



**WFP EVALUATION**



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES

# **Evaluation of R4 Rural Resilience Initiative in Masvingo and Rushinga Districts in Zimbabwe January 2018 – June 2021**

Decentralized Evaluation Report

DE/ZWCO/2020/025  
WFP Zimbabwe

15 January 2022

# Key personnel for the evaluation

## **WFP Zimbabwe Country Office**

Jennifer Sakwiya, Evaluation Manager

## **PREPARED BY Particip GmbH**

Mike Brewin, Team Leader

Marian Meller, Deputy Team Leader

Ellen Jaka, Senior Evaluator

Farirai Zingwe, Researcher

# Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to thank the WFP Country and Field Offices in Zimbabwe for their support and assistance provided during the evaluation. Their guidance, logistical support in the field mission, and provision of documents and data have been of great value for this evaluation. Thank you also to the Evaluation Manager, Jennifer Sakwiya, for her advice and support throughout the evaluation process. The team also extends special thanks to the R4 beneficiaries and community members who gave their time, information, and opinions.

# Disclaimer

The opinions expressed in this report are those of the evaluation team, and do not necessarily reflect those of the World Food Programme. Responsibility for the opinions expressed in this report rests solely with the authors. Publication of this document does not imply endorsement by WFP of the opinions expressed.

The designation employed and the presentation of material in maps do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of WFP concerning the legal or constitutional status of any country, territory or sea area, or concerning the delimitation of frontiers.

# Cover Image

Lamack Mahohoma facilitating a stakeholder orientation session on village savings and lending for Mutya community members in Masvingo district, Zimbabwe. Photo Credit: ©WFP/Michael Chingosho

# Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1. Evaluation features .....	1
1.2. Context .....	1
1.3. Subject evaluated .....	5
1.4. Evaluation methodology, limitations and ethical considerations .....	8
<b>2. Evaluation findings</b> .....	<b>14</b>
2.1. EQ 1 – Relevance: To what extent were the different components of the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative in line with the needs of women, men, boys and girls from different marginalized groups in the targeted communities? .....	14
2.2. EQ 2 – Relevance: To what extent were R4 activities aligned to WFP and donors’ strategic mandates, national priorities, and relevant to the political and economic challenges in the implementation period? .....	17
2.3. EQ 3 – Effectiveness: To what extent have the outputs and (intended and unintended) outcomes of the R4 Initiative been achieved? .....	19
2.4. EQ 4 – Effectiveness: How and to what extent was the achievement of results driven (or hindered) by the R4 approach and external factors? .....	24
2.5. EQ 5 – Efficiency: Were the R4 activities implemented in a timely, equitable and cost-efficient manner? .....	27
2.6. EQ 6 – Impact: To what degree did the R4 Initiative and its integrated risk management approach contribute to enhanced resilience and food security? .....	30
2.7. EQ 7 – Sustainability: To what extent are the activities and benefits of the R4 Initiative likely to continue after donor funding/WFP support ceases, and what are the potential opportunities and threats to sustainability? .....	34
<b>3. Conclusions, lessons and recommendations</b> .....	<b>39</b>
3.1. Conclusions .....	39
3.2. Lessons .....	44
3.3. Recommendations .....	44
<b>Annex 1 Terms of Reference</b> .....	<b>48</b>
<b>Annex 2 Evaluation timeline</b> .....	<b>53</b>
<b>Annex 3 Theory of Change</b> .....	<b>56</b>
<b>Annex 4 Results framework</b> .....	<b>57</b>
<b>Annex 5 Project location Maps</b> .....	<b>58</b>
<b>Annex 6 Evaluation matrix</b> .....	<b>59</b>
<b>Annex 7 List of interviews and focus group discussions</b> .....	<b>69</b>
<b>Annex 8 Data collection tools</b> .....	<b>70</b>
<b>Annex 9 Survey results</b> .....	<b>94</b>
<b>Annex 10 Field mission schedule</b> .....	<b>101</b>
<b>Annex 11 Findings Conclusions Recommendations Mapping</b> .....	<b>102</b>
<b>Annex 12 Bibliography</b> .....	<b>103</b>
<b>Annex 13 Acronyms</b> .....	<b>106</b>

# List of figures

Figure 1: Change in wealth categories.....	20
Figure 2: Number of income sources and share of income from climate resilient sources.....	20
Figure 3: Average number of crops grown .....	21
Figure 4: Average annual crop production (kg) .....	22
Figure 5: Percentage of households who save.....	22
Figure 6: Percentage of farmers who sell through PMGs and contract farming .....	23
Figure 7: Food Consumption Scores.....	31
Figure 8: Dietary Diversity Scores .....	31
Figure 9: Food Expenditure Share.....	32
Figure 10: Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA) Scores .....	32
Figure 11: Original Theory of Change for the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative in Zimbabwe.....	56
Figure 12: Masvingo district map with R4 wards (until June 2021) .....	58
Figure 13: Rushinga district map with R4 wards (until June 2021).....	58
Figure 14: Participation in asset creation.....	99
Figure 15: Use of loans from VSL groups .....	99
Figure 16: Participation in different value chains .....	99
Figure 17: Benefits of PMG membership .....	100
Figure 18: Participation in, usefulness of, and application of training .....	100

# List of tables

Table 1: Geographic coverage of WFP Zimbabwe resilience initiatives (by year).....	7
Table 2: Overview of qualitative (QLI) and quantitative (QTI) data collection methods by EQ .....	10
Table 3: R4/FFA budget allocation and expenditure.....	27
Table 4: Reflections on R4 Theory of Change .....	42
Table 5: Recommendations .....	45
Table 6: Detailed evaluation schedule.....	53
Table 7: Impact and outcome monitoring indicators .....	57
Table 8: Evaluation matrix .....	59
Table 9: List of interviews and focus group discussions conducted.....	69
Table 10: Interview guides .....	70
Table 11: Thematic guide for focus group discussions with beneficiaries .....	89
Table 12: Phone survey questionnaire for beneficiaries.....	90
Table 13: Phone survey results (descriptive statistics and gender differences) .....	94
Table 14: Field mission schedule .....	101

Table 15: Mapping of findings, conclusions, and recommendations ..... 102

## List of boxes

Box 1: Sampling strategy and setup of the phone survey with R4 beneficiaries ..... 11

Box 2: EQ 1 Main findings ..... 17

Box 3: EQ 2 Main findings ..... 19

Box 4: EQ 3 Main findings ..... 24

Box 5: EQ 4 Main findings ..... 26

Box 6: EQ 5 Main findings ..... 30

Box 7: EQ 6 Main findings ..... 34

Box 8: EQ 7 Main findings ..... 38

# 1. Executive Summary

1. This decentralized activity evaluation of the **R4 Rural Resilience Initiative** (“R4 Initiative” or “R4” henceforth) was commissioned by the Zimbabwe Country Office (CO) of the World Food Programme (WFP). It serves the dual purpose of learning and accountability. Primary users of the evaluation comprise the WFP CO and Regional Bureau (RB), and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

2. Low-input, rainfall-dependant agriculture is the main livelihood strategy for about 70 percent of Zimbabwe’s population, making them particularly vulnerable to climatic shocks. Agricultural productivity for smallholder farmers is too low for the typical household to cover its own consumption needs. Food insecurity has become more prevalent in recent years due to successive droughts, economic uncertainty, and the Covid-19 pandemic. Food Consumption Scores in the two districts where WFP is implementing R4 (Masvingo and Rushinga) declined significantly from 2019 to 2020, and less than 20 percent of households in the districts had an ‘acceptable’ level of dietary diversity.

3. In 2018, WFP – with funding of US\$ 2.66 million from SDC – began implementing R4. This evaluation covers the first phase of R4 from its inception (January 2018) until June 2021. By that time, R4 had enrolled 6,000 beneficiary households (in 57 percent of them, the main registered beneficiary was a woman) in eight wards in Masvingo district and four wards in Rushinga district, all covered in this evaluation.

4. R4 involves an integrated risk management (IRM) approach package of activities organized under four synergistic themes: a) risk reduction; b) risk transfer; c) creation of risk reserves; and d) promotion of prudent risk taking. The R4 results framework includes two high-level impacts on beneficiaries: improved or stabilised food security status, and increased livelihood security and resilience. These impact objectives are supported by five associated outcome objectives.

5. The evaluation adopted a theory-based, mixed methods approach – including interviews with key stakeholders at national and local levels (WFP staff, implementing partners (IPs), private sector partners, local government, and R4 group/community leaders), focus group discussions and a phone survey with beneficiaries, visits to field sites and document review to answer the seven main evaluation questions (EQs). A key limitation in primary data collection was the fact that the international team members could not participate in the field mission due to Covid-19 travel restrictions. Other limitations were minimal.

## FINDINGS

### **EQ 1 – Relevance: To what extent were the different components of the R4 Rural Resilience Initiative in line with the needs of women, men, boys and girls from different marginalized groups in the targeted communities?**

6. A comprehensive and participatory planning process ensured that actions were relevant to beneficiaries’ context and needs, and to the specific needs and circumstances of women (for example, in terms of facilitating their participation and saving them labour). The promotion of small grains production using mechanised Conservation Agriculture (CA) was relevant to agro-ecological conditions and addressed labour constraints. Provision of crop insurance is, in principle, an appropriate way of mitigating climatic risks. Village Savings and Loan (VSL) groups are relevant for enabling a largely unbanked population to save and take loans.

### **EQ 2 – Relevance: To what extent were R4 activities aligned to WFP and donors’ strategic mandates, national priorities, and relevant to the political and economic challenges in the implementation period?**

7. R4 actions are coherent with WFP’s mandate and Government policies relating to improving food security and building resilience. Opportunities for advocacy were met in terms of providing evidence of the benefits of mechanised CA. The project was also able to pivot in response to emerging economic challenges, for example, by accelerating insurance payouts to mitigate the effects of inflation.



**EQ 3 – Effectiveness: To what extent have the outputs and (intended and unintended) outcomes of the R4 Initiative been achieved?**

8. R4 appears to have increased household incomes and the range of income sources of beneficiaries (or at least protected income levels and diversification from deteriorating in the wake of shocks), as well as the variety of crops grown. Both farmers' adoption of CA and good rains contributed to particularly high crop yields in the 2021 season. R4 was successful in promoting high levels of VSL membership, regular savings by members, and building VSL capacity. Producer Marketing Groups (PMGs) were only moderately successful in enabling members to achieve higher prices for their produce.

**EQ 4 – Effectiveness: How and to what extent was the achievement of results driven (or hindered) by the R4 approach and external factors?**

9. After coordination challenges in initial years, project actions are sequenced effectively and worked synergistically with each other. Climate shocks, economic uncertainty, and the Covid-19 pandemic presented challenges to effectiveness. IPs were well placed to deliver R4, although some would benefit from WFP support to build their capacity to mainstream gender.

**EQ 5 – Efficiency: Were the R4 activities implemented in a timely, equitable and cost-efficient manner?**

10. A fully funded project budget meant that delays in the delivery of inputs were kept to a minimum, and costs per beneficiary for Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) actions – financed by other donors outside the R4 budget but constituting the entry point for other R4 components – compare favourably with other agricultural interventions in Zimbabwe. The short duration of Field Level Agreements with implementing partners, albeit linked to external factors, created additional work and made retaining staff difficult. Built-in quotas (and perceptions that the project was designed more) for women ensured high levels of women participation. In contrast, participation of young people was disproportionately concentrated in asset creation rather than in agriculture.

**EQ 6 – Impact: To what degree did the R4 Initiative and its integrated risk management approach contribute to enhanced resilience and food security?**

11. Beneficiaries – in particular women – experienced an improvement in Food Consumption Scores, Dietary Diversity Scores and resilience, with improvements seeming to positively correlate with length of participation. Enabling beneficiaries to participate in Lean Season Assistance likely moderated the extent to which household assets were eroded in years of poor harvests. The project did not achieve any structural change in gender dynamics, but rather contributed to a longer-term process of change.

**EQ 7 – Sustainability: To what extent are the activities and benefits of the R4 Initiative likely to continue after donor funding/WFP support ceases, and what are the potential opportunities and threats to sustainability?**

12. Budgetary and capacity constraints make it unlikely that the Government will take on project activities of R4 in their current form. Farmers are likely to continue to apply CA practices as long as they can access inputs and the mechanization necessary, and assets will remain operational as long as management committees are functional. Farmers appreciate the value of crop insurance in principle. but this is unlikely

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

[https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5\\_170](https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_170)

