



World Food Programme

A Report from the Office of Evaluation

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*Full Report of the Evaluation of CHINA
EMOP 6045 - "Emergency Food Aid to Flood
Affected People in Anhui, Hubei and Jiangxi
Provinces of China"*

(15 September - 07 October 1999)

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The evaluation team visited China from 15 September to 7 October 1999. This document was prepared by the mission team leader, Ms. Alice Carloni, on the basis of the mission's work in the field.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Mission

The purpose of this terminal evaluation mission was to assess project impact and draw lessons for the design of future emergency operations. EMOP 6045 is of particular interest because of its large scale (5.7 million beneficiaries; US\$ 146 million) and because it developed and tested a new model for linking disaster relief to livelihood recovery.

In response to a request from the China country office and the headquarters Evaluation Office, WFP fielded a five-person team in China from 15 September until 7 October 1999. The team comprised: Senior Rural Sociologist/Team Leader (FAO IC); Senior Evaluation Officer (WFP), Emergency Expert (consultant/AusAid) and two former EMOP Chinese Program Associates. Staff from the WFP country office and MOA's Department of International Cooperation accompanied the team and participated in the evaluation exercise, as well as staff from provincial and county Programme Management Offices (PMOs) -see list of participants in Attachment 6.

The EMOP evaluation assessed the value-added of WFP assistance in the context of a strong Government disaster response and drew lessons for future emergency operations. Findings highlight: strengths/weaknesses of VAM for EMOP targeting; issues related to timing; grain-borrowing mechanisms; advantages/disadvantages of combining relief and rehabilitation objectives in an EMOP; appropriateness of modified food-for-work type mechanisms (referred to as Food-for-Recovery or FFR to distinguish it from conventional FFW) in the recovery phase; beneficiary participation; gender issues and complementarity of Government and WFP monitoring systems.

1.2 Evaluation Methods

The EMOP impact evaluation mission adopted a participatory approach, articulated on five administrative levels: Central, Province, County, Township and Village. Methods included stakeholder workshops, village Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs), gender analysis, focus group meetings, semi-structured household interviews and spot visits to reconstruction sites. Participatory tools included key informant interviews, use of ZOPP-type cards, participatory mapping, calendar making, matrix ranking of reconstruction activities and positive/negative impact analysis. Gender issues were mainstreamed throughout the exercise (for details see Attachment 1–Methodology).

China EMOP 6045 evaluation findings are based on visits to three of the four project provinces and eight of the 23 project counties, 13 townships and 19 villages. To compare the “with” and “without” project situation as well as beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries, mini-PRAs were undertaken in eight severely-affected villages, five moderately-affected villages and four non-project villages.

In each county, using the PMO's map of the project and non-project areas, three villages were selected for rapid field investigations as a basis for comparing the extent of damage and rate of recovery among project beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Three teams were formed to undertake the village investigations: (a) EMOP evaluation mission, (b) WFP/MOA Beijing + Provincial PMO and (c) County PMO. Each team spent an average of 4-6 hours in each village and undertook a number of participatory evaluation exercises. The teams met jointly at the end of the fieldwork to compare findings from the three villages and draw lessons.

1.3 Project Background

Continuous, heavy rains from March to August 1998 caused China's worst floods in the century. According to official estimates, 223 million people were affected, 3,004 people died, 13.8 million people were evacuated, 5 million houses were totally destroyed and 21 million ha of crops were lost. In order to reduce the impact of the disaster, the Chinese Government (GOC) undertook a series of relief measures while concurrently seeking international assistance. WFP responded to the GOC request for the provision of emergency food aid to the targeted victims in four of the most seriously affected provinces - Hunan, Hubei, Anhui and Jiangxi.

The project was intended to be targeted, immediate, and short-lived, with two objectives, to assist Government to:

- meet acute food needs of the targeted population living in temporary shelters; and
- support post-disaster rehabilitation of essential assets for the target population.

The duration of the project was to be 120 days divided in two phases: a one month relief phase (the first objective) followed by a three month rehabilitation phase (second objective). Beneficiaries were to be provided with a daily ration of 0.5 kg of rice.

EMOP 6045 is by far WFP's largest project in China, covering 5,786,900 beneficiaries, 23 counties, 320 townships and 4450 villages in the four provinces. The total cost of the project was US\$ 145,770,799, of which WFP's contribution was US\$ 87,678,027 and GOC's was US\$ 58,092,772. The total food to be delivered to flood victims was to be 347,214 metric tons, of which GOC was to contribute 100,000 tons to start food distribution while WFP sought donor contributions. WFP was to contribute the equivalent in wheat of 247,214 tons of rice at the rate of 1 kg of wheat for 0.75 kg of rice (subject to the availability of resources).

1.4 Innovative Features

The project had a number of innovative features:

- (a) combination of relief with reconstruction of household and community assets;
- (b) use of Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping (VAM) for targeting;
- (c) use of Government grain to jump-start emergency food distribution;
- (d) Government cost sharing;
- (e) commodity borrowing against donor commitments;
- (f) beneficiary participation in food distribution and monitoring; and
- (g) strong emphasis on women's participation.

1.5 Key Issues for Evaluation

- What was the value-added of WFP assistance in the context of a food surplus and such a strong Government disaster response capacity?
- Was food aid justified?
- Did the distinction between the relief and rehabilitation phase make sense?
- Was FFR appropriate in an emergency relief operation?
- How timely was the assistance?

- Did the assistance reach the most needy people?
- Was one month of relief + three months of FFR sufficient for recovery?
- Did food aid speed up the pace of rehabilitation?
- Did it reduce victims' need to go out of the village in search of work?
- Were the FFR activities appropriate and did they reflect villagers' priorities?
- Was food distribution fair and transparent?
- Was any of the food misused?
- Did the project empower women?
- Was food distribution and FFR adequately monitored?
- Were counterpart contributions sufficient?
- Did EMOP assistance increase GOC's emergency preparedness and local food handling capacity?
- Will the project have a lasting impact on future emergency operations?

References to statements made by the Government were forwarded to the Ministry of Agriculture before finalization of the report.

2. Summary of Key Findings

2.1 Overall Assessment of EMOP 6045

EMOP 6045 was a sound and successful project, which assisted 5.7 million people to recover from a major flood in record time. Its success is largely attributable to the strong, well-organized and concerted disaster response of GOC, to the proactive WFP effort to raise resources from international donors, to the very substantial GOC counterpart contribution and to the food-borrowing mechanism which allowed distributions to begin 4 months earlier than would otherwise have been the case.

The project tested a new model for combining relief with rehabilitation in an emergency operation and yielded valuable lessons about practical difficulties of marrying relief and FFR.

The project's main weaknesses relate to timing and to the scheduling of activities, which was off due to a delayed start of the project.

Although a number of innovative features such as commodity borrowing, cost sharing and beneficiary participation could be replicated in other emergency projects, it cannot be a model for other projects because of its dependence on unique circumstances - a century flood in China coinciding with a bumper harvest in the USA – in the absence of which WFP might not be as successful in resourcing such a large operation

2.2 Success Stories and Innovative Features of the Project

The project had a number of innovative features which may be of interest for future emergency operations, namely: (a) use of Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping (VAM) in targeting; (b) cost-sharing with Government; (c) commodity borrowing from local stocks against the *confirmation of*

donor commitments; (d) beneficiary participation in project implementation and (e) features designed to empower rural women.

Use of VAM in Targeting

Because needs greatly exceeded available resources, accurate targeting was essential. Opportunities for targeting were excellent by international standards due to the existence of detailed data on flood damage at county and township level as well as house-to-house inventories of damage at village level. Using the Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping (VAM) system to target those most severely affected, beneficiaries were reduced from an initial Government request of >55 million to 5.7 million people (see section 3.7 for details).

Cost Sharing

GOC disaster response at all levels was impressive and exemplary and prevented additional damages and loss of lives. WFP's ability to leverage counterpart funding from GOC contributed to the success of the operation. WFP's response was jump-started by Government counterpart contributions – nevertheless the first food distribution occurred when the relief phase had already turned into the rehabilitation phase. This first 100,000 mt allowed the distributions to begin within four weeks of the signing of the Letter of Understanding. It also gave WFP another thirty-five days to resource further contributions without a break in the pipeline (for details see section 4.1).

Conclusion: cost sharing combined with a grain-borrowing agreement with the Government improved the timeliness and coverage of the emergency food assistance.

Commodity Borrowing

The system of commodity borrowing established was very positive and permitted food distributions to start four months sooner than otherwise. GOC's agreement to authorize borrowings from locally held stocks against a pledge from a donor (rather than requiring the food first to be shipped and discharged at port) was an innovative and important feature of this EMOP. It enabled WFP to follow GOC's first two EMOP distributions without interruption to the distribution schedule. In WFP's development projects, commodities must be offloaded before any grain borrowing from local stocks is authorized (see section 4.1 for details).

Beneficiary Participation

Beneficiary participation was positive: public posting of beneficiary lists and entitlements at village level increased transparency and reduced the scope for misuse of food aid. Beneficiary representation on village-level Registration and Distribution committees created local ownership of the project and helped to ensure that rice distributions were fair. However, EMOP's record on participatory planning of FFR is somewhat disappointing. The village level PRAs specified in the project document were not carried out because the VDPs had already been finalized before EMOP started.

Role of Women in Implementation

Over 10,000 village women were represented on VCs, 7,000 served on registration committees and nearly 14,000 served on distribution committees. Women were 24 percent of the staff of provincial and county PMOs, 37 percent of the membership of VCs, 39 percent of the membership of registration committees and 45 percent of the members of distribution committees. Although women's representation on project committees did not last beyond the end of the project, it improved transparency and accountability of village leaders to the flood victims. According to the All China Women's Federation (ACWF), the requirement that 60 percent of food rations should be collected by women was unnecessary and culturally inappropriate because Chinese women traditionally control family food stocks.

3. Disaster Assessment and Response

3.1 Contingency planning

What contingency plans did the GOC have in place?

Contingency plans were in place in the relevant GOC departments, although not for an emergency of this magnitude. The Water Conservancy Departments in project provinces had an early warning system based on monitoring of water levels in rivers and lakes coupled with an emergency flood diversion plan. The Civil Affairs Department had contingency plans for evacuation and for emergency relief to displaced persons. In addition to its short-term plans for relief and rehabilitation, GOC also had medium-term plans for dyke reinforcement and resettlement of population from flood-prone areas, and long-term plans for disaster prevention through watershed reforestation and engineering infrastructure works. GOC's advanced prevention policy contributed significantly to limiting the scope of the damage from the floods and the loss of life.

Nonetheless, unnecessary loss of property may have occurred due to late evacuation. In many cases, villagers were inadequately prepared because they did not expect such a big flood. When the order came to evacuate the village, the men were away on the dykes fighting the floods. Women's first priority was to evacuate children and old people. They had to go on foot, carrying children in their arms. There were no means of transport with which to evacuate stored grain, livestock or valuables.

Conclusion: Although the emphasis on trying to hold the dykes was understandable, unnecessary losses of property may have occurred because men were absent and women had no transport to assist them to evacuate the village.

Lesson: involving women in response mechanisms at the village level could help prevent unnecessary losses of household assets and enable a more rapid recovery.

Recommendation: the All China Women's Federation (ACWF) could organize rural women for emergency preparedness to facilitate the evacuation of household grain and assets before dykes break.

3.2 UN assessments and appeals

As early as June 9, 1998 the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) based in Geneva began monitoring the floods and issued situation reports. The early assessment was that the flood season, which usually peaks in July/August, would be particularly severe in 1998. At the same time, the UN Resident Coordinator reactivated the UN Disaster Management Team

(UNDMT), a UN task force established in many countries following recommendations from ECOSOC. The UNDMT includes representatives from all UN agencies present in China, as well as representatives from the World Bank and the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC).

The timing of key events in the assessment and appeal process is outlined below. In mid-July, the Ministry of Agriculture approached FAO with a request of emergency assistance of US\$ 400,000 to purchase seeds and fertilizers for the worst hit provinces of Hunan, Anhui and Jiangxi. On 3 August, GOC requested WFP assistance for Hunan, Hubei and Jiangxi through a “Note verbale” submitted in Rome. On 23 August, the GOC added the province of Anhui to its request. On 31 August, GOC made an official appeal to OCHA in New York through the Chinese Permanent Mission to the United Nations. This official request for assistance enabled OCHA and the UNDMT to prepare a UN inter-agency appeal to mobilize international emergency and immediate rehabilitation assistance to the seven most affected provinces in China. A UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team (UNDAC) composed of OCHA, UNDAC, WHO, WFP, UNDP and China visited the flood affected areas from 7 to 25 September. UNICEF had already undertaken its own, separate assessment to Hunan province during the first week of September. The appeal was launched by the UNDMT in Beijing on 23 September 1998, on the basis of the UNDAC assessment mission report.

Assessment Timeline

8 June 1998	OCHA publishes first situation report on China floods
18 June	UNDMT reactivated
mid-July	MOA request to FAO for seeds/fertilizer in Anhui, Jiangxi and Hunan
3 August	Request from MOA to WFP for food aid for Hunan, Hubei and Jiangxi
12 – 17 August	First WFP/MOA assessment mission
21 August	MOA requests inclusion of Anhui
28 Aug – 1 Sep	Second WFP/VAM assessment mission
1-7 September	UNICEF assessment mission
18 September	EMOP 6045 Project Document signed
28 September	Letter of Understanding signed between WFP and MOA
7-25 September	UNDAC assessment mission
23 September	First UN appeal for relief
Oct 98 – Jan 99	Separate assessments by FAO, UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNIDO, World Bank and IFRC
10 February	Second UN appeal for rehabilitation

The first UN appeal was for US\$ 139,040,000 and was resourced as follows:

Table 1 – Summary of UN Appeals and Resources Generated

Relief Activity	Amount of Appeal (US\$)	Amount Pledged (US\$)	Amount Channelled Through UN (US\$)	% of Appeal	% of Amount Pledged to UN
Shelter	28,800,000	4,122,765	3,609,765	20.7	4.5
Food	87,700,000	70,636,053	70,636,053	63.1	88.3
Medicine	7,000,000	12,000,000	1,000,000	5.0	1.2
Water and Sanitation	5,400,000	2,820,000	2,820,000	3.9	3.6
Agriculture	90,000	590,000	590,000	0.06	0.7
Education and initial rehabilitation	9,600,000	16,465,656	1,035,656	6.9	1.3
Associated relief assistance	0	3,900,000	0	0	0
Co-ordination	450,000	345,847	345,847	0.3	0.4
Total	139,040,000	110,880,321	80,037,321	100	100

From the table, food emerges as the most important need, accounting for over 60 percent of total resources demanded and over 80 percent of resources mobilized. Shelter and housing, which were also badly needed, came in a distant second. The fact that WFP managed to reach almost 90 percent of the funding needed is to the credit of its resource mobilization activities both in Beijing and Rome. As early as July, WFP Beijing was in contact with donors regarding possible food assistance. By that time it became known that the US Government had purchased surplus wheat and would be willing to consider a major wheat donation to China.

Nevertheless, the goal that WFP set itself was ambitious. It took from September – March to resource the EMOP. Gaps in resourcing caused two breaks in rice distribution and threatened the viability of the operation. By December, only about 50 percent had been resourced and it took a concerted resource mobilization effort to cover the remainder of the EMOP. When the EMOP was signed in September, the LOU clearly indicated that WFP assistance was “subject to the availability of resources”. Nevertheless, there was some disappointment in the provinces regarding the inability to cover the full 120 day period.

UNDMT was an excellent forum for exchange of information on the disaster and, to a lesser extent, for coordinating assessments. However, it is clear that individual UN agencies could not wait for the official launching of an OCHA appeal, which could only be made once GOC officially requested UN assistance. By the time the OCHA appeal was launched, victims had already been on the dykes for two months and had begun to return home. Had WFP waited for the OCHA appeal, the funding of food aid would have come too late. The two agencies that sent early assessment missions (UNICEF and WFP) were more successful in obtaining funding than those that waited (UNICEF resourced 61 percent of its appeal and WFP 88 percent). Together these two donors resourced over 90 percent of the amount pledged to the UN.

Lesson: A lesson the UNDMT learned from the 1998 floods consequently was that early assessment of the relief needs is essential to improve the timeliness and the quality of emergency relief assistance.

In spite of coordination efforts, provincial PMOs perceived a lack of coordination among UN agencies and indicated that there were too many separate assessment and follow-up missions by UN agencies.

WFP's assessments, which complemented those of other UN agencies, focused on estimation of emergency food needs and quantifying damage to houses, wells, cropland, canals and roads.

Why did the GOC request assistance? Initially, GOC did not think that international food aid was needed. WFP encouraged MOA to request assistance and informally approached potential donors to sound out resourcing possibilities. It appears that GOC would not have requested assistance had it not been reasonably confident that large quantities of grain could be mobilized in response to its request.

How was the size of the program determined? Since the need was far greater than the resources available, the size of the program was determined by WFP's estimate of the amount of grain it could reasonably hope to mobilize from donors. A tentative ceiling of 300,000 tons (200,000 WFP and 100,000 from GOC) was agreed early in the process.

How big a risk did WFP take in signing the LoU for 242,000 mt? WFP had an understanding from the US that they would provide 200,000 mt, although the formal pledge for the second 100,000 mt was conditional on GOC's acceptance of the first shipment of US wheat (the Chinese had to certify that the wheat was free of TCK). Donor and WFP were confident that the US wheat was TCK free. Hence, the risk was not excessive.

Why was no request made for assistance in northern China? Although Northern China also experienced severe flood damage, GOC did not request WFP assistance because flood damage was more localized and GOC felt that it could cope without international assistance. GOC was aware that WFP resources were limited and that FFR could not be implemented in the Northeast until summer 1999 because of the cold climate.

Was it appropriate for WFP to approach donors before the joint appeal was issued? Yes. It took 6 weeks to process the project from the receipt of the MOA request to the signing of the Letter of Understanding. If WFP had waited for the joint UN assessment and the joint appeal to be launched, another month would have been lost. The problem was that UNDMT could not undertake a UN assessment and OCHA could not launch an appeal until invited.

Conclusions:

- WFP's assessment was conducted when flood victims had already been displaced from their villages for an entire month. The joint assessment was conducted two months after the evacuation. The delays were mainly caused by the need to wait for GOC's request for assistance.
- Although WFP took a risk by setting such an ambitious goal for resourcing the EMOP, it successfully resourced 90 percent of its target thanks to a tremendous resource mobilization effort in Beijing and Rome.

Lesson: The UNDMT provides a good forum for the exchange of information on a disaster and to a lesser extent, for coordinating assessments. However, it is clear that individual UN agencies cannot afford to wait for the official launching of an OCHA appeal (which can only be made once the government concerned officially requests UN assistance). Early assessment of food needs combined with early and proactive resource mobilization efforts are essential to provide timely assistance to disaster victims.

3.3 Need for relief

Food aid was justified by the magnitude of the calamity. In the most severely affected areas, the victims lost everything: house, crops, livestock and most of their property. They had little or no stored food and no money to buy it. The problem was lack of purchasing power, not overall food supply. The Grain Bureau had sufficient grain reserves, but households could only access grain for cash or on credit. They were falling deeply in debt to buy food.

3.4 Disaster response

How well did the WFP respond?

Although MOA approached WFP almost one month before the Government requested assistance through OCHA, it still took six weeks from the first contact to the signing of the Letter of Understanding. It took five more weeks for the first food distributions to start and five additional weeks to confirm the first significant donor contribution. Even though project processing and start-up were very rapid, it still took three months for the first EMOP food to reach the needy.

The timeliness of WFP's response was greatly aided by cost sharing with GOC. The Government contributed the first 100,000 tons of rice in two distributions in November. This allowed WFP lead time to obtain resources from donors while the program was being jump-started with the Government's own resources and US\$ 1 million from a WFP Immediate Response Account. Without Government's rice contribution, the first WFP resourced food distribution would have occurred as late as December.

How well did the Government respond to the disaster? The relief effort mounted by the GOC at all levels was impressive and exemplary. GOC mobilized hundreds of thousands of farmers, villagers, police, army and other Government staff to shore up the dykes and provide relief to the flood victims. GOC health teams were on site very quickly and stayed in the villages for several weeks. GOC also dispatched working groups of 3-4 people to each single village. These working groups were from various Government agencies and assisted villages in relief and rehabilitation efforts. GOC implemented its own disaster relief and recovery plan with domestic resources, partially through national fund-raising campaigns. Many Chinese throughout China sent contributions, donated their salaries and/or physically assisted in the rehabilitation efforts.

Conclusions:

- GOC disaster response at all levels was impressive and exemplary and prevented additional damages and loss of lives.
- WFP's ability to leverage GOC counterpart funding contributed to the success of the operation.
- WFP's response was jump-started by Government counterpart contributions – nevertheless the first food distribution occurred when the relief phase had already turned into the rehabilitation phase.

Lesson: Cost sharing with the Government improves the timeliness and the extent of the emergency food assistance.

Recommendation: At design, more attention should be paid to complementarity of WFP assistance with GOC's own domestically financed relief and rehabilitation plans.

3.5 EMOP needs coverage

How was the 5.7 million beneficiary figure arrived at? Beneficiary numbers were determined by many considerations including resource availability, expected duration, Government request and the seriousness of the flood. Two main options were considered: to support 5 million people for 4 months or to support 2 million people for 10 months. WFP initially set a ceiling of 5 million beneficiaries. It eventually agreed to increase the number of target beneficiaries to 5.7 million in response to pressures from GOC to add two additional counties.

The distribution of beneficiaries by province mirrors the distribution of the total population (Hunan 33%, Jiangxi 26%, Hubei 24%, Anhui 17%), independently of the proportion affected by the flood. The proportion of the affected population benefiting varies widely between counties, ranging from a low of 21 percent to a high of 67 percent. In several counties, the number of project beneficiaries corresponds exactly to the number of displaced persons who were either camped on dykes or evacuated to higher ground or staying with friends and relatives in non-affected areas. The availability of local government counterpart funds at county level may have influenced the allocation of project resources between counties. The two poorest counties had a high percentage of households affected and a low percentage of affected households covered whereas the richest county covered a higher percentage of affected households than any other county (Tables 1 and 2 - Appendix).

What percentage of needs did WFP cover? In the four severely affected provinces for which assistance was requested, EMOP rice accounted for approximately 34 percent of the total rice distributed freely, on credit or purchased over the period of the food crisis, of which WFP contributed approximately 22 percent.

Table 2 - All rice distributed in four provinces (free and on credit)

Before EMOP (33.3%)		During EMOP (43.2%)		After EMOP (23.5%)	
Free (GOC)	Credit	Free (EMOP)	Credit	Free (NGOs)	Credit
154,250	154,250	312,911	86,804	Negligible	217,000
Total free rice 467,161 mt			Total rice on credit 458,054 mt		

Excluding rice given on credit or purchased, the EMOP provided approximately 67 percent of the free rice distributed and WFP's contribution alone (excluding the GOC's counterpart contribution to the EMOP) was approximately 44 percent of the free rice distributed.

Why did EMOP only provide rice until February/March when the flood victims needed it until June? Although flood victims needed rice until the June harvest, WFP and GOC opted to limit the EMOP to four months in order to maximize the number of beneficiaries. WFP assistance was to be phased out once the normal Government response mechanisms were able to cope with the recovery by itself. It was not perceived that a protracted intervention would be appropriate or supported by donors. WFP and GOC had an understanding that beneficiaries would not go hungry: local government would arrange for them to borrow rice on credit from the end of EMOP until the first rice harvest.

Why was only rice provided? The displaced also needed edible oil, pulses and vegetables. WFP was justified in only providing rice because: (a) it was a short term emergency - not long enough to seriously compromise nutrition; (b) the overhead cost of importing other commodities would have been unduly high considering that WFP was borrowing rice from existing GOC stocks in exchange for wheat; (c) imported commodities would not have been available in good time; and (d) it would

have complicated many aspects of the project. The evaluation team found that in some cases at least the GOC distributed small amounts of cash to enable the displaced to buy other commodities.

3.6 Counterpart funding

Counterpart funding averaged US\$10 per beneficiary. It was earmarked for building materials (housing), hand pumps and pipes (wells) or hire of pumps and earth-moving equipment (farmland, road and canal desilting). The funds flowed through the relevant provincial and county departments (e.g. Water Conservancy for canals, MOA for farmland, etc.). The allocation between departments varied widely between counties, depending on FFR targets.

Table 3 - Chinese Counterpart Contribution per Beneficiary

	GOC Counterpart Contribution (RMB)		Total GOC Contribution (Letter of Understanding)		Chinese Contribution (RMB per Beneficiary)			Chinese Contrib. US\$/B
	Cash	Rice	(RMB)	(US\$)	Cash	Rice	Total	
Hubei	52,530,895	64,394,159	116,925,054	14,138,458	38	46	84	\$ 10.20
Hunan	65,787,830	89,435,486	155,223,316	18,769,446	34	46	81	\$ 9.75
Jiangxi	56,338,769	70,376,144	126,714,913	15,322,239	37	46	84	\$ 10.11
Anhui	36,994,734	44,569,211	81,563,945	9,862,630	39	46	85	\$ 10.28
Total	211,652,228	268,775,000	480,427,228	58,092,773	37	46	83	\$ 10.04

Source: Letter of Understanding

Although the US\$ 58 million is a large sum, GOC's contribution to EMOP represents only a small share of total GOC expenditure for emergency relief to flood victims.

Table 4 - EMOP Counterpart Finance (including the Value of GOC Rice) as a % of Total Counterpart Funds Spent on Flood Victims (Hubei and Jiangxi Province: July 1998 - June 1999)

County	Hubei Province		Jiangxi Province	
	Shishou	Jianli	Duchang	Xingzi
Counterpart funding for rehabilitation	62,601,000	265,585,248	21,608,500	22,205,000
EMOP counterpart funding	9,133,000	17,926,922	14,823,500	15,905,000
Other counterpart funding	53,468,000	247,658,326	6,785,000	6,300,000
<i>EMOP - % of counterpart funds</i>	<i>15%</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>69%</i>	<i>72%</i>

Source: County Questionnaires

Most of the counterpart contribution for housing was given as a subsidy to households on the condition that they would move to resettlement villages. Most houses in resettlement villages are two-storey brick buildings costing RMB 30,000. The EMOP housing subsidy of RMB 600 per room constituted only a small proportion (8 percent) of the total cost.

3.7 Targeting

Because needs greatly exceeded available resources, accurate targeting was essential. Opportunities for targeting were excellent by international standards due to the existence of detailed data on flood damage at county and township level as well as house-to-house inventories of damage at village level.

In EMOP, there were several levels of geographic targeting: county, township, village and household. Project counties were selected by the WFP VAM unit in consultation with provincial PMOs. Finer targeting was done by County PMOs, Township Implementation Groups and Village Committees.

County targeting. The list of priority counties drawn up by MOA changed several times as the flood evolved. Initially, there was limited overlap between the MOA list and the list prepared by WFP's VAM unit. The initial MOA request was for 36 counties. Later a second list of 36 counties was proposed. Data were gathered on 111 flood-affected counties in the four provinces for input into VAM. These data were used to select 21 EMOP counties. During the process, the number of beneficiaries was cut down from an initial GOC request of over 55 million to 5.0 million. Two additional counties were included later (Jiayu and Wangcheng) because they were high on the GOC list and MOA argued successfully with the VAM unit for their inclusion.

The main indicators used in VAM targeting were:

Flood damage

- Affected population (% of total population)
- Evacuated households (% of total households)
- Number of houses (rooms) collapsed (totally, partially)
- Affected area as a % of total cultivated land
- Affected rice area as a % of total cultivated land
- Affected area of other crops as a % of total cultivated land
- Meat lost as a % of total meat output

Poverty

- Average annual net income per capita of county

Cluster analysis was used to identify classes of cases with common characteristics: counties with comparable values on flood damage indicators, such as housing damage and livestock losses, were classed together. This resulted in the identification of 7-8 classes, each with a distinctive set of characteristics. Working from the listing of counties by class, further selection was done jointly in consultation with Government, on the basis of four additional considerations:

- **Contiguity** (counties contiguous with other severely-affected counties were retained and isolated counties were eliminated on grounds of logistics; a few less-affected counties were included because of their contiguity with severely-affected counties);
- **Logistical considerations** (two clusters of counties were selected on both sides of the Yangtze river in the proximity of bridges and major ferry crossings; priority was also given to counties close to major GOC grain storage points);
- **Government priority**; and
- **Total beneficiaries** not to exceed 5.5 million people (subsequently adjusted to 5.7 million with the addition of 2 counties that were high priority for GOC although they were not contiguous with the rest).

This process resulted in the selection of 23 counties out of 111 for which data had been supplied to VAM by GOC.

Township Selection. Within EMOP counties, finer targeting was done by County PMOs. Townships that experienced dyke breaks, leading to widespread destruction of houses and deep siltation of farmland, were given priority over townships where the main damage was waterlogging of crops or where the population had 1-2 days advance warning before the dyke broke.

Village Selection. Within project townships, EMOP villages were selected by the Township Implementation Groups (TIGs) following guidelines suggested by the County PMOs. In general, EMOP villages were evacuated and had greater flood damage than non-project villages.

Household Selection. In severely affected areas, in principle, 100 percent of the village population received EMOP assistance. Elsewhere, parts of the village not suffering extensive flood damage were excluded from EMOP. Selection of beneficiary households was done by the Village Committee. The list of beneficiaries usually coincided with the list of evacuated people requiring emergency food aid and assistance at the peak of flooding.

Should the beneficiaries have remained the same throughout? The LoU specified that the beneficiaries must remain the same, presumably to improve transparency and to guard against counties or townships spreading the assistance around. However, because the beneficiary list included the entire displaced population, some beneficiaries were not poor. One WFP Emergency Officer recommended that households with business income should be excluded from the lists when the immediate emergency is over. In the mission's view, it would have been very difficult to adjust the beneficiary lists. It was probably better that no attempt was made to do so (other than for births and deaths). Graduating households within villages would have been problematic.

Conclusions:

- Targeting appears to have been fair. Cluster analysis avoids subjective judgements about relative weighting of indicators. Problems were due to shortcomings in data quality.
- It is crucial to distinguish between severely and mildly affected areas. This can be done by putting more weight on numbers and proportion of houses totally collapsed as a proxy indicator for severity of flood damage.
- VAM was designed for targeting agricultural development projects. For use in emergencies, it needs to be adapted, to put more emphasis on flood damage indicators.
- VAM is potentially a powerful tool for targeting, provided that the database on flood damage is regularly updated and that local knowledge and experience are reflected. GOC should acquire capacity to master the tool for its own targeting.
- In severely affected areas, it is preferable to target the entire population of a village (as EMOP generally did). This ensures that none of the needy are left out.

4. Rice Distributions to Flood Victims

4.1 Commodity Borrowing

EMOP had two innovative features that made it possible to start food distribution within a month of signing the LOU. One was the agreement of GOC to distribute 100,000 tons of its own rice to flood victims to jump-start distribution. The second innovation was that GOC not only agreed to exchange wheat received in designated Chinese ports for rice held in county and township grain stores (at 0.75 mt of rice for 1 mt of wheat), but it also agreed – for the first time in China - to authorize borrowings from the local grain stores against a confirmed pledge. This meant that WFP could access local rice for distribution as soon as it had secured a pledge from a donor, rather than having to wait for wheat to be shipped and discharged at a Chinese port. The latter innovation allowed WFP's emergency food aid to reach flood victims four months sooner than would have

been the case without commodity borrowing. The emergency operation could not have been implemented successfully without such an arrangement.

As soon as WFP Rome had a formal commitment from a donor, the Beijing office requested MOA to borrow the corresponding quantity of rice from local stocks. MOA notified the provincial PMOs, which submitted a document to their provincial Leading Group (LG) requesting the formal authority (required under the LoU) for rice to be borrowed from Government grain stores. With this authority in hand, the provincial PMOs asked the county PMOs to submit a similar document to their county LG. Once this was finalized, the county PMOs requested county and/or township grain stations (depending on where the rice was held) to thresh and bag the rice ready for distribution. County PMOs then wrote to TIGs who in turn informed Village Committees of the arrangements.

The preliminary authorization process, from MOA right down to village committee, was generally completed within a week. In most cases, actual distributions began within seven to ten days of provincial level authorization. If rice was released from a county grain store rather than the township store, the TIG transported it to the township. The cost of rebagging and transportation was borne by GOC. The GOC's Project Management Offices (PMOs) and TIGs efficiently planned and organized EMOP rice distributions, in the main adhering to WFP's requirements. EMOP rice was well prepared, stored and handled.

To increase transparency and facilitate monitoring, WFP required that a sign be posted outside county and township grain stations announcing that the store held EMOP rice. Bags had WFP logos printed on them and had to be returned by beneficiaries so they could not be reused and mistaken for stolen bags of rice. WFP also required special record keeping for EMOP rice movements through the stations. Storage conditions and record keeping were checked periodically by the Food Monitors. Some problems were identified but, on the whole, total reported losses were insignificant (64.21 mt, or 0.02 percent of total EMOP rice) *and were made up by the GOC*. However, given that people had lost their storage containers in the flood, it might have been preferable to allow them to retain the bags.

EMOP distributions appear to have been fair and transparent. Information about EMOP rice distributions, including how much beneficiaries were entitled to, flowed right down to village committees and even beneficiaries appear to have been well informed. This flow of information provided a good check on potential diversion. There do not appear to have been any grounds for excluding a village or a family that had been registered and the Food Monitors did not report any instances of unfairness.

Conclusions:

- The GOC efficiently planned and organized EMOP rice distributions, adhering to WFP's requirements.
- The system of commodity borrowing agreed to by GOC was very positive and allowed food distributions to start four months earlier than otherwise. The operation could not have been implemented successfully without such an arrangement. Unfortunately some borrowings are still outstanding, which could make the GOC wary of agreeing to such an arrangement in future.

Lesson: Getting agreement to a system of commodity borrowing (whereby local grain is released against a confirmed pledge to WFP and repaid upon its arrival) greatly facilitates any operation. Given the long-term value of such an arrangement it would be prudent to ensure that borrowings are repaid expeditiously.

4.2 EMOP Requirements for Village Level Food Handling and Distribution

As a condition for its assistance, WFP imposed a number of requirements aimed at ensuring transparency about who got the food and how they used it. These differed substantially from the procedures used by the Ministry of Civil Affairs in its Emergency and Social Relief operations. In the distributions organized before EMOP, Civil Affairs used a coupon system and beneficiaries had to collect their food from township or country grain stations/bureaux. There were no Registration and Distribution Committees and no beneficiary lists to sign. Distribution was monthly rather than fortnightly.

Under EMOP, allocation was made against beneficiary lists prepared by Village Committees. The LoU stated that each individual beneficiary would be entitled to 0.5 kg per day for a total 120 days and set forth three categories of food distribution: (a) one month free food distribution to those beneficiaries able to return to the villages where water levels have receded sufficiently in the early stage of the emergency operation; (b) continued free food distribution to those beneficiaries who remain on the dykes until such time that they can return to their villages and (c) a total of 90 days or less, depending on time of return, to beneficiaries participating in recovery and rehabilitation activities. Lists of beneficiaries and food entitlements as well as names and responsibilities of committee members had to be posted in a public place where all villagers could see them. This flow of information provided a good check on potential diversion.

In addition, WFP required that beneficiaries be involved in food distribution and monitoring at village level through the establishment of a Registration Committee and a Distribution Committee. The Registration Committee's task was to ensure that rice went only to people on the beneficiary list and that all persons entitled to food got it. Each beneficiary household had to sign (or thumbprint) when she/he collected the food. Beneficiaries were also involved in the Distribution Committee, whose task was to weigh rice rations and check that the quantity distributed to each household was correct. All committee members were required to be physically present at the food distributions. The county PMO and TIG were supposed to carry out inspections to ensure that the food reached the beneficiaries.¹ Another stipulation in the LOU was that a minimum of 60 percent of food rations would be delivered directly to women. The rationale behind this requirement was to ensure that food would be used exclusively to feed the family.

To what extent were WFP's requirements adhered to? Although Registration and Distribution Committees were formed on paper to comply with WFP requirements, Village Committee members and Village Group leaders usually took on these responsibilities, with the addition of the required number of female representatives. The requirement that women collect the food rations was strictly adhered to for the first distributions, but was subsequently relaxed wherever distances were too great and the bags too heavy for women to carry. However, in many areas, women continued to collect the food because men were busy with dyke construction and FFR.

WFP Food Monitors accompanied County PMO staff to villages to witness distributions and ensure that EMOP systems were followed. They also inspected grain storage and inspected the progress of FFR activities.

How far did beneficiaries have to go to collect rice? EMOP brought food distribution points closer to the beneficiaries, thereby reducing the amount of walking. Before EMOP, under the Ministry of Civil Affairs emergency relief program, beneficiaries had to walk to the township to pick up their

¹ Source for formal requirements concerning rice distributions is WFP EMOP Implementation Checklist, 18 November 1998

grain. Under EMOP, the project usually dropped off the grain by truck, except in cases where a 7-ton truck could not get to the villages.

Would monthly distributions have been better? MoCA uses 30-day distributions and in principle it would have provided more security to flood victims to have 30-day rations instead of 15. It would also have simplified distributions from an organizational point of view. The 15-day distribution was selected because the storage capacity of the beneficiaries was limited. Another reason for distributing food twice a month was that the township grain stations did not have the capacity to process a 30-day ration. Monthly distributions would also have provided fewer opportunities for the Food Monitors to attend distributions.

What problems occurred? Only a few minor problems were reported. Juijiang office monitoring report no # 2 stated that the food monitors found ‘some complaints that registered beneficiaries had not received the correct rations and some confusion as to who was officially registered.’ The food monitors also found that in one village in Wangjiang County ‘the WFP distribution had not yet taken place despite the delivery of the food the previous week and that some of the Government food had not been distributed during the first two distributions.’ Juijiang office monitoring report no # 5 said that in two villages visited in Anhui Province ‘only 2/3 of the fortnightly ration was distributed: in one case the rations were spread out over a larger number of beneficiaries than the originally planned caseload and in the other case the VC reduced the ration according to the amount of work performed.’ In Boyang country, Jiangxi Province there was one instance of overlap of donated food in one township (three months rations from a Taiwanese organization).

Conclusions:

- The management of rice distributions by the PMOs and TIGs appears to have been very effective and efficient.
- EMOP brought food distribution points closer to the beneficiaries, thereby reducing the amount of walking.
- WFP’s requirements increased transparency and accountability.
- Distributions appear to have been fair.

Lesson: If elected village committees are already functioning and likely to be responsible for all relief functions, it is unnecessary and ineffective to insist on the establishment of separate registration and distribution committees. It is nevertheless valuable to complement existing committee structures by stipulating or negotiating for the addition of farmer and women representatives.

4.3 Timeliness

The GOC’s agreement to provide a counterpart contribution of rice and distribute it up front meant that the distributions were able to start on 29 October rather than four months later. Nonetheless, one month was lost between signing the LoU and the first EMOP food distribution. Because of this delay, EMOP “missed” the optimal timing of its relief phase, since the majority of displaced persons returned to their villages during the month that elapsed between the LoU and the first distribution.

GOC was keen to start the first distribution of its own rice contribution at the end of September, immediately after signing the LoU, but WFP did not authorize any GOC distributions until it had formal donor commitments. GOC rice was distributed in October but was not counted as part of Government’s EMOP contribution. This was presumably because WFP wanted to be sure it could follow on with the third distribution (against borrowings of local stocks). However, it might have been better to take a risk of a break in distribution (between the second and third distributions) and

get underway while people were still on the dykes. Other factors were also at play including the need to get staff and sub-offices in place to monitor the distributions.

Although the project document specified that distributions would occur fortnightly over a 4-month period, in reality, six food distributions were made from 29 October 1998 to mid-April 1999. Distributions were interrupted twice while WFP struggled to obtain pledges from donors, resulting in a break from 28 December to 5 February of 39 days and a break from 20 February until 22 March of 30 days.

The first two distributions were managed entirely by GOC as the WFP sub-offices had not yet been established (although staff from WFP Beijing visited to monitor some distributions).

During the 5-week break in EMOP food distribution, which unfortunately coincided with preparations for the main Chinese holiday season, some counties began distributions without WFP's permission. The EMOP office in Beijing responded by issuing a warning to counties that any unauthorized distributions made with WFP food rations would be considered as food diversion. The issue was resolved by the MOA: it was agreed that if counties wished to distribute food to beneficiaries for the Spring Festival, they were free to do so with their own rice, but this would not be counted as part of their EMOP contribution.

Conclusions:

- Although the GOC rice contribution made it possible to start rice distribution within a month of signing the LoU, even this was not fast enough to reach the flood victims while they were still camped on dykes or evacuated on higher ground. GOC was ready to start immediately but WFP could not authorize distribution until donor resources were committed.
- The release of local rice upon the commitment rather than the arrival in port of WFP rice allowed WFP to intervene four months earlier than would have otherwise been the case.

Lesson: Because food distributions are conditional on donor commitments, Government distributions cannot be authorized until resources are secured. Project designers should be realistic about how fast the first distribution can be authorized.

4.4 Reimbursement of Borrowed Grain

Unfortunately, the borrowed grain was repaid very slowly. The first donor wheat did not arrive in port until the end of February, only one week before project closing. As a result, the Grain Bureau did not receive its first repayment for two and a half months (7 December to 21 February). Moreover, the final wheat shipment only arrived in China on 7 October 1999. Hence the Grain Bureaux were forced to wait seven months for repayment of the final borrowing.

The delays were caused by a number of factors including the GOC's concern that US wheat might have a disease known as 'TCK'. This slowed down deliveries because smaller ships had to be used in case the wheat was rejected and diverted to Hainan Island, which could not handle large ships, for an alternative use. Moreover, the US Government made the pledge of the second 100,000 mt conditional on GOC acceptance of the first shipment. The last two consignments of US wheat were shipped in oil tankers which: a) required special equipment to unload; b) upset the wharf laborers due to the difficulty of working in the tanks; and c) was considerably slower to unload than conventional bulk grain carriers. (Oil tankers have a narrow opening and the wheat has to be sucked out of the tanks.) This resulted in demurrage charges of US\$ 140,000 on the first tanker consignment and it is likely to amount to US\$200,000 on the second.

Some of the Australian wheat shipped to China had traces of *Pyrenophora Semeniperda*, a common and relatively harmless fungal disease. Unfortunately, this was not entered on the phytosanitary certificate (the ship apparently departed Western Australia before the test result was known). The Chinese authorities reacted negatively when they found the fungus and quarantined the wheat for six weeks, but finally released it to WFP. The Australian Wheat Board paid the demurrage and storage charges.

Would in-country purchases of rice have been more appropriate? Local stocks of rice were available and could have been purchased for the EMOP. However, the main donor (USA) was only interested in providing wheat. When donors did provide cash, rice was purchased outside China because it is cheaper. Nevertheless, the quickest possible response would have been achieved by purchasing local stocks of rice.

Lesson: Commodity borrowing (whereby local grain is released against a confirmed pledge to WFP and repaid upon its arrival) is a very useful mechanism, so useful that WFP would do well to protect it by ensuring more expeditious repayment than was the case for EMOP 6045.

4.5 Achievements against Food Distribution Targets

Due to a shortfall in donor response to WFP's appeal, rice could only be provided to beneficiaries in Hunan and Hubei for 109 days and in Jiangxi and Anhui for 107 days (an average 108 days per beneficiary). However, the EMOP did reach 90 percent of its target of providing 5,786,900 beneficiaries with a ration of 0.5 kg for 120 days, which was a very considerable achievement.

The GOC fulfilled its commitment to provide 100,000 mt and indeed exceeded it by providing 105,527 mt.² To reach the target of 120 days, WFP would have had to provide 241,687 mt, but it only managed to deliver 207,384 mt, or 86 percent of what was required.

Table 5 - EMOP rice distributions

Cycle	Start	End	Covering period		Days	Beneficiaries	Kg/B	Kg	Tons
1	29-Oct	Nov	29-Oct	12-Nov	15.0	5,786,900	7.5	43,401,750	43,402
2	13-Nov	Nov	13-Nov	27-Nov	16.2	5,786,900	8.1	46,867,870	46,868
3	07-Dec	Dec	28-Nov	12-Dec	14.8	5,786,900	7.4	42,708,526	42,709
4	17-Dec	Jan	13-Dec	27-Dec	16.2	5,786,900	8.1	46,867,870	46,868
5	05-Feb	Mar	28-Dec	11-Jan	15.0	5,786,900	7.5	43,401,750	43,402
6	22-Mar	Apr	12-Jan	12/14-Feb	31.0	5,786,900	15.5	89,663,436	89,663
Totals					108.1	5,786,900	54.1	312,911,202	312,911

Source: Evaluation Team's Reconstruction

What food assistance was provided outside EMOP? GOC provided 308,300 mt of rice to flood victims in the four provinces before the EMOP commenced, some of it as a free relief grain and the rest on credit through local governments from Grain Bureau stores. Additional rice was provided on credit during the gaps in EMOP distributions and after EMOP ended.

² Assuming that the team's calculation that a total 312,911 mt was distributed under EMOP is correct.

Table 6 - Total Rice Distributed in EMOP Provinces (free and on credit)

Before EMOP (33.3%)		During EMOP (43.2%)		After EMOP (23.5%)	
Free (GOC)	Credit	Free (EMOP)	Credit	Free (NGOs)	Credit
154,250	154,250	312,911	86,804	Negligible	217,000
<i>Total free rice 467,161 mt</i>			<i>Total rice on credit 458,054 mt</i>		

The ‘before EMOP’ estimate assumes that approximately half the rice provided by GOC was on credit. The figure given for rice distributed on credit during the gaps in the EMOP distribution assumes that four weeks (or 30 days) of rice was provided and the ‘after EMOP’ figure assumes that about ten weeks (or 75 days) of rice was provided before the first rice harvest.

The estimates given above for rice provided on credit are probably high because no account has been taken of rice purchases (for which estimates cannot even be made). To cover this, assume that the figures given for rice distributed on credit *include* rice purchases. In any event, it is apparent that free distributions accounted for only about half the rice secured by flood victims by whatever means over the period of the food crisis (from evacuation to first rice harvest).

What contribution did the EMOP make to the availability of rice? Based on the estimates provided in the foregoing table, EMOP rice accounted for approximately 34 percent of the total rice distributed freely, on credit or purchased over the period of the food crisis (assuming this to be a total of 925,215 mt). WFP’s contribution alone (excluding GOC’s contribution to the EMOP) was approximately 22 percent of the total rice distributed, borrowed or purchased over the period of the food crisis.

Conclusions:

- The EMOP reached 90 percent of its target for the quantity of rice to be distributed.
- The GOC exceeded its commitment but WFP suffered a shortfall of 14 percent in its appeal to donors.
- Free distributions before EMOP and during the EMOP accounted for about half the rice secured by flood victims by whatever means over the period of the food crisis (from evacuation to first rice harvest).
- EMOP rice accounted for approximately 34 percent of the total rice distributed freely, on credit or purchased over the period of the food crisis. WFP’s contribution alone was approximately 22 percent of the total rice distributed, borrowed or purchased over the period of the food crisis.

5. Rehabilitation through FFR

5.1 Planning and organization

To increase farmers’ voice in planning the rehabilitation of their own village, the EMOP project document specified that Village Committees would prepare Village Development Plans (VDPs) as a basis for defining which FFR work activities would be carried out under EMOP. However before the LoU was even signed, Village Committees had organized in-depth, house-to-house investigations of flood damage and formulated comprehensive Village Rehabilitation Plans in consultation with representatives of Village Groups. When WFP’s planning requirement was made known, village leaders carved out EMOP Village Development Plans from the existing village

rehabilitation plans under the guidance of their County PMO. This was done before the WFP sub-offices opened, so WFP field staff was not able to have much influence on planning (for details see Calendar and 6.8 – Beneficiary Participation).

The Village Committees had some difficulties in preparing the VDPs, as it was difficult for them to estimate how much FFR could be accomplished during the 3-month EMOP rehabilitation phase, particularly given that strict work norms were not to be set as in typical FFW projects.

Conclusions:

- It would have been preferable to recognize and build upon existing village, township and county-level flood rehabilitation plans instead of insisting on a separate EMOP VDP.
- Local Government needed guidance in preparing the VDPs, as it was difficult for them to estimate how much work could be accomplished during the 3-month EMOP rehabilitation phase.

5.2 Appropriateness of activities and phasing

The five rehabilitation activities included in EMOP (house reconstruction, well desilting, farmland desilting, canal desilting and village road rehabilitation) were appropriate. It was also appropriate to exclude dyke reconstruction and reinforcement, as well as rehabilitation of primary schools, health posts, township roads and irrigation headworks, as such works exceed the EMOP time frame and are a local government rather than a village responsibility.

In principle, it was appropriate to include shelter; however, in practice a considerable amount of EMOP funding went into resettlement villages and represented a small proportion of the cost of housing to flood victims. This was presumably not anticipated by WFP.

Women, men and Government had slightly different priorities. Plans reflected township and (male) leader's priorities; nevertheless there was a considerable general consensus on what had to be done.

Table 7 – Priority Ranking for Rehabilitation Works and Actual Labor Allocation

Ranking of Priorities	Women	Ordinary Farmers	Village Leaders	Actual Labor Allocation
Food	1	1	1	Not applicable
Water	2	5	6	6
House	3	3	5	2
Farmland	4	2	7	5
Canals	7	7	4	3
Road	6	6	3	4
Dyke	5	4	2	1

Source: EMOP Evaluation Mission - Village PRAs

Although it was expected that victims would give first priority to rehabilitating their houses and farms, the rehabilitation of canals, roads and dykes absorbed the most labor during the EMOP period. This occurred because all able-bodied workers (male and female) took part in reconstruction activities organized by the Village Committee and the township. As a result, there was competition for limited labor, which was responsible for the slow completion of FFR targets in Jiangxi and Anhui Provinces.

The Chinese tradition of unpaid collective labor poses a serious challenge for village-level FFR implementation. In non-project villages, all able-bodied villagers were expected to contribute to reconstruction even in the absence of FFR. Likewise, in some project villages, the entire population contributed to the work but only a minority was on the EMOP beneficiary lists. This is another

reason why blanket coverage of the population at village level is preferable to partial coverage. For instance, the Juijiang office monitoring report no # 2 reported that “there are non-beneficiaries participating in a number of FFR activities.”

The connection between the food and the work was weak – this was not a typical FFW activity, and could not be (see 8.4).

Household members typically worked continuously on rehabilitation from the moment the floods subsided until the first rice harvest. Upon returning to the village, they cleared the debris from their houses, built temporary shelters, rehabilitated drinking water sources, made the road passable, desilted their farmland and sowed their first crop (rapeseed) before turning to communal labor on dykes, canals and roads. Work started before EMOP and continued after EMOP in spite of 100 percent achievement of targets). Work also continued during the two breaks in EMOP rice distributions.

The sequencing of rehabilitation was partly dictated by circumstances: first temporary shelter, then water supply (to prevent epidemics), then road access to facilitate food delivery. Farmland desilting work was phased in two stages to fit with planting times for upland crops and paddy. Irrigation canal desilting had to be completed in time for the first rice crop. Initially, some of the heaviest land desilting work was organized collectively. Thereafter, most of the house reconstruction and farmland rehabilitation on individual fields was done in people's spare time, using family labor or informal exchange labor with friends and relatives.

Table 8 - Actual Phasing of Rehabilitation Activities

Individual Activities	Collective Activities (EMOP)	Collective (non-EMOP)
1. Debris clearing from house	Road access restoration (preliminary)	Plug broken dykes
2. Private well rehabilitation	Farmland desilting (big damage)	Reinforce dykes
3. Farmland desilting	Canal desilting (shared structures)	Major irrigation rehabilitation
4. Desilting in-field canals	Road rehabilitation	Major road rehabilitation
5. New housing construction	Resettlement village establishment	Construction of new school

Conclusion: The expected shift in the composition of FFR activities from public assets to recovery of household assets did not occur as planned because priorities were influenced by township planners and village leaders.

5.3 Non-food Inputs for Rehabilitation

The main non-food inputs foreseen in EMOP were construction materials and equipment for house reconstruction, well rehabilitation, farmland, canal and road desilting. These were covered by the GOC matching contribution. With the exception of housing, the counterpart GOC contribution provided in connection with EMOP was adequate for achievement of the project's modest FFR targets.

The main gap reported by villagers was farm inputs: the EMOP design assumed that farm inputs would be resourced through the OCHA appeal. Although FAO obtained a US\$ 400,000 Technical Cooperation Project (TCP) that provided seeds and fertilizers to 160,000 flood-affected farmers in 6 counties of Anhui, Jiangxi and Hunan (3 EMOP and 3 non-EMOP counties), only an estimated 80,000 households in EMOP counties (6% of the EMOP target population) benefited from FAO assistance.

Lesson: Because seeds are so important for recovery of crop production and household food security, it may be unwise to rely on other donors to provide them. Free seeds and

credit for farm inputs could have been included as part of the GOC counterpart contribution.

5.4 FFR Achievements

Over 79,000 houses were repaired/reconstructed, 827,000*mu* of farmland, 247,000 water wells/tanks, and 7,600km of irrigation canals de-silted, and 2,000km of village feeder roads repaired in the 90 days of the EMOP's FFR phase.

Table 9 - EMOP FFR Achievements in Project Villages

County	House Rebuilding	Farmland Desilting (mu)	Well Desilting	Canal Desilting (m)	Road Desilting (m)
Hubei	7,696	217,782	30,335	1,351,300	557,957
Hunan	10,677	143,983	163,363	1,481,708	353,417
Jiangxi	30,712	56,432	18,161	3,593,644	887,632
Anhui	30,397	409,035	35,113	1,235,808	284,084
Total	79,482	827,232	246,972	7,662,460	2,083,090

Source: EMOP Weekly Progress Reports

Although accomplishments appear large and all targets except housing were 100 percent met by the end of the 90-day period, achievements are modest in relation to the number of beneficiaries and the size of the labor force. The housing targets were difficult to meet because the standard of housing in resettlement villages is excessively high.

Table 10 - EMOP Food-for-work Reconstruction Activities per Beneficiary Household

County	Project Beneficiaries	Beneficiary HHs (estim)	% of HHs get house	Farmland Mu/B HH	Wells/ Ben. HH	Canal m/ Ben. HH	Road m/ Ben. HH
Hubei	1,386,448	346,612	2%	0.6	0.1	3.9	1.6
Hunan	1,925,604	481,401	2%	0.3	0.3	3.1	0.7
Jiangxi	1,515,244	378,811	8%	0.1	0.05	9.5	2.3
Anhui	959,604	239,901	13%	1.7	0.1	5.2	1.2
Total	5,786,900	1,446,725	5%	0.6	0.2	5.3	1.4

Source: Mission calculation - FFR Actual Totals divided by Total Beneficiary Households.

The EMOP achievements represent a modest share of total FFW for some activities.

The vast majority of FFR targets were met and some were exceeded. However, on the whole, the targets were set too low and took no more than 30 workdays per active labor unit to meet. The targets may have been set artificially low because of limited GOC counterpart funding for non-labor inputs.

The EMOP achievements represent a modest share of all the rehabilitation work that has been done (although there are major variations between counties regarding the contribution of EMOP to total rehabilitation). In spite of 100 percent achievement of targets, in most cases EMOP rehabilitated less than half of the total damage to houses, roads and canals. Some work is still going on, most notably house construction.

Table 11 - EMOP Reconstruction Work as a Percentage of Total Achievements

County	Hubei Province		Hunan Province			Jiangxi Province	
	Shishou	Jianli	Nanxian	Anxiang	Lixian	Duchang	Xingzi
House reconstruction	30%	6%	42%	25%	13%	67%	18%
Well desilting	56%	24%	84%	11%	51%	37%	2%
Canal desilting	18%	6%	89%	29%	20%	26%	53%
Road rehabilitation	10%	7%	72%	1%	20%	38%	35%
Farmland desilting	13%	10%	93%	6%	20%	50%	39%

Source: County Questionnaires

FFR achievements were ascribed to EMOP by drawing a line on particular dates to separate ongoing activities for accounting purposes. Nothing distinguished the work done before and after EMOP. Many beneficiaries did not know what work was classified as EMOP. The actual amount of

reconstruction work that was accomplished spontaneously by flood victims during the 3-month FFR period was far greater than the totals reported for EMOP.

5.5 Quality of work

The appropriate township level technical office monitored the quality of work. Adequate technical assistance seems to have been provided and the project was right to rely on township level technicians - it was far too big a job for EMOP Food Monitors. PMOs reported that EMOP work was done to a higher quality than non-project work because of the greater availability of construction materials.

6. Management and coordination

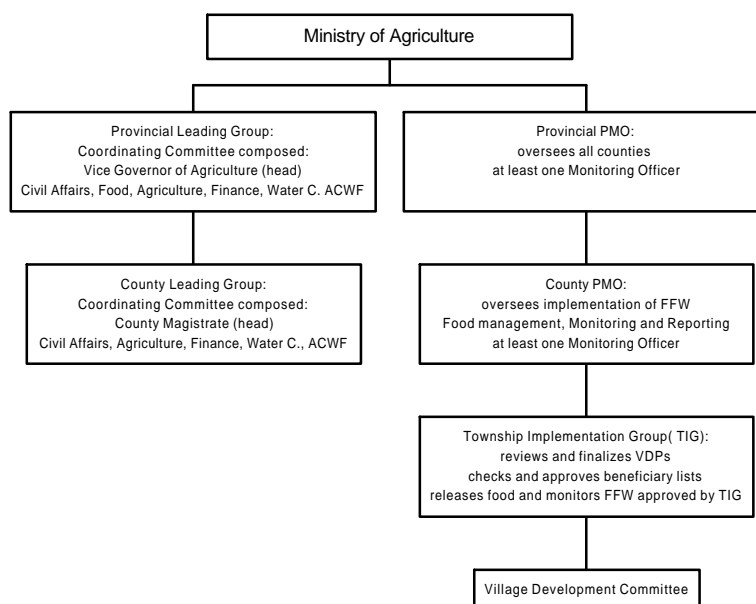
6.1 Choice of Partner

Emergency food aid in China is usually handled by the Department of Disaster and Social Relief within the Ministry of Civil Affairs (MoCA) working in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Domestic Trade and the State Grain Reserve Bureau. Had the project been a pure relief program, it might have been advisable to go through MoCA. The MOA was chosen as WFP's partner for the EMOP because it is WFP's main GOC partner and because of the rehabilitation component of the EMOP. Coordination with other ministries including MoCA seems to have worked well and MOA proved to be a solid partner.

6.2 GOC Structures

PMOs were set up as early as late August, even before the project document was signed. By the time the WFP sub-offices were established, GOC had already fully staffed and functioning Project Management Offices and Leading Groups at Province and County level as well as project Implementation Groups at township and village level. The structure was appropriate for China and worked well.

Government Project Organigram



The Leading Groups at Province and County level set policy and ensured coordination between the different implementing agencies. Overall responsibility for project implementation rested with the four provincial PMOs. They planned the food distribution, organized logistics, supervised food storage and monitored food distribution, quality and quantity. They passed on the data received from the County Level to WFP Beijing and MOA. Staff also undertook regular monitoring visits to the counties. The implementation capacity of the provincial governments was excellent. All provincial governments had considerable domestic food aid management experience prior to the project.

The County PMOs were the central management point of the project, playing three important roles: (i) food borrowing from the grain bureaux; (ii) coordination among government departments and TIGs; and (iii) monitoring and reporting. They were the main contact point for the sub-offices and would regularly liaise with them. PMOs collected data received from the Townships and reported them to the Province.

The Township Implementation Groups under each township government were responsible for implementing the EMOP at the village level. They assisted the VCs in the preparation of the village development plans, prepared distribution plans, coordinated with the grain stations and organized food delivery to the villages.

Conclusions:

- The Leading Group – Project Management Office – Township implementation structure was appropriate for China and worked well. The different PMOs demonstrated great implementation efficiency.
- Existing Government experience with domestic food management greatly contributed to the successful operational implementation of the project.

- The fact that three provinces had experience with WFP FFW development projects did help but also the fact that all provinces had ample donor project experience and were using similar operational set-ups with other donors.
- This GOC system represented a de-facto parallel monitoring system to the WFP monitoring system. The strength of the system allowed WFP to develop a lighter structure for its own monitoring.

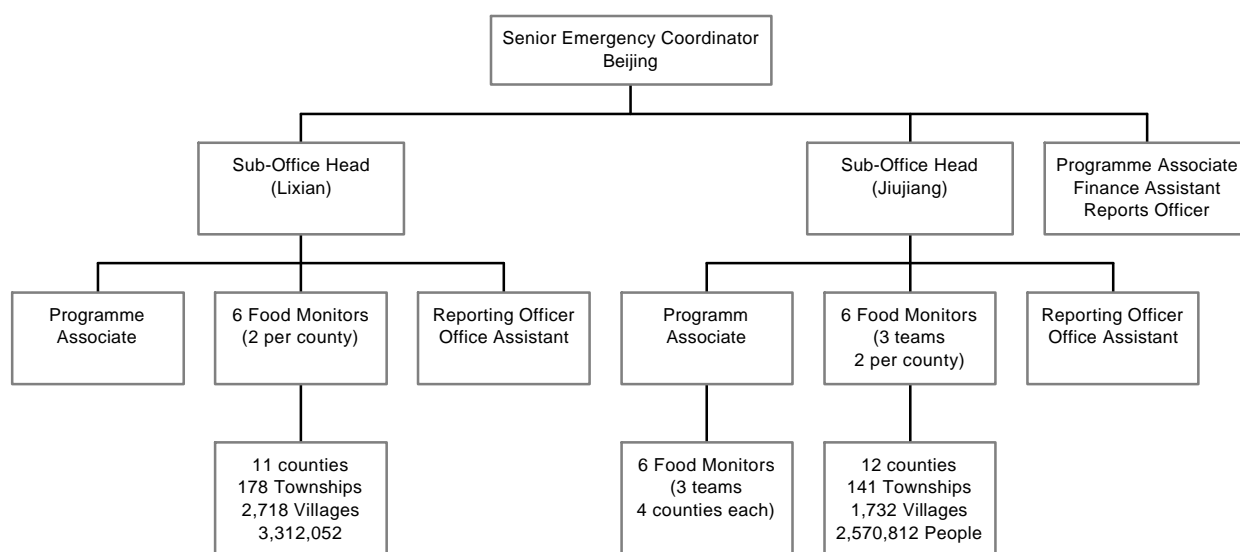
6.3 WFP Structures

Beijing-based staff was involved in project start-up and monitoring early food distributions. Two sub-offices were subsequently established in two of the four provinces, covering two provinces each. The sub-offices were a good idea and worked well but the GOC was well into the implementation of the EMOP by the time the sub-offices were established and performing their tasks well. Following a late start, the sub-offices were closed in early March, two weeks before the final rice distribution. At that time, the FFR activities had been implemented and the Beijing emergency office declared the project as having reached its objectives. The folding-up of operations both in the sub-offices and the Beijing office may also have been necessitated by the departure of most international staff who had only been available for the original duration of the project. By late March, only the reports officer was left in the Beijing office. Given the magnitude of the project, this constituted a somewhat unsatisfactory ending.

The management structure of the EMOP was fairly lean and cost-efficient, given the scale of the project. Support costs for this EMOP (<6 US\$ per beneficiary) were much lower than for similar types of emergency operations. This was possible due to the parallel system that allowed WFP to build on a well-functioning national management structure.

A US\$ 1,134,500 direct support cost budget was established to run the EMOP, a relatively modest cost for running a project of this scale. Together with the direct operational costs of US\$ 8,652,490 and indirect support costs of 4,962,907 it cost \$14,749,897 to deliver US\$ 72,928,130 worth of rice, not counting Government counterpart costs. In other words, less than 17 percent of the EMOP budget was spent on operations, a fairly low percentage for an emergency operation.

Project staffing originally cost US\$ 455,000 but remained lower due to the fact that an international VAM officer (US\$ 53,000), a logistics officer, interpreter, secretary and driver were never recruited. The management of the program included one main office based in Beijing and two sub-offices based in two of the four provinces, covering two provinces each. The head office in Beijing was staffed with the following international staff: one senior emergency coordinator, one Reports Officer and one Finance Administration Assistant. National staff included one national program officer and one reporting officer. Total staffing in the Beijing office was five. Each sub-office was staffed with one international emergency officer, one national program officer, one reporting officer, one secretary and six food monitors of which two were internationals nationally recruited.



Performance monitoring of the EMOP was to be provided by 18 international and national staff (see monitoring organigram). Overall monitoring was to be provided by the senior international emergency coordinator based in the WFP Beijing Country Office. Two sub-offices covering two provinces each were set up in addition to provide close-up monitoring for food aid and FFR. Four donors (USA, Britain, Canada and Australia) funded one international United Nations Volunteer (UNV) each. These UNVs were fully integrated into the monitoring team and, while serving as food monitors, also provided feedback on the EMOP to their Government, thus providing additional monitoring transparency.

Once the EMOP was fully operational, the office issued regular donor reports advising on the situation of the flood victims and providing detailed account of the food-for-work activities. Donors felt that these reports were useful and helped resident missions to advise their Governments regarding assistance needed. A donor mission organized by the project to the flood-affected areas was also highly appreciated.

The mission felt that the sub-offices could have benefited from a more frequent presence of the emergency coordinator in the field. The sub-offices shouldered a disproportionate share of the workload and could have benefited from more substantive guidance, in particular regarding the impact studies undertaken and the need to critically review the underlying assumptions of the project. The Beijing emergency office did not encourage critical reflection by field staff.

Although a VAM officer was to have maintained the database and analyzed implementation based on established performance-monitoring indicators, this officer was never recruited. In hindsight there would have been little role for the VAM officer in project monitoring since VAM served pre-project targeting and was not meant or equipped to provide monitoring data relevant to EMOP implementation. Since the performance indicators established in the project document were different from the ones used for VAM (and rightly so), the monitoring of performance indicators did not require a VAM officer. This role was handled effectively by the Sub-offices and the Beijing Emergency Office.

There was, however, considerable overlap in the job descriptions for Food Monitors (FMs), Program Associates and Emergency officers. While everyone was involved with monitoring tasks or gathering monitoring information provided from GOC and sub-offices, there was no staff assigned to provide more technical services, such as PRA training and M&E training, two types of

expertise and activities the mission felt should have been included in the staff profile and job description.

On balance, it appears that the workload of the Beijing Emergency Office and the Sub-offices was not equally distributed. Sub-office staff spent 7-day working weeks (with the exception of Spring Break) and was stretched both regarding numbers and monitoring tasks.

Each food monitor covered on average two counties for a total of 11 counties in Hunan/Hubei and 12 counties in Jiangxi and Anhui. Sub-offices were opened quite late – 2 ½ months after signature of the project document and five weeks after the GOC had officially started implementation. Thus, upon arrival, sub-office staff found a labor-intensive reconstruction program that was already ongoing, approved Village Development Plans and a rice distribution system that followed standard Government procedures. This forced the Sub-office staff to spend their first month aligning operations with WFP requirements.

Equipment was not sufficient for both sub-offices. Each sub-office had three vehicles and two cellular phones. While in Lixian, the County provided three additional vehicles to enable all six monitors to cover their counties, this was not provided by the Jiujiang County, necessitating the teaming up of the six monitors into three groups. The Beijing office rejected requests for additional funds to rent additional vehicles. Since funds would have been available (by transferring funds from another budget line), this is not quite understandable since this clearly hampered the sub-office's mobility. Given the fact that cellular phones are an increasingly common and affordable communication tool in China and given the fact that the County PMO staff were all equipped with cellular phones, it would have been appropriate to equip all Food Monitors with cellular phones.

Until the recruitment of the international staff, the EMOP was run by WFP Beijing who sent staff to the provinces to order the food distributions. Staff provided valuable early feedback on distribution and management issues. They were able to convey their experience to the Sub-office staff who received a one-day training on food monitoring before leaving for the sub-offices.

In line with WFP's commitments for women, the EMOP observed strict guidelines for the gender composition of its staffing. Of the total WFP staff attached to EMOP, 10 were males and 14 females (or 58 percent female). In the Beijing office, the emergency coordinator, finance officer and driver were male while the reports officer, program associate and program assistant were female. The Emergency Officers and Program Associates, based in the sub-offices, were equal with one male and one female in each post. Both Reports Associates were female and the FMs were 50/50 male/female.

The sub-offices operated from December until February and were closed down in early March, two weeks before the final rice distribution. At that time, the labor-intensive reconstruction activities had been implemented and the Beijing emergency office declared the project as having reached its objectives. The folding-up of operations both in the sub-offices and the Beijing office may also have been necessitated by the departure of most international staff who had only been available for the original duration of the project. By late March, only the Reports Officer was left in the Beijing office. Given the magnitude of the project, this constituted a somewhat unsatisfactory ending.

While the project document is specific about the staffing and the role of WFP monitoring, the role and function of Government monitoring is only mentioned in passing. It would have been important to clearly establish the common and separate monitoring, analysis and reporting responsibilities.

Two of the three provinces visited by the mission complained about the frequency of EMOP missions to their province. In Hunan, 22 visits were recorded between August – March. Given

Chinese traditional hospitality, each mission would tie up several staff at various levels for several days. The provincial PMOs felt that less monitoring would have been required and that more use should have been made of national monitors. Much less frequent visits were reported in Jiangxi – only 8. The mission felt that more monitoring coverage should have been provided for Jiangxi and Anhui and that in comparison the focus on Hunan and Hubei appeared excessive.

Conclusions:

- WFP Beijing staff provided valuable inputs into project start-up and early food distribution monitoring.
- GOC was well into the implementation of the EMOP by the time the sub-offices were established and were performing their tasks well.
- The sub-offices were a good idea and worked well.
- Workload was disproportionate between sub-offices and the Beijing emergency office.
- Job profiles of emergency officers/program associates should have reflected training and capacity-building responsibilities.
- The sub-office's capacity could have been enhanced by renting additional vehicles and cellular phones.
- Support costs per beneficiary were low (under 6 US\$ including GOC + WFP costs).
- WFP's commitment to women was taken seriously; close attention was paid to obtaining an optimum male/female ratio on EMOP staff.
- The Food Monitors working out of the EMOP sub-offices and the GOC monitoring system in PMOs and TIGs complemented each other. GOC accepts that WFP needs an independent monitoring system to ensure transparency and accountability to its donors.
- 12 Food Monitors (FMs) were too few to monitor distributions and reconstruction works in 23 counties, 320 townships and 4450 villages. The FMs worked very hard but could not cover so many villages without relying on GOC monitoring systems. Expectations about impact monitoring by FMs were unrealistic.
- Over 75 percent of the EMOP food was distributed either before the Food Monitors were in place or after the sub-offices closed (although Program Associates spot-checked the November distribution and 12 FMs returned to monitor the final distribution).
- Expatriate Food Monitors' presence strengthened national Food Monitors' confidence to be critical. They also provided the EMOP with additional external monitoring transparency for donors.
- National Food Monitors needed to accompany the expatriate Food Monitors, which was inefficient because it reduced coverage.
- VAM was not used as planned for performance monitoring.
- There was a disproportionate emphasis by official missions on Hunan and Hubei with much less attention given to Jiangxi and Anhui.

6.4 Performance Monitoring Indicators

The project document identified ten indicators to be used for performance monitoring but it failed to identify the type of indicator, data gathering method and who was responsible for monitoring the

indicator. None of the ten indicators address the primary objective of the project, “to meet the acute food needs of the targeted population living in temporary shelters”.

The table below indicates that only seven indicators were appropriate, while the remaining three not useful. The seven indicators are all output indicators indicating the status of reconstruction activities but provide no information on any qualitative performance or on outcome. For instance, a more telltale, outcome-related indicator for “the percentage of arable land rehabilitated” might have been the “percentage of arable land sown with rapeseed, wheat or potatoes.” This would have given an indication towards the medium-term prospects for food security in the project area.

Table 10 - Performance Indicators as per Project Document

Indicator	Type	Usefulness	Was this monitored and by whom?
% of people no longer requiring emergency food assistance.	Impact	No – since number of beneficiaries was to remain constant throughout the project.	No
% of women participating in registration and food distribution	Process	This indicator was not well worded. Project requirement of at least 60% women picking up the food may have been a more appropriate indicator	Yes –Township/County required to submit list indicating numbers; FM’s monitored in each village whether there were 2 women representatives and the percentage of women receiving the food.
% of beneficiaries returned to their villages by gender from the temporary shelters	Process	Normally yes – but by the time this indicator was reported on over 95 % had already returned. Did not affect management of project	Township/County
# of shelters reconstructed/rehabilitated	Output	Yes – but no quality standards had been set – this activity ranged from simple fixing to the construction of new villages.	Township/County. However, data monitored by WFP only at county level, which did not show possible problems at township/village level.
% of drinking water wells/tanks de-silted	Output	Yes	See above
% of arable land rehabilitated	Output	Yes	See above
Kilometers of farm irrigation channels de-silted	Output	Yes – but no quality standards had been set	See above
Kilometers of farm road rehabilitated/construction	Output	Yes – but no quality standards had been set	See above
% of women beneficiaries who are members of village development committee	Process	No. This was a project requirement for 2 women members – should have been reworded to % of village committees having at least three women members.	

In terms of outcome indicators, it would indeed have been useful to develop a list of assumptions regarding the potential outcome of the project, associate these with performance outcome indicators and monitor these systematically.

6.5 Effectiveness of monitoring

Independent monitoring of EMOP implementation was provided by twelve Food Monitors, including four international United Nations Volunteers funded by USA, Australia, Britain and Canada. Unfortunately the Food Monitors were not in place in time to monitor the first distributions and had left the project area before the last distributions. Out of the six rice distributions, only three were fully monitored by WFP as foreseen in the project document. Two food distributions took place before the sub-offices were opened, part of one distribution took place during the Spring Festival when all staff was absent and the Beijing emergency office ordered monitoring to be stopped until the next wheat donation was confirmed (10 March), and the final distribution took place in late March/April when the sub-offices had already been closed. However WFP Beijing staff covered the first two distributions and most of the Food Monitors as well as the Programme Associates were asked to return to monitor the last distribution.

The first month of reconstruction was not monitored since this activity was officially started by the villages on 1 November. On December 25, only two weeks after FMs had started to monitor, the first consolidated report on FFR was produced by the project. It showed that at that time targets were achieved at 62 percent for housing, 42 percent for farmland de-silting, 60 percent for well de-silting, 37 percent for canal de-silting and 46 percent for farm road de-silting.

The monitoring tasks for the 12 FMs were broad and numerous. They visited Government storage facilities to check on storage capacity, conditions and management, availability of EMOP bags, rice processing and packaging. Much emphasis was put on monitoring food distribution in villages to ensure that beneficiaries received the correct ration of good quality rice from the VCs. FMs also inquired about family coping strategies and household food utilization. Monitors also checked on the beneficiaries that were still displaced and monitored their return to their villages.

The Lixian Sub-office had to monitor 178 townships comprising 2,718 villages. The Jiangxi Sub-office covered 141 townships and 1,732 villages. Given such large numbers of villages and townships involved, it is to the credit of the FM and their commitment that they managed to visit at least each township once during three months of EMOP monitoring. Covering all villages was impossible and villages were usually picked in discussion with the TIG. Monthly monitoring plans were prepared by the sub-offices in coordination with the County PMOs.

Effectiveness of monitoring might have been improved - by focusing less on maximizing the number of sites visited and increasing the emphasis on spot-checks. One FM complained in the final debriefing note that the FMs were never allowed to make unplanned visits and spontaneous checks – all visits had to be approved in advance. The pairing of WFP FMs with County monitors, while a good idea in principle, detracted from the County monitors' own monitoring time, hence reducing somewhat the overall monitoring provided.

The main focus of monitoring was at village level. An audit instigated by the People's National Congress found that there was misuse of Government emergency funds at the Township level. Hence, the township may have been a weak link and in the future should be monitored more closely.

The effectiveness of monitoring was hampered in Jiangxi and Anhui by three factors: (a) the distances involved; (b) the lack of transportation (only three vehicles were available for the office); and (c) language (since the international FMs did not speak fluent Chinese, the head of the sub-

office decided to group the FMs into three pairs, thus effectively cutting monitoring capacity/coverage by half).

Although provincial governments expressed their appreciation of WFP food monitors' hard work and commitment, they indicated that fewer monitors would have been needed, given the fact that the GOC already had a well-developed monitoring system in place.

Early monitoring findings revealed problems with beneficiary signatures (people signing on behalf of illiterate neighbors, excessive prolonging of food distribution in some villages; late food distribution in some villages; defective storage management in grain houses; inferior quality of rice in some cases, etc.). There was a small problem with the quality of rice distributed initially, but it was quickly resolved. FMs discussed these problems with their counterparts at County Level, who took action.

Save one incident, no misuse of food aid was identified in the villages. Ironically, this was identified by the visiting Beijing finance officer, leaving one to speculate about the effectiveness of the Food Monitors. WFP reaction and GOC reaction to this incident was swift and effective. Two separate investigations were carried out and the shop owner and his family were excluded from the beneficiary list. Subsequently, the Province sent a memorandum to all counties with instructions to ensure that such cases are not allowed to happen. The mission was assured by all sides that no other incidents had occurred.

The mission found no evidence that the project had monitored the delivery and timeliness of Government counterpart contributions. One of the sub-offices, when inquiring with the Beijing emergency office, was informed that they were not to monitor this aspect. Monitoring Government counterpart funding, however, was originally foreseen and is in the terms of reference of the reports officers (one in Beijing and two in the sub-offices) and of the emergency officers.

Much confusion was created by the EMOP monitoring forms and it took a special training session with County PMOs to clarify the information needed. Still, it was impossible for the mission to reconstruct the exact quantities of rice distributed per province from the project files due to contradictions between various reports. For distributions that straddled months and months with more than one distribution, it was difficult to ascribe what proportion of each month's total grain outflow belonged to each rice distribution as well as what share of each distribution was contributed by WFP versus GOC. The totals from the commodity forms could not be reconciled with the quantities to be provided by both Government and WFP, resulting in an apparent shortfall of Government contributions.

Food-for-work monitoring and quality control was mainly the responsibility of the relevant technical departments at township level. There were, however, no established work norms nor indicative minimum working hour requirements per beneficiary, as is established in regular FFW programs. Hence, the amount of time beneficiaries spent on FFR was not monitored.

Although monitors made joint field visits, there was no other linkage between the two monitoring systems. It would have been useful to have at least monthly meetings between County PMOs and FMs to discuss issues, findings and solutions.

Project staff recommended in their final reports that a joint lessons learned meeting should be held with MOA and the County PMOs. Regrettably, this excellent suggestion was not implemented, as such meeting could have provided a useful forum for self-evaluation.

Conclusions:

- Only 27 percent of the food was distributed when the sub-offices were open to assist with monitoring. The rest of the distributions had to be monitored by staff or consultants from the Beijing country office or by contracting the former food monitors to return to the area to cover the last distribution.
- Only part of the EMOP FFR activities were monitored.
- The effectiveness of the monitoring system hinged on the existence of two parallel monitoring systems. The combination of the two resulted in an efficient and effective system and allowed for broad coverage.
- GOC counterpart funding was not monitored by EMOP staff.
- Problems at township level would not have been monitored due to a focus of the project monitoring team on village-level monitoring.
- Performance indicators as established in the project document were not useful as they did not relate to the key project objective and focused on output monitoring of the second objective.

Lessons:

- An effective monitoring system should be built on a thorough analysis of potential weak spots of an existing system or of the system the project intends to set up. Such analysis will allow project monitors to pay special attention to weak links in the chain and will result in a sounder system.
- A strong national monitoring system and culture enables WFP to reduce its own monitoring role and staffing. Nevertheless, in order to combine the two systems into one effective one, both systems should have regular joint feedback and analysis sessions allowing for review of issues arising during monitoring visits, project assumptions and impact on beneficiaries.

6.6 EMOP Impact Study

What value were the four village impact studies? Could the approach be replicated for similar emergency interventions in the country, region or elsewhere? Originally not foreseen, an impact study was developed by the two program associates in the sub-offices and the program associate in the Beijing emergency office. This was an excellent and innovative idea rarely found in emergency projects. The impact study focused on case studies in four villages, one for each province. Following the gathering of village baseline information such as population figures, household income before the flood, and flood losses, the project associates returned to the villages with a questionnaire which was distributed to village leaders, farmers, women and women VC members (113 in total for the four case studies). Results were analyzed and matched with findings from FM reports. A follow-up impact study was to have been undertaken 6 months later to document changes in production, assets and attitudes, but was not implemented.

A basic flaw in the conception of the case study was the lack of comparison with non-project villages in order to shed light on the contribution of EMOP to recovery. One cannot deduct from the results of such an impact study whether changes are really attributable to the food assistance or whether they reflect a general recovery from the emergency. As was evidenced during the mission's visit to non-project villages, these had also mostly recovered. Another limitation was the small sample and the non-random selection of respondents, focussing heavily on members of

project-related committees. Village leaders and women on the VCs were much better informed about the project and its intentions and are thus not representative of the wider population. Nevertheless, the impact studies did suggest some possible benefits derived from the project, which the mission attempted to verify during the evaluation.

Given the short duration of the project and the fact that the staff involved had other competing responsibilities, the impact study report was only available on 6 March, at the time of the closure of the sub-office. Unfortunate was the lack of guidance the program associates received, apart from assistance on gender issues. Guidance on method (sampling techniques, interviewing, control villages) would have greatly improved the impact studies.

The impact study was seen as a separate exercise and was not used by project management as an additional monitoring tool. Hence the effort put into the impact study was largely wasted, since it came late and was not used to inform decision-making. Apart from the selection of case study villages the PMOs were not involved in the impact study and did not receive a copy of the report. An effort should have been undertaken to fully involve counterpart staff in this exercise to ensure that all implementation partners understand the value of such a study.

Conclusions:

- Impact studies can provide valuable information on the effects of emergency food aid but need to be used to advise project management on possible positive and negative changes occurring.
- Impact studies require time and attention and at least one full-time staff should be entrusted with coordinating the study.
- It would have been useful to involve PMOs more closely in the preparation and execution of the impact study.

Lesson: An impact study accompanying an emergency project can be an important and valuable monitoring and evaluation tool. However, care must be taken to provide the necessary technical support and staffing to establish valid survey methods and to include non-project villages in the survey to better assess impact. Impact studies should not be undertaken in isolation and should be well incorporated as a regular monitoring activity informing and advising project management.

6.7 Capacity building

EMOP did provide some capacity building for the international and national staff hired. None of the Food Monitors had prior food monitoring experience and the program associates were unfamiliar with emergency operations. Most capacity building was done on-the-job, rather than through formal training. Although sub-office staff was provided with a one-day training course before departing for the field, former staff interviewed felt that the training course was insufficient to prepare the FMs for their tasks in the field.

While the project document mentions that PRA tools would be used to develop the VDPs, there was no capacity building to ensure that these would be applied. A short training course in each province would have been useful and could have provided the needed capacity. Training of food monitoring was also not provided to Counterpart staff. Given the fact that counterpart staff was experienced with monitoring, it may have been appropriate to organize an initial monitoring workshop to review the existing monitoring methods and capacity and to explain the monitoring requirements and techniques of WFP.

There was no systematic capacity building of Government counterpart staff. A one-day training course was organized to explain the reporting forms when it became clear that the reporting forms were not understood. PMO staff did feel, however, that they had acquired more knowledge about WFP and a donor food aid operation. Monitoring staff interviewed by the mission did not see much difference in the monitoring undertaken by the FMs in comparison to the monitoring they undertook prior to the FMs arrival. All mentioned that the FMs had been very hard working and that they felt the joint monitoring went well. One monitor stated that he had learned to take detailed notes from the FMs.

Capacity building would have been enhanced by greater substantive interface between sub-offices and PMO staff. For instance a joint meeting every two weeks to discuss approach, methods and impact assessment would have gone a long way in building capacity.

Conclusions:

- There was limited capacity-building by the project.
- More training would have been required to ensure the application of PRA methods and that monitoring and reporting are undertaken according to WFP's expectations. Such training would have expanded the capacity building of the project.

Lessons:

- More systematic capacity building of counterpart staff, particular in the area of impact monitoring is required in order to build institutional capacity beyond the lifetime of an emergency operation.
- A joint lessons-learned session between the project staff and the Government could have enhanced learning and future application of lessons learned.

6.8 Beneficiary participation

Beneficiary participation in EMOP was both a means to an end (transparency, accountability) and an end in itself (empowerment of farmers and women). The principal forms of beneficiary participation foreseen by EMOP were:

- information sharing through posting of beneficiary lists and entitlements on the external walls of the Village Committee office;
- cost sharing through beneficiary labor mobilization for rehabilitation of dwellings, wells, farmland, canals and roads;
- co-optation of two additional women on Village Committees;
- establishment of village level beneficiary Registration Committees and food Distribution Committees; and
- participatory planning of reconstruction through VDPs.

Information sharing with beneficiaries was quite useful, because it increased transparency and reduced the possibility of misuse of food aid.

The existing (elected) Village Committees were enlarged for the duration of the project by co-optation of women farmer-representatives. This seems to have increased transparency but its

impact on project-related decision making was less than expected. The co-opted women are no longer represented on the Village Committee.

Beneficiary representation on Registration and Distribution committees was useful for ensuring that the distributions were fair. The involvement of villagers in tasks such as checking of beneficiary registration and weighing of rice created a sense of local ownership of the project.

Participatory planning of reconstruction did not take place as planned. The VDPs had already been finalized before EMOP sub-offices opened. Although WFP country staff went to the field on 4 November 1998 and participated in the preparation of some VDPs, the village level PRAs specified in the project document were not carried out.

Although it was not foreseen at project design, beneficiaries from four villages were involved in project evaluation through the impact study. Interviewees were given the opportunity to respond to an anonymous questionnaire.

On the whole, the project's experience with beneficiary participation was positive. Although WFP's requirements were sometimes implemented pro-forma (without deep conviction), it was a step in the right direction. According to the EMOP Chinese Program Assistants, this degree of openness was new and unusual for Chinese villages.

To what extent did local government internalize the project's participatory approach? The committees set up for EMOP with farmer representatives were not institutionalized. They only operated for the duration of the project.

Conclusions:

- Information sharing with villagers, through public posting of beneficiary lists and entitlements, improved transparency and accountability.
- Co-opting of farmer and woman representatives on the Village Committee was positive because it increased villagers' access to information about the project and introduced an independent check on the VC.
- Involvement of beneficiaries in food distribution and monitoring helped to ensure fairness.
- Participatory planning of FFR is feasible and desirable in WFP's development projects, but in a 4-month emergency relief-cum-rehabilitation project, due to time constraints, it may not be practical to try to establish project-specific Village Development Committees and undertake village PRAs as a basis for FFR planning.

Recommendations:

- Future projects should recognize and use existing Chinese village institutions such as the Village Committee rather than attempt to create new institutions expressly for the project.
- If the intention was to launch a series of PRAs in each village, WFP country office staff could be used to train PMOs in participatory methods.

6.9 Role of women

The project document set a number of targets for women's participation in project implementation:

- up to half of the members of PMOs, TIGs and VCs were to be female;

- two additional women representatives were to be co-opted to participate in the “Village Development Committee” along with the existing Women’s Federation representative;
- up to 65 percent of project beneficiaries were to be women;
- 60 percent of food rations were to be distributed to women in order to reinforce their control over the food and reduce the possibility of misuse; and
- monitoring systems were to provide gender-disaggregated statistics on women’s participation in project committees, food distribution and FFR.

EMOP’s achievements against targets are shown below: over 10,000 village women were represented on VCs, 7,000 served on registration committees and nearly 14,000 served on distribution committees. Women were 58 percent of staff contracted by WFP, 24 percent of the staff of provincial and county PMOs, 37 percent of the membership of VCs, 39 percent of the membership of Registration Committees and 45 percent of the members of distribution committees. The EMOP did not reach 50 percent gender equality in all things, but it did reach percentages of women’s participation that realistically are impressive in such a short time period. In the Chinese context this is quite an achievement.

Table 12 - Women's Participation in EMOP PMOs and Project-related Committees

County	PMOs		Village Development Committee		Registration Committee		Food Distribution Committee	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Hubei	10	4	3,939	1,965	1,790	1,240	3,523	2,721
<i>% female</i>		29%		33%		41%		44%
Hunan	22	8	8,506	5,705	3,146	2,405	6,618	4,998
<i>% female</i>		27%		40%		43%		43%
Jiangxi	42	14	2,784	1,663	3,217	1,446	2,001	2,474
<i>% female</i>		25%		37%		31%		55%
Anhui	30	7	3,407	1,471	3,197	2,101	5,165	3,724
<i>% female</i>		19%		30%		40%		42%
4 Prov.	104	33	18,636	10,804	11,350	7,192	17,307	13,917
<i>% female</i>		24%		37%		39%		45%

Source: Impact Study.

Who controlled the food aid received? Was it sensible to require that women receive and carry 60 percent of the food? According to the All China Women’s Federation (ACWF), WFP’s requirement that 60 percent of food rations should be collected by women was unnecessary and culturally inappropriate. According to Han Chinese custom, family food stocks and savings are traditionally controlled by women. Hence, it was unnecessary for women to physically collect the food from distribution points, as they already control the family rice. In many cases the distances between distribution points and houses were too great and the bags too heavy for women to carry. The ACWF representative in Hunan cited a case where the entire month’s family food ration fell into the flooded paddy field and got spoiled because the rice was too heavy for the woman to carry. The same ACWF representative said that she understands WFP’s reasoning but it is not necessary for women to carry the rice because “China is not Africa: Chinese men would not take the food and exchange it for alcohol”.

Did women influence the choice of work and/or their work contribution? Women do not appear to have influenced the choice of FFR activities, although ACWF is represented on the VC.

What proportion of the work burden of FFR fell on women? Women participated in all five of the EMOP FFR activities but not in non-EMOP dyke construction (only men are expected to do the latter). The Impact Study reported that 100 percent of women respondents were involved in house

rebuilding and farmland desilting, 85 percent in well desilting, 81 percent in road repair and 68 percent in irrigation canal rehabilitation. About 1/3 of the FFR burden fell on women. Fortunately, FFR work requirements were applied flexibly: women participated whenever they had time; they were excused from FFR when their labor was needed in the paddy fields.

Lessons:

- Participation in decision making empowered women and seems to have made a lasting impression on local government. Physical participation in FFR and carrying grain, on the other hand, did little to empower women.
- Abstract targets for women's participation in FFR and collection of food are inappropriate. Local Government was wise to exempt women from FFR when they were busy in the fields and to adjust the requirement that women collect the food when the distance between the distribution points and the village was too great. Targets aimed at helping women should not be allowed to impose an excessive work burden on women.

7. Impact

7.1 Impact of food aid

How did food aid contribute to the ability of families to survive? Beneficiaries and officials were very appreciative of the assistance and expressed no reservations about the appropriateness of providing rice. Although it was not a project objective, GOC repeatedly stated that EMOP saved precious lives. The evaluation mission found no evidence to support the claim. On the contrary, it found that it was mainly GOC's disaster-preparedness during the early stages of the emergency rather than the EMOP that reduced the loss of lives. Deaths occurred mainly in July/August as a result of sudden dyke breaks or hurricanes, before EMOP started. Government relief through the Department of Civil Affairs filled the gap in this critical period. Nevertheless, flood victims still needed food assistance until the next rice harvest. The food provided under the EMOP increased food consumption and had a positive impact on victims' health status and productivity.

How did food aid enable people to recover? The project solved the immediate problem of food for flood victims and gave them the security of knowing that they would not go hungry. For four months it freed flood victims from having to worry about where their next meal was coming from, thereby allowing them to concentrate more energy on recovery. The food rations freed men from having to go outside the village looking for work to get money to survive. The fact that men stayed in the village speeded up the pace of reconstruction. The food allowed the victims to recover their household assets more quickly than they would have without the project. World solidarity with China gave people increased confidence and hope.

Food aid provided under the EMOP enabled families to recover faster with fewer debts than those families not assisted under the EMOP. The impact on debt was substantial for households who only lost their crops, but insufficient for households that lost their house and all their possessions. The major expense was housing for which they had to put forward all their savings and/or borrow heavily, mainly from relatives. Food aid provided the cash equivalent of 864³ yuan whereas a single new house cost around 15,000 yuan. Although EMOP subsidies for house reconstruction were modest in relation to total housing costs, they accelerated the process of rural urbanization, which is a top priority for GOC. The standard of housing is better than it was before the floods.

³ (assuming Y4 per kg x 54 kg per person x 4 persons per household on average)

Did food aid create dependency? No, on the contrary, it reduced dependency because it enabled flood victims to recover their livelihoods in a shorter period of time.

How did people cope and what contribution did EMOP rice play? The main coping mechanism was borrowing rice from the Grain Station on a collective basis and borrowing money from relatives outside the affected area. Food aid substituted to some extent for this coping mechanism. This is a positive aspect of the EMOP.

Did food aid substitute for other coping mechanisms such as migratory labor? The second most important coping mechanism was migratory labor. Although EMOP appears to have reduced migration, some migration continued because of households' need for cash. The food aid constituted a small percentage of total resource requirements, particularly when housing is taken into account, and flood victims must have been under considerable pressure to earn money to pay off debts incurred (including for food). The value of the food is only RMB 2 per person per day, compared with a going daily wage of RMB 20 in towns and RMB 10-15 in villages. Moreover, because FFR requirements weren't strict, men could go away and leave their women to do the FFR and collect the ration. In Hubei it appears village committees did not require people to stay at home, recognizing that it was worth foregoing their labor in favor of the income they brought to the village, although in some cases migrant workers were asked to contribute money to pay for reconstruction (drawing laborers from families with excess labor). On the other hand, it was said in Jiangxi that men had to stay at home to help with the enormous amount of work to be done for their household. Food aid may have made it easier for them to do this. It is very difficult to estimate the balance in practice between these competing imperatives – to earn money to pay off debts and to work on reconstruction.

What difference did EMOP make in comparison to previous floods? In previous floods, households received only 25 kg of grain per person and no subsidies for house reconstruction.

Did food aid make it easier for families to take the risk to take loans to buy farm inputs for the first planting season? Food aid seems to have had little impact on use of seasonal credit for inputs: few households took credit for farm inputs. Everywhere, shortage of seeds and lack of money or credit for farm inputs was reported to be a problem.

Did food aid make it easier for parents to keep children in school? The mission was unable to substantiate the Impact Study's claim that food aid made it easier for parents to keep children (especially girls) in school. Most children (male and female) in project villages completed the school year. Education is a high priority for parents. The flood occurred during summer school holidays and schools reopened in September/October in temporary shelters. Local Government did everything in its power to ensure that children did not miss a year of schooling (temporary shelters, free books, and reduced fees). New permanent schools have already been built with self-help labor.

Was there any social and/or political impact? GOC reports that food aid helped maintain social order. This was an important consideration for GOC. According to the Impact Study, EMOP also promoted democracy and fairness among villagers. In most of the villages, the names of beneficiaries and their allocated food ration, the names of members of the Village Implementation Group (VIG) and their responsibilities, as well as the Village Development Plans were publicly posted on the wall of the Village Committee office. There was a good deal of excitement regarding this level of openness.

Did food aid have any negative impacts on the economy or on markets? Although quantities delivered under EMOP appear large, they were very small in relation to the total rice production and requirements for China as a whole (0.15%). As a result of the floods, rice output dropped from 200.3 million mt in 1997 to 182.7 million mt in 1998 and wheat output declined from 108 million

mt to 92 million mt. In the 4 EMOP provinces, 7.4 million ha of crops were damaged. 122 million people needed food and relief requirements per month were 1.7 million mt. Since the food aid was given only to people who had lost all their crops and phased out as soon as the next harvest, it had minimal effect on local economies and markets. It was not a disincentive for production and did not distort local prices.

Conclusions:

- Although EMOP food assistance probably did not save lives, flood victims still needed food assistance when they returned to rebuild their homes and desilt their farmland. The food provided probably increased food consumption, having a positive impact on health status and productivity.
- The most significant impact of food aid was that it substituted for borrowing food and thus enabled families to recover faster with fewer debts. However, for households having to borrow heavily to replace their houses the impact was relatively slight given the high cost of housing in relation to the value of the food distributed.

7.2 Impact of FFR

Did the use of the FFR mechanism reduce or enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of disaster relief? What would have happened in the absence of the EMOP? Comparison with non-project villages suggests that the same work would have been done anyway but at a slower pace. Work on canals and roads requiring costly materials and equipment would have remained unfinished due to lack of counterpart funds. More family members would have left the village in search of work. Reconstruction was faster in project than non-project villages due to stronger GOC pressure to meet FFR targets and more counterpart funds.

Did rehabilitation of drinking water sources prevent epidemics? Yes, but this is true of non-project as well as project villages. Much of the well rehabilitation work was completed before EMOP.

What impact did FFR have on agricultural recovery? Although FFR accelerated farmland and canal desilting, feedback from non-project villages suggests that farmers would have rehabilitated cropland anyway because their survival depends upon their crops. Except where dyke breaks resulted in severe damage to farmland, crop production has recovered to previous production levels (apart from some areas that also suffered flooding in 1999). Both EMOP and non-EMOP villages have recovered at approximately the same speed.

What contribution did the work completed under the EMOP make to people's recovery? Works completed under EMOP covered only a modest share of the total reconstruction requirements. Although FFR targets were fully met, more work was needed. The pace of recovery depends on the severity of damage and household financial resources. Households who only lost their crops need one good crop year to recover. Households who lost their houses and all their assets are on the road to recovery but will need many years to regain prior living standards. New floods in 1999 were a serious setback.

Did FFR for house construction accelerate resettlement in new villages? Yes, EMOP played a small part in achievement of GOC's long term rural urbanization objectives. This was presumably not anticipated by WFP. Post-flood housing standards are generally better than previous housing, but only for households who can afford to build better housing.

How adequate was Government's counterpart funding for particular activities (e.g. shelter)? EMOP increased the allocation of public funds to project counties for reconstruction efforts. The

amounts allocated were generally adequate for the works targeted, with the exception of housing. The EMOP contribution to housing (RMB 600 per room) only covered a fraction of average reconstruction costs. The only important item not covered was farm inputs.

Was FFR a disincentive for future public works? No, because Chinese villagers have a long tradition of unpaid self-help participation in collective labor and people would have worked on reconstruction whether or not food aid was provided.

Conclusions:

- Reconstruction was faster in project villages due to stronger GOC pressure to meet FFR targets and the additional counterpart funds, but most of the work would nevertheless have accomplished without EMOP.
- Although one might have expected the project to have had an impact on food production, particularly given the emphasis on farmland and canal desilting, farmers would have done the work without food rations because their survival depends upon it, the evidence being that this work was conducted in non-project villages.

Lessons:

- Victims of severe damage to houses and assets need more assistance than those affected by waterlogging. In particular they need credit for house rebuilding and replacement of draught animals.
- It was unrealistic to expect that food aid would enable victims to give first priority to rehabilitating their houses and farmland. Chinese villagers have a long tradition of unpaid collective labor and all able-bodied workers (male and female) are obliged to take part in reconstruction. Chinese villagers are only free to allocate their labor to rehabilitation of personal assets when they have no other obligations.

7.3 Impact on women

How did the emergency situation affect women in particular? Prior to the flood, the gender division of labor was flexible and both men and women worked side by side in the fields. The emergency situation increased women's workload because men were away fighting floods or repairing and reinforcing the dykes and doing collective labor on infrastructure projects, hence the main responsibility for farming and looking after the family shifted onto women. Women lost all their income-producing assets such as pigs, chickens and ducks in the flood. They had to spend more time fetching drinking water because wells were unusable. Women moving to new villages built on hilltops had to walk back to the old village site to draw water because there were no wells. In non-project villages, women's responsibility was even greater because many men went outside the village looking for work. EMOP had a positive impact on women's workload by reducing male outmigration. Rehabilitation of wells saved time for women.

Did WFP's emphasis on women's participation in PMOs and project committees increase women's voice in decision-making? Did it improve the status of women? The project's impact on the over 10,000 women leaders who participated in implementation was highly positive. The women involved are enthusiastic about the experience and say that it enhanced their management skills as well as their personal self-esteem and the villagers' respect for them. It will have a lasting effect on the individuals even though the committees were disbanded after the project. The women involved in EMOP have become role models for other women. The impact on the status of ordinary farm women was more modest.

Did women's contribution to reconstruction improve their status in the community? Participation in FFR had little impact on the status of women, since Chinese women have a long tradition of participating in the same types of work as part of their collective labor obligations. Even when there are no emergencies, all active laborers, male and female have a duty to contribute a fixed number of labor days for projects of public utility at village and township level.

Did the requirement that women should collect 60 percent of the food improve women's control over food utilization? No, it was unnecessary. Project planners should have realized that in Chinese villages it is customary for women to control the family cash as well as the food stocks. Collecting and carrying the bags of rice did not empower women because they already had this power. On the contrary, it may have increased their workload, although many women would have collected the food anyway because their husbands were busy elsewhere. The impact on gender roles in family decision-making was slight (77 percent of the women interviewed by the EMOP Impact Study reported little or no change).

Did EMOP increase women's income generating opportunities? Only in a few isolated cases. Before the flood, women's main income-generating activities were pig fattening and poultry. All of the domestic animals were swept away by the flood. In some villages, local government gave women loans to restart their pig and poultry raising. In one township, women were employed to make bamboo seat covers for cars. On the whole, the assumption that food aid would empower women to undertake income-generation activities was unrealistic because women were too busy with clearing the debris from their ruined houses, helping men construct temporary shelters, desilting wells and farmland and replanting their fields. They have no spare time for new income-generating activities.

Lesson: WFP's strong emphasis on rural women paid off, but it is unrealistic to expect that a 4-month project can make a major impact on the gender balance of power at household level.

7.4 Impact on disaster-preparedness/response capacity

In response to the 1998 floods, GOC significantly improved its disaster-preparedness and response capacity, through dyke reinforcement, relocation of entire villages away from flood-prone areas, reforestation of watersheds and returning of reclaimed lakes to fish farming. Early warning systems and evacuation procedures are being reviewed and modified to reflect what happened in 1998. As a result, GOC found it easier to cope with the 1999 floods.

Farmers themselves are now more prepared. A number of farmers interviewed by the mission stated that they did not evacuate in time last year because they did not believe the dyke would break. This year, people did evacuate much earlier, enabling them to save some of their assets. Some farmers have turned to activities that are less susceptible to the impact of floods. Many people relocated to higher terrain, even in some cases families whose house was not totally destroyed. For those who have rebuilt on their original plots the new house construction techniques should result in less damage during the floods. Many people are now opting for building a second floor, which in most cases would not have been reached by the water.

The EMOP enabled the Ministry of Agriculture, traditionally not entrusted with emergency assistance, to develop a response capacity that can be tapped into for future emergency situations. MOA through the EMOP was able to demonstrate that it can play a role in future emergency operations. In some provinces, the provincial MOA departments experimented with the introduction of new crop varieties. For instance, in Jiangxi, a pilot involved the planting of buckwheat - which can be harvested by the winter and can thus help to address food insecurity

following the floods. It remains to be seen, however, whether there will be greater MOA involvement in future disasters based on this experience. Relief assistance for this year's flood was again mostly managed by Civil Affairs.

WFP China has improved its preparedness and response capacity. This was the first emergency operation in many years and most staff was not familiar with emergency operations. The staff coped well and managed to quickly prepare the emergency program. They provide effective backstopping and monitoring in the early days of the EMOP. VAM was used to target beneficiaries at the county level. In future WFP should have access to data at the township level, which will improve targeting. With a well-functioning and staffed VAM unit, the office is well prepared to undertake beneficiary targeting for future emergencies. It may be useful for WFP's development program to have a closer look at natural disasters that tend to affect the project areas and build into these programs disaster prevention activities. WFP is said to be building disaster preparedness into its new project in Jiangxi and Hubei.

Conclusions:

- The magnitude of the 1998 flood disaster stimulated greater community and GOC awareness. Hence GOC was better prepared for the 1999 floods and people more willing to accept new, less flood prone, settlements within villages. Although EMOP made a modest contribution, increased disaster preparedness is attributable to the floods themselves, not specifically to EMOP.
- WFP Beijing is much better prepared to cope with future emergencies as a result of their experience with EMOP.
- EMOP set a model for WFP disaster response in China and gave GOC a better understanding of what the international community can and can't do - but standing arrangements should be institutionalized (such as those for commodity borrowing).

Recommendations:

- Potential partner organizations at provincial/county level such as the All China Women's Federation could already be identified and involved in contingency planning and training.
- Disaster preparedness could also be integrated into future project designs (as WFP is attempting to do in its new development project in Hubei and Shaanxi).

7.5 Value-added of EMOP

If donors had channeled food aid directly to GOC, rather than through WFP, it would probably have gone to the Department of Emergency and Social Relief of the Ministry of Civil Affairs – not to MOA. Thus the scope for harnessing it for rehabilitation would have been reduced. In the absence of a rice-borrowing mechanism, food aid would have needed 3-4 months to reach the flood victims while waiting for ships to arrive in port, hence it would have arrived in February/March when flood victims were no longer displaced and rehabilitation was nearly completed. GOC counterpart funding for rehabilitation would probably have been spread more thinly. Donor grain would probably have been released to beneficiaries on credit (against the promise to repay at the first harvest). Donors would not have had the opportunity of monitoring where their grain went and how it was used and villagers would have had no way to ensure that the distribution was fair. Nevertheless, channeling the food aid through Civil Affairs might have had the advantage of avoiding stressful breaks in distribution for beneficiaries and reducing the need for counties to borrow from grain stations.

In comparison with the alternative of channeling food aid through Civil Affairs, EMOP had the following value-added:

- It reduced debt of beneficiary households by about RMB 850 (US\$ 103);
- It speeded up livelihood recovery through rehabilitation of household and village assets;
- It attracted nearly US\$ 12 million in counterpart funds to project counties;
- Through information-sharing with villagers, it increased transparency in project implementation and empowered beneficiaries to monitor food distribution;
- It co-opted 10,000 women onto Village Committees and empowered 20,000 women to take part in beneficiary registration and food distribution committees;
- It built up and strengthened local capacity in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of large-scale emergency operations;
- VAM improved targeting;
- The WFP monitoring system reassured donors that the food they donated was properly monitored and reached the intended beneficiaries;
- It ensured timely and effective reporting on EMOP progress, much appreciated by the donor community;
- The project gave WFP high visibility as an emergency organization and further enhanced WFP's image in China;
- It gave WFP valuable experience for future emergencies and lessons applicable in China and elsewhere, especially about the appropriateness of combining relief with FFR.

8. Reflection on Project Design Issues raised by EMOP 6045

8.1 Project Timing

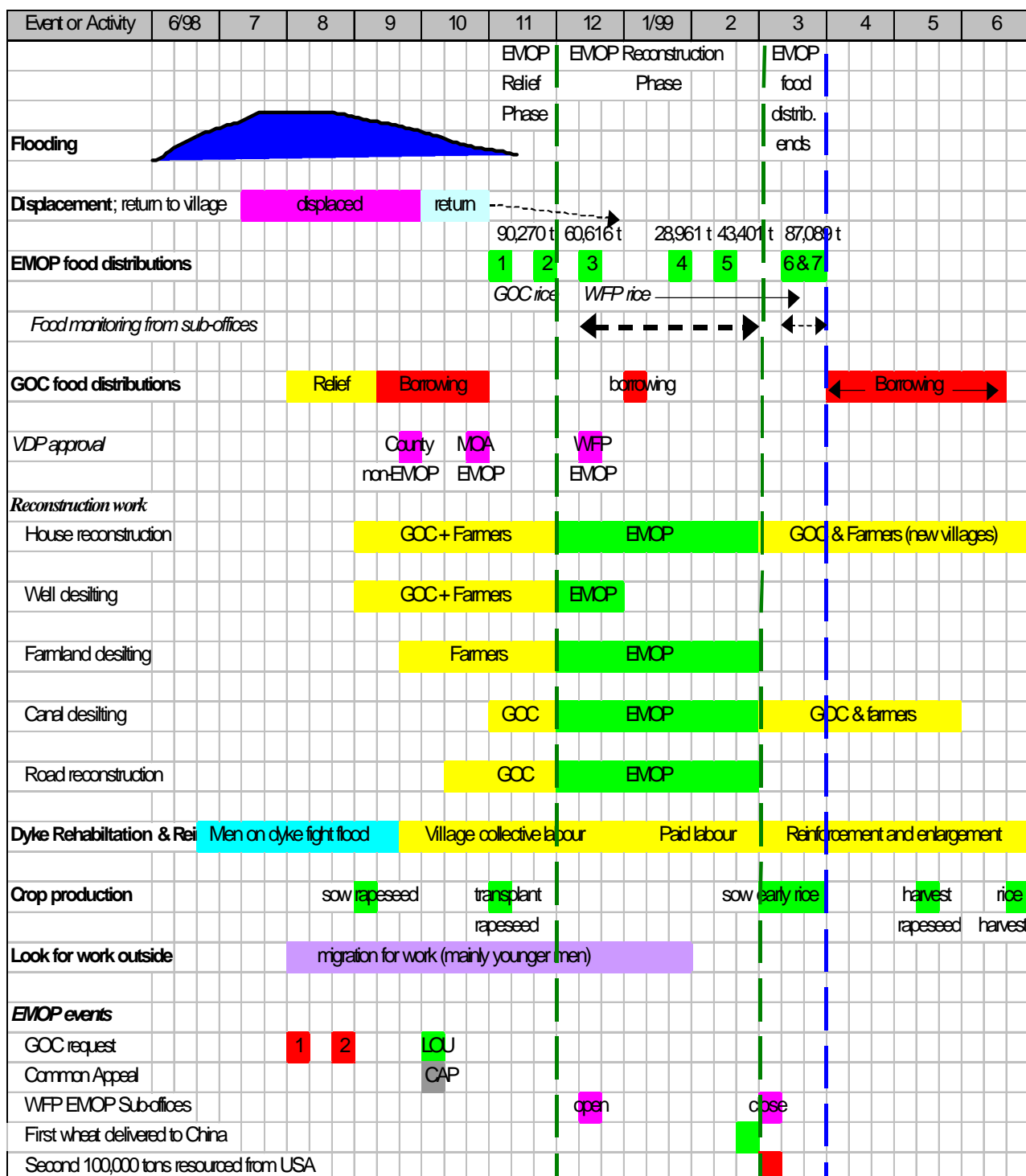
The calendar on the following page illustrates the actual timing of the different project activities in relation to project designers' expectations. It clearly shows that important aspects of timing were off:

- The optimal timing of the relief phase was missed due to a 1-month delay between the signing the LoU and the first GOC food distribution. GOC was ready to distribute but WFP did not authorize the distribution. As a result, the distinction between the one month of relief grain and the three months of FFR made little sense because flood victims had already returned to their villages and were engaged (de facto) in rehabilitation work.
- Although the duration of FFR was adequate for recovery of assets in moderately affected areas, in severely affected areas three months of FFR were insufficient to allow households to rehabilitate their house, wells, farmland, canals and roads.
- Food distribution stopped too early. At the end of the project, beneficiaries needed to borrow rice for an additional 2½ months.
- Project staff were fielded too late to influence the participatory planning process; although some staff from WFP Beijing assisted villagers to prepare Village Development Plans in

early November, most VDPs were finalized by local government before field staff was in place to assist in the process.

- The timing of the opening and closing of the EMOP sub-offices was not fully synchronized with food distributions. The first food distribution (100,000 tons) took place before the EMOP sub-offices opened and the last distribution (100,000 tons) was made after the sub-offices closed.
- FFR was only partly monitored because the food monitors were not in place to monitor it before 12 December 1998.
- The first wheat shipment from USA arrived during the last week of project implementation and the final shipment had still not arrived 7 months after project closing.

EMOP Events and Activities⁴



⁴ This chart was elaborated by project stakeholders in every village and county visited by the evaluation. The above represents a synthesis chart presenting overall findings.

The purpose of highlighting the lack of synchronization between the situation on the ground and WFP field operations is not to criticize Government or WFP but to highlight that even under optimal conditions (and WFP response was exceptionally fast), it was still not possible to deliver WFP rations to victims before they returned to their villages or to set up the sub-offices in time to influence the village rehabilitation plans. This may call for greater realism about what is possible. One lesson from EMOP 6045 is that if food distributions are to be monitored and participatory planning is to take place before project staff can be fielded, alternative arrangements should be made for this input through the WFP Country Office.

8.2 Project Objectives and Packaging

At the time of the GOC request, there was a real emergency situation with need for relief. It was appropriate to package the project as an EMOP because its main thrust was to meet acute, short-term food needs of flood victims and to help them recover their livelihoods. Its packaging as an EMOP facilitated rapid processing and increased its appeal to potential food donors. The PRRO process would have been far too slow and probably no more appropriate given that the floods were not a 'protracted' emergency.

However, there was also the implicit understanding that the relief phase would soon turn into a rehabilitation phase. The project document gave primacy to a relief objective but it is clear from internal correspondence that WFP anticipated that the GOC would meet the emergency needs and that WFP assistance would mainly focus on the recovery phase. Rehabilitation was given as a secondary objective in the project document but it is apparent that during implementation it became the principal objective.

8.3 Linkage between Relief, Rehabilitation and Development

Although theoretically it may seem attractive to link disaster relief, rehabilitation and development, in practice it is important to recognize that each phase in the process presupposes a different set of target beneficiaries and a different way of utilizing food. EMOP experienced difficulties when it attempted to combine relief and FFR in a single project. The EMOP experience has helped WFP and GOC to clarify some of the practical implications of supporting FFR-type activities in the recovery process.

Table 13 - Food Aid in Context

Relief	Recovery	Development
Immediate food security	Medium-term food security	Longer-term food security
Target beneficiaries are displaced or disaster-affected people (men, women, children, aged, disabled)	Target beneficiaries are disaster-affected men and women and their dependents	Target beneficiaries are able-bodied workers from poor or disadvantaged groups
Focused on acute food needs and generally organized as a blanket distribution to displaced or disaster-affected people, often without specifically targeting the poor or the most vulnerable	Still linked to short-term food needs but focus shifts to supporting livelihood recovery. May have poverty as additional criterion (ability to recover). May include complementary inputs like seeds and tools.	Focus shifts further to rehabilitating or establishing assets that will help the poor to improve their food security. However, must be justified by need for additional food for adequate health and productivity.
FFW not appropriate – need to conserve energy, may need to provide supplementary food to particular groups, conflicts with entitlement to emergency assistance	FFW problematic in that there may still be a need for a general ration. Project can't impose work norms. Can't presume surplus labor during recovery phase but people's efforts to recover can be supported as ' food for recovery '.	Presupposes existence of underemployed labor among the target population. Normal FFW arrangements are appropriate (food in return for work outputs).
Individual rations for all affected people, based on energy requirements.	Food aid should still be based on individual rations for energy requirements. Disaster-affected households with no active labor should continue to be included. Food should not be conditional on work outputs.	Rations based on incentives, not dire need. Food payment set just below market wage rates to attract the poor and discourage the non-poor from participating.

EMOP 6045 fell mainly into the second category – recovery – although it was intended to start with one month of relief. The concept of combining relief and recovery was sound. It was appropriate to try to meet acute food needs while flood victims were displaced on dykes and higher ground and then to support them in their immediate efforts to recover their livelihoods.

Lesson: The EMOP experience proves that it is feasible and desirable to combine relief and recovery in a flood context, because recovery can start as soon as floodwaters recede. The turn-around time from the relief to the recovery phase is short enough that immediate recovery can be supported by an EMOP. However, WFP would have to start an EMOP more quickly than it did in China in 1998 to meet immediate relief needs.

8.4 Food-for-Recovery (FFR) Concept

The arrangements put in place under EMOP were unlike the FFW arrangements for WFP development projects or in GOC projects and this led to considerable confusion. There was little or no connection between the food distributed and the work done. Because it was essentially a relief distribution and nobody could be excluded, work norms could not be applied. All flood victims included on the beneficiary lists were entitled to a ration independently of whether they were able to work and whether they actually worked. Field staff and GOC counterparts initially found it difficult to marry the apparently conflicting requirements and to set FFR targets in the context of a blanket distribution.

The initial confusion over WFP's intentions could have been avoided by describing the different conception of FFW as 'Food for Recovery'. At the same time, WFP Beijing could have made the point to Rome and to the donors that the EMOP sought to both provide relief and to 'enable recovery'.

It would still be possible to set overall work targets and monitor achievements within the context of a recovery-oriented project. However this should not be merely an accounting exercise (in which FFR outputs for a certain time period are ascribed to a donor project, as occurred in China where the recovery work supported by WFP was only a part of a larger effort undertaken by the community and supported by different levels of government). Emphasis should be on adding value to the recovery process.

Lesson: FFW requirements and modalities in the recovery phase differ from those of ordinary development projects. Unnecessary confusion could be avoided by describing the former as '**food for recovery**' (FFR) to set it apart from normal FFW arrangements.

8.5 Need for Relief

Food aid was justified by the magnitude of the calamity and by the victims' lack of purchasing power although there was no overall grain deficit. In severely affected areas, victims lost everything: house, crops, livestock, property and savings. They had no stored food and no money with which to buy it. The Grain Bureau had sufficient reserves, but households could only access grain for cash or on credit. They were falling deeply in debt to buy food.

By national standards, the victims were not the poorest. Average net income per capita in project counties prior to the flood was well above the national poverty line of RMB 850 (US\$ 103) per annum, ranging from a low of RMB 1,170 (US\$ 142) per annum to a high of RMB 2226 (US\$ 270). However, in the severely affected areas, victims had used all their savings to rebuild their houses after the 1996 flood.

The main coping mechanisms were for local government to organize food borrowing from the township Grain Station on behalf of farmers or to look for work outside. In previous floods, migration of household members to cities was more important. In the current flood, GOC's policy was to keep them fully occupied at home with reconstruction work, although in some areas village committees clearly took the view that it was better to allow young men to go out to work and remit much needed cash to their families.

Why didn't GOC provide free rice instead of rice on credit? GOC could not simply decree that the Grain Bureau release stocks to flood victims because the Grain Bureau now operates as an autonomous commercial venture at the provincial, county and township levels. GOC would not do anything to undermine their commercial and financial viability.

Did the GOC have the resources to provide for the flood victims? Rice surpluses were available for purchase from the Grain Bureau, but the hard-hit counties and townships were strapped for cash. Although the provinces and/or the central government arguably had the financial resources to purchase the grain on behalf of the counties for distribution to flood victims, this was in contrast with the central government's policies of decentralization and regional self-reliance. Because of the vast scale of the emergency, GOC seems to have adopted a policy of only providing free rice during the relief phase (while flood victims were displaced from their villages). With over 180 million flood victims to provide for, in 1998, GOC spent the equivalent of 30-35 percent of its annual fiscal revenue on emergency flood relief. China invested US\$ 3.3 billion of its own resources in flood relief, compared with only US\$ 1 billion invested by external donors (including the UN system, World Bank and ADB).

Conclusion: The GOC presumably had the resources to provide for the flood victims but was only prepared to provide free rice while the victims were displaced. If WFP and its donors had not provided food aid the flood victims would have had to borrow rice from the grain stores, deepening their indebtedness.

Lesson: Emergency food aid can be justified even in countries with a food surplus. WFP needs to carefully evaluate when and how to intervene in such cases.