

WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

Annual Evaluation Report 2005

OFFICE OF EVALUATION JULY 2006



Acronyms

AAR	after-action review	OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action	ODB	Asia Regional Bureau
BPR	Business Process Review	ODOC	other direct operational costs
CARE	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere	OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
CFSAM	crop and food supply assessment mission	OEDE	Office of Evaluation
COMPAS	Commodity Movement Processing and Tracking System	PDP	Policy, Strategy and Programme Support Division
CP	country programme	PGM	Programme Guidance Manual
DAC	Development Assistance Committee	PRC	Programme Review Committee
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency	PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
DAR	during-action reviews	PSA	Programme Support and Administrative
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	RBM	results-based management
DSC	direct support costs	RIACSO	Regional Inter-Agency Coordination and Support Office
EMOP	emergency operation	SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	SO	special operation
FFE	food for education	TEC	Tsunami Evaluation Coalition
FFT	food for training	UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
FFW	food for work	UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
GMO	genetically modified organism	UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
ICT	information and communications technology	UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
IDP	internally displaced person	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development	UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
M&E	monitoring and evaluation	UNJLC	United Nations Joint Logistics Centre
MCN	mother-and-child nutrition	VAC	vulnerability assessment committee
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development	VAM	vulnerability analysis and mapping
NGO	non-governmental organization		

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Preface

Last year the Office of Evaluation (OEDE) presented WFP's first annual evaluation report for 2004. It was well received. I am proud to present to internal and external readers the second annual report of WFP's evaluation experience during 2005.

The report describes the activities undertaken by OEDE and by regional bureaux and country offices. The second part of this report summarizes the findings and conclusions of 28 evaluations, allowing for an insight into generic and corporate issues that go beyond individual evaluations. It is not surprising that some of the generic issues are similar to those identified in 2004.

This report was discussed in the Board's annual informal consultation, which took place on 1 June 2006. The informal session expressed the wish that, in line with good practice in individual evaluation reports, a corporate management response be produced at a future date for discussion by the Board to assess progress made in terms of findings and conclusions.

The modalities of such a response will be discussed by the Internal Evaluation Committee established by the Executive Director in January 2006.

I would like to draw your attention to WFP's external evaluation website www.wfp.org/operations/evaluation, which provides access to OEDE's summary evaluation reports submitted to the Board, to the full technical reports of these evaluations and to other joint external non-WFP evaluations dealing with the broad issue of food aid.



Kees Tuinenburg
Director, OEDE

EVALUATION POLICY

at WFP

OEDE's main objectives are to: ensure an independent evaluation service for the Board, senior management and staff; support WFP in its efforts to become a better learning organization; and provide evaluation support for regional bureaux and country offices.

WFP's evaluation policy of September 2003¹ emphasizes that evaluation is a corporate responsibility. Consequently, OEDE, which traditionally had exclusive responsibility for managing evaluations, now shares the evaluation function with regional bureaux and country offices. Any programme, project or operation longer than 12 months should be evaluated once during its lifetime.

The evaluation policy encourages greater use of decentralized evaluations, including self-evaluation by staff and evaluations managed by regional bureaux or country offices using external consultants. Such evaluations have been conducted since 2001 (during the first two years on a pilot basis) for small and medium-sized operations, including country programmes (CPs), emergency operations (EMOPs) and protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs).

On the basis of the Report on the Management of Evaluation,² prepared by OEDE, additional measures were introduced in WFP's evaluation policy during 2005 to strengthen the evaluation function. These measures include the following:

Annual informal consultations, to enable the Board to gain a more informed view of evaluation activities. The first session took place on 19 May 2005 (see page 13 for details).

Establishment of a consultative internal evaluation committee, currently chaired by the Director for Results-Based Management (RBM) and composed of executive staff from the Operations, Policy and External Affairs Departments, Oversight Services, and the Office of Evaluation, and three of the six Regional Directors in rotation. The purposes of the committee are to: (i) raise the profile of evaluation through regular consultation and dialogue between senior management and OEDE; (ii) contribute to enhancing lessons learnt by ensuring that programme/policy improvements identified by evaluations and agreed upon by management are properly reflected in the design of WFP-supported programmes, projects, operations and policy; and (iii) enhance coordination between OEDE and the regional bureaux with regard to decentralized evaluations. The Circular for the Establishment of the WFP Internal Evaluation Committee was signed by the Executive Director on 23 January 2006, and the first meeting is planned for 9 March 2006.

Professionalization of the evaluation function, by filling three or four posts, including that of the Director, with candidates who have a professional background in evaluation, and by introducing a more relaxed rotation policy for these posts. In autumn, an external candidate was selected for the vacant P-4 position to take up her functions in January 2006. WFP also agreed to apply a longer rotation period for three OEDE posts (including that of the Director), of which two are already occupied by professional evaluators.

¹ "WFP's Evaluation Policy" (WFP/EB.3/2003/4-C). A summary of this policy is given in Annex III.

² "Report on the Management of Evaluation" (WFP/EB.A/2005/5-E).

Involvement of eminent outsiders for peer

reviews for important evaluations. Such a review was organized for the thematic evaluation of targeting in relief situations in June. More of these peer reviews will be conducted in 2006. The above-mentioned report also stated that a peer review of WFP's evaluation function will be conducted in 2007, similar to that undertaken for the United Nations Development programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) during 2005.

WFP programmes, projects and operations are typically evaluated according to the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. These comply with the Principles for Evaluation drawn up by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC)/Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) evaluation network.

For reasons of transparency and accountability, all OEDE summary reports are presented to the Board for consideration six months to one year after evaluation arrangements have begun; full evaluation reports are available for information. Summary and full reports are posted on the internal and external OEDE websites³. It is worth noting that in December 2005, Norway praised WFP, together with Oxfam, the Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) and World Vision, for publishing constructively critical independent evaluations of the respective agency's performance in responding to the Indian Ocean tsunami.⁴

Evaluation Activities

UNDERTAKEN BY OEDE IN 2005

OEDE focused its activities in 2005 on evaluating: (i) programme and policy issues of corporate interest; and (ii) large operations in the field of humanitarian assistance, both EMOPs and PRROs. The appropriateness of this focus was reconfirmed at the first annual informal consultation in May, at which Board members recommended that OEDE concentrate on thematic, policy and other corporate issues, and important EMOPs and PRROs. In addition, the Board encouraged the continued use of real-time evaluations as a managerial tool to provide WFP with immediate feedback on how to improve the quality of its work, as well as the use of joint evaluations.

Thematic Evaluations

During 2005, OEDE completed two major thematic reviews: WFP-supported mother-and-child nutrition (MCN) interventions, and targeting in relief situations. Both reviews had been initiated in 2004 and were based on several country case studies. In general, thematic evaluations involve extensive document reviews, case studies and consultation, often requiring two to three times as many resources and staff time as an average traditional project evaluation.

MCN Interventions. OEDE commissioned a review of MCN interventions from the Royal Tropical Institute in the Netherlands. The review consisted of three phases: a desk review (January to March 2005) of relevant WFP documents; country studies in India, Madagascar and Zambia (March to May 2005); and production of summary and full evaluation reports (May to July 2005) based on the three country studies, and a similar report on WFP's MCN interventions in Cuba prepared in 2004 by an independent external

consultant recruited by OEDE. The case studies focused on “what works in practice and why” using the following four programming principles: (i) clear situation analysis and targeting of households where insufficient access to food leads to malnutrition; (ii) community involvement and community-based approaches in MCN programme design and implementation; (iii) partnership and integration with other social-care programmes; and (iv) provision of a quality food ration, including micro-nutrient fortification. The results of the review are summarized in the Synthesis of Evaluation Findings and Lessons (see page 21).

Targeting in Relief Operations.

OEDE managed this thematic review in cooperation with WFP's Policy, Strategy and Programme Support Division (PDP), which was developing a new corporate policy for relief targeting. The timing of the review would enable the results to feed into the new policy. The objectives were to: (i) identify typical targeting challenges and opportunities in relief situations; (ii) highlight good practices; and (iii) determine priority areas for improvement. The principal review team consisted of a team leader familiar with WFP relief operations and two acknowledged, independent food aid targeting specialists. Field work took place between January and July 2005 and covered nine relief operations in Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Myanmar and Sudan (Darfur). In Darfur and Myanmar, PDP staff participated in the field missions. The initial findings of the field work were presented and discussed at a peer review in Rome in June 2005. The review's main findings are summarized in the Synthesis of Evaluation Findings and Lessons (see page 17).

Real-Time Evaluations

In 2005 OEDE conducted its second real-time evaluation, this time of the Indian Ocean tsunami response; the subject of the first real-time evaluation was the southern Africa drought response of 2002–2003. Within three weeks of the tsunami on 26 December 2004, WFP management had agreed that OEDE should undertake a real-time evaluation to assess the relevance and effectiveness of WFP's response and to assess the appropriateness of the phasing-down mechanisms and plans for converting the EMOP into a PRRO.

A two-person team visited Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand in February 2005 for two weeks, and the full four-person team visited the region for four weeks in May–early June. A complementary effort was undertaken by an independent consultant in Somalia in July 2005, and the consultant's report was included as an annex in the full tsunami evaluation report. The main evaluation team focused on the regional approach coordinated by the Asia Regional Bureau (ODB) in terms of communication, appeals, finance, and WFP's response in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, which were the worst-affected countries (see summary of main findings on page 16).

It should be noted that under the auspices of the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP), a multi-agency Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (TEC) is currently working on a synthesis report integrating both individual agency and joint thematic evaluations (see page 10). The WFP evaluation will be included.

THE SOUTHERN AFRICA DROUGHT AND THE TSUNAMI: COMPARISON OF FINDINGS OF TWO REAL-TIME EVALUATIONS

- **Staff deployment.** Both operations faced problems in deploying sufficient numbers of experienced staff in the first phase of the response. This was partly because the Emergency Response Roster did not function and partly because of coincidence of two or more international crises at the same time.
- **Assessment coordination.** With regard to assessments, in the southern Africa drought the vulnerability assessment committee (VAC) assessments led by the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) were a unique example of a highly coordinated and collaborative process that involved most agencies with proven expertise in conducting emergency needs assessments. In the tsunami response, there were not the same standing arrangements, and the early needs assessments of food and non-food needs were not as well coordinated as they could have been.
- **Inter-agency coordination.** In the southern Africa operation, the overall coordination provided by the Regional Inter-Agency Coordination and Support Office (RIACSO), launched in October 2002, ensured cohesion of the effort at a regional level. In many ways inter-agency coordination proved to be more problematic in the tsunami operation.
- **Pipeline development and food deliveries.** The situation in the tsunami response was considerably better than in the southern Africa response, where only 57 percent of foreseen WFP food aid was distributed by the end of the first year of the emergency operation.
- **NGO capacity.** In southern Africa and some of the tsunami countries – particularly Aceh/Indonesia – non-governmental organization (NGO) capacity emerged as an issue in the discussions on implementation constraints. The southern Africa evaluation concluded that a more concerted effort was required to assess NGO capacities at the outset of a large-scale EMOP and during implementation.
- **Targeting.** Targeting of beneficiaries was an issue in both operations. In southern Africa the evaluation team concluded that there should be a comprehensive review of the crop and food supply assessment mission (CFSAM) methodology at the corporate level, because this should shed more light on the intricate inter-relationship between macro-analysis of food shortfalls and micro-analysis of

household food insecurity. In the tsunami response, there were concerns over possible “inclusion errors” in the two main countries, Indonesia and Sri Lanka. In Indonesia, this was linked to the mobility of the displaced population in the first months after the disaster, making numbers difficult to quantify, while in Sri Lanka it was linked to a rather generous government welfare programme.

- **Funding.** Both operations were eventually well funded in overall terms, although the tsunami resources response was much more rapid.
- **Local and regional food procurement.** The southern Africa response saw the largest local and regional purchase operation in WFP's recent history, in part because of the genetically modified organisms (GMO). Under the tsunami response, WFP had already purchased 57 percent of estimated food requirements for the first six-month period regionally or locally by the end of the second month of the response.
- **Cash flow.** The evaluation team noted that arrangements for overall cash flow, particularly of direct support costs (DSC) and other direct operational costs (ODOC), had improved since the time of the southern Africa emergency. Although the tsunami response did not suffer from overall cash flow problems, localized cash flow in Aceh/Indonesia was problematic because of banking difficulties.
- **COMPAS.** The RTE team also noted improvements in the Commodity Movement Processing and Tracking System (COMPAS) since the southern Africa emergency; the new COMPAS 2 system had significant enhancements over the earlier system.

Joint Evaluations

United Nations Joint Logistics Centre. During 2005, OEDE finalized the review of the United Nations Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC) core unit, which is hosted by WFP, and prepared a synthesis report of all UNJLC reviews undertaken to date.⁵ The UNJLC review was undertaken as an inter-agency initiative with representatives from WFP, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNICEF and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Inter-agency guidance was provided to the consultant throughout the exercise. Evaluation findings were intended to help guide decision making on the future of

THE JOINT OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES (UNHCR)/WFP EVALUATION

In terms of efficiency, the joint WFP/UNHCR evaluation concluded that the pilot project created opportunities to rationalize operations. Depending on the country, the combined costs of secondary transport and final food distributions either remained the same or decreased as a result of opportunities to improve the distribution system. Within this overall stability or decrease of costs, there was a shift of costs from UNHCR to WFP, as anticipated.

The pilot also led to enhanced dialogue at the field level between the staff of the two agencies on many issues of mutual concern, enabling a closer dialogue on the registration of beneficiaries. The refugees' perception of UNHCR as the lead agency responsible for refugee protection and assistance did not change with the implementation of the pilot project.

The findings of this evaluation will be considered at the next high level meeting of senior managers of the two agencies, planned for April 2006⁶, and the way forward discussed at that time.

UNJLCs. In April 2005, a stakeholder workshop was held near Rome to review the synthesis report and discuss its 20 main recommendations. The synthesis review of the UNJLC was presented to the Board in November 2005.

UNHCR/WFP pilot food distribution projects.

The joint UNHCR/WFP evaluation of the pilot food distribution projects was undertaken from July 2004 to June 2005 and included country case studies of the five pilot countries – Kenya, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Uganda and Zambia. The report examines the effectiveness of the project, under which WFP assumed responsibility from UNHCR for food distributions in refugee camps and settlements. The shift was intended to improve the overall food delivery chain, particularly from the extended delivery points to final delivery points, and the food-delivery system.

Country Portfolio Evaluations

In 2005, one country portfolio evaluation was conducted in Angola. It included an analysis of the three most recent PRROs implemented, from January 2002 to December 2004, and five special

⁵ See “Annual Evaluation Report for 2004” for the summary of main findings and lessons.

⁶ At the time of writing this report, the high-level meeting had already taken place. It was agreed that the current division of labour between WFP and UNHCR in the existing pilot countries would continue. It was also agreed that future proposals for similar arrangements in other countries should come spontaneously from the field level in response to the actual needs of operations, rather than resulting from a headquarters decision.

ANGOLA PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

The evaluation noted the substantial efforts made by WFP to reach large numbers of people in urgent need of food assistance in a very short time. It recognized WFP's considerable operational flexibility as increased access to formerly remote areas and a growing caseload in 2002 and 2003 required relief food distributions to quickly reach a large number of locations. The PRRO strategy was found to permit sufficient flexibility to provide for sudden massive relief needs, within the limitations of existing resources.

The evaluation concluded that WFP largely met its objective of saving lives through the regular distribution of considerable quantities of food aid to war-affected, vulnerable populations. However, few data were collected on population figures or morbidity on a routine basis. Thus, there was little quantifiable evidence to prove that WFP had achieved this objective. Recovery activities through food for work (FFW) and food for education (FFE) were found to be relevant in the Angolan context.

operations (SOs) designed to help the PRROs to achieve their objectives.

Country Programme Evaluations

In 2005 OEDE initiated two CP evaluations and completed the evaluation of WFP's assistance to China (1979–2005) consisting of a review of WFP's first 21 years in China (1979–2000) and the evaluation of the 2001–2005 CP.

Bhutan CP. The evaluation of the Bhutan CP in September–October 2005 included the assessment of the following evaluation criteria: coherence, relevance, effectiveness and sustainability. Particular emphasis was given to the programme's main activity, school feeding. The evaluation was conducted by a three-person team, including an international consultant (team leader), a national consultant and the Chief Evaluation Officer. The evaluation summary report was presented to the Board's Annual Session in 2006.

Yemen CP. The evaluation of the Yemen CP was included in OEDE's 2005 programme of work at the request of the country director, who favoured an OEDE-managed evaluation instead of the planned evaluation by the regional bureau for

reasons of accountability. Following high levels of diversion of WFP assistance that were pointed out by an evaluation and an audit in 2000, the country office introduced measures to strengthen its focus on food management and monitoring, the effects of which should be assessed by an independent evaluation managed by OEDE.

OEDE undertook a preparatory mission in June and met country office staff and national project authorities. Field work was conducted from 17 November to 7 December. The summary evaluation report will be presented to the Board's 2006 Annual Session. The team consisted of an agricultural economist (team leader), a socio-economist and a civil engineer. As in China and Bhutan, the OEDE evaluation manager accompanied the team throughout; this arrangement proved to be useful for the field mission, and for quality control of the evaluation report and follow-up to the management response to evaluation recommendations.

Evaluation of WFP's Assistance to China

(1979–2005). The objectives of the evaluation were to review and record the main elements of WFP's 21 years of assistance to China and evaluate the current CP, with a focus on outputs, impact and lessons that may be of corporate interest, particularly in view of the phase-out of WFP development assistance. The exercise comprised a desk review of project documents, progress and evaluation reports from 1979–2000 and a field mission in May 2005.

The team made extensive use of previous evaluations, including a report on WFP/International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) partnership. The team, headed by a staff member of the Investment Centre of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), included a member of the national project management office, through whom it coordinated the programme, who looked at cross-cutting issues such as gender and partnership, particularly with respect to the Government and IFAD. The draft evaluation report underwent a peer review by WFP, FAO

and IFAD staff who had not been involved in the evaluation; the final report was presented to the Board's First Regular Session of 2006.

WFP delivered 4 million mt of food, worth US\$1 billion. The Government contributed US\$1.16 billion as counterpart funds; IFAD provided loans of US\$148 million. About 30 million people benefited from WFP assistance during the period under review. WFP-supported projects during the 1980s and 1990s achieved exceptional results in terms of creating productive assets and enhancing the development of poor households in project areas. This should, of course, be seen in the light of the general development which took place in China during this period. The evaluation found that, on balance, WFP's experience in China was successful.

With regard to the 2001–2005 CP, the evaluation found that consistent government input in terms of food, cash and commitment played an essential

role in implementation. However, ambitious coverage plans combined with shortfalls in WFP contributions in 2003 and 2004 resulted in resources being spread too thinly, which reduced the effectiveness of some activities. The programme approach⁷ does not require technical appraisals and reviews at the activity level, which in certain locations negatively affected the outcome of soil and water conservation activities.

Under the agreement between the Government and WFP, CP activities terminated at the end of December 2005. WFP will keep a small office to maintain relations with the Government.

THE CHINA EXPERIENCE

WFP's successful experience in China can be attributed to a number of factors, including:

- ▶ government commitment and support in terms of counterpart funds and staffing;
- ▶ ownership of the WFP-assisted projects by the provincial and county development plans and the various implementation groups;
- ▶ integrated approaches to poverty eradication, which facilitated a combination of activities concerning asset creation, improved productivity and human development to increase the capacity of the poor to help themselves and thus ensure sustainability;
- ▶ emphasis on income diversification of farm and non-farm employment in raising household incomes;
- ▶ dedicated programme management committed to the objectives agreed upon between WFP and the Government;
- ▶ strong commitment and involvement by the beneficiaries;
- ▶ adequate targeting of assistance in remote, resource-poor and food-deficit areas; and
- ▶ good coordination with partners.

DESIGN PHASE OF SUDAN EMOP (DARFUR) EVALUATION

For the Darfur operation – Sudan EMOP 10339 – the field work portion of the design phase included the following activities:

- ▶ drafting a concept paper and first-draft terms of reference for the evaluation;
- ▶ identifying research products useful for the evaluation and ongoing design of the next PRRO, including: (i) a summary of the Darfur crisis, the overall humanitarian response to date and WFP's role in it; (ii) a stakeholder analysis of each of the stakeholder groups with an interest in WFP's programme; (iii) a review of evaluation issues identified by stakeholder groups or emerging from recent and historic evaluations in Darfur and Sudan; and (iv) a bibliographic database of all documents relevant to the evaluation;
- ▶ hiring of Tufts University as external contractor to lead the design phase; and
- ▶ a pre-evaluation field mission to Darfur by the evaluation manager, design team leader and researcher to solicit inputs from stakeholders and collect background data.

The mission met with more than 80 stakeholders, including WFP and other United Nations agencies, donors, NGOs, government officials, civil society organizations, private-sector organizations, beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. An evaluation advisory group was identified, consisting of evaluation peers from OCHA, the Netherlands Foreign Ministry, ALNAP and the NGO sector. All advisory group members have recent experience in designing or conducting humanitarian evaluations in Darfur.

⁷ The Programme approach was adopted worldwide for WFP's development portfolio in the 1990s.

Traditional Project Evaluations

Evaluations were completed during 2005 for the Somalia PRRO and the Latin America PRRO, which were both initiated in 2004. Since the successor PRRO documents have not yet been finalized, the evaluation reports will be presented to the Board's 2006 Annual Session and Second Regular Session. Ideally, evaluation reports are submitted to the same Board session as the new project document presented for approval so that Board members can use evaluation findings when examining the latter document.

The field work portion of the design phase of the Sudan EMOP (Darfur) evaluation was completed at the end of 2005.

At the end of the year, the design phase of the following evaluations began: Colombia PRRO, Tajikistan PRRO, Niger EMOP and the Business Process Review (BPR).

OEDE and External Evaluations

During 2005, OEDE was involved in the following three external evaluations.

Tsunami Evaluation Coalition. TEC is a multi-agency effort under the auspices of ALNAP to assess the international response to the tsunami. TEC members have been working together since early 2005 on five thematic evaluations: (i) coordination, including civil-military issues, (ii) needs assessment, (iii) impact on local and national capacities, (iv) linking relief, rehabilitation and development, and (v) the international community's funding response, including the role of the media. A synthesis report focusing on the emergency and initial recovery phases of the response is scheduled for release in June 2006; it will integrate evaluation findings and learning included in individual agency evaluations and the TEC thematic evaluations. OEDE plans to present an information note with the main findings and lessons from these TEC evaluations to the Board's 2006 Second Regular Session.

OEDE contributed US\$10,000 toward funding core TEC management. OEDE staff reviewed

and provided inputs to the TEC design, the terms of reference of the two thematic evaluations,⁸ and the draft evaluation findings, and participated in discussion of the design and implementation of the TEC communication and dissemination strategy and an action plan for the synthesis report. It is likely that the TEC will enter a second phase in May 2006 and that WFP will provide continued support.

Real-Time Evaluation of the Humanitarian Response to the Darfur Crisis.

OEDE participated in and provided US\$25,000 in financial assistance to the OCHA-led real-time evaluation of the United Nations humanitarian response to the Darfur crisis. OEDE staff participated in the Core Learning Group, providing comments on evaluation design, mission terms of reference, draft reports, final reports and management recommendation matrices. OEDE facilitated initial communications between the evaluation team leader and the WFP office in Sudan, and throughout the evaluation facilitated communications and data collection for Headquarters; OEDE coordinated information requests from the evaluation team to Headquarters units and oversaw the RTE data-collection surveys by the Human Resources, Policy and Programme Support and Resources Divisions and coordinated circulation of the draft and final reports of the evaluation missions in Headquarters. The report of this OCHA-led evaluation is available on OEDE's Web pages on the WFP's public web site.

Joint evaluation of WFP's Enabling Development

Policy. As indicated in the Annual Evaluation Report of 2004, at the request of seven main donors – Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy and the United States – an external joint evaluation of WFP's Enabling Development Policy was undertaken between 2003 and early 2005 by a team of independent consultants. The Director of OEDE was a member of the steering committee to guide the evaluation and chaired a WFP working group of directors and heads of departments to facilitate the work of the evaluation teams and feedback from WFP on the draft reports.

EVALUATIONS, REVIEWS AND OTHER REPORTS UNDERTAKEN BY OEDE AND COMPLETED IN 2005⁹

- ▶ Evaluation of PRRO 10233 in Afghanistan
- ▶ Evaluation of WFP's Development and Recovery Portfolio in Uganda
- ▶ Study of WFP's follow-up to evaluation recommendations
- ▶ Real-time evaluation of WFP's response to the Indian Ocean tsunami
- ▶ Joint review of the WFP/UNHCR pilot food-distribution project
- ▶ Review of the UNJLC
- ▶ Evaluation of the Angola portfolio of activities
- ▶ Evaluation of WFP's assistance to China
- ▶ Thematic review of targeting in relief situations
- ▶ Thematic review of mother and child nutrition interventions
- ▶ Report on the management of evaluation
- ▶ Annual Evaluation Report for 2004

EVALUATIONS OR REVIEWS IN PROGRESS AND TENTATIVE PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD

- ▶ Evaluation of the Business Process Review (for the Board's 2006 Annual Session)
- ▶ Evaluation of Bhutan CP (for the Board's 2006 Annual Session)
- ▶ Evaluation of Yemen CP (for the Board's 2006 Annual Session)
- ▶ Evaluation of Somalia PRRO (for the Board's 2006 Annual Session)
- ▶ Evaluation of Niger EMOP (for the Board's 2006 Annual Session)
- ▶ Evaluation of Latin America PRRO (for the Board's 2006 Second Regular Session)
- ▶ Evaluation of Tajikistan PRRO (for the Board's 2006 Second Regular Session)
- ▶ Evaluation of Darfur EMOP (for the Board's 2006 Second Regular Session)
- ▶ Evaluation of Colombia PRRO (for the Board's 2006 Second Regular Session)

In February 2005, an informal Board session was organized to share the preliminary findings of the evaluation. A document was presented by WFP to the Board in November 2005 addressing the recommendations of the external evaluation. A review of progress made in implementing the recommended actions will be presented to the Board at its Second Regular Session in 2006.

OEDE Support to Decentralized Evaluations

OEDE provided evaluation support to regional bureaux and country offices whenever requested. Evaluation officers commented on draft terms of reference, proposed composition of missions and recommended qualified consultants, for example for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Lesotho, Mali, and Sudan evaluations. Evaluation reports were not routinely sent to OEDE for quality control.¹⁰ They vary in scope; the quality of the reports had generally improved compared with 2004. OEDE uses the main findings of the decentralized evaluations for the synthesis of evaluation findings and lessons in the Annual Evaluation Report.

Since the introduction of decentralized evaluations in the WFP evaluation policy in 2003, two issues remain problematic: funding and evaluation capacity. OEDE-managed evaluations are funded from the Programme Support and Administration (PSA) budget under OEDE's biennial PSA budget allocation based on a Board-approved programme of work. It should be possible to fund decentralized evaluations of EMOPs and PRROs from their DSC budgets, but regional bureaux and country offices are currently facing problems in finding sufficient funds. With regard to WFP's development portfolio, funds are available for appraisal, project preparation and evaluation, but they are limited and do not cover all the requirements.

⁹ Includes all evaluations, reviews and other reports undertaken by OEDE and presented to the Board in 2005 for consideration, and three evaluation reports completed in 2005 that were postponed to the Board's 2006 First Regular session.

¹⁰ Nineteen evaluations were completed, 80 percent of the programme of work for 2005: two were regional bureau-managed evaluations – 40 percent of the planned programme of work – eight were country office-managed evaluations – 88 percent of the planned programme of work – and nine were country office self-evaluations – 90 percent of the planned programme of work. Armenia, Georgia and Mali used the after-action review (AAR) method on a pilot basis for the self-evaluation. With regard to evaluations managed by regional bureaux, the planned evaluations of the DPRK EMOP and the Sri Lanka and Sudan PRROs were not conducted. The planned Yemen CP evaluation was replaced by an OEDE-managed evaluation; that for Cameroon was postponed to 2006. The planned country office-managed evaluation for the Kenya EMOP was postponed to 2006; the planned self-evaluation for the Tajikistan PRRO was replaced by an OEDE-managed evaluation in the first half of 2006.

There are no dedicated evaluation officers or monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officers in the regional bureaux to provide advice on evaluation questions; OEDE does not have the capacity to take a more active role in building regional evaluation capacity. These important issues will need to be clarified in the Internal Evaluation Committee.

FOCUS ON LEARNING

A study by OEDE in 2004 of management compliance with evaluation recommendations showed that of 363 recommendations, 54 percent had been fully implemented and 34 percent partially implemented (WFP/EB.A/2005/7-B).

With a view to more systematic measurement of its contribution to Management Objective 4, as mentioned in the 2004 report, OEDE continues to work on the development of a web-based application for posting, tracking and reporting evaluation recommendations. Country offices, regional bureaux and Headquarters divisions responsible for implementing the recommendations that apply to them submit the follow-up action directly to the OEDE website. The indicator can be tracked on an ongoing basis and reported at any time. This will be complemented by analytical studies to assess (i) the factors that influence the extent to which recommendations are implemented; and (ii) the impact of OEDE evaluation recommendations on improved programme quality, operational support and policy formulation.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND EXCHANGE

In 2005, the Information and Communications Technology Division (ICT) and OEDE completed the design of the OEDE web pages on WFP's public website (<http://www.wfp.org/operations/evaluation/>), making evaluation products accessible to a broader audience. These pages include WFP evaluation policy documents, OEDE's biennial programme of work, summary and full evaluation reports, reports on evaluations related to food aid and food security undertaken by other agencies, and M&E training material. Links are provided to evaluation websites of other United Nations agencies, evaluation networks and government evaluation websites. The same information is available for WFP staff on the internal M&E knowledge base website.

In late 2005, OEDE began to prepare two-page evaluation briefs summarizing the main findings, recommendations and lessons of individual evaluations. To date, three briefs have been prepared: the real-time evaluation of the Indian Ocean tsunami response, the evaluation of the Angola portfolio and the China CP evaluation. They were posted on the public WFP web site in early 2006.

Activities

Improving Self-Evaluation

In the context of the Practical Advice Sharing System (PASS-*it-on*) initiative to enhance corporate learning, PDP is developing during-action reviews (DARs) and AARs to generate learning through self-assessment for improved performance. Their design draws to a large extent on ALNAP's work on improving performance through improved learning¹¹.

DARs and AARs take the form of a workshop and are based on four main questions: What did we set out to do? What did we achieve? Why did things go as they did? What would we do differently next time? There is a fundamental principle of "no attribution, no retribution", as it is not an exercise in accountability.

During 2005, OEDE explored ways to focus the concept of self evaluation to make it more learning-oriented and participatory,¹² and worked with PDP on AARs, examining ways in which AARs could complement or replace self-evaluations in view of the similarities in the tools. For the time being, it is likely that both tools will continue to be used.

A "one-tool" approach combining self-evaluation and AARs for the Georgia and the Eritrea PRROs was piloted in April and June. These pilots helped to bring the AAR methodology closer to the guiding principles of self-evaluation in terms of focus by selecting focus issues in advance of the DDR/AAR and of involvement of implementing partners and use of monitoring data. Experience gained from the pilots will help OEDE to revise the M&E guidelines module.

Evaluation Work Plan for 2006–2007

A first-draft work plan for 2006–2007 was discussed at the informal consultation on evaluation in May 2005 and submitted for approval with WFP's biennial management plan at the Board's Second Regular Session in 2005.

Preparations for the two-year rolling work plan began in December 2004 with a two-day retreat of OEDE staff to review major relief operations and identify thematic evaluations of corporate interest, building on previous work plans. Spreadsheets for decentralized evaluations by region were then distributed to all regional bureaux, listing basic information for each WFP-supported project, programme and operation and indicating whether it was proposed for an OEDE-managed evaluation. In early 2005, regional bureaux were invited to indicate which operations they proposed to evaluate, and whether through evaluations managed by the regional bureaux, country offices or self-evaluations. There were discussions with the Board at the informal consultation and with management to identify thematic evaluations of corporate value.

Programme Guidance Manual

In view of the considerable growth of programme guidance material over the last years, WFP management decided to review the *Programme Guidance Manual* to refocus attention on the essential guidance needed by country offices, with links if necessary to more detailed guidance provided by specialized units. OEDE described the evaluation process from identification of need to dissemination of evaluation results, including links to the M&E training modules issued by OEDE in 2002.

Informal Consultation on Evaluation

On 19 May 2005, the first informal session on evaluation was held with Board members to discuss the draft reports on the Management of Evaluation and the Annual Evaluation Report for 2004 and the proposed 2006–2007 work plan for OEDE. Delegates expressed great appreciation for this kind of informal consultation, which gave them the opportunity to discuss evaluation findings; the two-hour discussion was considered insufficient, however, to consider all the issues in a meaningful

¹¹ ALNAP, 2002. *Annual review. Improving performance through improved learning*, pp. 37–43.

¹² This activity has been initiated in order to provide inputs for the revision of the M&E guidelines, Module 6: How to plan and undertake a self-evaluation. The M&E guidelines were issued by OEDE on December 2002.

way. The OEDE Annual Evaluation Report was well received, especially the synthesis section. Board members felt that they had as much to gain from lessons learned as WFP management.

Steering Group on Governance

OEDE was involved in the Steering Group on Governance, examining outstanding issues related to WFP's Evaluation Policy. On the basis of the discussions, WFP prepared a report on the management of evaluation that was presented at the Board's Annual Session in 2005 for consideration. The document concluded with a management protocol (see Annex II) summarizing the principles for WFP's centralized evaluation function.

Participation in Groups and Networks

Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action. OEDE is a member of ALNAP. In June and December 2005, OEDE staff attended the ALNAP biennial meetings in the Hague and Brussels. The first meeting was devoted to the tsunami and Darfur crises. The agenda of the December meeting included the TEC communication and dissemination strategy. ALNAP provides state-of-the-art knowledge with respect to evaluations of humanitarian assistance programmes. The ALNAP annual reviews aim to advance understanding and practice in terms of how the quality of humanitarian action can be improved.

United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).

OEDE is also a member of UNEG, whose annual meeting in April¹³ was hosted in Rome by FAO, IFAD and WFP. At this meeting, UNEG agreed "Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the United Nations System," to which OEDE had contributed as a member of the working group. For the first time, issues related to the evaluation of humanitarian assistance programmes were put on the agenda of this meeting. One session, chaired by the Director of OEDE, was devoted to this subject. At the end of the meeting, four UNEG task forces were formed: the Quality Stamp for evaluation and task forces for RBM and evaluation, evaluation capacity development, and country-level evaluation.

OEDE is co-chairing with the evaluation service of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) the Quality Stamp task force, whose objectives are to support UNEG members in applying the norms and establishing a quality-assurance tool that uses these norms. UNIDO prepared the checklist of quality issues to be used as tools for self-assessment by UNEG members; WFP arranged for the services of a consultant to process and compile the self-assessments and prepare a synopsis and baseline report on the current situation in relation to compliance with norms and standards. The report, available on the UNEG web site (www.uneval.org/uneq)¹⁴, will be submitted to the next UNEG meeting in March 2006 in Paris.

Programme Review Committee. OEDE contributed to the Programme Review Committee (PRC) by providing comments in writing to ensure that recommendations and lessons learned from evaluations were incorporated in the design of new activities. OEDE has initiated a review of the process. First results show that OEDE's inputs for the PRC represent a heavy workload for evaluation officers: 72 sessions, an average of 4.3 sessions per month, were held during 2005. OEDE staff provided comments at 52 sessions, 72 percent of the total, focusing on issues of monitoring, reporting and evaluation, and targeting and implementation. OEDE is currently looking into follow-up actions to enhance its contribution to the PRC.

Training

OEDE gives high priority to training through the International Programme for Development Evaluation and other courses. In view of staff reassignments in mid-2005¹⁵, only one evaluation officer participated in 2005 in an "E-learning" training on evaluation. The training was based on 12 half-day modules, of which four were completed during a seminar and the remaining eight through "E-learning". It was felt, however, that the course content and case study material of the "E-learning" portion was less relevant to WFP. Lack of interaction with other evaluation professionals because of the distance-learning element was also considered to be a disadvantage.

¹³ UNEG was established in January 1984 (originally under the name of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation). Its main objective is to provide a forum for the discussion of evaluation issues within the UN system. The OECD/DAC evaluation network and international institutions attend the annual meeting as observers.

¹⁴ The link is on the WFP web site (www.wfp.org/operations/evaluation).

¹⁵ In July 2005, two evaluation officers were re-assigned; one replacement arrived in November 2005 and the second in January 2006.

SYNTHESIS OF EVALUATION

Findings and Lessons

This section draws from the main findings of 28 evaluations of WFP-supported projects, programmes and operations, and thematic reviews completed during 2005; 9 of the evaluations were conducted by OEDE, 19 by regional bureaux and country offices (see Annex I). Findings of the synthesis report of the external “Joint Evaluation of the Effectiveness and Impact of the Enabling Development Policy of the World Food Programme”, mentioned in last year’s report, are summarized again in this section.

Findings and lessons are grouped into two categories: WFP’s humanitarian assistance portfolio and its development portfolio.

Humanitarian Assistance Portfolio

The review of 16 OEDE-managed and decentralized evaluations in the field of humanitarian assistance revealed that the main issues reiterate many in last year’s report. The issues can be grouped as follows: (i) demonstrating results; (ii) timeliness of response and level of resources; (iii) partnership; (iv) flexibility; (v) targeting; (vi) transition from relief to recovery; and (vii) phase-out and exit strategy.

Demonstrating Results

According to the evaluations reviewed, WFP has met its main objectives of saving lives and maintaining or improving nutritional status. General or targeted food distributions prevented beneficiaries from resorting to “negative coping mechanisms” such as begging, as in Armenia and Georgia, and selling assets or taking children out of school, as in Afghanistan and Uganda. WFP assistance to schools and kindergartens helped to keep institutions open. The Angola evaluation drew attention to the fact that school feeding also promoted community participation and reconciliation.

Evaluations reported that WFP assistance contributed to Strategic Objective 1, but few data were routinely collected on population figures, mortality and morbidity, so it was not possible to quantify the extent to which lives were saved. The evaluation of the Great Lakes Region PRRO found that nutrition data collected were not of an internationally acceptable standard and thus not reliable. Other evaluations noted that monitoring often operated separately from vulnerability assessments – Angola, Afghanistan, DRC, Russian Federation and Uganda – concentrating on input/output measurement, and that there was insufficient analysis of outcomes in relation to objectives. In the DRC, insecurity, distances and the large number of activities made monitoring difficult; discrepancies between the reports of the sub-offices and central office were noted by the evaluation. The evaluation recommended that sub-offices needed to be fully staffed and that personnel should be regularly trained.

Lack of baseline and follow-up surveys prevented the Guinea Bissau country office from assessing the outcomes of the PRRO and reporting on Strategic Objective outcomes. As pointed out by the self-evaluation of the Russian Federation EMOP, there is a need to align the M&E system with RBM requirements so that information on outcomes and perhaps impact can be reported. The Angola evaluation recommended that WFP enhance its capacity to measure outcome-level achievements and carry out regular self-evaluations.

The Georgia self-evaluation suggested that a one-day data collection and processing pilot should precede the food-for-work (FFW) outcome assessment. This would allow questionnaires and checklists to be verified for accuracy, as well as provide an

FROM THE REAL-TIME EVALUATION OF WFP'S RESPONSE TO THE INDIAN OCEAN TSUNAMI

The Indian Ocean Tsunami Real-Time Evaluation concluded that WFP food aid had provided a vital safety net in the five months following the tsunami. WFP's assistance contributed to saving lives in the two countries most affected – Indonesia and Sri Lanka – but it proved to be more difficult to achieve the second EMOP objective of “promoting the rehabilitation of housing, community infrastructure and livelihoods” in the optimistic timeframe proposed in some of the initial planning documents.

The operation was well funded soon after the tsunami. Significant cash donations enabled WFP to maximize local and regional procurement, speeding delivery of relief food and helping local economies.

The tendency in Indonesia and Sri Lanka was for initial needs assessments to be high. In Indonesia in particular, some of the assessment inclusion errors were probably a result of the high degree of initial mobility of the displaced population, with people registering in internally displaced persons' (IDP) camps but not always living in them consistently. In Aceh, Indonesia, there was the added problem of accurately identifying the numerous IDPs living with host families. Needs assessment may not have taken sufficiently into account the medium-term effect of remittance income from relatives working abroad.

WFP was unable to achieve rapid mobilization of sufficient experienced staff with programming backgrounds. Staff turnover and the allocation of staff between different locations were issues: too many staff remained in capital cities and not enough in sub-offices. The evaluation recommended that the functioning of the Emergency Response Roster be reviewed and strengthened, particularly with a view to establishing a cadre of experienced programming staff who can be deployed quickly in an emergency.

By mid-year, it was possible to start moving away from general distributions to more targeted approaches, including some pilot cash approaches instead of food programmes. Markets were working reasonably well in Aceh and Sri Lanka, so the real-time evaluation was of the view that cash approaches could be further developed.

The evaluation recommended that general food distributions and targeted food aid be continued into the second half of 2005.

It was recommended that a senior emergency manager in Rome should be appointed to ensure rapid

and disciplined deployment of WFP assets in a major emergency, oversee preparedness and follow-up implementation of actions under the authority of the Senior Deputy Executive Director.

Gender experts should be deployed early in an emergency to work with other sectors in mainstreaming gender concerns and in assessing the achievement of gender mainstreaming activities.

opportunity for differing interpretations of the terms, methods and approaches between WFP staff and implementing partners to be identified.

Timeliness of the Response and Level of Resources

Most evaluations identified shortfalls in resources and delays in pipeline deliveries as major constraints to programme performance. In the Angola, Great Lakes and Russian Federation evaluations, the teams drew attention to the fact that data did not permit an assessment of the impact on beneficiaries of pipeline breaks, leading to reduced rations and/or eliminating FFW activities. These evaluations recommended the development of contingency plans at the design stage for coping with reduced rations. As a matter of routine, strategies need to be developed and in place to cope with resource shortfalls. In the Algeria PRRO, the establishment of buffer stocks has been effective in smoothing delays and bridging gaps in food deliveries to the refugees, in spite of lack of collateral for their utilization and replenishment by WFP. The Russian Federation self-evaluation found that more attention needed to be given to mobilizing resources and planning availability of commodities well in advance of the planned distribution date. Pipeline documents need to be reconciled each month to estimate the needs and shortfalls for at least the following three months.

The BPR, introduced in 2003 to improve resources and pipeline flows through advance funding mechanisms against committed or anticipated resources, has been piloted in nine regional operations or countries to date. As noted elsewhere in this report, OEDE initiated an evaluation of the BPR in the fourth quarter of 2005 and this should be completed by mid-2006.

Partnership

Most evaluations identified a shortage of skilled implementing partners for service delivery and monitoring, particularly in remote areas, including technical services and financial inputs. This lack of partners reduced the effectiveness of the programmes.

The Angola and Russian Federation evaluations recommended that WFP should assess performance of implementing partners more systematically. Fewer partnerships with larger and more capable implementing partners would increase WFP's effectiveness, but as noted in the Angola evaluation, such partners are not always available. The Russian Federation self-evaluation suggested that performance targets and indicators be established and partner performance measured objectively.

There is an urgent need for WFP to clarify UNJLC's role and its relationship to WFP. Some users of the common service felt that WFP tended to give priority to its own staff in the use of UNJLC assets. Separate UNJLC and United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) reviews have looked at these issues; recommendations have been made for improvements in the common services provided by WFP.

Flexibility

The PRRO strategy allowed sufficient flexibility to respond to changing situations, though with limited resources. In Angola, WFP was able to display operational flexibility as access to formerly remote areas increased and a growing caseload required WFP to expand relief food distribution rapidly to many locations. The evaluations of the PRROs for Afghanistan, DRC, Great Lakes Region and Uganda emphasized the utility of the flexible PRRO approach which allowed coordinated response to changing situations. In the Great Lakes PRRO, the evaluation noted with concern that cross-cutting issues of gender, HIV/AIDS and the environment had been included too late in the PRRO, resulting in insufficient resources for these activities.

Targeting

The thematic review of WFP's experience in targeting food aid in relief operations found that WFP has made significant strides in targeting in recent years, including strengthened support for and participation in multi-stakeholder targeting structures, increased development and utilization of community-based targeting and distribution modalities, and a capacity to improve targeting over time in all types of EMOPs.

The review team found that WFP's increased engagement in multi-stakeholder targeting structures improved coordination, enhanced utilization of inter-agency experience and capacity, and strengthened stakeholder acceptance of the analysis and conclusions. The use of community-based targeting and distribution engaged communities more effectively in the identification of their neediest members, which improved the accuracy of targeting and reduced administrative and food-distribution costs.

These improvements were praised, but the thematic review found that the cross-fertilization of best practices across WFP operations could be improved: individual WFP operations showed an impressive capacity for self-improvement over time, but operations in other countries were not able to benefit from WFP's experience.

Others areas for improvement include improved use of alternative or cost-benefit analysis in deciding food aid modalities, which could reduce double coverage and administrative demands on WFP and its partners, and improved monitoring of targeting assumptions and outcomes.

Many evaluations highlighted the usefulness of vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) to inform targeting; suggestions were made to improve it further through more refined assessments – for example by shifting from the district to the village level as in Armenia and Georgia. The evaluation of the Russian Federation EMOP recommended development of new criteria that cross-referenced qualitative and quantitative indicators such as dependency ratios and income

and expenditure but still allow for households that do not meet the criteria to be included.

Poor security and lack of access have impeded WFP and implementing partners in DRC and the Russian Federation. No systematic targeting of beneficiaries took place in the DRC or Great Lakes PRROs; in DRC this resulted in many beneficiaries being counted twice.

The targeting thematic review and other programme reviews suggested that additional investment in targeting would make WFP more effective and efficient. Greater emphasis on more accurate targeting would bring WFP closer to achieving its goal of reaching the right people and would result in savings as a result of a reduction in inclusion errors. It was suggested that priority action be taken in this regard.

Transition from Relief to Recovery

The DRC and Great Lakes PRRO evaluations drew attention to the absence of criteria, indicators or guidance for indicating the shift from general food distributions to targeted interventions and vice versa. The Great Lakes evaluation pointed out that it should not be assumed that the decision is based on WFP policy only: it needs to be guided through phase-out mechanisms based on indicators. The Russian Federation self-evaluation emphasized that guidance needs to be available for determining when to opt for development and when to opt for recovery and for assessing fundraising implications. Cross-sectoral, sample-based needs assessments are needed to clarify assistance requirements and resolve the current relief-or-recovery dilemma and determine programme priorities. The Afghanistan evaluation argued that general food distributions can indirectly contribute to recovery without FFW activities: relief food aid helps to free beneficiaries' time, so they can choose their own rehabilitation activities.

Recovery activities consisted of FFW, FFE, food-for-training (FFT) and MCN activities contributing to Strategic Objectives 2, 3, and 4. In Armenia, FFW created well-organized community

groups. The Armenia and Georgia self-evaluations stressed that interaction with local governments and capacity training for community groups is very important to ensure that FFW projects reflect the needs of communities.

A set of realistic work norms should be prepared for each FFW activity that reflects the capacity and potential of the group. Consideration should be given to basing work norms on team outputs, bearing in mind that a team might have some members whose ability to work is limited.

In Angola, FFW provided food in exchange for labour instead of addressing the needs of food-insecure households to improve livelihoods in a sustainable manner; food served as budgetary support for implementing agencies rather than a tool for enhancing community development. In Guinea-Bissau, the duration of FFW projects was too short to achieve impact.

MCN and nutrition education have not been implemented in the Uganda PRRO as planned, which limits the potential of the interventions and prevents effective use of resources. The scope of school feeding in Angola was constrained by weak government services, limited funding and commitment, and a shortage of skilled implementation partners. Few activities adequately reflected priority areas for women such as literacy, skills training and income generation. In Armenia, many participants did not find self-employment after training offered by implementing partners in micro-enterprise development because of the lack of grants, micro-credit or micro-finance tools. It should be a rule that the commitment and implementation capacity of partners must be ascertained before launching FFW, MCN, school feeding or training, the scope of which should depend on the availability of non-food resources.

The findings of evaluations presented to the Board during 2005¹⁶ and 2004 with regard to the relevance of recovery activities were included in the 2004 Annual Evaluation Report or in the thematic evaluation of the PRRO category presented to the Board in February 2004. OD addressed the

issues raised by the PRRO thematic evaluation in an information note¹⁷ presented to the Board in February 2005, but the impact of proposed measures will only be felt in the future.

FROM RELIEF TO RECOVERY – LESSONS LEARNED FROM RECOVERY OPERATIONS

- ▶ WFP's recovery activities have more impact when they contribute to broader recovery strategies and common goals set by governments than when WFP provides resources to stand-alone recovery activities.
- ▶ Results, especially at the outcome level, depend on the strength of partnerships. Unrealistic assumptions about a partner's ability to deliver technical, financial or supervisory inputs can affect results negatively.
- ▶ Currently, monitoring systems do not systematically collect information on results at the outcome level to determine the effectiveness of recovery activities in protecting and creating livelihoods and durable assets.
- ▶ Recovery programming is more demanding in terms of staff and time. This is often underestimated when moving from relief to recovery. In some cases, evaluation teams found that results expected at the outcome level, especially those related to Strategic Objective 2, were too ambitious in terms of the resources available.
- ▶ Some operations run activities with several hundred cooperating partners. The management of so many contracts is time-consuming and may not be cost-effective. Results cannot be adequately monitored for so many activities.
- ▶ The transition from a relief operation to a recovery operation depends on correct assessment of the operational context. Political considerations may influence the decision to move to a recovery operation rather than an independent assessment of the situation. Such decisions are very context-specific, but guidance should be given to country offices on indicators that would trigger a change in operational mode.

Phase-out/Exit Strategy

The issue of phase-out and sustainability has been raised in the context of Armenia, Georgia and the Russian Federation. The Russian Federation self-evaluation stated that involving communities in the programmes and encouraging their contributions to school feeding and FFW programmes promoted a spirit of ownership, which is an essential factor for sustainability. A strategy for the gradual transfer of responsibility for social welfare assistance to government counterparts is needed; this should be reflected at the community level through the adoption of community-based targeting to ensure full understanding of vulnerability.

The Georgia evaluation recommended that ownership and responsibility for maintenance of all targeted assets rehabilitated through FFW should be stated in project documents. Asset-maintenance groups need to be created.

In the Angola PRRO, little progress was made in linking short-term relief measures with longer-term recovery efforts because of the absence of a medium-term exit strategy for transferring responsibility to the Government, which was only marginally involved in WFP's programmes. The Government's weak financial and technical engagement limited the potential of WFP activities to contribute to sustainable recovery.

Development Portfolio

OEDE-managed and decentralized evaluations of WFP's development portfolio during 2005 and the external evaluation of WFP's Enabling Development Policy confirmed that programmes were consistent with WFP's Enabling Development Policy, national development priorities and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

The review of 13 evaluation reports revealed that the main issues affecting programme performance and sustainability are similar to those of the humanitarian assistance portfolio: partnership, capacity-building, funding and M&E. The following issues have been identified: (i) demonstrating results; (ii) timeliness of the

¹⁷ "Information Note on the Implementation Plan of the PRRO Evaluation" (WFP/EB.1/2005/6-B).

response and level of resources, including DSC and ODOC; (iii) partnership; (iv) CP approach; (v) project management and coordination; and (vi) exit strategy.

Demonstrating Results

In the evaluations reviewed, WFP food assistance was considered an appropriate input in support of project objectives. In Senegal, for example, enrolment at WFP-assisted schools increased on average by 12 percent per year against 8 percent in non-assisted schools; girls' enrolment increased by 15 percent against 10 percent in non-assisted schools. In WFP-assisted schools, there was 3 percent less repetition.

The Nicaragua CP evaluation noted improved attitudes among parents as to the importance of education and of education committees. Providing a food supplement enriched with micronutrients together with training in health and sanitation resulted in better use of the food distributed and improved knowledge about health and sanitation.

In Mali, WFP food assistance contributed to improved use of health services and better recovery rates.

The Ethiopia CP evaluation reported that RBM was functioning; well documented reporting of performance was available in all three components. The mission found, however, that closer collaboration was needed between the RBM team and the VAM technicians to define the type of data that could be most appropriate for measuring progress at several levels: achieving results and targets, levels of accomplishment of objectives and short-term and longer-term impacts involving planned and unplanned beneficiaries, progress in relation to strategic objectives and long-term sustainability. The RBM system should include a section with indicators to guide exit, including community sustainability and management capacity.

In the Chad, Mali, Malawi and Zambia CPs, this was not yet the case. Evaluations found weak monitoring and reporting of outputs and outcomes.

FROM THE EVALUATION OF WFP'S ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY

The external joint evaluation of WFP's Enabling Development Policy confirmed that it was sound and that its principles had the potential for improving the quality and relevance of EMOPs and PRROs. The evaluation recommended that the policy be further supported by WFP and donors, and emphasized that WFP-supported interventions achieved better development results when they were targeted to already resourced strategies and programmes such as national and local poverty reduction plans, a conclusion that was also reached by other evaluations of WFP's development portfolio.

The evaluation recommended that WFP programming for development should concentrate on the following three strategic priorities:

- ▶ further integration with poverty-reduction frameworks by giving more attention to partnerships, promoting activities in which food aid is a complement to other resources and integrating activities into development programming;
- ▶ improved targeting of the most vulnerable and excluded groups by limiting the number of resource-poor areas in a country, supporting national safety nets, encouraging men and women to participate in WFP-supported projects to close the gender gap and addressing HIV/AIDS through more context-specific approaches; and
- ▶ further mainstreaming nutrition priorities by developing guidelines for nutrition interventions.

With regard to implementation of the policy, it was recommended that WFP management, the Board and donors consider resource-related issues, particularly the availability of direct operational costs (DOC), which are essential for complementary non-food inputs. RBM should be applied throughout WFP, which should consider applying the guiding principles of the Enabling Development Policy to EMOPs and PRROs. WFP addressed the recommendations of the external evaluation in an information note to the Board in November 2005. A review of progress made in implementing the recommended actions will be presented to the Board in November 2006.

Reports were frequently delayed and lacking prior analysis. The development of clear M&E strategies including outputs and outcomes and the inclusion of M&E costs in budgets and training have been recommended. The Mali CP evaluation stressed that more monitoring staff were needed and that M&E should be harmonized with the programmes of other partners.

Timeliness of the Response and Level of Resources

Most evaluations identified shortfalls in resources and delays in pipeline deliveries as major constraints to programme performance. In Uganda, food rations were reduced for the development portfolio, with the result that periodic food shortages could not be alleviated. The low level of funding affected the level of DSC and ODOC and hence the ability of the country office to complement food with non-food inputs such as technical expertise and capacity-building for staff and partners. This in turn negatively affected the quality of FFA activities and the sustainability of interventions.

To address these constraints, the Malawi CP evaluation recommended the establishment of an advance facility before programme resources are mobilized so that implementation can begin quickly. BPR was introduced in 2003 as a pilot to improve resources and pipeline flows through advance funding mechanisms.

All evaluations emphasized that efforts must continue to attract cash and technical and physical resources to accompany food needs. The pipeline must be continuously monitored and pipeline breaks avoided to ensure smooth implementation of activities and to maintain the motivation of beneficiaries.

The thematic review of MCN interventions stressed the need to change the DSC and ODOC mechanisms for MCN and other development programmes to provide additional financial resources for complementary activities.

FROM THE THEMATIC REVIEW OF MOTHER AND CHILD NUTRITION INTERVENTIONS

The thematic review of WFP-supported MCN interventions identified five elements for strengthening and scaling up MCN.¹⁸ It was recommended that WFP should focus on nutrition issues, which should be monitored when draft CPs and PRROs are reviewed by the PRC, and should develop a tracking system for programming decisions – when, by whom and with what result – with regular reports to Headquarters. WFP should improve the quality of its MCN programmes by developing an MCN programming toolkit based on the four programming principles that guided the review and by incorporating the provisional guidance already available in the Programme Guidance Manual. This toolkit should be developed in such a way that it can also be used for PRROs. The review team recommended increasing WFP's efforts to establish or scale up local production of fortified blended food, raising more funds at the country level and advocating to strengthen and harmonize national MCN programmes with national policy frameworks.

Partnership

Evaluations in Chad, Malawi and Mozambique emphasized that CP development effectiveness was linked to the collaboration and follow-up activities of partners. Food alone is not a sufficient condition for development, particularly in FFA. Given the limited capacity of governments, which are WFP's main partners for development, partnerships with other United Nations agencies, NGOs and bilateral donors must be identified when designing CPs.

Country Programme Approach

Most evaluations agreed that the CP approach made possible a more integrated strategy in which different types of activities in different sectors complement each other and achieve greater impacts. The China evaluation demonstrated that care needs to be taken not to spread resources too thinly, because this will reduce outcomes.

The evaluation of the Malawi CP found limited complementarity and coherence between activities, partly because of different selection criteria. It recommended designing an integrated programme in which all components are implemented in a specified target area. Evaluations in Malawi and

¹⁸ These were (i) more corporate commitment to MCN as a way of addressing early malnutrition; (ii) more nutrition expertise in country offices and more technical support from Headquarters and regional bureaux; (iii) more effective collaboration with UNICEF, the World Bank and other United Nations agencies; (iv) a change in DSC and ODOC for MCN and other development programmes to provide additional financial resources for complementary activities; and (v) greater flexibility to reallocate or add resources for MCN programmes so that they can function as a food safety net during disasters.

Mozambique stated that CPs should integrate relief components, particularly in disaster-prone countries.

With a view to broadening the resource base, the Ethiopia CP evaluation recommended more income-generating opportunities that are not based on natural resources, particularly for the most vulnerable households. Market surveys and financial appraisals should be conducted for new income opportunities; people should be trained in preparing business plans.

Project Management and Coordination

Given limited government capacity for implementing CPs, evaluations in Chad, Mali and Nicaragua recommended capacity-building programmes for government implementing partner personnel. Operational frameworks were important in ensuring coordination, management and monitoring of activities and results and integration of interventions with other development projects. The Chad evaluation reiterated the need for sufficient national staff for the duration of a CP. Country offices should request technical assistance as needed in support of ministries.

The Sudan CP suffered from high turnover of staff at top management level; simultaneous humanitarian assistance programmes absorbed staff time. The evaluation recommended that WFP should appoint dedicated staff for the CP. Operational agreements should be revised so that the government and WFP adhere to their roles and responsibilities. Clear terms of reference for the State Steering Committee and National Coordinating Committee must be prepared to improve coordination.

Phase-out/Exit Strategy

Most evaluations found that exit strategies have been insufficiently articulated, and would have benefited from a more integrated approach at the community level.

The Chad, Malawi and Zambia evaluations stressed that community participation and empowerment are essential for sustainability. The Chad evaluation recommended that communities must

be integrated from the outset in programming activities; there must be clear commitment and acceptance of responsibility by all concerned.

The project evaluation of the Lesotho school feeding programme concluded that the coverage of the programme and its expansion will depend on the funding patterns and communication and monitoring mechanisms put in place by the Government. WFP must work with the ministries of planning and education to establish the resource requirements for the Government's phase-in as a replacement when WFP phases out.

The extent of community participation in the activities varied in the evaluations reviewed: in the Sudan CP and the school canteen activities in Senegal, for example, it was good, but it was weak in the health centres of the Senegal CP.

In Zambia, community ownership did not materialize as planned because district authorities had not received the budget for CP implementation, monitoring and reporting; no district activity steering committee had been set up at the time of evaluation. In the FFA component of the Mali CP and the health component of the Senegal CP, management committees were not active enough to look for additional resources.

In Mozambique, it was recommended that WFP should support regional initiatives stimulating local production, for example the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and provide meals to schools that are more likely to be taken over by communities.

The Ethiopia CP evaluation recommended that strategic planning data for an activity be collected through VAM, providing an overview of implementation status. These data could be enriched by incorporating data from the programme unit, so that overlay maps could be prepared. Such data would have strategic value for planning purposes and would provide information for the development of an exit strategy.

EVALUATION ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

The Annual Evaluation Report aims to draw institutional lessons based on centralized and decentralized evaluations. They may concern OEDE, executive staff and Board members. The establishment of a response matrix should be considered, to be followed up in the subsequent report; the matrix should list the main lessons contained in the annual report and the action taken or to be taken and by whom.

The management response to evaluation recommendations introduced in 2000 is an important mechanism for ensuring follow-up action. As OEDE-managed evaluations have become more thematic in recent years and focused on major and complex operations, a management response is required that goes beyond a single unit. More consultations are needed with stakeholders to clarify evaluation recommendations and ensure ownership with respect to policy formulation and project design. Current deadlines may not allow timely formulation of management responses that include implementation plans and completion dates. It may be preferable to submit the management response to the subsequent Board meeting as a separate document rather than as part of the evaluation summary report. For most single-country/operation evaluations, however, it should be feasible to combine the evaluation report and the management response matrix as an annex to the evaluation summary report.

A peer review of WFP's evaluation function will be conducted in 2007, taking into account the lessons learned from peer reviews of the UNDP and UNICEF evaluation functions and the outcome of a workshop organized by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) for members of the OECD/DAC evaluation network and others.

OEDE evaluations conform to the principles for evaluation drawn up by the OECD/DAC network, but it is difficult to apply the cost-efficiency criteria in the WFP context. Evaluations should be able to determine whether cost-efficiency ratios are justifiable and, where necessary, identify activities that would have a greater impact. Further methodological work needs to be undertaken by OEDE in collaboration with the Economic Analysis Unit in the WFP Policy Division and the Office of Internal Audit.

ANNEX I

Evaluations completed in 2005

OEDE-Managed Evaluations

Summary Evaluation Report on PRRO 10233.0 in Afghanistan, February 2005.

Summary Evaluation Report on WFP's Development and Recovery Portfolio in Uganda, June 2005.

Summary Report on Follow-up to Evaluation Recommendations, June 2005.

Report on the Management of Evaluation, June 2005.

Synthesis Review of the UNJLC, November 2005.

Summary Report on the Angola Portfolio Evaluation, November 2005.

Summary Report of Real-time Evaluation of WFP's Response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami, November 2005.

Summary Evaluation Report on WFP's Assistance to China (1979–2005), February 2006.

Summary Report on Thematic Review of Targeting in Relief Situations, February 2006.

Summary Report on the Thematic Review of WFP-supported Mother-and-Child Nutrition Interventions, February 2006.

Summary Report on WFP/UNHCR Joint Evaluation of the Pilot Food Distribution System, February 2006.

Decentralized Regional Bureau and Country Office Evaluations

Asia Regional Bureau

Nil

Middle East, Central Asia and Eastern Europe Regional Bureau

Self-Evaluation Report of PRRO 10053.1 in Armenia, September 2005.

Self-Evaluation Evaluation of PRRO 10165.1 in Albania, November 2005.

Self-Evaluation Report of EMOP 10128.1 in Russian Federation, June 2005.

Self-Evaluation Report of PRRO 10172.1 in Algeria, September 2005.

Self-Evaluation Report of PRRO 10211.0 in Georgia, May 2005.

West Africa Regional Bureau

Mid-Term Evaluation Report of Senegal Country Programme 10088.0, March 2005.

Self-Evaluation Report of the PRRO 10148.1 in Guinea Bissau, August 2005.

Evaluation-cum-Appraisal Report of PRRO 10148.1 in Guinea Bissau, September 2005.

Self-Evaluation Report of Mali Country Programme 10205.0, December 2005.

Mid-Term Evaluation Report of Chad Country Programme 10018.0, May 2005.

Southern Africa Regional Bureau

Mid-Term Evaluation Report of Malawi Country Programme 10106.0, February 2005.

Self-Evaluation Report of Zambia Country Programme 10157.0, October 2005.

Mid-term Review Report of Project Lesotho 10266.0 – Support to free Primary Education, November 2005.

Mid-term Evaluation Report of the Mozambique Country Programme 10097.0, November 2005.

East and Central Africa Regional Bureau

Mid-term Evaluation Report of PRRO 10062.1 in the Great Lakes Region, February 2005.

Mid Term Evaluation Report of the Ethiopia Country Programme 10208.0, August 2005.

Mid-term Review of the Sudan Country Programme 10105.0, August 2005.

Terminal Evaluation Report of PRRO 10288.0 in DRC, November 2005.

Latin America and Caribbean Regional Bureau

Mid-term Evaluation Report of Nicaragua Country Programme 10044.0, March 2005.

ANNEX II

List of Staff, Office of Evaluation

(As at 31.12.2005)

Mr Kees TUINENBURG, Director

Mr Julian LEFEVRE, Chief Evaluation Officer

Ms Annemarie WAESCHLE, Senior Evaluation Officer

Mr Jeffrey MARZILLI, Evaluation Officer

Ms Katrin VON DER MOSEL, Evaluation Officer¹⁹

Ms Pernille HOUGESSEN, Evaluation Officer

Ms Anne-Claire LUZOT, Evaluation Officer²⁰

Ms Aurelie LARMOYER, Evaluation Officer (Junior Professional Officer)

Ms Eliana ZUPPINI, Senior Staff Assistant

Ms Rosa NETTI, Programme Assistant

Vacant, Research Assistant

Vacant, Administrative Clerk²¹

Ms Samantha MARTINI, Temporary Administrative Clerk

¹⁹ In November 2005, Ms Katrin Von Der Mosel replaced Mr Paolo Mattei, who was re-assigned in July 2005 to the Emergency Preparedness and response Unit in the Operations Department.

²⁰ In January 2006, Ms Anne-Claire Luzot replaced Mr Romain Sirois, who was re-assigned in August 2005 to the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Bureau.

²¹ Ms Anne-Marie Niro was re-assigned on 29 April 2005 to Walk the World in the Fundraising and Communications Department.

ANNEX III

OEDE Management Protocol²²

OEDE provides an independent evaluation service to the Board and to the Executive Director.

WFP has an evaluation policy that is approved by the Board based on the twin pillars of accountability and learning.

OEDE will be located in the Office of the Executive Director.

OEDE is currently one of the two offices constituting the RBM division. The Director of OEDE reports to the Director of the RBM division, who will ensure that the parameters are in place to enable OEDE to carry out its work.

OEDE is autonomous in carrying out its evaluation work. The budget and programme of work are approved by the Board.

OEDE consists of a director, senior staff and support staff. The director is appointed by the Executive Director and will have relevant professional evaluation experience in line with a job description that will be shared with the Board beforehand. With regard to professional staff, it will consist of a mix of professional evaluators, to be externally recruited, and experienced internal staff. Reassignment cycles will be longer than usual. The final selection of staff will be made by the Director of OEDE, with due regard to HR procedures.

Terms of reference for evaluation work are finalized by the Director of OEDE following a process of consultation.

As a rule, OEDE-managed evaluations are undertaken by external and independent evaluators. The final decision on recruitment is taken by the Director of OEDE.

The Director of OEDE is responsible for signing off all evaluation reports before submitting them simultaneously to the Board and the Executive Director.

Summary reports of all OEDE-managed evaluations are shared with the Board. Full technical reports will be made available separately. Summary reports contain a management-response matrix as an annex.

OEDE will maintain a follow-up mechanism of evaluation recommendations.

OEDE prepares an annual evaluation report incorporating decentralized evaluations for discussion in the annual informal consultation with the Board. This report will feed into the APR submitted to the Board's Annual Session.

OEDE will maintain an externally accessible website presenting WFP's evaluation policy, programme of work, evaluation reports and other information.

ANNEX IV

Summary of WFP's Evaluation Policy

WFP's October 2003 evaluation policy document (WFP/EB.3/2003/4-C) emphasizes that evaluation is a corporate responsibility resting on the twin pillars of accountability and learning, in a context of independence. OEDE, which previously had exclusive responsibility for managing evaluations, now shares the evaluation function with the whole of WFP.

OEDE's main objectives are: (i) to ensure an independent evaluation service for the Board, senior management and staff; (ii) to support WFP's move towards becoming a better learning organization; and (iii) to provide evaluation support for regional bureaux and country offices.

On the basis of the principle that any programme, project or operation longer than 12 months should be evaluated, the division of labour is the following:

- ▶ Evaluations managed by country offices or regional bureaux should include "... any operation at any time if the management need arises and if issues cannot be dealt with through self-evaluation; and any operation if the cumulative budget of all phases exceeds US\$50 million and if the previous evaluation took place more than three years prior...". If it is not "feasible or desirable" for a country office or regional bureau to manage the evaluation, OEDE should be approached.
- ▶ Self-evaluations are to be "... undertaken by the country office in collaboration with the government, implementing partners and, when feasible, beneficiary representatives prior to the planning of a new phase or at operations' close. Normally, no external consultant should be involved other than as a facilitator of the process."

- ▶ Evaluations managed by OEDE are to include "... all first-generation development CPs at mid-point; any operation if the cumulative budget of all phases exceeds US\$50 million and if the previous evaluation took place more than three years before (if such an evaluation is not undertaken by the country office or the regional bureau); any operation, thematic or policy evaluation requested by the Executive Board or by senior management; and OEDE-managed evaluations identified and proposed as part of its biennium work-planning exercise; these are undertaken with the agreement of the regional bureau and the country office."

The guiding principles of evaluation at WFP are the following:

- ▶ evaluations must serve a management purpose;
- ▶ evaluations must be independent and impartial;
- ▶ evaluations must be credible;
- ▶ evaluation findings, recommendations and lessons must be made public and disseminated to all stakeholders concerned;
- ▶ evaluation concerns must be addressed at the design of an intervention; and
- ▶ whenever possible, evaluations must be undertaken in partnership with recipient countries, sister United Nations agencies and interested donors.

OEDE reports simultaneously to the Board and the Executive Director. Its budget and work plan are submitted to the Board for approval with WFP's Management Plan. Since 2004, the budget has been entirely funded from the PSA budget. This budgetary independence has been an important part of the functioning of the evaluation service.

The location of OEDE in the Secretariat facilitates the integration of findings into the preparation of policies and formulation of projects and programmes.

During the discussions of WFP's evaluation policy, the Board requested the Secretariat to develop three related issues to strengthen WFP's evaluation function: the location of the Office of Evaluation, the merits and practicability of establishing a sub-committee of the Board on evaluation and the staffing arrangements for the Office of Evaluation. Following discussions with the Sub-Group on Governance, it was decided to widen the discussion to include eight issues.²³ The report prepared by the Secretariat in cooperation with the Sub-Group on Governance was presented to the Board in 2005 for consideration. It included the following innovations to strengthen the role of evaluation:

- ▶ establishment of a consultative internal evaluation committee;
- ▶ an annual informal consultation on evaluation;
- ▶ establishment of three or four specialized evaluation officers' posts, including a Director, filled by persons with a professional background in evaluation; the current rotation policy for WFP staff will be applied less rigidly;
- ▶ involvement of eminent outsiders for peer review of important evaluations; and
- ▶ a peer review of WFP's evaluation machinery in 2007.

²³ Is WFP devoting sufficient resources to evaluation? What scope exists for improving lessons in the Secretariat? Could the presentation of evaluation issues to the Board be improved? Should evaluation be the subject of annual informal consultation? What steps might be taken to strengthen the skills and experience of the staff in OEDE? Should the Board be involved, and if so how? Could the quality control of evaluation be enhanced by involving outsiders? Should WFP's evaluation machinery be the subject of a peer review by outside experts at some point?

For more detailed information visit our Web site:

www.wfp.org

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