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sharing lessons

2013

# Annual Evaluation Report

Office of Evaluation May 2014



**World Food Programme**

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# Foreword

In line with WFP's evaluation policy, the Annual Evaluation Report synthesizes findings from completed evaluations, and reports on the Office of Evaluation's performance against plan, including its support for WFP's overall evaluation function and the international evaluation system. Based on the analysis, insights and recommendations for corporate action are provided.

The essence of the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013)<sup>1</sup> was the shift from food aid to food assistance, the effects of which may be expected to be evident in 2013 evaluations. The evaluations considered in this report reflect the wide range of contexts in which WFP operates, and identify challenges and opportunities for continuing the shift under the Strategic Plan (2014–2017).

The 2013 country portfolio evaluations cover the shift to food assistance in some of WFP's very large and very small country offices. The food-for-assets impact evaluation series offers insights and lessons for addressing the longer-term Strategic Objective for resilient communities meeting their own food and nutrition needs. Gender issues, at the heart of WFP's mission and mainstreamed in the Strategic Plan, were examined in most of the evaluations, in addition to evaluation of the 2009 gender policy. Recommendations derived from all the evaluations are intended to support implementation of the new Strategic Plan.

In 2014 in addition to conducting a large number of planned evaluations, the Office of Evaluation will review its priorities and strategy in response to the Development Assistance Committee/United Nations Evaluation Group peer review of the WFP evaluation function.



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<sup>1</sup> Strategic Objectives referred to in the report are from the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013).

# Executive Summary

## 2013

The 12 evaluations completed by the Office of Evaluation in 2013 covered WFP's broad spectrum of geographic, operational and institutional contexts, and two of its major cross-cutting policy and programming areas: gender and food for assets. Conflict was a common contextual factor affecting strategic and operational choices in most of the country portfolios evaluated. Two of WFP's largest portfolios operating in contexts of chronic food insecurity and undernutrition were evaluated, while four country/regional portfolio evaluations covered small country offices, mostly in middle-income countries. The lessons described and recommendations made in this report are offered as WFP begins implementation of its Strategic Plan (2014–2017).

Although all the country portfolios evaluated aimed to contribute to all of WFP's Strategic Objectives, the majority of operations focused on relief corresponding to Strategic Objective 1, and general food distribution remained the dominant activity. The country portfolio evaluations confirmed that despite many operational challenges, WFP continued to be relevant, capable and effective in delivering emergency response at scale, and strongly commended its logistics and food security analysis capacity in humanitarian contexts.

The evaluations on the impact of food for assets in five countries found evidence of positive contribution to livelihoods resilience, in addition to their short-term food and employment benefits. Considering that the FFA programmes covered by the evaluation were designed well before current livelihoods and resilience policy and guidance, the overall conclusions from the evaluations support WFP's recent policy direction and confirm the relevance of food for assets to WFP's longer-term response options for restoring livelihoods, strengthening community capacities, and building resilience.

All evaluations cited attention to gender issues as critical for effectiveness. The FFA evaluations provided insights for gender-sensitive programming, while the country portfolio and policy evaluations found limited progress in mainstreaming gender. While gender-sensitive programming is producing results for increasing equitable access to food, with some significant exceptions, the gender policy evaluation found less evidence of using food assistance to support empowerment and transformation of gender relations in WFP-assisted communities and households.

The evaluations noted examples of successful capacity development in policy, strategy and assessment. These are increasingly important areas of WFP's work, particularly in middle-income countries, where serious vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity persists alongside economic progress. Although the evaluations confirmed the relevance of WFP's work in such contexts, small country offices faced structural, financial and operational challenges that constrained their ability to support national systems in a sustained manner. Advisory and capacity development skills backed by technical expertise and operational credibility are essential yet in limited supply, especially in small country offices; more advice and support from regional and global Headquarters is needed.

Long-term programming responses, the selection of transfer modalities and capacity development were constrained by rigidities in humanitarian funding and chronic underfunding of development programming, hindering the transition to food assistance. Several evaluations identified opportunities for long-term strategic positioning, partnerships, and diversification of funding to prevent funding availability from driving strategic direction and programming more than it should. All evaluations called for a longer-term

perspective in country-level strategic planning and programme design, supported by greater use of analysis, better monitoring and evaluative evidence, and a stronger focus on national capacity development.

Most evaluations raised monitoring as an area of concern, confirming the need for WFP's recent prioritization of monitoring and evaluation to inform strategic choices, planning and programme design, and to provide robust evidence of results. With few exceptions, lack of good data limited WFP's ability to measure effectiveness, efficiency and outcomes. This was seen to constrain funding opportunities, particularly for long-term programming.

The following recommendations support implementation of the Strategic Plan (2014–2017):

**Recommendation 1:** Clarify, communicate and implement country office strategic planning requirements and establish them as the basis for long-term systematic planning and performance management of country portfolios.

**Recommendation 2:** Define capacity requirements necessary for small country offices to support national policy advisory and capacity development, gender, monitoring and evaluation.

**Recommendation 3:** Develop a monitoring and evaluation plan for country portfolios. These should be a component of WFP's performance management system and should build on recent commitments to demonstrate evidence and accountability for results.

**Recommendation 4:** Ensure full implementation of the agreed gender policy evaluation recommendations. Effective work on gender supports the effectiveness of all WFP's work. Implementation requires a clear vision to ensure clear understanding of what gender means for every WFP function, with appropriate capacity, guidance, and incentives aligned with the UN-SWAP.

### **WFP Evaluation Function**

Significant progress was made towards meeting the evaluation policy's coverage targets, with the launch of the operation evaluations series. Independent gender assessments were carried out on all evaluations managed by the Office of Evaluation.

Some Office of Evaluation resources were redirected from evaluations that had yet to begin so that timely contributions could be made to the inter-agency humanitarian evaluation agenda; and support to WFP's decentralized evaluation function. The strategy of the Office of Evaluation will be developed in line with an updated evaluation policy expected in 2015.

# Introduction

Part 1 of the Annual Evaluation Report (AER) synthesizes evaluations completed by the Office of Evaluation (OEV) in 2013, concluding with overarching recommendations for WFP. Part 2 reports on OEV's performance against its Board-approved work plan, and its contribution to strengthening WFP's overall evaluation function along with that of the United Nations and international evaluation systems.

In addition to its complex strategic and impact evaluations of multiple operations, OEV's 2013 work plan included several work streams that strengthened WFP's overall evaluation function, including:

- launch of a new series of operation evaluations to fill a long-standing gap in coverage;
- introduction of a regional portfolio evaluation (RPE) approach to improve evaluation coverage in regions with small country offices and regional operations;
- increased support to management for establishing a decentralized evaluation function to help meet the demand for robust evidence of results, also addressed in WFP's new Strategic Plan, internal reorganization and Business Process Review;
- embedding of evaluation in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC's) humanitarian programme cycle, particularly relevant in view of the recent number of Level 3 emergencies; and
- increased emphasis on stakeholder engagement to support learning during the evaluation process, in addition to complementary products and events that

summarize lessons from completed evaluations for future policy and practice.

The 12 complex evaluations considered in Part 1 covered a wide range of WFP's geographic, thematic and operating contexts, as shown in Table 1 and Figure 1. Further coverage details are presented in Part 2.

Country portfolio evaluations (CPEs) are designed to support WFP strategic and country-level decisions in line with its Strategic Plan; they were included in OEV's work plan following WFP's 2009 launch of country strategy documents. They assess WFP's strategic positioning and choices, and the results and performance of a country office's overall set of operations. The CPEs selected for 2012–2015 are reviewed annually to meet regional bureau and country office timetables, enhancing relevance and utility. Five CPEs were conducted in 2013,<sup>2</sup> bringing the total completed to 17. The first RPE was conducted, covering Central America.

The series of impact evaluations by OEV provide in-depth assessment of WFP's specific programming activities. In 2013, five evaluations considered the impact of WFP's food-for-assets (FFA) activities on livelihoods resilience. FFA is one of WFP's main operational instruments and is recognized for its potential contribution to building resilience.

In line with OEV's mandate to evaluate WFP policies, and timed to contribute to WFP's renewed commitment to gender equality, an evaluation of the 2009 gender policy was completed in 2013.

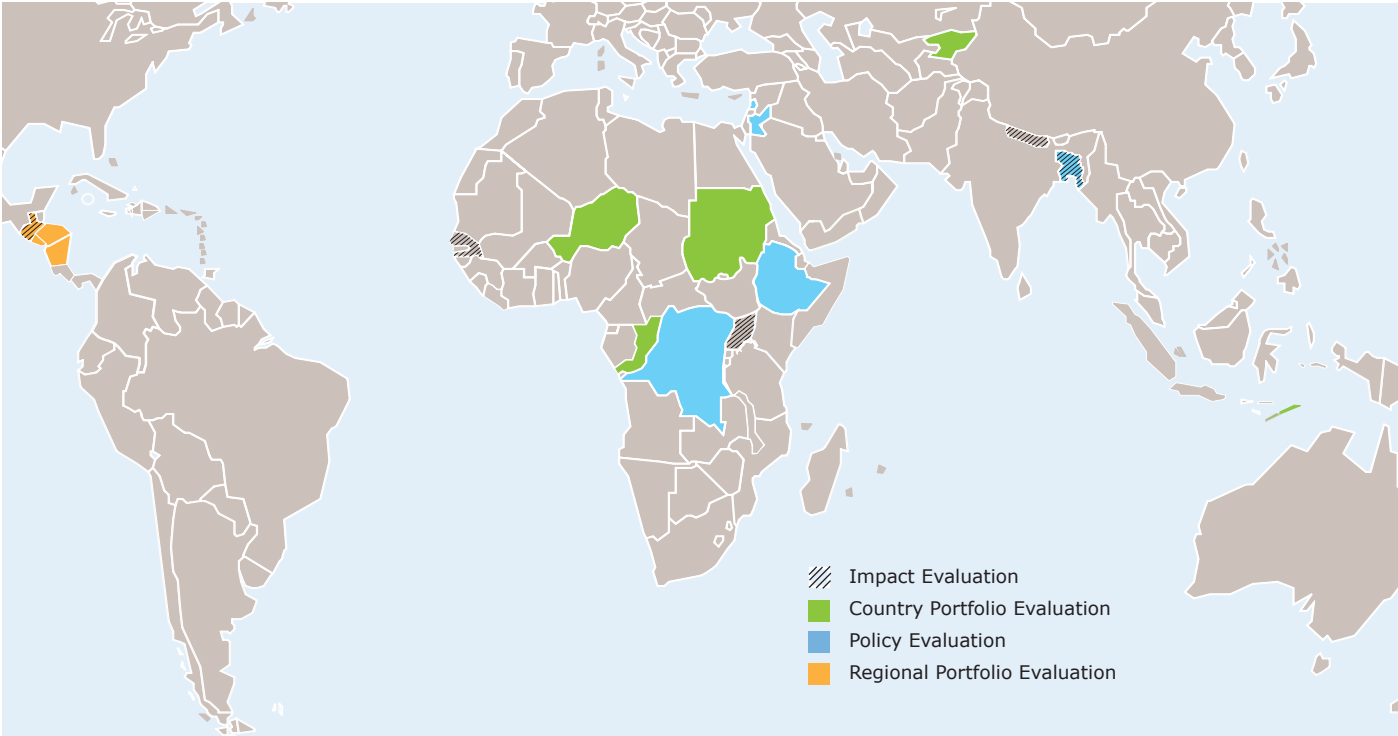
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<sup>2</sup> Of these, only the Sudan had a country strategy document, and because of the changed context it was not used to frame the evaluation. A Latin American regional strategic vision developed during 2011 was reviewed by the RPE, and the CPE informed development of a country strategy in the Congo in 2013. Development of a country strategy for the Kyrgyz Republic is scheduled for 2014.

**Table 1. Evaluations completed in 2013**

Type	Subject	Reference period
Regional portfolio	<b>Central America</b> El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua	2007–2011
Country portfolio	<b>WFP’s country-level strategic positioning, performance and results</b> Niger Kyrgyz Republic Timor-Leste Congo Sudan	2007–2011 2008–2012 2008–2013 2009–2012 2010–2012
Impact	<b>Impact of FFA on livelihood resilience</b> Nepal Guatemala Senegal Uganda Bangladesh	2002–2010 2003–2010 2005–2010 2005–2010 2008–2011
Policy	<b>Gender</b>	2008–2013

**Figure 1. Evaluations by type, 2013**



Source: OEV database 2013.

# Part 1. Evaluation Findings

## Country and Regional Portfolio Evaluations

### Context and WFP operations


As illustrated in Figure 2, 2013 CPEs covered a wide spectrum of WFP’s country presence, including in the Congo, the Kyrgyz Republic, the Niger, the Sudan and Timor-Leste. In both the Niger and the Sudan, WFP is the largest non-governmental humanitarian agency, operating over a long period and accustomed to addressing the context of major, prolonged humanitarian emergencies and chronic food insecurity and undernutrition. In contrast, WFP presence in the Congo, the Kyrgyz Republic and Timor-Leste, was through small country offices. Four evaluations covered WFP’s work in middle-income countries (MICs).

Continuing or recently ended conflict was a common feature in many countries, and a significant factor in WFP’s strategic choices and portfolio composition. Most portfolios included nutrition, education and food for work (Figure 3), although general food distribution (GFD) was the main activity in all portfolios. Cash and vouchers were used only in the Congo, the Niger and the Sudan, covering 2 to 3 percent of the beneficiaries in these countries during the period covered by the evaluations. The findings best reflect WFP’s portfolio from 2008 to 2012, the period covered by four of the six evaluations, although the full evaluation period started in 2007 (Table 1).

Figure 2. CPE/RPE: contextual characteristics

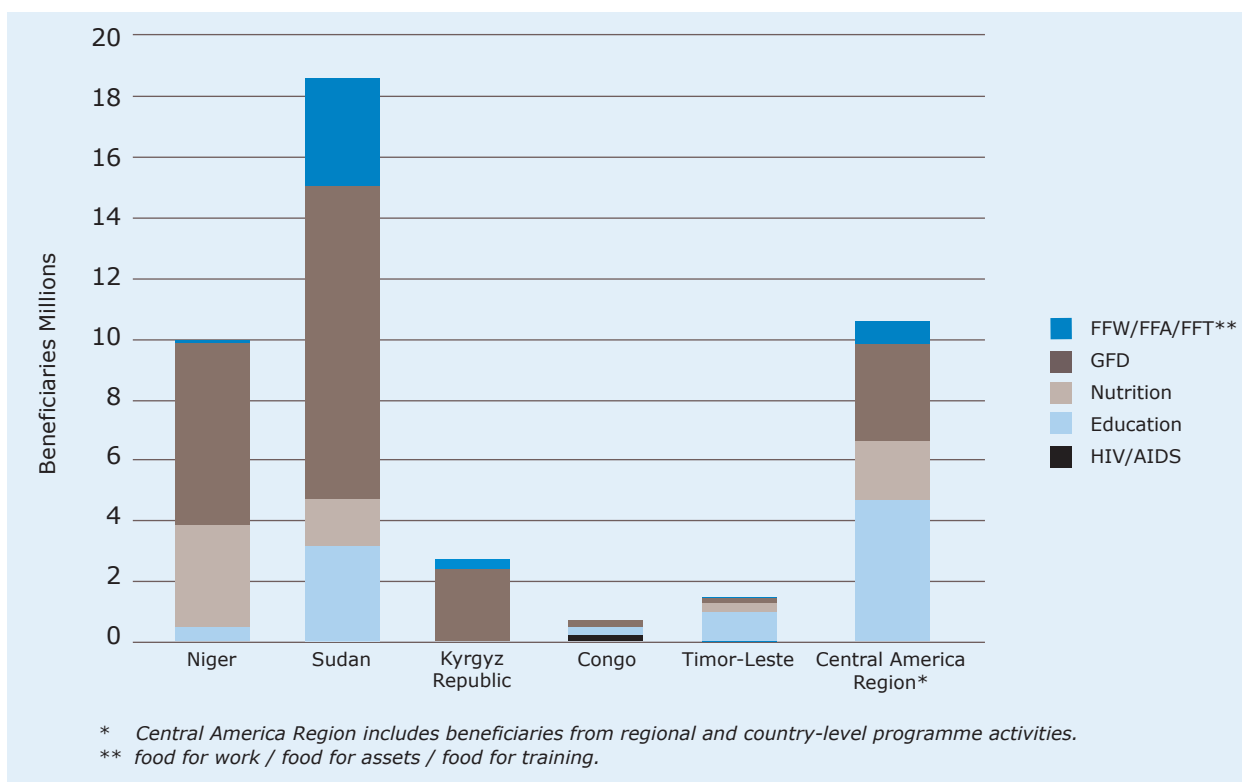
	Central America	Kyrgyz Republic	Niger	Republic of Congo	Sudan	Timor-Leste
Mainly humanitarian focus			●	●	●	
Affected by recurrent natural disaster	●	●	●	●	●	●
Fragile / Post-conflict		●	●	●	●	●
Small country office	●	●		●		●
Middle- income country	●			●	●	●

Source: WFP OM, World Bank and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Partially 



**Figure 3. Beneficiaries by activity in countries evaluated**



Source: Evaluation reports.

### **WFP alignment and strategic positioning**

In most cases WFP sufficiently aligned operations with food security and humanitarian needs. Such alignment is relatively easier to accomplish in humanitarian emergencies, where immediate needs and WFP’s role are clear. In post-emergency contexts, appropriate responses and priorities are more complex, and securing funding for long-term programmes remains a challenge.

While WFP usually aligned well with humanitarian good practice, working closely with governments can create dilemmas: in the Congo, WFP’s transition from emergency feeding to longer-term livelihoods support was constrained by government policy on repatriation; in the Sudan, WFP’s need to balance its mandate under humanitarian principles with government engagement affected access to some affected populations; in the Niger, from 2007 to 2010, WFP was constrained by the Government’s unwillingness to acknowledge the need for relief interventions. In all cases, evaluations concluded that WFP had managed a difficult situation well.

In general, WFP’s alignment with governments was appropriate. Limitations included poor government capacity and systemic constraints in WFP’s capacity to provide sustained policy support. That said, in no case were there effective partnerships operating simultaneously with donors, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Private-sector partnerships were rare but often innovative, such

as those related to logistics and transport in the Sudan and mobile phone partnerships in the Congo.

### **Strategic choices**

Funding was a significant and recurring challenge and one of the key factors influencing strategic choices. Dependencies on a single donor, and rigidities in donor support, particularly when in-kind donations were involved, often constrained programmatic choices and prevented adoption of long-term approaches. A further influence on strategic choice concerned country office access to appropriate human resources, particularly important for the shift from food aid to food assistance and for strengthening national capacities.

Effective use of assessment and analysis was found in several cases, including in the Niger, where food supply assessments were used well to target cash and voucher schemes. However, monitoring was often used more for donor reporting than for informing programme decisions and management. In the most serious cases, lack of systematic programme monitoring undermined resource mobilization.

Gender inequality was a significant challenge except in the Kyrgyz Republic, but did not appear to be a major factor in country office strategic decision-making and planning; and there was limited evidence of meaningful implementation of WFP’s gender policy. This was attributed to lack of capacity – skills and staff numbers –

and insufficient support and oversight from Headquarters, including regional bureaux. While gender-sensitive approaches were evident in some interventions, these were not supported by a holistic, portfolio-level understanding of and approach to gender equality.

Pilot schemes were observed in cash and vouchers, local food purchases and fortified blended food production; several evaluations concluded that the requirements of thorough piloting had been underestimated. In several cases pilots were not implemented as planned, the monitoring and evaluation needed for lesson learning was lacking, or preparatory analysis of risks, costs and benefits had been insufficient. This generated practical problems and reduced the usefulness of the pilots for informing decisions, particularly significant when pilots were designed to inform the development of national systems. However, valuable lessons were learned, not least for pilot management.

### ***Performance and results***

Assessment of performance and results depends on data availability and quality, which varied from scant, in the Sudan and Timor-Leste, to ample, in the Kyrgyz Republic and the Niger, where it was an impressive resource for partners. Common challenges included a focus on outputs rather than defined measurable outcomes, and lack of targets and baselines. The gender dimensions of data were poor in all cases. In Central America, monitoring was constrained by low budgets and insufficient comparability across the sub-region.

#### **• Relevance and effectiveness**

WFP's reputation for delivering large-scale humanitarian aid in difficult circumstances was confirmed by the evaluations, with commendations for its logistics capacity and food security analysis. WFP's programming has been generally aligned with governments and other external partners, and where possible, it has sought to move towards food assistance and long-term planning.

Food for work, FFA and food for training have registered positive results, reducing vulnerability and improving productivity. Three evaluations recommended their potential in the shift from GFD towards longer-term recovery, although this depends on having appropriate skills and maintenance arrangements to ensure sustainability.

Nutrition interventions were generally considered relevant and to have delivered some benefits. However, there was only weak evidence of the effectiveness of blanket supplementary feeding on child malnutrition, except in the Sudan, where piloting of an integrated blanket supplementary feeding programme<sup>3</sup> proved effective though relatively expensive per beneficiary.

School feeding was generally effective in promoting enrolment and attendance,<sup>4</sup> although coverage and rations were often less than planned. WFP is expanding its support to national systems, using the South–South learning services of the Brazil Centre of Excellence against Hunger.

The evaluations observed several instances where support for development of national systems supported sustainability, for example in food security monitoring and assessment, and in nutrition policies and strategic planning. In several cases, management had been handed over to government partners, with full integration into wider national systems.

#### **• Efficiency**

Efficiency was assessed from the perspective of coverage against plan, timeliness and targeting. Managing efficiency is particularly challenging in many of the high-cost contexts in which WFP delivers food assistance, often exacerbated by funding unpredictability and logistics challenges. Coverage and timeliness performance is heavily influenced by funding factors and varied considerably, with no clear pattern across countries. Responses to targeting problems included ration-sharing or reductions.

Operational efficiency in the Kyrgyz Republic was applauded by all concerned; in the Niger and elsewhere costs per beneficiary were substantially reduced by the introduction of cash transfers. In the Sudan, short contracting cycles were cited as limiting efficiency, and in the Congo, efficiency was affected by challenging logistics<sup>5</sup> and funding gaps, especially for food for work, assets or training. Funding gaps in nutrition support for people living with HIV or tuberculosis led to phase-out.

#### **• Middle-income countries**

Several of the 2013 evaluations confirmed the relevance of WFP's work in MICs, where government capacity does not always keep pace with financial gains, and countries

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<sup>3</sup> The pilot aimed to enhance the long-term impact of feeding programmes on wasting and stunting by improving feeding, food hygiene and safety practices for young children.

<sup>4</sup> Except in the Kyrgyz Republic, where a school feeding programme has just been introduced.

<sup>5</sup> Only 34 percent of planned tonnage was delivered to 76 percent of planned beneficiaries, because of difficult logistics.

may remain vulnerable to food emergencies and serious nutrition and food security issues, often linked to socio-economic inequality. Problems may be obscured by standardized international food security indicators: in Central America, for example, there is both undernutrition and overnutrition, with poor dietary diversity. The evaluations emphasize the need for WFP to develop further its strategic approach in the varied contexts of MICs.

WFP's presence in several MICs is managed through small country offices, which were found to face particular challenges:

- Traditional sources of funding are limited and/or declining. Although several country offices have attracted host government funding, this may present administrative complications, and WFP reporting systems do not fully capture results from trust funds.
- Strategic planning in MIC contexts requires a long-term perspective and close attention to the development of national capacity. It requires different skills to identify and manage opportunities, and reliable long-term funding to underpin work to improve national policy and systems. The combination of WFP's tonnage-based financing model and the small scale of MIC country offices means that these offices operate on small and precarious budgets and are often over-reliant on junior staff.
- While small offices may provide greater incentives for innovation, several evaluations observed that they need more advice and support, particularly for managing pilots. Where small country offices are in the same region, there is potential for regional bureau to play a greater role by providing common services, strategic guidance, and technical support.
- Facilitating South-South cooperation is a relevant approach, with strong potential to develop capacity in MICs.

### **Common CPE lessons and recommendations**

There are common lessons and recommendations across the CPEs/RPE:

- Stronger monitoring and evaluation systems are needed to ensure that evidence is available for strategic planning and programme management, and to demonstrate effectiveness and impact.

- More systematic, strategic planning of country portfolios is needed to enable country offices to deliver results on the Strategic Objectives most relevant to their contexts.
- Diversification of funding sources is needed to prevent funding availability from driving strategic direction more than it should. The evaluations found that country offices shifted their focus to national implementation and capacity development to the extent possible, but this shift needs to be supported with appropriate, longer-term funding.
- Country offices require corporate support to improve implementation of WFP's gender policy.

### **Food for Assets Impact Evaluations**

The FFA evaluations covered FFA activities conducted between 2002 and 2011 in Bangladesh, Guatemala, Nepal, Senegal and Uganda. The evaluation reference period predated the 2011 disaster risk reduction and management policy and FFA Guidance Manual. They focused on medium and longer term effects and sustainability of those past efforts. They also provided an opportunity to assess how past efforts contributed to new objectives and provided lessons on how FFA activities could be better aligned with the recent policy and guidance.

Between 2006 and 2010, FFA activities were WFP's largest food distribution modality after GFD, providing money or food as compensation for short-term employment on labour-intensive projects. The evaluations focused on natural resource assets – soil, water, agricultural and forest – but recognized the contributions to livelihoods resilience of assets for infrastructure and access.

Expected short-term benefits include increased cash/food availability and the immediate effects of the asset: for instance, flood protection may result in reduced vulnerability. Medium-term benefits include protection and increased land productivity and agricultural production, increased income-generation opportunities, better access to markets and social services, etc. Long-term benefits include reduced vulnerability, improved livelihoods<sup>6</sup> and increased resilience.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> A livelihood comprises a household's capabilities, assets and activities for securing basic needs such as food, shelter, health, education and income. Assets can be human, social, financial, physical or natural. A livelihood is sustainable if it can manage and mitigate the effects of external stresses and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide for future generations (*WFP Comprehensive Food Security & Vulnerability Analysis Guidelines, 2009*).

<sup>7</sup> Resilience refers to the ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate to and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation of essential basic structures and functions ("WFP Policy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management" (WFP/EB.2/2011/4-A)).

The evaluations found common contextual factors, including high levels of poverty and vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change, and the effects of conflict and associated social upheaval and disruption of livelihoods. Programming was variable, responding to specific contexts and reflecting the role and profile of FFA in respective country portfolios.

A similar evaluation methodology, adapted to context, was applied in the five countries. It included quantitative household surveys, secondary data analysis and focus group discussions, technical asset appraisal, and social and institutional analysis. Limitations included absent or inconsistent data, changes in programming and limited records of individual assets and participating households. Significant programme variations among countries limited comparability. Evidence of change was derived mostly from perceptions reported by household survey respondents; in all but one case, household surveys were applied to both participant and comparison populations.

### **Short-term benefits**

The FFA activities evaluated provided food and employment to 2 million food-insecure people affected by shocks that threatened their livelihoods and food security. In many cases, WFP was one of the few organizations to operate at scale in remote or dangerous areas. Chronic underfunding, compounded by discontinuity and unpredictability, meant that the food provided was not always timely or adequate for needs.

### **Medium-term benefits**

Asset survival is a precondition for medium-term impact. Table 2 reveals that for all but one asset type, more than half of the assets assessed were fully functional.

There was strong evidence of increased land productivity, agricultural production and income-generating opportunities. Quantitative and qualitative evidence of positive income effects associated with asset creation was found in Bangladesh, Nepal and Senegal; in Guatemala the differences in land assets and associated incomes between participants and comparison households were not statistically significant. In Uganda, where no comparison group could be identified, small but positive effects over time on savings, income and standard of living were reported.

**Table 2. Functionality by type of asset**

<b>% functional</b>	<b>Type of asset</b>
90	Flood protection
87	Agriculture soil stabilization
82	Water management
77	Access infrastructure
73	Forestry
72	Community infrastructure
67	Sanitation
65	Fuel-efficient stoves
60	Agroforestry
57	Gardens
55	Household infrastructure
40	Fish ponds

Some assets delivered multiple benefits to livelihoods or resilience. For instance, in Bangladesh, dyke construction for flood protection also brought longer-term positive effects on land productivity and livelihoods. In Guatemala, the size of the agricultural productivity effect was positively correlated with the number of asset types in place, suggesting a compounding effect. In Guatemala, Nepal and Senegal respondents linked gardens and agroforestry to agricultural diversification, improved dietary diversity and income generation.

### **Long-term benefits**

Although none of the programmes evaluated were planned to address long-term livelihoods resilience, the evaluations found that FFA activities contributed to significant improvements in livelihoods in Bangladesh, Guatemala, Nepal and Senegal. Improvements in social cohesion in Bangladesh, Guatemala, Nepal and Uganda were particularly important for countries recovering from conflict.

As summarized in Table 3, findings on longer-term food security and dietary diversity were muted and mixed, despite the increased access to agricultural inputs and markets from road construction, and the increased awareness of nutrition and gardening from training reported in several evaluations.

**Table 3. Summary of long-term food security and dietary effects**

Bangladesh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No difference in household ability to provide three meals per day</li> <li>• No difference in dietary diversity</li> </ul>
Guatemala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparison households more likely than beneficiaries to borrow food</li> <li>• Beneficiary diet containing more beans</li> <li>• Most households reporting insufficient food or means to purchase food, regardless of programme participation</li> </ul>
Nepal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small improvement in food consumption scores among participants</li> <li>• Shorter lean season</li> <li>• Better security of crop yields</li> <li>• No reported improvements in structural chronic food insecurity</li> </ul>
Senegal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beneficiary diet containing more fruit and meat</li> <li>• Children in beneficiary households consuming more meals per day</li> <li>• Adults in beneficiary households eating fewer meals per day, but of better quality -more fruits and meat</li> </ul>
Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased access to food-related resources - seeds, water and fish</li> </ul>

***Impacts on women and gender dynamics***

In all countries, women were specifically targeted and significant short- and medium-term impacts on women were found. Following concerted efforts towards gender-sensitive programming in Bangladesh and other countries, significant improvements in women's participation were reported. Women benefited directly when they had control of assets targeted to their traditional roles.

Participation had an empowering effect through women's enhanced influence on household budgets, social network support and freedom of movement. Women's position in the household and society improved in Bangladesh, Guatemala and Senegal. Where they participated in food distribution committees, women reported increased empowerment, with community-level changes in gender dynamics reported in some cases, particularly Bangladesh.

Shortcomings in the targeting of women as FFA participants included trade-offs with women's childcare and domestic responsibilities, and security issues, particularly when travelling to work in remote areas. Programmes need to pay more attention to the potential effects of physically demanding labour on the nutrition balance of already food-insecure women, especially considering the higher nutritional needs during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

***Factors affecting impact***

The functionality of assets was affected more by asset type, ownership, degree of asset completion and smoothness of programme implementation than by age

of asset. Technical support for quality assurance was not always available, and there were insufficient resources and unclear roles and responsibilities for asset maintenance. Where assets provided immediate and substantial benefits in protecting lives, land and possessions, communities were willing to assume their maintenance.

Responses to slow-onset risks such as land degradation involved a combination of assets and a longer timeframe before risk reduction results became evident, such as in tree planting. FFA activities were often carried out in isolation from one another and from other types of intervention – by WFP or other actors. There was limited evidence of effective systems and technical support for planning and constructing assets appropriate to context, or of partnership strategies for integrated local planning towards outcome-level change and sustainable uptake by government or communities.

When FFA was used for early recovery following an emergency, interventions were based on broad geographical targeting of the communities most at risk of food insecurity and were planned to assist as many people as possible through short interventions over wide areas. While this approach met short-term food security objectives it limited impact on livelihoods and resilience.

Within communities, the commonly used self-targeting approach – with compensation set at levels intended to attract participation from those with almost no alternative livelihood options – did not provide sufficient confidence that interventions reached the poorest and most excluded groups; a risk compounded by the

selection of assets that did not always reach the most vulnerable.

Factors affecting gender impacts included the targeting of assets to women's needs, gender-sensitive worksites, and flexibility to respond to the competing demands on women's time.

Serious limitations in monitoring systems included insufficient household-level data and inadequately disaggregated financial information for activity analysis; inconsistent food basket and post-distribution monitoring; and in some cases, insufficient clarity in explaining programmes' selection criteria, payment norms, etc. to communities. Some country offices introduced improvements, but without adequate corporate guidance.

### ***Common FFA conclusions and recommendations***

The overarching conclusion from the evaluations is that WFP's FFA activities contributed to livelihoods resilience, even though the programmes evaluated predated WFP's 2011 FFA Guidance Manual and disaster risk reduction and management policy.

Most assets constructed were still functional, with significant positive short- and medium-term impacts in many areas; few negative impacts were reported. However, although there were some contributions to long-term livelihoods resilience, improvements in long-term food security were limited.

The recommendations in the evaluation series synthesis report include bringing FFA activities into line with current policy and guidance, and securing adequate funding for transition to the new approach, with technical assistance and support for country offices from Headquarters and regional bureaux. Asset planning and targeting should be participatory and draw on comprehensive contextual, gender, livelihoods and risk analysis to ensure the long-term livelihoods resilience of the poorest. Strategic planning at country offices is needed to position FFA as a resilience and disaster risk reduction measure, building on WFP's comparative advantage and partners' complementary programmes to use FFA as an entry point for enhanced, sustained impact. Studies should be carried out to build understanding of food security and gender dynamics related to FFA, and monitoring systems should be strengthened to enable better outcome measurement.

## **Gender Policy Evaluation**

International norms and goals position gender equality as a development objective in itself, as well as a powerful lever for achieving other development outcomes. Efforts to address gender issues have been gaining momentum internationally, with the 2006 United Nations System-Wide Policy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and the 2012 United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP).

WFP's 2009 policy on "Promoting Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Addressing Food and Nutrition Challenges" is its third gender policy. Evaluations of previous policies found that while they raised the profile of gender issues, shortcomings in institutional arrangements and capacities for addressing gender persisted. Similar shortcomings were noted in this evaluation, which concluded that a step shift is needed and WFP's efforts to address gender issues must be strengthened and sustained.

This evaluation had wide coverage and was highly inclusive, drawing on information from 60 country offices, corporate data and a systems review, comparator benchmarking and partner feedback.<sup>8</sup> A global workshop was held prior to finalizing the evaluation recommendations.

The evaluation found that the policy appropriately made a conceptual shift from women to gender, in response to previous evaluation recommendations and in line with international norms. However, although it was intended to drive institutional reform, the policy lacked a number of foundations that limited its quality from the outset.

The policy failed to explain how the shift to gender would help WFP deliver its mandate in all operating contexts. WFP's "Commitments to Women" remain the most common perception of what "gender" means to the Organization.

The policy did not provide a strong rationale for the necessary changes in roles, responsibilities and accountability across WFP, and -critically- in core business areas such as emergency response and disaster preparedness.

The policy did not create a WFP-wide vision or significantly influence the institutional capacity to

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<sup>8</sup> Field study: Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Syrian Arab Republic emergency operation (EMOP); desk study: Burkina Faso, El Salvador, Ghana, Malawi; benchmarking: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Oxfam, CARE.

mainstream gender; corporate recognition of, commitment to and resources for policy implementation were limited. Fragmented and project-based implementation fell short of the comprehensive, gender-focused systemic activity required to meet policy

commitments, and technical scrutiny and policy oversight lacked rigour. Table 4 summarizes the evaluation's findings of progress against the gender policy's commitments.

**Table 4. Summary of progress against gender policy commitments**

Policy commitment	Status (October 2013)
<b>Vision:</b> To create an internal enabling environment for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women	<b>Limited progress.</b> The policy has had limited influence on the institutional environment, but there is evidence of growing momentum and commitment
Improve the effectiveness and sustainability of WFP programmes addressing hunger in partner countries	<b>Partially achieved.</b> There is evidence of gender-sensitive programming at the country level, but this is not guided by the policy
Strengthen and maintain an institutional environment that supports and encourages gender mainstreaming	<b>Partially achieved.</b> The policy has not significantly influenced the institutional capacity for or commitment to mainstreaming gender. The building blocks of an accountability framework are in place, but have not yet brought results
Promote the integration of a gender perspective into the food and nutrition policies, programmes and projects of partner countries and cooperating partners	<b>Partially achieved.</b> There is little evidence of WFP raising gender issues in dialogue and policy discussions at the country level, but there is evidence of effective responses to encouragement from the surrounding environment

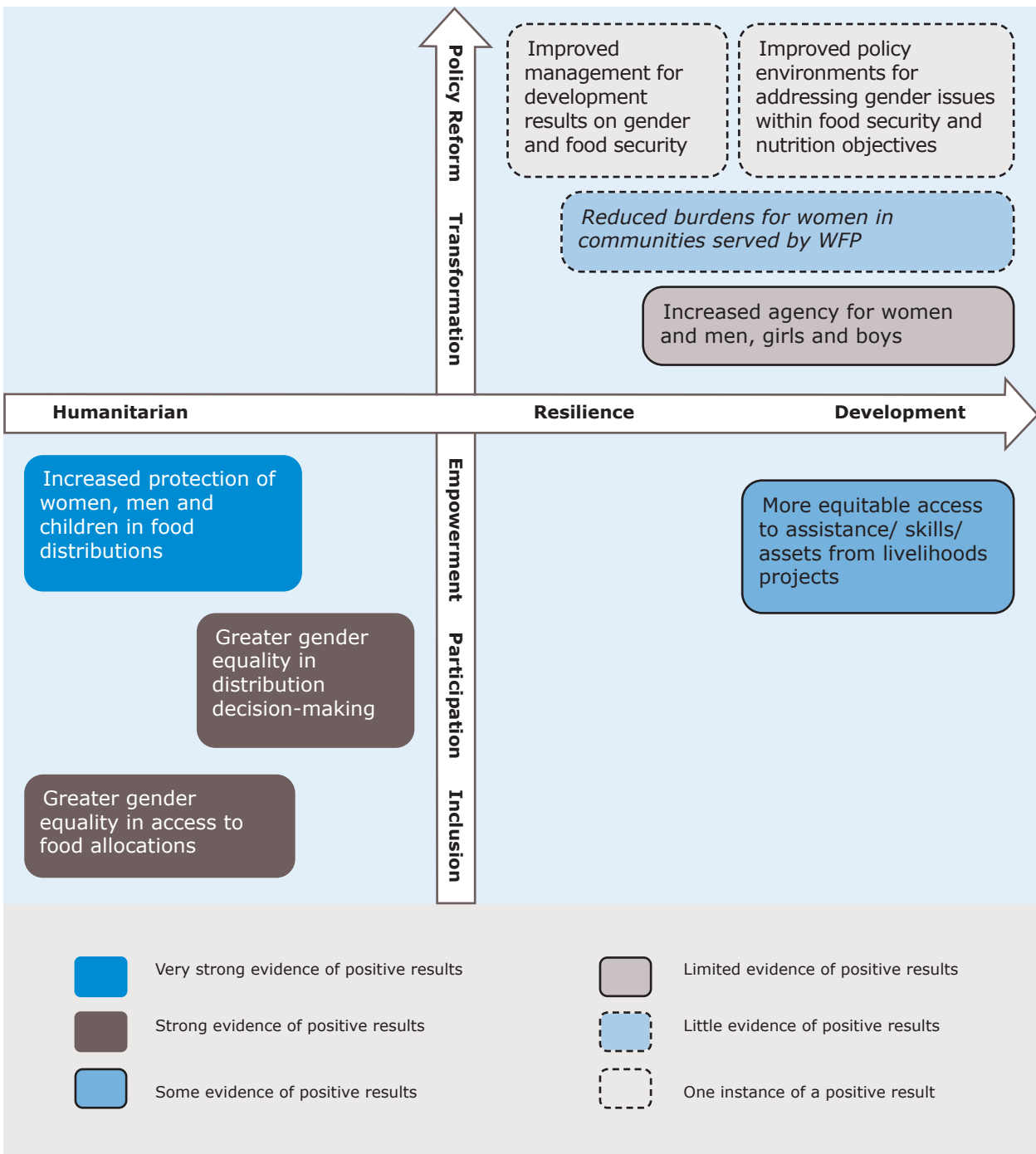
Although underfunded, the Gender Innovation Fund supported some valuable initiatives, but sustainability was limited and transaction costs were high. While gender is reflected in WFP's main thematic policy documents, analysis and the integration of gender into programme design and implementation have been patchy, with more successful examples including Purchase for Progress (P4P), livelihoods and resilience programmes.

Nonetheless, as illustrated in Figure 4, the evaluation found evidence of a growing body of gender-sensitive programming at the country level, positively associated with valuable results such as increasingly equitable access to food allocations, and women's greater participation in

decision-making on food distributions. However, results concentrated on ensuring women's inclusion.

There was less evidence of programmes using food assistance to support empowerment. Transformation of gender relations in households, camps and communities served by WFP was less evident, and often associated with WFP's participation in wide multi-party initiatives such as social safety-net programmes. Where capacity, commitment and conducive national conditions existed, WFP adopted more progressive gender-sensitive programming and participated in national dialogue around gender equality.

**Figure 4. Results of the 2009 gender policy**



However, these shifts were driven from the bottom up, without guidance from a common central vision, framework or cross-learning from the policy. This situation sometimes put the do-no-harm principle at risk.

External factors such as the UN-SWAP reporting system, the IASC Gender Marker and conducive national environments have been the real drivers of WFP’s gender efforts. Constraining factors are mainly internal, and relate to limitations in the policy’s quality and implementation arrangements.



The evaluation found evidence of a significant increase in corporate-level momentum and commitment from 2012, including invigorated institutionalization of the policy; the Executive Director's championship of gender issues; additional staff and finance and a higher profile for the Gender Office; the incorporation of gender issues – albeit to a limited degree – in the 2014–2017 Strategic Plan, the strategic results framework and the management results framework; a draft gender mainstreaming accountability framework geared to the UN-SWAP indicators; and annual progress reports on the corporate action plan to the Board.

However, the evaluation cautioned against complacency, concluding that a shift in gear is needed for WFP to realise its mission and mandate and respond to its international commitments in the post-2015 development agenda. This requires sustained support by the recent reinvigorated leadership, accountability reforms, and strengthened profile for gender together with a more comprehensive approach to addressing gender issues in WFP's policies, strategies and operations. The evaluation made comprehensive recommendations with which management agreed, for: the renewal of the gender policy; embedding gender into country strategies, operational plans, programme design and management and partnerships; developing technical gender expertise at all organizational levels; and clarifying accountabilities, reporting roles and responsibilities for addressing gender concerns across WFP.

## Overall Conclusions and Recommendations

Despite the broad span of evaluations completed in 2013, several themes were common to all. All evaluations, particularly the CPEs and the RPE, highlighted WFP's continuing relevance and effectiveness in emergency response, in line with Strategic Objective 1. Despite the challenges, WFP's efforts to implement a broad range of food assistance approaches to restore livelihoods, break the cycle of hunger and build local capacity were also endorsed.

The rigidities of in-kind humanitarian funding and the chronic underfunding of development-oriented programming limited impact and results. Longer-term strategic positioning, partnerships and funding diversification are needed to prevent funding from driving strategic direction and programming more than it should.

The need for flexible and locally responsive programming approaches is increasingly recognized, but programme categories remain a constraint. All

evaluations called for a longer-term perspective in country-level strategic planning and programme design, supported by greater use of analysis, better monitoring and evaluative evidence, and more attention to national capacity development.

All evaluations identified attention to gender issues as critical for effectiveness, as highlighted in the gender policy evaluation. The FFA evaluations demonstrated the benefits of explicitly addressing gender issues and ensuring gender-sensitive programming, while the CPEs noted limited progress on application of WFP's gender mainstreaming objectives.

The limited technical capacity of WFP and partners was another challenge cited in all evaluations. In particular, the FFA evaluations highlighted the importance of appropriate expertise to support long-term livelihood resilience, and the gender policy evaluation identified insufficient gender expertise as a key constraint to gender-sensitive programming.

Several CPEs further highlighted the importance of technical capacity for WFP to operate effectively in MICs. Even where partner governments provide financial support to programme implementation, WFP must provide sustained advisory and capacity development skills, underpinned by technical and operational credibility; and country office funding frameworks based on programme size are self-limiting in this regard. More advice and support from regional bureaux and Headquarters are needed, particularly for small country offices.

The evaluations confirmed the continuing need for enhanced monitoring and evaluation to inform strategic choices, planning and programme design, and to provide robust evidence of results. Monitoring was an area of concern in most evaluations. With few exceptions, weaknesses in the quality and availability of data limited WFP's ability to measure effectiveness, efficiency and contributions to outcomes, constraining future funding opportunities, particularly for longer-term programming. While improvements in disaggregated monitoring were observed, the gender policy evaluation recommended developing gender indicators tailored to the new Strategic Objectives and going beyond the measurement of women's inclusion and participation. The need for better management of pilots and innovations was also identified, as these must generate strong evidence to inform the decisions of WFP and, increasingly, national partners. The FFA evaluations identified the need for significant strengthening of monitoring systems, for both community accountability and the assessment of household-level outcomes over time.

## Recommendations

To support implementation of the 2014–2017 Strategic Plan, and in the context of WFP’s Fit for Purpose framework for action and associated change management processes, the following recommendations are made to senior management:

**Recommendation 1:** *Clarify, communicate and implement country office strategic planning requirements and establish them as the basis for long-term systematic planning and performance management of country portfolios in line with the Strategic Plan, with attention to national contexts and capacity, partnerships and funding.* A similar recommendation was made in the 2012 AER. It is reiterated this year in line with WFP’s ongoing Business Process Review and reflecting the need for country offices to plan ahead in coordination with others, for long-term recovery and resilience even while meeting immediate needs.

**Recommendation 2:** *Define the capacity requirements necessary for small country offices to*

*support national policy advisory and capacity development, gender, monitoring and evaluation.* While these capacity needs were identified in all evaluations, the challenges facing small country offices were highlighted.

**Recommendation 3:** *Develop a country-portfolio level monitoring and evaluation plan as a component of WFP’s performance management system.* Building on recent commitments to enhance the evidence base and accountability for results, there is need to plan and implement evidence requirements appropriate to each country portfolio.

**Recommendation 4:** *Ensure full implementation of the agreed gender policy evaluation recommendations, providing a clear vision, appropriate capacity and incentives aligned with the UN-SWAP.* As effective work on gender issues supports the effectiveness of all WFP’s work, attention should be paid to enhancing understanding of what gender means for each WFP function, developing practical guidance for gender-sensitive programming and ensuring access to gender expertise.

# Part 2. Evaluation Function in WFP

This section begins with a report on OEV's performance to plan. It then outlines activities on: i) strengthening the evaluation function in WFP to implement the Fit for Purpose commitments; ii) promoting learning from and use of evaluations; iii) improving evaluation quality; and iv) engaging with the international system on evaluation. A summary of OEV's management results focuses on the use of human and financial resources and the AER closes with a section on the outlook for 2014 and beyond.

## Office of Evaluation Performance to Plan in 2013

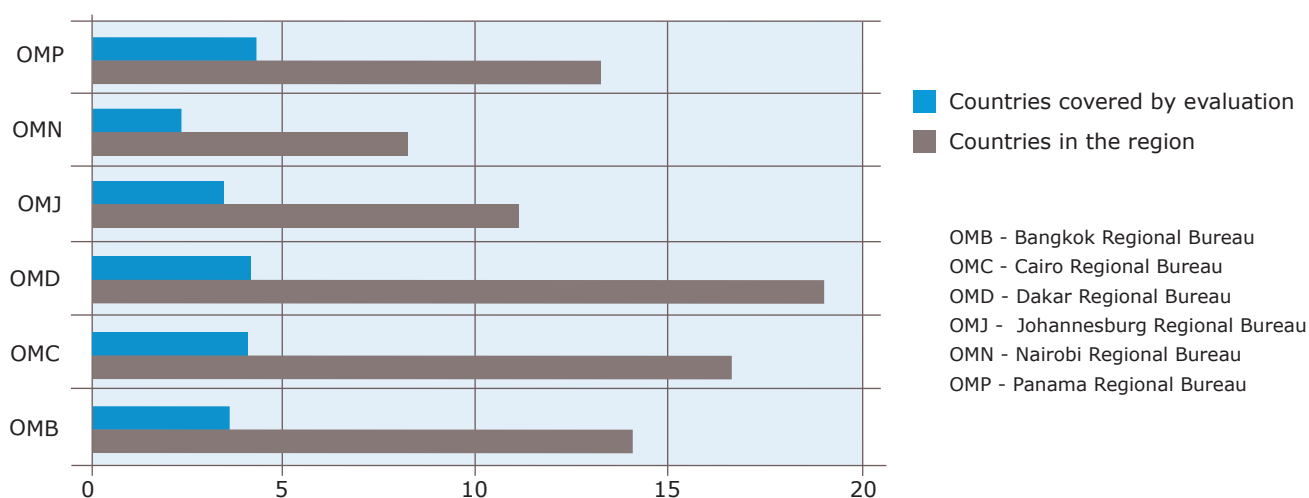
The Office of Evaluation's 2013 work programme brought significant changes, moving towards compliance with the 2008 evaluation policy. An 8 percent increase in

Programme Support and Administrative (PSA) funding enabled the continued delivery of complex evaluations of multiple operations, policies and strategies; increased engagement, to strengthen the evaluation function across WFP; increased investment in promoting learning from and use of evaluations; and increased participation in strengthening United Nations system-wide evaluation arrangements under the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) and the IASC's Transformative Agenda.

A new funding mechanism from project sources enabled the 2013 launch of a three-year series of single operation evaluations to fill a long-standing gap in evaluation coverage.

Twenty countries were covered by OEV evaluations completed in 2013, compared with 21 in 2012 (Figure 5).<sup>9</sup>

**Figure 5. Coverage of completed OEV evaluations by WFP region, 2013**



<sup>9</sup> OEV database, 2013 and 2013 programme of work.

Table 5 shows OEV's performance to plan. Many evaluations start in one year and are completed in the

next; the table therefore shows starts<sup>10</sup> and completions<sup>11</sup> separately.

**Table 5. Implementation Status of 2013 Evaluation Work Programme<sup>12</sup>**

	Country portfolio evaluations	Regional portfolio evaluations	Impact evaluations	Global evaluations	Synthesis Reports	<b>Total complex evaluations</b>	Evaluability Assessments	Single Operation evaluations (temp)
Total planned to complete 2013	5	1	5	1	2	14	–	–
<b>Total actual completions 2013</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	–	–
Completion rate of 2013 work programme	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		
Planned to start 2013	2	1	2	6	2	13	2	12
<b>Total actual starts 2013</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>
Start rate 2013 work programme	200%	100%	100%	33%	100%	85%	100%	83%

All of the planned completions of complex evaluations were actually completed. The actual overall evaluation start rate was 85 percent of the plan because of mid-year adjustments reducing the number of global evaluations starting in 2013 from six to five: the gender policy evaluation; the final evaluation of the P4P pilot; and three strategic evaluations in the emergency preparedness and response series,<sup>13</sup> two of which were rescheduled for 2014. A fourth evaluation in this series – on urban food insecurity – was cancelled.

The resources liberated were redirected to: i) supporting an innovative inter-agency approach to evaluation of the Syrian crisis response; ii) developing WFP's decentralized evaluation function; and iii) bringing forward the start of three CPEs originally planned for 2014 so that their findings can inform in-country strategic planning processes.<sup>14</sup> In addition, an evaluability assessment<sup>15</sup> was conducted for the planned series of impact evaluations on moderate and acute malnutrition.

The first ten in the new series of operation evaluations, partly funded from direct support costs, were

commissioned across the six regions, using a streamlined model with outsourced management. Evaluations are selected and timed to facilitate the systematic use of evidence in decision-making, particularly for new project formulation. While OEV maintains independence in the selection and conducting of these evaluations, the engagement of country offices and regional bureaux is integrated to enhance learning and use of the evaluation and to help develop WFP's evaluation function and culture in line with its Fit for Purpose approach and the new Strategic Plan.

As indicated in Figure 6, operations selected for evaluation broadly reflected the geographic coverage of WFP's operations and the respective shares of different programme categories. Special operations are excluded, because they were covered by recent joint evaluations of the Global Logistics and Food Security Clusters and/or other control mechanisms. EMOPs are underrepresented because of their short duration. Evaluations of Level 3 EMOPs are excluded from this series, because they are directly managed by OEV.

<sup>10</sup> When budget expenditure commences.

<sup>11</sup> When the final evaluation report is approved by the Director of OEV. Reports approved at the end of a calendar year are usually presented to the first Board session in the following year.

<sup>12</sup> As per WFP Management Plan 2013, Annex III.

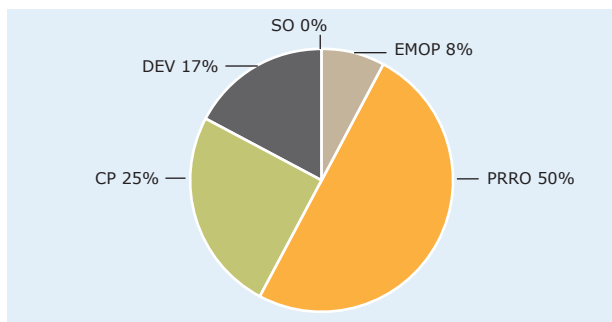
<sup>13</sup> A joint FAO/WFP evaluation of the global food security cluster, an evaluation of the preparedness and emergency response programme and an evaluation of WFP's use of pooled funds.

<sup>14</sup> Democratic Republic of the Congo, Indonesia and Uganda.

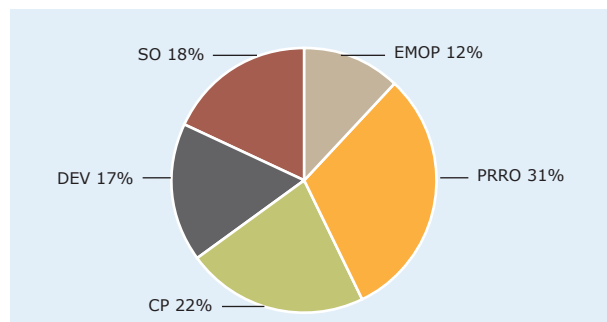
<sup>15</sup> An evaluability assessment reviews whether objectives are adequately defined and results sufficiently verifiable to enable credible and reliable evaluation.

**Figure 6. Selected operation evaluations and WFP 2013 operations by programme category and regional bureau**

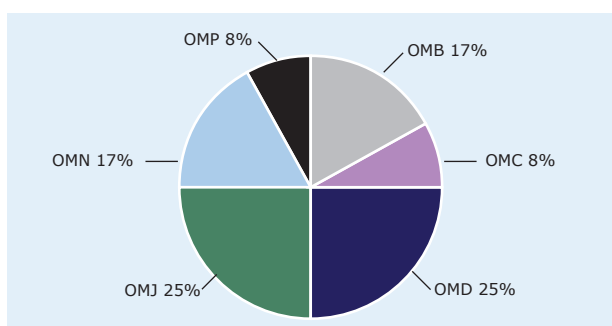
**a. 2013 Operations Evaluations by programme category**



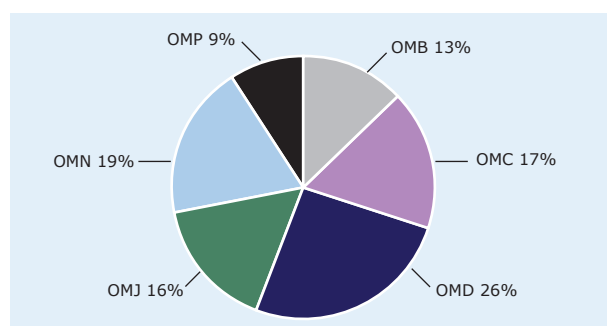
**b. WFP 2013 Operations by programme category**



**c. 2013 Operations Evaluations by Regional Bureau**



**d. WFP 2013 Operations by Regional Bureau**



### Strengthening WFP's Evaluation Function

An independent peer review of WFP's evaluation function – was commissioned by the Executive Director, following up on a previous review in 2007. Conducted by a panel of peers from the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) evaluation network, the review focused on the adequacy of WFP's evaluation policy and arrangements in the changing external and internal environment. Interim findings were provided in 2013 to inform on-going enhancement of WFP's accountability and learning frameworks and systems. The final assessment will be available in 2014.

Throughout 2013, in line with QCPR recommendations, the 2013 Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network review of WFP, and other reviews, OEV contributed advice and comments on many of WFP's organizational strengthening processes and initiatives for results-based management, including the performance management system, the Strategic Plan and the Strategic and Management Results Frameworks, and the Business Process Review. OEV also participated in

task forces on beneficiary counting and cost calculation, value for money, cash and vouchers, accountability to affected populations, knowledge management and other topics. OEV considers each of these engagements carefully, to balance its advisory/learning and independent accountability roles.

The Office of Evaluation worked closely with the Performance Management and Monitoring Division throughout to maximize complementarity, reinforce monitoring and evaluation, and lay the foundations for strengthening evaluation at the field level. For example, in support of roll-out of the monitoring and evaluation strategy, OEV contributed to the induction of six regional monitoring and evaluation advisors appointed in 2013.

### Promoting learning from and use of evaluations – closing the learning loop

In 2013, OEV finalized its 2013–2014 strategy for knowledge management, which guides its efforts to increase management's access to and use of evaluation evidence to inform decision-making on policies and operations. Within the available resources, OEV: i) provides strategic decision-making processes with information and lessons from evaluations; ii) builds

evaluation learning events into the evaluation process;<sup>16</sup> and iii) develops information products for specific audiences.

The synthesis report of the 2011–2012 impact evaluation series on the contribution of food assistance to durable solutions in protracted refugee situations, conducted jointly with UNHCR, was presented to a WFP-UNHCR high-level meeting and to representatives of both agencies' governing bodies.

The Office of Evaluation commented on the interpretation of 2011–2012 evaluation evidence for the formulation of new policy and strategy on private and public partnerships and school feeding. Evaluation evidence was also provided during development of WFP's 2014–2017 Strategic Plan; to the Strategy Review Committee, highlighting lessons from evaluations relevant to country strategies; and during the approval process of some new projects.

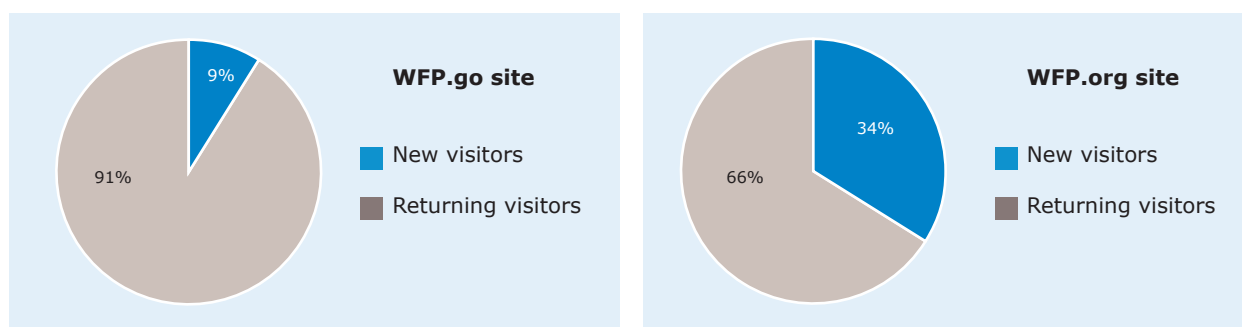
To help internalize evaluation findings and ensure relevant and well-focused recommendations, a special

learning event was organized during the evaluation of WFP's gender policy – an increasingly frequent practice. End-of-evaluation discussions were also conducted on the Bangladesh and Nepal FFA impact evaluations. Evaluation briefs were prepared for all evaluation reports completed in 2013, and a “top ten lessons” on partnerships was produced.

In line with the evaluation policy and good practice, all OEV evaluation reports and associated products are accessible from the evaluation library on WFP's website. The evaluation site also provides information on OEV's objectives and work programme, the types of evaluation WFP undertakes and the tools employed.

In 2013, the 3,850 visitors to OEV's intranet site represented an increase of 8 percent since 2012. However, as in 2012, only 9 percent of visitors were new. The total number of visitors to OEV's site on WFP's website almost doubled, to reach 4,400, although the proportion of new visitors dropped by 25 percentage points, implying that users return to the site, but that more effort is needed to publicize it.

**Figure 7. Evaluation websites, new versus returning**



### Evaluation Quality Improvement

Alongside strengthening WFP's evaluation function and closing the learning loop, other work streams for enhancing evaluation quality continued from 2012, notably on assessing gender.

A meta-evaluation of WFP's 2013 performance in meeting the UN-SWAP evaluation requirements on gender was commissioned, using the criteria and scorecard developed by UNEG.

There was evidence of progress in integrating gender into evaluation questions, designs and methodologies and in ensuring that evaluation teams have capacity for gender-sensitive evaluation. Overall, WFP was again rated as “approaching requirements” with four of the 12 assessed evaluations already fully meeting requirements and one exceeding them. The meta-evaluation noted areas for improvement, including gender-sensitive stakeholder analyses and evaluability assessments; the inclusion of findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons on gender in evaluation reports; and the integration of

<sup>16</sup> WFP. Evaluation Brief: “Evaluation into Use: How the OE Stimulates Learning for Programme Improvement”. <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/reports/wfp254763.pdf>

gender considerations into validation and dissemination processes.

In 2014, OEV will strengthen its guidance and quality standards to ensure that gender considerations are factored appropriately into evaluation processes, focusing on areas requiring improvement. As these measures are implemented, improvements in the gender rating are expected to start in 2014 and to be reflected in all 2015 evaluations.

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women identified the 2013 meta-analysis as setting the standard for robust gender assessment across the United Nations system. OEV and the evaluation offices of the other Rome-based agencies are organizing a joint seminar on gender in evaluation to be held in 2014.

Work on assessing efficiency/value for money is well advanced and partially incorporated into the Evaluation Quality Assurance System, with completion pending the finalization of corporate policy, definitions and metrics. An end-of-evaluation survey to assess evaluation management has been integrated into the system. Development of consultant resources continues.

#### ***Office of Evaluation staff skills and knowledge development***

A total of 72 professional staff days – 3.3 percent of working time – were spent in professional development in 2013, reflecting significant investment in new staff on rotation. Two staff members and a junior professional officer attended the International or the European Programme for Development Evaluation Training. One participant attended a specialist course on applied regression analysis; all staff attended an internal seminar on evaluating efficiency; and some attended WFP's Management Assessment Centre and other leadership-related workshops. Staff communities of practice continued, facilitating the informal development of skills and knowledge.

#### **Engagement with the International System on Evaluation**

With increased participation in the inter-agency steering group convened by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), automatic triggers for inter-agency humanitarian evaluation were integrated into the IASC humanitarian programme cycle. The Director of OEV became a member of the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP) steering group.

As Vice-Chair of UNEG, the Director of OEV oversaw completion of the independent assessment of UNEG, and co-led development of its 2014–2019 strategy, shaping its future contribution to United Nations system-wide evaluation capacity. OEV participated in UNEG task forces on joint evaluation, peer review, and human rights and gender equality.

The Office of Evaluation presented aspects of its work to the American Evaluation Association, the ALNAP annual general meeting, the UNEG evaluation practice exchange, and two seminars on impact evaluation organized by the Institute for Development Studies and the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

#### **Resources for Evaluation**

This section reports only on resources available to OEV. WFP's management information system cannot yet produce an aggregated report on resources dedicated to the evaluation function elsewhere in the Organization.

##### ***Financial resources***

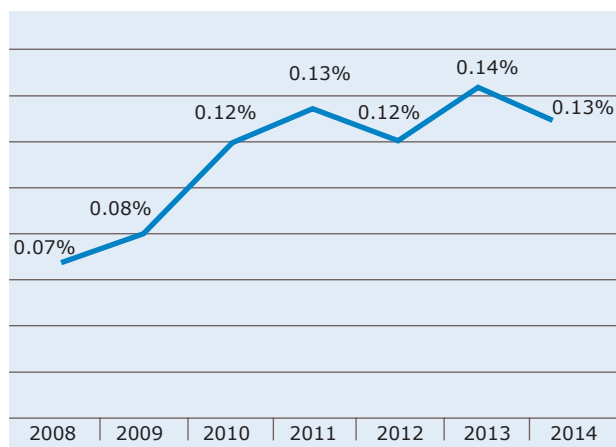
The 2013 Management Plan allocated USD 5.28 million of PSA funding to staff (USD 2.28 million) and non-staff (USD 3 million) expenditures for the core evaluation work programme – representing an 8 percent increase over 2012 and 0.14 percent of WFP's estimated total contribution income for 2013. A further USD 380,000 from multilateral funds was allocated to trust funds for the UNEG-OECD DAC peer review of WFP's evaluation function, for strengthening evaluation quality generally, and separately for the gender policy evaluation.

The main increase in investment in evaluation came from the allocation of an additional USD 2 million, largely from project sources, enabling the launch of a new series of operation evaluations, in line with WFP's policy concerning evaluation coverage.

This investment brought the total budget for evaluation to USD 7.66 million – a 53 percent increase over 2012 – which is set to grow further in 2014 with the projected increase in operation evaluations. Nevertheless, at only 0.2 percent of WFP's estimated total contribution income, this total is still low compared with those of many other United Nations agencies.

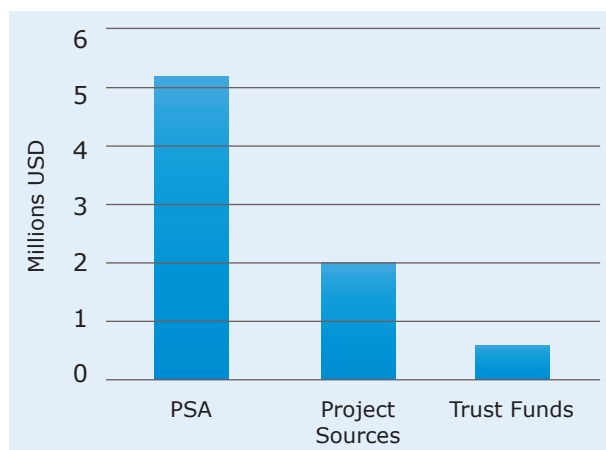
As in 2012, OEV expenditure was 100 percent of all funds required to be spent within the year.

**Figure 8. OEV PSA budget as percentage of WFP total contribution income**



Source: 2009–2013 Management Plan; audited annual accounts 2008–2012; Executive Board informal consultation on the 2014–2016 Management Plan, 20 September 2013.

**Figure 9. 2013 Office of Evaluation budget**



Source: OEV and 2009–2013 Management Plan.

### Human resources

The professional staff complement of OEV grew by 18 percent, to one director, nine professional officers and three general service staff. As illustrated in Table 6, most of the growth is dedicated to the new series of operation evaluations, temporarily under OEV management. Geographic diversity improved, but a strong gender imbalance remained, with only one male staff member. The 50:50 balance between WFP staff on rotation and

externally recruited experts, foreseen in the WFP evaluation policy, was maintained.

Over the year, there was a 90 percent occupancy rate for core professional staff positions and 100 percent use of the staff budget for operation evaluations. A junior professional officer completed one year with OEV and was replaced late in 2013. OEV continued to hire junior consultants as evaluation analysts. Table 6 provides details.

**Table 6: Office of Evaluation Staffing, 2013**

Core OEV work programme	WFP staff on rotation	Externally recruited evaluation specialists	Locally recruited	Total
Director (D2)		1		1
Senior Evaluation Officers (P5)	1	2.5		3.5
Evaluation Officers (P4)	3	1		4
General Service Staff (G6 and G5)			3	3
<b>Operation evaluation series (temporary)</b>				
Senior evaluation officers (P5)		0.5		0.5
Evaluation officers (P4)	1			1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>



During 2013, OEV increased to 12 the number of long-term agreements (LTAs) with consultancy firms and research institutions providing high-quality services and technical expertise in the specialist areas of evaluations planned for 2013–2015; an additional seven LTAs were issued for the operation evaluation series. LTAs have become the dominant method of hiring evaluation teams for complex evaluations and are the sole method for operation evaluations.

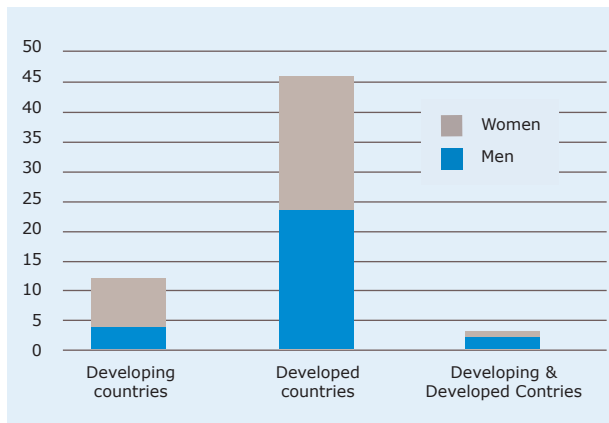
For OEV’s complex evaluations, 92 percent of the 63 consultants hired in 2013 were contracted via LTAs<sup>17</sup> and 65 percent of these were being hired for the first time, bringing fresh expertise to complement that of consultants

with previous OEV experience. The average team size was 4.1 consultants, down from 5.8 in 2012. For the first time, more women than men consultants were hired, at 52 percent women and 48 percent men. Diversity still requires improvement, as under 20 percent of consultants came from developing countries. However, these figures do not include the local research team members who are subcontracted in-country by the main WFP contractor.<sup>18</sup>

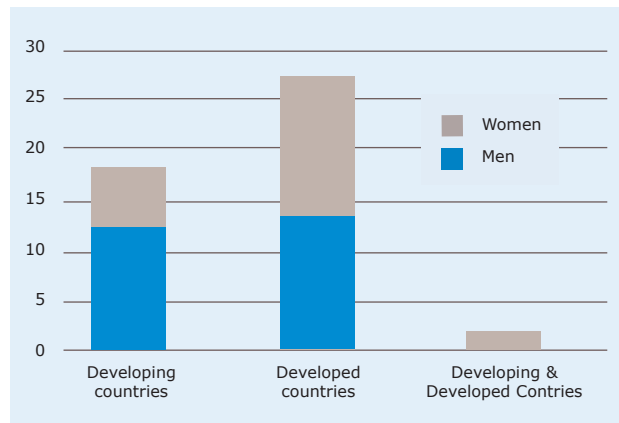
Operation evaluations had smaller teams, averaging 3.7 people, with a slightly less equitable gender balance of 60 percent men and 40 percent women and more consultants from developing countries – 40 percent.

**Figure 10. Composition of evaluation teams<sup>19</sup>**

**a. OEV Complex Evaluations**



**b. Operation Evaluations**



<sup>17</sup> Similar to the 97 percent of 70 consultants hired in 2012.

<sup>18</sup> Used extensively for impact evaluations and in the final evaluation of the P4P pilot project.

<sup>19</sup> Team members with dual developing/developed country nationality.

# Part 3. Evaluation Outlook

WFP's evaluation function is at an important juncture. Following five years of steady enhancement of OEV's independence and credibility, 2013 marked an increasing focus on the utilization of evaluation results, and evaluation at the operational level. Following the 2013 launch of the operation evaluation series, the priority in 2014 is to ensure that this model is suitable for application by regional and country offices. WFP will then be able to meet its commitments – made in the new Strategic Plan, the organizational strengthening exercise and the Business Process Review – to building field-level evaluation into its programme cycle and performance management systems.

Reflecting this pivotal period for WFP, the UNEG-DAC peer review of WFP's evaluation function concluded its work in early 2014, and far-reaching recommendations are expected. OEV's longer-term priorities and plans will be made in line with the management response to the peer review, which is likely to require an update of the 2008 evaluation policy.

In the shorter term, OEV will maintain the twin-track strategy outlined in its 2014 programme of work, combining complex and single operation evaluations and adjusting to internal and external contextual developments. The policy evaluation cycle, CPEs and strategic evaluations will continue as planned, while, in parallel, the outsourced operation evaluation series will continue into its second year. OEV will continue to build learning into its evaluation processes, consistent with its independence and resourcing limitations. Appropriately in the current external context, OEV will continue its international engagement in humanitarian evaluation, jointly through IASC's humanitarian programme cycle, balanced by directly-commissioned evaluations of WFP EMOPs, where appropriate.

# Acronyms

AER	Annual Evaluation Report
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance
CPE	country portfolio evaluation
CSD	country strategy document
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EMOP	emergency operation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GFD	general food distribution
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IBSFP	Integrated Blanket Supplementary Feeding Programme
LTA	long-term agreement
MIC	middle-income country
NGO	non-governmental organization
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD	Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development
OEV	Office of Evaluation
P4P	Purchase for Progress
PSA	Programme Support and Administrative (budget)
QCPR	Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review
RPE	Regional Portfolio Evaluation
SO	Strategic Objective
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UN-SWAP	United Nations System-Wide Action Plan
WFP	World Food Programme



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