



# The Missing Piece of World Food Program's Strategic Plan: Cambodia as Illustration of WFP's Need to Lead and Collaborate in Addressing the World Obesity Epidemic

by Amanda Hixson (MDP 2018 University of Arizona)

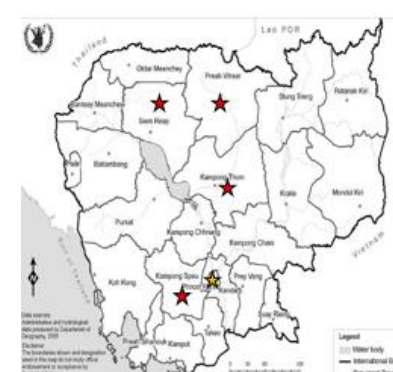


## INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Over the last four decades, obesity rates among children and adults have increased at a staggering rate (UN, 2017; Black et al., 2013; Abarca-Gómez et al., 2017). The physical and socioeconomic effects of this phenomenon are dire and long-lasting on a micro and macro level.

In order to reverse global obesity trends, there must be worldwide efforts and collaboration on all levels of community and government. The World Food Program (WFP) of the United Nations is strategically situated to have a large impact on the global obesity epidemic, as the largest humanitarian agency in the world assisting approximately 80 million people in 80 countries located throughout Central America, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific (WFP, 2017b; WFP, 2017g). This research utilizes data from the WFP Cambodia 2011-2016 Country Portfolio Evaluation (CPE) conducted by TANGO International as a case study to put forward recommendations for WFP to ensure it is actively engaged in combating obesity while addressing all aspects of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2: Zero Hunger.

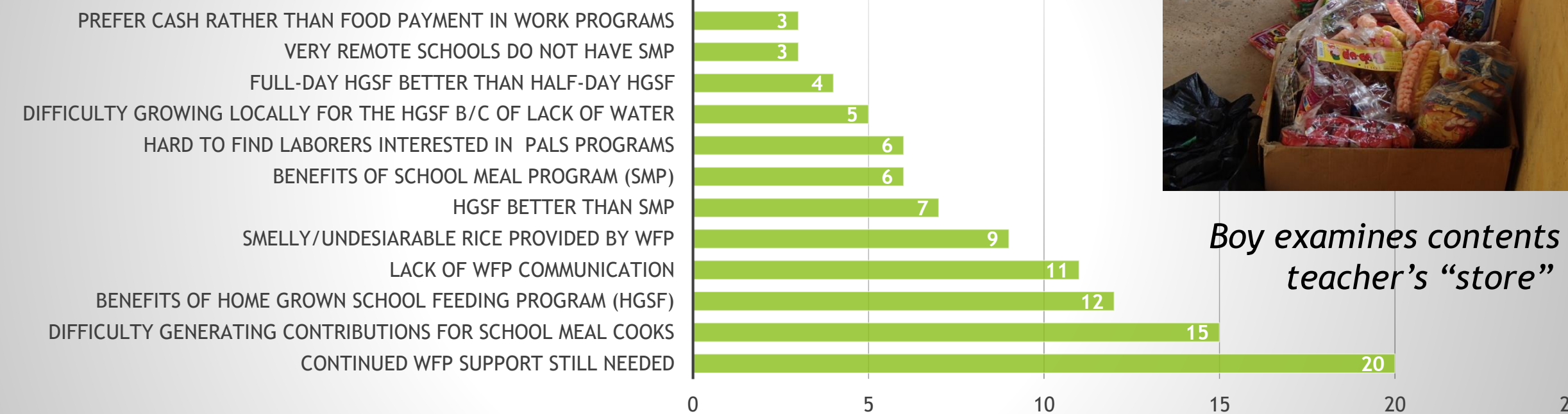
## METHODS



- Extensive document review
- Direct observation and photo documentation
- Purposive sampling strategy
- 29 key informant interviews
- 16 focus group discussions

## RESULTS & DISCUSSION

### Number of stakeholders who talked about an issue



Boy examines contents of a teacher's "store"



Boys in a remote resettlement community eat popsicles delivered over a heavily rutted road by motorcycle



The most pertinent results for this research emerged in the nuances of observations, side conversations, and comments that had no vital importance for the evaluation team.

### ➤ Nutrition programs no longer resource priority for WFP Cambodia

"WFP will not get back into nutrition programming because of lack of funding. Also, they lost their seat at the table. They try to offer strategic information for decision making, but don't do anything about implementation" (personal communication, WFP Cambodia staff member, July 2018).

### ➤ WFP Cambodia staff not trained in nutrition

- ❑ Staff members requested budget and training for nutrition intervention as priority in next Country Strategic Plan
- ❑ Mothers inadvertently prioritize non-nutritious snacks over healthful school meals

### ➤ WFP not affecting nutrition in Cambodia

- ❑ No nutrition indicators for school meal programs (SMPs), and school is conducted in two half-day shifts
- ❑ Those most in need are not included in the programs because they are "too remote"

## RECOMMENDATIONS & CONCLUSIONS

### Lead the push to achieve SDG 2

- Increase long-term positive nutrition outcomes
  - ❑ Establish nutrition indicators
  - ❑ Implement staff nutrition training
  - ❑ Nutrition education for parents, school staff, children, communities
- Combat overweight/obesity trends

Future corporate strategic plans should include an objective to decrease overweight and obesity numbers in the countries where WFP works, with accompanying action steps informed by evidence.

## REFERENCES

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to the U of A Master's in Development Practice (MDP) Program and the School of Geography and Development for grants that helped fund this research. I also would like to thank Tim Finan for helping me secure this practicum, and Bruce Ravesloot and Jeanne Downen with TANGO International for their funding, mentoring, and willingness to allow me to participate in the Cambodia World Food Program Country Portfolio Evaluation. Lastly, I would like to give an enormous thank you to my parents, Karen and Lee Hixson, for taking my son, Phoenix, around Thailand while I completed my field work in Cambodia.