P4P in post conflict countries - difficult but important

Conflict and food insecurity are strongly interlinked. Violence can be one of the main drivers for food insecurity, which in turn also fuels conflict and can impede reconciliation. Combined with relief and recovery activities, P4P can therefore help mitigate conflict. Moreover, it can support households and communities during conflict as well as accelerating post-conflict recovery.

WFP is deliberately piloting P4P in a very diverse set of countries to determine the various positive and possibly negative outcomes of different approaches in different environments. In post-conflict countries like Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and South Sudan, many difficulties have been revealed.

Countless obstacles face P4P implementation

One example is the lack of roads and basic transport infrastructure in South Sudan, hindering most smallholder farmers to access markets. “Besides the remarkably poor infrastructure, weak markets and agro practices in South Sudan, we are also dealing with many other post-conflict symptoms. Many of the farmers that we approach have been traumatized, others are suspicious towards us. The most difficult challenge for P4P here must be the aid-dependency that has been deep-rooted in people throughout decades of conflict.” said Marc Sauveur, P4P country coordinator in South Sudan.

In Sierra Leone, the post-war environment revealed challenges at farmers’ organisation level. Insufficient management skills, lack of good governance and transparency were leading to mistrust among members. In order to enable a business relationship, P4P and its partners had to address the problems through sensitization and various trainings on business ethics and the importance of good governance and transparency.

Combining short-term responses with P4P

While the overall objectives of P4P are the same in every pilot, the approaches and targets can be as diverse as the countries are themselves. One of the vital opportunities for P4P as a conflict mitigation instrument is to develop a synergy with WFP’s emergency response and recovery

Continued on page 2
projects. Since an emergency response focuses on creating swift but short-term interventions it can be complemented by P4P’s medium term development objectives. The combined strategic efforts of both interventions can contribute to stability and open doors for development and exit strategies.

**Flexible methods in a fragile environment**

There is always a risk that a post-conflict environment can easily become a pre-conflict environment. In Afghanistan for example, the situation has changed considerably since P4P was introduced in 2010. Due to security constraints and increasing challenges with access and capacity, the country office is in the process of reviewing its P4P strategy.

“**P4P has to combine a bottom-up approach - working with field-level organizations - with a top-down approach - partnering with institutions and government ministries at the policy level, having entry points throughout the entire value chain. In this ever-evolving and high risk environment we need to be both flexible and dynamic, yet we have to maintain our mid-term objectives.**” said Djordje Vdovic, P4P country coordinator in Afghanistan.

**Women using P4P as a tool for protection**

P4P’s engagement through farmers’ organizations has demonstrated to be a powerful tool in post-conflict environments, especially for women. In Liberia, women have used the P4P platform, not only to increase their incomes through sales but to establish a social network strengthening their protection. One of the Liberian farmers, Fatu Namieh Nyen, highlighted P4P as a protection tool when speaking at the P4P Annual Consultation in early 2013.

“**During the war in Liberia neighbours were killing each other. After the war, people were afraid and sometimes didn’t talk to each other. Since P4P, we have to work together to sell our rice together. Now, I go check on my sisters when they don’t come to a meeting. I go see what is wrong. P4P is not just helping us earn money; it is bringing us peace we have not had. It is rebuilding trust and community. That is what P4P is to me.**” said Fatu.

---

**Smallholder farmers to report prices from smartphones**

WFP has recently piloted a new price monitoring system in El Salvador. Selected P4P-supported farmers have been provided with smartphones and technical training on how to report updates on their crop sales and current farm-gate prices. This innovative system also allows smallholder farmers to benefit from the data when taking marketing decisions.

WFP launched the new price monitoring system in order to obtain a better understanding of the different marketing options available to smallholder farmers. In essence, the system will capture the volumes sold and the prices obtained by farmers in different markets, such as local markets, farm-gate selling and marketing through farmers’ organisations. El Salvador is the first of four target countries to pilot the new system. A data collection application for smartphones has been specifically designed for the trial.

**Trained to report farm-gate prices**

A three-day training was held in the capital San Salvador where 18 lead farmers from P4P-supported farmers’ organisations learned how to use the application. The lead farmers will use WFP-distributed smartphones to submit weekly reports to the WFP country office. This will allow for an instantaneous data monitoring and analysis by the WFP staff.

*Farmers in El Salvador learning how to report farm-gate prices through the WFP smartphone application.*

Continued on page 3
Furthermore, a summary of the weekly update will be shared with the farmers. Alcides Ruiz, one of the participating farmers has already discovered the potential benefits this will bring to him and the Asaescla farmers’ organisation:

“The compiled price information will be extremely useful for us. At the moment, it’s the middlemen that are running the market in our community, as they dictate the price when they pick up our crops. They pull the prices down. If we as the producers are kept informed about the prices in other areas, and how they evolve, we will be able to negotiate fair prices and increase our incomes.”

Encouraged to use the smartphones
The smartphones include an arrangement with free calls between the 18 farmers and the WFP office. Due to the expected increase in the exchange of information, this will prove an instrumental tool. In addition, the participating farmers and their organisations are encouraged to explore other possible uses of the smartphone. As an incentive, a limited amount of monthly airtime and internet data is included in the arrangement.
In the coming weeks, the pilot system will be launched in Ethiopia, Ghana and Tanzania.

Background
To date, there has been no conclusive evidence clearly indicating that collective marketing through farmers’ organisations is an efficient way to address failures in agricultural markets. As a result, the P4P Mid-Term Evaluation (2011) recommended P4P to “implement a practical system for quickly collecting farm-gate prices”. This innovative tool is a product of that recommendation. The system, developed and designed by WFP, aims to fill a gap in the current market data collection and enhance the understanding of farmers’ marketing choices.

Read more about P4P in El Salvador
- [Factsheet about P4P in El Salvador](#)
- Previous reports from El Salvador about [the benefits of collective action](#) and how [female farmers are able to expand production](#).
- [WFP operations in El Salvador](#)

NOTE: With funds from P4P, the farm-gate price monitoring system pilot has been planned, designed and implemented in collaboration with WFP’s food security experts in the Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) unit. Read more about their work [here](#).

“With the smartphone, I will be aware of the prices in the market and will be able to easily share the information with others. I will also be able to call relatives as well as the other associations to share information on prices and markets. Maybe we could even use this opportunities to sell products between our organisations and regions.”

“Sonia Patricia Diaz”

“In my community there may be one price and at the same time there is another price in another community. It is important to be informed about the prices at local and national levels. Is has happen before that our farmers’ association bought products that we could not sell further because it turned out we had paid too high price in the first place.”

“Rufino Fajardo”

“I will not only use the phone for me, but also teach others in my organisation how to use it. It also enables the establishment of a network of communication with other producer organisations. Previously we did not know each other and now we are looking forward sharing important information on how to access better markets.”

“Alcides Ruiz”
P4P benefits extend to local tax system

In Cinzana municipality in Mali, the income generated by sales to WFP from P4P-supported smallholder farmers is directly linked to increases in tax revenues. With the local government investing the extra income in social services, an entire community is benefitting indirectly from the P4P pilot.

Out of the 703 municipalities in Mali, Cinzana is the biggest one with its 72 villages. Since the start of a decentralization process in Mali in 1993, the state has transferred many responsibilities to the municipalities, including the accountability and ownership of development. In Cinzana municipality, payment of local development tax (less than US$2 per person aged from 14 to 60 years) was previously a major challenge for smallholder farmers. “Before the start of the P4P project, local tax recovery rate was about 50 to 60 percent in Cinzana municipality but now it’s about 83 to 86 percent, thanks to a better income for farmers” said Bamoussa Traoré, Mayor of Cinzana municipality. “This local tax increase is extremely important as it allows the municipality council to meet the needs of the communities by building schools and health centres in many villages”.

Training that connects farmers to markets
In one of the villages, Falema, the municipality council has used the increased tax revenues to build a community health centre which increases access to medical services for many people like Assitan Traoré who lives in Tigini, about 6 kilometres away. “I used to go to a health centre which is 35 kilometres away from my village but now I don’t have to pay anymore for transport, I get quicker medical treatment and return earlier home to continue my daily work” said Assitan.

Since 2009, P4P has worked with the Dry Cereals Producers Union in Cinzana (USCPCS). In partnership with PRECAD, AMASSA Afrique Verte and Sasakawa Global 2000, P4P has trained the smallholder farmers on farming techniques and access to agricultural inputs, cereals commercialization, tendering, organisation management and post-harvest handling. They have also been equipped with scales, pallets and sieves, instruments that help them partake in other competitive markets beyond WFP.

Thousands of indirect beneficiaries
During the P4P pilot, the USCPCS Farmer’s Organisation has supplied WFP with 1,250 metric tons of quality commodities including millet, sorghum and beans to a value of US$525,000. USCPCS is also supplying quality cereals to food processors and other buyers. The positive impacts of the P4P project have encouraged more farmers to join the USCPCS Farmers’ Organisation which has almost tripled its members from 145 in 2009 to 427 in 2013. Moreover, the 40,000 inhabitants in Cinzana continues to benefit from the new schools and health centres that the local government is building as a result of the increased tax revenues from smallholder farmers.

In total, WFP has purchased 13,400 metric tons of quality commodities from P4P supported farmers organisations in Mali, injecting more than US$ 7 million into the economy of a country which ranks 182 out of 187 in UNDP’s 2012 Human Development Index.
As the global coordinator for WFP’s Purchase for Progress (P4P) pilot, I visited Malawi in early July to review the challenges facing smallholder farmers and how P4P might build on the progress to date. These are a few of my observations.

Flying into Malawi, nestled between the Lake and the lush hills of Africa’s Rift Valley, the deforested hills and depleted soils are visible from 2,000 metres. This presents daunting challenges for Malawi’s farmers, most of whom rely on semi-subsistence rainfed production to feed their families and earn a decent living.

One might say that the P4P pilot in Malawi is experimenting with a two track approach: one bottom up by working directly with smallholder farmers’ organizations, and the other top down through the Agricultural Commodity Exchange for Africa (ACE), working to engage various stakeholders to use the commodity exchange as a marketing platform. A nascent Warehouse Receipt System (WRS), affiliated to ACE, provides guaranteed storage and quality control for buyers and sellers.

**Continuous increase in purchases from smallholder farmers**

WFP offers a reliable market opportunity for farmers’ organizations (FOs) and small and medium traders who can supply high quality staple commodities, particularly white maize and pulses; and through P4P works closely with numerous partners at different points along the value chain to improve smallholder farmers’ capacities. To date, P4P and partners have provided hands-on training to some 15,000 farmers who belong to participating farmers’ organizations. The farmers have been trained in various topics including: organizational management and business planning; improved production and post-harvest handling; quality control; storage facility management; marketing; conservation agriculture; and other aspects of the value chain.

WFP Malawi purchases almost 70 percent of its food locally. Since the inception of P4P in 2009, WFP has purchased almost 52,000 metric tons of commodities through ACE or directly from farmers’ groups, putting US$ 14 million more directly into the pockets of the smallholder farmers and the local economy. The food is used in WFP programmes in Malawi and neighbouring countries for activities such as school meals, food for assets, refugee rations and maternal child health programmes. Purchases from farmers’ organizations continue to increase as more FOs achieve the capacity to meet WFP’s quality standards, minimal contract sizes, and relatively strict delivery requirements.

**Applying knowledge from P4P training to other markets**

During the visit, I met with the members of Cheka FO in Ntchisi district. The FO had recently received a “Certificate of Graduation” due to their good performance in marketing to WFP and others. This means that they have graduated from the “direct purchase” modality (a negotiated contract), to a competitive procurement modality through the internet-based trading platform of ACE.

Matthews Kamphambe, the chairman of Cheka FO, told me that last year the FO sold maize to a large agro-dealer as well as to WFP. He proudly told me that “we got a good price, as we sold later in the season”. He attributes this success to the training and experience over the past three years.
Cheka is now applying their improved knowledge regarding warehouse management and marketing to the other products that they aggregate. “We offer our members the possibility of getting paid when they bring their commodities to the warehouse - or to wait to get paid a better price when we find a market. Last season we did not have any farmers asking for upfront payment, because they now believe that it is better when we all sell together. And we always encourage our members to keep enough for their families before deciding to sell.”

**Optimism despite challenges**

As part of the “graduation strategy”, WFP’s P4P team in Malawi seeks to help farmers progress from semi-subsistence agriculture to become empowered market actors. As in all P4P pilot countries, many challenges remain, such as access to affordable financial services, poor roads and insufficient storage infrastructure.

Fortunately, many FOs in Malawi are steadily overcoming these obstacles through their own initiative, hard work and persistence. There is certainly an enormous potential to strengthen WFP’s partnerships with other organizations to support conservation agriculture, improve access to farm inputs and financial services and to further enhance both production and market access.

*Ken Davies*

*Purchase for Progress (P4P) Global Coordinator*

---

### July updates

#### Preparations for International Year of Family Farming

During the Economic and Social Forum in Geneva on 3 July, Thomas Yanga, WFP director of interagency partnerships participated in a side event on “Innovation Systems for Family Farming”. This provided an opportunity to discuss WFP’s work with smallholder farmers, focusing on P4P. The event was organized by FAO, CGIAR, GFAR and IFAD in preparation for the 2014 International Year of Family Farming (IYFF). In a joint statement the organisers urged the international community to promote agricultural innovation systems that are particularly responsive to the needs of smallholder family farmers. P4P is actively engaged in the IYFF international steering committee while regional and country offices are encouraged to get involved in upcoming local events.

#### Expert highlighted P4P’s efforts during conference in Germany

The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), together with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), hosted a conference on 10 July in Bonn. The purpose was to discuss the conceptual approaches and practical instruments of linking agricultural development and food security with social protection. P4P’s efforts in promoting strategies that target both agricultural development and social protection, such as linking with school feeding was presented by Dr. Miguel García Winder, director of agribusiness and trade at the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) and a member of the P4P Technical Review Panel (TRP). He also highlighted the need to scale up these experiences by involving the private sector and strengthening government programmes to utilize local procurement.

#### Feed the Future’s progress report - focus on smallholder farmers

USAID shares P4P’s vision that support to smallholder farmers can be a catalyst for community development. On 25 July USAID released the 2013 Feed the Future Progress Report that highlights the impact of their support to smallholder farmers. The report also emphasizes the need to accelerate smallholder adoption of new technologies and farming practices as well as to promote sustainable commercial markets and improved smallholder access to markets. USAID provides funding to P4P through its Bureau of Food Security. The full report can be accessed [here](https://www.feedthefuture.gov/sites/default/files/2013_progress_report.pdf).
KEY P4P CONTACTS IN ROME

P4P COORDINATION UNIT
• Ken Davies, Global P4P Coordinator:
  Ken.Davies@wfp.org
• Catherine Feeney, Sr Programme Adviser, Communications & Partnerships; Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone:
  Catherine.Feeney@wfp.org
• Edouard Nizeyimana, Sr Programme Advisor for Eastern and Southern Africa:
  Edouard.Nizeyimana@wfp.org
• Romain Sirois, Sr Programme Advisor for Latin America and Afghanistan:
  Romain.Sirois@wfp.org
• Clare Mbizule, Programme Adviser, M&E, Learning and Sharing:
  Clare.Mbizule@wfp.org
• Bhai Thapa, Finance Officer:
  Bhai.Thapa@wfp.org
• Batamaka Some, Gender Consultant:
  Batamaka.Some@wfp.org
• Ahnna Gudmunds, Communications and Advocacy Officer:
  Ahnna.Gudmunds@wfp.org
• Barbara Pfister, Reports Officer:
  Barbara.Pfister@wfp.org

PROCUREMENT DIVISION
• Shane Prigge, Food Technologist:
  Shane.Prigge@wfp.org
• Stephane Meaux, Food Technologist:
  Stephane.Meaux@wfp.org
• Brigitte Labbé, Procurement Officer:
  Brigitte.Labbe@wfp.org

LEGAL OFFICE
• Yoshiko Makino, Legal Officer:
  Yoshiko.Makino@wfp.org

P4P Country Coordinators/Focal Points

Asia
Afghanistan: Djordje Vdovic <Djordje.Vdovic@wfp.org>

Eastern, Southern & Central Africa
Democratic Republic of Congo: Francis Bere <Francis.Bere@wfp.org>
Ethiopia: Mauricio Burtet <mauricio.burtet@wfp.org>
Kenya: Zippy Mbati <zippy.mbati@wfp.org>
Malawi: Irene Del Rio <Irene.Del-Rio@wfp.org>
Mozambique: Ana Touza <Ana.Touza@wfp.org>
Rwanda: Patrice Nzyeyimana, OIC <Patrice.Nzyeyimana@wfp.org>
South Sudan: Emmanuela Mashayo <Emmanuela.Mashayo@wfp.org>
Tanzania: Marina Negroponte <Marina.Negroponte@wfp.org>
Uganda: Germain Akoubia <Germain.Akoubia@wfp.org>
Zambia: Aurore Rusiga <Aurore.Rusiga@wfp.org>

Regional Bureau Focal Point: Sarah Longford (Johannesburg)
  <Sarah.Longford@wfp.org>

West Africa
Burkina Faso: Yves Aklamavo, <Yves.Aklamavo@wfp.org>
Ghana: Hassan Abdelrazig <Hassan.Abdelrazig@wfp.org>
Liberia: James Legg <James.Legg@wfp.org>
Mali: Isabelle Mbala <Isabelle.Mbala@wfp.org>
Sierra Leone: Peter Kimotho, OIC <Peter.Kimotho@wfp.org>
Regional Bureau Focal Point: Isabelle Mbala <Isabelle.Mbala@wfp.org>

Latin American & Caribbean
El Salvador: Hebert Lopez <Hebert.Lopez@wfp.org>
Guatemala: Sheryl Schneider <Sheryl.Schneider@wfp.org>
Honduras: Lenin Gradiz <Lenin.Gradiz@wfp.org>
Nicaragua: Francisco Alvarado <Francisco.Alvarado@wfp.org>
Regional Bureau Focal Point: Marta Ortiz <Marta.Ortiz@wfp.org>

P4P Annual Consultation
The Fifth WFP/Purchase for Progress Annual Consultation will be held during the last week of January 2014 in Rome. Learning from the pilot phase continues to be consolidated, as we move into mainstreaming of pro-smallholder market development as a part of the WFP toolbox. This consultation will be an opportunity for P4P stakeholders to share and reflect upon the learning of the past five years. Selected government partners, private sector, agricultural institutions, donors and non-governmental organizations will shortly receive an invitation to attend the event.

P4P updates and stories every week on www.wfp.org/p4p

The Guardian: “Small-Scale Producers Key To Attaining Food Security And Ending Hunger”
http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development-professionals-network/2013/jul/10/hunger-food-security-small-producers

Do you know the best Farmers’ Organisation in Africa?
The upcoming 2013 Annual Africa Farmer Organisation Award is organized by African Investment Climate Research (AFRICRES) in partnership with Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and supported by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The purpose of the event is to acknowledge the vital role that farmers’ organisations play in promoting sustainable agriculture in the continent. The deadline for submissions has been extended until 30 August. You can download the entry form and read more about the selection criteria on AGRA’s webpage.

The update is published by the P4P Coordination Unit in Rome, Italy.
External: www.wfp.org/p4p Internal: http://go.wfp.org/web/purchaseforprogress