



World Food Programme

# A Report from the Office of Evaluation

*Full Report of the Mid-Term Evaluation  
of the India Country Programme  
(1997 – 2002)*

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The evaluation team visited India from 04 to 24 September 2000. The mission team leader prepared this document on the basis of the mission's work in the field.

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Responsibility for the opinions expressed in this report rests solely with the authors. Publication of this document does not imply endorsement by WFP of the opinions expressed.

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# Acronyms

CCA	Common Country Assessment
CP	Country Programme
CSO	Country Strategy Outline
DWCD	Department of Women and Child Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFW	Food-For-Work
GDI	Gender Development Indicator
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEM	Gender Empowerment
GNP	Gross National Product
GOI	Government of India
HDI	Human Development Indicator
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
IFAD	International Fund for Agriculture Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
JFM	Joint Forest Management
MT	Metric Tons
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NSSO	National Sample Survey Organization
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PDS	Public Distribution System
SC	Scheduled Caste
ST	Scheduled Tribe
TPDS	Targeted Public Distribution Scheme
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDMT	United Nations Disaster Management Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis Mapping
WFP	World Food Programme



# Table of Contents

	Page
.....	
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>I. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION AND METHODOLOGY USED.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 <i>Background – The Purpose of the Country Program</i> .....	1
1.2 <i>Objectives of the Evaluation</i> .....	1
1.3 <i>Scope of Work</i> .....	1
1.4 <i>Methodology Used</i> .....	2
<b>2. COUNTRY SITUATION ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 <i>Food Insecurity And Poverty</i> ... ..	2
2.2 <i>National Priority And Policies Addressing Poverty And Food Insecurity</i> .....	4
2.3 <i>The Role Of Food Aid</i> .....	5
<b>3. THE INDIA COUNTRY PROGRAMME AS PLANNED.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>4. ASSESSMENT, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1 <i>Concept &amp; Design</i> .....	7
4.2 <i>Operations and Implementation</i> .....	8
4.3 <i>Common Country Programme Issues</i> .....	18
<b>5. COMPLIANCE WITH WFP’S ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>6. LESSONS LEARNED .....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>ANNEXES</b>	



# Executive Summary

The general conclusion of the Mission is that serious effort was made to incorporate the new country programme approach in the preparation of the current India country programme and as a result the programme has been improved. The programme was consolidated into three activities, which was reduced to two during programme implementation, in itself allowing for greater coherence and increased flexibility in resource use during implementation.

The programme introduced changes in established areas of WFP activity, rather than identifying new target activities for intervention. This made sense, as the existing programme areas provided ample opportunities for the pursuit of CP objectives. Moreover, the possibilities for totally new initiatives were limited as the programme was developed in the context of tightening overall budget constraints.

With the two areas of activity, serious efforts were made to incorporate approaches reflecting evolving WFP policies in such areas as gender commitment, development impact (asset creation for poor families) and community participation and empowerment.

The main critical issues that emerge from the evaluation relate to the difficulties in achieving the ambitious objective that WFP has set itself in its statements of programme objectives (e.g. the FAAD). In particular, the impact of the programme on the economic and social development of chosen target groups is to be seen at the local level. It depends on how the activities impact at the local – which groups with the local community benefit, how benefits are distributed within the household and what is the longer-term impact on economic opportunities and social relations.

In achieving the desired outcomes WFP is inevitably dependent on its partners who have the capacity to engage in local implementation. In particular, the impact of the programme depends on the effectiveness of the lead partners, the GOI programmes operating at the State level. That impact may also be enhanced through partnership with other agencies, particularly NGO's.

Assisting partners to improve performance demands significant inputs of staff time in planning, advising and monitoring, either by WFP staff or by consultants. Successful development of the Country Programme approach will require decentralization of the WFP Country Office. Decentralization to the state level is being implemented, but is likely to require significant additions to the country office establishment to be carried out successfully.

The Mid Term Policy Review has proposed that more effective impact could be achieved by concentrating the geographical focus of the programme, from the 96 districts currently serviced to around one-sixth that number. Movement in that direction should enable the programme to be more carefully targeted and monitored.



## **1. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION AND METHODOLOGY USED**

### **1.1 Background – the purpose of the Country Programme**

WFP is committed to implementing the programme approach, as mandated by the General Assembly in resolution 47/199. Accordingly, a general policy framework for introducing the Country Programme Approach was approved by the 38<sup>th</sup> session of the CFA (1994), in order to make WFP work in each country more integrated, coherent, focused, and flexible. The cornerstone of the WFP programme approach is its underlying strategy, which is set forth in a Country Strategy Outline (CSO). The Country Programme (CP) is then prepared on the basis of the findings of the CSO, and consistent with the planning cycles of the Government and the United Nations system.

Within the directions stipulated by the Country Strategy Outline (CSO) and a well-defined rationale for food aid, the CP should provide a countrywide strategic focus to WFP's programme of activities/projects. The proposed functions of food aid should be based on a thorough analysis of national food security and the vulnerability of specific population groups.

### **1.2 Objectives of the Evaluation**

The terms of reference for the evaluation (Annex 1) set out the following objectives:

- 1) To assess the extent to which WFP's current development activities/projects have been influenced by the CP approach so that they constitute a recognizable CP.
- 2) To assess the extent to which WFP's systems and procedures for programme and project identification, design, budgeting, resourcing and implementation at both the headquarters and field levels have enhanced or impeded the CP approach.
- 3) To assess the extent to which the CP in India may be a more effective tool for preparing WFP's contribution in development.
- 4) To determine whether the development activities ongoing in India have been designed to make a direct contribution to the objectives of the CP.
- 5) To assess the extent to which the individual WFP activities/projects represent recognized good practice in food aid (including the practices and principles recognized in the "Enabling Development" policy).
- 6) To provide recommendations for the CP which can be used in the development of future Country Strategy Outlines and CPs, and to provide accountability to the Executive Board.

### **1.3 Scope of Work**

The evaluation of the CP in India has focused primarily on the development and implementation of the programme as a whole. It considered the programme in the context of the principles of the CP approach as they were understood and communicated throughout WFP at the time that the current CSO and CP were developed. The evaluation considered the way in which activities have been integrated into the programme and the extent to which they have made a contribution to the programme objectives.

The terms of reference for the mission instructed it to cover only the activities defined under the CP, and not to attempt to assess the effectiveness of relief and recovery activities/projects, or any development



activities/projects that may exist outside of the CP. Thus the emergency interventions of the WFP in India during the period under review (notably the response to the cyclone that devastated Orissa in 1999) did not fall strictly within the Mission's terms of reference. Nevertheless, the mission found it useful to include a brief discussion of the Orissa post-cyclone intervention, as it illustrated WFP's basic strengths and also the potential for successful joint action by UN agencies.

While the main task of the mission was to complete a mid-term evaluation, its findings and recommendations are expected to contribute to the formulation of the new CSO and CP. The new CP will be expected to implement the "Enabling Development" policy of the WFP. Since the "Enabling Development" initiative dates from 1999, it was not appropriate to evaluate the existing programme in terms of its effectiveness in meeting the requirements of this policy. However, the evaluation team has explored how experience with the current programme indicates the potential for implementing the "Enabling Development Policy" in the future.

## 1.4 Methodology

Prior to the in-country mission, the team reviewed relevant background documentation, including the CSO and CP, activity summaries, project progress reports, and project mid-term and terminal evaluation reports, relevant international and national sectoral publications/reports. Three team members assembled at WFP in Rome for a briefing prior to departure, in which a number of WFP staff who have been involved in the India programme were interviewed.

In the field, Team sought to have meetings with a sample of all relevant stakeholders, including beneficiaries, local and national government, key implementation partners and donor agencies.

As the implementation of the programme is quite decentralized to the State government level, almost half of the time of the mission in India was devoted to field visits to four of the States in which WFP has activities – Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Bihar.<sup>1</sup> The field visits enabled the mission to understand the operations of the programme, and time was spent in interviewing implementation partners and groups of beneficiaries. Nevertheless, such short field visits covering such an extensive terrain cannot provide an adequate basis for assessing the impact of the programme on the intended beneficiaries. In the face of the lack of solid evidence on the impact of the programme on beneficiaries, the mission has had to fall back on qualitative judgments based on plausible inference.

Evaluation of a programme in a country the size of India, where implementation is decentralized to the State level requires more time than the three weeks allotted. The mission advise that at least four weeks would be required to allow for sufficient field visits and for detailed discussion in the capital, with staff at the country office, partners, members of the donor community and relevant experts.

## 2. COUNTRY SITUATION ANALYSIS

### 2.1 Food insecurity and poverty

**National food security:** in aggregate terms, Indian food supply is secure. The national food supply situation has been improving for many years. As table 1 indicates, India has enjoyed high rates of growth in food grain production over the long term, as a result of increases in both yield and areas under cultivation.

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<sup>1</sup> The terms of reference envisaged that about two thirds of the mission's time would be spent in New Dehli, but in view of the decentralization of programme implementation the balance was shifted.



**Table 1: Annual growth in food grain production (annual compound % rate)**

Period	Rice	Wheat	Pulses	All Foodgrains
1967/68-95/96	2.9	4.72	0.93	2.67
1980/81-95/96	3.35	3.62	1.21	2.86
1990/91-96/97	1.52	3.62	1.07	1.70

Source - Annex table 1.4a, p.39, *India Foodgrain Marketing Policies: Reforming to meet food security needs* World Bank, August 1999. Calculated from data taken from the Government of India *Economic Survey 1996/97*

The trend growth in food grain production has remained higher than the population growth rate. Although there has been some deceleration in food grain growth, that has been roughly matched by the decline in the population growth rate.

Links between crop failure and famine have been largely severed. Although the country faces temporary food problems caused by natural disasters, India is well used to handling calamities and generally does not require external assistance unless the situation is severe.

In good production years, India has been able to export large amounts of food grains.<sup>2</sup> Since 1993, official food grain stocks have remained comfortably above “minimum buffer stock” norms and recently stocks have been 30-40 million MT, around twice the minimum norm. Moreover, since 1993 India’s foreign exchange reserve position has been strong; in most years foreign exchange reserves have been large enough to finance more than six months imports.<sup>3</sup>

Total annual production of food grains is more than 150 million MT (in 1997/98, 82 million MT of rice and 69 million MT of wheat). The sheer size of this production total means that the amount of food the WFP can supply (less than 0.06% of total output) does not make much difference at the national level.<sup>4</sup>

However, although food grains are readily available, other foods, such as edible oils and pulses that are in relatively short supply in India.

**Household food security:** despite the apparently secure national food situation, India does have a serious problem of food insecurity at the household level. It is serious enough to have been described as ‘the Silent Emergency’ in a recent study, which records that:

- 53% of children under 4 years of age suffer from moderate and severe PEM,
- iron deficiency anemia is widespread among women (especially pregnant women) and children;
- India, with less than 20% of the World’s children, accounts for 40% of the World’s malnourished children.

Despite its success in agricultural production and economic growth, India has the largest number of poor people and malnourished children in the world. Thirty per cent of the urban population and forty nine per cent of the rural population live in poverty<sup>5</sup>. Most rural poor are dependent on agriculture for survival. 30 per cent of new-born children are significantly underweight, and 60 per cent of Indian women are anemic. Low food consumption, poor diets during pregnancy and nursing and inadequate feeding practices of infants contribute to high rates of child malnutrition and morbidity. Although food security is often defined in terms of per caput grain availability on an annualized basis, critical co-factors concern non-foodgrain items and the appropriate mix.

<sup>2</sup> In 1995/96, a peak year for grain exports, India exported 373 thousand MT of basmati rice, 4,540 thousand MT on non-basmati rice and 632.5 thousand MT of wheat.

<sup>3</sup> However, this year, if the oil price rise persists, the reserve position could deteriorate.

<sup>4</sup> *Wasting Away – the Crisis of Malnutrition in India* Anthony R. Measham and Meera Chatterjee, *World Bank 1999*.

<sup>5</sup> UNDP Human Development Report 1996





While over the past three decades, India has achieved significant progress in reducing poverty, some recent studies have suggested that over the past decade the pace of poverty reduction has decelerated. There is a striking contrast in poverty reduction between those rural areas that have benefited fully from the “Green Revolution” increase in agricultural productivity and those that have lagged. One determinant of the difference has been availability of irrigation. There have also been striking variations in social provisions and investment in human capital, depending on policies of the States.

Food insecurity in India has both chronic and transitory dimensions. Chronic food insecurity is mostly the result of persistent poverty. Transitory food insecurity is often caused by seasonal fluctuations in food availability and access, or by annual fluctuations in crop production caused by natural disasters such as droughts or floods. Food insecurity affects mostly those with insufficient incomes to ensure a proper diet, or insufficient assets and other mechanisms to cope in times of severe food stress.

## **2.2 National priorities and policies addressing food security**

Since independence, policy makers in India have given high priority to ensuring food security for its rising population. Food-grain production has increased through technological innovations in agriculture. Food security has been supported by a comprehensive food management and distribution system and various safety net schemes, including massive public works programme.

National food policy has included a programme of public food procurement that has provided an element of market stabilization through setting procurement prices and maintaining large public food stocks. Long established Government interventions in the supply of food to households include the Public Distribution System that makes food available at subsidized prices through government stores, the Integrated Child Development Services programme (ICDS) that provides supplementary nutrition, which is supported by the WFP programme, and the National Mid-day Meals Programme for primary school children.

These efforts are in certain respects very ambitious – the PDS programme alone is estimated to absorb 0.5% of GDP. Nevertheless, these schemes “have had relatively limited impact on nutrition among the poor because of major problems in effective targeting, implementation and coverage”<sup>6</sup>. More than 300 million people, or about one in three-- in India are still “food insecure” despite these substantial government programmes.

Modifications are needed in a number of aspects of food policy. Some of the required reforms (e.g. to the PDS system) were under consideration by the government during the mission. Policy approaches are as varied as the respondents, including support for a full-scale move to “market-driven” forces, retention of market subsidies and price-fixing. WFP has not attempted to play a role in influencing critical aspects of food policy at the national level.

More recently, direct investments in human resource development--including health care, education for the poor, and nutrition--have been stressed, particularly at the Central Government level.

Government’s capacity for managing serious food shocks has grown. But non-availability of adequate financial resources--because of budget constraints or different policy priorities--often hampers the scale and effectiveness of food-assisted operations. Often the quantity and quality of food supplied to beneficiaries is much below the prescribed levels.

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<sup>6</sup> *Wasting Away*, op. cit. page 2.



### 2.3 The role of food aid

For several years India has been facing the seeming paradox of widespread food insecurity and malnutrition in the midst of rapidly increasing food-grain production, active and well-stocked grain markets. This has raised some questions about the advisability of continuing external food assistance to India.

The case of the continuation food aid is based on the vast numbers of people in India who are still deficient in basic food consumption and who may need transitory food assistance. The current average daily caloric consumption of about 2,150 kcal per person in rural areas, as compared with requirements of 2,400 kcal is a clear sign of a persistent and significant food gap. This is not the result of limited food availability or production potential, but rather of food access and limited income, that are rooted in lack of access to basic agricultural inputs, low farm incomes, and few alternative sources of rural income.

Thus the need for food aid to India does not arise from any national food shortage, but from the scarcity of fiscal resources to utilise available food stocks in public programmes<sup>7</sup> and deficiencies in the instruments for public intervention.

More fundamentally, the role of external assistance in addressing food insecurity over the longer term should be to help tackle underlying causes by supporting poverty reduction.

**Rationale for WFP food aid:** With about one third of the population (i.e. more than 300 million) with household incomes insufficient to achieve an adequate calorie intake, the magnitude of the poverty and malnutrition problem remains enormous. It is the persistent food insecurity of the poor that provides the justification for continued food aid.

However, given the absolute size of the affected populations, the WFP cannot expect to have a decisive or pervasive impact. Its role must necessarily be selective. One basis for selectivity is to intervene within areas in which poverty is particularly concentrated.

Although the incidence of poverty and food insecurity in India is a complex matter, there are some simple generalizations that are valid:

- Poverty is greater among those who either reside in or have recently migrated from rural areas of low agricultural potential (in contrast to the States such as the Punjab and Haryana, which have been leading beneficiaries of the 'Green Revolution).
- Within the backward areas, certain social groups suffer from particular deprivation (particularly members of the scheduled tribes and scheduled castes). And within poor families, gender inequality tends to make the position of women particularly unfortunate.

Given the small relative size of the WFP programme (and of UN programmes in general) it has been increasingly recognized by the Government of India and by the UN system that if it is to have a meaningful impact, the resources used must have a disproportionate impact, by

- leverage of other resources (including national resources) into the chosen areas of activity;
- providing a base for advocacy (e.g. of policy changes, or the interests of neglected and under-privileged groups) and
- promotion of innovative approaches incorporating 'best practice' in tackling strategic problems.

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<sup>7</sup> Moreover, costs for states of food programmes are expected to rise significantly (up to 10 times of current costs) with the planned expansion and universalisation of ICDS.



In light of the above, the role of the WFP should be both the focus on particularly vulnerable groups and to use its interventions to promote innovative approaches to the needs of these groups.

### 3. THE INDIA COUNTRY PROGRAMME AS PLANNED

The **Executive Board approved the India Country Programme** in 1997 for a period of five years, to be extended to the end of 2002 in order to be harmonized with planning cycle of the government and other UN agencies. The programme was developed on the basis of the Country Strategy Outline of December 1994. The CP a core allocation of 182 million dollars for core activities. Provision was also made for supplementary activities valued at 68.8 million dollars, depending on resource availability. The programme was intended to cover approximately 4 million beneficiaries.

The CP broad goals were:

- a) to improve nutrition and the quality of life of the most vulnerable at critical times in their lives;
- b) to promoted sustainable improvements in household food security of carefully selected groups of the poorest people (with special emphasis on children and women).

The objectives were to:

- a) combat malnutrition and invest in human resources through the ICDS;
- b) help improve immediate food security for selected target groups, and, with their participation, invest generated funds in their sustainable food security;
- c) maximize the active participation of women in WFP projects;
- d) advocate and support Joint Forestry Management (JFM);
- e) help strengthen distribution channels for locally-produced food grains; and
- f) increase agricultural production and create employment through canal construction, command area development and settlement under irrigation schemes.

The CP was planned to include three core development activities

1. assistance to vulnerable women and children through support to supplementary feeding programme of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) of the Government;
2. support for joint forestry management, which aims to achieve enhanced food security and development for scheduled tribal people and scheduled castes in isolated forest areas and
3. support for rural development through irrigation and settlement.

In addition, three supplementary activities (expansions of basic programme activities) were also planned. Currently, only two core activities are operational (1, and 2). The third activity (support for irrigation and settlement) was terminated in March 1998.

**The Mid-term policy review:** A mid term policy review (MTPR) was undertaken in November-December, 1999. It aimed to assess the program's compatibility with the Food Aid and Development policy (FAAD) and to provide an input into the work being done by the Regional and Country offices on a CSO for India's next country program.

The MTPR concluded that the current CP in its focus and objectives is basically consistent with FAAD policy. It noted that the target groups for the ICDS program are children below the age of 6 years, expectant and nursing mothers, and adolescent girls. That is in line with WFP's commitment to women and FAAD priorities. The component of the forestry program, which supports investments in assets to increase the productive capacity of tribal and scheduled caste communities, was also consistent with



FAAD priorities. However, the Mid-term Policy Review also pointed out, the development impact of these interventions has been limited by the absence of the complementary inputs which would enable the target groups to achieve the “benefits of development”.

Considering the Joint Forestry Management Program, the MTPR concluded that “The provision of seasonal employment for participants, even if it has been considerably below target, provides some measure of food consumption support in the short term. Where the programme falters is that the support for long-term food security implicit in the investments derived through generated funds has not generally benefited the same group of people. Nevertheless the MTPR recognized that “There is little doubt that Joint Forestry Management (JFM) supported under the programme has had significant pay-off in terms of community participation and ownership of projects, a re-orientation of forestry staff towards working together with villagers and the value of re-invested funds for productivity enhancement. Similarly, the importance and potential of micro planning has also been recognized.”... although “As it currently stands, there is perhaps too much of a forestry determined approach to what is ostensibly a more general rural development exercise aimed at empowering poor families to gain and preserve assets and move to more sustainable livelihoods through the use of food. This is also evidenced from the requests for investments made from the ‘generated funds’. A more generalized “rural development” approach, where forestry plays only a part along with other sectors, would enable a more sustainable intervention in tribal area development.

## 4. ASSESSMENT, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

### 4.1 Concept & Design

WFP’s food assistance to India and support for the two sub-programmes in its current portfolio dates back more than 20 years. During that period projects were subject to continuous revisions and improvements, as the policies of the Government and of WFP changed. The process that started with the 1995 CSO and led to the formulation of the first CP for India in 1997 was useful, and meant some major evolutionary changes for WFP’s activities in the country:

1. Project activities have become less geographically dispersed and are increasingly targeted to the most food-insecure states and districts. This process of consolidation coincided with, and in some ways was facilitated by, significantly reduced food aid resources for India.
2. Support is now concentrated on only two major sub-components (ICDS and TFDP) after general agricultural development support through various irrigation schemes was terminated during this first CP’s initial phase. The CP thereby focuses on a much more narrowly defined target group of beneficiaries in the most remote and backward areas, the majority of which are tribal people.
3. A new integrated strategy was adopted to generate more synergy among sub-programmes by “*moulding the CP into a programme for sustainable household food security ... and consolidating activities gradually into areas where simultaneous interventions can be carried out.*” (CP doc.; para. 29). Pilot activities were initiated in several districts to explore better convergence between ICDS and TFDP.
4. Separate projects in 5 of the 6 states where the TFDP is operating were converged into one project (#5569), which led to a more unified approach across similar activities and states, e.g. in the distribution and management of generated funds through village micro-planning;
5. In the operational contracts of TFDP and the ICDS clauses were adopted that offered more flexibility in resource allocation among the various states according to needs and performance.



Overall, the CP process in India led to a more strategic programming in line with WFP guidelines and policies. In general, the CP exhibits the desired characteristics of:

1. **Integrated:** The India CP is well integrated with the priorities of India's Union Government (GoI) and the various State Governments, as well as those of the UN system and other donors. The ICDS is one of the Indian Government's main social programmes to address malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies among India's children and young mothers. ICDS remains prominent as a component of the Government's policy on national health and nutrition as reflected in the country's National Plan of Action for Nutrition (NPAN) and commitments expressed in international policy fora. The WFP has been a principal donor to the Government's ICDS programme since 1976, together with UNICEF, the World Bank, USAID, and CARE. The TFDP's long-standing support for Joint Forest Management, a policy introduced in the early 1990s, make it an important part of India's current policy agenda for the environment. IFAD, DFID, and the World Bank also support activities in this area.
2. **Coherent:** The main goals and objectives of the India CP are simple, conceptually sound, and coherent. The two CP activities are complementary, addressing different aspects of improved household food security and nutrition. The ICDS provides supplementary nutrition and services for pregnant and nursing mothers and children up to 6 years of age, and TFDP is more concerned with overall household food-security. The common thread of both activities is their attention to women, investment in human and social resources.
3. **Focused:** Not only has the CP increasingly focused on the most disadvantaged districts, villages, and beneficiaries, it has also concentrated its resources on two key Government implementing agencies, the Department for Women and Child Development (DWCD) and the Forest Department, with the objective of supporting institutional and behavioural change in these departments.
4. **Flexible:** Last, but not least, the CP has proven to be rather flexible and innovative, by swiftly shifting food resources to better performing states, and the integrated pilot activities, and by accelerating activities to respond to natural disasters. It has also mobilized significant non-food resources for testing of new models.

However, the CP has not been very successful in bringing greater conversion between TFDP and ICDS. Although some positive experiments were initiated in several pilot districts and a number of anganwadi centers have been built with the assistance of Generated Funds from the TFDP. The main constraint in generating greater synergy between the two activities is that the two activities overlap geographically only in very few districts (less than 10 percent), mostly in Rajasthan and Western M.P. due to historical programme development and other reasons. In some districts and villages served by the TFDP, either CARE supports ICDS activities or villages may not qualify at all for ICDS assistance, as population density is too low (according to national ICDS regulations).

## **4.2 Operations and Implementation:**

### *4.2.1 Support for the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS):*

The ICDS has been in operation since 1975. It is designed to provide basic health, nutrition and education to poor women and children through village level Anganwadi Centres (AWCs). The programme is the first and the largest such government supported child development programme in the world. It is considered by the GOI to be the major activity focusing on the needs of women and children. It is intended to "holistically address interrelated needs of young children, adolescent girls and women"<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> Dept. Women & Child Development (undated) Integrated Child Development Services (General Booklet)



ICDS is intended to improve household food security by two means: (i) by providing free food to particularly vulnerable expectant and nursing mothers and their children and (ii) to improve the quality and biological utilization of food by providing a high quality food supplement, and by investing in mothers' nutritional education, maternal child care, reproductive services, and improved quality and access of health services.

WFP has supported the programme in six states - Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh (M.P.), Uttar Pradesh (U.P.), Assam, Orissa and Kerala. Beneficiary coverage is estimated at some 2.6 million, spread across 42,000 AWC in some 47 districts. The programme provides supplementary feeding for about 25 days a month to expectant and nursing women and children under 6 years of age through on-site feeding as well as take-home rations.

A number of evaluations of the ICDS have suggested that the programme has significant limitations. This Mission did not seek to repeat the well documented critiques of the ICDS but rather concentrated on the process whereby WFP is attempting to respond to deficiencies and opportunities.

The immediate impact of provision of take-home rations for families with severely malnourished children and the feeding of children with micro-nutrient fortified Indiamix blended food is a significant contribution of the programme. However, the main *raison d'être* for the WFP intervention in support of ICDS is the creation of synergy between the supplementary food and other interventions to create lasting change. The CP anticipates that food supplementation can be an effective incentive to get targeted children and women to the AWC for other purposes. To achieve its broader objectives, WFP is seeking to increase the educational, women's empowerment and community development impact of the ICDS. Thus WFP has taken on a challenging task going well beyond the provision of food to the needy.

Progress has not been easy. In the areas visited by this Mission WFP support to the GOI programme included various elements of the overall plan to meet social development, health and nutrition needs. Not all elements were included at all sites and the Information, Education and Communication (IEC) /advocacy elements were least visible. WFP's partners apparently largely influence the activity package and level of support given to any AWC.

In general ICDS seeks to empower and support local decision-making – an objective consistent with the CP approach. However, that process requires a degree of commitment that is evident at only a few sites. The CP approach should provide a sharper focus for identifying and supporting the most effective coping strategies for the communities and households most at-risk. This implies work at the level of the community. It requires careful identification of broad social and economic issues, appropriate IEC and strong, active community participation. This has implications for both the level and the professional profile of WFP staffing.

Where the ICDS works well, the enthusiasm of workers and beneficiaries has come from a degree of ownership and personal drive and not simply from "duty". Respondents indicated that a supportive local political scene, effective community leadership, self-managed women's organizations and the range of economic opportunities were the main factors in driving change. The most critical link for all factors at the field level is the ICDS supervisors.

Repeated staff transfers leave little opportunity to enhance commitment, ensure staff action at a difficult site or encourage travel and contact with the beneficiaries. This has a broad implication for WFP programming when crucial training and good relationship building may have to be repeated many times in one area.

The success of the WFP programme with ICDS depends on the institutional and personal relationships and ownership engendered through the AWC staff. A sense of purpose and direction is seen when good field support is available. Partnership with other donors and NGOs is essential since WFP currently relies



on others to provide this support. Without strong partner support in the critical areas (adolescent programmes, empowerment, improved targeting and monitoring, improved training) it is unlikely that CP objectives can be achieved. Contracts with partners may need revision to focus more clearly on what elements of ICDS may be practically achieved with WFP support. As demands made at AWC visits suggest that many people do not understand the limited role of WFP. This includes other donors and GOI officials.

Sometimes poor state funding for ICDS reflects the relatively low priority given to the programme by key policy-makers, particularly at state level. Arguably the most important contribution by WFP—in addition to providing temporary financial resources for a faster expansion of the ICDS system—would be to use food aid as a leverage for (1) raising policy makers’ awareness of the need to invest in early childhood nutrition, particularly at the state level, and (2) assisting in improving implementation mechanisms, based on WFP’s regional and world-wide experiences.

There are some specific areas in which WFP might provide practical capacity building support to ICDS. For example assistance with logistical planning may be appropriate if logistics continue to be a problem, as appears to be the case in some places.

**Fortified food supplement, Indiamix:** The key contributions of WFP to the ICDS have been the development of the fortified food supplement, Indiamix, and work on a food based approach to address micro-nutrients. However, there is a potential negative effect if the supplement itself (rather than a balanced diet from local food) is not perceived as a complementary but as the only essential element in child feeding. Therefore, provision of the supplement should be accompanied by strong Information, Education and Communication (IEC) support as has been initiated in a limited number of places.

Partnerships with the private sector and community organizations have been instrumental in producing Indiamix. WFP has provided support in initiating local production and encouraging purchase of the product by GOI. WFP also supports a women’s co-operative producing Indiamix.

**Co-operation with NGO’s:** Given the fact that the WFP local presence will always be light on the ground, co-operation with NGOs can be critical in achieving some of the programme objectives. Assertive management of the AWC is not common, but where it has occurred, it has often resulted from NGO support.

The WFP approach is to subcontract the NGOs. A suggestion from two NGOs highlights the difficulties when these agencies are given too tight a mandate that limits their ability to respond to community groups’ level of willingness to undergo change. As community ownership and participation is essential for sustainability, the NGOs consider more flexibility is required, which might be achieved through a staged process of collaboration, with a phase-out strategy, even if that is considered in the far future.

NGO responses indicate that they believe WFP could do more to promote change at policy and programming levels (national and state), although they recognize that even with decentralization, WFP will not have the capacity to work alongside the communities or themselves.

**The Donor role in ICDS:** The programme is the largest such government initiated and supported child development programme in the world. The role of individual donors in this huge programme needs to be defined with some care, given the scale of the nutrition problem, the complexity of its causes and the potential difficulties for GOI in meeting separate donor agendas. Clearer delineation of the WFP role within the donor support group would be advantageous, based on respective strengths and comparative advantage is necessary

The World Bank, CARE and UNICEF also recognize the need for institutional change to address the deep-seated problems facing ICDS, but face an uphill task in reorienting a top-down GoI process and



preparing the AWWs to facilitate social change and communicate practical messages. However, in the long-term, current decentralization pushes by donors and GoI may result in significant positive changes.

The most important contributions by WFP might be to raise policy makers' awareness, particularly at the state level, of the need to invest in early childhood nutrition, and to assist in improving implementation, based on WFP's regional and world-wide experiences.

**Targeting:** The CP approach emphasizes improved targeting. The Mission examined AWC weight charts as a means to introduce discussion about targeting. Although less than 20% of the children's charts examined showed declining weight trends over 3 consecutive months, almost 85% of those children were in the 9 – 18 month age range, a critical age for child development and good nutrition.

Simple point prevalence studies indicated that remarkably few of the AWCs visited had more than 10% of the attending children consistently in the lower nutritional status zones according to weight/age charts. The AWWs had difficulties identifying vulnerable families and continued to assume that all families would benefit equally from the supplement. Tighter, infra-community targeting may not be possible despite the directions to provide the supplement in recognition of nutritional and social factors.

However, the need for tighter targeting was requested by some GOI and AWC supervisors, so that they can reduce pressure on AWWs to provide food and additional service to any community member who attends the AWC. The suggestion to concentrate on under 3's is accepted as realistic. Additional use of adverse secondary indicators for targeting would depend on VAM data, collected or disaggregated to the appropriate level.

Targeting for the small programme supporting adolescent girls could be improved. Under the CP approach it is intended that these young girls be seen as change agents, in addition to their important beneficiary status. The Mission appreciated the difficulty of fulfilling such a challenging task. A clear demand was expressed for their inclusion in training and for them to take on a community role. These roles include functional literacy, a child mentor approach or to assist with the community based monitoring system. Discussion with other donors may clarify the practicality of using WFP food ration to promote the involvement of these vulnerable youth.

**ICDS intervention options in the CP context:** There is agreement by stakeholders of the need for more and better interventions in developing:

- Definitive approaches to support ownership of the problems and positive interventions.
- Culturally appropriate "packages" for AWWs to support their work.
- Capacity building for AWWs and supervisors to train, follow-up, re-train and extend the increasingly heavy responsibilities laid on these women.
- Strategic use of WFP food as an incentive for change rather than continuing a focus on the food as a supplement.

An approach promoting behavioural change will lead to a degree of sustainability in the long-term. Nutritional, food security or childcare indicators need to be identified by WFP as markers along the road to eventual phase-out. A phase out strategy will require institutional support and capacity building. Although many WFP staff have the specific skills and attitudes to develop a full institutional support package in the context of decentralization, a phase-out strategy will need to be developed in partnership with other supporters of the ICDS.

Numerous evaluations and reviews of the ICDS have taken place over many years. Follow-up to recent reports should identify the barriers to undertaking the suggested changes. This Mission did not seek to repeat the well documented critiques of the ICDS but rather concentrated on the process undertaken by WFP in attempting to respond to deficiencies and opportunities in a manner that reflects the overall CP approach.





## Recommendations:

- WFP needs to establish a clearer comparative advantage, and focus on what it can do best, rather than be pulled into desirable but difficult areas of change management in ICDS that it is not well adapted to supporting.
- Refocusing the CP process into specific high priority areas (through decentralization of WFP support) will assist tighter targeting. The Mission suggests that specific adverse indicators be agreed for each District considered at high-risk by reference to the VAM generated data, and supporting qualitative material developed with the relevant communities. Similarly, agreement on cut-off points for assistance, phase-out and staged targets of change could be developed with partners.
- Other donor and NGO partners should continue to be brought into this planning process, as an improved ICDS would be to everyone's advantage. Other donors already acknowledge the need for a combined reassessment of the donor focus.
- The CP approach requires greater complementarity of activities at Block level, where individuals can develop respect, trust and work together. The suggested inter-Block competition may develop greater commitment and ownership on the part of partners and community members.
- Specific interventions that the Mission believes warrant closer focus have been discussed with relevant staff and partners. Some common features that may require additional consideration relate to
  - (1) capacity building of AWWs and supervisors using KABP and competence models,
  - (2) development of IEC and behavioural change processes,
  - (3) institutional support (especially for panchayati raj institutions and their women members) and,
  - (4) changing emphasis to concentrate supplementary feeding on the under 3 year olds progressively over the next 2 years.

Many similar issues have been raised in previous ICDS related reports. As many previous reviews have been made of ICDS and related activities it would be appropriate to consider why the recommendations of so many reports are regularly repeated. Donors may care to prepare an overview of critical constraints to the current programme from the donors' perspective. Follow-up to recent reports should be pursued – even if only to highlight the barriers to undertaking the required changes or to prepare yet more studies.

### Nutrition Planning and Programming:

Nutrition planning has been an important activity in India since the 1960s. Nutrition policy is subsumed under the Indian National Health Policy that in the early 1980s developed a standard contextual framework that focused attention on the end-point issues [impact on health status] rather than socio-economic and technical parameters. It was left to State Governments to develop a more detailed approach and to adjust various programmes to impact on the critical impact points.

Each State GOI nutrition document was drawn up by a team of senior GOI personnel from relevant Government Departments, supported by individuals from NGOs, the UN (including WFP on occasion), the National Institute of Nutrition and token Panchayati representation. This interdepartmental co-ordinating committee approach is similar to that undertaken in many countries. International experience shows that this approach rarely takes co-ordination beyond the broad policy and macro-planning stage.

At District level there is another committee structure to monitor activities and feedback to the State body. Representation is the same but at lower levels of responsibility and without the involvement of a UN



officer. Examination of two sets of minutes from the District to State level suggests that the feedback is largely through aggregate statistics prepared from an unknown sample base.

The data prepared for nutrition surveillance should receive the level of attention that is being devoted to the development VAM. This is important since the main monitoring unit for nutrition no longer operates at national level. Monitoring at the State level depends on ICDS generated anthropometric data for its assessments. The World Bank suggests that this data is inadequate for the task.

Most NGO, government and community leaders do not place nutrition in the context of development. Despite the all-pervasive nature of the nutrition problem and the complexity of the factors affecting human development, nutrition is limited to a vulnerable group feeding issue in most minds. Matters of education, labour, public health engineering and spending power are treated as minor issues and the questions related to access and effective demand are not addressed.

Although most people agree that “participation” is essential, a gap now exists in many areas between theory and practice. The WFP approach to nutrition is largely through the ICDS programme. In the face of nutritional indicators that suggest similar levels to those of 25 years ago, WFP goes along with the GOI response that what is needed is more efforts with the ICDS programme. Despite the deficiencies in the programme, it is argued that in the absence of ICDS support the nutritional status of vulnerable people would be declining in many areas.

Most documents reviewed show that donors and agencies are agreed that the ICDS has major structural and programming problems and that the causes of malnutrition are not addressed. The Mission agrees with UNICEF, the World Bank, key WFP staff and NGOs consulted that this stopgap approach makes it likely that intransigent underlying factors causing malnutrition will remain. Social change is needed, increasing access to information and services and, most importantly, empowering women and changing the balance of power and decision making.

After many years of a *malnutrition* focus it is time to take a *wellness/well-being* focus and to work to modify behaviour and practices that create the underlying factors causing the continuing serious situation. Dependence on ICDS to partially mitigate the effects of the problems is an inadequate response.

It was reported that WFP has already commissioned a nutrition policy paper (for the UN interagency group). This could contribute to the development of new strategies for intervention.

#### **Recommendation:**

- That the WFP undertake a joint review, with UNICEF, CARE, World Bank and the Hunger Project and/or other suitable donors, of options available to develop a more effective approach to the underlying issues for the most marginalised members of communities at-risk. This would assist all agencies to develop better community ownership and community management and more selective and strategic interventions.

#### *4.2.2 Support for the Joint Forestry Management Programme:*

WFP’s support to improving the food security of tribal, largely forest-dependent people has a long history, starting in 1972 in Maharashtra, followed by projects in several other states. The projects started out primarily to serve the needs of forest departments, in managing, harvesting, and protecting the forests, and providing some short-term relief for local tribal people. Project objectives and strategic approaches changed dramatically in the early ‘90s when India introduced social forestry principles under its new Joint Forest Management (JFM) policy. This aimed to achieve constructive engagement with local communities, joint responsibility for management and protection of forests, and sharing in the



income flow from forest products (mainly timber, bamboo, and minor forest products). While forest protection and re-forestation remained a primary goal, participatory planning through Joint Forest Management and Protection committees was introduced.

Thus, from the early 90's, the various state-based projects and the Forest Department sought to improve in the food security of poor tribal and scheduled caste groups by providing direct assistance for short-term food security through expanded cash and food-for work schemes and development initiatives. New initiatives aimed to create alternative sources of food and income at village level through investments in agriculture and other income generating activities.

To Support this process, the Tribal Forestry Development Project (TFDP) offered: (1) food rations as a subsidized supplement to wages received for seasonal employment in Forestry Department activities, and (2) productive investments supported by cash generated through a deduction from the forest department wage bill (funded under State budgets). These funds are redistributed to selected communities for use in ways agreed by the community, by district and state officials, and by WFP.

In the formulation of the first CP in 1997 significant modifications were introduced to the TFDP. Project activities became less geographically dispersed. Consolidation was accelerated in response to reductions in food aid resources. The projects in 5 of the 6 states where WFP was operating in TFDP were consolidated into one project (#5569).<sup>9</sup> This led to a more unified approach e.g. in the distribution and management of generated funds through village micro-plans. It also resulted in more flexibility in resource allocation among states, by permitting reallocation of resources to better performing states. Pilot activities were initiated in two districts to explore the potential for achieving greater synergy between TFDP and ICDS.

TFDP supported Forest Department activities include work in officially designated forest areas. Where forests are fully-grown, this may mean harvesting of timber and bamboo, maintenance of feeder roads, water management, and seedling development and planting. Where forests are severely degraded, activities mainly relate to afforestation of degraded lands (e.g. in parts of Rajasthan, M.P., and Bihar). In some states (e.g. Orissa) processing of minor forest products plays an important role, absorbing about half of the food assistance.

**The TFDP accounts for around 40% of the India country programme. It exhibits a number of the desired CP characteristics:** It reflects the priorities of the Union and State Governments, as well as those of the UN system and other donors (such as IFAD, WB, and DFID). It lends support to the Joint Forestry Management, which emphasizes environmental protection through a community-centered approach.

TFDP's activities contribute to the CP's stated objective of improving household food security, although it is questionable if they alone will ensure sustainable food security. TFDP focuses on disadvantaged districts and villages. TFDP has been flexible, by shifting food resources to better performing states, and by contributing food resources to emergencies and to new supplementary activities.

**Support of employment generation for short-term food security:** The total number of beneficiaries is estimated at slightly over 600,000 people from about 121,650 poor families. For the last 3 years the aggregate implementation targets set by the operational contract in terms of food distribution to forest workers have largely been met. There are, however, significant differences among states, with M.P., Orissa, and Gujarat either exceeding or coming close to targets, while Rajasthan, Bihar, and U.P. achieve between 50 and 65 percent. States that encountered difficulties in providing sufficient employment lacked counterpart funds for undertaking forestry activities and for meeting food-handling costs.

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<sup>9</sup> The Gujarat project remained separate, as continued involvement in the state was uncertain.



While the numbers are encouraging, last year's Government internal audits of the states' forestry employment schemes identified several issues that suggest that food have not always been distributed according to agreements. While some of this may be simply related to accounting and reporting problems, concerns were serious enough for support for employment generation for M.P. and Bihar to be temporarily suspended.

One concern is that the targeted number of employment days and food rations per beneficiary worker of 90 days is rarely achieved. Estimates of actual average numbers of food rations per worker range between 30 and 70 days. The amount of work, and thus food rations received, often depends on the potential for timber and bamboo harvesting (forest density). There are also pressures to employ a large number of labourers during the limited forestry season.

As the districts and blocks qualifying for supplementary food support have been increasingly restricted to the most needy ones, and most hiring of workers is done locally, the large majority of food recipients are poor and are deserving of food rations and income transfers. This does not mean that the food support necessarily reaches the poorest of the poor among the tribal population. Self-targeting works to some extent, but people who are not among the neediest are also attracted by the employment opportunities within these very poor communities.

**Appropriateness of food assistance and closed circuit magnetization:** Food rations provided to daily wage-workers in forest department activities increase incomes and access to food (as the food is priced at a concessional rate). Real wages for millions of workers are increased by providing subsidized food rations (an addition valued between 15 and 25% of cash wages, which are equivalent to minimum wages). Supplementary income in the form of rice, wheat, oil and pulses is appropriate because the availability and quality of food in many remote areas is variable.

Closed-circuit magnetization generates the cash funds for village development activities that cannot easily be supported with direct food assistance. Funds have been generated successfully, but there may be future problems. Many states rely in part on external donor funding for generating employment in forestry (particularly from the World Bank and from Japanese assistance). Their activities have been significantly reduced as projects have been phased out (particularly in M.P. and Rajasthan).

**Long-term benefits - asset generation:** An important objective of the FAAD policy is to support food-for-work activities that create lasting assets. This appears to be broadly the case in the TFDP, although the primary recipients of food assistance (workers in forestry department programmes) are not necessarily the same as those benefiting from generated assets.

The closed-circuit magnetization system generates funds (a total of about US\$ 15 million over a 5-year CP period) that are invested in targeted communities. Also, the work organized by the Forest Department in JFM areas generates profits from harvesting that are intended to flow back to local communities under JFM's revenue sharing arrangements (30-80 percent). However, revenue and profit flows from employment generation deserve more attention from WFP, to monitor the benefits received by local communities and to support long-term village micro-plans.

**Utilization of Generated Funds:** The forest departments save cash from the wage bill, which generates funds to be invested in village development activities that cannot easily be supported with direct food assistance (a total of about US\$ 15 million over a 5-year CP period). Before the initiation of the current CP only two out of six states, Gujarat and Rajasthan used village micro-planning based on community participation. In the rest of the states (with 88 % of the resources, 56% in M.P alone), project activities tended to be scattered and impacts difficult to monitor. Most funds went into forest investments, such as access roads to forests, re-forestation, labour sheds, and food distribution centres. However, more than 4000 hand pumps were installed in villages and a number of schools, community halls, and anganwadi centres were built, but often without much thought about operational costs, maintenance, and community priorities. With the introduction of micro-plans and increased community participation, irrigation and



water-management facilities now demand an increasing share of available funds, alongside continued investments in jointly managed forests.

The process of fund accumulation, village selection, and micro-plan formulation under the CP are time consuming. Fund utilization under TFDP project # 5569 is just gaining pace now, three years after fund accumulation under the CP started. As of Sept. 2000, 161 micro-plans out of 439, (in five states, excluding Gujarat) have been formulated, most of which are expected to be approved by the state level committees this year. It is premature to assess the impact of the new approach, as except for Gujarat and Rajasthan, implementation of micro-plans has only begun in a handful of villages in each state. But a review of the early experiments in Rajasthan and Gujarat and recent experience in formulation and early implementation in other states suggest a number of issues concerning micro-plans related to:

- Appropriate *choice of investment types* and targeting for food-security impact, particularly for the poorest community members and for women;
- Improved *technical and economic effectiveness* of investments, including technical support, maintenance, sustainability, and potential “multiplier effects”;
- Changes in *community participation* to enhance ownership, awareness and empowerment, particularly of traditionally disadvantaged groups;
- The concentration on selected micro-plan villages.

**Choice of investments:** According to the OPC, Generated Funds under the village micro-plan concept would be used to support a broad range of activities, provided that they are “improving household food security”. Schemes could be selected under four broad categories: forestry, agriculture, income generation--especially for women--, and miscellaneous village infrastructure.

Better irrigation and water-management are the most popular factors in improving food-security and generating additional employment (as would be expected from conventional wisdom on development constraints in rural India). Yet, not every villager benefits equally from irrigation investments, which often cover a limited area and are biased towards the lands of better-off and influential farmers. For instance, a 1996 evaluation showed that stop-dams in M.P. allowed some villagers to have a second harvest, but in several villages they did not benefit more than 10% of the households.

Those with small, remote or no landholdings at all may only benefit indirectly, either through employment generation, increased food availability in the village during the dry season, or other secondary effects (e.g. water tanks being used for livestock, laundry, bathing, or aquaculture). Ensuring access to irrigation benefits for poorer community members remains an important issue for equitable development. Sometimes this may be a question of technical design, i.e. lift irrigation systems usually can supply water to more people than gravity irrigation. Better participation and social auditing in plan development and implementation may raise access by those most in need.

Although village irrigation investments bring specific productivity gains, forestry activities that rehabilitate, protect and create forests potentially benefit long-term food security. Tree cover reduces flooding and soil erosion, benefiting agriculture. Trees and forest products provide fuel and edible fruits, nuts, leaves and roots. The gathering, processing, and selling of forest products gives people income and employment. However, sharing and harvesting arrangements need to be clearly spelt out, and understood by the Forest Department, the communities as a whole, and its most food-insecure members

Complementary income generating activities in and outside of agriculture need to be expanded, particularly for women (e.g. fish ponds, poultry, mushroom growing, grazing reserves in forest areas, fodder production for livestock, distribution of vegetable seed packs, training in sewing and weaving). Such activities should be targeted to those households and community groups least able to benefit from gains in irrigated farm production.



In the past, income-generating activities often have not done well (1997 evaluation) as marketing, credit, and sustainability of support were missing and the Forest Department had little experience in implementing them. Activities should only be started when they are accompanied by appropriate support structures that can provide training, technical, management, and marketing advice, as well as credit and savings facilities.

**Technical and economic effectiveness:** of initiated investment schemes often is below what could be achieved. More involvement and consultation of technical departments from other Government agencies, in particular the Irrigation Department, and from non-governmental institutions; better analysis of financial viability and feasibility, and better systems for ensuring the maintenance and operation of infrastructure and assets in micro-plans would all help.

While these issues are well known in principle and are being addressed by the OPC, they are not addressed effectively in the field. More detailed guidelines and best practice advice to micro-plan developers and implementers based on past successes and failures should be developed. They should address the underlying economic, institutional and social constraints for different categories of villages served, in such areas as marketing, indebtedness, access to know-how, literacy, substance abuse, and gender inequities. While many of these issues are well researched for the targeted tribal communities, available knowledge is not effectively used for practical purposes and programming.

**Dilemmas in participatory decision-making:** WFP and its partners need to work on ways to deal with some of the basic dilemmas in participatory decision-making. Community investment priorities may be unrealistic in relation to what can be delivered. Conflicting opinions and interests exist in the communities served. Some desirable investment activities were dubbed by the Mid-term Policy Review as “invisible”, as there usually is not an immediate demand for them among villagers without prompting, such as better quality pre-school education, female literacy, or social mobilization against child labour.

**Village selection:** The TFDP in particular focuses on support for tribal villages close to the forests and to degraded former forest areas. These villages are generally regarded as among the most disadvantaged, food-insecure, and neglected in the country. The 439 villages selected for micro-plan development under the CP were supposed to fulfill several criteria, determining the most appropriate and needy ones. The main indicators for village selection were defined by high food insecurity, high concentration of landless people, out-migration, and remoteness. Social indicators included the community’s willingness to contribute to the implementation of activities; availability of JFM committees and local NGOs or other village development groups.

In 4 out of 6 States the identification of micro-plan villages and further specification of main indicators was contracted out to external research and consulting institutions. Gujarat and Rajasthan relied on the Forest Department to take the decision. The outside agencies had some differences with the Forest Department, including questioning of the appropriateness of specific indicators, secondary data quality, and screening methodologies. Above all, some selected villages were seen as being inappropriate by the Department in terms of villager motivation, commitment to forest protection, and availability of adequate Forest Department services in the area. As in most qualifying districts micro-plan villages constitute less than 10% of all villages, many villages with exemplary forest protection were bypassed which generated particular disappointments. In the end, compromises were reached, but process has raised a more fundamental question for the future and the next CP.

Although it is widely agreed that generated fund investments should be concentrated to increase the impact of interventions, WFP may wish to reconsider its strategy of fund concentration on a rather small number of villages. Notwithstanding the merits of the micro-plan approach, there are indications that cluster approaches may be more advantageous and economical in achieving desirable multiplier and replication effects. NGOs working in the micro-credit field insist that very often it is better to avoid singling out individual villages, to avoid feelings of jealousy, unfairness, and neglect, as well as to generate a larger critical mass and support for specific interventions.



This also raises the question of possible reconsideration by WFP of the current distribution of generated fund resources to villages of high concentration (80%) and sectoral support initiatives (10-16%). Well designed sectoral support programmes can be both very effective in targeting specific villages or clusters of villages and ensuring better outreach and replicability, even when some compromises have to be made in terms of targeting and concentration.

### **Recommendations:**

On employment generation for short-term food security the Mission recommends:

- An improvement in monitoring of the Forest Department's employment generation and beneficiary targeting, to address concerns raised by internal auditors in 1999. That will require employing more food aid monitors.
- To ensure the continuing availability of counterpart funds, alternative mechanisms for magnetization with other partners, or/and the direct utilization of food in micro-plan activities should be explored.

On choice of investments and effectiveness:

- A review of the long-term asset generation component to identify if the long-term beneficiaries include the target groups in line with FAAD principles and if profits flowing back to communities are integrated into WFP/FD's micro-plan process.
- Infra-community targeting Increase efforts to monitor the inter-community distribution of benefits, and to identify and target specific disadvantaged groups with special programmes.

On strengthening the supply side:

- Make funding of specific activities increasingly conditional on the availability of appropriate sectoral support structures, and assist in identifying and nurturing this support structure.

On ensuring viability and sustainability of investments:

- Improve assessment of economic feasibility and make provisions for long-term maintenance and running costs; and improve assessment of underlying problems (e.g. marketing, social structures);

On selection of villages:

- Reconsideration by WFP of the current distribution of generated fund resources to villages of high concentration (80%) and sectoral support initiatives (10-16%).

## **4.3 Common Country Programme Issues**

### *4.3.1 Meeting Commitments to Women*

In certain respects, the gender focus is one of the most positive features of the India CP and it is only fair to point out the serious efforts made in the following points: Gender has been integrated into the country programme and in the design of the activities. Gender concerns have been included in planning, monitoring, evaluating, and reporting in gender related activities, and gender disaggregated data included in all operational contracts with other partners.

- To promote gender equity in the CP, a Gender Action Plan (GAP) was developed and reviewed biannually. Gender training courses were offered to 433 counterpart staff (Project Directors, Division field officers etc.) at the programme implementation level.
- Women and children constitute 100% of the beneficiaries of the ICDS activity; and 80% of the beneficiaries of the TFDP activity. Therefore, 95% of the CP beneficiaries are women and children.



- Micro-nutrient deficiencies of vulnerable groups of women, children and adolescents are addressed by the CP through: i) providing fortified food in all activities; ii) encouraging local production of fortified food (Indiamix); and iii) working with Government to include micro-nutrient fortification norms into all supplementary food to ICDS;
- In the WFP supported TFDP, 37% of direct benefits of Generated Fund investments in four states (Bihar, M.P., U.P. and Orissa) go to women, 10 particularly through micro-credit targeted income-generating schemes, and improved nutrition, health, and drinking water facilities. 11
- In numerical terms, the distribution of beneficiaries is consistent with WFP objectives. Since India's gender statistics demonstrate at least a 25% gender gap, 60% of the CP resources should, therefore, be targeted to women and girls according to WFP commitments to women. Achievement to date shows closer to 72% of the CP resources were directed to Women.
- The WFP supported TFDP, through CARE and associated local NGO's, has supported the establishment of savings- and credit groups, sometimes with linkages to the formal banking sector, sometimes through injecting matching funds from WFP generated fund resources. Such activities expand women's access to credit, and are intended to enhance empowerment, entitlements, and self-esteem through group-bonding and increased contributions to their families.
- The CO has approved the recruitment of female social development officers from the generated funds in the Joint Forestry component. Two officers have been recruited, and plans are under way to recruit more. The recruitment of the social foresters is also planned as a means to increase the gender awareness in the forestry department by providing support to the professional forestry officers in gender issues.

Examples of innovative women's savings and credit schemes were observed by the mission in southern Bihar. Over the past three years, numerous credit and savings groups have been organized in about 300 villages by two national Indian NGOs: Pradan and *Nav Bhrat Jagriti Kendra (NBJK)*, in partnership with CARE, which advises them on managerial and other issues, and with local NGOs who provide their grass roots organizational capacity and knowledge. Regular savings generation over a certain period of time by group members themselves is the precondition for gaining access to additional loan funds, which are provided either directly from WFP or from local banks through GOI's national programme to support loans to self-help groups.

The groups visited had excellent loan repayment rates, and high group discipline. Women from all social levels were participating. Loans were often shared within the families, rather than being specifically geared towards women's own businesses or interests. Activities funded included agriculture (land, livestock and input purchase), women's horticulture, health, children's education, but also for family consumption, such as housing, clothes, and marriage.

Despite the enthusiasm encountered, a few words of caution about possible limitations of micro-credit schemes may be appropriate. First, these systems have not yet been tested at a time of serious crisis, such as severe drought and harvest failures. Second, recent endeavours by GOI to expand financial assistance for such self-help groups too fast may endanger the gradual process of developing effective institutions. Third, credit and savings groups are mostly successful where there is a clear potential for expansion of economic activities, where loan repayment capacity is facilitated by temporary employment opportunities, and where communities are cohesive. This may not be the case in many remote areas and villages, where loan uptake generally is low, as repayment capacity is limited due to lack of cash income-earning opportunities. .

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<sup>10</sup> . Figures varied across states, ranging from 44.1 to 58.0% in UP, Orissa, and Bihar, vs. only 17.5% in M.P..

<sup>11</sup> To sustain progress it was concluded there was a need for: (1) more micro-credit schemes for women; (2) support to ICDS in areas served by TFDP; (3) more activities in micro-plans directly targeted to women; and (4) an expanded the role of Forestry Department social development officers in identifying NGO's capable of strengthening the gender perspective in village development plans.





A different but complementary approach to the empowerment of villagers is taken by another WFP supported NGO in Bihar, the Rama Krishna Mission (RKM). This well entrenched, faith-based, but non-denominational organization mainly relies on building a solid agricultural foundation for tribal villagers through intensive technical training, mainly of young men, on its very well equipped and impressive college campus/training centre in Ranji. In addition, a lot of efforts are spent on motivational and spiritual training of the young trainees. RKM's main focus does not lie in directly assisting women, although several programme activities are directed to women, but it indirectly contributes to improved gender and infra-village relationships, mainly through raising awareness among young men about their responsibilities.

Within the Country Office, there have been significant developments in relation to gender concerns. A pro-woman focus is strong reflected in discussions with CO staff. There is an officer who acts as the gender focal point, responsible for consolidating the gender action plan (GAP), as well as internal advocacy, and monitoring of gender issues. She is also an active member of the UN, Donor, Government and NGO co-ordination group on Gender. The number of women staff has increased from 32% in 96 to 43% in 2000. Efforts have been made to increase the numbers of women involved with the programme, especially in activities 2 and 3 (ICDS, activity 1, is totally directed to females).

Based on the above, and the assessment of adherence to commitment to women (Annex 5), the performance of the India CP is fully satisfactory, and commendable.

However, despite the positive gender components of the CP, the gender impact of the main components of the programme is still quite limited. While it is hoped that the women's position in the family is being strengthened through their increased contribution to the household food needs, there is little evidence of progress being made with respect to women's participation in *decision-making*, or '*control of resources*' aspect of the programme. Thus while the number of women in Joint Forest Management Committees is encouraging (and rapidly expanding due to changing state regulations), their actual role in decision-making often still remains weak.

In the ICDS programme, many of the women's committees are brought together for an unclear purpose. Some of the women themselves believed that formation of their group was necessary to receive project benefit. As many of the groups are effectively extended family groups in tribal areas, it is unlikely that a change in traditional social dynamics will result unless these individuals desire a clear developmental objective. They are being asked to save for health purposes and while no one disputes the need, it is also evident that other needs could be met through these groups. In particular, the desire for functional literacy was mentioned several times, followed by small scale business training to support any relevant activity.

The difficulty facing the CP in relation to gender is that achievements in promoting gender equality cannot be seen solely in terms of the numbers of women involved in various activities. The critical dimension is the quality of change, of women's actual control over resources acquired or accessed, and changes in their role within their families and community. Much remains to be accomplished here, and without question, will take time.

The dynamics of male-female interactions, responsibilities, and partnerships in rural tribal areas have to be better understood. Ways have to be found to bring about positive changes in gender relationships and power structures to break the vicious cycle of deprivation, despair, alcoholism, and domestic violence and abuse. While it is valuable to tip the scales in favour of women, men have to be brought into the process, by generating more awareness through educational, economic and spiritual advancements. Direct empowerment of women needs to be complemented by addressing the concerns of husbands, sons, and father. Most reports acknowledge that the process of change will be slow unless men see an advantage for themselves in empowering women and involving them fully in development options. Further steps are now required to incorporate a gender approach in the CP. While gender inequities have



deep social roots, traditional norms are constantly challenged in the Indian media and change in educational opportunities and openness to reforms in other areas has increased the options.

Despite the WFP activities to facilitate women's involvement, the Midterm Policy Review highlighted the limitations of projects where women may still be marginalised by the process applied and where there is a lack of focus on infra-household and community dynamics. The move to a smaller geographical area proposed by the MTPR may permit greater effort to focus on the gender dimensions of the supported programmes rather than merely seek to include women.

At this point there is no evidence of a backlash from men whose roles or responsibilities are "usurped". This could be due to the limited impact that the projects have had on lifestyle or coping strategies used by the communities. However, there is reluctance to change the gender balance in group decision-making<sup>12</sup>. Genuine empowerment programmes to counter the high levels of substance and personal abuse, economic dependency, lack of decision making over land use or crop diversification may provoke further problems unless handled sensitively.

In summary, the WFP approach to gender issues has not developed far beyond the "Women In Development" (WID) approach, where women are conceived as a separate target group and not in a dynamic relationship with men. This approach has the danger of isolating women from other actors in development. WFP should review its current approach, since it is now recognized that the WID approach will not lead to mainstreaming women in development, nor will it address the issue of empowerment. More specifically, WFP should adopt a "Gender And Development" approach, whereby the needs, priorities, and roles of both women and men are considered together. Men should be involved in the process in order to achieve a sustainable change in the status of women.

### **Recommendations:**

- WFP as an organization should review its current approach to gender issues in favour of a more comprehensive approach, that aims to increase women's access to and control over resources on equal terms with men. A Gender and Development approach that targets both women and men should be adopted to achieve empowerment of women, and behavioural change.
- A gender focus should be utilized at all levels involving male/female staff, NGO participants, and community members. A gender focus implies men are included in any agreement whereby women get access to resources and services and are encouraged to modify their attitudes to gender issues.
- *The CO should support and encourage Government to recruit more female social development officers in the Joint Forestry component for micro-plan formulation and implementation.*

#### *4.3.2 Community Participation:*

Increased participation by villagers, particularly women, and decentralization of decision-making to village and *panchayat* levels are key goals of the India CP. It is a challenging and arduous task, involving building of trust, and changes of power relationships, requiring intensive grassroots work by sensitive and well-trained staff.

In the JFM some progress has been made, particularly by encouraging villagers' active participation in JFM, by institutionalizing the micro-plan process at village level, and by supporting the development of

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<sup>12</sup> The reality is best expressed by a group respondent; "there are only a limited number of decisions to be made during our meetings. Now we have women at the meetings as we have been told to, but why should they make any decisions when it is not their role and why should we give our funds or time to their needs when NGOs will do things for them?"



models for women's self-help groups (micro-credit) and long-term agricultural training and extension support through NGO's (e.g. in Bihar).

Villagers are becoming more aware of the potential benefits of forest management. A number of village micro-plans--often including very detailed problem, constraint and investment analyses--have been jointly developed and written up by Forest Department officials and/or local NGO facilitators with the participation of villagers, and sent for approval to district and state level committees. Several committees are being set up at village level to express villagers' needs and to set priorities for village investments and forest management. However, committees and larger meetings are often dominated by local elites, even though women and other disadvantaged groups may be formally represented.

Community participation in the forestry-based livelihood support activity is critical to its success. The use of micro-planning techniques is one step in the CP towards addressing the need for local level planning for development. To be effective, it requires participation through different groups functioning at various decision-making levels. The development of this approach will require persistent efforts over more than one CP period and more continuous support and monitoring than has been possible in the past.

Beneficiaries are involved in the micro-planning process for village joint forest projects. The further development of village level partnerships will be critical to the achievement of the development objectives of the CP. This will require a greater WFP presence at the district level, continued work with the forestry department to adjust the profile of forestry staff and identification of additional appropriate NGO partners.

There is limited scope for broad community participation within the ICDS programme. It is a long-standing programme following established Government practices. It is assumed that women's groups can provide an important avenue for facilitating participatory processes. Evidence was not found that women's groups have yet developed into effective self-help groups.

Barriers to change include the traditional civil service attitude (which tends to be paternalistic), complex infra-community relationships of caste and gender (though tribal communities tend to be more cohesive and egalitarian), and engrained mistrust of authorities. The empowerment of villagers may mean a significant loss of power and influence by those previously in control, in this case primarily the Forest Department, leading to a certain resistance to change.

Coping with these complex issues will require intensive attention from WFP in the coming years, to move from formal participation and representation in meetings to genuine empowerment for the benefit of all community members. Moving villagers from passive recipients of assistance to active participants and shapers of their own fate and overcoming the dependency mentality that is so common among tribal people must be a priority. Documentation prepared by the Country Office (CO) for the CP (1997) recognized the importance of effective participation for programme success.

The recent intensive pilot initiatives in a few Districts offer an opportunity to expand the concept of participation to a more active process, with involvement from local government members at ward, block and district levels, and community groups with relevant interests (e.g. women's micro-enterprises). However, the concept of participatory planning and the assessment of community coping strategies are still weakly developed among many government officers, although there is support for innovation from senior district officials (District Collectors).

Many of weaknesses in the participation mechanisms being applied to GOI programmes are set out in a recent article related to social forestry<sup>13</sup>. The author had more opportunity than this Mission to work

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<sup>13</sup> Dhanagare, D.N (2000) *Joint Forestry Management in UP: People, Panchayats and Women*. Economic and Political Weekly Sept 9. p3315-3324



with stakeholders to assess the degree and value of participation as applied to the Uttar Pradesh Forestry Project. The author is critical of the joint forest management guidelines, the processes applied, the limited role of different stakeholders (especially the NGOs and women), and decisions concerning revenue distribution.

#### 4.3.3 Partnerships and co-operation with other agencies

**Partners in implementing the CP:** Pursuit of the ambitious development objectives adopted under the FAAD requires active co-operation with organizations that can complement WFP capacity. In particular, WFP lacks the staff to implement rural development projects on the ground.

The main partner is the GOI. The Ministry of Agriculture is the “nodule” ministry, which in the first instance is the point of contact between the WFP and GOI. Contact is mainly at a senior level, through the Joint Secretary. While the ministry is helpful in facilitating the work of the WFP and lending its support to the programme, its role is somewhat anomalous, as the activities included in the programme do not fall within the mandate of the Ministry of Agriculture.

In practice, the most important relationships are with State governments, whom are responsible for implementing the ICDS and forestry programmes. The number of contact points varies depending on State and District. Some States do not appear to permit junior staff to take decisions related to WFP programmes. The FAASC is seen as important for State allocation decisions. – this is seen as the main interest of the participants, closely followed by requests for specific, new “project” support).

In the joint forestry programme, the key partnership is with the State forestry departments. This relationship is of critical importance for the development component of the CP. The Forest Department’s role as the leading implementation agency is justified by its strong effective presence in the field and the strong link between targeted villages and forest resources. But the Forest Department cannot yet effectively fulfill all the activities necessary for the changes envisioned at the community level.

The forestry departments are long-established well disciplined organizations, whose traditional functions focused on the protection and development of forests, and as such historically played something of a policemen, protecting the forests from the local communities. With the introduction and development of the social forestry policy over the past decade, efforts have been made to change that relationship, with the forestry department taking on a more benign development role in relation to the communities with its mandated areas of operation.

It is difficult to judge how effectively the forestry departments have succeeded in developing the capacity to take on the development role with the tribal communities. Field discussions suggested a mixed picture. Some more senior staff have assimilated the need for new approaches, and some field workers demonstrate a genuine concern for the communities they are serving. . There have been some successes during the last few years in overcoming the Department’s resistance and increasingly involving NGOs in planning and implementation of micro-plans.

However, the technical skills required of a good forester are not the same, as those required for development work with the tribal communities. The introduction of a few posts for social advisers will not by itself change the orientation of the service. There is still evidence of paternalistic attitudes. That limits appreciation of the social and cultural dimensions of development work with the target communities and of the virtue of co-operating with NGO’s. The FD needs assistance in the areas of on-the-job training of field officers, and recruitment of staff at all levels that are more sensitive to community and gender issues.

Planned changes in implementation mechanisms and institutional responsibilities for the next CP should be tested in its ‘Intensive Intervention’ initiatives, particularly with respect to the management of food



logistics and the lessons to be learnt on co-ordination problems of multiple-agency operations in the field.

**Co-operation within the UN system:** In relation to partnership within the UN community, members of the WFP staff have played an active part in inter-agency discussions to develop an UNDAF approach in India. However, it remains unclear how far such discussions will proceed from treatment of general principles to the development of more co-operation on the ground. The detailed benefits WFP may derive from active participation in the UNDAF process remain unclear.

In the initial response to the Orissa emergency in 1999, WFP played an active role in a joint UN intervention that was an exemplary case of joint agency action, which might be taken as an indicator of the potential for collaborative interventions. However, subsequently to the crisis intervention, the various UN agencies increasingly focused on their separate programmes. More sustained co-operation on the ground may require innovations in the form of new modalities for joint, inter-agency programmes. While agencies mount independent programmes, the inter-agency relationship is likely to remain as much competitive as complementary.

The one area in which there is an encouraging potential for inter-agency co-operation is in relation to joint initiatives between WFP and IFAD. Possibilities for joint work in Bihar are now under preparation. This is an excellent prospect. The two programmes have similar criteria for the identification target groups, and there is a high degree of potential complementarity. WFP has a greater presence on the ground (and this will be even more the case with the decentralization of the CO), while IFAD has greater flexibility in input provision.

#### 4.3.4 Monitoring and Reporting

**Monitoring:** There have been several positive developments on monitoring CP outcomes, overall effects and ultimate impacts. The Operational Contracts for ICDS and TFDP incorporate M&E in general, and impact monitoring in particular. Gender-specific beneficiary contact monitoring and reporting is promoted in both sub-programmes. A set of village baseline studies has been conducted for ICDS and TFDP, and the impact of stop-dams built through generated funds in M.P. has been assessed. Several WFP Food Aid Monitors were hired in 1999 on a short-term contract to complement the monitoring capacity of the implementing agencies.

The CP document provides a focused, although somewhat generic list of key indicators<sup>14</sup>. Several studies were commissioned to improve monitoring, including a 1997 report on "Monitoring and Evaluating Participation in WFP Natural Resource Management FFW Interventions" for the TFDP, and a 1998 study suggesting a revised system of monitoring the ICDS programme. The 1998 ICDS evaluation and the 1999 mid-term policy review provided additional suggestions for assessing project effects and improving management information systems. The latest Operational Contracts for the two CP sub-programmes extensively address critical monitoring issues and indicators. Process and outcome indicators are formulated, baseline studies planned, and responsibilities broadly assigned.

The monitoring of programme outcomes and effects beyond simple output reporting of the current CP has been concentrating on the following efforts:

1. A comprehensive ICDS baseline study of 300 randomly selected *anganwadi* centers has been conducted by a consulting firm in 1999 in 3 states (Rajasthan, M.P., and U.P.). The study

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<sup>14</sup> 'Key indicators include income transferred through food aid, increase in household food security, nutritional status of vulnerable women and children, increases in people's participation in project planning and in receiving benefits, rates of generated fund use, and performance of project authorities. Beneficiary contact monitoring surveys are carried out. More attention is being given to achievements by gender and social group' (Country Programme document, para. 105)



provides a good baseline, that, when repeated in 2 or 3 years, can give valuable information on whether the quality of services has changed, and on some factors affecting that change. It falls short of directly assessing any impact of services on beneficiaries, or addressing some critical issues such as infra-household distribution of food.

2. Outcome monitoring under the TFDP has concentrated on two activities: (a) the adoption of a food security card which regularly records the food security and socio-economic status, main food sources, and receipt of food assistance by randomly selected beneficiaries of the employment generation schemes supported by WFP. Although the system was introduced more than two years ago and has provided some scattered information, consolidated and written-up results are still not available, as data quality and processing capacity have often been rather poor. (b) WFP and its partners introduced a village-level questionnaire on the micro-plan development process and its beneficiaries. Data is being collected on villagers' participation in decision-making and on generated assets and benefits from such assets, with a particular focus on women. Village level data collection, planned to be repeated every six months, is complemented by a beneficiary contact monitoring survey. Very limited information has been analyzed and collated yet. For comparative purposes, data was also collected in a number of villages in M.P., U.P., and Rajasthan that have not received WFP generated funds.

Overall, TFDP's monitoring suffers because the Forest Department--as the responsible agency for field monitoring--does not have the capacity (or willingness) to collect and process the outcome data. WFP was for some time constrained by a very limited presence of WFP programme officials and the unavailability of food aid monitors in the field<sup>15</sup>. WFP has recently taken steps to hire several food aid monitors and collect more data on its own which is expected to yield some results in the coming months.

In the past year, extensive vulnerability assessments have been conducted by the VAM unit of the WFP Regional Office in order to improve targeting and programme design of the next India CP. The assessments concentrate on the 3 districts slated for 'intensive interventions'. For the near future it is planned to formulate monitoring strategies for these districts that track project implementation as well as leading indicators of project achievements. Some of the experience gained by WFP in this exercise may also be useful for future monitoring efforts.

As progress in monitoring is made, several issues begin to crystallize: Although the awareness of the importance of monitoring and impact assessments has increased, monitoring plans have often been over-ambitious and outstripped the capacity of those implementing them and the limited funds available. Delayed and incomplete reporting by implementation partners has also seriously hampered monitoring. Monitoring needs to be driven by more clearly defined management priorities for information needs, achievable within the resources available.

Past efforts to improve the India CP monitoring system have been characterized by an abundance of proposals, some of them highly complex and sophisticated (e.g. the 1997 and 1998 M&E consultant reports), some of them more basic (such as the recent log-frame workshop at the CO). However, these proposals have not come to terms with of the reality on the ground. In general, there is a shortage of practical and result focused M&E plans, and too much jargon.

WFP's current monitoring and evaluation capacities are not yet quite adequate, neither in the CO, nor in the field. The capacity (and possibly willingness) of WFP's implementing partners to reliably monitor the programmes in terms of anything more than basic inputs and outputs, is questionable.

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<sup>15</sup> Until 1999 monitoring by the WFP CO was confined to regular visits of Programme Officers to the field. Only in mid-1999 WFP hired 5 Food Aid Monitors of its own, under a Special Service Contract, for the period of 11 months (through DSC M&E funds).



It is not sure that the solution lies in the usual set of recommendations, such as re-establishing a separate M&E unit in the CO, hiring more Food Aid Monitors, decentralizing the office, or 'purchasing' more short-term consulting on monitoring. The complexity of monitoring project outcomes and effects may require fundamental re-thinking of how to better determine and narrow down information priorities, and to adopt better suited data collection and analysis methodologies.

### **Recommendations:**

It is recommended that

- The WFP country office take a fresh start in setting monitoring priorities, by carefully analyzing the CP's basic objectives, the multiple constraints on monitoring, and by realistically assessing what can and cannot be done by WFP and its partners. This will require prioritizing information requirements and concentrating on a few aspects of CP inputs, outputs and outcomes that are measurable and should be regularly and publicly reported on. Involvement by all levels of CO management and implementing partners in this process is essential.
- WFP assist implementing partners in improving their in-house monitoring capacities and systems.

**CP Reporting:** With the strong push behind the CP approach, there is a need for a reporting requirement related to the CP itself. Available data on project implementation and monitoring could provide basic information about CP effects, if annually synthesized for the sub-programmes and the CP programme as a whole. Guidelines and operational procedure have been developed to enhance the flexibility of the Country Director in developing and negotiating country programmes and making shifts in resources when appropriate. However, there are still ambiguities and differing interpretations about procedures and the precise extent of the delegated authority, particularly in the area of budget and finance. In the case of India, there have been differences in interpretation and perception regarding the 10% flexibility in resource allocation delegated under the CP.

### **Recommendation:**

- WFP should strengthen the CP approach by establishing a monitoring and reporting requirement for the CP as a whole (e.g. an annual summary report on the CP).

#### *4.3.5 Staffing*

Staff numbers remained static and have not been affected by the creation of the CP. They seem to have the right combination of profile and skills required to design, manage, and implement the CP. However, staff numbers are indeed deficient to undertake effective monitoring. Currently this deficiency is being addressed by recruiting six food monitors on short-term contracts funded from M & E fund.

In order to bring WFP support closer to the implementation sites, the CO is implementing a decentralization plan. One sub-office has been created, with another two offices to follow. However, the proposed structure did not address the shortage of food monitors. It is based on deployment of existing posts from the New Delhi office to the field with no establishment of new posts for food monitors. This was largely attributed to the constrained imposed by the DSC budget where the support cost depends on the amount of food moved.

The Regional Cluster shares premises with the CO. The Regional Manger is also the WFP Representative. Because of their ready availability, and being in the same environment, the CO has increased contact with the Regional Cluster particularly the VAM unit, and the Regional Programme Adviser who have provided an additional planning and review resource for the CO. At the same time the CO provides the necessary administrative support and financial services to the Regional Office.



## Recommendation:

- WFP needs to review and adjust the typical country office staffing profiles and numbers for countries that manage CPs. Staff numbers should be adequate to undertake required field support, and their profile should be appropriate to carry out management, implementation, and the monitoring tasks of the CP.

### 4.3.6 Flexibility of resource allocation within the CP

**Reallocation among states:** One important aspect of flexibility in the Indian CP is the capability to re-allocate resources among India's different states, depending on needs and performance, which was much more difficult before the CP's initiation. The possibility of reallocation among states has been built into Operational Contracts in an exemplary way. The ICDS contract states that "Food allocations to each state will be based on a combination of factors like project performance in the state, effective compliance with the state's obligations, rate of food utilization, carry over stocks and annual availability of external food aid." (ICDS 2206.07, para. 30) Similarly, the TFDP OPC (5569.01, para. 1.2) suggests that "depending upon the performance of the sub-programme in the respective states, re-allocation of commodities among the five states will be made as required." With the approval of the respective Food Aid Advisory Sub-Committees these provisions have been regularly used, particularly in the TFDP, thus significantly increasing the programme's effectiveness by increasing overall off-take of food.

**Reallocation to Supplementary Activities:** It is expected that up to 15,000 MT annually of CP resources will be re-directed this coming year to the supplementary activity of "intensive interventions" in three districts, one each in Rajasthan, M.P. and Orissa. The main objective is to develop and test alternative models for WFP's food assistance under the next CP. The bulk of resources for these supplementary activities is expected to come from reallocations among states and from the TFDP, in line with priorities stated in the Country Agreements: 'When annual resources for the core programme are limited, priority will be given to activities one (ICDS), two (TFDP), and three (Irrigation and settlement), in that order.'

It appears that the CO has successfully convinced GOI and the CFAAC (Country Food Aid Advisory Committee) to support this new effort, thereby again illustrating the flexibility of the CP in redirecting resources to new activities.

In sum, flexibility in food resource use has been an achievement of the India CP, although it is not yet clear if all the shifts have strictly followed the WFP rules (e.g. the 10% maximum of total CP budget allowed for resource shifts among sub-programmes).

### 4.3.7 Geographical concentration

The strategic change envisioned for the new CSO towards more geographical concentration on fewer states and districts makes sense, provided it is accompanied by clear strategies for scaling-up and advocacy. Formulation of an effective outreach strategy for dissemination and replication of effective development approaches and best practices beyond the areas where WFP is operating should be an integral part of the next CSO. That could include seminars, workshops, and field trips of administrators, politicians, researchers, NGOs and beneficiary representatives alike.





#### 4.3.8 Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM)

One potentially important contribution of WFP to food security policy in India is through the development and application of the VAM methods. Food vulnerability at household level has been modelled by WFP. The application of the model shows that there is a significant role for VAM both to improve the various databases and to assist targeting for specific Districts/Blocks.

VAM is not only used for the improvement of targeting and planning but is intended to use selected secondary data (of variable reliability) to develop a more analytical approach to food security interventions. Where a State is put into a priority category on the basis of VAM data, a range of analytical tools can be brought into play to determine an appropriate response. Further work is required to identify indicators reflecting resilience and the coping capacity of a community. This will be a considerable challenge to WFP in its future development of VAM.

Currently, VAM output is mainly quantitative but it will increasingly concentrate on qualitative indicators at District and Block levels. Such material will be particularly useful if WFP wishes to reassess its role in any area or activity, as it should provide evidence in a form that can not easily be disputed. It should enable communities to ascertain the level of services and resources deployed, in comparison with contiguous blocks or as a trend over time.

The level of committed professional input into VAM and the apparent high level of interest by academics, bureaucrats and local planners, indicates that extended use of VAM may be one of the most critical additions that WFP can make to the progress of the various GOI programmes. The strong involvement of GOI in the VAM process is welcomed. Although there are detractors who criticize its statistical basis, basic data are only to be improved when the practical need is demonstrated. The VAM team cannot itself generate the required primary data.

#### **Recommendation:**

- VAM is an essential tool for future WFP and other donor/GOI strategy, planning and programming requirements. The VAM related services could be seen as a specific WFP contribution for the benefit for the donor group and the GOI. The positioning of VAM, as a strategically important tool for GOI and donors would be a strong plus point for a CP and is developing a comparative advantage for WFP. The advocacy of VAM tools within a nutritional surveillance system in key States would be a positive role for WFP and increase the skill base of data collectors from key Departments.

#### 4.3.9 Leverage, advocacy and innovation

The mission feels that some modest progress has been made in this respect. The main advocacy achievement has been in promoting community based development approaches within the context of the Joint Forestry Management Programme. The WFP has lent its support to the implementation of the programme. This has involved a gradual process of change in which the forestry service has been shifting its role from being entirely a forest development and protection (policing) agency to developing a capacity to support the economic and social development of the communities living in the areas of forest department jurisdiction. This has also involved some evolution towards a more community-based approach to local development.

In terms of innovation, the introduction and promotion of 'Indiamix' (and Rajasthanmix) did introduce a new type of supplementary feeding input. So far the effect has been modest, as there has been only limited adoption outside of WFP programmes, so far.



#### 4.3.10 Capacity to respond to emergencies

The India CP does not include any explicit contingency planning for disaster mitigation as such. The main reason is that it is now the Indian Government's policy not to request food aid for emergency relief purposes, but only for development, as calamity relief funds have been set up for each state. This policy was re-iterated in a letter by the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture to WFP of Nov. 5, 1999, regarding assistance after the Orissa cyclone: "... we [GoI] seek WFP assistance in India for developmental programmes only and not for emergency relief operations." Nevertheless WFP has reacted quickly, mostly upon state governments' requests, when natural disasters have struck (floods in Assam, drought in Rajasthan, and a major cyclone in Orissa). The main instrument has been to accelerate delivery of planned CP resources for ICDS and TFDP for the particular state, and to reallocate and concentrate them on the geographic areas most affected. Such assistance has only been provided for emergencies in states where WFP already had a presence.

The biggest test for WFP's response capacity came when the cyclone hit the Orissa coastline in September 1999. Through a combination of various mobilization and transfer mechanisms WFP effectively addressed this emergency at its early stage, in close co-ordination with UN sister organizations.<sup>16</sup>

It turned out that the total food made available through the CP of about 12,500 MT (which is equivalent to about 15 percent of WFP's annual CP budget) was far short of the estimated requirements of more than 42,000 MT needed for rehabilitation work. Thus, additional assistance was sought by WFP through two PRROs. Under the first PRRO (6211), an additional amount of 5,773 MT of various commodities was made available and distributed through ICDS and NGO organized FFW. A second, follow-up PRRO (6220) of about 36,000 MT was approved by the WFP EB in May 2000.

In sum, the India CP mechanism did permit necessary shifts of food resources in a timely and efficient way and the provision of some modest additional resources. WFP's presence, technical know-how, staff dedication and collaboration within an efficient UN co-ordinated response facilitated the immediate assistance. The United Nations' cyclone response is now seen as a model for UN co-ordination in programming and implementation.

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<sup>16</sup> US\$ 200,000 was immediately mobilized from the CD's discretionary fund for emergencies ("immediate response facility") for the local purchase of 234 MT of high-energy biscuits fed to children through the existing ICDS network (EMOP 6192.00). WFP also accelerated its food assistance activities in Orissa by reallocating about 7,500 MT of available, partly not-yet allocated, but mostly 'left-over' development resources of the CP for 1999 and 2000, and by securing an additional amount of 5,000 MT of food assistance from various donors for the CP. Of this total, about 7,500 MT of Indiamix/CSB were distributed by the Department for Women and Child Development under the ICDS programme, and about 5,000 MT of rice, dal, and oil were either directly distributed by the Indian Red Cross or used in FFW programmes with NGOs (CARE, Action Aid, Lutheran World Federation). Among the facilities restored or constructed through FFW were homes, ponds, roads, drains, embankments, schools, and community centers. In addition to food resources, US\$ 250,000 was made available for the construction of up to 100 combined *anganwadi* centers/food stores/shelters in cyclone devastated areas from carry-over generated funds of projects 2685 (former Orissa TFDP) and currently generated funds of TFDP project 5569. Allocation to the emergency was facilitated as generated fund use in the Orissa TFDP had been low (79%).



## **5. COMPLIANCE WITH WFP'S ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY (FAAD):**

The Country Programme should not be evaluated against the new FAAD WFP policy programme, as the formulation of the current programme antedates the adoption of the new guidelines. Nevertheless, it is useful to ask how far the programme is consistent with the new approach.

The new policy framework<sup>17</sup> identifies five areas on which future WFP programmes should concentrate. The five areas are:

- a. enabling young children and expectant and nursing mothers to meet their special and nutrition-related health needs;
- b. enabling poor households to invest in human capital through education and training;
- c. making it possible for poor families to increase and preserve assets;
- d. mitigating the effects of natural disasters in areas of recurring vulnerability and
- e. enabling households, which depend on degraded natural resources for their food security, to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods.

The ICDS programme directly address (a) and aspects of the programme relate to (b). ICDS does not directly address the other goals.

The Joint Forestry programme also provides food to poor families through the food for work component. That programme is also intended to make a significant contribution to (c) and (e). Much of the work being implemented in target villages is intended to build social assets and by so doing to increase productivity of the farm household (c). Also, the Forestry Department programmes in which food is used as part payment of wages include a number of activities aiming at preservation and restoration of forest lands through strategies which will provide increased income benefits to the local communities, activities which fall within the spirit of (e).

Thus the broad thrust of the objectives adopted for WFP activities in India are already consistent with the FAAD policy.

## **6. SOME LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE**

The evaluation mission is in broad agreement with the Mid-term Policy Review in some of its main conclusions. The current programme is spread too thin and in future there should be a move in the direction of greater geographical concentration, both in fewer States and fewer Districts within the chosen States. The choice of target States from among the populous poorer Northern States is appropriate. Where the mission feels that much more work needs to be done is in relation to the precise nature of the new interventions.

The continuation of a programme in India will only be justified if the WFP manages to contribute to solutions to the poverty of its chosen target groups. They are faced with very difficult physical conditions – semi-arid lands, land shortages, social isolation and marginalisation. Development solutions are not obvious, nor will they be easy to implement.

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<sup>17</sup> 'Enabling Development' was approved by the WFP Executive Board in May 1999.



WFP operates under two basic constraints. The input mix it can command to support its interventions is narrowly defined. And it has a limited staff establishment. It is implausible that WFP, with its inherent constraints, can be itself deliver the required solutions, although with its resources and its commitment it can make a significant contribution.

The new draft CSO document has placed a good deal of emphasis on concentrating the WFP in much fewer districts (sixteen), with the intention that ‘synergy’ may be achieved between the various WFP interventions. While this approach may generate some benefits, it should be noted that the hoped for synergy would largely be generated between the outputs of the various interventions. However, the fundamental problem WFP faces is the rather limited range of inputs it has on offer. What is required is additional synergy from complementary inputs, needed to increase the productivity of WFP food inputs. In turn, that requires a careful identification of the partners that can most effectively complement WFP resources, which could include NGO’s, other donor agencies (UN and non-UN) and government agencies. In this regard, the critical synergy that WFP needs to seek out is synergy with partner agencies, in addition to synergy within its own activities.



# Annexes



## Annex 1: Terms of Reference

### Background

WFP is committed to implementing the programme approach, as mandated by the General Assembly in resolution 47/199. Accordingly, a general policy framework for introducing the Country Programme Approach was approved by the 38<sup>th</sup> session of the CFA (1994), in order to make WFP work in each country more integrated, coherent, focused, and flexible. The cornerstone of the WFP programme approach is its underlying strategy, which is set forth in a Country Strategy Outline (CSO). The Country Programme (CP) is then prepared on the basis of the findings of the CSO, and consistent with the planning cycles of the Government and the United Nations system.

There are three key reference documents, which outline the CP approach: CFA 37/P/7 (April 1994), CFA 38/P/6 (October 1994), and CFA 40/8 (October 1995).

Within the directions stipulated by the Country Strategy Outline (CSO) and a well-defined rationale for food aid, the CP should provide a countrywide strategic focus to WFP's programme of activities/projects. The proposed functions of food aid should be based on a thorough analysis of national food security and the vulnerability of specific population groups.

### The India Country Programme – An Overview

The **India Country Programme** was approved by the Executive Board in 1997, based on the Country Strategy Outline of December 1994. The CP provides a strategy for WFP assistance for a five-year period and involves a core allocation of 182 million dollars for direct operational costs as well as supplementary activities valued at 68.8 million dollars, and covering approximately 4 million beneficiaries. The CP was approved for five years (April 97 – March 2002), however, it is expected to be extended for nine months to end 2002 in order to be harmonized with Government planning cycle and other UN agencies. The CP broad goals are:

- (a) improvement of nutrition and quality of life of the most vulnerable at critical times in their lives;
- (b) sustainable improvements in household food security of carefully selected groups of the poorest people (with special emphasis on children and women), who are unable to produce or procure enough food for their families to lead active and healthy lives.

The objectives are to:

- g) combat malnutrition and invest in human resources through ICDS;
- h) help improve immediate food security for selected target groups, and, with their participation, invest generated funds in their sustainable food security;
- i) maximize the active participation of women in WFP projects;
- j) advocate Joint Forestry Management (JFM);
- k) help strengthen distribution channels for locally-produced food grains; and
- l) increase agricultural production and create employment through canal construction, command area development and settlement under irrigation schemes.

Accordingly, the CP was planned to include three core development activities (1: Supplementary feeding of vulnerable women and children under integrated child development services (ICDS); 2: Food security and development support to tribal and scheduled caste people in isolated forest areas, 3: Rural development through irrigation and settlement. And three supplementary activities (expansions of basic



programme activities). Currently, only two core activities are operational (1, and 2). The third activity was terminated in March 1998.

A mid term policy review was undertaken in December, 1999 in order to assess the programme's compatibility with the Food Aid and Development policy (FAAD). Based on this review the CO started the process of preparing the second generation CSO.

As the CP will terminate in 2002, the evaluation will closely assess the CP experience, make recommendations for the formulation of the second generation CSO and CP, and may draw lessons for the future application of the country programme approach of WFP.

### **Objectives of the India Country Programme Evaluation**

- 7) To assess the extent to which WFP's current development activities in India have been influenced by the CP approach so that they constitute a recognizable CP.
- 8) To assess, for the India CP, the extent to which WFP's systems and procedures for programme and project identification, design, budgeting, resourcing and implementation at both the headquarters and field levels have enhanced or impeded the CP approach.
- 9) To assess the extent to which the adoption of the programme approach has been effective for WFP's contribution to development in India.
- 10) To determine the extent to which the development activities ongoing in India have been designed to make a direct contribution to the objectives of the CP.
- 11) To assess the extent to which the individual WFP activities in India represent recognized good practice in food aid (including the practices and principles recognized in the "Enabling Development" policy).
- 12) To provide recommendations which can be used in the development of future Country Strategy Outlines and CPs, and to provide accountability to the Executive Board.

### **Scope of Work**

#### **Evaluating the Country Programme In Light of Its Constituent Activities**

The evaluation of the CP in India will focus primarily on the development and implementation of the programme as a whole. It will consider the programme in the context of the principles of the CP approach as they were understood and communicated throughout WFP at the time that the current CSO and CP were developed.

While focusing first at the programme level, the evaluation will also consider the way in which activities/projects have been integrated into the programme and the extent to which they make a contribution to the programme objectives as well as meet their own. ***It is important to distinguish between the evaluation of the CP and the separate exercise of evaluating each of the activities/projects which make up the CP, the latter being outside the scope of the current evaluation.*** In CP evaluations, a team works its way from the general to the particular, from the CP to the activity level.

Activities/projects are assessed in terms of their logic and their expected contribution to meeting the objectives of the CP. It may be that activities/projects provide the most concrete opportunity for assessing progress toward overall programme objectives.



## Country Programmes and “Enabling Development”

The findings and recommendations of the evaluation will be forward-looking in that they will be framed in a way, which supports the development of a new CSO and CP in India, which will conform to current requirements, including those of the “Enabling Development” policy. Since the “Enabling Development” initiative dates from 1999, it will not be appropriate to evaluate programmes developed before that, such as India CP, in terms of their effectiveness in meeting the requirements of this policy. Rather, the evaluation team will assess the current India programme for its fit with the policy prescriptions evident in “Enabling Development” and make recommendations for the future CSO/CP. The assessment of programme compatibility with “Enabling Development” will be guided by the template provided in Annex 5.

## Linking the Country Programme to Other Activities

The evaluation will directly cover only the activities defined under the CP. As such it will not attempt to assess the effectiveness of relief and recovery activities, or any development activities which may exist outside of the CP. However, the evaluation will examine development activities in the CP, which have been designed to support current or future emergency operations.

## Key Issues and Sub-Issues

The evaluation will address the following issues and sub-issues.

### 1. Has the process of developing a CSO and CP In India resulted in a CP as described and expected in the guidelines and policies of the WFP?

- 1.1. How were the activities ongoing before the establishment of the CP modified to fit more readily into the CP approach?
- 1.2. Did the process of developing the India CSO and CP include an analysis of national and sub-regional (within the country) food insecurity and vulnerability? Does the CSO and/or the CP make reference to any VAM material developed for India?
- 1.3. Did the process of developing the India CSO and CP result in an identified strategy for WFP development programming in India? Did it include, for example, choices in strategic areas such as: key partners inside and outside government; geographic target areas; targeting considerations within geographic areas; programme areas best dealt with by other agencies?
- 1.4. Are the activities in the India CP designed to be complementary in terms of addressing the cycle of food insecurity from various angles (for an identified target group), or to be linked in terms of sector, geographic area, beneficiaries or any other common elements? If not, is there a strong rationale for not making these linkages?
- 1.5. Are there specific objectives expressed at the level of the CP (as opposed to the activity level)? Are they relevant, realistic and attainable in light of the approved activities in the CP? Further, can the achievement of objectives be measured at the program level?
- 1.6. What evidence exists that the current India CP exhibits the desired characteristics of:
  - ◆ integration;
  - ◆ coherence;
  - ◆ focus; and
  - ◆ flexibility.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> These terms are defined in CFA 38/P/6 as follows: **integration**: with the priorities and other activities of the country itself, as well as those of the UN system and other donors;  
(footnote continued)





**2. To what extent did WFP's systems and procedures for programme and project identification, design, budgeting, implementation and review enhance or impede the CP approach?**

- 2.1. To what extent has the delegation of authority to the regional and country office level enhanced the flexibility of the India Country Director in developing and negotiating a CP and in making shifts in resources when appropriate? Has the Country Director been pro-active in using those authorities which have been devolved?
- 2.2. Have appropriate policy statements, guidelines, and headquarters/ regional staff support been made available to the India country office-during the development of CSOs and CPs?
- 2.3. In the experience of the WFP country office in India, are procedures and rules for establishing programme and project budgets appropriate to a CP approach? Do they allow for the required flexibility in resource planning and allocation?
- 2.4. Is the staffing mix in the India country office appropriate given the requirements of the CP approach? Is short-term technical support available where it is needed and appropriate? Has the organizational set-up of the Country Office been conducive to the implementation of a programme approach?
- 2.5. Were the defined procedures for preparing and implementing the CP at country level followed? For example, has a CP agreement been signed with the government? Were appraisal missions carried out to prepare Project Summaries? Does a Programme Review Committee exist and does it function?
- 2.6. What problems or constraints have been identified during the development and implementation of the India CP?

**3. To what extent has the design, development and implementation of a CP in India resulted in a more effective WFP contribution to development programming?**

- 3.1. Was the Indian government fully involved in the review of needs in preparation for the CSO and does it agree with the stated priorities of the CP?
- 3.2. Did the process of developing the CP enhance WFP involvement in the CCA and UNDAF processes under way in India? Did the shift to a CP enhance WFP's ability to contribute to UN coordination through the CSN, CCA, UNDAF or other processes?
- 3.3. Has the process of developing the CP in India had any appreciable effect on the ability of the Indian government to make and meet programme commitments regarding counterpart contributions including both finances and staff time?
- 3.4. Does the India CP include contingency planning measures at either the country programme or activity level? Does it include measures in one or more activities aimed at ensuring that disaster preparedness or disaster mitigation actions are taken in development projects so that the transition to emergency operations may be more effective and timely? Is there evidence that contingency planning will be included in the development of the next country programme?

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**coherence:** the elements of the WFP sub-programmes in the country relate closely to each other to achieve a clear purpose;

**focused:** on those geographical areas and households that represent WFP's target groups; and,

**flexibility:** allowing for activities to be adjusted within the programme period in line with changing circumstances.



- 3.5. While the India CP does not include resourcing and planning for PRROS and EMOPS, does it describe them and note any possible actual or potential interaction between development activities and emergency operations?
- 3.6. Did the India CP mechanism permit necessary shifts of resources among activities in a timely and efficient way?
- 4. Do the activities in the India CP adequately address gender issues and adhere to WFP's Commitments to Women?**
  - 4.1. Does the country programme approach make it easier or more difficult to meet the Commitments to Women, and to mainstream a gender perspective? (For a detailed guide to addressing this issue, see Annex 4.)
  - 4.2. What changes would be required in the next CSO and CP which would ensure better compatibility with the Commitments to Women?
- 5. Does the design of the activities, which make up the India CP reflect the lessons documented in Enabling Development Policy?**
  - 5.1. Is food aid the most appropriate resource for use in the India CP activities? Is food aid justifiable and necessary for the achievement of the activity level objectives?
  - 5.2. Are WFP's partners in each activity the most appropriate? What measures were taken during the design of the activity to assess possible partners?
  - 5.3. Is food aid used in the activities in the India CP targeted to food deficit sub-regions and/or populations identifiable as the hungry poor? Is there evidence that these targeted people are being reached?
  - 5.4. Are assets being created in the activities? If so, what measures are in place to ensure that the targeted beneficiaries benefit from these assets?
  - 5.5. What indicators are being monitored which can be used to assess the effectiveness of the activities in the India CP? Do they provide information regarding the achievement of anticipated outputs, outcomes and impacts? Were appropriate baselines established for the indicators being used?
- 6. To what extent does the use of food aid in the current activities of the India CP conform to the "Enabling Development" policy<sup>19</sup>? (For a detailed guide to addressing this issue see Annex 5.)**
  - 6.1. What changes would be required in the development of a new CSO and CP in India, which would ensure better compatibility with "Enabling Development"?
- 7. What measures can be taken in the development of the next CSO and the CP to improve the effectiveness of WFP's contribution in India to development during the next programming cycle?**

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<sup>19</sup> It is important to note that this issue does not mean that the current country programme will be retroactively evaluated against the criteria of Enabling Development. Rather, the programme will be assessed with a view to providing guidance as to any changes required to ensure compliance in the future.



## **8. Are there any other lessons to be learned from the experience gained in designing and implementing the current CP in India?**

### **Methodology**

#### **6.1 Stages of the Evaluation**

The proposed method is indicative and may be revised and/or refined by the Team Leader. The evaluation will normally be divided into three phases:

#### **Phase I – Preparation and Desk Review (approximately one week):**

Prior to the in-country mission, the team will review all relevant background documentation, including the CSO and CP, activity summaries, project progress reports, project mid-term and terminal evaluation reports, relevant international and national sectoral publications/reports. In addition, the team should locate and review country policy reviews, and studies carried out for recent thematic evaluations, such as the review of WFP Commitments to Women. Key team members will be assembled at WFP in Rome for a briefing prior to departure. Following decentralization of many programme functions to the field level, some of the documentary material on programmes and activities will be accessed at the level of the regional and country offices.

#### **Phase II - The in-country evaluation (3 weeks):**

To the extent possible, the Team will meet with all relevant stakeholders, including beneficiaries, local and national government, key implementation partners and other development agencies involved in the UNDAF and with any of WFP's programmes.

Data collection during the CP evaluations will take place both in the offices of key stakeholders in the capital and in the field where examples of major programme activities can be visited. Priority should be given to meetings in the capital but some coverage of field activities will be necessary. A useful rule of thumb may be to spend two-thirds of the available time in the capital and one-third visiting activities in the field.

#### **Phase III - Report writing (5 working days team members, 10 working days Team Leader):**

During each phase of the CP evaluation, the team leader should confirm the duties and accountabilities of each team member. This can be easily organized around the products of the evaluation (see Annex 2 and 3) which are in turn organized around the key objectives and issues.

The team leader is responsible for co-ordinating inputs to and writing the Aide Memoire, evaluation summary and final report. Individual reports by team members may either be integrated into the final report or, where necessary, presented as annexes.

#### **1.2 The Evaluation Team**

The evaluation will be organized and managed by OEDE and the team will be composed of four members, including the team leader. The team should contain the following expertise:

- ◆ Rural development/household food security expert
- ◆ Development planner/economist
- ◆ Socio-economist-cum-gender expert
- ◆ Nutritionist/household food security expert



### 1.3 Timetable and Itinerary

The tentative itinerary for the India CP evaluation will be as follows:

Briefing and desk review at WFP Rome	4 – 8 September
Travel to India	9 -10 September
In-country mission	11 – 28 September
Debriefing of Country Office	29 September
Travel to Rome	30 September
Debriefing at WFP Rome	13 October
Deadline for Summary Evaluation Report	23 October
Deadline for Final Evaluation Report	November

### 6.4 Organization of the Mission

Role of the Team Leader: Will finalize the methodology and key issues for the evaluation. This will be done in consultation with the OEDE Evaluation Officer. He/she will also clarify the role and input of each team member, including individual requirements for the Aide Memoire, Evaluation Summary and Final Report. With assistance from the WFP Evaluation Officer, the team leader will define any preparatory work required by the India CO and/or local consultants prior to the mission (at least 2 weeks notice should be given to the Country Office). The team leader will assume overall responsibility for the mission, and will synthesize the inputs from all sources in order to produce the necessary outputs.

The Team leader is responsible for producing the following outputs:

- an **Aide Mémoire** for presenting the mission’s early findings and recommendations at the final debriefing of the India Country Office, Regional Office and at HQ ;
- an **Evaluation Summary Report** for presentation to the Executive Board; and
- a **Final Evaluation Report**.

The team leader will present the team’s findings at all debriefings and will ensure that all deadlines are met for the above outputs.

Role of the other team members: To provide technical expertise according to individual skill sets, and to provide written inputs to the Aide Memoire, Evaluation Summary and Final Report under the guidance of the Team Leader and WFP Evaluation Officer.

Role of the OEDE Evaluation Officer: In addition to participating fully as a team member, the OEDE Evaluation officer will provide support to the overall evaluation exercise as necessary, which includes liaising between team members, relevant areas of WFP headquarters, and the country office. She/he will also ensure compliance with the intended thrust of the evaluation, and that the necessary logistical support is provided by WFP HQ and the CO.

Role of the India Country Office: To advise on the timing of the evaluation to ensure that the evaluation outputs are available for the preparation of the CSO. To ensure that all necessary documents required to plan the evaluation and undertake the desk review are provided in a timely manner. To assist with the identification and hiring of local consultants as required. To ensure that any necessary preparatory work is undertaken in-country prior to the arrival of the evaluation team, and to facilitate the work of the team while in-country. Prepares and organizes the mission in-country itinerary, and organizes the CP evaluation workshop/briefing/debriefing.



### **6.5 Products of the Evaluation**

- **Aide Mémoire** for debriefing the Country Office, Regional Office, and HQ  
*Deadline: 27 September*
- **Evaluation Summary Report** (maximum 5000 words)  
*Deadline: 23 October*
- **Final Evaluation Report and Recommendation Tracking Matrix**  
*Deadline: 6 November*

All reports will be prepared in English, and must be written in conformity with the outlines in Annexes 2 and 3. Draft versions of the Evaluation Summary Report and Final Report will be reviewed by the OEDE Evaluation Officer prior to being finalized.

The Evaluation Summary Report and Final Evaluation Report must be submitted in hard copy accompanied by an electronic version. If applicable, annexes should also be made available in WFP standard software (i.e. Microsoft package). For ease of processing, the Summary Report should be submitted as plain, unformatted text only (no paragraph numbering, limited bold, underline, etc.).

The mission is fully responsible for its independent report, which may not necessarily reflect the views of WFP.

The evaluation shall be conducted in conformity with these terms of reference and under the overall guidance of OEDE.



## Annex 2: India Country Programme Overview

States	Total commodities available for 1999 (carry over from 1998 plus 1999 allocation (tons))	% of total commodity amount available for 1999	Approx. number of beneficiaries ICDS (1999/2000)	Approx. number of beneficiaries Assistance to Forestry in Tribal Areas (1999/2000)	Approx. number of food aid beneficiaries (1999/2000)	% of total beneficiaries (1999)	Activity 1:	Activity 2: Assistance to Forestry in Tribal Areas	Number/ Names of common programme districts
Assam	4,922	4%	172,000	0	172,000	4%	Yes, 3 districts	No	Nil
Bihar	2,500	2%	0	70,000	70,000	2%	No	Yes, 10 districts	Nil
Gujarat	8,184	6%	0	311,000	311,000	8%	No	Yes, 7 districts	Nil
Kerala	12,370	9%	430,725	0	430,725	11%	Yes, 6 districts	No	Nil
Madhya Pradesh	43,596	33%	720,000	230,750	950,750	24%	Yes, 11 districts	Yes, 12 districts	1 district: Jhabua
Orissa	53,885 11,815**	9%	860,000 335,000	389,500 89,500	1,249,500* 424,500**	10%	Yes, 7 districts 3 districts**	Yes, 13 districts 10 districts**	5 districts: Koraput (regul), Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Dhenkanal (expansion)
Rajas-than	21,736	16%	582,780	109,000	691,780	17%	Yes, 10 districts (incl. Canadian Grant)	Yes, 13 districts	7 districts: Ajmer, Tonk, Rajsamand, Udaipur, Durgapur, Chittorgarh, Banswara
Uttar Pradesh	28,156	21%	833,885	109,000	942,885	24%	Yes, 10 districts	Yes, 10 districts	3 districts: Varanasi, Mirzapur, Sonbhadra
Total	175,349*1) 133,279**2)	100%	3,599,390* 3,074,390**	1,219,250* 919,250**	4,818,640* 3,993,640**	100%			16 out of 96 (17%) * 12 out of 93 (13%)**

\* including the expansion due to the Orissa cyclone of October 1999

\* including the expansion: for the Orissa expansion only 4,206 out of 42,070 tons had been resourced until 16.12.99; i.e. in total only 137,976 tons

\*\* excluding the Orissa expansion

\*\* excluding the expansion: out of the total only 93,000 tons (i.e. 70%) were utilized.

Note: Beneficiary calculation for Forestry in Tribal Areas project: number of workers multiplied by five household members.



### Annex 3: Cumulative Food and Fund Utilization as of March 31, 2000, by State

	Unit	Total	Madhya Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh	Rajasthan	Bihar	Orissa	(Gujarat) (#2783)
<b>Project 5569</b>								
Cumulative food utilization <sup>20</sup>	Percent	107	131	65	51	49	133	(91)
Proportion of food allocated by state <sup>21</sup>	Percent	100	35.4	16.7	16.7	13.5	17.6	(n.a.)
Total no. of micro-plans to be formulated <sup>22</sup>	No.	439	180	80	80	37	62	(130)
No. of micro-plans formulated as of Sept. 2000 <sup>23</sup>	No.	161	73	34	Under formulation	29	25	(13)
<b>Pre-CP Projects</b>								
Cumulative Generated Fund Utilization <sup>24</sup>	Percent		98	93	93	92	79	76
Proportion of overall G.F. utilization by state	Percent	100	55.6	15.7	7.7	7.3	9.4	4.4

<sup>20</sup> Memo by Dr. R.R. Sharma to G. Aelion et al. of Aug. 11, 2000

<sup>21</sup> Wheat and rice only, as planned, based on total availability of 133,955 MT

<sup>22</sup> Excluding Gujarat (proj. # 2783.01)

<sup>23</sup> Majority of which is expected to be approved by SLCCs before end-2000

<sup>24</sup> CP Evaluation Mission Briefing Documents, p. 11



**Annex 4: Utilization of Generated Funds in Tribal Forestry Development Projects, by State (pre-CP projects)**

	Unit	Total	Madhya Pradesh	Uttar Pradesh	Rajasthan	Bihar	Orissa	Gujarat
<b>Irrigation (lift-irrigation, micro-watersheds, water-harvesting)</b>	No.	1,323	916	41	101	216	-	49
<b>Forest plantation</b>	Hectare	26,725	-	-	7,450	2,785	15,730	760
<b>Roads (mainly forest)</b>	Km	2,290	1,184	-	-	274	832	
<b>Drinking water (wells)</b>	No.	4,256	1,949	535	117	818	592	245
<b>Schools</b>	No.	628	465	148	-	-	-	15
<b>Anganwadi (cum-health) centres</b>	No.	468	409	-	-	-	38	21
<b>Food storage centres</b>	No.	234	-	51	-	-	183	-
<b>Labour sheds</b>	No.	270	-	179	-	-	91	-
<b>Community halls</b>	No.	113	-	113	-	-	-	-
<b>Tribal housing</b>	No.	175	-	-	-	175	-	-
<b>Additional employment</b>	Million workdays	4.6	-	4.6	-	-	-	-





## Annex 5: Checklist for Meeting the Commitments to Women & Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective - CP India

Essential Elements of Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy	Detailed Observations	Level of CP Coherence With Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy			
		Very High	High	Low	Very Low
<b>Commitment I: Provide Direct Access to Appropriate Food for Women</b>					
◆ Does the Country Programme make a real effort to get food into the hands of women, e.g. through women's ration cards?	Since the beneficiaries of the ICDS activities are all women and children, 100% of primary recipients are, therefore, women. For the forestry activity the women workers receive food entitlement through a ration cards.	X			
◆ Do the CP activities address micronutrient deficiencies amongst women and children?	Yes, All WFP supplied food is fortified. Also WFP is encouraging local production of fortified food ( India mix), and is working with Government to include micronutrient fortification norms into all supplementary food to ICDS	X			
◆ Do the CP activities consider local cooking and eating habits?	Yes,		X		
◆ Have women been consulted in determining the food basket?	No, women are not consulted in determining the food basket.				
◆ Are female-headed households given special attention because of their greater poverty and time constraints?	N/A				
◆ Does the CP make an effort to reduce the security and /or health risks women face when collecting food?	N/A				



Essential Elements of Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy	Detailed Observations	Level of CP Coherence With Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy			
		Very High	High	Low	Very Low
<b>Commitment II: Take Measures to Ensure Women's Equal Access to and Full Participation in Power Structures and Decision-Making</b>					
◆ Does the CP address women's strategic needs, i.e., use an approach that challenges traditional gender roles and empowers women? Describe how.	The CP has addressed indirectly the strategic needs of the women through the allocation of 30% of the generated fund to women programmes.		X		
◆ Does it address gender relations? Does it bring men into the dialogue around the issues of women's status?	Gender relation is discussed in the gender training for counterparts, and with women in the women committees, however, there is no present approach to bring men into the dialogue.			X	
<b>Commitment III: Take Positive Action to Facilitate Women's Equal Access to Resources, Employment, Markets and Trade</b>					
◆ Are Country Programme resources deliberately targeted to women and girls where there is a big gender gap, i.e. of 25%? <sup>25</sup> (This includes most WFP-assisted countries.) What is done?	Both programme activities explicitly aim at women: women and children constitute 100 of the beneficiaries of the ICDS activity, and 75% of the forestry activity, i. e. 89% of the beneficiaries of the CP are women and children. Achievement to date shows closer to 72% of the CP resources were directed to Women.	X			
◆ Does the CP have incentive programs to address the gender gap in primary education? What are they?	N/A... Current CP does not have an Education project.				
◆ Do women participate in FFW? As labourers or also as decision-makers? Do they control the assets created?	Yes, in the Forestry activities 40% of the work force are women. They also participate in all decision-making bodies at the village through village development committees. However, active participation in decision making is very weak, and limited to silent attendance. Women have very limited control over the assets created as most of it are community assets that benefit both women and men such as water harvesting structure, or a pumps etc....			X	

<sup>25</sup> For information on the gender gap in your country, contact the Senior Gender Adviser, SPP at HQ.



Full Report of the Evaluation of the India Country Programme

Essential Elements of Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy	Detailed Observations	Level of CP Coherence With Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy			
		Very High	High	Low	Very Low
◆ Is there any opportunity in the CP for women to learn new skills through FFW for greater development sustainability?	Yes, CP allocate 30% of the generated funds for income generating activities primarily benefiting women such as sewing training, beads work, growing of Turmeric as cash crop, etc....		X		
◆ Does the CO engage in advocacy under the CP on behalf of women? For gender equity? To leverage resources for partnership work?	A series of training were conducted for counterparts at the programme implementation level in order to raise gender sensitivity. A strategic planning workshop, with focus on mainstreaming gender in programme planning was also conducted for senior managers in the CO and counterpart departments. In addition, the CO office is planning to produce a document on gender issues in food security and women's participation in food-assisted programmes and village institutions.		X		
<b>Commitment IV: Generate and Disseminate Gender-Disaggregated Data for Planning and Evaluation</b>					
◆ Are the M&E systems used in the CP sensitive to gender? Explain how.	Yes, The monitoring formats were modified to include gender-disaggregated information from the field.		X		
◆ Is qualitative information sensitive to gender also collected?	A special tool to monitor women's participation in village development has been developed in order to monitor the active involvement of women in planning and decision making processes at village level.				
◆ Does the CP look at inputs, outputs outcomes and impact from a gender perspective?	Yes, the office has consciously incorporated gender disaggregated information in all baselines studies and developed formats to capture gender desegregated statistics in order to have a gender sensitive inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impact information.	X			



Essential Elements of Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy	Detailed Observations	Level of CP Coherence With Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy			
		Very High	High	Low	Very Low
<b>Commitment V: Improve Accountability of Actions Taken to Meet the Commitments</b>					
◆ Are WFP staff held accountable in the CP for meeting the Commitments to Women and mainstreaming gender? How?	Indirectly, for staff who are directly responsible of gender issues, degree of achievement of their workplan will form part of their yearly Performance Appraisal Reports.		X		
◆ Is the Gender Focal Point given sufficient authority? Support?	Yes, she is very active in overseeing the inclusion of the gender issues in all activities that the office undertakes.	X			
◆ Are implementing partners held accountable for meeting the Commitments to Women and mainstreaming gender, e.g. through inclusion in LOU's and MOU's? How?	Yes, all LOUs/MOUs, and operational contracts have a gender requirements, therefore, partners are committed to meet the WFP Commitments to Women through these programmes which they implement with WFP assistance	X			