FSOM survey shows that community members were unfamiliar with the CFM. For example, they did not know who to contact if they wanted to ask a question or make a complaint about the assistance they were receiving. As the CBT deep dive shows, 81 per cent of the respondents had never heard of the hotline (FSOM survey, 1679 out of 2071 respondents). Moreover, even if community members were aware of the mechanism, it is possible that they would be reluctant to report sensitive matters pertaining to conflict dynamics. In fact, WFP noted a reluctance by intended beneficiaries to report on sensitive issues such as SGBV.[52] WFP Nigeria must continue to explore the barriers to reporting, beyond the observed lack of awareness of the process. Given that a transparent and well-understood process is likely to enhance trust in the organization and between actors, it is key that WFP Nigeria clearly communicates the existence and operation of the complaints process to communities.

Different CFM channels might be well placed to capture certain dynamics. CFM channels include telephone hotlines, complaints and feedback desks or boxes, and social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. When WFP is collecting statistics on complaints and feedback, and reporting on any improvements related to the CFM, it is assessing its contributions to improving the prospects for peace. To assess whether the CFM helps to increase community trust, WFP Nigeria could devise metrics for processing the information it already collects on CFMs as part of the FSOM. For example, it could monitor how many issues were identified, and how many of these were resolved, and assess whether awareness of the CFM has increased between assessment rounds. For WFP to move from being peace aware to being peace responsive will require more work to both monitor and identify progress and identify opportunities for engagement (see figure 3.1).[53] These metrics can illustrate WFP's level of peace awareness through its awareness of the complaints shared by intended beneficiaries. By the same token, WFP can assess its peace responsiveness through its ability to identify issues and follow them up, or even resolve them where feasible.

In addition to the CFM, feedback is also channelled through the PMCs.[54] In north-east Nigeria, these community-based processes led to the prioritization of asset creation activities during a livelihood and resilience-building intervention, whether this be a market shade or the rehabilitation of a borehole, a dam or a classroom. There are different ways in which WFP can monitor contributions to improving the prospects for peace through consultations with communities and PMCs that would illustrate how WFP programming interacts—positively or negatively—with conflict dynamics.

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[51] Remote interview, WFP staff member, 23 Feb. 2021.
[52] Remote interview, WFP staff member, 23 Feb. 2021; and Interview, WFP staff member, 1 Mar. 2021.
[53] Milante, G. et al. (note 32); see also Interpeace (note 34).
[54] Remote interview, WFP staff member, 23 Feb. 2021.

Assessing participation on and the composition of these committees, people's perceptions of the process and whether they are satisfied all constitute peacebuilding metrics. WFP could also assess community relations and whether community members would still meet to resolve community problems, or at all, even if these committees no longer existed. If so, the PMCs established for WFP assistance have contributed to improving the prospects for peace. Current efforts by WFP Nigeria to streamline and standardize the CFMs provide a good opportunity to ensure the above are included. In the meantime, WFP Nigeria should continue to monitor these perceptions and to track progress on these aspects.

The Nigeria Operations Centre platform

WFP Nigeria has recently developed the Nigeria Operations Centre, a data visualization platform used for operational purposes. The country office also aims to use this tool to inform programmatic decision-making and prioritization.[55]

Although still at the development stage, the tool displays eight layers of information from separate data sources on an interactive country map. Most of the information in the platform is available at the state and local government area levels over time. It is intended to inform operations by providing regular inputs on daily food distribution, Integrated Phase Classification/Cadre Harmonisé data on current and projected food security outputs and food consumption, and outcome monitoring. The tool also has information on climate change, Covid-19 incidence and security incidents. The security team uses the tool to support the drafting of heat maps and to monitor the evolution of the intensity and localization of security incidents over time, in order to inform various teams, including the logistics and programme units. Information is also provided on the potential impact of insecurity on ongoing operations.

The Operations Centre is a promising work in progress that illustrates WFP responses to contextual dynamics and better informs programming. Since information is available over time, the tool provides opportunities to track changes and identify how these changes affect WFP operations in the country. In addition, it is important that the data is available to most teams in a comprehensive manner to be used for programmatic purposes and to facilitate WFP's operations in north-east Nigeria. To fulfil this purpose, the data must communicate a narrative through changes beyond operational metrics. Once WFP Nigeria has defined its peace-related ambitions and aspirations, including the TOCs it will incorporate and the measurement it will be necessary to undertake at this level of ambition, it will be important that these metrics are incorporated into dashboards such as the Nigeria Operations Centre. After all, actors must measure what matters.

The way forward: Combining existing data and methods

WFP must first define its ambition around these contributions and identify peace-related outcomes (see above). To assess and report on contributions to improving the prospects for peace, it must then use a combination of qualitative, quantitative and visual methods. The combined qualitative and quantitative approaches used in this research demonstrate the importance of digging deeper into quantitative findings (see TOC 1 in the stabilization deep dive, part I of the series).[56] Combining

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[55] Remote interview, WFP staff member, 24 Mar. 2022.

[56] The analysis of the first TOC of the stabilization deep dive (Reducing violence-exposing coping strategies, freeing up resources for longer-term stability and enhancing intra-community relations) highlights the need to validate quantitative findings through greater use of qualitative methods, including interviews, to ensure programming is leveraged to strengthen the processes that foster positive relations between IDPs and the host community, and to help reduce tensions where they exist.

quantitative surveys with qualitative in-depth interviews and assessments provides a better understanding and draws out important nuances. Such a combination also allows WFP to fine-tune the more sensitive questions included in the surveys, such as on NSAG recruitment and service provision, ensuring that questions are culturally sensitive and do not jeopardize the neutrality of WFP.

There is also merit in conducting qualitative assessments first and then exploring the degree to which the findings can be extrapolated from quantitative surveys. This is useful if qualitative assessments produce new insights that are worth testing on a larger sample. For example, it might be useful to validate any relevant findings from the special workforce present in deep-field locations using larger quantitative surveys. If WFP's survey infrastructure does not reach these locations, existing surveys (such as the FSOM) could be filtered to capture IDPs from these locations.

Some of the complexities of conflict and peacebuilding environments could also be captured by combining perception surveys with security incident maps. Perceptions of insecurity do not always match actual insecurities, which means that communities' perceptions of safety and security can decline even when the actual number of security incidents has decreased. Similarly, reported feelings of safety and security can improve regardless of an increase in security incidents. While these mismatches may seem contradictory, it is key for WFP to identify and assess them over time. Identifying where such mismatches exist is important for enhancing the contribution of WFP's programming to improving the prospects for peace by knowing what kind of insecurities WFP can impact and how. It can also help to identify sensitive issues that communities are reluctant to communicate through broader perception surveys. While these issues may be beyond the mandate and ability of WFP to analyse or act on, sharing such data, where it exists, can ensure that the information reaches partners with dedicated capacities and the resources to act.

4. External information flows and working through partners

Partner engagement

Various local, national and international actors collect data on conflicts and violence. WFP Nigeria shares data with cooperation partners and regularly receives data from these partners for planning and operational purposes. For example, WFP Nigeria receives information from the distribution sites and feedback from the CFMs established by cooperation partners to complement its own data collection. Other UN agencies are also strong and reliable WFP partners in Nigeria. While OCHA compiles and coordinates information sharing between UN partner agencies, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees shares regular key updates with WFP on returnees and protection policies in camps. Assessments are carried out under the direct supervision of both WFP staff and close partners such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN. Given the sensitivity of certain types of data, including data on intended beneficiaries, this is shared in an anonymized way in line with WFP data privacy regulations. WFP is also present on inter-agency coordination platforms and in the network for peace and conflict. These and other coordination meetings between partners indicate who is working on a specific aspect, where and with what resources. These processes were developed to avoid duplication, but interviews with WFP staff and partners indicate that coordination and holistic approaches are rare. These key information-sharing processes could be strengthened so that not only data, but also knowledge can be jointly generated and shared.

Settings like north-east Nigeria are characterized by limited or incomplete information. The information collected by WFP is often incomplete and lacking partners' input, and vice-versa. Any inferences drawn from the resulting data can therefore be misleading. A more robust engagement and strategic alignment with partners on data collection, sharing and monitoring would provide additional perspectives and understandings of the environment, which would help with identifying and designing solutions and monitoring impact.

Since a significant part of the data collected by WFP is survey data, partners that lack the capacity to run such large data collection exercises could benefit from the assessments conducted by WFP. In addition, local organizations rely for regular updates on partners that, like WFP and other UN agencies, have a well-developed security unit. The evidence collected by WFP can support partners' work and inform their programming (see the Borno Women's Development Initiative, BOWDI, below). At the same time, data sharing between partners could also inform WFP's contributions to improving the prospects for peace beyond food security and nutrition. Partners can help where WFP personnel do not have the skills or access to conduct in-depth community consultations. Partners are well placed to share local fine-tuned findings with WFP, which could benefit from access to more local and better qualitative assessments. Partners can also flag whenever there is a lack of conflict sensitivity and how to strengthen it. Partners' capacity and skills can complement WFP capacities in various ways. A good case in point is WFP's partnership with Translators Without Borders to improve access to information and enhance inclusion. In response to the FSOM findings, which suggested that access to information had deteriorated, WFP Nigeria is establishing a partnership with the NGO to reach out to more communities in their native language.[57] This is critical if humanitarian and

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[57] Remote interview, WFP staff member, 23 Feb. 2021.

development actors are to reach out to communities and deliver messages on their assistance and protection concerns. Working with a relevant partner will enable WFP to reach out to communities in a language they understand and leave no one behind.

To be effective, this mutual support requires mutual trust. Enhancing partnerships in this way would contribute to greater coordination and collaboration among the agencies, NGOs and INGOs operating in north-east Nigeria, facilitate coherent messaging and thereby contribute to enhancing trust among the various stakeholders (see the stabilization report, part I in this series).

Working with and learning from partners

Based on the opportunities outlined above, the measurement deep dive identified two pertinent examples of how knowledge can be jointly generated and/or shared with local and international partners.

The Borno Women's Development Initiative

The Borno Women's Development Initiative is a north-east Nigeria-based NGO partner of WFP. BOWDI is part of the Lake Chad Region Youth Network, a 60+ member organization that aims to cultivate resilience and peacebuilding in affected communities. With the support of the African Union Commission, the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the Crisis Management Initiative and the Institute for Security Studies, it engages with challenges to peacebuilding and stabilization. Tapping into the collective knowledge and experience of the network will be critical for WFP Nigeria if it is to further enhance and assess its contribution to improving the prospects for peace by increasing stability. At the same time, WFP would be able to build the capacity of BOWDI still further. BOWDI collects background information for its contextual analysis but mainly relies on INGOs and UN agencies due to a lack of capacity.[58] Since BOWDI lacks the tools and a system for supporting monitoring, WFP could partner beyond implementation and strengthen engagement in joint monitoring and analysis. This would need to continue beyond project cycles as peace is a process that spans both projects and generations.

The stability index of the International Organization for Migration

As part of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Displacement Tracking Matrix, the stability index provides evidence-based analysis that better captures persistent community vulnerabilities and grievances, and informs tailored interventions to respond to such problems. A returnee intentions survey complements the data. The stability index attempts to identify pockets of stability, foster recovery, lay the foundations for the sustainable return of displaced persons and prevent additional forced displacement. Every four months, it assigns a general stability score that helps to improve prioritization and the design of assistance by setting priorities in returnee areas. It also delivers detailed assessments of displacement locations to ensure appropriate and well-targeted assistance to affected populations and provide better understanding of conditions for return. The general stability score consists of 21 measurement indicators selected according to context and related to livelihoods and basic services, levels of social cohesion and perceptions of security. Questions include what peace looks and whether respondents expect to move in the next six months. The index is based on people's perceptions because: 'we do not achieve anything if it is too technical. We take away their agency as human beings'.[59]

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[58] Remote interview, BOWDI representative, 19 Aug. 2021.
[59] Remote interview, IOM staff member, 9 Aug. 2021.

There are multiple learning opportunities for WFP from the IOM stability index. Based on data shared on the *Humanitarian Data Exchange* platform or a shared agreement between both agencies, data from the stability index, such as the stability score and data on forced displacement, could be fed into the Nigeria Operations Centre. Merging data, where feasible, could provide a broader picture of perceptions around security and instability in the locations where both the IOM and WFP operate.

Challenges

Simply collecting more evidence, or creating new reporting requirements or structures, will not necessarily result in more and better peace monitoring. Data must be transmitted, processed and used.[60] Specific capacity to process and use data was identified by the research as one of the core challenges facing measuring WFP's contribution to improving the prospects for peace.

As noted above, WFP has robust systems in place that allow it to collect relevant data and evidence in support of assessing its contribution to peace. Much data is already collected that could be used for this purpose. However, the capacity to critically reflect on and analyse data for this purpose is lacking. As one WFP staff member noted, 'we are an assessment machine', but with few resources to support the analysis or sense-making of the data through a peace lens. Assessing, monitoring and analysing contributions to improving the prospects for peace require dedicated resources, which WFP Nigeria currently needs to develop. For example, making sense of perception data on community cohesion requires additional qualitative research expertise as well as a sound knowledge of the context and its variations. WFP Nigeria therefore needs dedicated resources, allocated time and dedicated staff with sound knowledge of peace and conflict to apply a peacebuilding lens to monitoring, analytical processes and programming. Adding new indicators to the systems in place without ensuring the availability of expertise in qualitative methods and in the areas of peace and conflict would not add any value to the current assessments. If WFP Nigeria is to intentionally increase its peace ambitions, it will need additional capacity to measure what matters.

A second challenge is related to increasing access constraints in deep field locations and conflict-affected areas, as well as obstructed access to communications channels with communities. The highly volatile security situation in north-east Nigeria jeopardizes WFP's access to communities and its ability to conduct qualitative assessments. In addition, poor network coverage, with only a single network provider permitted, as well as low levels of mobile phone ownership, language barriers and technical disruption constitute further challenges to qualitative data collection in Nigeria.

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[60] Brusset, E. and Milante, G., Round Table Document, *Measuring Peace Performance Round Table* (SIPRI and WFP: Stockholm and Rome, 2021).

5. Conclusions

This report has explored the current architecture of the monitoring systems at WFP Nigeria and proposed ways to leverage existing processes and methods to create new opportunities to capture evidence on WFP's contributions to improving the prospects for peace. The report makes eight recommendations on moving towards measuring contributions to improving the prospects for peace.

1. WFP must define its peace-related ambitions and the boundaries of its engagement through internal reflection and identify, in a TOC, the points in the evolution of the conflict at which WFP's programming is most likely to make a positive contribution.

2. Any intended objective to contribute to improving the prospects for peace and become peace promoting must be accompanied by an investment in the required human resources to monitor contributions.

3. In order to develop a more systematic approach to conflict analysis that complements and supports current analytical capacities, WFP Nigeria must strengthen relevant staff capacity and allocate more resources to conflict analysis. This will improve its ability to identify windows of opportunity for contributing to improving the prospects for peace.

4. When conducting risk assessments, WFP should apply a cross-cutting conflict lens to all risk categories to maximize the potential for these assessments to identify negative interactions between interventions and the conflict environment.

5. WFP and partner agencies must more systematically entrench interventions in local contextual knowledge. One way to do this would be to increase and systematize consultation with intended beneficiaries and local staff by building on current successful feedback mechanisms such as Complaint and Feedback Mechanisms and Project Management Committees.

6. WFP should maximize the potential of the data already collected by the country office and partners by exploring innovative ways to combine, compare and contrast quantitative, qualitative and visual data, including through the Operations Centre.

7. WFP should extend operational partnerships to become knowledge partnerships, where data is shared and joint analysis informs the different programming of WFP and partners, and strengthens the ability of each actor to contribute to improving the prospects for peace within its mandate, in a coordinated and coherent manner.

8. Since peace is a process and peacebuilding is inscribed in long-term thinking, risk assessments and follow-up assessments should be approached as part of a longer-term process that goes beyond project cycles. From a longer-term perspective, WFP can use these assessments as a learning metric to assess its adaptation.

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