



World Food Programme

A Report from the Office of Evaluation



*Full Report of the Mid-Term Evaluation
of the LESOTHO Country Programme
(2000 – 2002)*

(11 – 27 October 2001)

Rome, September 2002

Ref. OEDE/2002/11



Acknowledgement

The evaluation team visited Lesotho from 11 to 27 October 2001. This document was prepared by the mission team leader on the basis of the mission's work in the field.

On behalf of the team, the author wishes to extend thanks to all those who facilitated the team's work in the field and in Headquarters.

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

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Acronyms

CBO	Community-based organization
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
CFA	Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes
CP	Country Programme
CPC	Country Programme Committee
CSN	Country Strategy Note
CSO	Country Strategy Outline
DMA	Disaster Management Authority
DMP	Disaster Management Plan
DSC	Direct support costs
ECCD	Early childhood care and development
EDP	Extended distribution point
EMOP	Emergency operation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFA	Food for Assets
FFT	Food for Training
FFW	Food for Work
FMU	Food Management Unit
FNCO	Food and Nutrition Coordination Office
FPE	Free primary education
GDP	Gross domestic product
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITSH	Internal transport, storage and handling
JPO	Junior Professional Officer
LANFE	Lesotho Association of Non-Formal Education
LAPCA	Lesotho AIDS Prevention Coordinating Authority
LDC	Least-developed country
LDTC	Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre
LENA	Lesotho Network on AIDS
LIFDC	Low-income, food-deficit country
LOU	Letter of Understanding
LPA	Learning Post Administrator
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NFE	Non-formal education
NFI	Non-food item
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NSS	Nutritional Surveillance System
OEDE	Office of Evaluation



PIR	Project Implementation Report
PRRO	Protracted relief and recovery operation
PS	Principal Secretary
PSC	Project Steering Committee
REWU	Regional Early Warning Unit
SADC	South African Development Community
SAP	system administration procedures
SSRFU	School Self-Reliance and Feeding Unit
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAG	Vulnerability Analysis Group
VAM	vulnerability analysis and mapping
WFP	World Food Programme



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¹ This checklist is derived from the completed checklist presented in the document: WFP. 1999. Time for change: food aid and development - Enabling Development in practice. Rome, May 1999.



Executive Summary

The goal of this evaluation is to assess whether the Country Programme Approach has been an effective tool for preparing and implementing WFP assistance to national development and relief programmes. The Country Programme (CP) Document shows a genuine effort to define an initial CP for Lesotho. The shift to a programme approach in 1999 constituted a significant attempt to refocus WFP assistance to the country: food for work in civil works was ended and a number of new activities identified, all focusing on education and education-related fields. A higher-level CP objective was similarly defined, and the strategic focus became the enabling of poor households to invest in human capital through education and training. Four basic CP activities (CPAs) were identified:

- CPA1: Food assistance to primary schools;
- CPA2: Early childhood development centres;
- CPA3: Food for capacity building;
- CPA4: Support to disaster preparedness and mitigation.

The CP was developed during a period of severe budget restrictions and the phasing out of (part of) existing projects. In fact, the main activity (CPA1) was the continuation of a pre-existing school feeding activity and absorbs 82 percent of approved resources.

The three new activities were defined in response to the guidelines on country programming in order to give the CP the appearance of a real programme. However, for a small country such as Lesotho it would probably have been better to base the CP on one main activity that had already been assessed as successful and that was likely to have the most impact.

When the CP was approved, the newly proposed activities had not been properly appraised as prescribed by the guidelines. Later attempts to do so faced several conceptual problems. No reformulation was undertaken, and the activities were simply kept on hold.

When the evaluation took place, the only activity under implementation was the school feeding project, which turned out to be an extension of the prior project LES 3853/1. The CP activity was on hold awaiting a comprehensive evaluation of the education sector, which is currently being carried out. None of the other activities were being implemented. As a consequence, the evaluation had to look at the CP as it was originally designed and conceived and at the causes of the delays in implementation, rather than at the outcomes and results.

During almost the whole period since its approval, the CP has been facing severe problems of understaffing with many vacancies remaining unfilled. The late arrival of non-food items (NFIs) for a closed project has been an additional burden on the already understaffed country office. Moreover, the management that was in place from April 2000 until summer 2001 did not seem fully committed to providing the required support and, as such, did not always have a practical and problem-solving perspective towards getting the Lesotho CP under way.

There are serious weaknesses in the area of finance and administration. These are partly due to a gap in the required skills within the country office. On the other hand, the implementation of activities has suffered either from a loose interpretation and application of the clauses stipulating the Government's and WFP's mutual obligations and commitments, or from an unclear definition of the relationships. Statements of account have not been presented and reconciled on a regular basis, and audits have not taken place.



By adopting the Country Programme Approach, WFP sought to strengthen its programme with regard to the characteristics of integration, coherence, concentration and flexibility. The programme certainly has elements of the desired characteristics, but none of them can be considered fully satisfactory.

Lesotho is a low-income, food-deficit country (LIFDC). Poverty is widespread and deepening under the influence of the deteriorating economic situation, natural disasters and the increasing impact of HIV/AIDS, resulting in increasing vulnerability to food insecurity for significant segments of the rural population.

The CP's strategic focus on human capital development is consistent with the policy as decided in WFP's Enabling Development document. However, there remain a number of significant gaps in its elaboration and implementation.

The programme lacks a sense of ownership, as the Government has not monitored its progress and has made no attempt to get activities started. Proposals for operational contracts have not been finalized. Furthermore, in this respect, WFP has not made a sustained effort to pursue implementation of the CP. The Country Programme Committee (CPC), which was agreed to in the mutual agreement between the Government of Lesotho and WFP, has never met.

Monitoring and evaluation prove problematic. Reporting from the field is not always timely and adequate. Performance indicators are limited and focus mainly on implementation rather than on effects and impact. The higher-level CP objective is not stated in sufficiently clear and measurable terms, and it is not possible to distinguish adequately between the objectives formulated at the level of the four basic activities and the intended outcomes at the overall CP level.

No further poverty targeting, beyond that which was done at the time of the elaboration of the CP, has taken place. The vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) capacity to which the CP refers is not operational.

Newly proposed activities have shown significant deficiencies in design since it cannot be proved that the intended recipients of food aid belong to the very poorest population groups or are effectively suffering from inadequate food consumption.

Relationships with other United Nations agencies are good. WFP participated actively in the preparation of the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which were created after the current WFP Lesotho CP had been approved. In order to harmonize this CP with UNDAF, a new CP will be formulated in 2002.

Collaboration with non-governmental partners was restricted to formal meetings. Closer cooperation for increased effectiveness has not been realized.

Commitments to Women do not appear as a special concern in the Country Strategy Outline (CSO), the CP or the draft operational agreements. Only the draft basic activity summary for CPA4 explicitly refers to women, but it is not clear whether the intended benefits of that activity would have been the outcome of deliberate targeting or the result of women being the majority in the rural areas.

The other activities have concentrated mainly on children. Whereas in most countries gender issues concern mainly women, and thus largely coincide with commitments to women, this is not the case for children in Lesotho. School attendance of girls is higher than that of boys, many of whom drop out for economic and socio-cultural reasons. As a consequence, the gender gap in education primarily concerns boys.



INTRODUCTION

In 1994, the World Food Programme (WFP) introduced a new policy framework called the Country Programme Approach. This replaced the project-by-project approach, which had made it difficult to relate WFP assistance to overall national planning. Under the previous approach, there was little integration of different WFP activities to ensure a coherent Country Programme (CP). The new approach implies some fundamental changes to the way in which WFP plans and programmes, and focuses on a people-centred and food-based strategy in which the country is the basic entity for WFP's engagement. A CP should be a cohesive and focused response to those strategic objectives of a recipient country that coincide with the strategic objectives of WFP and other assistance partners. This new orientation is also in line with the direction of United Nations reform (Common Country Assessment [CCA], United Nations Development Assistance Framework [UNDAF], etc.).

The Lesotho Country Programme is based on a Country Strategy Outline (CSO), approved by WFP's Executive Board at its January 1999 session and a CP Document approved at the Board's October 1999 session. The programme was approved for a period of three years from January 2000 to December 2002. This short duration was chosen because the Government of Lesotho's then current triannual development plan ended in March 1999, and the future orientation of Government development policy was not decided in time to influence the CP.

The programme was approved prior to the formulation of the CCA and UNDAF, and so could not take into account the strategic considerations of the latter. In order to harmonize the CP with UNDAF, which will run from 2002 to 2007, the formulation of a new CP is planned for 2002, to become retroactively operational as of January 2002 for a period of six years.

The CP provides for WFP assistance of US\$6,097,795, including direct operational and support costs, for four basic activities providing 138,600 beneficiaries with 12,700 tons of food. The general objective of the programme focuses on enabling poor households to invest in human capital through education and training.

This evaluation focuses primarily on the development and implementation of the programme as a whole. It considers the programme in the context of the principles of the Country Programme Approach as they were understood and communicated throughout WFP at the time that the current CSO and CP were being developed. It also considers the way in which activities have been integrated into the programme and the extent to which they contribute to the programme objectives, as well as meeting their own. The specific objectives of the evaluation were formulated as:

- to assess the extent to which WFP's current development activities in Lesotho have been influenced by the Country Programme Approach so that they constitute a recognizable CP;
- to assess the extent to which WFP's systems and procedures for programme and project identification, design, budgeting, resourcing and implementation, at both the headquarters and the field levels, have enhanced or impeded the Country Programme Approach;
- to assess the extent to which the Country Programme Approach in Lesotho has been an effective tool for preparing WFP's contribution to development;
- to determine whether ongoing development activities have been designed to make a direct contribution to the objectives of the CP;
- to assess the extent to which individual WFP activities represent recognized good practice in food aid (including the practices and principles recognized in the Enabling Development policy);
- to provide recommendations that can be used in the development of future CSOs and CPs and to provide accountability to the Executive Board.

The present analysis does not constitute an evaluation, in the strict sense, of the individual activities in the CP. In fact, the mission found that the CP has not yet been implemented since none of the planned



activities has been started. The only ongoing activity – the school feeding project – is an extension, in time and in budget, of a previous school feeding project which expired on 31 December 2001. As a consequence, the evaluation is based on intentions rather than outcomes.

1. The National Context of WFP Food Aid

1.1 Economic Performance

Lesotho ranks among the poorest countries in the world, with a real per capita income measured in purchasing power parity of US\$1,854 in 1999. Between 1991 and 1998, real economic growth averaged 6 percent per year, fuelled by construction in connection with the Lesotho Highland Water Project. The political turmoil of 1998 caused a turnaround in the performance of the economy, which declined by 3.6 percent in 1998/99. Economic growth resumed the following year at 2.1 percent, but per capita income fell, as population growth was higher.

The total population is estimated at 2.2 million people, and is growing at a rate of 2.2 percent per year. This percentage is expected to decline in the coming decades as the effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic take their toll. The rural population accounts for 73 percent of the total.

Traditionally, a large part of Lesotho's male labour force was employed in the South Africa mining sector. Economic decline in this sector, and South Africa's preferential employment policy for South African nationals, caused a decrease in the Basotho male labour force employed in South Africa. In 1986, more than 122,000 Basotho migrants (nearly one half of the total male labour force) worked in South African gold mines. That number almost halved to 65,000 in the first half of 1999, and remittances decreased accordingly. Moreover, the labour force is growing rapidly and formal-sector employment is only able to absorb a small percentage of the new entrants. It is estimated that 25,000 youths enter the work force every year, but only 9,000 find employment.

1.2 Agricultural Production

Agricultural productivity is low. While about 50 percent of the labour force works in agriculture, the share of agriculture in gross domestic product (GDP) fell from 50 percent in 1973 to 17.3 percent in 2000. In normal years, Lesotho relies on imports for about 25 percent of its basic food needs. The scarcity of arable land has led to overcultivation and further degradation of the available land. More than 30 percent of the Basotho people are landless, and most of those who do own land have only one field of, on average, 1 hectare.

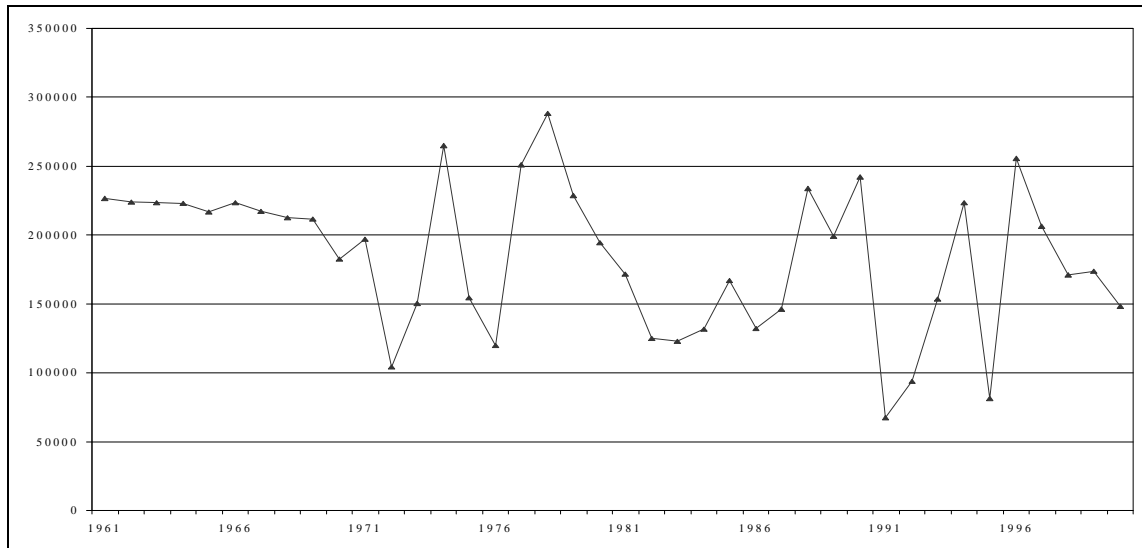
Cereal production has stagnated over the past decades. During the period 1961 to 1970 the average production of all cereals amounted to 216 metric tons.² Over the period 1995 to 2000, this declined to an average 200 million tons. The average yield for maize, the major staple crop, declined from 1.2 tons per hectare in 1975 to 0.6 tons in 1995. Over the same period, the average yield for maize in South Africa remained stable at 2.5 tons per hectare.³ As a result of falling production and growing population, per capita food production has declined over the last 40 years, and continues to do so.

² FAO, FAOSTAT.

³ United Nations. 2000. *Common Country Assessment Lesotho*. Maseru, July 2000, p. 11.



Figure 1.1 Cereal production in Lesotho 1961-2000 (in tons)



Source: FAO, FAOSTAT.

1.3 Poverty

Poverty is widespread in Lesotho. Among the most comprehensive studies on poverty are those conducted by the Maseru-based Sechaba consultants who undertook poverty mapping exercises in 1990, 1993 and 1999. The most recent study was sponsored by the Government of Lesotho, the World Bank, Ireland Aid, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO). Defining the "poor" as those with monthly expenditures of less than 80 Maloti,⁴ it is estimated that some 68 percent of the population fall into this category. According to the 1999 survey, this represents an increase from the 49 percent of 1990, remaining more or less unchanged from the 71 percent found in 1993. Moreover, of the total number of poor, more than 70 percent are defined as "destitute" with monthly expenditures of less than 40 Maloti. This group accounts for 49 percent of the total population.

From the available evidence, it emerges that a large proportion of the Basotho people, perhaps more than half, are trapped in poverty and that the situation does not seem to have improved over the past decade, despite the macroeconomic boom that Lesotho has enjoyed since the late 1980s. Another key conclusion from the Sechaba study is that there are large regional disparities in poverty levels. Poverty is highly concentrated in the predominantly rural and remote mountain and Senqu River areas, where more than 80 percent of the people are characterized as "poor" or "destitute". This compares with nearly 70 percent in the lowland and foothill areas and 54 percent in the urban zones. One of the most striking features of the poverty situation in Lesotho, which is not captured by the average and aggregate poverty levels, is the inequality with which income is distributed. In the 1998 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) National Human Development Report for Lesotho, it was discovered that 45 percent of total national income flows to the richest 10 percent of the population, compared with less than 1 percent going to the poorest 10 percent.

An International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) socio-economic and production systems study, made in 1998 in the rural mountains, shows that only 7 percent of households are self-sufficient in food. Of those interviewed, 80 percent maintain that home production accounts for less than 60 percent of the household's food requirements. The larger proportion of households without cash income acquire cereals through payment for casual work (mainly weeding) or from households that are better off. More than 60 percent of the assistance provided in this way is in the form of food. Households headed by

⁴ 1 Maloti = US\$0.11 at the time of the mission.



women frequently engage in arrangements such as sharecropping with neighbours. About 40 percent of the households are indebted. Households borrow for a variety of reasons, but chiefly to buy food (31 percent) and clothing (16 percent), and to pay school fees (14 percent).

1.4 Health

The country ranks 120th out of 162 countries in the UNDP Human Development Index 2001. Life expectancy at birth is low, averaging 51.2 years in 1996, only a slight increase from the 49.5 years of the early 1970s. Infant mortality is estimated at 93 per thousand live births in 1999 compared with 125 in 1970. However, the HIV/AIDS virus threatens to reverse these trends. According to the United States Bureau of Census, cited in the CCA, life expectancy in Lesotho is set to drop to 45 years by 2010 instead of making the previously expected rise to 66 years. The CCA notes that these estimates were based on an HIV prevalence rate of just 4.4 percent.⁵ The Human Development Index 2001 gives far higher estimates, at nearly 24 percent of people from 15 to 49 years of age.⁶ Preliminary estimates of the World Bank put sero-prevalence still higher at 26.5 percent of the total population and 35.3 percent of the adult population, with 39.4 percent for men and 29.7 percent for women.⁷ This is expected to have a devastating effect on economic performance and to increase drastically the number of orphans in the coming decade.

Chronic malnutrition or stunting is the most prevalent form of malnutrition in the country. According to a national survey (1992), 33 percent of children under 5 years of age suffer from stunting,⁸ and the highest prevalence is in the mountains, where it ranges from 36 percent in Thaba Tseka to 40 percent in Quachas Nek. This is an increase from the 1976 figure of 23 percent. Current conditions have not improved, and the latest Human Development Report records a figure of 44 percent.⁹ This clearly reflects the declining quantity of per capita food production. In the mountains, for all measures of malnutrition, boys under 5 years of age, who often accompany their older brothers as herd boys, fare substantially worse than girls in the same age group.

While stunting is the prevalent form of malnutrition, acute malnutrition or wasting is reported to be increasing; it is assumed that this is an effect of HIV/AIDS and the deteriorating economic situation. This trend is arising while food aid deliveries are diminishing from an annual average of more than 35,000 tons in the early 1990s to less than 6 000 tons in recent years.

1.5 Education

Although Lesotho continues to enjoy some of the highest levels of literacy and primary school enrolment in sub-Saharan Africa, the latest available data suggest that 55 percent of children from 6 to 12 years of age – the official primary school age – attended primary school in 1998, compared with 76 percent in 1990 (Ministry of Education, 1998 and 1999). Generally, primary school enrolment rates are higher for girls than for boys, chiefly because boyhood in Lesotho traditionally involves the herding of livestock. However, the enrolment rate for girls has dropped by nearly one third over the period. In order to reverse these trends, the Government approved the plan for free primary education (FPE), which took effect from January 2000. The plan proposes a gradual increase in access to primary education to be fully implemented by 2006.

⁵ United Nations. 2000. *Common Country Assessment Lesotho*. Maseru, July 2000, p. 36.

⁶ UNDP. 2001. *Human Development Report 2001*, p. 168.

⁷ United Nations. 2000. *Common Country Assessment Lesotho*. Maseru, July 2000, p. 55.

⁸ Stunting is a condition characterized by slowing of skeletal growth that causes reduced stature or length, usually as a result of extended periods of inadequate food intake, especially during the years of greatest growth for children.

⁹ UNDP. 2001. *Human Development Report 2001*, p. 164.



The adult literacy rate is relatively high, at 82.9 percent, but is expected to decline in the coming years as a result of decreasing enrolment. The female literacy rate, estimated at 93.3 percent, is higher than the male rate, estimated at 71.7 percent.

1.6 Position of Women

Despite the fact that women are more educated, bear most of the responsibilities for the household and represent the majority of the domestic labour force, their social status is low. Under customary law, all women are considered perpetual minors whose guardianship is passed from father to husband, or to a male relative. Under general law, single women attain the age of majority at the age of 21. The status of married women varies according to their marital contracts.

1.7 Government Policy

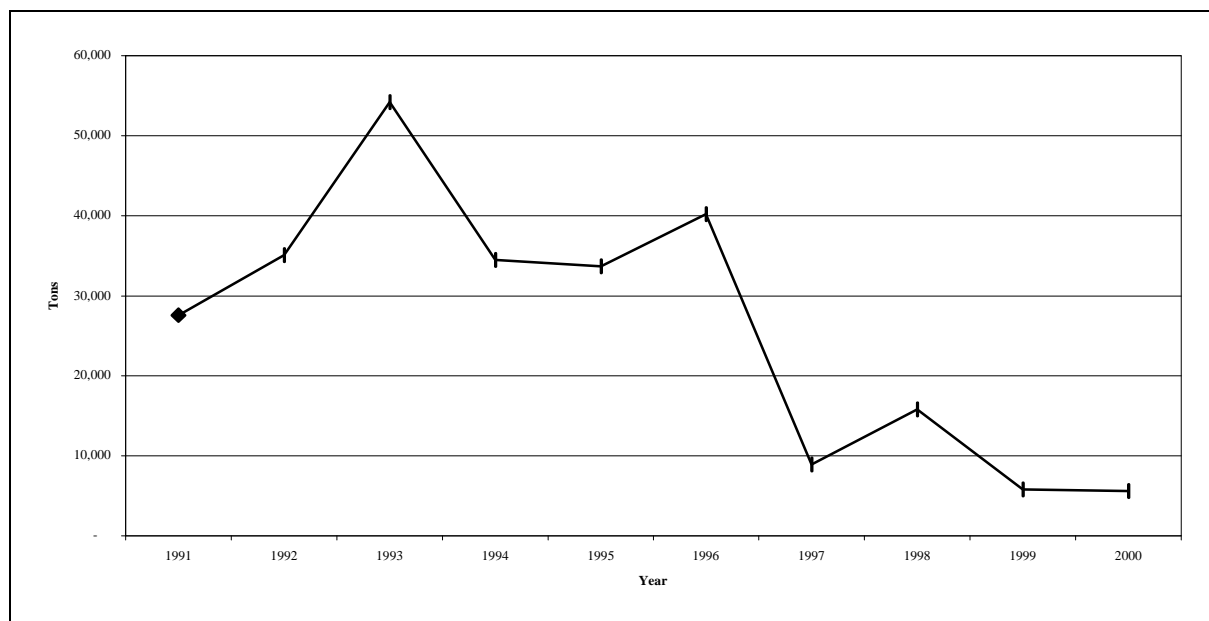
The Government's priority is poverty reduction, with a focus on the mountains and the Senqu Valley, through extending education and training opportunities in order to increase the skills and employability of the Basotho, and by managing poverty related to environmental degradation.

Lesotho is prone to human-induced and natural shocks such as drought, heavy snowfall, hailstorms, tornadoes and localized floods. The Disaster Management Authority (DMA), established in 1993, has developed Disaster Management Plans (DMPs), which are partly integrated with national development plans and are financed by an ad hoc Disaster Management Fund maintained by the Ministry of Finance. DMA coordinates relief assistance and undertakes mitigation and preparedness activities. A multisectoral group, led by DMA, was recently established for vulnerability assessment in Lesotho. Large local milling firms hold a national strategic food reserve, which is currently 7,000 tons of grain.

1.8 Food Aid

The quantities of food aid reaching Lesotho are relatively small compared with the amount that is commercially imported every year. Food aid deliveries have significantly diminished from more than 35 000 tons per year in the early 1990s to less than 6 000 tons in more recent years.

Figure 1.2 Food aid deliveries 1991-2000 (cereals in grain equivalent)



Source: WFP Interfais.



In 1997, food aid represented only 5.2 percent of commercial imports (National Early Warning Unit). The Ministry of Development Planning is initiating a comprehensive national food aid policy to ensure harmonization with national food security and poverty reduction strategies.

2 The Country Programme and Its Activities

2.1 WFP Activities Prior to the Country Programme

WFP began its intervention in Lesotho in 1964. Since then, it has delivered food aid worth US\$222 million to 26 development projects and six emergency operations. Development aid has received by far the largest share, emergency food aid representing only 7.8 percent. Aid has fluctuated greatly over time. In 1987, total shipments to Lesotho reached 270,797 tons, but since 1995 they have decreased significantly to less than 5,000 tons in 1999.

Prior to the formulation of the current CP, WFP activities were centred on the alleviation of poverty and malnutrition, the development of human resources, rural development and assistance to drought victims. The nature of the activities has not changed drastically over time, with support provided mainly to primary education and community road infrastructure.

WFP has supported the education sector since 1965. In 1989, the Government introduced the policy of “education with production”, the aim of which is to strengthen the teaching of practical skills, particularly in agriculture. Part of this policy is the Government’s school self-reliance programme, which should enable schools and communities to provide school meals from their own resources. WFP assisted the implementation of school self-reliance with food and non-food items (NFIs) during a predetermined period; at the end of this period, the participating schools were phased out of the school feeding project. The next phase of the school feeding project, Project Lesotho 3853 (exp. 1) Food Assistance to Primary Schools started in 1995 for a period of five years and was extended twice until December 2001. The project started with some 183,000 pupils in 865 schools, more than 300 of which have since qualified for the school self-reliance programme and been phased out of the school feeding project.

WFP assistance to rural infrastructure started in 1996 under food-for-work schemes to support soil and water conservation activities and to construct and improve rural roads. The latest project was Project Lesotho 352 (exp. 8) Construction, Upgrading and Maintenance of Rural Access Roads, which was approved in 1993 for a period of five years. This project aimed at addressing the basic problems of accessibility to remote rural communities and of unemployment and underemployment in rural areas. Under the project, some 12,000 workers per year were provided with short-term employment and benefited from family food rations and cash. NFIs, including equipment and hand-tools, were also provided, and donors made various hardware and steel construction materials available through WFP. Since WFP now has fewer available resources than it had in the past, the Country Strategy Outline (CSO) has had to refocus its activities in Lesotho and the road construction project was phased out at the end of the planned period.¹⁰

2.2 Objectives of the Country Programme and its Components.

The strategic focus of the CP was formulated as “enabling poor households to invest in human capital through education and training”.

This broad goal was to be attained by increasing learning opportunities for at-risk groups in order to strengthen their capacity to survive a rapidly degrading environment and a changing regional economy. The resulting implementation strategy is composed of four activities:

¹⁰ WFP. 1998. *Country Strategy Outline – Lesotho*. WFP/EB.1/99/5. Rome, p. 13, para. 44.



- *Food assistance to primary schools:* This proposed activity is a continuation of the project implemented in 1995 and extended to the end of 2001. The objective of this component is to improve the quality of education by improving pupils' attention spans, stabilizing school attendance and reducing drop-out rates. This will be achieved by alleviating short-term hunger through the provision of an early morning snack and one meal per day.

The number of schools is set at 562, with the number of beneficiaries increasing from 99,000 pupils during the first year to 114,000 pupils during the third year of the activity. During the first year, assistance is foreseen for an additional 19,000 pupils at 55 schools which are expected to be phased out of the project from the second year onwards. The activity covers the mountain areas of seven (out of ten) districts with a budget of US\$5.0 million.

- *Early childhood development, later renamed early childhood care and development (ECCD):* This activity aims at developing ECCD centres in mountain areas, improving enrolment at the centres and reducing the prevalence of micronutritional deficiencies. To this effect, two fortified meals a day will be provided for 180 days a year to children from 2 to 6 years of age attending the centres. In total, some 13,000 to 15,000 pre-school children in 631 ECCD centres are expected to benefit from the intervention. The project is seen as a pilot covering the mountain areas in four districts with a budget of US\$458,000.
- *Food for capacity building, later renamed assistance to non-formal education for herd boys:* The strategic focus of this activity is support to the Government's policy of providing vocational training in food-insecure mountainous areas. This policy aims to increase the practical skills of poor men and women. The activity was later narrowed to non-formal (basic) education for herd boys as a result of the worsening employment situation of boys and men following the decline in job opportunities in South African mines. Support is intended to be given to Learning Post Administrators (LPAs) and animators in food-insecure mountain areas to allow them to increase the number of non-formal education initiatives. Some 350 volunteer LPAs/animators should directly benefit from food aid distribution, while 3,500 to 6,500 boys and girls in 300 communities are expected to benefit indirectly through increased training possibilities. The budget for this activity amounts to US\$150,000.
- *Support to disaster preparedness and mitigation initiatives:* Originally, the strategic focus of this activity was to support disaster preparedness and mitigation initiatives through education and training. Later, the goal was reformulated as reducing food insecurity by strengthening disaster preparedness and mitigation at the national and local levels. Immediate objectives were to enable poor households in disaster-prone areas to invest in training in community initiatives for disaster preparedness and mitigation, and to enhance the disaster response capacity of DMA at the national and local levels through the greater participation of communities and other relevant stakeholders. Foreseen activities were the development of springs and the construction of ditches to provide water for human consumption and gardens, the strengthening of local capacities to use food aid in response to disasters, and support to the training of district and village disaster management teams. The expected number of beneficiaries was 6,000 over three years. The activity was intended to cover disaster-prone and food-insecure communities in mountain areas in six districts with a budget of US\$278,000.

This activity was profoundly reformulated in October 2001 as *disaster mitigation through food assistance to people affected by crop failure*. The reformulation was a follow-up of an FAO/WFP crop and food supply assessment mission in June 2001. The new activity aims at supporting people and households affected by the 2000/01 crop failure. The number of beneficiaries is estimated at 36,125. A budget of US\$ 874,000 has been proposed, using the prerogatives of the Country Director to shift 10 percent of the value of the food resources from one activity to another within an approved CP.

The CP targets some 138,600 people through the utilization of 12,700 tons of food, representing US\$5.5 million in direct operational costs. Related direct support costs (DSC) are estimated at US\$600,000. The



bulk of this aid goes to the school feeding activity, which receives 10,800 tons of food at a total cost of US\$5 million.

2.3 Future Role of Food Aid in Lesotho

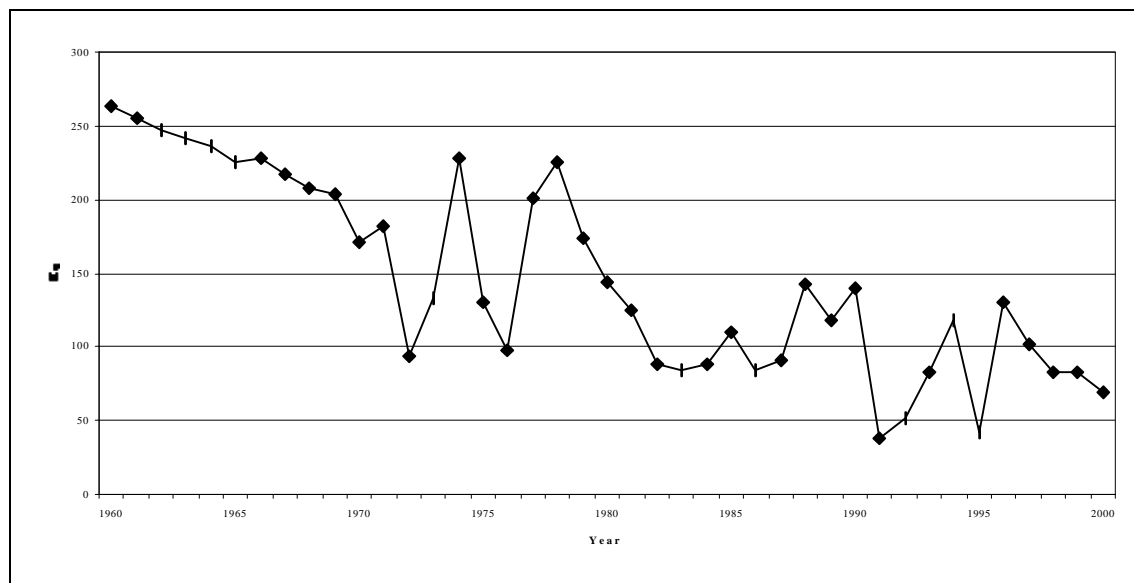
Lesotho is a low-income, food-deficit country (LIFDC), which depends on imports to cover about 75 percent of its basic food needs. After a period of relatively rapid growth in the early 1990s, growth declined in 1998 following a period of heavy political unrest. Recovery has been slow since then.

The scarcity of land has led to overcultivation and degradation of the available land. This, combined with the lack of inputs or the necessary resources to buy them, has resulted in gradual declines of the average yield per hectare and of food production per capita.

Agricultural production is regularly hit by natural disasters such as droughts, early frost and hailstorms. Such was the case in the 2000/01 agricultural season, which resulted in an important number of distressed households not having enough food. An FAO/WFP Crop and Supply Assessment Mission, which visited the country in May 2001, estimated the 2000/01 cereal production to be 55 percent below the previous year's harvest and 60 percent below the average for the last five years. A DMA/WFP survey established that, as a consequence, more than 7,000 households, representing about 35,000 people, were in urgent need of food assistance for six months, until the arrival of the next harvest.

Poverty is widespread, especially in the mountain areas where more than 70 percent of the population is considered to be destitute, with monthly expenditures of less than 40 Maloti (about US\$4.5).

Figure 2.1 Annual cereal production per capita 1960-2000 (kg)



Source: FAO FAOSTAT

Children are especially vulnerable, often going to school without having had breakfast or anything else to eat. While acute malnutrition (wasting) is rather rare, chronic malnutrition (stunting) is frequent and rising. Increasing life expectancy and declining infant mortality are seriously threatened by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Poverty in households will increase as infected income earners are no longer able to work. It is reported that the traditional social system is already no longer able to take care of the growing number of orphans.

Many households lack, chronically or incidentally, the resources to satisfy their basic needs, including food. Given the trends mentioned in the previous paragraph, this situation is not expected to improve



greatly in the near future. Food aid forms a welcome and useful instrument to help these households. School feeding contributes to the creation of a lasting asset in the form of human capital, while the feeding of targeted vulnerable groups and households can help them to preserve or protect necessary productive assets which otherwise might be lost.

3. Assessment of Country Programme Design

3.1 Analytical Basis for the Country Programme

The current CP and its constituent activities are based on the CSO for Lesotho, which was considered by the Board in January 1999. Both the CSO and the CP were prepared by the country office after wide consultations with development partners, including government departments, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and donor representatives in Lesotho.

The CP Document shows a genuine effort to define an initial CP for Lesotho. The shift to a Country Programme Approach in 1999 constituted a significant attempt to refocus WFP assistance to the country: food for work in civil works was ended and a number of new activities were identified, all focusing on education and education-related fields. A higher-level CP objective was similarly defined. The programme, however, remains heavily centred on its constituent activities and lacks the systemic support required to ensure a smooth and successful transition from a project-based approach to a programme approach. Higher- and lower-level objectives are not clearly linked and have been defined without clear performance indicators.

The targeting processes underlying the CP have not been particularly efficient or effective. This is a result of the continued absence of an operational vulnerability assessment mapping (VAM) system. The VAM unit to which the CP Document refers does not exist anymore. A coordinating platform, the Vulnerability Assessment Group, which is also mentioned in the CP Document, has not met since the adoption of the CP.

While the principles and guidelines for country programming prescribe “a programme of preappraised country activities, described in sufficient detail to indicate the basic soundness of these activities and their consistency with WFP’s country strategy and mandate”,¹¹ three out of the four activities hardly exceed the level of “project idea”. One of them, food for capacity building, has proved especially unclear and internally incoherent in its statement that it “will provide food aid in support of non-formal education for poor women and men, particularly herd boys”. Herd boys are not women, and few activities appear to be planned for the latter. The strategic focus is to support the Government’s policy of providing vocational training; however, the activities for which assistance was to be provided focus on basic non-formal education rather than vocational training.

During subsequent appraisals, it appeared that the objectives and interventions of these three activities were ill-defined and that the planned beneficiaries did not always respond to WFP’s criteria for targeting. There also appeared to be little agreement about the strategic orientation of planned activities and it was not clear that the activities really would enable the poorest households to participate.

The ECCD centres cover only a relatively small percentage – about 17 percent – of the age group. Attendance at these centres is limited to children whose parents can afford to pay fees and provide lunch boxes. Parents who are able to fulfil these requirements are not likely to come from the poorest households or to live in a situation of food shortage. Furthermore, the provision of meals to small children for only 180 days a year, as intended, might not be very effective in improving their nutritional status.

¹¹ WFP. 1994. *The World Food Programme and the Programme Approach: Principles and guidelines for country programming*. Rome, article 35b.



The food for capacity building activity planned to provide food rations to the trainers of courses in addition to their meagre remuneration. However, even the small amount that they earn brings these trainers above the level of the very poor. Moreover, no indication was given about this group's shortage of food.

In fact, the programme, which was never implemented, was centred around one core activity: the continuation of the existing school feeding project. The CP was elaborated in a situation of severe budget restrictions, leaving room for only one substantial project, which alone uses 82 percent of all budget resources; another 3 percent is needed for the phasing out of the road construction project. Funding for new activities is limited. The new activities proposed in the CP all have more or less the character of a pilot, but there is no indication about the possible future of these activities. A pilot supposes the possibility of larger-scale expansion once it has proved to be a success. Without any indication of increased funding in the future, the value of these pilots is difficult to establish.

It is questionable whether it makes sense to formulate a full CP with several activities while budget and human resource conditions permit that only one activity can be carried out effectively.

Recommendation

- WFP might consider the possibility of limiting the activities of a CP to only one or two projects in the case of small CPs with limited resources.

3.2 Strategic Orientation of the Country Programme

By adopting the Country Programme Approach, WFP sought to strengthen its programmes with regard to four characteristics:

- *integration* of its development activities with the priorities and other activities of the country concerned, as well as with those of the United Nations system and other donors;
- *coherence*, so that the elements of the WPF sub-programmes in each country relate closely to one another in order to achieve a clear purpose and to avoid situations in which design elements of one activity/project work counter to achieving the objectives of another activity/project;
- *concentration*: improved focusing on those geographical areas and households that represent WFP's target groups;
- *flexibility*: allowing for activities to be adjusted within the programme period in line with changing circumstances.

The Lesotho CP certainly has elements of these desired characteristics, but does not fully satisfy any of them:

- **Integration**: The CP fits in well with the priorities of the country itself, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and donor activities. However, in the view of the mission, there is scope for further collaboration with the United Nations system in relation to key CP objectives, for example, herd boys, vulnerable groups and relief-development linkages.
- **Coherence**: Given that 82 percent of the proposed CP's total costs are represented by school feeding, and 10 percent by two other education-related fields (with a small provision for disaster mitigation), the programme can certainly be characterized as coherent, albeit in a narrow sense. However, the higher-level CP objective is not stated in sufficiently clear and measurable terms to allow success to be recognized; this implies an inability to distinguish adequately between objectives at the activity level and outcomes at the CP level. In addition, the wording of the fourth activity appears coherent, but the disaster mitigation objectives are not fully reflected at the CP level.



- **Concentration:** The activities attempt to target to specified geographical areas and target groups that are widely recognized to be vulnerable. However, limited VAM capabilities have, to some extent, limited the move towards more targeted approaches. Some recent success, however, has been made in undertaking a household-level survey and assessing coping capabilities. This approach should be pursued.
- **Flexibility:** The mission appreciated an element of flexibility within the CP during the visit. The acting Country Director was planning to propose to the Government that he make use of his delegated authority to transfer 10 percent of the value of the food resources from CPAs 1, 2 and 3 to a reformulated CPA4. The mission supports this initiative insofar as the proposed revisions offer a better prospect for achieving the intended disaster mitigation objectives of the activity. What was unclear to the mission, however, was whether the Country Director has the delegated authority to propose to the Government a revision to an approved basic activity within the life of the CP, no matter how well justified that revision may be.

Recommendations

- Pursue activities that establish ways for improving targeting at the household level, as stated in the framework of the 2001 operations for support to distressed households.
- Clarify or establish procedures for revising approved basic activities within the life of a CP, when changing circumstances indicate that it is necessary to do so.

4. Systems and Procedures Supporting the Country Programme

4.1 Support from Cluster and Regional Offices

Management and programming support visits to Maseru from the regional office have tended to be sporadic and are undertaken on an ad hoc basis, not as a matter of routine backstopping. Country offices are generally expected to pay for the technical support visits of regional officers. However, because of the limited DSC, the funds available to the Lesotho country office have not generally been adequate to pay for such visits. Limited travel funds at the regional office have therefore restricted visits.

Periodic visits have nevertheless been undertaken by regional office staff, including the Regional Manager, the Regional Programme Adviser, the Regional Finance Officer and the Regional Personnel Officer. Some training in system administration procedures (SAP) has been provided, as well as on-the-job training. Technical support in the area of VAM has been weak. In 2000, the regional office produced guidelines, and some financial assistance has been provided to pay for Government officials to attend regional VAM meetings and training organized by the South African Development Community (SADC/REWU).

4.2 Human Resources

Limited Capacity within the Country Office

The country office pointed out to the mission that, despite its small size, it is required to follow the same financial, programming, reporting and budgetary procedures as larger WFP country offices, which have far larger staffing complements. For small offices, this can become burdensome, and certainly consumes much of the valuable time and energy that are needed to make a successful shift over to the Country Programme Approach, with its strong emphasis on partnerships and programming skills.

In the mission's view, the time that staff require to follow new policy and programming guidelines, reporting and financial procedures correctly and to respond to ad hoc requests from headquarters has



played a significant role in explaining the poor follow-through of a small country office vis-à-vis the new Country Programme Approach.

At the time of the evaluation mission, there was only one international professional staff member at the country office – the Acting Country Director – and one United Nations volunteer (UNV) assigned to the office. Two posts in the country office, including the Country Director position, two national posts and the junior professional officer (JPO) post remained unfilled. The National Officer post had been left vacant for almost one year, while the Logistics Assistant post had been vacant for more than ten months, resulting in poor follow-up on logistic matters.

There is limited scope to fill the gap with technical consultancies. The budget currently provides only US\$2,000, and there are few local consultancy firms. Technical skills of the type required usually need to be acquired from South Africa or internationally.

Recommendation

- Urgently recruit the necessary staff to fill all vacancies.

Leadership and Management

In the mission's view, the management of the country office after April 2000 was not fully committed to providing the required support and, as such, did not always take a practical and problem-solving perspective towards getting the Lesotho CP under way. When inconsistencies in the design of the planned activities were found, no effective corrective actions were taken and the activities concerned were merely kept on hold. The signing of the operational contract for the school feeding activity was postponed pending a comprehensive evaluation of the education sector and, when it became clear that this evaluation was delayed, the postponement was not reconsidered. The reason for this additional evaluation condition is not clear, and the absence of a signed operational contract risks seriously affecting the school feeding operations as of January 2002.

In April 2000, the country office received six tractors, four trucks and a bus to support the road construction project, which had already been closed. While the mission did not investigate the reasons for such late delivery, it was surprised to find that this equipment was still at the office at the time of the evaluation, by which time it had remained idle for more than a year and a half. It was not until after the recent departure of the former Country Director that an alternative use for the equipment was found with the Government.

Another pending issue was the Government's sale of oil, which was approved by WFP only in a second instance. Contrary to the terms of the agreement, the oil was sold outside the country and the proceedings of this sale had not been received by the WFP country office at the time of the evaluation.

Communication with the Government on difficult issues such as delayed internal transport, storage and handling (ITSH) reconciliations – up to about US\$300,000 – and payments, as well as the problem of surplus oil, has not always been consistent and clear. For example, Government claims for ITSH reimbursement are returned without clear instructions on what action needs to be taken. The mission noted confusion within the Government on how to make claims so that they can be processed without further delay.

Recommendations

- Clarify and establish procedures for claims.
- Carry out all outstanding reconciliations before the end of the year.



Training and Guidelines

All staff have received security awareness training. The Country Director received management training in 2001. SAP training has been provided to the Finance Officer. One staff member has received VAM programming training at the cluster office. No country office staff have received training in enabling development.

VAM guidelines have been provided to the country office, although the capacity to implement these must remain in question.

Recommendation

- Strengthen VAM capacities within the country office.

4.3 Financial and Budgetary Support Issues

The mission recognizes and appreciates the added flexibility that the new CP budgetary processes offer to the Lesotho country office. During the mission's visit, and pending an agreement with the Government on the start-up of two basic activities, plans were already under way for the acting Country Director to make immediate use of his delegated authority in order to shift 10 percent of the value of food commodities from one basic activity to another.

In the mission's view, it was not clear that the country office possessed sufficient budgetary allocations to fund the technical inputs needed to support the CP programming process. Funds were either unavailable or inadequate to support technical visits from the regional office in key areas such as VAM or to support activity appraisals. However, the regional office provided funding support to make up for some of the shortfall.

Serious weaknesses in the area of finance and administration are, however, apparent to the mission. These weaknesses are due in large part to a gap in the required skill sets within the country office. Their negative consequences include:

- failure to follow standard financial procedures, especially those regarding purchasing;
- delayed bank statement reconciliations;
- delayed payments to suppliers;
- delayed ITSH reconciliations;
- failure to claim back government sales tax properly;
- failure to update office inventory system software regularly;
- poor and delayed maintenance of office equipment.

Many of the reporting and accounting obligations of the Food Management Unit (FMU), as agreed in the plan of operations, are not being met, when they are not totally ignored. Monthly and quarterly meetings are held erratically, if at all. Contacts at the highest management level are not planned in an orderly manner. This situation has resulted in many claims issues remaining unresolved for months or years. Neither FMU nor WFP appear to have a clear view of the joint Government of Lesotho/WFP landside transport, storage and handling (LTSH) or proceeds accounts. Statements of accounts are not presented and reconciled on a regular basis, and the debit/credit situation of both accounts is, at best, mere guesswork. Moreover, the two parties seem unable to reach an agreement on the annual audit of these accounts according to the procedures set out in the plan of operations.



FMU's late presentation of quarterly progress reports, and the persistent absence of the full set of supporting documents necessary to ascertain that deliveries have effectively been carried out as planned, stand in the way of prompt settlement of the WFP contribution, although funds are readily available and at the disposal of the Government of Lesotho.

Proper accounting procedures, auditing and reconciliation of accounts, together with the presentation of supporting documents, must be implemented urgently. Failing this, the situation will slip out of control. Close and sustained cooperation between FMU and WFP would certainly help a return to normality. Unresolved claims and issues tend to assume political connotations after protracted periods of time, making decision-making even more difficult to achieve.

The country office has already taken action to hire additional part-time help as a means of addressing the demand.

Recommendations

- Finalize and sign the operational contracts for CPA1 and CPA4 immediately.
- Implement proper procedures for the accounting, auditing and reconciliation of accounts.
- Improve the quality and timeliness of reporting.
- Carry out an audit of accounts and financial reporting.

4.4 Country Programme Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

There is no monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system or strategy for assessing the performance of the CP based on a logical framework analysis or even in relation to the indicators that had been identified for monitoring in the annex of the original CP Document. In addition, the proposed outcome indicators listed in the CP Document annex are not always consistently and logically related to basic activity (or CPA) objectives. For example, the proposed outcome indicator for the stated CPA1 objective of "reducing drop-out rates" is stated as: "80 schools to be phased out in self-reliance activities for sustainable development". More important, no higher-level performance indicators are proposed at the level of the CP as a whole. Such indicators are essential if any performance-based M&E system is to be put in place.

Nevertheless, there has been continual project-level monitoring. Throughout the period of the approved CP (January 2000 to the present), the country office has organized periodic field visits, usually in relation to the school feeding project (3853/1), which has been operating on two budget extensions pending conclusion with the Government of an agreement to start up the new CP school feeding activity.

Field monitoring visits became more regular in 2001 than they had been in 2000. The evaluation mission counted only five reports on file for 2000 and was advised that this was the result of budgetary constraints.

Recommendation

- Improve the logical framework by defining objectives and performance indicators clearly and in a consistent way.



4.5 VAM Efforts in Lesotho (1997-2001)

VAM and the Country Programme Formulation Process

The country office has not been able to develop a strong VAM capacity to support the CP development and implementation process in Lesotho. This constitutes an important weakness given the heavy emphasis on targeted approaches within both the Enabling Development Policy and the 2000 Disaster Mitigation Strategy paper.¹²

Since the departure of the JPO, and given the shortage of programme staff, there is currently a lack of any dedicated VAM capacity within the country office, let alone a VAM officer. However, both the July 2000 CCA for Lesotho¹³ and the 1999 WFP Lesotho CP Document¹⁴ imply that such capacity exists. With its current staff, it is not clear that the country office can play a leadership role for the development of a VAM system in Lesotho along the lines set out in the June 2000 VAM guidelines issued by the regional office. The new UNDAF document also identifies vulnerability analysis as a key area of United Nations coordination under one of its strategic objectives.

The Maputo regional office has given some support to vulnerability analysis-related activities, mostly related to the training of government counterparts and, in June 2000, the production of VAM guidelines (WFP Maputo 1999 Workshop; 2000 Lake Kariba workshop for senior officers and a recent workshop in Malawi).

In June 2001, the country office submitted a request to the regional office for budgetary support of US\$26,000 related to VAM inputs for the CSO and CP preparation process. No budgetary funds had been allocated at the time of the evaluation mission, and there are no funds available for the cluster VAM officer's travel to Lesotho.

As stated in the CP Document, a multisectoral Vulnerability Analysis Group (VAG), chaired by DMA, was established in 1999; however, there has not been sufficient momentum to keep the process going. Currently, efforts are being made to promote training as a means of developing more capacity.

Recommendations

- Strengthen VAM capacities within the country office by filling existing vacancies.
- In collaboration with other United Nations agencies, revive the VAG and formulate a plan to reinforce VAM capacities within the country.

Key Environmental Constraints Related to the Future Development of VAM for the Country Programme in Lesotho

Data collection systems at the household level are very weak or non-existent. Delays in the entry, processing and analysis of data for periodic national-level household food security and nutrition surveys limit the relevance of the results for food aid decision-making purposes.

Key technical ministries, such as those of agriculture and health, regularly collect health, nutrition and agricultural data or, at least, are supposed to do so. The quality and reliability of the data are poor and their coverage is often limited. There is a lack of fully functioning information systems that are capable of producing time series and data sets relevant for vulnerability assessments.

¹² WFP. 2000. *Disaster mitigation: a strategic approach*. Rome.

¹³ United Nations. 2000. *Common Country Assessment Lesotho*. Maseru, July 2000, p.33.

¹⁴ WFP. 1999. *Country Programme – Lesotho 2000-2002*. Rome, p.17, para. 91.



The existing Early Warning Unit within DMA has only limited capacity. The national policy framework for disaster management and response is highly fragmented and suffers from a lack of leadership.

Programming Opportunities

A recent baseline and nutrition survey undertaken by the Food and Nutrition Coordination Office (FNCO) within the Ministry of Development Planning confirms that, with increased poverty and the AIDS crisis, food access issues are becoming more acute. Whereas stunting – chronic malnutrition – still remains the main problem, wasting (acute malnutrition) is becoming more prevalent. According to the Director of FNCO this is owing to the deteriorating economic situation, while the prevalence of HIV/AIDS is expected to play a role as well.

WHO, FAO and UNICEF are providing support to strengthen the Nutritional Surveillance System (NSS). There may be opportunities to use data collected through this system to target vulnerable households for supplementary rations.

A very successful rapid household-level food security survey was jointly undertaken with DMA in July/August 2001, and demonstrated the viability of more targeted approaches to food aid. The results will be used as the basis for targeting food aid to distressed households under CPA4 as being restructured at the time of the mission.

Recommendation

- Use the experience gained in applying the approach for targeting distressed households under CPA4 in order to improve the early warning system.

4.6 Gender

Neither the CSO nor the CP explicitly refers to the Commitments to Women. Commitments to women is one of the aims of the intended disaster preparedness and mitigation activity,¹⁵ but it is not clear whether the strong role of women in this activity would have been merely a collateral effect of women being in the majority in the countryside or the outcome of deliberate targeting.

The other activities concentrate on children. Whereas in most countries gender issues mainly concern women, and thus largely coincide with commitments to women, this is not the case for children in Lesotho. The school attendance of girls is higher than that of boys, many of whom drop out for economic and socio-cultural reasons. As a consequence, the gender gap in education primarily concerns boys, who form a particularly vulnerable group. A special focus on this group would be in line with the Lesotho UNDAF.

5. Factors in the Effectiveness of the Country Programme

5.1 Relations with the Government

The preparation of the CP was based on the principles and guidelines for country programmes approved by the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes (CFA) in December 1994. The programme was designed prior to the approval of the Enabling Development policy.

¹⁵ WFP Lesotho. 1999. *Disaster Mitigation and Preparedness Activity Document. Draft*. Maseru, December 1999, p. 17.



The Government of Lesotho has been involved in the preparation of the CP through its participation in the CPC before the programme was submitted to the Board. Ownership, however, appears to have been limited, and new ideas for activities were introduced by WFP staff rather than by the Government. In fact, the CP confirmed the change in WFP assistance to the country, which had been greatly reduced by the closure of the food-for-work project and the phasing out of a large number of schools from the food assistance to primary schools activity.

The CP defines four basic activities: the first, food assistance to primary schools, is an extension of a long-term ongoing activity; while the other activities hardly exceed the level of project idea. Elaboration and implementation of these activities presupposes a sustained and proactive interplay among all the parties concerned: the Government, international organizations, NGOs and WFP, e.g. the Ministry of Education, the School Self-Reliance and Feeding Unit (SSRFU), ECCD, Lesotho Distance Teaching Centre (LDTC), DMA, the Ministry of Agriculture, the United States Peace Corps, Lesotho Association of Non-Formal Education (LANFE) and many others. However, while WFP's input has been calculated with considerable accuracy, the potential contributions of the other intervening parties are, at times, overlooked or overestimated. Their roles and responsibilities are not clearly established and defined in advance. The failure to implement CPAs 2, 3 and 4 is, at least in part, the result of these parties' lack of commitment, and perhaps also their lack of a sense of ownership.

The CP provides for a CPC which is to assume the role and responsibility of the local programme review committee. Among the CPC's tasks are the review and, eventually, endorsement of the appraisal findings and activity summaries for approval and signature by the WFP representative. The annual CPC report is mentioned as the main monitoring report.

The establishment of the CPC is confirmed in the Country Programme Agreement between the Government of Lesotho and WFP. Co-chaired by the Directorate of Sectoral Planning of the Ministry of Development Planning and WFP, it should be responsible for general policy issues, programme direction (including inter-ministerial cooperation and coordination) and guidance and monitoring of the basic activities. However, the CPC has not met since the approval of the Lesotho CP.

While the CPC has not functioned as planned, meetings have been held on an ad hoc basis between WFP and the implementing ministries and agencies. However, ambiguity has remained regarding who is to assume the lead on the Government of Lesotho side. Both the CSO and the CP mention the Ministry of Development Planning as the coordinating agency, but this in turn has designated the Ministry of Education as the main implementing partner of WFP projects. Neither of these two ministries had really taken the lead, and it was only when the evaluation was being carried out that the Ministry of Development Planning confirmed that it would have the lead, as requested by the country office.

Where leadership and coordination are lacking, the implementation of projects may suffer from a very loose interpretation and application of the clauses stipulating obligations and commitments. An agreement is usually entered into and signed by two parties (WFP and the Ministry of Development Planning) acting on behalf of a multitude of intervening parties (the Ministry of Education, FMU, LDTC, LANFE, DMA, etc) that do not always feel bound by the agreement. Project 3853 provides for a Project Steering Committee (PSC) composed of no fewer than seven members and chaired by the Principal Secretary (PS) of two different ministries, responsible for policy decisions, review and comment on project implementation. A Project Approval Committee of four members, responsible to the PSC, is responsible for the overall implementation of the project. At the top of this hierarchy are the PS of the Ministry of Development Planning and Manpower Development as the channel of communication between the Government of Lesotho and WFP for policy matters, and of FMU (belonging to the Prime Minister's Office), as the channel of communication between the Government of Lesotho and WFP for logistics, reporting and accounting. This multiplicity of communication channels and delegation of authorities greatly dilutes the sense of responsibility, delays decision-making and reduces the overall effectiveness of the project. In reality, the guidance delivered by these bodies has been minimal and, for



the sake of convenience, final implementation has been left jointly to FMU and WFP acting to the best of their abilities.

Recommendations

- Revive the CPC, and make it carry out its designed tasks.
- Establish a clear presidency and secretariat of the CPC.
- Clarify the roles and tasks of all departments and institutions participating in the implementation of the programme.

5.2 Collaboration with other United Nations Agencies

Both the CSO and the CP were made in consultation with government authorities, donors, other United Nations agencies and representatives from NGOs.

The WFP Lesotho CP was drafted prior to the CCA and UNDAF for Lesotho. The CCA was adopted in July 2000, while UNDAF was finalized in summer 2001. WFP participated actively in the preparation of these policy documents.

UNDAF covers the period 2002 to 2007 and partly overlaps with the planned period of the WFP Lesotho CP. WFP is planning to harmonize its CP with UNDAF. Therefore, a new CSO and CP will be drafted for the period 2002 to 2007. Once these have been adopted, they will become operational, retroactively, as of January 2002.

For the moment, the adoption of the CCA and UNDAF has not resulted in a shift or refocusing of activities. There are no indications that the close involvement of WFP in the CCA and UNDAF processes has resulted in better and more cost-effective coordination and integration of logistic activities. Nevertheless, UNDAF certainly offers possibilities for closer coordination and integration, especially in the fields of household-based support and HIV/AIDS or in reducing child labour by herd boys.

Recommendations

- Harmonize the CP with UNDAF, as planned.
- Reinforce cooperation with other agencies.
- Explore possibilities for joint activities in the fields of household-based support, HIV/AIDS and the fight against child labour.

5.3 Building Partnerships

While consultations with other United Nations organizations are good and frequent, practical cooperation appears to be rare. More practical cooperation might have been expected, with FAO in developing the early warning system with VAM and the food self-reliance activities, or with UNICEF for the planned ECCD activity.

Partnership with other donors or NGOs has been restricted to formal meetings. The CP foresaw collaboration with several NGOs and the United States Peace Corps, but this has not materialized, as none of the activities have yet been implemented. Possible partners are not systematically kept informed about progress on projects and proposals.



5.4 Targeting

The targeting processes underlying the CP have not been particularly efficient or effective. This is owing to the continued absence of an operational VAM system. The VAM unit to which the CP Document refers does not exist anymore. A coordinating platform, the VAG, which is also mentioned in the document, has not met since the adoption of the CP.

No further targeting activities were undertaken between the adoption of the CP and the summer of 2001, when a very successful rapid household-level food security survey was undertaken jointly with DMA, demonstrating the viability of more targeted approaches to food aid. The results will be used as the basis for targeting food aid to distressed households under CPA4, which was being restructured at the time of the mission.

5.5 Flexibility in Implementation

The principles and guidelines on country programming authorize Country Directors, within certain limits, to transfer resources among activities in the context of an approved CP.¹⁶ However, no allusion is made to the possibility of completely replacing or cancelling an activity. The CP does not include any contingency planning measures.

At the time of approval of the CP, three of the proposed activities had not been sufficiently appraised and were not ready for implementation. The Acting Country Director, who arrived at the beginning of April 2000, faced serious problems with regard to both conformity of the project design with WFP's criteria and practical implementation. The previous Country Director made use of the authority bestowed on him by the WFP system and did not hesitate to reconsider parts of the CP. However, his approach was rather one-sided as, when faced with genuine implementation problems, he preferred to keep projects on hold rather than seeking alternatives, which would have permitted WFP to fulfil at least part of the CP objectives.

During the mission's visit, the acting Country Director was preparing a proposal to make use of his delegated authority to transfer 10 percent of the value of food commodities from one basic activity to another.

Although none of the activities have yet been implemented, it is clear that programme resources will not be depleted before the end of 2002. However, some resources may be used to explore possibilities for new activities that can be integrated into the new CP.

Recommendations

- Introduce or clarify procedures for cases in which basic activities need to undergo major changes or complete replacement within the lifetime of an approved CP.
- Prepare a proposal on the use of the remaining budget.
- Use part of the remaining resources for exploring new activities that can be integrated into the new CP.

¹⁶ Guidelines etc. art. 41 and art. 42.



6. Contribution of Activities/Projects to Programme Objectives

As previously mentioned, the CP contained four basic activities, none of which had been implemented when the evaluation was carried out. The main activity, school feeding, is a continuation of the pre-existing school feeding project LES 3853/1, which was extended to the end of 2001.

Since the other activities have not yet been implemented, the evaluation cannot assess their contribution to the programme objectives.

With regard to assessing the school feeding activity, the old school feeding project can be used since the new activity is its follow-up. These activities are concentrated in mountainous areas where the prevalence of poverty is high and food shortages are common. Many children reach school without having eaten breakfast. The use of food aid is appropriate in this case, and the activity is also well targeted. The contribution to the intended objectives of stabilizing attendance, reducing drop-out rates and giving dietary support to alleviate short-term hunger is difficult to measure, however, owing to a lack of regular and timely monitoring from the field.

The introduction of free primary education made it clear that part of the population had previously been excluded from education because of school fees and the obligation to wear school uniforms. At all the schools that the mission visited, attendance has increased since admission became free and the obligatory uniforms were abolished. The higher attendance of very poor people further enhances the effectiveness of the targeting.

While school attendance in the lower grades has increased, drop-out rates remain high, especially for boys. Many boys leave school to become herd boys or to participate in initiation activities. These problems have not been addressed by the CP so far.

Further support to the Government's self-reliance programme did not occur. Partnerships with FAO and the United States Peace Corps volunteers, as announced in the CP, were not found.

The other programme activities did not start. Questions about the appropriate use of food aid and targeting certainly contributed to the postponement. The small scale of activities 2 and 3 might also raise questions about their possible impact.

7. Meeting Commitments to Women

7.1 Introduction

Lesotho has been a party to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) since 1995.¹⁷ The Constitution of Lesotho overrules CEDAW and upholds the application of personal law and customary law which, in nature and effect, are discriminatory to women as expressed in Section 18 (4) of the Constitution. The reservation further limits women from occupying high levels of authority within the church institution and excludes them from succession to the chieftainship.

7.2 Gender Issues in the Legislative Framework

There are two legal systems in Lesotho, customary law and general law, which consists of common law and other statutes passed by Parliament. According to these two legal systems, women married under customary law and civil law have a minority status. Under civil law, this legal position occurs when a woman is married in community of property and is subject to her husband's exercise of marital power.

¹⁷ Other international documents to which Lesotho is a party are discussed in relevant sections.



Women married under customary law or civil law have no power to conclude contracts, except when they are public traders and subject to civil law. In addition, a woman cannot mortgage or alienate property in her own name, she cannot register property in her personal right and she cannot become a director of a company without her husband's prior consent.

7.3 Gender Issues in Relation to Access to Land and Credit

CEDAW recognizes women's equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property, as well as to have access to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit. These rights, in particular, are denied to women in Lesotho. According to the Sechaba 1999 poverty assessment, women manage (*de jure* or *de facto*) approximately 50 percent of rural households and 38.5 percent of urban ones. Despite such a high number of women managing households, they still face a number of legal constraints when it comes to land and property ownership.

According to Grdanicki,¹⁸ such constraints are especially harsh on women who live in rural areas. These women are commonly married under customary law and are therefore subject to customary practices. Since under Sesotho custom women are considered to be legal minors for most of their lives, the control of resources is in the hands of their fathers, husbands or male heirs. Arable and residential land in rural areas is usually allocated to men on the basis of their marital status; married women do not have a legal entitlement to land. Women who are divorced and live in rural areas are returned to their premarital homes and are not entitled to any of their spouses' real estate. An unmarried or divorced woman can only have access to land in her natal home and through her father. A widow, on the other hand, has a right to remain on the residential land belonging to her late husband, as prescribed by the 1992 Amendment of the Land Act (1979). Women in urban areas have easier access to land than those living in rural areas. They can acquire the title to land if they are unmarried and can show that they have abandoned the customary way of life. However, women's ability to register the title to land is hampered by a provision of section 14 of the Deeds Registry Act of 1967, which provides that no land can be registered in the name of a woman who is married in the community of property. The legal effect and consequence of these laws is that women married under customary or civil law are denied ownership, access and control of land as an income-generating asset.

At the community level, women are increasingly engaged in decision-making processes. Numerous NGOs and Community-based organizations (CBOs) promote women's participation in the economy through income-generating activities. More women than men are actively involved in the creation and management of self-help groups in local communities.

7.4 Gender Issues in the Country Programme

A specific characteristic of Lesotho is that gender issues and commitments to women do not coincide in the case of children. Unlike many other countries, access to primary education is traditionally easier for girls than for boys, as the latter are often withdrawn from school for economic reasons (herd boys) or social and cultural reasons (participation in initiation rites). In 1989, the enrolment rate for girls was 86 percent against 69 percent for boys. Although enrolment rates dropped heavily between 1989 and 1998, enrolment rates for girls are still higher, at 59 percent, than for boys, at 51 percent.¹⁹ Thus, the gender gap among children is against boys, resulting in higher literacy rates for women than for men.

It has already been noted that, to date, only one of the four planned activities has been carried out. However, for the purposes of this review, the Commitments to Women and Mainstreaming of a Gender Perspective will be looked at from the angle of the whole CP, with reference both to the planned activities and to the activity that is under way.

¹⁸ J. Grdanicki. 1999. Mini situation analysis of children and women in Lesotho. UNICEF Lesotho.

¹⁹ United Nations. 2000. Common Country Assessment Lesotho., Maseru, July 2000, p. 29.



Gender issues and commitments to women are only partly addressed in the CP. The CP does not refer to the Commitments to Women, but they are referred to in the design of the *Disaster Mitigation and Preparedness Activity Document*.²⁰ In addition, although Commitments to Women and Mainstreaming of a Gender Perspective are not specifically mentioned in the other activity summary documents, an effort has been made to ensure that some of the intended beneficiaries are female (the teachers at herd boy training centres) and some male (herd boys).

The strategic focus of the CP states that investments in human capital will be directed to people and activities that reduce the disadvantages of poor herd boys, as well as the low social status of Basotho women and the families of returned mineworkers.²¹ However, this latter element regarding social status has not been fully worked out and is only implied in the wording regarding vocational training in CPA3,²² which in fact focuses on non-formal education for herd boys.

Gender Issues in CPA1: Food Assistance to Primary Schools

According to the 1999 poverty assessment study,²³ the average literacy rate is 72 percent. Women are more literate than men, at 82 to 60 percent, respectively, in 1999. The literacy rate by geographic areas shows that mountains have the lowest literacy rate (60 percent). The study also noted the following:

- The enrolment in primary schools has not grown since about 1992.
- Overall, there are more girls than boys in primary school.
- The proportion of boys in primary school is rising, and that of girls decreasing.
- About the same number of boys as girls enter the primary school system at standard 1.
- On average, the percentage of boys drops from 52 percent in standard 1 to 41 percent in standard 7. The drop is far greater for boys in the mountains: from 49 percent in standard 1 to 34 percent in standard 7.
- The performance of boys in primary schools is lower than that of girls, i.e. boys drop out more often than girls.

The data obtained during the mission's visits to schools in the Thaba Tseka, Qacha's Nek, Quthing and Mohale's Hoek districts are similar to those noted during the 1999 poverty assessment. In all the schools visited, girls outnumbered boys, especially in the upper classes. More boys than girls drop out of school to become herd boys or to undergo traditional initiation ceremonies. In general, during the first two years of school there are slightly more boys than girls. By the time the children reach standard 7, there are more girls than boys.

In 2000, the Government of Lesotho introduced a free education policy with the aim of assisting those who could not afford to send their children to school owing to lack of money. Since its inception, the number of children enrolling in schools is reported to have increased.

As a result of enrolment numbers, the WFP school feeding activity benefits more girls than boys. This is a collateral effect of the activity, not an intended one. The beneficiaries are schoolchildren, regardless of their sex. No analyses were found that explain the relative shift in enrolment between boys and girls.

²⁰ WFP Lesotho. 1999. Disaster Mitigation and Preparedness Activity Document. Draft. December 1999, p. 17.

²¹ WFP. 1999. Country Programme – Lesotho (2000-2002). Rome, p. 8, para. 29.

²² Ibid., p.15, para. 71.

²³ G. Mathot. 1999. Poverty Assessment: Education Component, Maseru: Sechaba Consultants.



Gender Issues in CPA2: Early Childhood Care and Development

As for the first activity, ECCD targets all children, regardless of their sex. With regard to monitoring, the CP mentions increases in enrolment and attendance by gender. It is unclear, however, which performance indicator should be monitored.

Through its layout, the activity might favour certain types of households, and thereby implicitly contain a gender bias. In particular, the condition of fee paying might tend to attract more well-off families, and female-headed households are relatively more present in the lower-income groups. Analyses of this kind, however, have not been found.

Gender Issues in CPA3: Food for Capacity Building

The intended direct beneficiaries of the food incentives offered by this activity are the teachers of courses. As 95 percent of these teachers are women, the activity looks women-friendly. The participants in this activity, the children and adults who attend the courses, only benefit indirectly. While this activity scores positively on the Commitments to Women, it fails to meet the condition of Enabling Development by targeting the right people, as it cannot be confirmed that the teachers are suffering from inadequate food consumption, while many herd boys are.

Many of the participants are boys and men. From the section on gender issues in education, it is clear that drop-out rates and poor school performance are higher among boys than girls and that this situation is also clearly reflected in adult literacy rates. Therefore, males need to participate more in education and more should be done to motivate them to attend these schools so as to increase their literacy rate. Although it is questionable whether herd boys should receive non-formal education instead of going to school (see section 8.3 for a discussion this subject), by supporting this activity, the CP is effectively addressing the gender gap in education.

Gender Issues in CPA4: Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation

Under CPA4 the expected gender allocation of both inputs (work) and benefits will exceed the WFP policy requirements on Commitments to Women, i.e. that at least 25 percent of FFA resources and benefits go directly to women.

According to the CP, food-for-training (FFT) and food-for-work (FFW) activities that were planned under this activity were geared to ensure that 55 percent of the participants were women and that 75 percent of the food beneficiaries were women and children. One of the indicators would be the active community (women's) participation in food activity management and maintenance arrangements (80 percent).

7.5 Monitoring Gender

The CP has a Gender Action Plan for 2000-2001, but none of the activities outlined in this plan have yet been carried out. There used to be a Gender Focal Point at the country office, but this post has been abandoned. This has been attributed to staff shortages at the country office.

There are gender-specific monitoring strategies and work plans for the CP, although these focus specifically on food assistance to primary schools (CPA1). A checklist of components for a monitoring strategy has been prepared (see Annex i). The plan includes questions on the monitoring component: whether such a component exists or not; in what form it exists; whether it tracks gender equality in the distribution of resources, activities and outputs; and how it can be improved. Since the plan came into existence, monitoring reports from field visits have gender-disaggregated data, although not always consistently. There has been no overall reporting so far.



Recommendations

- Reinforce country office staff and designate a new Gender Focal Point.
- Implement the country office Gender Action Plan.
- Implement the gender-specific monitoring strategies and work plans.

Activities/Projects: Food Aid and Development

7.6 Food Assistance to Primary Schools

The broad objective of this activity is the development of human resources in Lesotho. Immediate objectives are to provide dietary support to primary school children in the mountains so as to alleviate short-term hunger, thereby improving attention spans, stabilizing attendance and reducing drop-out rates. This activity fits in well with the basic education policy of the Government of Lesotho.

The activity as proposed under the CP is a continuation of project LES 3853/1 Food Assistance to Primary Schools. In fact, the new activity has not yet started, and the old project is still running thanks to an extension in time and budget until the end of 2001. The reason for this project extension, which was made more than a year after the new CP had been agreed, was not made clear. In April 2000, the country office had already submitted a draft operational contract for the CP activity to the Government of Lesotho. However, there appears to have been no subsequent follow-up from either the addressee (the Ministry of Education) or the country office. The reason given by the country office is the pending comprehensive evaluation of the education sector. This evaluation has been delayed several times and, as preparatory work did not start until October 2001, it is not expected before summer 2002.

Since the new school feeding activity is a continuation of the old one, the findings of the mission with regard to the projects it visited can be expected to apply to the new activity as well.

The school feeding project provides food for children, many of whom have had little or no food before arriving at school every morning. The provision of meals attracts children who would not otherwise have come to school and lowers drop-out rates. Nevertheless, until recently, the existence of school fees and the cost of compulsory school uniforms prevented many parents from sending their children to school, the school feeding activities alone not being sufficient to attract these very poor categories.

As school attendance rates have been gradually dropping over the last decade, the Government of Lesotho, in an attempt to reverse this trend, has decided to introduce free primary education gradually and to abolish compulsory school uniforms. Since the start of implementation of this policy in 1999, attendance rates have increased. This was also noticed by the mission during its visits to a number of schools where the number of pupils in standards 1 and 2 had increased significantly.

Under the current school feeding project, a gradual phasing out was planned in which the schools that were phased out were supposed to have become self-reliant by undertaking agricultural, horticultural, small husbandry and poultry activities. During project implementation, the number of assisted schools diminished from about 860 in 1994 to about 560 in 2001. The CP activity initially envisaged a continuing phasing out, but this was not pursued in the draft operational contract. In fact, the successful transfer of schools from a fully food aid-assisted status to a status of self-sufficiency has not been demonstrated. Schools in the process of being phased out need more than a reduced food allocation. There is a need for more inputs (e.g. seeds, seedlings, poultry, piglets, farm entrants) and sustained guidance. At this crucial juncture, teaming up with a specialized United Nations agency might yield better results than abandoning the schools to the vagaries of government services. Some schools have succeeded, but many of them face problems and have not managed to continue school feeding. As a consequence, many children have dropped out and attendance rates have fallen.



In response to the school feeding problem, the Government, in addition to its free primary education policy, also reintroduced school feeding for schools not falling under the WFP project, thereby implicitly recognizing the – partial – failure of the self-reliance policy. Under the new scheme, the schools receive 2 Maloti per child per day for feeding, including fuel and preparation costs, while self-reliance activities can go on to improve the nutritional value of the meals or to finance other urgent needs of the school. Schools receiving food under the WFP activity receive a reduced amount of 0.7 Maloti per child per day to cover costs for cooks and fuel.

The WFP school feeding activity is highly concentrated in the mountain areas. The population in these areas is, in general, very poor. Access to schools is often difficult, and many children have to walk long distances to school without having had breakfast. Although there is little doubt that, even before the free primary education policy, many pupils in the schools came from poor families, the introduction of the policy has demonstrated that sections of the poorest groups were not included in the original school feeding project. The increase in pupils in standards 1 and 2 shows how many children were being deprived of primary education. These Government measures have therefore greatly reinforced WFP's targeting of the very poor. As a consequence of the rising number of children, the number of food rations also has to be increased.

Although the mission was favourably impressed by the school feeding activities, it noted the continuing existence of many of the problems that had been identified previously and had not yet been sufficiently addressed. Among these is the lack of clean water and sanitation facilities at schools, the lack of cooks and cooking facilities and problems related to fuel for preparing the meals. WFP missions have identified these problems but have not been able to find practical solutions to them. Some of the problems might now be addressed with the help of the Government support mentioned previously.

While school feeding has generally been highly appreciated, the effectiveness of the project in terms of projected outcomes has been difficult to appraise. Reporting from the field through the Ministry of Education has been haphazard. The monthly reports compiled at the school level by teachers have suffered from a huge backlog caused by a lack of incentive to fill in the forms. The prescribed biannual Project Implementation Report (PIR) also suffers from delays to the extent that, by the time it is made available, information has become almost irrelevant. Against this background it is difficult to measure the outcome and yield, i.e. the theoretical number of meals to be served against the number of meals actually served. Poor flexibility in the planning of deliveries handled by FMU results in food commodities reaching the school as many as 5 to 15 days after the beginning of the school quarter, making it very unlikely that the planned 180 rations/year are served to the children. The exact shortfall is not known, and the monitoring procedure is failing. A more practical and flexible approach, for example using data from the previous quarter to start with, would permit food aid to be readily available as of the first class day of each quarter.

Several ruptures in food deliveries occurred during 2001; the most important of these took place during the second quarter of the year. This was due to delays in the procurement of food resulting from the lack of a signed operational contract for CPA1 under the current CP and the late request for a time and budget extension of project LES 3853/1. A new major breakdown in deliveries is threatening the activity, as no food has been ordered, the operational contract has still not been signed and the old project is expiring. Steps were undertaken during the mission to get the operational contract signed at the earliest convenience.

Work and reporting in the field are considered satisfactory. Receipt of food consignments, their storage at the various extended distribution points (EDPs) and transport and final deliveries to the schools and depot schools are all meeting acceptable standards. Reporting from the various EDPs to FMU headquarters is considered satisfactory. From this very narrow logistic approach FMU could be considered as contributing to the objectives of the project. The warehousing and transport facilities are appropriate.



However, delivery problems have occurred as a result of poor reporting and communication among FMU, the Ministry of Education and WFP. If the value and accuracy of FMU's reporting from the field are adequate, the processing and analysis of these data at the FMU headquarters level leave much to be desired. This entails a totally inadequate level of reporting to WFP which, in turn, puts the pipeline monitoring into total disarray (cf. consignments that have past their expiry dates, inadequate or late deliveries to certain schools and, to a certain extent, the non-delivery of food during the second quarter of 2001). On many accounts, FMU headquarters' reporting and accounting obligations, as agreed in the Plan of Operation, are not being met, when they are not totally ignored.

Recommendations

- Finalize and sign the operational contract for the school feeding activity under the CP before the end of October.
- Prepare the school feeding campaign that starts in January 2002 by ordering the necessary food immediately.
- Prepare a contingency plan for situations in which food does not arrive on time.
- Revise the budget of this activity, taking into account the increasing number of rations needed.
- Address the collateral problems of sanitation, cooking and the provision of clean water and fuel.
- Improve reporting and accounting, as agreed in the Plan of Operations.

7.7 Early Childhood Development Centres

This activity was foreseen in the CP but an agreement for it has never been signed. A preliminary activity summary document was prepared in the second half of 2000 after an *Appraisal study on school feeding scheme for the early childhood development centers in Lesotho* produced by NUL Consuls in Spring 2000. This appraisal is positive and highlights the need and relevancy of health care and development activities for pre-school children.

The results of the NUL Consuls study and the proposal laid down in the activity summary document were recalled by another appraisal carried out on behalf of WFP Lesotho in March and April 2001. This latter report does not study the activity from the perspective of the beneficiaries but looks at it from another angle, i.e. in terms of its conformity with WFP policies.

Early childhood care and development (ECCD), as it has been renamed, takes place on a rather limited scale, reaching only some 17 percent of pre-school-age children. For the moment, there seems little chance that this percentage will increase rapidly in the short term, given the high costs already faced by the Government for the introduction of free primary education. In fact, attendance at ECCD centres is decreasing, as many children are prematurely enrolled at primary schools that no longer charge fees and that provide meals.

Until now, parents have had to pay fees for their children to attend ECCD centres. The fees cover teachers' salaries and the rent and upkeep of the building. Parents are also expected to provide their children with lunch boxes. According to the reappraisal, only a small percentage of families can afford the fees for access to ECCD centres, and it is unlikely that these families are in a situation of inadequate food consumption, as stipulated in the Enabling Development policy.

A second issue is the proposed limiting of the food supplied through these centres to only 180 days a year. The 2001 report questions the effectiveness of such limited assistance for improving the nutritional status of children.

The report concludes that food assistance to ECCD centres is not feasible, although it recognizes that children under 5 years of age are the most at-risk from the effects of malnutrition. A more feasible



activity involving food assistance to the under-5s might be home-based community care initiatives, initiated by the ECCD Unit of the Ministry of Education with support from UNICEF. This approach is now in a pilot phase. Although there seem to be more possibilities for targeting poor people through this approach, it is too early to conclude that this is the case. Furthermore, the current pilot is based on the voluntary participation of teachers. It is not clear that this voluntary approach is sufficient to enlarge the scale of the activity but, if teachers must be paid, their remuneration too might face the budgetary problem of an already financially stretched Government, as already mentioned.

Considering these problems, the mission is not favourable to the pursuit of this activity. Inadequate food consumption in households should be targeted directly. Rather than this activity, the mission would favour the feeding of vulnerable groups through the targeting of distressed households. The operation organized to identify households suffering from last year's early frost and drought problems shows that such targeting is possible. This experience could be used to establish a more permanent system. The Food and Nutrition Coordination Office (FNCO) might be a possible partner for this activity.

Another option might be to offer assistance to distressed households affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This could include the patients themselves, members of their households and orphans. The fight against the consequences of HIV/AIDS and related diseases is one of the priorities of UNDAF and the Government which, specifically for this purpose, has established the Lesotho AIDS Prevention Coordinating Authority (LAPCA) at the Office of the Prime Minister.

Recommendations

- The mission's reservations regarding this activity are serious enough to suggest that its preparation should be discontinued. The home-based care approach is certainly not advanced enough to provide a viable alternative; therefore, the recommendation is not to pursue this activity.
- Instead of this activity, two pilots might be considered: the feeding of vulnerable groups through the clear targeting of distressed households; and support to households and orphans affected by HIV/AIDS or its consequences.

7.8 Food for Capacity-Building

As in CPA2, no operational contract for CPA3 has been signed with the Government. A CP activity summary was drafted in February 2000, but this activity was left on hold and was reappraised in March and April 2001 by the WFP consultant who also appraised CPA2. In the meantime, the activity title was changed to Assistance to non-formal education for herd boys.

This activity mainly addresses herd boys and adults who have not been able to attend school or finish their schooling. It is to be implemented through LDTCs and the NGO LANFE. Food aid is planned to be provided to the facilitators of the courses as a supplement to their remuneration, which is considered to be too low.

However, although it is very low, the remuneration of these teachers and facilitators raises them above the level of the very poor. Instead of giving food aid to the trainers, food aid should be given to the trainee herd boys, who do come from the very poor groups.

The structure of the centres is not very stable. There is a high turnover of trainers who give up this work as soon as they can find better-paid jobs. Furthermore, the facilities are very poor. Many courses are given in private houses without lighting or basic school facilities. This is not a favourable environment for creating success.

The distance learning activity can be divided into two parts: functional education for adult illiterates, and functional education for herd boys. Herd boys include children from 6 years of age to adults of over 30.



In so far as it concerns children, the activity presents two moral dilemmas: all children have a right to education and should therefore go to school; and herding is remunerated work and the job of herd boy can therefore be considered as child labour, as it is by United Nations organizations in Lesotho. Instead of mitigating the negative aspects of life as a herd boy, WFP should strive to get the boys out of this work and into the regular education system. Formulating an activity focusing on herd boys is thus in line with UNDAF, which defines these boys as a common target group for United Nations organizations in Lesotho.

Recommendations

- The mission recommends that this activity not be implemented as planned.
- Instead of this activity, a pilot might be considered in which food is given to the parents of herd boys as compensation for the loss of income. In return, the boys would be sent to school. This would also be in line with the UNDAF policy to fight child labour.

7.9 Support to Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation Initiatives

During interviews, review of documentation and field visits, it did not become clear what specific activities are planned for CPA4. The appraisal of this activity does not define exactly what disaster is, nor how it could be mitigated by proposed interventions other than in terms of improving the general situation of poverty and food insecurity. As such, the activities could be implemented under other projects (rural water supply, sustainable agriculture) and can best be characterized as FFW.

So far, none of the activities undertaken by DMA in preparation for CPA4 show a clear link with the activities mentioned in the appraisal. As a pilot, 35 villages from seven districts were chosen. Two people from each of these villages were selected to attend a one-week course at the Bethel Business and Community Development Centre. Selection criteria for both the villages and the villagers are not clear. The subjects covered by the course seem too comprehensive to be of much practical use and demand more training and education than might readily be expected from an average villager. Finally, all the district DMA officers cited road construction as the first, or even the sole, activity that the villages would undertake, however road construction was not part of the course that the villagers attended.

Following a joint WFP/FAO mission in June 2001 which carried out a crop and food supply assessment, a survey was carried out in five districts to identify families at risk or already in a state of emergency. The mission estimated that the situation could not be characterized as a generalized emergency qualifying for large-scale food assistance. However, it concluded that a relatively small proportion of rural households (probably 10 to 15 percent) in the most affected districts of Mokhotlong, Thaba-Tseka, Mohale's Hoek and Quthing had lost their crops and had neither livestock nor off-farm income with which to gain access to food on the market. This is the group that is most at risk. These households also did not have seed for planting in the cropping season starting in September 2001.

The findings were confirmed by a survey that was carried out to establish the coping capacity of individuals and households on the basis of: i) the current year's harvest; ii) livestock holding; and iii) incomes from jobs in and outside Lesotho (South African mines, self-employment, etc.). Beneficiary households are targeted according to their coping capacity.

In normal years, most households bring in a cereal harvest that is sufficient to last until November or December, when they have to start selling goats and sheep to buy food. However, this year, households will be forced to sell their animals much earlier, finding themselves without such traditional savings when needed at a later stage. In addition, the reduced harvest has also resulted in a decreased supply of animal fodder, with the consequence that animals are being sold at a lower weight, thus further diminishing the households' resource base.



Most affected households are single-headed, the majority of them by women. Although many households had access to transfers from household members working in South Africa, the reduction of employment in the mining sector has led to an increased number of households being unable to cope with the current situation.

The crop failure has also had a substantial impact on people affected by HIV/AIDS, particularly orphans and the sick without family support, whose marginal existence is threatened by the additional hardship. As traditional informal safety mechanisms have been damaged, many elderly and landless farm workers are threatened by the lack of food.

Based on these findings, CPA4 was reformulated as a disaster and mitigation initiative providing 2,225 tons of food for 36,125 beneficiaries. This will permit distressed households to preserve valuable assets while, at the national and district levels, it will support the strengthening of the disaster response capacity of the country.

The activity in this form is in conformity with the WFP policy on Disaster Mitigation according to which localized disasters may be covered through CP resources.²⁴ The intervention effectively targets those whose coping capacity in the face of natural disaster is insufficient to meet their food needs²⁵ and prevents the irrevocable erosion of the subsistence base of the poor.²⁶ Government involvement is good, DMA being one of the driving forces behind this intervention. Therefore, the mission suggests that it is included under CPA4 of the CP.

Recommendations

- The mission recommends that this activity not be pursued in its present form.
- The mission supports the Country Director's efforts to restructure CPA4 for relief food assistance and recommends its rapid implementation.
- The feeding of targeted vulnerable households, based on a well established targeting system built on the experiences acquired in the 2001/02 disaster mitigation operation, might be considered as a possible new activity under the forthcoming CP.

8. Enabling Development

In 1999, WFP reformulated its development priorities²⁷ to focus on five activities with the goal of meeting the urgent needs of people who were largely by-passed by the conventional processes of development. It will do this by using food aid in ways that enable poor, food-insecure households and communities to make investments that will help them in the longer term. The five activities are:

- to enable young children and expectant and nursing mothers to meet their special nutritional and nutrition-related health needs;
- to enable poor households to invest in human capital through education and training;
- to make it possible for poor families to gain and preserve assets;
- to mitigate the effects of natural disasters in areas vulnerable to recurring crises of this kind; and
- to enable poor households that depend on degraded natural resources for their food security to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods.

²⁴ WFP. 2000. Disaster mitigation: a strategic approach, Rome, p. 17.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 9.

²⁷ WFP. 1999. Enabling development. Rome.



No other activities other than these will be supported. WFP interventions consist of assistance with food consumption. Such assistance should only be provided when and where food consumption is inadequate for good health and productivity. If there is no problem of food consumption, food aid is not needed.

The CP has made its central focus the activity that enables poor households to invest in human capital through education and training. The school feeding activity is fully in line with this activity. ECCD falls within the first Enabling Development activity with regard to the improvement of nutritional status, and within the second activity as far as development is concerned. Capacity building or non-formal education of herd boys is in conformity with the second activity. The disaster preparedness and mitigation activity finally falls within the fourth activity of the Enabling Development policy. In all cases, a lasting asset is created or preserved in the form of human capital.

Two of the Lesotho CP activities fail to meet the requirement that food aid should only be provided in cases of inadequate food consumption: in the case of ECCD and non-formal education to herd boys, it could not be proved that the intended beneficiaries suffer from inadequate food consumption. For CPA4, disaster preparedness and mitigation, the criteria for selecting villages and households were not made clear. Therefore, it cannot be ascertained whether the inadequate food consumption requirement is satisfied by this activity. The school feeding activity makes a genuine effort to target food aid to children suffering from inadequate food consumption. However, the targeting of this activity was enforced by the Government's free primary education policy, which permitted poorer people to enrol their children at school.

While the CP's strategic focus – to invest in human capital through education and training – is in conformity with WFP policy, there remain a number of significant gaps. Government ownership appears low. The CPC, which conferred several times during the formulation of the CP, never met after its approval, and regular monitoring and evaluation is not taking place. No operational agreement had been signed at the time of the mission.

Two proposed activities showed important targeting deficiencies, such as not reaching the very poorest of those facing food consumption problems. For the other activities, basic targeting had been done but was not pursued further. Operational VAM capacity at the country level, to which the CP and the subsequent UNDAF refer, does not exist (anymore).

Collaboration with non-governmental partners was restricted to formal meetings. The collaboration announced in the CP, such as that with the United States Peace Corps, LANFE and other NGOs, was not really effective.

Planning and implementation of the activities is top-down through the line ministries. There is little beneficiary participation in planning or monitoring. Parent groups and community involvement have been mentioned, but their role has not been made clear.

Basic activities were poorly designed and most of them had not yet been properly appraised or pre-appraised when the CP was approved. Subsequent appraisal showed important deficiencies in design and targeting.

Proposed indicators for monitoring and evaluation purposes are limited and concentrate on implementation. Few indicators permit the monitoring of effects or impact. The higher-level CP objective is not stated in sufficiently clear and measurable terms, and performance indicators for it have not been defined.



9. Conclusions

The CP Document shows a genuine effort to define an initial CP for Lesotho. The shift to a Country Programme Approach in 1999 constituted a significant attempt to refocus WFP assistance to the country: FFW in civil works was ended, and a number of new activities were identified, all of which focus on education and education-related fields. A higher-level CP objective was similarly defined, the strategic focus becoming the enabling of poor households to invest in human capital through education and training. Four basic activities were identified:

- CPA1: Food assistance to primary schools;
- CPA2: Early childhood development centres;
- CPA3: Food for capacity building;
- CPA4: Support to disaster preparedness and mitigation.

The CP was developed in a period of severe budget restrictions and the phasing out of (part of) existing projects. In fact, the main activity (CPA1) was the continuation of a pre-existing school feeding activity, and absorbed 82 percent of approved resources.

The three new activities were defined in response to the guidelines on country programming in order to give the CP the appearance of a real programme. However, for a small country such as Lesotho it would probably have been better to base the CP on one main activity that had already been assessed as successful and that was likely to have the most impact.

When the CP was approved, the newly proposed activities had not been properly appraised as prescribed by the guidelines. Later attempts to do so faced several conceptual problems. No reformulation was undertaken, and the activities were simply kept on hold.

When the evaluation took place, the only activity being implemented was the school feeding project, which turned out to be an extension of the prior project LES 3853/1. The CP activity was kept on hold awaiting a comprehensive evaluation of the education sector, which is currently being carried out. None of the other activities were being implemented. As a consequence, the evaluation had to look at the CP as it was originally designed and conceived and at the causes of the delays in implementation, rather than at the outcomes and results.

During almost the whole period since its approval, the CP has been facing severe problems of understaffing with many vacancies remaining unfilled. The late arrival of NFIs for a closed project has been an additional burden on the already understaffed country office. Moreover, the management that was in place from April 2000 until summer 2001 did not seem fully committed to providing the required support and, as such, did not always have a practical and problem-solving perspective towards getting the Lesotho CP under way.

There are serious weaknesses in the area of finance and administration. These are partly due to a gap in the required skills within the country office. On the other hand, the implementation of activities has suffered either from a loose interpretation and application of the clauses stipulating the Government's and WFP's mutual obligations and commitments, or from an unclear definition of the relationships. Statements of account have not been presented and reconciled on a regular basis, and audits have not taken place.

By adopting the Country Programme Approach, WFP sought to strengthen its programme with regard to the characteristics of integration, coherence, concentration and flexibility. The programme certainly has elements of the desired characteristics, but none of them can be considered fully satisfactory.



Lesotho is an LIFDC. Poverty is widespread and deepening under the influence of the deteriorating economic situation, natural disasters and the increasing impact of HIV/AIDS, resulting in increasing vulnerability to food insecurity for significant segments of the rural population.

The CP's strategic focus on human capital development is consistent with the policy decided in the Enabling Development document. However, there remain a number of significant gaps in its elaboration and implementation.

The programme lacks a sense of ownership as the Government has not monitored its progress and has made no attempt to get activities under way. Proposals for operational contracts have not been finalized. Furthermore, in this respect, WFP has not made a sustained effort to implement the CP either. The CPC, which was agreed to in the mutual agreement between the Government of Lesotho and WFP, has never met.

Monitoring and evaluation prove problematic. Reporting from the field is not always timely and adequate. Performance indicators are limited and focus mainly on implementation rather than on effects and impact. The higher-level CP objective is not stated in sufficiently clear and measurable terms and it is not possible to distinguish adequately between the objectives formulated at the level of the four basic activities and the intended outcomes at the overall CP level.

No further poverty targeting has taken place beyond that which was done while the CP was being elaborated. The VAM capacity to which the CP refers is not operational.

Newly proposed activities have shown significant deficiencies in design since it cannot be proved that the intended recipients of food aid belong to the very poorest groups or are effectively suffering from inadequate food consumption.

Relationships with other United Nations agencies are good. WFP participated actively in the preparation of the CCA and UNDAF, which were made after the current WFP Lesotho CP had been approved. In order to harmonize this CP with UNDAF, a new CP will be formulated in 2002.

Collaboration with non-governmental partners was restricted to formal meetings. Closer cooperation for increased effectiveness has not been realized.

Commitments to Women do not appear as a special concern in the CSO, the CP or the draft operational agreements. Only the draft basic activity summary for CPA4 explicitly refers to women, but it is not clear whether the intended benefits of that activity would have been the outcome of deliberate targeting or the result of women being in the majority in the rural areas.

The other activities concentrated on children. Whereas in most countries gender issues mainly concern women, and thus largely coincide with commitments to women, this is not the case for children in Lesotho. School attendance of girls is higher than that of boys, many of whom drop out for economic and socio-cultural reasons. As a consequence, the gender gap in education primarily concerns boys.

10. Recommendations for the future Country Strategy Outline and Country Programme

The forthcoming programme should be based on a sound balance between objectives and resources. Under the current programme, the school feeding activity alone accounts for more than 80 percent of the budget. The resources necessary for the continuation of this activity will certainly increase as a consequence of the greater number of children going to school under the policy of free primary education. The Government's tremendous efforts to implement this policy are highly appreciated, and an intensification of WFP assistance in support of this policy is encouraged.



WFP should reconsider its policy with regard to small countries and small programmes. The school feeding project is highly justified and completely fits in with the Enabling Development policy. However, the available budget and human resources hardly permit implementation of other activities in a substantive way. For a small country such as Lesotho it should be possible to focus the CP on one main activity that is likely to have the most impact.

Budget permitting, the forthcoming programme might consider other activities. In this case, however, the mission recommends that CPA2 and CPA3 are no longer pursued and that CPA4 is developed in its restructured form.

The mission identified three possible new fields of activities; all of these fall within the priorities spelled out in UNDAF:

- targeted vulnerable group feeding in support of distressed households as a follow-up to CPA4 and, partly, to CPA2;
- food aid to households struck by HIV/AIDS and its aftermath;
- encouraging poor households to enrol herd boys in school by providing the households with food aid in compensation for the herd boys' loss of income.

In all cases, mutual tasks and obligations should be respected in a more sustained way. WFP should start reinforcing its country office with dedicated personnel to fill the existing vacancies and bring the level of staffing in line with required tasks and performance.

The role of the Government should be reinforced. WFP should ensure that the Government takes the lead and should incite it to do so. The CPC needs to be revived, and meetings, joint programming and annual reports must be held and made regularly.



Annexes



Annex I: Checklist for Meeting the Commitments to Women and Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective

Essential elements of Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy	Detailed observations	Level of CP coherence with Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy			
		Very high	High	Low	Very low
Commitment I: Provide direct access to appropriate food for women					
◆ Does the CP make a real effort to get food into the hands of women, e.g. through women's ration cards?	An effort would have been made to get food into the hands of women through CPA4.			√	
◆ Do the CP activities address micronutrient deficiencies among women and children?	Yes, food was fortified with vitamins and iodine.	√			
◆ Do the CP activities consider local cooking and eating habits?	Yes, the commodities served include <i>papa</i> (thick maize porridge) and pulse soup cooked with oil and salt, and these form part of the local diet and are locally accepted.	√			
◆ Have women been consulted in determining the food basket?	No, the food basket has been based on nutritional analysis.				√
◆ Are female-headed households given special attention because of their greater poverty and time constraints?	The way CPA4 was conceived would have reached out to women heads of households.				√
◆ Does the CP make an effort to reduce the security and/or health risks that women face when collecting food?	No.			√	
Commitment II: Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making					
◆ Does the CP address women's strategic needs, i.e. does it use an approach that challenges traditional gender roles and empowers women? Describe how.	CPA3 would have seen to this through the income transfer of food. This would have lessened the weight of tradition on their male counterparts through greater education.			√	
◆ Does the CP address gender relations? Does it bring men into the dialogue about the issues of women's status?	No.				√



Essential elements of Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy	Detailed observations	Level of CP coherence with Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy			
		Very high	High	Low	Very low
Commitment III: Take positive action to facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade					
◆ Are CP resources deliberately targeted to women and girls where there is a large gender gap, i.e. of 25%? ²⁸ (This includes most WFP-assisted countries.) What is being done?	The CP concentrates on children. In education the gender gap favours girls. Many boys drop out of school to become herd boys. Only CPA4 would have been more beneficial to women.			√	
◆ Does the CP have incentive programmes to address the gender gap in primary education? What are they?	No.				√
◆ Do women participate in FFW? As labourers, or also as decision-makers? Do they control the assets created?	Under CPA4 it was anticipated that 55% of the participants would be women and that 75% of the food beneficiaries would be women and children.			√	
◆ Is there any opportunity in the CP for women to learn new skills through FFT for greater development sustainability?	CPA4 would have catered for this.			√	
◆ Does the country office engage in advocacy under the CP on behalf of women?	In CPA3, assistance was to be directed to women as a way of helping them through the income transfer effect of the food provided to the helpers and by lessening the weight of tradition on their male counterparts through greater education.			√	
◆ ...for gender equity?	Through CPA3, the country office aimed to reach out to herd boys in an attempt to close the gender gap in education, thereby creating some gender equality.				
◆ ...to leverage resources for partnership work?	No.				
Commitment IV: Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data for planning and evaluation					
◆ Are the M&E systems used in the CP sensitive to gender? Explain how.	Yes, reports are gender-disaggregated, although there are some inconsistencies. Field reports reflect gender-disaggregated data, but there is no clear link with expected outcomes and impact based on gender-sensitive performance indicators.			√	

²⁸For information on the gender gap in your country, contact the Senior Gender Adviser, SPP at HQ.



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Essential elements of Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy	Detailed observations	Level of CP coherence with Commitments to Women and Gender Mainstreaming Policy			
		Very high	High	Low	Very low
◆ Is qualitative information that is sensitive to gender also collected?	No.				√
◆ Does the CP look at inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact from a gender perspective?	Monitoring forms and reports have room for gender-disaggregated data, but specific gender-sensitive performance indicators are lacking.			√	
Commitment V: Improve the accountability of actions taken to meet the commitments					
◆ In the CP, are WFP staff held accountable for meeting the Commitments to Women and Mainstreaming Gender? How?	They are not held accountable, but participate in mainstreaming gender. A member of staff was appointed as the Gender Focal Point to attend gender-related meetings and prepare the CP Gender Action Plan.			√	
◆ Is the Gender Focal Point given sufficient authority and support?	No, there is no longer a Gender Focal Point as the office is very small. No support was received.				√
◆ Are implementing partners held accountable for meeting the Commitments to Women and Mainstreaming Gender, e.g. through inclusion in Letters of Understanding (LOUs) and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)? How?	No.				√



Annex II: Indicative Checklist for Activity/Project Level of Coherence of Lesotho CP With Enabling Development²⁹

Essential elements of Enabling Development	Detailed observations	Level of CP and project coherence with Enabling Development policy			
		Very high	High	Low	Very low
1. Government Commitment					
♦ Is there a national food security strategy or other enabling policy in place? Identify the policy.	Some preliminary drafts exist, but there is no formally approved food security strategy or disaster management scheme in place.			√	
♦ Has an inter-ministerial cooperation been established? Note any committees, mechanisms.	A CPC functioned while the CP was being formulated. The committee regrouped all the main participants and was maintained in the mutual agreement, but never met again.				√
♦ Is the CP committed to targeting the poorest – including women? Cite references in the CP agreement or activity designs.	The CP concentrates on mountain regions with a high prevalence of poverty. Within these regions, no further targeting takes place. CPA2 and CPA3 would assist people who are not likely to belong to the poorest groups.			√	
♦ Are staff and other human resources assigned in line with capacity? Any references to insufficient or underqualified counterparts?	Necessary staff is in place but adequate monitoring and coordination are below expectations. Reporting from counterparts is poor, but not necessarily because of underqualification.			√	
♦ Have related capacity building measures been identified for when problems occur regarding the qualifications and availability of counterpart staff?	Some training took place in relation to VAM.			√	
2. Coordination					
♦ Does the programme refer and conform to UNDAF/CCA priorities? Cite reference in CP and activities to UNDAF/CCA.	CP was made prior to CCA and UNDAF. WFP actively participated in formulation of both, but references within UNDAF to VAM refer to a capability that does not exist. A new CP will be formulated before the current one expires in order to harmonize WFP country policy with UNDAF.		√		
♦ What complementary linkages are there with other partners? Evidence of participation of non-traditional and non-governmental partners.	Planned cooperation with NGOs or other donor agencies (United States peace corps) was restricted to formal meetings.			√	

²⁹ This checklist is derived from the completed checklist presented in the document: WFP. 1999. *Time for change: food aid and development - Enabling Development in practice*, Rome, May 1999.



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Essential elements of Enabling Development	Detailed observations	Level of CP and project coherence with Enabling Development policy			
		Very high	High	Low	Very low
Operational partners					
◆ Identify operational partners – cite key operational partners by activity.	Only governmental departments and organizations.				√
◆ Are operational partners chosen for their effectiveness?	No, as a continuation of former practices. No formal assessment was made, although the existing partner (FMU) can be considered the best under the circumstances. However, there are only a limited number of possible operational partners working in food aid in Lesotho.			√	
Understanding needs					
<i>Consumption needs</i>					
◆ Does the CP identify food consumption problems adequately? Cite references to VAM or other mapping/targeting exercises and information.	Targeting of mountain areas is appropriate, as inadequate food consumption is frequent there. However, CPA2 and CPA3 do not identify food consumption problems. During the evaluation, CPA4 was restructured on the basis of a survey identifying this problem. The VAM unit mentioned in the CP does not exist, and the VAG did not meet after approval of the CP.			√	
◆ Is the CP appropriate for the nature of the food consumption problem: geographic location, effected population, severity?	See above. Only acceptable for the school feeding activity.			√	
◆ What key indicators of the food consumption problem are cited in CP and activity documents?	Some figures on child malnutrition, but no target indicators or data on food intake. Limited number of performance indicators mostly restricted to implementation. No indicators for higher-level CP objectives.				√
<i>Consumption/investment link</i>					
◆ How is food linked to the development opportunity in the CP and activity plan?	By creating human capital.	√			
Creation of lasting assets					
◆ Which assets are created and for whom?	Human capital for schoolchildren. Other activities never started.		√		
◆ What are the sustainable benefits from the assets and for whom?	See above.		√		
Reaching the right people.					
◆ What indicators are used to identify geographic areas and target groups within these areas?	Targeting is based on poverty studies. No further targeting within the areas has taken place.			√	



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Essential elements of Enabling Development	Detailed observations	Level of CP and project coherence with Enabling Development policy			
		Very high	High	Low	Very low
◆ Are women equally targeted?	Yes, no distinction is made between boys and girls, but this seems to be a collateral rather than an intended effect.		√		
◆ Are targeted areas the most food-insecure areas?	Yes.	√			
◆ Are methods/techniques used to identify groups of participants within a geographic area? Cite methods noted in activity summaries.	Only through an extensive household survey for an intended emergency operation, which has been reformulated as targeted vulnerable group feeding under CPA4.			√	
Participation					
◆ Are project participants involved in planning, implementation and/or monitoring?	Parents and children participate in loading/unloading, fuelwood collection, cooking and storage. No active participation in planning or monitoring.			√	
◆ Are participatory tools and methods used?	No.				√
◆ Are mechanisms for facilitating participation used?	No, parent groups are mentioned but there is no proof of their active participation.				√
◆ How are women and men involved in decision-making? Cite references in activity documents to special measures to encourage full participation in decision-making.	Not applicable.				√
Cost-effectiveness					
◆ Were alternatives for meeting food aid objectives examined?	No.				√
◆ Were measures introduced to minimize costs?	No.				√
Technical quality					
◆ Are activity appraisal missions carried out?	Activities were not appraised beforehand. Appraisals were contested later and several inconsistencies in design have been found resulting in activities being placed on hold.			√	
◆ At what stages of the programme cycle is technical expertise used?	After approval of the CP, when implementation should have started.			√	
◆ Where does technical expertise come from: FAO, ILO, UNESCO, WHO?	Mostly local consultants. One international consultant. Regular consultation with United Nations organizations, but no participation in missions.			√	



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Essential elements of Enabling Development	Detailed observations	Level of CP and project coherence with Enabling Development policy			
		Very high	High	Low	Very low
◆ Are criteria for the sustainability of assets used?	No.				√
◆ What are the conditions under which WFP assistance is no longer required? Cite references in activity plan.	When schools are transferred to the school self-reliance scheme. The sustainability of this scheme proved to be low and the Government restarted its own school feeding programme as it regards this activity as valuable and is willing to expand and maintain it by committing its own resources. In the future, the Government might take this activity over completely, but lacks the resources to do so at present.		√		
Market impact					
◆ What is the impact of food aid imports or local purchases on local markets?	Cereals are bought locally. Little impact because of small quantities and open borders with South Africa.			√	
Demonstrating results					
• Are performance indicators established and in use?	Indicators are not consistent and not clearly linked to objectives. There is active monitoring of the school feeding project, but this is insufficiently result-oriented.			√	



Annex III: Itinerary (including persons interviewed)

12 October	Arrival at Maseru
13 October	Meeting with WFP country office staff Mr V.K. Jain, Acting Country Director Mr K. Seifu , Field Monitor (UNV) Ms K. Mojak, Field Monitor Ms N. Makibinyane, Administrative clerk on logistics Review of documents
14 October	Review of documents and internal meetings
15 October	Meeting with WFP programming staff Kick-off meeting with governmental officials Mr M. Makosholo, Coordinator SSRFU Mr M. Motjoli, Assistant Inspector ECCD Mr T. Nkholise, Project Manager SSRFU Mr P. Phamotse, Chief Inspector Field Services, Ministry of Education Ms A. Ramotso-Maieane, Editor LDTC Ms M. Setlolela, Inspector ECCD Mr V. S. Seutloali, Acting Director LDTC Ms M. Shai, Assistant Inspector ECCD Ms T. Tsilo-Mngadi , Acting Service Agency Coordinator LDTC Meeting with Disaster Management Authority (DMA) Ms M. Mojaki, Chief Economic Planner Mr S. Molapo, Senior Economic Planner Meeting with United Nations Heads of Representations Ms S. Kimaryo, Resident Representative UNDP Dr T.R. Tshalaba, Representative WHO Dr A P.M. Bay, Representative FAO Ms A.-M. M. Fonseka, Social Planning and Policy Officer UNICEF Meeting with NGOs Ms G. Forrest, Programme Manager Save the Children Mr W.B. Nkhoma, National Director World Vision Mr G. L. Nicolay, Programme Director Helvetas
16 October	Meeting with Food and Nutrition Coordination Office (FNCO) Ms M. Ntsike, Director Meeting with Food Management Unit (FMU) Ms N. Makhalanyane, Deputy Director Mr P. Makata, Chief inspector Ms M. Molelle, Food Administrator Mr L.B. Ralebese, Project Officer Ms S.H. Salae, Senior Project Officer Mr T. Smith, Controller of Stores Ms M. Thebe, Project Officer Meeting with UNICEF Ms Nadi Albon, Project Officer Education Mr K. Monyau, Assistant Programme Officer Education Meeting with Ministry of Education Ms N. Kokome, Chief Officer Primary Education and ECCD Mr Makara
17 October	Field visit to Thaba Tseka District Visit to Koporale Primary School



Visit to Baenaena Primary School
Visit to FMU Mantsonyane Area Depot (EDP)
Meeting with Mr M. Mphafi District Secretary of Thaba Tseka

18 October

Meeting with District staff Thaba Tseka

M.B. Motaung, Public Health Nutritionist
M. Phalatsi, FMU
M. Moletsane, LENA
F.K.M. Marumo, Education
M. Leaooa, SSRFU
M. Thamae, Hospital Administration
M. Letsie, DMA

Visit to TMU Thaba Tseka Area Depot (EDP)

Visit to Sehongong substore

Visit to Quacha's Nek District

Visit to Masuoaneng Distance Teaching Centre
Visit to Tsatsalemeno Primary School

19 October

Meeting with District staff Qacha's Nek

Mr M. Makajanem Rural Dev. Officer Local Government
J. Makenanyi, Post Master
F.B. Lekhela, District Agricultural Officer
M. Magma Senior Transport Officer, Ministry of Civil Works
T. Motuba, District Technician Department of Rural Roads
L. Possi, ECCD Officer
T. Sefubanyane, Inspector of Police
P.M. Mokoena, Field Education Officer LDTC
L. Majosa, Assistant Senior Education Officer
M. Mabusa, Nutrition Officer DMA
S. Phate, Field Officer DMA
N. Phenduka, Education Officer
M. Hoodi, C.A. FMU

Visit to Qacha's Nek EDDC

Visit to Qacha's Nek EDP store

Visit to White Hill Primary School

Visit to Quthing District

Visit to Quthing EDP store

Meeting with Quthing District staff

Ms T. Doti, Intelligence officer NSS
Ms M. Hlapho, Officer ECCD
Mr R. Kotsana, Stores assistant FMU
Mr K. Lokotsi, Assistant Senior Education Officer
Ms M. Moeletsi, Officer ECCD
Ms M. Mohau, Education Officer
Ms M. Motemekoane, District Disaster Management Officer
Ms M. Sakoane, Local Government economic planner

20 October

Visit to Telle Primary School

Meeting with parents, teachers and children

Return to Maseru

21 October

Internal meeting

22 October

Meeting at Ministry of Development Planning

Ms L.A.M. Hlasoa, Director Department of Sectoral Programming
Mr C.M. Mohapi, Principal Economic Planner

Visit to Lower Thamae home-based ECCD



Visit to Upper Thamae home-based ECCD
Visit to (non-assisted) Masapong Primary School
Follow-up meeting with FMU management
Follow-up meeting with NFCO
Ms N. Ntsike, Director

23 October

Meeting with DMA Early Warning Unit

Ms Ntoli,
Head of DMA Food Logistics Unit

Meeting with United States Peace Corps

Ms C. Djondo, Country Director Peace Corps Lesotho
Mr N. Boyer, Associate Peace Corps Director

Meeting with Ireland Aid

Mr Joe Feeney, Attaché Development Cooperation

Meeting with European Commission

Mr S. Forester, Second Secretary Economic Affairs

Meeting with WFP Maputo cluster office officer

Mr G.-F. Heymell, Regional Advisor for Programme Unit

24 October

Meeting with UNICEF

Mrs M.L. Moeketse, Assistant Project Officer Nutrition

25 October

Meeting with Ministry of Education

Mr L. Lehohla, The Honourable Minister of Education
Mr C. Moshapane, Principal Secretary Ministry of Education

26 October

Debriefing with United Nations representatives

Ms S. Kimaryo, Resident Representative UNDP
Ms K. Gamble-Payne, Representative UNICEF
Dr A P.M. Bay, Representative FAO
Mr V.K. Jain, Acting Country Director WFP
Mr E. Fausther, Deputy Resident Representative UNDP
Mr H. Tolofi, National Professional Officer WHO

Debriefing with Government officials

Mr Ramotsoari, Principal Secretary of Planning
Mr M. Makosholo, Coordinator SSRFU
Mr T. Nkholise, Project Manager SSRFU
Ms M. Setlolela, Inspector ECCD
Ms M. Shai, Assistant Inspector ECCD
Ms M. Molelle, Food Administrator
Ms S.H. Salae, Senior Project Officer
Mr R. Lerotholi, Senior Economic Planner DMA
Ms M. Nketsi, Assistant Economic Planner MoA
Mr A.M. Mantutle, ECCD

27 October

Departure from Maseru



Annex IV: Documents Reviewed

- **FAO/WFP.** 2001. *Special report: Crop and food supply assessment mission to Lesotho.* Rome, June 2001.
- **Government of Lesotho, Ministry of Development Planning.** 2000. *Interim poverty reduction strategy paper.* Maseru, December 2000.
- **Miers, H.** 2001. *Report on appraisals of CPA2, CPA3 and CPA4 for WFP-Lesotho.* Maseru, April 2001.
- **NUL Consuls.** 2000. *Appraisal study on school feeding scheme for the Early Childhood Development Centers in Lesotho. (Second draft).* Maseru, July 2000.
- **Sechaba Consultants.** 2000. *Poverty and livelihoods in Lesotho, 2000. More than a mapping exercise.* Maseru, June 2000.
- **United Nations.** 2000. *Common Country Assessment Lesotho.* Maseru.
- **United Nations.** 2001. *Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Lesotho 2002-2007.* Maseru, June 2001.
- **WFP.** 1994. *The World Food Programme and the Programme Approach: Principles and guidelines for country programming.* CFA 38/P/6. Rome, December 1994.
- **WFP.** 1998. *Country Strategy Outline – Lesotho.* WFP/EB.1/99/5. Rome, December 1998.
- **WFP.** 1999. *Enabling development.* WFP/EB.A/99/4-A. Rome, May 1999.
- **WFP.** 1999. *Country Programme – Lesotho (2000-2002).* WFP/EB.3/99/6/2. Rome, September 1999.
- **WFP.** 2000. *Disaster mitigation: a strategic approach.* WFP/EB.1/2000/4-A. Rome, February 2000.
- **WFP.** 2001. *Report on Chief OTL Mission to Lesotho, Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia.* Rome, May 2001.
- **WFP Lesotho.** 2001. *Activity summary briefing note for CP evaluation.* Maseru, October 2001.



ANNEX V: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Evaluation of the Lesotho Country Programme (January 2000 – December 2002)

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Country Programme Concept

In 1994, WFP introduced a new policy framework called the Country Programme Approach. This replaced the project-by-project approach, which had been making it difficult to relate overall WFP assistance to overall national planning. Under the previous approach, there was little integration of different WFP activities to ensure a coherent strategy for the country. The new approach implied some fundamental changes to the way in which WFP plans and programmes, focusing on a people-centred and food-based strategy and using the country as the basic entity for WFP's engagement. A CP should be a cohesive and focused response to those strategic objectives of a recipient country that coincide with the strategic objectives of WFP and other assistance partners. This new orientation is also in line with the direction of United Nations reform (CCA, UNDAF, etc.).

In agreeing to the Country Programme Approach, WFP's Executive Board stipulated (CFA 37/P/7) that the approach must be supported by three key operational principles:

- predictability of resource levels over several years;
- integrated planning; and
- flexibility in resource management.

In addition, the Country Programme Approach also requires the following:

- **Concentration on the neediest**, which has implications for targeting because WFP must redeploy and concentrate its efforts on the neediest people in the neediest countries. It also implies improving analytical, planning and operational capacity at the country level.
- **Focus on fewer priority activities**, which concentrate on:
 1. meeting the immediate needs of the hungry poor;
 2. improving the quality of life for the most vulnerable people; and
 3. building assets and promoting self-reliance through labour-intensive activities.

2 The Lesotho Country Programme

2.1 The CP as Designed

The Lesotho CP is based on a 1999 CSO, approved by WFP's Executive Board at its January 1999 session, and a Country Programme Document, approved at the Board's October 1999 session. The short duration of three years was chosen since the Government of Lesotho's current triannual development plan ended in March 1999 and a future orientation of the Government's development policy had not been decided in time to influence the future CP.

Lesotho is classified as a least-developed country (LDC) and an LIFDC with an estimated population of 2 million, a per capita gross national product of US\$770 and a gross domestic product of US\$354 (1998 figures).

The CP's strategic focus is on enabling poor households to invest in human capital through education and training. The assistance also aims at increasing learning opportunities for at-risk groups in order to strengthen their capacity to survive a rapidly degrading environment and changing regional economy. The geographic focus is on poor and marginal mountain districts of the country. A main thrust of the CP is food assistance to primary schools.



Four basic activities were foreseen in the CP:

Basic Activity 1: Food assistance to primary schools – 10,800 tons (88 percent of food resources);

Basic Activity 2: Early childhood development centres – 645 tons (5.2 percent);

Basic Activity 3: Food for capacity building – 130 tons (0.1 percent);

Basic Activity 4: Support to disaster preparedness and mitigation initiatives – 700 tons (5.7 percent).

2.2 Current Status of the CP

Basic Activity 1: Food assistance to primary schools

The Government of Lesotho's decision to give free primary education to all children is a major step in long-term investment in the education sector. This investment is highly justified by its return to society and to individuals. According to a study carried out by the World Bank, ensuring a minimum of four years of primary education could increase the country's productivity by 8 to 10 percent, in addition to social gains. The primary school feeding activity supported by WFP is helping undernourished children to attend schools in difficult mountainous terrain. WFP-provided meals help children to overcome short-term hunger and concentrate more, and thus may lead to more effective education. The activity is also expected to increase school attendance, improve normal growth and help improve health. This assistance is reducing pressure on family expenditures, thus alleviating parents' financial burdens to some extent.

This is the main activity under the current CP and has been receiving continuous support from WFP for more than 35 years. About 667 primary schools were phased out of the original 1,229 after the mid-term evaluation in October 1997. WFP is now assisting only 562 primary schools located in the mountainous areas. Some 85 percent of overall CP resources are programmed for this activity. WFP assistance to primary schools continued throughout 2001 under the earlier project 3855.01, after the budget revision. This budget revision continued until the end of August 2001.

An activity summary for CPA1 was drafted and sent to the regional bureau in January 2001. The bureau recommended the reappraisal of this activity. The reappraisal has not yet been carried out as it was considered more appropriate to wait for the outcome of the proposed comprehensive evaluation of school feeding in Lesotho as a part of the Government initiative with the World Bank, WFP and other stakeholders. This evaluation was to have taken place at the end of 2000 but has been delayed.

Basic Activity 2: Assistance to early childhood development centres

An appraisal of this activity was conducted by a local consulting company (NUL Consuls) in 2000. The report was delayed for several months and was submitted only in December 2000. An activity summary was prepared in January 2001 and sent to the regional bureau, which recommended a reappraisal of this activity. The reappraisal was conducted in April 2001 and concluded that "The two key objectives of food assistance to under-5s in ECCD centres cannot be justified: (a) as only a few families that can afford the fees are sending children to ECCD centres; and (b) as increased nutritional status is not feasible with one meal a day for 180 days a year." The mission recommended that WFP and the Government partners should consider designing a pilot activity focusing on the provision of food for children under 5 years of age in the pilot home-based care centres piloted by the Government's ECCD unit.

Basic Activity 3: Food for capacity building

The appraisal of this activity was carried out in April 2001. The appraisal mission recommended that a major redesign of the proposed activity is necessary, if it is to achieve the stipulated objectives outlined in the CP Document. It was stated that there is little evidence that the provision of food to non-formal education (NFE) teachers would increase access to NFE, nor that NFE teachers are more in need of food assistance than anyone else. WFP and the Government partners may consider designing a pilot activity



that provide food assistance to herd boys, with the help of UNICEF and other partners who are active in this area.

Basic Activity 4: Support to disaster preparedness and mitigation initiatives

The reappraisal of this activity was carried out in April 2001. This reappraisal concluded, among other points, that WFP, DMA and other potential partners must agree on a distinction between disaster preparedness and mitigation initiatives, and how the proposed activity can address each.

This activity had previously been appraised in November 1999 by an independent consultant, and the activity summary was presented to the Government. An operational contract was also drafted by the country office and sent to the Government. Meanwhile, the activity was reappraised in April 2001 in order to reassess its appropriateness.

3 Objectives of the Country Programme Evaluation

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

4 Scope of the Work

4.1 Evaluating the Country Programme in Light of its Constituent Activities

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

While focusing first at the programme level, the evaluation will also consider the way in which activities have been integrated into the programme and the extent to which they make a contribution to the programme objectives, as well as meeting their own. *It is important to distinguish between the evaluation of the CP and the separate exercise of evaluating each of the activities that make up the CP, the latter being outside the scope of the current evaluation.* In CP evaluations, a team works its way from the general to the particular, from the CP to the activity level. Activities are assessed in terms of their logic and their expected contribution to meeting the objectives of the CP. It may be that activities provide the most concrete opportunity for assessing progress towards overall programme objectives.



The evaluation will also consider how effectively the Commitments to Women (formulated at The Beijing United Nations Conference for Women 1996-2001) have been integrated into the CP. In addition, it will assess how well the consideration of gender relations, which can be a major impediment to improved food security, have been mainstreamed into the programming process.

4.2 Country Programmes and Enabling Development

The findings and recommendations of the evaluation will be forward-looking in that they will be framed in a way that supports the development of a new CSO and CP that will conform to current requirements, including those of the Enabling Development policy. Since the Enabling Development initiative dates from 1999, it will not be appropriate to evaluate programmes developed before that in terms of their effectiveness in meeting the requirements of this policy. Rather, the evaluation team will assess the current programme for its fit with the policy prescriptions evident in Enabling Development and make recommendations for the future CP/CSO. The assessment of the programme's fit with Enabling Development will be guided by the template provided in Annex 2.

4.3 Linking the Country Programme to other Activities

The evaluation will directly cover only those activities defined under the CP. As such it will not attempt to assess the effectiveness of relief and recovery activities, or any development activities that may exist outside the CP. However, the evaluation will examine which development activities in the CP have been designed so that they may support current or future relief operations, as well as why development activities may exist outside the CP (if applicable).

5 Key Issues and Sub-issues

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

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

- 1.1. How were activities/projects that were ongoing before the establishment of the CP modified to fit more readily into the CP approach?
- 1.2. Did the process of developing the CSO and the CP include an analysis of national and subregional (within the country) food insecurity and vulnerability? Do the CSO and/or the CP make reference to any VAM material developed for this country?
- 1.3. Did the process of developing the CSO and the CP result in an identified strategy for WFP development programming? Did it include, for example, choices in strategic areas such as key partners inside and outside government, geographic target areas, targeting considerations within geographic areas, or programme areas that are best dealt with by other agencies?
- 1.4. Are the activities/projects in the CP designed to be complementary in terms of addressing the cycle of food insecurity from various angles, or are they designed to be linked in terms of sector, geographic area, beneficiaries or any other common elements? If not, is there a strong rationale for not making these linkages?



- 1.5. Are there specific objectives expressed at the overall CP level (as opposed to the activity/project level)? Are they relevant, realistic and attainable in light of the approved activities/projects in the CP?³⁰ Furthermore, can the achievement of objectives be measured at the programme level?
- 1.6. What evidence exists that the current CP exhibits the desired characteristics of:
- ◆ integration;
 - ◆ coherence;
 - ◆ concentration;
 - ◆ flexibility.³¹
- 2. To what extent did WFP's systems and procedures for programme and project identification, design, budgeting, implementation and review enhance or impede the Country Programme Approach?**
- 2.1. To what extent has the delegation of authority to the regional and country office level enhanced the flexibility of the Country Director in developing and negotiating a CP and in making shifts in resources when appropriate? Has the Country Director been proactive in using the authorities that have been devolved?
- 2.2. Have appropriate policy statements, guidelines and headquarters/regional staff support been made available to country offices during the development of CSOs and CPs?
- 2.3. In the experience of the WFP country office, are procedures and rules for establishing programme and project budgets appropriate to a Country Programme Approach? Do they allow for the required flexibility in resource planning and allocation?
- 2.4. Are the organizational structure of, and the staffing mix in, the country office appropriate, given the requirements of the Country Programme Approach? Is short-term technical support available where it is needed and appropriate?
- 2.5. Were the defined procedures for preparing and implementing the CP at the country level followed? For example, has a CP agreement been signed with the Government? Were appraisal missions carried out to prepare project summaries? Does a Programme Review Committee exist, and does it function?
- 2.6. What problems or constraints have been identified during the development and implementation of the CP?
- 3. To what extent have the design, development and implementation of a CP resulted in a more effective WFP contribution to development programming in Lesotho?**
- 3.1. Was the national Government fully involved in the review of needs in preparation for the CSO, and does it agree with the stated priorities of the CP?

³⁰ It will be necessary for the evaluation teams to determine the fit between programme-level goals and objectives and those of the individual activities making up the programme.

³¹ These terms have been defined in the documentation on the country programming process (CFA 38/P/6):

- *integration*: with the priorities and other activities of the country itself, as well as with those of the United Nations system and other donors;
- *coherence*: (so that the elements of the WFP sub-programmes in each country relate closely to one another in order to achieve a clear purpose) the absence of any design elements in one activity/project that may work counter to achieving the objectives of another activity/project;
- *concentration*: focused – on those geographic areas and households that represent WFP's target groups,
- *flexibility*: allowing for activities to be adjusted within the programme period, in line with changing circumstances.



- 3.2. Did the process of developing the CP enhance WFP involvement in the CCA and UNDAF processes that are under way? Did the shift to a CP enhance WFP's ability to contribute to United Nations coordination through Country Strategy Notes (CSN), CCA, UNDAF or other processes?
- 3.3. Has the process of developing the CP had any appreciable effect on the ability of the national Government to make and meet programme commitments regarding counterpart contributions, including both finances and staff time?
- 3.4. Does the CP include contingency planning measures at either the CP or the activity level? Does it include measures in one or more activities/projects aimed at ensuring that disaster preparedness or disaster mitigation actions are taken in development projects so that the transition to emergency operations may be more effective and timely, when necessary? Is there evidence that contingency planning will be included in the development of the next CP?
- 3.5. While the CP does not include resourcing and planning for protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs) and emergency operations (EMOPs), does it describe them and note any possible actual or potential interaction between development activities/projects and emergency operations?
- 3.6. Did the CP mechanism permit necessary shifts of resources among activities/projects in a timely and efficient way?
4. **Does the design of the activities/projects that make up the CP incorporate the lessons reflected in the Enabling Development policy?**
 - 4.1. Is food aid the most appropriate resource for use in the CP activities/projects? Is food aid justifiable and necessary for the achievement of the activity-/project-level objectives?
 - 4.2. Are WFP's partners in each activity/project the most appropriate? What measures were taken during the design of the activity/project to assess possible partners?
 - 4.3. Is the food aid used in the CP activities/projects targeted to food-deficit subregions and/or to populations identifiable as the hungry poor? Is there evidence that the people targeted are being reached?
 - 4.4. Are assets being created in the activities/projects? If so, what measures are in place to ensure that the targeted beneficiaries benefit from these assets?
 - 4.5. What indicators are being monitored that can be used to assess the effectiveness of the activities/projects in the CP? Do they provide information regarding the achievement of anticipated outputs, outcomes and impacts? Have appropriate baselines been established for the indicators being used?
5. **Do the activities/projects in the CP adequately address gender issues and adhere to WFP's Commitments to Women?**
 - 5.1. Does the Country Programme Approach make it easier or more difficult to meet the Commitments to Women and to Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective? (For a detailed guide to addressing this issue, see Annex 1.)
 - 5.2. What changes would be required in the next CSO and CP to ensure better compatibility with the Commitments to Women?



6. To what extent does the use of food aid in the current activities/projects of the CP conform to the Enabling Development policy³²? (For a detailed guide to addressing this issue see annex 2.)

6.1. What changes would be required in the development of a new CSO and CP in order to ensure better compliance with Enabling Development?

7. What measures can be taken in the development of the CSO and the next CP to improve the effectiveness of WFP's contribution to development during the next programming cycle?

8. Are there any lessons that can be learned from the experience gained in designing and implementing the current CP?

6 Notes on Method

6.1 Stages of the Evaluation

The method proposed below is indicative and may be revised and/or refined by the team leader. The evaluation will normally be divided into the following three phases.

Phase I: Preparation and desk review

The terms of reference should be shared with the Government, who should be asked to review them and to nominate a key focal point for the mission.

Prior to the in-country mission, the team will review all relevant background documentation, including the CSO and the CP, activity summaries, project progress reports, project mid-term and terminal evaluation reports, and relevant international and national sectoral publications and reports. In addition, the team should locate and review country studies carried out for recent thematic evaluations such as the review of WFP Commitments to Women. Some members of the team may review materials provided electronically and join the team directly in the field. Following the decentralization of many programme functions to the field level, some of the documentary material on programmes and activities is most readily available at the country office level.

Phase II: In-country evaluation (two weeks)

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

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

Key informant interviews to be carried out by the Team may be divided into different groupings:

Group One: WFP full-time and contract staff working on development activities.

Group Two: Institutional partners/actors in the development and coordination of programmes at the national level. For example:

³² It is important to note that issue number 6 does not mean that the current CP will be retroactively evaluated against the criteria of Enabling Development. Rather, the programme will be assessed with a view to providing guidance as to any changes required to ensure compliance in the future.



- United Nations agencies active in consultative processes related to development, such as the CCA and UNDAF and including UNDP, UNICEF, the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), UNESCO, the International Labour Organization (ILO);
- Government ministries that are either involved at the national level in consultations on donor coordination (Ministry of External Cooperation, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Finance) or represent current or planned partners in WFP development activities (Ministry of Education), as appropriate;
- the local offices of the World Bank and the regional development bank;
- bilateral donors with a significant presence in sectors of WFP programming; these should be identified by the WFP office in the country. Of special interest will be donors that are taking part in structures aimed at national-level coordination;
- NGOs with a national presence and mandate in food security and/or poverty alleviation. The WFP office should be able to identify a small group of national and international NGOs with a strong presence and reputation in food aid and/or food security and poverty programming. Ideally, these organizations should be recognized by the Government as co-participants in national or regional programmes.

Group Three: Institutional partners engaged in WFP activities:

- national, provincial or local offices of the agencies implementing WFP activities on behalf of Government (DMA, LDTC, LANFE, etc., as appropriate);
- staff of national and international NGOs involved in the delivery of WFP food aid and/or the planning and completion of infrastructure assets created with food aid (Save the Children Fund);
- staff of human service agencies supported by WFP food aid, such as nutrition rehabilitation units, mother and child health clinics, schools.

Group Four: Participants and beneficiaries: Accompanied by project staff, the mission members should meet, in group settings, parents, children and teachers in schools, etc. Groups can be comprised of village elders or representatives, women, youth, etc. These meetings will serve as a first-level test of the targeting aspects of the development activities.

Past experience strongly suggests that the WFP country office would benefit from organizing a one-day feedback workshop for WFP staff and key stakeholder organizations at which to discuss the preliminary findings and recommendations of the evaluation prior to the team's departure. This debriefing could be provided for key Government and NGO representatives as well as donors, WFP and other United Nations agency staff. In addition, a structured debriefing with an aide-mémoire summarizing key preliminary findings and recommendations is essential prior to the team's departure.

Phase III: Report writing (five working days for team members, ten working days for team leader)

During each phase of the CP evaluation, the team leader should confirm the duties and accountability of each team member. This can easily be organized around the products of the evaluation which are, in turn, organized around the key objectives and issues.

The team leader is responsible for coordinating the inputs to, and the overall drafting of, the aide-mémoire, evaluation summary and final report.

6.2 The Evaluation Team

The team should contain the following experts:

- ◆ a development planner/economist;
- ◆ a food aid expert;
- ◆ a logistician;
- ◆ a food security-cum-gender expert (national consultant).



One team member should be a locally recruited national consultant, and one should be able to review gender issues as they relate to the CP and the Commitments to Women.

In addition, team members should be familiar with the country situation, have solid evaluation expertise and good drafting skills in English.

6.3 Indicative Timetable and Itinerary

Maputo briefing	28 September 2001
In-country mission: Maseru Project visits Maseru	1 October – 12 October
Evaluation debriefing workshop	11 October
Aide-mémoire Presentation to Government and WFP	12 October
Finalization of aide-mémoire	12 October
Departure	12 or 13/14 October
Debriefing at WFP Maputo	Only if no Maputo participation in Maseru debriefings
Deadline for draft evaluation report	2 November
Deadline for evaluation summary	15 November

6.4 Organization of the Mission

Role of the team leader: to finalize the method and key issues for the evaluation. This will be done in consultation with the Office of Evaluation (OEDE) Evaluation Officer. The team leader will also clarify the role and input of each team member, including individual requirements for the aide-mémoire, evaluation summary and final report. With assistance from the WFP Evaluation Officer, the team leader will define any preparatory work required by the country office and/or local consultants prior to the mission (at least two weeks notice should be given to the country office).

The team leader will assume overall responsibility for the mission, and will synthesize the inputs from all sources in order to produce the necessary outputs. The team leader is responsible for producing the following outputs:

- ✓ *aide-mémoire* for presenting the mission's early findings and recommendations at the final debriefing at the country office and at headquarters;
- ✓ a *final evaluation report*; and
- ✓ an *evaluation summary report* for presentation to the Executive Board.

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

Role of the other team members: to provide technical expertise according to individual skill sets, and to provide written inputs to the evaluation summary and final report, under the guidance of the team leader and WFP Evaluation Officer.

Role of the WFP Evaluation Officer: full mission member, see previous paragraph.

Role of the Lesotho country office: to advise on the timing of the evaluation in order to ensure that its outputs are available for the preparation of the CSO. The country office ensures that all the documents required for planning the evaluation and carrying out the desk review are provided in a timely manner; assists with the identification and hiring of local consultants as required; ensures that any necessary



preparatory work is undertaken in-country prior to the arrival of the evaluation team, and facilitates the work of the team while in-country; and prepares and organizes the mission's in-country itinerary, as well as organizing the CP evaluation workshop.

6.5 Products of the Evaluation

- ✓ *Aide-mémoire* for debriefing the country office and headquarters (maximum five pages)
deadline: day of debriefing in Maseru.
- ✓ *Final evaluation report*
deadline: two weeks after leaving Lesotho.
- ✓ *Evaluation summary report* (maximum 5,000 words)
deadline: four weeks after leaving Lesotho.

All reports will be prepared in English and must be written in conformity with the outlines.

The evaluation summary report and the final evaluation report must be submitted in printed form accompanied by an electronic version. If applicable, annexes should also be made available in WFP standard software (i.e. Microsoft package). For ease of processing, the summary report should be submitted as plain, unformatted text only (no paragraph numbering, limited use of bold, underline, etc.).

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

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