



Final Report for the Final Evaluation of Food for Peace III program

July to October 2021



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Acronyms

AO	Area office
B	Baseline
CFM	Complaints and feedback mechanisms
CFW	Cash for work
DFID	Department for International Development
E	Evaluation
FB	Food basket
FFP	Food for Peace
FGD	Focus group discussion
FSL	Food support and livelihoods
FCS	Food consumption score
KII	Key Informant Interview
HH	Household
HHS	Household Hunger Scale
HK	Hygiene kit
IDP	Internally displaced person
IP	Implementing partner
IYD	İnsani Yardımlaşma Derneği
MEAL	Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning
MCRFF	Multi-round cash for food
MT	Mid-term
NFI	Non-food items
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NWS	Northwest Syria
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
PDM	Post-distribution monitoring
PWD	People with disabilities
RCSI	Reduced Coping Strategy Index
SR	Syria Relief
TOR	Terms of Reference
TRY	Turkish Lira
USD	United States Dollar

1. Executive summary

1.1. Project background and methodology

Jouri for Research and Consulting was commissioned by CARE International (CARE) to undertake a final evaluation of the Food for Peace project, “Emergency and Regular Food Assistance in Syria” implemented in Aleppo and Idleb in Northwest Syria (NWS), funded by USAID’s Food for Peace (FFP) program. The project is implemented through four local partner organizations as well as CARE’S area office in Jarablus.

The project consisted of cash distribution (both one-off as well as multi-round cash for food (MRCFF) support and livelihoods activities, which included wheat value chain support (wheat purchase from selected farmers, milling into flour, distribution to bakeries for subsidized bread and infrastructure rehabilitation) and cash for work (CFW) activities. The project was implemented through the local partners Shafak, Ihsan, Syria Relief (SR) and İnsani Yardımlaşma Derneği (IYD), as well as CARE’s area office (AO) in Jarablus.

The evaluation addressed the key evaluation questions organized under the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC) evaluation criteria, including Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability. The impacts of coordination among other actors and between partners was also investigated. In total, Jouri conducted **587 surveys**, **nine focus group discussions (FGDs)** and **40 key informant interviews (KIIs)**. Data was collected face to face and in some cases, remotely due to COVID-19. The evaluation was conducted between July and September 2021. Data was collected in August and September 2021.

1.2. Key findings and conclusions

Relevance

The project and the implemented activities can be considered as highly relevant to the local context and the needs of the beneficiaries. While the selection process was considered as fair and effective, the need to increase transparency of the selection criteria to decrease jealousy or tension of the people who were not selected was reported. The project activities were accessible to beneficiaries from various groups, and a high percentage of people with disabilities were included in the project. However, more can be done include a larger group of female beneficiaries in the cash distribution assistance. The project did not duplicate or overlap with other organization’s interventions, but complemented the activities of the US-funded project of farmers support implemented by DFID.

- Project activities and locations were based on previous needs and market assessment as well as previous rounds of the FFP project
- 98 % of total beneficiaries found the selection process fair and 95% knew why they were selected
- The majority of beneficiaries stated that the assistance came at the right time
- Beneficiaries were selected based on clearly defined eligibility and vulnerability criteria

- The project was described as accessible and inclusive by project stakeholders and beneficiaries. Challenges in participation reported by beneficiaries include commuting to distribution locations and crowding on site
- Beneficiaries stated that in their opinion, the needs of following groups were adequately addressed: Elderlies (98%), Female-headed households (98%), People with disabilities (95%) and child-headed households (51%).
- Although the project focused on targeting women-headed households, participation of women in the MRCFF or One-Off cash activity was around 30%. Under the livelihood component, participation of women was much higher and around 55%.
- Needs identified by beneficiaries include basic household needs, food insecurity, high-cost of bread or agricultural inputs and the lack of livelihood opportunities in the region, which match the provided activities

Efficiency

The project and the activities were implemented smoothly and delivered efficiently. Project implementation went overall according to the timeline, however the direct implementation of CARE Area office (AO) faced a delay of two months due to the time-consuming approval procedures in Jarablus. Overall, modalities were used for their intended purpose of being used for food consumption (cash assistance) or for agricultural investments (farmers). The project received a No cost extension and was implemented according to budget. The multi-round and livelihood activities were described as having the highest value for money out of the provided assistance.

- The majority of surveyed beneficiaries were satisfied with the distribution process
- According to key informants, the distribution process was organized well and beneficiaries were well informed about the time and amount of the assistance
- Nearly all (99%) of surveyed respondents used the cash to buy food, 78% to pay debt, and 61% to pay for health costs. Other way of using the cash were to buy household assets or to out the money to savings.
- Farmers who received the cash for wheat selling used the assistance to buy wheat input or cultivate additional areas of wheat (23%), to increase the amount of fertilizer in wheat (13%) and to buy good quality wheat input (7%)
- The project was implemented according to budget and financially efficient according to key informants.

Effectiveness

The activities can be considered as effective in achieving the planned outcomes and overall goal of increasing the food security of households of the project. Successful factors of the project contributing to the achievement were regular communication with the IPs, experience from previous implementation rounds, an effective selection process, a high involvement in local and international coordination structures and flexibility from the donor. Factors that challenged the achievement were mostly related to external challenges not related to the project itself. Feedback and complaint mechanisms are effectively in place, however more can be done to increase satisfaction and awareness about these channels.

- The project was able to adequately adapt the implementation according to changing circumstances, e.g. the distribution of Ready-to-Eat kits was suspended due to difficulties in procuring high quality food and was replaced with cash distribution instead
- Feedback mechanisms include complaint boxes, hotlines and face to face submissions
- 78% of all surveyed beneficiaries stated to be aware of feedback channels
- 97% of all surveyed beneficiaries would feel comfortable to raise a concern
- Challenges of the project were the time-consuming preparation and approval procedures in Jarablus, difficulties in procurement and contracting financial service providers, the lack of 50 USD notes, COVID-19 cases among employees and the tight timeline for agricultural activities due to seasonal time constraints.

Impact

The evaluation concluded that the project had great impact on beneficiaries' lives and the wider community. Positive impact on local markets was reported in term of a higher purchasing power of beneficiaries and an increased cash flow. . From all provided activities, the cash for work pest control activity had the highest positive impact on women and their role in livelihood, due to their tailored activities for female workers. When comparing food security indicators with baseline values from the multi-round cash activity, the evaluation found significant improvements in terms of reduced hunger and increased food consumption score. While use of coping strategies decreased compared to baseline values, the use was still relatively high among beneficiaries from Ihsan and Shafak based on the survey data collected during the evaluation.

- 93% of all survey respondents stated that the cash had significant impact on their household
- 86% stated to be able to afford/consume more food items, 80% were able to consume better food items and 82% were able to purchase food items they were not able to buy previously
- Impact and effects on shops and markets include increased spending of money on beneficiaries, increased cash flow and increased availability of items
- Impact on bakeries included increased availability of bread and prevention of overpricing due to subsidized bread prices
- Some informants reported a slight increase in the prices, while the exchange rate was described as stable in the project locations
- Effects on the wider community included improved wellbeing through secured households needs and financial relief, improved social relationships due to beneficiaries being able to pay off debt and increased purchasing power or financial independence of women who participated in the cash for work activity
- The cash for work activity empowered women to participate in livelihood income; 97% of surveyed women from the CFW activity stated that the project had a positive influence on women

Sustainability

Overall, the sustainability of the project was limited, due to the nature of an emergency intervention and the provided modality. However, with increased stability in some of the locations, more can be done to further enhance sustainability through an increased focus on livelihood activities in the future as well as advocacy for livelihood activities.

- According to key informants, the emergency component was not designed to create sustainability, but to address current needs in terms of food security
- The project does not have an exit strategy per se, however a similar project (BHA) is already planned to continue to be implemented in the targeted locations
- Beneficiaries and stakeholders agreed that the benefits of the assistance are likely to end with the project
- Specific activities (e.g. rehabilitation of bakeries) were more likely to have a sustainable impact than the activities from the emergency component

1.3. Recommendations

While the project was overall impactful and beneficiaries generally responded positively, there are several areas that could be improved:

Relevance:

- **Further focus on increasing female participation in the project** through conducting awareness raising activities and higher focus on female-headed households when coordinating the pre-beneficiaries lists with the local council and IPs
- **Increase transparency and awareness of the selection criteria**, especially among non-selected beneficiaries. This can be done through sharing criteria through brochures and flyers or visual media, e.g. infographics or info-video on social media. This also includes providing appropriate explanations to non-selected beneficiaries on the reasons for why they were not selected. Further investigate in coordination with the IPs and local stakeholders if the selection criteria are covering different groups in the communities comprehensively. Investigate complaints of beneficiaries regarding wrong selection of beneficiaries

Efficiency:

- **Consider shifting the focus to cash distribution only** in the next project round instead of food due to a more efficient balance between procurement, distribution and impact
- **Allocate more time for planning and preparation of the project activities at the beginning of the project cycle** especially for the area office.
- **Improve the coordination process with financial service provider** through allocating sufficient time for the contracting process and communicate any challenges transparently, especially relevant for the area office's implementation of CARE
- **Consider switching to e-vouchers completely instead of paper vouchers**, as most of the informants stated it as a preferred modality of cash distribution due to increased efficiency

Effectiveness:

- **Review and improve effectiveness of available feedback and complaint mechanisms** through increase awareness of available mechanisms as well as introducing additional checks on effectiveness of response procedures, e.g. a satisfaction survey

Sustainability

- **Consider building sustainability measures into emergency programming** where possible to prevent a sudden decrease in food security or an increased use of coping strategies or hunger once the activities have ended
- **Further discuss the exit of the project with beneficiaries and local stakeholders** to generate ideas that the project could adopt to enduring benefits

2. Project and evaluation purpose

2.1. FFP project summary

The Food for Peace (FFP) program 2021 was implemented in Idleb and Aleppo in NWS. The FFP program began started in July 2019 and ended in September 2020, and is extension of the 2018 FFP program. The overall goal of the program is that **“households in targeted locations have increased access to food and livelihoods”** and the purpose of **“reduced use of negative coping strategies by conflict affected households”**. The overall objective is that **vulnerable communities, IDPs and hosts, have improved their food consumption through direct food support using cash, voucher and in-kind modalities.**

Project activities included one-off cash and multi-round cash distribution. The activities under the cash component were carried out through CARE’s area office in Jarablus as well as the four local partners Syria Relief (SR), Insani Yardimlasma Dernegi (IYD), Shafak and Ihsan Relief and Development (Ihsan).

Additionally, activities to strengthen the wheat value chain were implemented; these included purchasing wheat from farmers, distribution of flour to bakeries, supporting bakeries with infrastructure rehabilitation and distributing price-subsidized bread to local communities. Next to the wheat value chain, the livelihood component also included cash for work activity as pest-control, olive harvesting or afforestation. The activities under the livelihoods component were carried out through Shafak. A more detailed overview on the project can be found in Annex 4.

2.2. Evaluation purpose

The purpose of the evaluation was to document evidence of change in the outcome and impact level, which will be used for organizational learning and improvements as well as for accountability towards donors, partners and beneficiaries. The evaluation also aimed to document lessons learned so that findings and recommendations can serve as a basis to planning similar projects in the future.

The evaluation took place in Aleppo (Al Bab, Azaz, Jarablus, Ghandoura) as well as in Idleb (Jebel Saman, Harim).

3. Methodology

The methodological approach of the evaluation was developed in accordance with the OECD DAC evaluation criteria of Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact and Sustainability. Additionally, specific focus was given to Coordination. Jouri used a mixed-methods approach of both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect primary data and review secondary data.

The methodology was based on CARE’s initial suggestions in the TOR and developed further by Jouri after an initial desk review of project documents, as well as in cooperation with CARE during the inception phase. CARE’s MEAL and programme team was included throughout the design, the data collection and the report writing and revision phase.

This assignment was guided by a detailed evaluation matrix, which included key evaluation questions (see Annex 5). Throughout the evaluation, Jouri followed the ‘Do No Harm’ principle.

Quantitative data collection methods included surveys, qualitative data collection methods included key informant interviews (KIIs) and focus group discussions (FGDs). A detailed overview on the data collection methods is given below.

3.1. Data collection methods

Data was collected by both female and male researchers face to face in the venues of the IPs. The evaluation included both female and male respondents, the gender participation was calculated proportionally based on the overall percentage of male and female beneficiaries. A detailed demographic breakdown of the respondent sample can be found below. Data was collected in all project locations, including Aleppo (Jarablus, Ghandoura, Azaz, Al-Bab) and Idleb (Jebel Saman, Harim and Ariha). Jouri’s team of researcher. The data collection was carried out between August 29 and September 14.

3.1.1. Desk review

Jouri’s team reviewed all of the relevant project documents, including the project logical framework, budget, and MEAL reports. The purpose of the desk review was to inform the design of the evaluation matrix and to serve as a basis for data triangulation during the analysis and report writing stage. A list of reviewed documents can be found in Annex 9.

3.1.2. Key informant interviews

A total of **40** KIIs were conducted with project stakeholders, including both project staff from CARE and all four IPs as well as external stakeholders from the local communities. Key informants were selected based on the selection from CARE’S programme team as well as in coordination with IPs.

Figure 1: KII distribution

KIIs	CARE AO	Ihsan	SR	IYD	Shafak	Total
Field Staff	2	2	2	2	2	10
Management	-	2	1	1	4	8
Total	2	4	3	3	6	18
Stakeholders	Location					Total
Local Council	Al Bab City Azaz Jarablus Tal Al Karamah Atareb					5
Agriculture office	Jarablus					1
Bread committee	Al Bab					1
Bakeries	Private bakery: Jarablus Public bakery: Al Bab					2

Camp management	Jarashka Sheberan Benyan Al Yaman	3
Shops/Vendors	Al Bab Azaz Jarablus Binish	4
Financial service provider	CARE – cash provider Shafak – cash provider SR – Cash provider E voucher company – NAGIS (Remote)	4
FFP Focal point	Remote	1
FSL Cluster Focal Point	Remote	1
Total external stakeholders		22

3.1.3. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

In total, nine FGDs were conducted with both male and female project beneficiaries (eight) as well as one FGD with CARE’s programme team and grant manager, which was conducted remotely. FGD locations were selected based on the suggestions from CARE’s programme team.

Figure 2: FGD respondents

Activity Type	Organization	No of participants	Gender	Location
MRCFF	CARE AO	5	Male	Jarablus
	IYD	5	Female	Al Bab
	SR	5	Female	Harim
	Ihsan	4	Male	Darat Azza
	Shafak	5	Female	Azaz
Livelihood component				
Cash for work (Pest control)	Shafak	7	Female	Al Bab City
Farmers		5	Male	Jarablus Al Ghandoura
Subsidized Bread		5	Male	Al Bab City

3.1.4. Surveys

In total, Jouri conducted **587** surveys with project participants. The sample size was based on the total number of beneficiaries with a 95% confidence interval. The sample by activity and IP was then proportionally calculated based on the databases provided by CARE. The sample size for each IP and activity was increased to 30 where necessary, leading to a total sample size of 585 surveys. The sample was also proportionally separated by location and gender. Respondents were then randomly selected from the beneficiaries database shared by CARE.

Figure 3: Sample size by partner and activity

	Ihsan	IYD	Shafak	SR	CARE	Total
Cash For Food - Multi Round	75	44	76	30	40	265
Cash For Food - One Off	172	30	30	30	0	262
Cash for wheat selling (Farmers)			30			30
Cash for Work - pest control			30			30
Total	247	74	166	60	40	587
%	42%	13%	28%	10%	7%	100%

The survey respondents had the following demographic distribution:

Overall, the majority of the total sample was male (66%), internally displaced (71%) and between 30 and 50 years old. Only a minority of respondents was divorced or single. The Washington short set of questions was used to determine the disability status of respondents.

Figure 4: Demographics of sample

Demographics	Cash for work	Cash for wheat	One-off Cash	IP MRCFF	CARE MRCFF
Total Respondents	30	30	262	225	40
IDP	53%	3%	95%	50%	90%
Host community	47%	97%	5%	49%	10%
Female	100%	7%	31%	35%	30%
Male	0%	93%	69%	65%	70%
Age (average)	36	44	40		39
From 18-30	23%	23%	28%	20%	28%
From 30-50	67%	46%	46%	49%	53%
50 and over	10%	3%	26%	32%	20%
Disability	13%	23%	28%	48%	50%
Married	63%	97%	81%	74%	78%
Widowed	30%	3%	18%	24%	20%

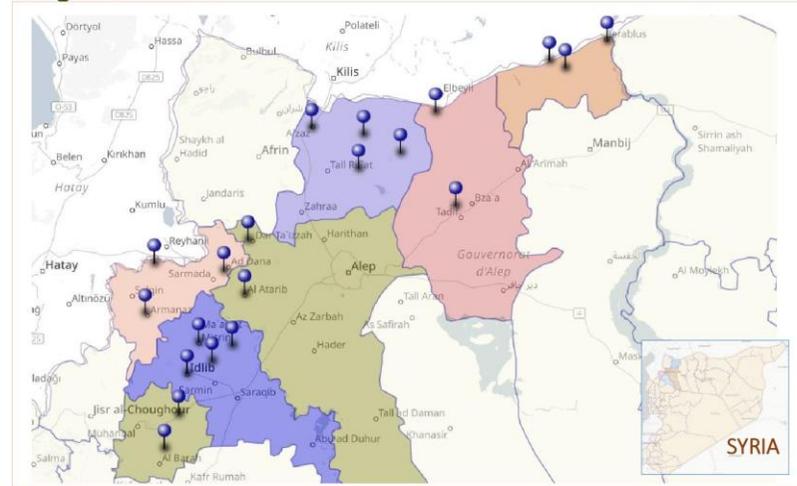
A detailed overview on the demographics can be found on the following page:

Summary methodology and demographic information

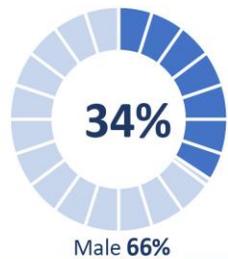
Key demographics:

# of Governorates	Total # of respondents	Location	Female	Male
2	587	Al Bab	46	50
		Ariha	1	6
Districts	% of Males	A'zaz	31	125
		Harim	19	46
		Idleb	25	51
Sub-districts	% of Females	Jarablus	52	60
		Jebel Saman	28	47
		Total	202	385

Targeted areas:



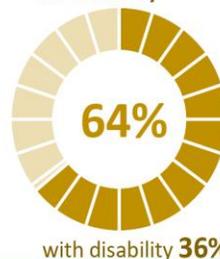
Percentage of female



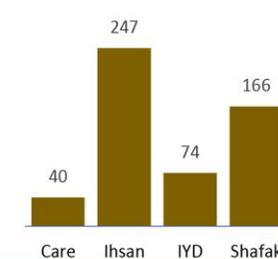
Percentage of IDPs



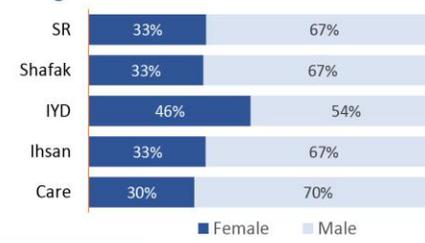
Percentage of respondents with no disability



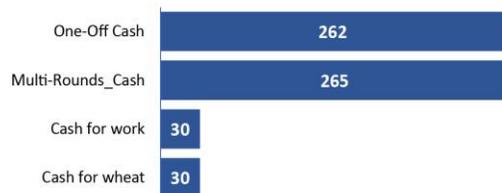
Respondents by partner



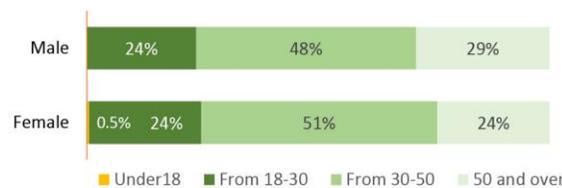
Respondents disaggregated by partner and gender



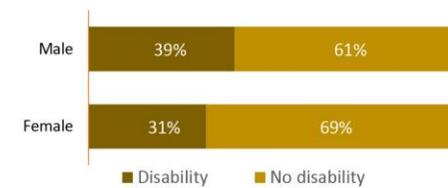
Respondents by survey type



Respondents by gender and age



Respondents by gender disability status



4. Data Quality Assurance, Analysis and Reporting

The assessment followed a strict data quality assurance process throughout the data analysis and the report writing stage. All Jouri field researchers have several years of experience in collecting data and conducting research, in-depth knowledge of the context and the target locations, and received thorough training by Jouri's Field Coordinator on how to use these data collection methods, including explaining each question and its purpose one by one. The training also included role-play for conducting a real interview to ensure that trainees had absorbed the knowledge about the tools.

The first day of the data collection served as a pilot test for the survey to detect any gaps or problems in the tools and fix them before fully continuing the survey. Using the digital platform, KoBo, for the quantitative data collection contributed significantly to reducing any human error (loss of paper forms and data entry mistakes) and helped to improve the accuracy of the collected data and reduced the amount of data cleaning. Jouri ensured the protection of data by removing completed forms from the data collection tool upon upload to the centralised database. The data cleaning and analysis of the quantitative data were conducted by using the spreadsheet software Excel. During the data cleaning, Jouri's analysts deleted any incomprehensible data or duplicated values, while also confirming the validity of the data.

Data Analysis

The descriptive quantitative analysis focused on separating the numerical findings by the units of analysis, e.g., organization, gender and age group, as well as developing diagrams for a visual presentation of the results. Additionally, the results of female and males from the survey were compared through statistical analysis, including a comparison of means. Qualitative data was analysed by capturing the key points from the content, the narrative, and the discourse of the interviewees or FGDs. This analysis aimed to complement the quantitative analysis with additional validation, perceptions, and opinions in the report.

The data analysis stage was followed by a data triangulation and quality assurance process, in which Jouri discussed the key findings with the field researchers. During the report writing stage, different components of the analysis were summarised and compared against each other. The evaluation team then developed the recommendations based on the findings of the data analysis. The report went through several rounds of drafting for quality assurance before it was finalised.

5. Limitations and Challenges

The implementation of the assignment encountered the following limitations and challenges:

- **Timing of the evaluation:** The overall timeline for the evaluation was challenging for the evaluation team as the project itself was not completed until September 2021. Therefore, at the time of the data collection, not all beneficiaries from the CARE AO modality had received the full rounds of cash.
- **Information sharing:** Obtaining the lists of beneficiaries from the different sectors and activities took an extended period of time, which resulted in work pressure for the field researchers and the evaluation team. Additionally, differences in the databases of CARE and the IP Shafak led to a

delay in contacting and inviting the selected beneficiaries. These challenges have been mitigated through meetings and regular communication with the relevant team members.

- Obtaining permissions: It was necessary for CARE to seek relevant permissions for data collection in Jarablus, which was a time-consuming process.

6. Findings

6.1. Relevance

6.1.1. Local context

Were the project interventions deemed appropriate to the local context and beneficiary needs (including eligibility criteria, distributions and other processes)?

Development of the activities

According to key informants from CARE and IP management, the activities were developed based on previous need assessment as well as the experience and collected data from previous rounds of the FFP project. The project locations are identified through both rapid need assessment as well as a market assessment at sub-district level. The activity design phase included consultation of local stakeholders and beneficiaries. When asked if they knew about people in their community who have been consulted by the organizations about their needs, the majority (76%) of MRCFF survey respondents said 'Yes'. The detailed percentages by activity can be found below:

- All beneficiaries from the direct implementation (CARE) knew someone who has been consulted about their needs. Nearly three in four (72%) of respondents from the MRCFF under IPs knew someone in their community who has been consulted by the Ips on needs. However, the number was lower among respondents from the MRCFF activity from Ihsan, from which only 40% knew of people who were consulted on their needs. An informant from Ihsan stated that a random sample of HHs in the proposed communities are contacted to participate in the need assessment, however there is not 100% coverage. 73% of beneficiaries who received cash for work stated that they were consulted by Shafak on what their needs were.

Relevance and appropriateness of the assistance

All 36 FGD participants from different activities and both IPs and AO implementation agreed that the provided assistance was relevant to their needs and the challenges people face in the local context. MRCFF beneficiaries especially highlighted how they liked that the cash was unconditional and not tied to specific shops. Key informants specifically highlighted the relevance of the livelihood component and the wheat value chain, an intervention that is rarely implemented in NWS, but extremely important to the region in order to rehabilitate the wheat production and motivate both farmers and bakeries to continue with their work.

The majority (99%) of beneficiaries stated that the assistance came at the right time, however 2 (1%) of MRCFF beneficiaries and 5 people (2%) from the one-off activity stated that the assistance came too late for them.

When comparing the project activities with the local context and needs in secondary data, the evaluation found the following:

The situation in NWS continues to have devastating effects on the local communities. In the North West of Syria, the 2021 Humanitarian Needs overview for Syria has found that 3.1 million people are

experiencing food insecurity and need food assistance. The COVID-19 pandemic has only served to further worsen this issue, due to the closure of crossing points, increase in fees for access points, and closure of bazaars that were a source of cheaper food. The needs are enormous in terms of shelter and food, among others, as a result of a lack of financial resources and physical infrastructures. Additionally, the devaluation of the Syrian Pound has severely affected the purchasing power of the local population to buy necessities, thus creating a reliance on humanitarian assistance. Women and children are also experiencing the burden of food insecurity as their dietary practices have led to a rise in stunting, a largely irreversible form of malnutrition.

The provided activities can be considered as highly relevant and appropriate to the local context and they match the needs in the project locations that were described by beneficiaries or local stakeholders.

- Beneficiaries have highlighted that the provided cash assistance was highly relevant due to the challenges around securing the households needs especially for food and health (medicine), as well as to cover for children's needs due to limited income opportunities and increased prices of items. The high living cost further influence the poor living condition, which leads to increased vulnerabilities
- Subsidized bread beneficiaries identified the high-cost of non-subsidized bread as a key challenge as well as the fact that the subsidized bread is not available every day. The high price on the black market is affecting households' ability to cover other pressing needs. Therefore, the subsidized bread was useful to households.
- Farmers and informants identified the price of agricultural inputs like fuel, pesticides and fertilizers as the main challenge for the agriculture sector, as it limits the amount that they can water their lands and the transportation of the wheat. Agriculture activities such as livestock or farming often were reported as being insufficient to earn enough income to cover households' needs. Additionally, farmers are not motivated to continue working in agriculture or to cultivate strategic crops, but prefer to switch to crops which can be planted multiple times a year. The provided activity was relevant for farmers in order to be able to maintain their agricultural business.
- Similar to the agriculture sector, the high cost of maintenance is challenging the local bakeries, and there is a lack of functioning bakeries in the region as many bakeries required extensive rehabilitation. The activity of rehabilitation was relevant in order to support bakeries in continuing to produce bread for the communities.

6.1.2. Selection process

Was beneficiary selection and targeting deemed to be fair (inclusion/exclusion bias) and transparent?

According to key informants from both IPs and CARE, the targeting and selection process of the FFP project was well organized and functioning due to clearly defined selection criteria. After the project locations were identified and confirmed through the above mentioned measures, the IPs coordinated with the local councils to sign an MoU, agreeing on selection criteria and receiving a list of suggested beneficiaries by the local council in each location to start the registration process.

The IPs and CARE then established selection committees to review and verify the selection process and the selected beneficiaries. This included initial review of the lists shared by the local councils which were then registered through door-by-door visits. After the scoring of vulnerabilities and assessment of the criteria, the committee is responsible for review and approval of the final list of beneficiaries that is created after the IP conducted multiple verification methods after the initial door-by-door registration of the suggested beneficiaries.

Selection criteria included the following:

Figure 5: Beneficiary selection criteria by IPs and AO

Selection Process	
Cash for work	<p>Eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HH with pregnant and/or lactating women. • The family is headed by a female. • The HH has one or more disabled or chronically ill members • HH adopting negative coping mechanisms • Households displaced from another area and live in this village. • HH with more than 6 members, mainly children. • HH is caring for a child with no living parents • HH affected recently and live in poor living conditions • HH living in a damaged shelter, collective center or tents, or sharing shelter with other HHs
Cash for wheat	<p>Eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agriculture must be one of the main sources of income for the HH • Land size should be between one to six hectares • If an IDP should have been in the area for at least six months • HH not receiving any other winter crop support from other NGOs this year
MRCFF (IP)	<p>Eligibility Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1- Families with no assets • 2- Families with no one of the HHs are working. • 3- Female-Headed HHs. • 4- Child headed HHs. • 5- Family with disabled people • 6- Elderly headed HH • 7-Displacement period 6 months minimum
MRCFF (AO)	<p>Eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The family does not have a stable income. • The family does not have access to any assets or property generating income for it (such as land, car, shop, etc.) • The household is receiving no current support of a similar type from relatives or other agencies. • Families with no one of the HHs are working. • Families whose monthly income less than 15\$ per person
One off Cash	<p>Eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IDP (Regardless of the period of displacement) OR returnees (Within 3 to 6 months based on the targeted location) • The targeted beneficiary hasn't received any similar assistance as follows:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If the activity is one-off cash distribution, the beneficiary should not have benefitted from cash assistance (100 USD or above) within the <u>last three months</u>. ○ If the activity is NFI distribution, the beneficiary should not have received assistance from NFI assistance within the <u>last six months</u>. ○ If the activity is HK distribution, the beneficiary must not be assistance from HK assistance within the <u>last two months</u>. ○ If the activity is FB distribution, the beneficiary must not be assistance from FB assistance within the <u>last month</u>. ● The targeted beneficiary has no regular income or limited income as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Less than 75 USD for the families who have 2 to7 members. ○ Less than 100 USD for the families of 8 members or above.
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Similar, key informants stated vulnerability criteria as IDPs, PWD, women-headed households, elderly people and children. Overall, key informants found the selection process and the selection criteria as highly effective to ensure relevance. Field workers confirmed the described approach and stated that they found the selection process to be fair and transparent. IP management informants also stated that the designed criteria allowed them to target the most vulnerable people.

Field workers from Ihsan explained that they found the selection process to be fair, however that there was some disagreement with the local council on the selection criteria of the cash distribution of newly displaced. Some key informants stated that although the selection process is functioning well, the selection criteria should be expanded to improve the selection process and include more beneficiaries. All of the project staff assured that the reliability of the process was very high due to the variety of verification teams and the committee as well as the coordination with the local council.

CARE management reported that the selection process was successful in targeting the planned beneficiaries, however there were reports about interference of local stakeholders, e.g. the local council, in the targeting or selection process. This was mitigated by addressing this problem with the local council. All informants from IP management except IYD reported complaints during the selection process, which were reviewed, verified and addressed.

Transparency

When surveyed beneficiaries were asked about the selection process, findings were as follows:

Figure 6: Reported transparency of selection process

Selection Process	
Cash for work	Almost all (90%) of surveyed women who received cash for work knew why they were selected and confirmed that the eligibility criteria had been clearly communicated to them. All surveyed beneficiaries found the selection process to be fair. Additionally, all seven FGD participants stated that they joined the project due to specific vulnerabilities, e.g. having disabled children, being a widow or being the only breadwinner in the

	<p>family. Only 24% of the women had previous work experience before the project, and only 33% had an income before the project.</p>
Cash for wheat	<p>FGD participants stated that the major of the village submitted a list of suggested participants (70) to the IP, who then conducted an assessment to select 30 participants from this list based on specific conditions, e.g. absence of breadwinner or lack of income.</p> <p>Three out of 30 respondents, two of them in Mare' and one in Suran, stated that the selection process was not fair in their communities for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are beneficiaries who do not need assistance and have been accepted into the project. 2. Farmers of solid financial condition were selected. 3. Several people received and sold seeds, as well as fertilizers and pesticides. According to the beneficiary, these people do not deserve to be selected. <p>All respondents stated that they were clearly informed of information regarding eligibility criteria except for one woman in Azaz.</p>
MRCFF (CARE)	<p>All surveyed CARE MRCFF beneficiaries knew why they were selected for the assistance. Almost all respondents (95%) found the selection process to be fair, except for two, who gave examples of people in need who were not able to receive the assistance, while other families were told to have a higher living standard but are receiving the cash. All respondents stated that the selection criteria were clearly stated to them.</p>
MRCFF (IP)	<p>94% of surveyed multi-round of cash respondents knew why they were selected and 89% found the eligibility criteria to be clearly communicated to their household.</p>
One off Cash	<p>The majority (95%) of the One off cash beneficiaries knew why they were selected, while 5% did not know why they were selected, and 89% stated that the eligibility criteria were clearly communicated to them. All surveyed one-off cash beneficiaries except one found the selection process fair.</p>

6.1.3. Accessibility and inclusion

To what level have the needs or challenges of women, men, different age groups and people with disabilities or special needs been catered or addressed through the project?

According to key informants, the project was successful in targeting people from the most vulnerable groups, including people with special needs. Similarly, the evaluation found that a high number of

respondents had one or more disabilities. The percentage of respondents with disabilities was significantly high among beneficiaries from the Multi-round activity, while low for the cash for work activity due to the fact of having to work physically.

Figure 7: Inclusion of vulnerable groups

	Cash for work	Cash for wheat	One-off Cash	IP MRCFF	CARE MRCFF
Disability	13%	23%	28%	48%	50%

When surveyed cash beneficiaries were asked if they think that the following vulnerable groups were adequately served by the assistance, results were as follows:

95% of surveyed beneficiaries agreed that people with disabilities were adequately served to their needs, and 98% stated that both the elderlies and female-headed households were adequately served. However, only 51% believe that child-headed households were adequately served by the assistance. Only 8% from the beneficiaries of the AO implementation believed that child-headed households were adequately served under the project.

Accessibility

Key informants and beneficiaries gave examples throughout the evaluation on how the project was made accessible for all participants. The vast majority of interviewed and surveyed beneficiaries did not face any challenges when participating in the project.

- During the distribution, the health and elderly status was prioritized and these groups did not have to wait in line
- The distribution process was described by survey and FGD respondents as easy and appropriate, including social distancing and disinfection and COVID prevention measures and that the project staff was respectful and helpful

Challenges that participants mentioned during the participation in the project included:

- Although informants stated that people with special needs were prioritized during the cash distribution, FGD participants reported difficulties of vulnerable people with special needs to participate in the bread distribution; beneficiaries ask other people to attend the distribution for them
- Community leaders mentioned crowding during the distribution as a challenge and suggested that further coordination is needed to organize the distributions, especially in the camps, on a specific day
- One respondent from the direct implementation (MRCFF) stated it was a challenge to travel 500 meters on crutches due to the distribution location, but when he arrived the cash was given to him without having to wait in line.

6.2. Efficiency

6.2.1. Processes and Procedures (distribution)

How was the process of receiving the assistance viewed by the beneficiaries in terms of efficiency?

Level of satisfaction with cash distribution process

The large majority of surveyed beneficiaries were satisfied with the distribution process and felt safe at all times while participating in the project. Findings by activity are as follows:

- All MRCFF surveyed beneficiaries were satisfied with the distribution process and felt safe at all times while participating in the project.
- The majority (97%) of One-off Cash beneficiaries were satisfied with the distribution process, while 2% were partially satisfied and 1% was dissatisfied. Challenges mentioned regarding the distribution process were that the beneficiary was not notified ahead of time about the distribution or the date, that the distribution site was crowded or that COVID-19 precaution measures were not taken into consideration (according to two respondents from Ihsan from Aleppo, Azaz)
- All surveyed cash for work-beneficiaries were satisfied with the process of receiving cash from Shafak and all except one (3%) felt safe at all times while participating in the project, who was scared after hearing about the snakes in the farming fields.

Organization of cash distribution

According to key informants from all interviewed financial service providers, the distribution processes went smoothly, and no major difficulties were noticed. Informants from Al Zein and Qasioun stated that the distribution site was reachable and accessible and that the beneficiaries arrived on time. Additionally, one informant stated that the staff of SR was very helpful in coordinating and organizing the distribution team on site and that they were fully satisfied with the cash transfer. Providers from Shafak and SR stated that they found the team to be highly committed to the planned timeline and only small delays were faced. On the other hand, CARE AO field staff's team capacity was described as too small compared to the workload and due to the ongoing difficulties in the paperwork between the Syria and Turkey office, the distribution organization of the MRCFF with CARE AO did not go smoothly according to the financial service provider, who was not satisfied with the cash transfer to their business, due to the delays created by procedures of signing papers between the local office, the Turkey office and the local council. Another obstacle mentioned by the provider was that the CARE AO field workers were working from home due to COVID. However, these challenges were not mentioned by beneficiaries nor project staff.

Informants from the e-voucher company stated that the only challenges faced during the distribution stemmed from the issue of cards being not read or recognized by the team, however these technical issues were quickly resolved.

Financial service providers stated that the sufficient amount of cash for the required distribution was always available. The informants stated that beneficiaries were well informed about the specific amount they would receive and the method of distribution, as well as who is providing the assistance.

Overall, the distribution process can be considered as efficient and well-functioning, while more can be done to improve coordination between the area office as well as their financial service provider.

To what extent were the assistance modalities used for their intended purposes?

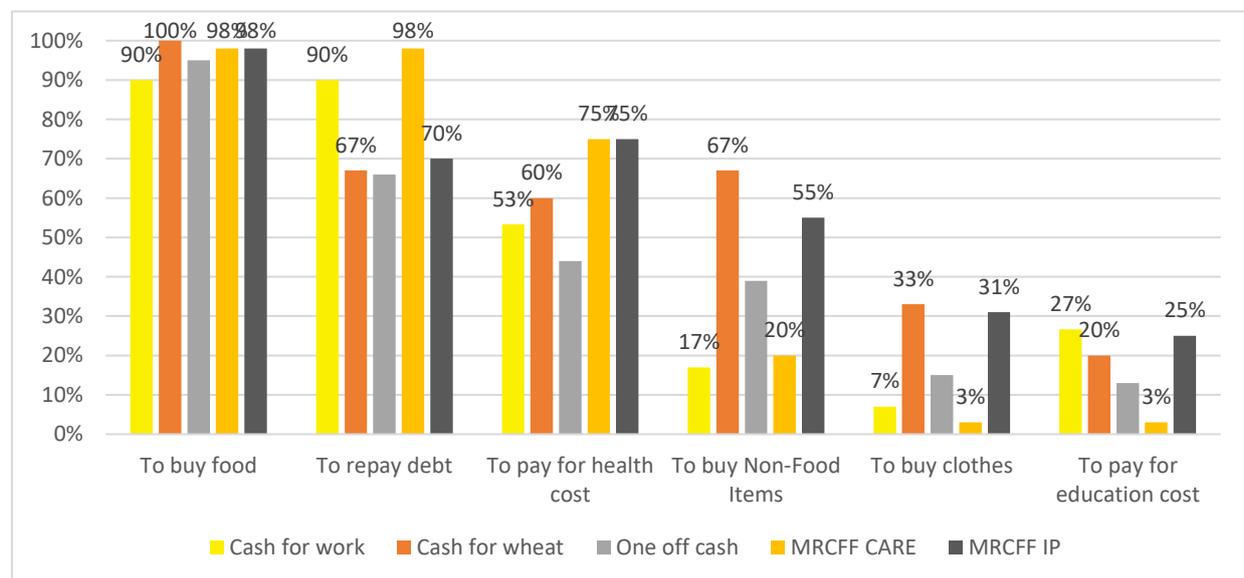
While the cash was deemed to be unconditional, the activity had the following intended purposes:

Overall, the evaluation found that the modalities were used for their intended purpose of buying food as highlighted in the findings below:

The majority (96%) of all surveyed respondents stated to have used the received cash to buy food, closely followed by repaying debt (78%) as well as to pay for health costs (61%). Only three percent of the total respondents used the cash to buy household assets, to save or to buy productive assets, however 9% stated to use the cash for 'other'.

A detailed overview on how the cash was used by respondents by activity is as follows:

Figure 8: Use of cash



The findings show that the majority of respondents has used the cash to buy food.

Similar, the evaluation found that farmers used the cash assistance to reinvest and support their wheat production as intended by the project:

Farmers who received cash for wheat stated to have used the cash for their farming: to cultivate larger areas of wheat next year or to buy wheat input (23%), to increase the amount of fertilizer in wheat (13%) and to buy good quality wheat input (7%). Similar, the evaluation

6.2.2. Project implementation (timely and financial delivery)

Did the project adhere to the planned implementation? Were the project's administrative, financial, logistical and M&E processes deemed adequate to ensure timely delivery of project interventions? To what extent has the project achieved value for money?

Overall, the evaluation found that the project was implemented in an economic and timely manner. Implementation was described by key informants, project staff and external stakeholders as very well

planned and efficient. While activities of the IPs were implemented as planned and according to the timeline, activities implemented by the area office under CARE were delayed due to the time-consuming approval process of conducting the direct implementation in the region of Jarablus. In order to cope with the delay, CARE combined two rounds of the multi-round of cash distribution into one, leading to a total amount of 100 USD instead of 50 USD per round.

While administrative and M&E processes were considered as efficient, informants from IPs as well as CARE highlighted that more time for preparation and coordination procedures as permissions applications can be allocated in the initial timeline and work plan in order to cope better with delays.

According to key informants, the project was implemented according to budget and financially efficient. Based on the type of assistance, key informants interpreted value for money as follows:

Cash assistance

All informants from IP management stated higher value for money has been achieved with cash assistance instead of food baskets, as used in previous projects, which some beneficiaries used to sell to cover for other expenses. Additionally, the process of monthly cash assistance was described as providing the biggest effect for money while also being the most efficient one, because the benefit of the money goes directly to the needs of beneficiaries and is not overspent on logistical expenses to organize the food basket or the one-off cash distribution. All community leaders (LC) agreed with this approach, saying that multi-purpose cash assistance allows families to meet their individual needs. One informant stated that conditional vouchers would be more safe and prevent the beneficiary to use the cash on drugs, which would prevent the family to cover other health or households needs. One suggestion from a camp manager was to introduce the condition that children of the households receiving assistance need to go school, in order to receive a higher impact with the same amount of cash.

Livelihood and wheat value chain:

Field workers from Shafak in particular highlighted how the rehabilitation of bakeries and the wheat value chain has achieved high value for money, because beneficiaries are both supported with financial assistance while the activities have also positive impact on the general wheat production sector in NWS. The subsidized bread activity was also described by informants from Shafak as highly cost-efficient due to the cost-sharing approach that was adopted for the beneficiaries. Similar, one informant from the local council as well as the agriculture committee stated that the cash for wheat activity provided great value as farmers were both able to profit from the wheat crop as well as use money to purchase seeds or fertilizers.

6.3. Effectiveness

6.3.1. Achieved outcomes

To what extent did the project achieve its intended outcomes, purposes or goals?

The evaluation reviewed to what extent the project achieved the targets of outcomes, goals and purposes. A detailed overview about the food security indicators can be found in chapter 6.4 under Impact.

Overall, the project achieved or over-achieved all targets except for the Ready-to-Eat (RTE) activity, which was removed under the NCE due to procurement challenges. Several other targets have been revised throughout the project period due to external factors, for example CARE increased the purchase wheat from 1400 MT to 2340.8 MT, by purchasing 914 additional MT from 2500 farmers instead of the proposed 3500 farmers.

All surveyed beneficiaries confirmed to have received the correct amount of cash during the participation in the project, except for the beneficiaries from the direct implementation by CARE, who have not received the full number of distribution rounds by the time of the evaluation.

The majority of farmers reported that Shafak purchased around 1 ton of wheat from them, while six respondents mentioned that the purchased harvest quantity was between 0.2 to 0.6 tons.

What were the major factors that contributed to the achievement or non-achievement of the project objectives? What factors, internal and external to the project, contributed to the changes, or detracted from more potential change?

When key informants were asked what factors contributed to the success or achievement of changes, the following themes were identified throughout the evaluation:

Factors which contributed to the success of the project:

- High level of involvement of CARE and IPs in coordination structures, e.g. the cluster, as well as positive relationship to key stakeholders from the Turkish government and regular communication with IPs and local stakeholders on the ground.
- Experience gained through the previous rounds of the FFP project (CARE).
- Effective selection process which ensured the appropriate beneficiaries were targeted, especially through the use of selection committee made up of representatives from host and IDP communities
- Flexibility from the donor to adequately address challenges on the ground, including the suspension of the Ready-to-eat kits.
- According to community leaders, there had not been major waves of displacements during the project period and only limited changes in displacements. Therefore, all families listed in the project were reachable by the project actors.
- According to two bakery owners, regular monitoring and staff from Shafak who were visited the bakeries on a daily basis to coordinate, to check the quantity and quality of the bread as well as to discuss any complaints was highly effective in supporting the bakeries

Factors which challenged the project:

- × Time-consuming preparation and approval procedures from the authorities in Jarablus which led to a delay of the MRCFF activity implemented by the area office.

- × Difficulties in procurement and contracting for the cash component as well as logistical organization.
- × Challenges faced by the SR provider was the availability of 50 USD notes needed for the distribution, which was solved by collecting 50 dollars on daily bases from the local markets through exchanging money. Suggestions from the informants from financial providers include switching to 100 USD when necessary or to consider providing assistance in Turkish Lira (TRY)
- × Challenges related to COVID-19 cases among employees or working from home
- × The nature of seasonal activities such as pest control or wheat farming: Due to the natural timeframe, there is no flexibility to extend the time for registration or preparations. Additionally, the activities are always at risk of being delayed due to weather conditions or other natural influences
- × Bombing and shelling in Atareb and Sarmada led to a suspension of the distribution for two days

How did the project adapt with changing circumstances?

According to key informants, the project did not face major changing circumstances on the ground. However, examples given by stakeholders were as follows:

- During the preparation period, CARE realized that another organization was implementing similar activities in targeted sub-districts of Jarablus and the CARE decided to target new locations instead.
- Due to the delay in preparation and contracting for the AO in Jarablus, the distribution amount was increased to 100 USD for four rounds instead of 50 USD for eight months.
- Due to difficulties in quality and procurement of the originally planned Ready- to-eat rations, CARE decided to suspend this activity and instead distribute One-Off Cash to the targeted households.
- When bakeries requested to receive flour at night instead of during the day due to the need to start baking bread early in the night, CARE and Shafak hired additional staff to monitor this activity at night.

6.3.2. Feedback and complaints mechanism

How were beneficiary feedback/complaints systems used to ensure effectiveness?

IPs' and CARE's complaint and response mechanisms include different channels such as complaints boxes, hotlines, emails and direct face to face submission. Both internal and external informants confirmed that these channels are accessible, in use and functioning well. Field workers confirmed to utilize the CFM as a tool to identify problems and lessons learnt during the project implementation and that beneficiaries are regularly updated on the use and importance of the mechanisms. Informants also gave examples how the FCRM complements the other monitoring activities such as post-distribution monitoring (PDM) or real time monitoring.

Members from the local council reported how they had received complaints from beneficiaries who were on the initial registration list, but then not on the distribution list. Other complaints made were that the wheat was delivered late to the processors.

Awareness among beneficiaries on the CFM were as follows:

Figure 9: Feedback and complaints mechanisms

Beneficiaries: Feedback and complaints mechanism	
Cash for work	77% of the cash for work women stated to know how to raise a concern, while 23% of the women did not know how to do it. These women named the channels as WhatsApp, a complaints box, hotlines, or face to face submission during field visits or at the IPs office. 93% of the surveyed women would feel comfortable to raise a concern if they faced any problem, while two women would not be. The one woman who raised a complaint stated to have been satisfied with the process of how it was dealt with. The most common sources of being informed about the mechanisms were IP staff, flyers and posters.
Cash for wheat	93% of farmers stated to feel comfortable to raise a concern if they faced any problems, however two male respondents stated to not feel comfortable raising their concern because they either knew about people who filed a complaint and did not receive a response or have not heard from anyone who benefitted from submitting a complaint. 27% of surveyed farmers stated to know about someone who has raised a concern regarding the assistance. Two male respondents also highlighted to be dissatisfied with the complaint response procedure, because they knew of several farmers who did not receive a response on their complaint.
MRCFF (IP)	78% of IPs' beneficiaries from MRCFF stated to know how to raise a concern, however almost half (47%) of SR beneficiaries and 39% of Ihsan beneficiaries stated to not know how to raise a concern. 99% of the surveyed beneficiaries stated they would feel comfortable to raise a concern if they would face any problems. Only 5% of the surveyed stated to have raised or know someone who has raised a complaint, out of these 75% stated to be satisfied with the answer, while 17% stated to be dissatisfied and 8% never received a response. The most mentioned ways to have heard about how to submit complaints were IP staff, flyers, posters, local councils or others. The most mentioned complaint channels were WhatsApp, followed by complaints box, face-to-face submission and hotlines.
One off Cash	74% of the beneficiaries who received One off cash stated to know how to raise a concern if necessary, while 26% did not know about the mechanisms. The most common channel mentioned among one-off cash beneficiaries was WhatsApp (86%), followed by complaints boxes in the community (36%), hotlines or face to face submission. 96% of surveyed one-off beneficiaries stated to feel comfortable if they had to raise a concern, while 4% would not. Reasons given were not knowing enough about the CRM system, to not like to raise complaints or not receiving any response. One beneficiary from Ihsan mentioned to be afraid to raise a complaint, after witnessing how their neighbor got insulted after raising a complaint.

When comparing the awareness of female and male respondents, 74% of all female respondents knew how to raise a concern, compared to 80% of all male respondents. The percentage (8%) of men who have or know of anyone who has raised a complaint was also slightly higher than compared to 4% of female respondents.

6.4. Impact

6.4.1. Project impact: Factors and Changes

How did the project change the lives of the beneficiaries and other local stakeholders?

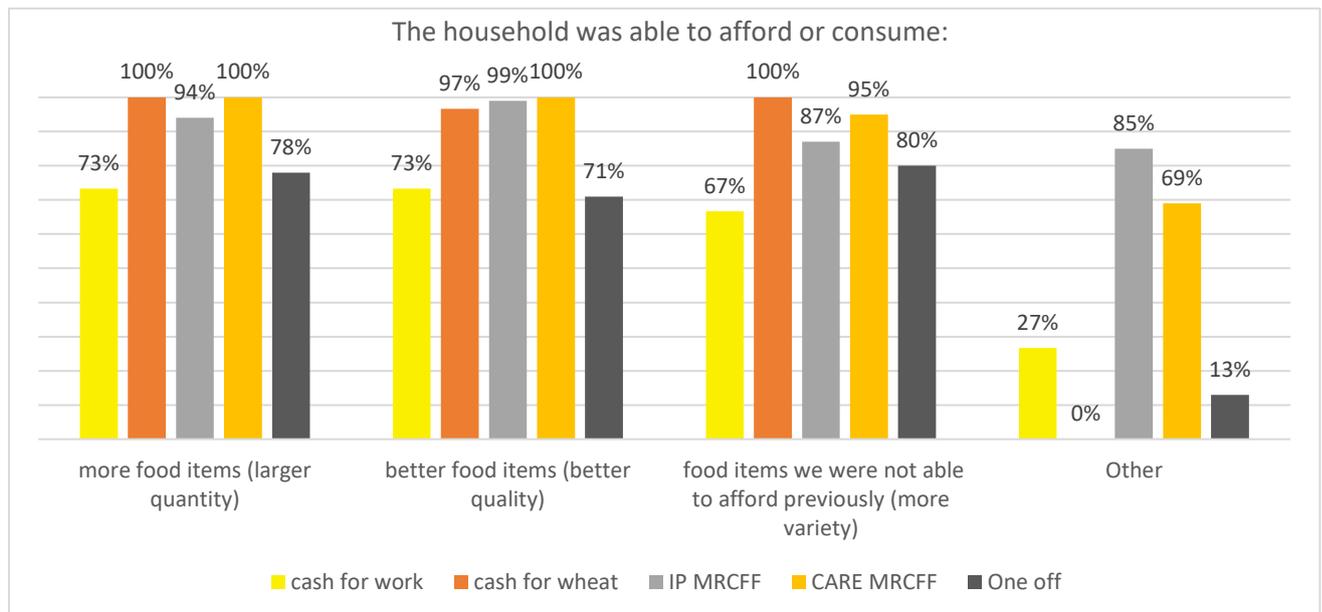
The evaluation identified significant changes in the lives of the beneficiaries; the cash recipients as well as other local stakeholders as bakeries, shops, vendors and camp management. The chapters below provide an overview how the project impacted the lives of the beneficiaries in terms of food security, local community and gender.

6.4.2. Food security

Impact on HH food security:

Of all survey respondents, 93% stated that the cash had significant impact on their household. 86% of respondents stated that they were able to afford/consume more food items, 80% were able to consume better food items and 82% were able to purchase food items they were not able to buy previously. 16% stated other uses.

Figure 10: Impact of FFP projects on households



The responses show that the impact of the cash assistance was especially high for the multi-round cash activity as well as the cash for wheat activity, while the impact of the cash for work and the one-off activity was lower compared to the other assistance.

Comparison between Food security indicators:

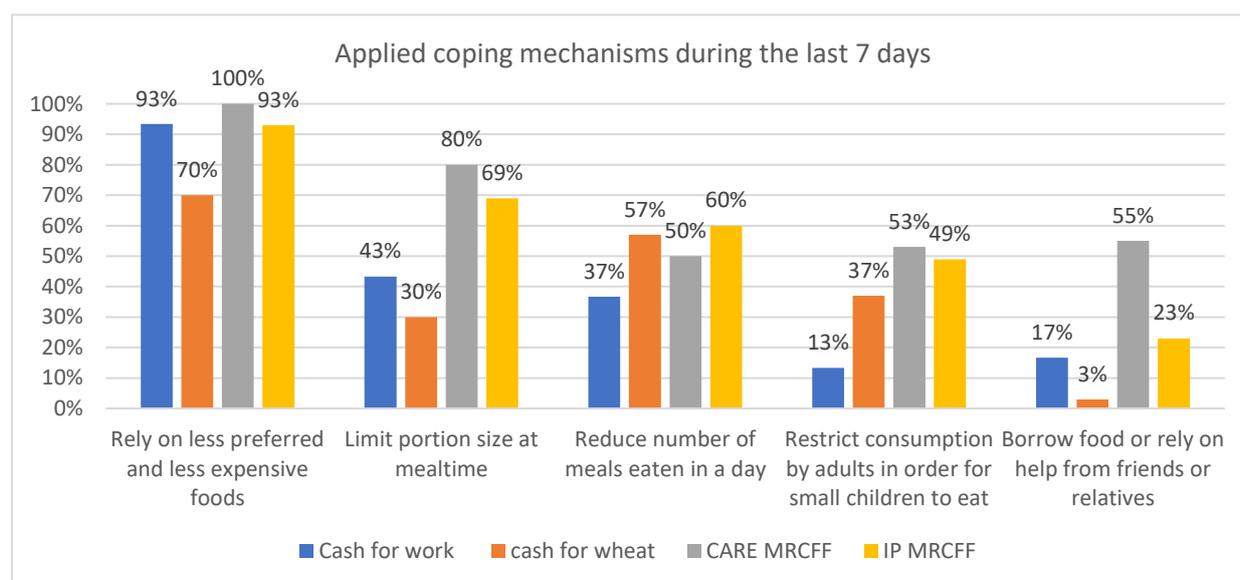
As part of the evaluation, the reduced coping strategy index, the food consumption index and the household hunger scale values were collected from beneficiaries of the multi-round, cash for work and cash for wheat activities. Additionally, the collected indicators were compared to the baseline indicators collected by the IPs and CARE where available.

However, the comparison between baseline, mid-term and endline values of the FFP project with the evaluation values is limited due to the different sample sizes¹ as well as the different timeline. Additionally, different results between the AO and IP implementation are based on the different timelines of the intervention, as CARE's AO distribution was still ongoing in September, while the IP's implementation was completed in June.

Coping mechanisms:

When respondents were asked what coping mechanisms they had applied in the last 30 days, the majority of respondents reported relying on less preferred or less expensive food (89%). 56% of survey respondents limited their portion size during mealtime and 51% reduced the number of meals eaten in a day. A detailed overview on applied coping mechanisms by activity is as follows:

Figure 11: Applied coping mechanisms during the last 7 days



Of those who applied one of the five coping mechanisms, when asked how many times per week this was applied, the average answers were as follows:

Figure 12: Types of coping strategies

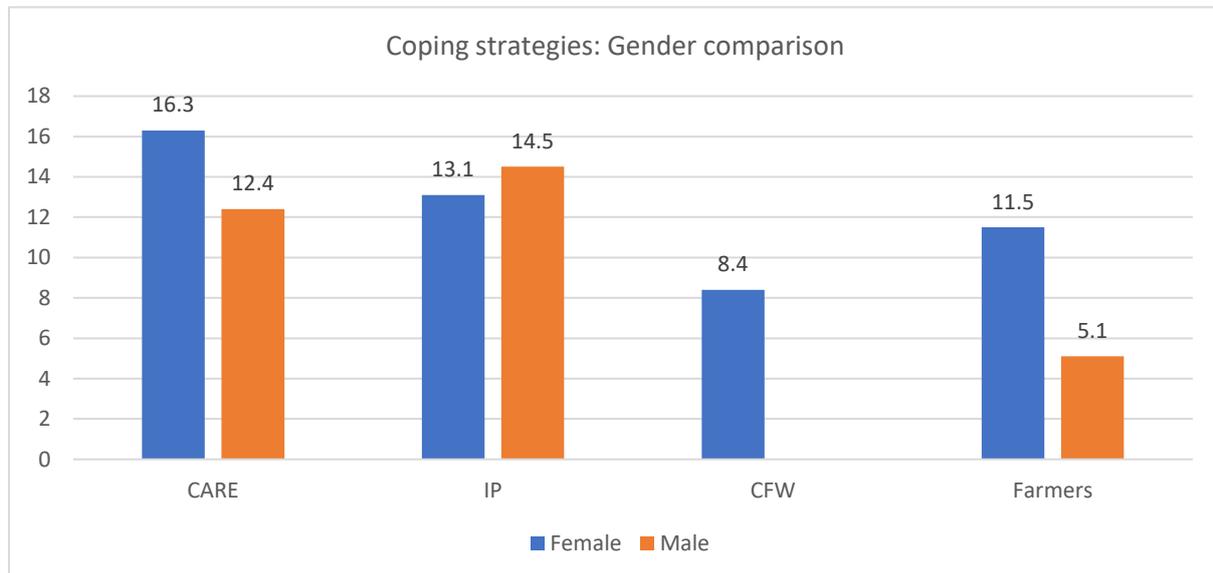
Average times per week	Cash for work	Cash for Wheat	CARE MRCFF	IP MRCFF
Rely on less preferred and less expensive foods	5	3	4	4
Borrow food or rely on help from friends or relatives	2	2	2	2
Limit portion size at mealtime	3	2	3	3
Restrict consumption by adults in order for small children to eat	3	1	3	3

¹ Baseline sample: Ihsan: 349, IYD: 348, Shafak: 350, SR: 350

Reduce number of meals eaten in a day	2	2	2	3
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When comparing the use of coping strategies for male and female respondents, the evaluation found the following differences:

Figure 13: Coping strategies: gender comparison



While these findings highlight that beneficiaries have stated a high use of coping mechanisms, a comparison with the baseline data from the multi-round cash assistance showed that although the average use of coping strategies is still relatively high, there is an improvement for all IPs, especially for IYD and SR.

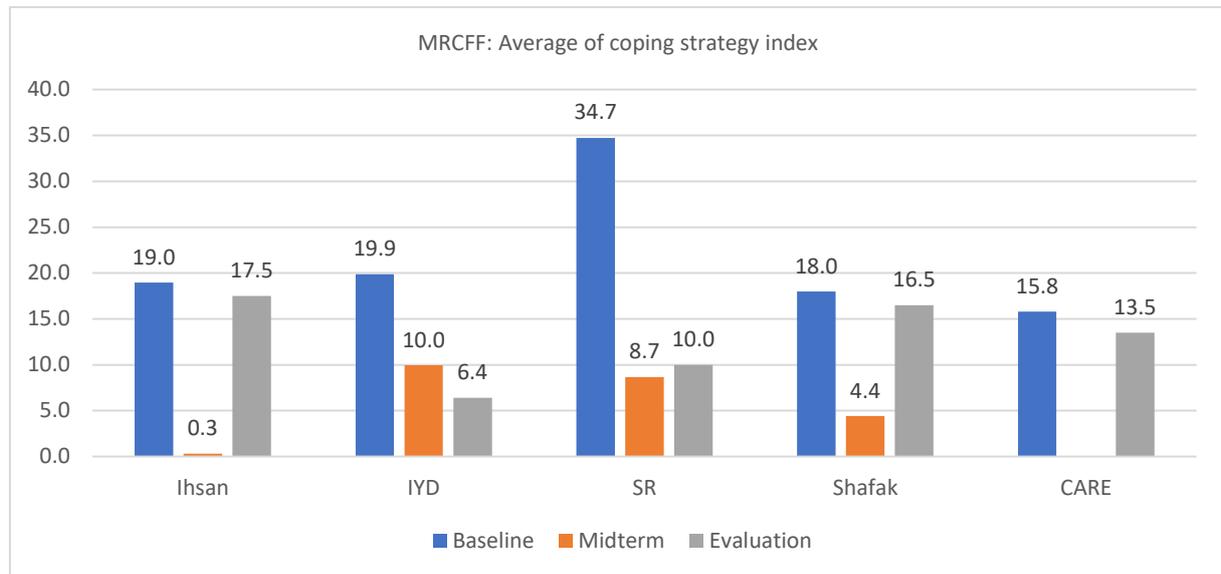
Especially when comparing baseline and mid-term data, a significant improvement is noticeable, which means that the project likely reduced the use of coping strategies. However, once the assistance was completed, the use of coping strategies increased again. This has clear implications for sustainability, and highlights the need for longer-term strategies that improve food security.

Figure 14: Indicator 1: Reduced use of coping strategies

Indicator 1: Reduced use of negative coping strategies by conflict-affected households (MRCFF)														
Target	IHSAN			IYD			SR			Shafak			CARE	
	B	EN	EV	B	EN	EV	B	EN	EV	B	EN	EV	B	EV
15	18,9	0,1	17,5	19,9	7,1	6,4	34,7	10,9	10	18,0	6,8	16,5	15,8	13,5

B= Baseline, MT= Mid-term, EN=Endline, EV= Evaluation

Figure 15: Average of coping strategy index by IP



Household Hunger Scale:

The Household Hunger Scale findings for the surveyed beneficiaries from the cash for wheat, cash for work and multi-round cash distribution activities were as follows:

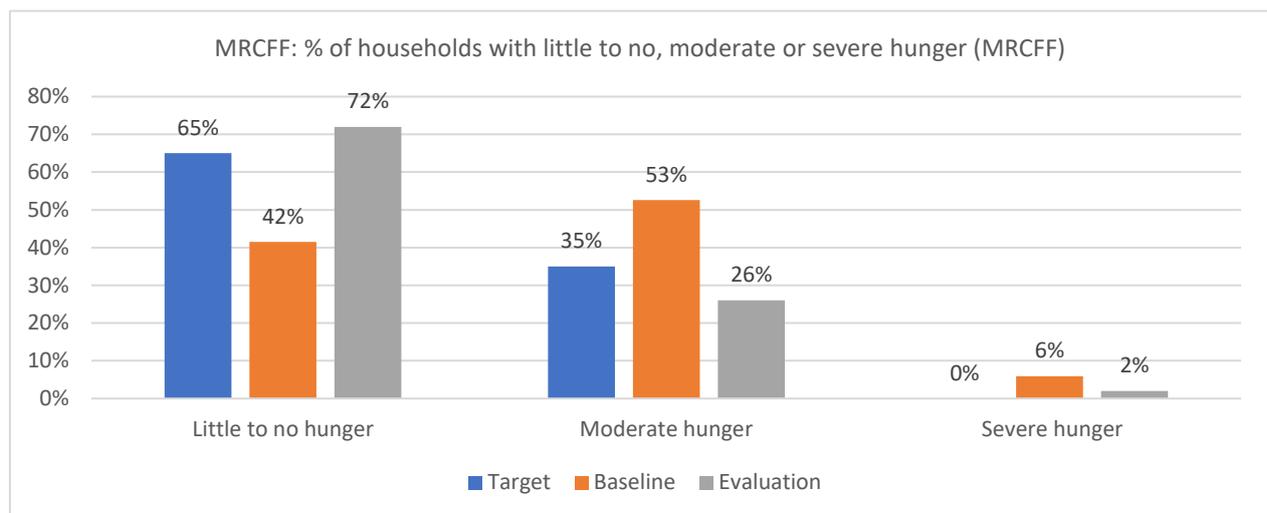
Figure 16: Household hunger scale by activity

Household Hunger Scale	Cash for work	Cash for wheat	MRCFF (IP)	MRCFF (CARE)
Little to no hunger in the household	90%	93%	72%	73%
Moderate hunger in the household	3%	7%	26%	28%
Severe Hunger in the household	0%	0%	2%	0%

The two percent of the beneficiaries who received MRCFF that received the score of severe hunger in the household were from Ihsan.

When comparing the findings from the MRCFF assistance, the evaluation found significant improvement in the level of hunger in the surveyed household compared to the baseline and overachieved the targets:

Figure 17: Household hunger scale for MRCFF



A detailed overview by IP is given in the table below. While the scores for IYD, SR and Shafak have significantly improved, it was noted that a higher percentage of households for Ihsan were categorized as having severe hunger compared to the baseline or the mid-term evaluation. Additionally, while during the project the large majority of households of IYD, SR and Shafak were categorized as having little to No hunger, the households of Ihsan were only categorized as having moderate hunger in the household.

Figure 18: Household hunger scale by partner

Indicator 5, 6, 7: % of households with little to no hunger, moderate hunger and severe hunger in the household (MRCFF)															
Hunger Score:	Target	IHSAN			IYD			SR			Shafak			CARE	
		B	EN	EV	B	EN	EV	B	EN	EV	B	EN	EV	B	E
Little to No	%65	56%	100%	60%	60%	99,7%	93%	26%	100%	67%	14%	98,00%	72%	86%	73%
Moderate	%35	43%	0%	33%	38%	0,3%	7%	74%	0%	33%	51%	2,30%	28%	14%	28%
Severe	%0	1%	0%	7%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	13%	0%	0%	0%	0%

B= Baseline, MT= Mid-term, EN=Endline, EV= Evaluation

Food Consumption Scores:

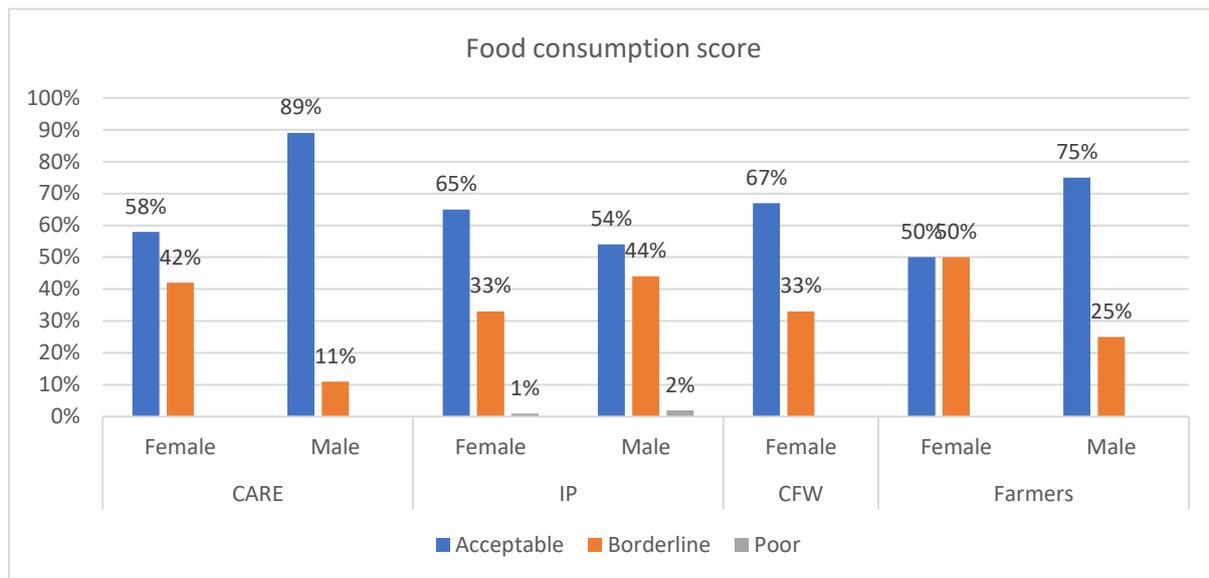
The food consumption scores from beneficiaries of each activity were as follows:

Figure 19: Food consumption score per activity

Food consumption Score	Target	Cash for work	Cash for wheat	MRCFF (IP)	MRCFF (CARE)
Acceptable	65%	67%	73%	58%	80%
Borderline	35%	33%	27%	40%	20%
Poor	0%			2%	

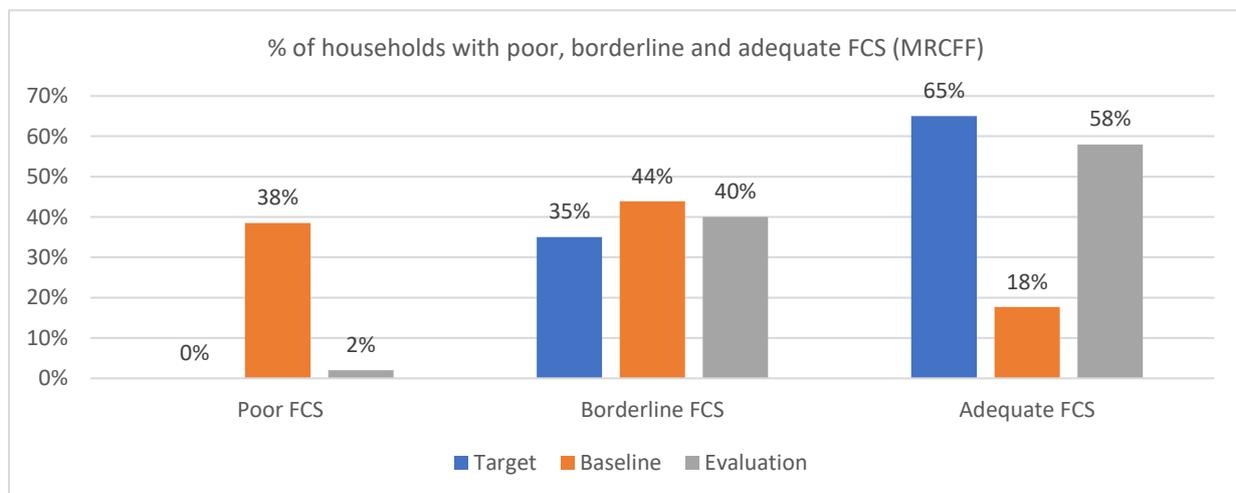
The food consumption scores from male beneficiaries from CARE's AO implementation and cash for wheat from male beneficiaries were largely better than those of female beneficiaries, while female beneficiaries from IPs intervention achieved better scores than the male beneficiaries.

Figure 20: Food consumption scores: gender comparison



When comparing the data of the MRCFF assistance, the evaluation found a positive impact of the assistance on the food consumption of beneficiaries. While the values did not meet the planned indicator target, the percentage of households with poor food consumption decreased by 36% and the percentage of adequate food consumption increased by 40%.

Figure 21: Food consumption score



A detailed overview by IP can be seen below:

Figure 22: Food consumption score per partner

Indicator 2, 3, 4: % of households with poor, borderline or adequate Food consumption Score (MRCFF)															
		IHSAN			IYD			SR			Shafak			CARE	
FCS Score	Target	B	EN	EV	B	EN	EV	B	EN	EV	B	EN	EV	B	EV
Poor	%0	32%	0%	3%	24%	0%	0%	84%	0%	0%	37%	13%	3%	13%	0%
Borderline	%35	56%	20%	29%	50%	8%	25%	11%	5%	60%	39%	35%	53%	36%	20%

Adequate	%65	12 %	81 %	68%	25 %	92 %	75%	5%	95%	40%	24%	52%	45%	51%	80%
B=Baseline, MT= Mid-term, EN=Endline, EV= Evaluation															

6.4.3. Local market, wheat and bread production

What effects did the project have on local market conditions?

Overall, the evaluation found positive effects on the local markets and found that the project did not impact local conditions as prices, availability of items or exchange rate negatively.

Figure 23: Effects on the local market, wheat and bread production

Effects on the local market, wheat and bread production	
Effects on local shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Beneficiaries spend more money in the local markets due to the assistance received, including repaying debts to shops and increased food consumption ➤ Refreshment of market due to increased cash flow, e.g. a new shop opened in one of the camps ➤ Increased availability of items due to increased demand, regular transactions and higher turnover ➤ Agricultural shops and pharmacies specifically benefited from the higher purchasing power of farmers, as many were reported to have paid off debt or purchased goods
Effects on prices and exchange rates:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The exchange rate was described as relatively stable throughout the project period by project staff and financial service providers ➤ Overall, informants reported a slight increase in prices due to the increased demand. Two of the shop and vendor informants stated that shops raise the prices on the day of the cash distribution, but lower them the next day
Effects on bakeries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Positive impact for consumers due to controlled and subsidized price for bread compared to the price on the black market ➤ Bakery owners highlighted the importance of prevention of overpriced bread through subsidizing the price for beneficiaries, as many households cannot afford the bread on the black market ➤ Owing to the project, the availability of bread increased significantly, because the bakeries were able to produce and sell larger quantities of bread due to the assistance provided ➤ Higher financial income and raise in wages due to higher production
Effects on agricultural sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Positive impact for farmers due to purchase of wheat for a higher price than on the market (50%) as well as support to market the crop, storage and transport (43%) ➤ Positive impact of saving costs or reinvestment of the assistance in agricultural inputs as fertilizer or pesticides (7%)

When bakery owners were asked how this part of the project had any tangible impact on the lives of people who bought the subsidized bread, one owner of a private bakery stated the following: “Some families even contacted us to thank Shafak for improving the quality and subsidizing the price of the bread, which means that they don’t have to buy bread bundles for a high price that is too much for their income”. Similar, informant from the bread committee in Al Bab stated that the assistance was of high impact for the supported bakeries due to reduced difficulties in receiving flour as well as the provided rehabilitation as well as that the assistance was especially significant for large families, who were able to purchase five bundles of bread for five Turkish Lira instead of 15 Turkish Lira.

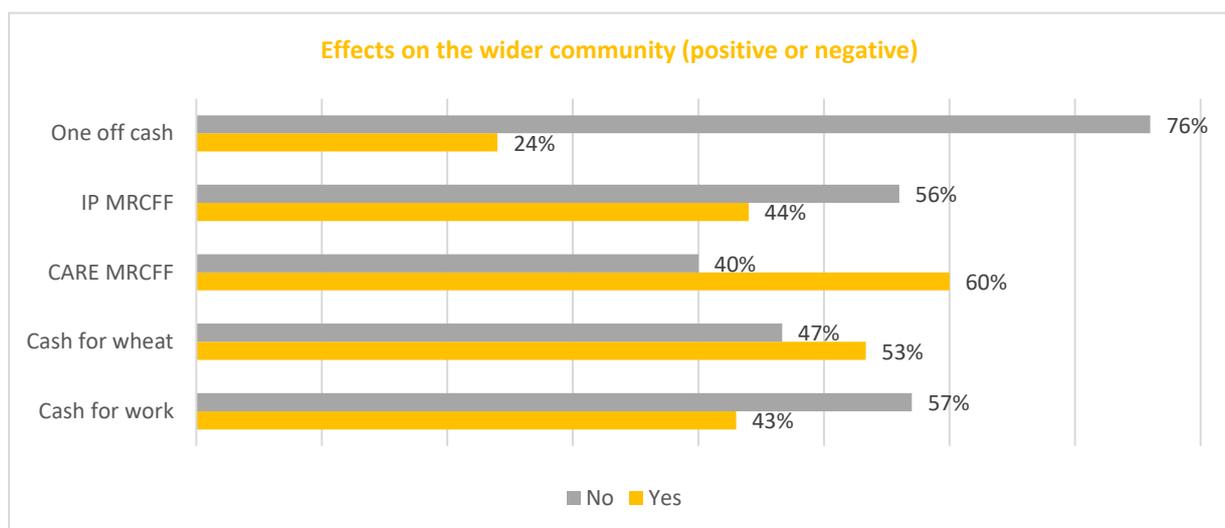
Overall, both quantitative and qualitative data shows that there has been positive impact of the FFP project on the wheat and bread production as well as on local markets.

6.4.4. Community dynamics

Did the project cause any changes to community dynamics?

The majority of surveyed respondents stated that the project did not create any positive or negative effects on the relationships between households or the wider community.

Figure 24: Effects on the wider community



Examples of effects on the wider community and household dynamics that were reported by both survey and FGD respondents were mainly positive:

Figure 25: Effects on the wider community

Effects on the wider community of the FFP project

- Improved wellbeing through secured households needs and financial relief
- Improved positive relationships and decreased tension with relatives and friends
- Coverage of health and children needs
- Improved relationships of households with shop owners or landlords due to being able to pay bills on time
- Improved relationship to pay off debt

- Increase in purchasing power and financial independence
- Higher motivation of people to work after having participated in livelihood activities
- × Envy of people who did not receive the aid towards the beneficiaries (FGD participants from SR, cash for wheat)
- × No specific effects on the community due to limited amount of cash or one time assistance

Similar to the beneficiaries, local stakeholders and project staff confirmed to have witnessed the positive effects of increased social cohesion and solidarity in the communities. No specific changes regarding the relationship between IDPs or non-IDPs were reported.

6.4.5. Gender and vulnerable groups

What impact was most valuable to participating communities? Are there different impacts on men and women or vulnerable groups (people with disability, children, elderly)? Did women and men participate and benefit equally or differently?

Beneficiaries from all of the activities, and key informants, stated that all participating individuals benefited equally from the intervention. During the data analysis, no specific differences were identified between the findings and answers from female and male respondents unless stated otherwise, which supports this finding.

While beneficiaries in FGDs stated that overall men have a stronger direct benefit from the project due to higher participation, women benefit indirectly from the project due to the increased HH income. Similar, subsidized bread beneficiaries stated that the whole household benefited from the assistance.

While the limited number of female farmer beneficiaries stems from the fact that the majority of farmers are males, informants from Shafak stated that the cash for work project specifically targeted women to maintain a balance in terms of gender:

- Tailored cash for work activities empowered women according to key informants, especially the pest control activity
- 97% of the surveyed women from the cash for work activity reported that the project had a positive influence on women, except one respondent who described the influence as 'neutral'.
- 47% of respondents believe that the project influenced women's role in livelihood 'very much', while the other 47% stated 'somewhat'.
- Key examples given of the effects on women were opportunities for females to provide for their HH's basic needs, reach financial independence, improve their living conditions and become an active member in the community.

6.4.6. Factors and effects

What changes were intended, unintended, positive or negative?

Overall, the evaluation found that the project created positive change on food security, community households and local markets, as described above. The change was intended and according to what was expected from the project's logframe and planning.

Key informants from project staff (both IPs and CARE) did not identify any major negative change, however the following unintended effects were reported:

One field worker from Shafak described tensions between the beneficiaries and other community members who did not score enough vulnerability criteria to receive the assistance as an unintended or negative effect. One informant from the external stakeholders stated that as many NGOs apply similar vulnerability criteria and have implemented assistance since several years, most of the beneficiaries are aware of the criteria and try to meet them on purpose, e.g. do not want to work because they assume higher chances of receiving assistance when being unemployed. Additionally, another unintended effect was that shop owners were reported as knowing the day of the cash distribution and as a consequence, raising the prices on this specific day.

6.5. Sustainability

6.5.1. Enduring benefits

To what extent are the benefits likely to be felt after assistance ends?

When asking about their ability to meet their needs for the coming three months, the surveyed beneficiaries of the four modalities had similar answers:

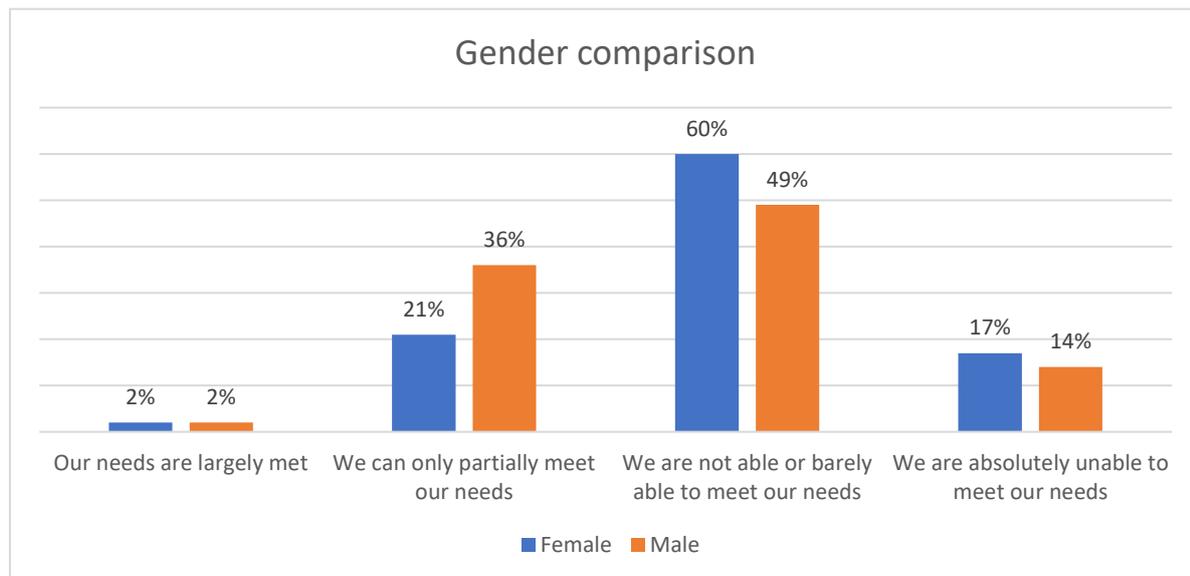
Table 1: Enduring needs

<i>In your current situation, how would you rate your household's ability to meet its overall needs for the next 3 months?</i>	Cash for work	Farmers	CARE	MRCFF	One Off
Our needs are largely met	7%	7%	0%	1%	2%
We can only partially meet our needs	43%	0%	50%	32%	34%
We are not able or barely able to meet our needs	30%	60%	48%	51%	48%
We are absolutely unable to meet our needs	20%	30%	3%	16%	16%

Only few (3%) respondents from the AO implementation stated to be absolutely unable to meet their needs compared to the modalities implemented by IPs, which likely stems from the fact that by the time of the evaluation, the cash distribution from the AO was still ongoing, while the distribution from the IPs was completed two months ago in June.

When separating the data by gender, the evaluation found that a higher percentage of the female respondents were unable to meet their needs in the next three month, as seen on the graphic below, where more women stated to not be able, barely or absolutely unable to meet their needs.

Figure 26: Enduring benefits: gender comparison



Similar, FGD respondents from all five organizations agreed that the benefits felt from the assistance will end with the project. Reasons given included the limited amount of money, which was described as hardly being enough to meet the basic needs. Another reason given was that due to the lack of income opportunities, the only income source would end with the project. FGD participants stated how they would be no longer able to secure food or rent after the end of the project and that people would return to debt or coping mechanisms such as reducing food or selling assets. Only 2 informants from IYD mentioned that they would be able to feel a benefit after the project ends, because the participant purchased a refrigerator and a solar panel from the assistance and the other two had saved food items in the house.

The livelihood component FGD participants gave varying answers. On one hand, participants from Cash for work stated that they felt short-term benefit after the assistance for between 10 to 20 days, due to lasting food. One participant explained how she still benefitted from her family's approval and pride in her, motivating her to look for another job opportunity. Farmers stated that the benefit was short-term, because most of the money was used to pay off debts. One farmer stated that his crops failed and he did not receive any benefit from the assistance.

While subsidized bread beneficiaries said they did not feel any long-term benefit, the informant from the Al-Bab LC stated that the institution worked on keeping the same price and quality of the bread bundles. However, the interviewed bakeries stated that they do not think that beneficiaries will continue to feel benefits after the end of the project, because the bread is only subsidized by the council for one day. One informant stated that beneficiaries would be forced to buy from the black market at a higher price after the project ended. Similarly, the LC and bakery informants stated that the investments in the bakeries do not guarantee sustainability, but that only continued support to provide subsidized bread will ensure sustainability. On the other hand, field workers from Shafak stated that the supported bakeries can operate for six months without the need for maintenance.

Enduring benefits of the FFP project:

- × The majority of beneficiaries do not see long-term benefits of the project and imagine challenges to meet their needs in the future
- × All interviewed project staff highlighted that the emergency component of the project was not designed for long-term sustainability, especially the One-off cash assistance.
- The livelihoods component was considered as more sustainable by project stakeholders due to the wheat value chain activities. Especially the infrastructure rehabilitation was highlighted as the most sustainable component of the project, as the benefits of rehabilitation endure after the project ended. However, although beneficiaries and local stakeholders confirmed a few sustainable effects, the overall benefit was not considered as long lasting due to high costs of operating the bakeries and wheat production.

Similar, findings from the baseline, mid-term and evaluation comparison of food security indicators show that the impact was significantly higher during the ongoing assistance, but decreased again after the assistance ended.

Overall and except for the bakery rehabilitation, the benefits of the assistance are not likely to be felt by beneficiaries after the project ends.

6.5.2. Exit strategy

To what extent will the project's exit strategy ensure sustainability?

According to CARE's management, the project does not have an exit strategy per se, however the plan was to continue with another round implementation of the FFP project to continue to cover the gaps and provide support, although this would not necessarily address the same beneficiaries as covered before. Additionally, informants stated that both IPs and beneficiaries were informed prior to participating about the start and end dates of the assistance. There is currently no coordination with other actors to smoothen the exit of the project.

While CARE's informants have expressed hope that the rehabilitated bakeries will continue to provide bread to the local communities, it was also highlighted that CARE and Shafak depend on the local council to monitor or supervise this.

Key informants from different groups expressed the need for a stronger focus on livelihood activities instead of emergency activities in order to offer long-term support and ensure sustainability. According to the food security cluster focal point, the region is in crucial need of advocacy and implementation of livelihood projects in order to provide sustainable income and food security opportunities to the local communities.

6.6. Coordination

Did the project activities overlap with and duplicate other similar interventions?

Informants from CARE management, the IPs as well as the cluster for Food security and the FFP donor have confirmed that the project activities did not overlap with and/or duplicate any other similar interventions. Several informants have highlighted CARE's great efforts on taking the lead on coordination within both the local NGO as well as international organizations community in order to

identify the key gaps in the targeted locations so as to ensure that no assistance is duplicated. Informants highlighted how regular meetings on the cluster platform has helped to identify potential areas of duplication, e.g. during the beginning of the project implementation.

Next to the cluster, an additional layer of preventing duplication is achieved through the coordination with local councils, e.g. informants from the local council in Azaz and Al Bab stated how there are three other organizations working on financial aid and cash distribution and how the LCs have established a joint meeting between these organizations to avoid duplication as well as provided each organization with different lists of names to cover as many families as possible.

No project similar to the Wheat Value Chain was reported by informants. The coordination with the AFAD, a Turkish government agency, was also mentioned as having contributed to ensuring the relevant gaps in the targeted communities are identified and covered by the assistance.

How has coordination among IPs, CARE and local institutions added value to the project?

According to key informants from CARE, added value of the coordination and partnership with IPs occurred due to their increased experience in implementing activities on the ground as well as their excellent knowledge of the local context and conditions. Working through partners was described by CARE as being able to access a higher number of locations due to the easier approval process.

Based on the feedback from local community leaders and camp managers, the coordination with CARE as well as the IPs went very smoothly due to regular exchange of information and meetings. Informants from the local councils appreciated how the IPs visited their offices and explained the planned activities and the scope. The informant from the agriculture office explained how there was effective follow up between the agriculture office and Shafak, as well as the farmers.

How did the project activities and partners complement each other? Did the project complement with other USG and non USG grants to maximize impact?

According to key informants, the cash components complemented each other through the coverage of different geographic areas. By implementing both through local partners as well as directly through the Area office, CARE was able to both benefit from the access and knowledge of local IPs, as well as through directly interacting with the beneficiaries and gaining more control over the project.

The main achievement in complementary activities was the wheat value chain, as all project activities were designed in order to complement each other as well as establishing increased value when coming together.

Under the livelihood component, the USAID-Food for Peace funded project is focusing on enhancing access to agricultural livelihood opportunities, improving long-term food security and local market resilience. Key informants from CARE have highlighted how the FFP'S livelihood components are focusing on building up on the activities from other similar projects funded by US Grants. In particular, the agricultural project funded by DFID is complementing CARE'S ongoing value chain program. While the DFID program is targeting the pre-harvest stage, CARE and Shafak programs are targeting the after-harvest stage of wheat production, e.g. purchase of wheat, distribution of flour to the bakeries and increased bread production. Therefore, there is a high level of complementarity among these two US-funded projects.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Relevance: The project and the implemented activities can be considered as highly relevant to the local context and the needs of the beneficiaries. While the selection process was considered as fair and effective, more can be done to increase transparency of the selection criteria to decrease jealousy or tension among the people who were not selected. The project activities were accessible to beneficiaries from various groups, and a high percentage of people with disabilities were included in the project. However, more can be done to include a larger group of female beneficiaries in the cash distribution assistance. The project did not duplicate or overlap with other organizations' interventions, but complemented the activities of the US-funded project of farmers support implemented by DFID.

Efficiency: The project and the activities were implemented smoothly and delivered efficiently, with exception of the direct implementation modality of CARE due to external challenges of gaining necessary approvals from local authorities. Modalities were used for their intended purpose of being used for food consumption (cash assistance) or for agricultural investments (farmers). The project received a No cost extension and was implemented according to budget. The multi-round and livelihood activities were described as having the highest value for money out of the provided assistance.

Effectiveness: The activities can be considered as effective in achieving the planned outcomes and overall goal of increasing the food security of households of the project. Successful factors of the project contributing to the achievement of the planned outcomes were regular communication with the IPs, experience from previous implementation rounds, an effective selection process, a high involvement in local and international coordination structures and flexibility from the donor. Factors which challenged the achievement were mostly related to external challenges not related to the project itself. Feedback and complaint mechanisms are effectively in place, however more can be done to increase satisfaction and awareness about these channels.

Impact: The evaluation concluded that the project had a great impact on beneficiaries' lives and the wider community. Positive impact on local markets was reported in term of a higher purchasing power of beneficiaries and an increased cash flow. From all provided activities, the cash for work pest control activity had the highest positive impact on women and their role in livelihood, due to their tailored activities for female workers. When comparing food security indicators with baseline values from the multi-round cash activity, the evaluation found significant improvements in terms of reduced hunger and increased food consumption score. While use of coping strategies decreased compared to baseline values, the use was still relatively high among beneficiaries from Ihsan and Shafak.

Sustainability: Due to the nature of an emergency assistance programme, the sustainability of the project was limited as well as lacking a concrete exit strategy. . More can be done to further enhance sustainability in the future through an increased focus on the livelihood activities. Overall, the evaluation did not find a high level of sustainability, which is largely related to the nature of an emergency intervention and the provided modality.

7.1. Recommendations

Relevance:

- **Increase transparency and awareness of the selection criteria**, especially among non-selected beneficiaries. This can be done through sharing criteria through brochures and flyers or visual media, e.g. infographics or info-video on social media. This also includes providing appropriate explanations to non-selected beneficiaries on the reasons for why they were not selected. Further investigate in coordination with the IPs and local stakeholders if the selection criteria are covering different groups in the communities comprehensively. Investigate complaints of beneficiaries regarding wrong selection of beneficiaries

Efficiency:

- **Continue to focus to cash distribution only** in the next project round instead of food baskets similar to the evaluated projects. Due to an easier distribution and procurement process needed for cash assistance instead of food baskets, this would increase the efficiency of the programme while maintaining a high impact of increased food security.
- **Allocate more time for planning and preparation of the project activities at the beginning of the project cycle**, especially for the areas that require specific approval procedures or additional paperwork to be completed.
- **Improve the coordination process with financial service providers** through allocating sufficient time for the contracting process and communicate any challenges transparently, especially relevant for the CARE area office's implementation.
- **Continue to focus on e-vouchers instead of paper vouchers**, as most of the informants stated these as a preferred modality of multi-round cash distribution due to increased efficiency, while for one-off distribution paper vouchers were suggested.

Effectiveness:

- **Review and improve the effectiveness of available feedback and complaint mechanisms.** Robust complaints and response mechanisms that beneficiaries trust and can rely on are crucial to accountability, especially if there is a risk of inclusion or exclusion. More can be done to increase awareness on available mechanisms and introduce processes to measure complaints responses, e.g. through regular follow up to verify that all complaints have been answered as well as through considering a satisfaction questionnaire once complaints have been answered. This is especially relevant for supported farmers and Shafak's implementation.

Sustainability

- **Consider building sustainability measures into emergency programming** where possible to prevent a sudden decrease in food security or an increased use of coping strategies or hunger once the activities have ended. Review the progress of stabilization in locations in which a stronger shift to livelihood activities would be feasible and adequate. Advocate for an increased focus on livelihood activities and their greater sustainable impact on overall food security.

- **Further discuss the exit of the project with beneficiaries and local stakeholders** to generate ideas that the project could adopt to increase the likelihood that they can sustain some of the benefits after the project ended. Consider partnering up with other organizations to smoothen the exit of the project.

Gender-specific conclusions and recommendations:

Overall, the project did not find major differences between female and male respondents, which supports the finding that male and female beneficiaries have benefited equally from the project.

Especially the cash for work activity had great impact on women's live and their role in livelihood. Beneficiaries reported positive personal changes, as financial independence, stress relief and stronger motivation to work.

In order to further increase the impact on women with the FFP programme, the following is recommended:

- **Further focus on increasing female participation in the cash component**, as female targets have not been adequately met. This can be done through conducting awareness-raising activities to promote gender-balanced participation of women from male-headed households in the project as well as higher focus on female-headed households when coordinating the pre-beneficiaries lists with the local council and IPs. Additionally, it is recommended to review gender-specific barriers which might hinder women to participate in cash distribution activities, e.g. the lack of safe transport to distributions sites or the lack of flexible hours of cash distribution, as females are often obligated with care-work during the day.
- **Further increase gender mainstreaming of food security indicators.** When comparing indicators between male and female respondents, female respondents from IPs' implementation received higher scores, while male respondents from the direct implementation received higher scores. Regular monitoring of indicators for male and female beneficiaries in baseline, mid-term and endline reports will lead to a better understanding of differences between male and female beneficiaries.
- **Continue to include and expand livelihood activities with a specific focus on women**, e.g. the pest control programme. Explore how to include elderly women or people with disabilities in the livelihood component, as the current activities require physical work. A stronger focus on livelihood activities would also increase the level of sustainability of the project.