

# Kore Lavi DFAP Final Qualitative Performance Evaluation

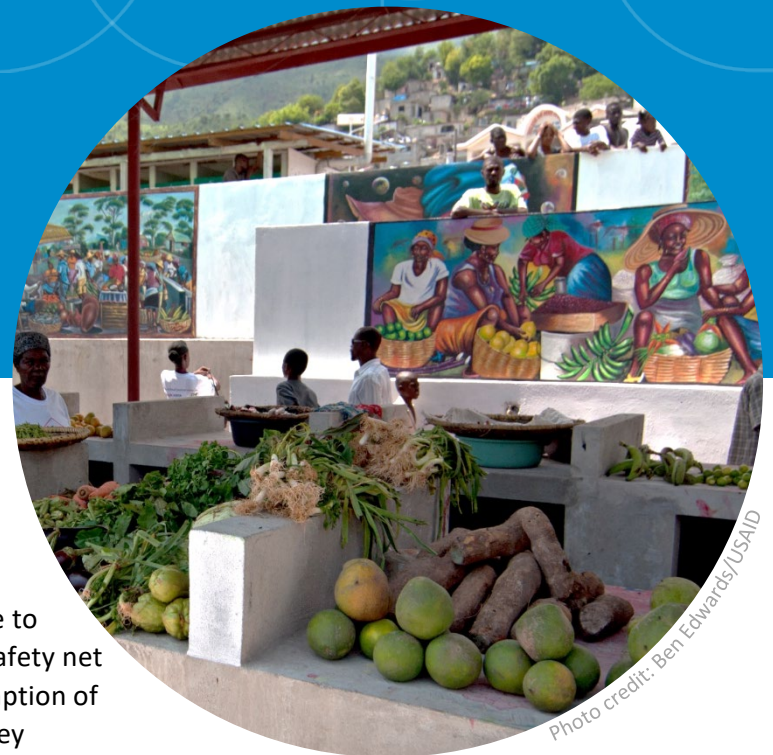
## Summary Brief

### INTRODUCTION

The Kore Lavi Development Food Assistance Project (DFAP) was launched in August 2013 with the purpose to support the Haitian Government in creating a social safety net for food and nutrition security that prioritizes consumption of locally grown quality products. The project had four key strategic objectives (SOs):

- SO1: National systems for vulnerability targeting strengthened
- SO2: Access of extremely vulnerable households to local and nutritious foods increased
- SO3: Maternal and child nutritional status improved
- SO4: Haitian institutions' capacity to effectively lead and manage safety net programming improved

Prepared by Tulane University School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, this brief summarizes the results of the final performance evaluation, which assesses the development outcomes of the Kore Lavi project and implications for sustainability.



### ABOUT KORE LAVI

**Primary Focus Areas:** 1) Participant targeting for social services; 2) Distribution of food vouchers to targeted families, prioritizing local foods (plus working with farmers, vendors, MFIs) 3) Social behavior change communications through care groups for child nutrition, health, and food safety promotion; 4) Institutional capacity strengthening

**Implementing Organizations:** CARE (prime), Action Against Hunger, World Food Program, World Vision, and in partnership w/ Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MAST)

**Intervention Period:** August 2013 – September 2019

**Funding Source:** United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s Office of Food for Peace (FFP).

**Intervention Areas:** 23 communes total, found across five departments: Artibonite (upper), Central Plateau, Northwest, Southeast, and West (La Gonave Island).



The evaluation presents qualitative evidence for many positive outcomes and promising practices, including:

- The hybrid paper/electronic voucher system was deeply appreciated by participants.
- Inclusion of fresh locally produced foods in the voucher system created important multiplication of impact.
- Partnering of Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs) and food vendors in the voucher system was successful.
- Drafting of the National Policy for Social Protection (PNSP) had positive long-term impact, an adaptation added later in the life of the project.
- The Système Informatique du Ministère des Affaires Sociales et du Travail (SIMAST) census-based information and targeting system was an important achievement.
- Collaboration and capacity building were appreciated by the Government of Haiti (GOH) staff.
- Implementing partners developed a system to monitor impacts on GOH institutionalization.
- Integrating Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) with food and nutrition activities was successful.

The evaluation also identifies several lessons learned, including:

- Building a social safety net takes time and long-term commitment.
- Programs aimed at policy making and institution building should include systems-level indicators from the start.
- Even in challenging contexts, progress and improvements in governance can be achieved.
- There is a synergistic effect between livelihood and health/nutrition programming.
- Account for cultural norms, such as resource sharing within and between households, in design.
- In the context of inter-generational poverty, pathways to graduation must be identified and monitored.
- There should be a clear, shared vision for information systems for social protection (such as SIMAST).
- Strong, participatory leadership at the Chief of Party (CoP) and mission level are essential for effective adaptive management.

## KEY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### SO1: National systems for vulnerability targeting strengthened

SO1: Targeting – Participant Perspective	
Conclusions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key Informant Interview (KII) and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) participants generally agreed that the Haitian Deprivation and Vulnerability Index (HDVI) functioned adequately as a targeting tool.</li> <li>• Degree of inclusion and exclusion error was not excessive or of large concern.</li> <li>• Complaint mechanisms allowed participants to appeal inclusion/exclusion from participant list.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to develop and refine the use of quantitative proxy vulnerability indicators.</li> <li>• Do not discount other approaches (community listing, etc.) in the correct contexts.</li> <li>• Ensure future projects include effective complaint/feedback mechanisms.</li> </ul>

### SO1: Targeting – Implementing Partner Perspective

Conclusions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Haitian Deprivation and Vulnerability Index (HDVI) was considered a ‘black box’ by consortium staff.</li> <li>• HDVI risks becoming outdated (based on 2012 poverty survey).</li> <li>• Targeting 10% of the most vulnerable households in each commune discounts differences in poverty between communes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The targeting indicator (HDVI) should be updated. Future targeting tools should be developed transparently, balancing simplicity with sensitivity and specificity.</li> <li>• Transferring ownership of tools to MAST will require capacity building and resources.</li> <li>• Regional differences in prevalence of poverty should be accounted for in targeting.</li> </ul>

### SO1: Targeting – Graduation

Conclusions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant graduation:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lack of clear pathway to graduation</li> <li>○ Lack of clear definition of ‘graduation’</li> <li>○ Lack of discussion if graduation was an appropriate objective</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Lack of funding or mechanism to enroll new voucher recipients after the initial targeting period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project design should include a clear definition of graduation and if it is a reasonable goal.</li> <li>• Include a way to enroll new voucher recipients:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Regular updates of SIMAST data</li> <li>○ Systems and resources to allow flexibility in caseloads</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### SO1: Targeting – SIMAST

Conclusions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of the Système Informatique du Ministère des Affaires Sociales et du Travail (SIMAST) was a significant accomplishment.</li> <li>• SIMAST opened the eyes of many to the potential for using a census approach to targeting.</li> <li>• Sustainability of SIMAST will be strengthened by ongoing support from MAST, other donors, and development projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FFP should continue to collaborate with internal and external stakeholders on the development and maintenance of GOH poverty information systems.</li> <li>• Developing sustainable information systems will require resource and capacity building support for MAST.</li> <li>• Regular data updates of the SIMAST will be required.</li> </ul>

## SO2: Access of extremely vulnerable households to local and nutritious foods increased

SO2: Increased access to food	
Conclusions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent, long-term voucher support smoothed households' (HH) resource inflow, allowing better planning.</li> <li>• Food sharing between HHs was common.</li> <li>• Vouchers alone may not reduce HHs in poverty:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Poverty, in many cases, is a long-term and even inter-generational problem</li> <li>○ KL lacked a complementary agriculture/livelihood component</li> <li>○ Voucher amount was not 'transformational'</li> </ul> </li> <li>• FGD participants appreciated the flexibility of paper and electronic vouchers.</li> <li>• Vouchers were considered more dignified than mass food distributions.</li> <li>• The voucher system offered adaptive mechanism for providing additional assistance following acute shocks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote sustainable impact, agriculture and livelihood components should be integrated with food security interventions.</li> <li>• Cultural norms such as sharing of food between HHs should be considered in building food ration systems.</li> <li>• Kore Lavi hybrid voucher system should be considered as a model for other FFP activities.</li> <li>• Voucher value should be regularly adjusted for inflation or in response to acute shocks.</li> </ul>

SO2: Farmers, Vendors, MFIs	
Conclusions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vouchers for fresh local foods had a multiplier impact on local markets, vendors, and farmers.</li> <li>• Inclusion of microfinance institutions and food vendors increased sustainability.</li> <li>• Outcomes related to vendors and farmers were not carefully measured.</li> <li>• Timeliness of payments to the MFIs was a frequent complaint.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to use vouchers for fresh local foods in future projects.</li> <li>• Strengthen impact monitoring. For example:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increase in producer, vendor income, and job creation</li> <li>○ Impact on vendors' business practices</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Efficient voucher distribution and reimbursement systems must be ensured.</li> </ul>

SO2: VSLAs	
Conclusions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respondents considered VSLAs successful and sustainable.</li> <li>• Demand was demonstrated by creation of non-project VSLAs.</li> <li>• VSLAs were most successful when combined with other food and nutrition interventions.</li> <li>• Impact of stand-alone VSLAs may not be as significant, particularly on the poorest HHs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to promote VSLAs as a complementary intervention to food security activities.</li> </ul>

## SO3: Maternal and child nutritional status improved

SO3: Maternal and child nutrition	
Conclusions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The “First 1,000 Days” strategy was considered appropriate and effective, but some KIIs described the end of SO3 activities as abrupt.</li> <li>Intra/inter HH sharing of food rations diluted the impact on targeted women and children.</li> <li>Sustainable behavior change will depend on affordability of nutritious local foods.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The “First 1,000 Days” strategy should be replicated.</li> <li>Consider cultural dynamics and HH ration sharing when targeting individuals such as pregnant/lactating women.</li> <li>Integrate maternal and child nutrition with livelihoods activities.</li> </ul>

## SO4: Haitian institutions’ capacity to effectively lead and manage safety net programming improved

SO4: Haitian institutional capacity – Social Protection Policy	
Conclusions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kore Lavi set the stage for work on the social protection policy.</li> <li>Drafting of the policy was consistently viewed as a high-quality, inclusive process.</li> <li>Implementation of the policy in the future is still unknown.</li> <li>Kore Lavi’s monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E) systems were not well adapted to capturing the impact of policy level change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prioritize strengthening government capacity to implement the social protection policy.</li> <li>Consider the role of and/or the need for national policy when piloting prototypes of social protection programs.</li> <li>Develop appropriate M&amp;E indicators for policy change.</li> </ul>

SO4: Haitian institutional capacity – Government of Haiti	
Conclusions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expectations of the timeline for building and transferring capacity to GOH were overly ambitious.</li> <li>High expectations had the unintended consequence of setting up the project to be perceived as less successful.</li> <li>Social safety nets take many years to build.</li> <li>The development of the institutional capacity monitoring system was a valuable innovation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tailor project goals, objectives, and timelines regarding building and transferring capacity (particularly with GOH) to local conditions.</li> <li>Commit long-term resources for capacity building.</li> <li>Include capacity building measurement tools in future programming.</li> </ul>

## Cross-Cutting Issues: Gender

Cross-Cutting Issues : Gender	
Conclusions	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Despite the promotion of gender inclusion, more men were in project leadership positions than women, and women remained underrepresented in VSLA leadership (despite positive progress).</li> <li>• Lack of gender-focused staff at the local level may have inhibited decentralized implementation to some degree.</li> <li>• VSLAs empowered women by giving them economic autonomy and leadership opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender inclusion cannot be left to happen ‘naturally,’ but it needs to be intentionally included in design, systems, staffing, and implementation.</li> <li>• Consider gender quota in project staffing where appropriate.</li> <li>• Include promotion of VSLAs as a part of gender promotion strategy.</li> </ul>

## METHODOLOGY

- Desk review of documents and data relevant to the project
- Qualitative study across all five departments where Kore Lavi was implemented (August 2019)
  - 63 key informant and in-depth interview respondents (16 female, 47 male)
    - Included informants from international organizations, implementing partners, project partners, and the Government of Haiti
  - 26 focus groups with a total of 257 participants (173 female, 84 male)
    - Discussion groups included voucher recipients, VSLA members, Mère and Père Leaders, as well as community members that did not participate in Kore Lavi activities.
- *SO2 Quantitative Impact evaluation (a separate activity), began data collection in January 2020, and is planned to end in November 2020.*