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## **EVALUATION REPORTS**

*Agenda item 7*

*For consideration*



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## **SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT AFGHANISTAN PRRO 104270**

**Post-Conflict Relief and Rehabilitation in the  
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**

## NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

**This document is submitted to the Executive Board for consideration.**

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact Ms I. Carpitella, Administrative Assistant, Conference Servicing Unit (tel.: 066513-2174).



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

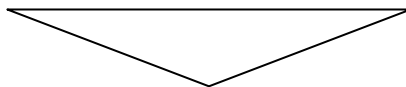
Afghanistan is a least-developed country with high rates of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition. Since 2002, which marked the end of two decades of war and civil unrest, WFP's assistance has shifted from emergency to rehabilitation and recovery. This report evaluates WFP's ongoing protracted relief and recovery operation in terms of relevance, results and factors that explain the performance. The evaluation was conducted by a team of four independent evaluators, with field work taking place in May and June 2009.

The evaluation found that WFP's operation was generally well aligned with government policies and partner strategies and was designed to meet existing critical humanitarian and social needs – but resulted in such a large variety of activities that it does not appear as a coherent programme. Overall, the operation performed well in its outreach to the target population, which was recognized as an achievement considering the prevailing security and access constraints.

The factors that positively influenced the operation's efficiency and effectiveness include: i) adequate targeting; ii) responsiveness to increased needs resulting from the high-food-price crisis and natural disasters; iii) flexible and innovative approaches; iv) good relations with partners; and v) adequate and simple food-for-work activities. On the other hand, the efficiency and effectiveness of the operation was negatively influenced by: i) the high diversity and lack of coherence of activities; ii) a combination of resource shortfalls in 2007, pipeline breaks and security threats leading to distribution delays; iii) deficiencies in the monitoring and evaluation system; and iv) insufficient staff capacities of WFP and partners.

The evaluation recommends that the country office: i) streamline and simplify its overall approach; ii) reflect on security risks and their implications; and iii) work towards establishing a practical monitoring and evaluation system harmonized with partners. Recommendations on specific programme components are also proposed.

## DRAFT DECISION\*



The Board takes note of “Summary Evaluation Report Afghanistan PRRO 104270” (WFP/EB.1/2010/7-A) and the management response in WFP/EB.1/2010/7-A/Add.1 and encourages further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

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\* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.



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## INTRODUCTION

1. This evaluation serves two objectives: i) accountability: reporting on the work carried out and the level of results achieved to date; and ii) learning with a view to inform the design of the successor protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO). The scope included all components and geographical areas of the operation. However, for the three pilot activities introduced through budget revisions – wet school feeding, cash/vouchers and mother-and-child health and nutrition – the evaluation limited itself to an assessment of their design.
2. Organized and commissioned by the Office of Evaluation, the evaluation was conducted by four independent consultants. The field study in Afghanistan (21 May–11 June 2009) was preceded by a desk study and preparatory mission to Afghanistan by the team leader.
3. The evaluation was constrained by: i) a lack of outcome data, forcing the team to rely on qualitative information and anecdotal evidence leading to indicative results which are not necessarily representative; ii) time constraints limiting the number of site visits; and iii) security constraints, which precluded access to many parts of the country.

### Country Context

4. Between 1979 and 2002, Afghanistan faced war, civil unrest and recurring disasters, which exacted a heavy toll on its people. During this period, millions died and millions more fled the country and became refugees in Pakistan, Iran and beyond.
5. Since 2002 there have been serious national efforts to revitalize the economy and enhance social development, with international assistance. Yet, these efforts have been constrained by persisting security threats, socio-political issues, corruption and recurrent emergencies: they have failed to reduce extreme poverty and hunger. Almost half of the estimated population of 25 million still lives below the poverty line, and Afghanistan ranks 174 out of 178 in the human development index.
6. Health indicators for both women and children remain exceptionally low and are amongst the worst in the world: 54 percent of children under 5 are stunted, and 6.7 percent are wasted due to malnutrition. The mortality rates for women reflect the dire conditions in which most of them live. One third of the school-age population are not in school and only 30 percent of girls attend school.
7. Food production is highly volatile, owing mainly to erratic weather conditions. Afghanistan is normally a food-deficit country, depending on net cereal imports (mainly wheat) even during years of good harvests.

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## OVERVIEW AND STRATEGY OF THE OPERATION

### Operation Features

8. Since the fall of the Taliban regime and the establishment of a transitional Government in June 2002, WFP's operations have shifted from emergency assistance to rehabilitation and recovery. The PRRO was approved in November 2005 for a period of three years (January 2006 – December 2008). The original number of people to be assisted was 6.6 million at a cost of US\$360.2 million. The operation has undergone six budget revisions, owing primarily to recurrent droughts, the crisis and consequences of escalating



food prices, and other, localized emergencies. It now assists 14.8 million people at a total cost of US\$848 million. The duration has been extended by one year, to December 2009.

9. The overall goal of the operation is to enhance food security and improve the human and productive capital of vulnerable Afghans in highly food-insecure and remote areas, with special emphasis on vulnerable women and children. The operation's specific objectives, which contribute to the five Strategic Objectives of WFP's previous Strategic Plan (2004–2007) are:

PRRO's Specific Objectives	⇒	Corresponding WFP Strategic Objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Save lives in crisis situations</li> <li>➤ Increase access to food for vulnerable groups affected by extreme weather</li> </ul>	⇒	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Improve capacity of vulnerable groups, including internally displaced persons (IDPs) to manage shocks and meet necessary food needs</li> </ul>	⇒	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Contribute to a substantial reduction in the number of people affected by tuberculosis (TB)</li> <li>➤ Raise awareness and participation of communities in preventive health and nutrition</li> <li>➤ Contribute to a substantial reduction of helminthic infections</li> <li>➤ Increase the availability of locally produced and fortified wheat flour to the general population</li> </ul>	⇒	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increase primary schoolchildren's enrolment and attendance in food-insecure and low-enrolment areas, increase girls' enrolment and attendance in areas with a high gender gap and address short-term hunger to improve learning</li> <li>➤ Increase the number of primary schools</li> <li>➤ Improve the literacy and functional life skills of poor rural adults, especially women</li> </ul>	⇒	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Increase the capacities of the Government, non-government counterparts and communities to identify food needs, develop strategies and carry out food-based programmes</li> </ul>	⇒	5

10. PRRO 104270 has two components:

- **Relief.** Includes emergency food assistance in the form of general food distribution (GFD) and relief food for work (FFW) to: a) victims of disasters and conflicts in food-insecure and disaster-prone areas; b) vulnerable populations affected by the food price crisis; and c) IDPs.
- **Recovery.** Includes: a) asset creation to sustain livelihoods, and protect the environment and natural resources: mainly FFW and food for assets for road rehabilitation, irrigation infrastructure construction, environmental protection and reforestation; b) vocational training to restore livelihoods and develop capacities; c) education and health activities to increase enrolment, reduce drop-outs and relieve short-term hunger: food for education (FFE), school construction and rehabilitation, teacher training and mobilization, functional literacy training, food security education and school gardens, deworming, assistance to TB patients and their families, and flour fortification; provision of fortified supplementary food for children and pregnant and lactating women.

11. The operation is implemented in all 34 provinces and in 390 of the 398 districts of the country. It is managed through a country office, five area offices and three sub-offices. At the time of the evaluation, WFP had 827 staff members in Afghanistan: 57 international and 770 national.



## Assessment of Design

12. The operation's objectives were adequate in seeking to contribute to the objectives of national development strategies, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and donor strategies.
13. Clear links can be made between the PRRO objectives and Pillar 3 on economic and social development of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, which states as its objectives: "Reduce poverty, ensure sustainable development [...], improve human development indicators, and make significant progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)." In addition to addressing the needs of the poor, vulnerable and food-insecure, thus directly contributing to MDG 1 (Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger), the operation is also designed to contribute, through its various components, to: MDG 2 (Achieve universal primary education); MDG 3 (Promote gender equality and empower women), MDG 4 (Reduce child mortality), MDG 5 (Improve maternal health), MDG Target 6.c (Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of [...] major diseases) and MDG 7 (Ensure environmental sustainability).
14. The objectives of the operation contribute to those of the WFP Strategic Plan (2004–2007) and the range of intervention types has been expanded following the approval of the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2011). The operation is in line with the main policy documents, including those on gender and Enhanced Commitments to Women and on transition from relief to recovery. Relief–recovery linkages have been considered both implicitly – in the work to prevent deprivation and secure livelihoods at critical times, a precondition for recovery – and explicitly by linking relief assistance with FFW approaches wherever possible.
15. Findings of previous evaluations have been considered in the programme design: as a result some projects such as the bakery activity were discontinued, while emphasis was put on improving the links between assessment, programming and monitoring – particularly outcome monitoring.
16. However, the logical framework (logframe) of the operation presents severe deficiencies with regard to the:
  - inherent logic (consistency between outputs, outcomes, and goal) and plausibility of some of the outputs and outcomes;
  - inappropriateness of most indicators and the lack of targets; and
  - risks and assumptions, which do not refer to external issues but to issues within WFP's control.
17. A notable design feature of the operation is the high diversity of activities (16 in total), especially for the education component, where the complexity of the design is particularly evident. The activities are justified by the needs as reflected by socio-economic indicators and are appropriate to the local context and practices. While there is a cultural preference for food to be distributed through a system of exchange such as for FFW, GFD is nonetheless considered appropriate in acute emergencies and in cases where the targeted beneficiaries are unable to work or where no meaningful FFW projects can be implemented. However, questions were raised as to the appropriateness of introducing the pilot wet school feeding activity, which was not validated by assessment, was designed with little consultation and could have important drawbacks in terms of implementation.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The evaluation of this pilot wet school feeding activity covered only its design.



18. Geographical targeting is based on the 2005 national risk and vulnerability assessment, carried out by government partners with technical support from the European Commission, the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), WFP and others; it provides information at district level with a degree of reliability acceptable for the recovery/development context. Special assessments have been carried out in disaster and crisis situations. Second-step targeting – i.e. beneficiary selection – is done with regard to GFD and FFW and is generally considered as adequate even though occasional targeting errors were noted. Community representatives are involved in beneficiary selection for both activities. While specific criteria are applied for GFD, FFW is largely self-targeting. Assisting all participants in FFE and food-for-training (FFT) activities is generally justified; however, concerns were raised as to the high number of criteria applied to selecting schools and FFT projects.

## RESULTS

19. Since 2006, 20 million people have been assisted, including 8.7 million in 2008 –implying that for that year 70 percent of the food-insecure and vulnerable Afghans were reached by one kind of WFP intervention or another.<sup>2</sup> Overall, there is a slightly higher number of male than female beneficiaries due to a higher number of boys attending school and receiving school meals, and of men involved in FFW activities; while women make up most of the beneficiaries of take-home rations under FFE (oil for girls) and FFT activities. The total tonnage distributed in 2008 represents 26 percent less than planned, suggesting that beneficiaries did not receive the totality of their rations or were assisted for shorter periods than planned.
20. While the original project document stipulated that relief would be 5 percent and recovery 95 percent of the activities, the relief component has been substantially increased because of consecutive emergencies, to 50 percent of the resources and volume of the operation.

### General Food Distribution

21. In 2008, 1.2 million Afghans received relief GFD rations, including IDPs and persons affected by crises and disasters who received assistance for between one and six months. GFD has, in general, reached vulnerable groups who suffered from acute food shortages. Notwithstanding some distribution delays, some targeting errors in the first round of urban distributions and a ration covering only part of household requirements, which constrained the effectiveness of GFDs to a certain extent, it has helped poor and vulnerable households to overcome critical times of food shortages without being forced to apply negative and unsustainable coping practices. As such, it provided an effective temporary safety net. Considering that the wheat prices had more than doubled between 2007 and 2008,<sup>3</sup> GFD effectively compensated the beneficiary households for the increased market price of their main staple food. Another outcome of the GFD activity has been capacity development of

<sup>2</sup> Beneficiary numbers should be treated with great caution because of deficiencies and inconsistencies in planning, monitoring and reporting the numbers. Reports from cooperating partners are often late, incorrect or missing and limited by insufficient monitoring capacity and difficulties with access.

<sup>3</sup> See WFP, Afghanistan Market Price Bulletin, April 2009. Starting from less than 15 afghanis (AFN)/kg in early 2007 retail prices of wheat reached a peak of more than 30 AFN/kg in April 2008, when they started to decline again to below 20 AFN/kg in April 2009.





national counterparts in managing food distribution schemes, as shown by the 2008 Government-managed distributions of food aid provided by the Russian Federation.<sup>4</sup>

## Food for Work

22. The FFW component is fundamentally strong and implemented through robust partnerships with national stakeholders and through communities. Originally intended as a recovery activity, it also became the major activity of the increased relief component following the 2008 joint appeal and absorbs the largest share of PRRO resources. Since 2006, 1.77 million participants (translating to 8.8 million beneficiaries) have participated in FFW projects. The ration size “value” was less than day-labour rates, which resulted in effective self-selection of participants from the most vulnerable households. The project selection is bottom-up and the approach fits with the intentions of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and community expectations; communities are responsible for deciding on their needs through a participatory and inclusive process that includes women and the most vulnerable. Projects are prepared by representative community development councils<sup>5</sup> with technical support from the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development and cooperating partners; they are assessed by the line ministry and confirmed by provincial governor. The WFP approval process of projects is rapid.
23. FFW for relief and recovery has resulted in positive outcomes by maintaining the stressed food budgets of beneficiaries at coping levels and providing a temporary top-up to livelihoods. It was also observed that the disabled or sick who cannot participate in FFW receive a share of rations from other community members. There are no reports of nutritional collapse (starvation, acute malnutrition) in areas covered by FFW, and FFW interventions have stabilized market prices by reducing profiteering during the high food price period. Local representatives and stakeholders unequivocally state that the economic impact of creating and rehabilitating assets is clear,<sup>6</sup> that FFW benefits the community at large through the assets created or rehabilitated, and that it is critical to the development, resilience and well-being of the community and its members. FFW also contributed to the realization of the Green Afghanistan Initiative, a joint programme of action of the Government and six United Nations agencies, which aims at protecting the environment and natural resources.<sup>7</sup>

## Food for Education

24. Annually, 1.4 million children (92 percent of planned) received sealed high-energy biscuits (HEBs) through on-site school feeding. The biscuits are well accepted by schoolchildren and are easy to distribute – although because they are dry the absence of drinking water in some places is regrettable. Interruptions in HEB supplies in late 2006 and early 2008 did not significantly impact on attendance because students knew that food would arrive and in fact it was eventually distributed. While 829,000 children received take-home rations in 2008 – 184 percent of planned because the number includes children receiving additional wheat under the pre-winter project – the school construction output level was remarkably low.

<sup>4</sup> These schemes have not been covered by the evaluation.

<sup>5</sup> Community development councils have been established in 80 percent of communities covered by the National Solidarity Programme.

<sup>6</sup> For example, de-silted canals result in improved productivity of irrigated land and rehabilitated roads and bridges reduce the cost of market access.

<sup>7</sup> WFP provides food-based support to various activities under the programme, mainly to nursery school workers.



25. FFE has reinforced existing trends towards increased enrolment in primary schools and has increased the attendance of girls. Data comparison between WFP-assisted and non-assisted schools shows a clear positive effect on the gender gap in WFP-assisted schools, even though the evaluation mission noted that enrolment figures in WFP-assisted schools were slightly inflated by headmasters. Also, incentives for girls were particularly successful in the early primary grades but the mission observed a tendency for girls to drop out in upper grades.
26. Increased enrolment, encouraged by FFE, has increased pressure on the education system. Schools are often overcrowded and complementary investments and measures are necessary to adequately accommodate a growing number of schoolchildren. This calls for ensuring the provision of the “Essential Package” in WFP-assisted schools.<sup>8</sup>
27. Functional literacy and vocational training courses were attended by 150,000 participants, two thirds of them women, which contributed to the development of literacy and functional life skills of the rural population, and particularly of poor women. However, the teacher training activity has not proven successful regarding two crucial indicators: the number of participants and the required participation of women.

## Health and Nutrition

28. Between 75 and 82 percent of the planned number of TB patients were assisted in 2007/08 because security issues halted some food deliveries. Nonetheless, outcomes were systematically monitored showing impressive results: increased numbers of people seeking voluntary treatment, improved case detection rates and directly observed treatment (DOT) coverage rate, and fewer defaulters. In addition, substantial further effects can be expected as family and community members will be less exposed to the risk of infection, and the cured people will be better able to contribute to the household and community economy. While food assistance is critical for enhancing case detection and thereafter achieving a decline in the overall TB-affected population, these results are attributable to a well-functioning integrated partnership.
29. Other notable results relate to the deworming and flour fortification activities. The annual target of deworming 5 million children has been surpassed since 2005 with over 6 million children aged 6–13 years reached since then. The production of fortified wheat flour, which is demand-driven, has almost doubled since the previous PRRO but still falls short of the expected target; the capacity of the Ministry of Public Health technicians is still inadequate. Fortified flour is mainly purchased by the urban lower- and middle-income classes who are most affected by micronutrient deficiencies. The widespread consumption of fortified flour is expected to lead to improved iron levels and improved overall health status of the population.
30. Less effective – actually hardly practiced – were health and nutrition awareness training and vocational training programmes, which were not effective channels of nutrition awareness because attention was not given to identifying health and nutrition trainers nor to adequately preparing them to fulfil this function.

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<sup>8</sup> Essential Package implementation involves the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and WFP. See <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/poverty/PovertyForum/Documents/The%20Essential%20Package.pdf>.



## FACTORS EXPLAINING RESULTS

31. **Security challenges** affect the operation throughout the project cycle and while United Nations security rules restrict staff travel in no-go areas, WFP applied flexible and innovative approaches in identifying cooperating partners, organizing transport through local transporters and beneficiary communities, and ensuring monitoring by outsourcing it in these areas. However, not enough information on the implications of security threats for the efficiency of the operation has been provided to stakeholders and particularly to donors. Some donors were left with the impression that everything goes smoothly until reports indicate otherwise; they noted the need for enhanced accountability on these issues and a pro-active flow of qualitative data from WFP on the efficacy of its approaches in security-risk areas.
32. **Risk of corruption and diversion** is widespread and, while government accountability standards are prescribed by various laws, corruption at all levels of government is well known and evident. This could also affect WFP, especially in no-go areas where WFP has outsourced critical project cycle components.
33. **Resource constraints** affected the programme in 2007 and WFP could ensure only minimum operational levels and respond to the most urgent needs by borrowing US\$10 million from the Immediate Response Account. Resource constraints also affected the operational capacity of the country and area offices, and international staff were replaced by United Nations volunteers. Favourable donor response to the 2008 joint appeal, however, meant the programme was 80.6 percent resourced by March 2009.
34. **The pipeline** has been affected by numerous factors including the 2007 resource shortfalls, security risks and weather hazards. Pipeline breaks have occurred frequently, leading to major backlogs and delays in food distribution, which undermined WFP's performance.
35. **Local purchases of cereals** were to increase subject to cash availability, according to the project document, but local purchases have been limited so far. Although Afghanistan is a net food importer, there are pockets of surplus production, some good harvests and a potential for increased production, which could be further enhanced through local purchase of food for aid.
36. **An ability to adapt to change** was demonstrated by the country office, along with the capacity to adequately use budget revisions to expand the relief share of the PRRO in response to emergency needs and to pilot new activities in line with the new WFP Strategic Plan. Some related concerns on **staff resources** should be noted as area office and sub-office staff struggled throughout the project cycle to meet the demands of various projects, especially in light of the expansion of FFW and the introduction of pilot projects.
37. **The need for improved and more effective monitoring**, particularly outcome monitoring, was emphasized in all previous PRRO evaluations. Although some steps have been made towards upgrading the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, they have not yet brought about tangible results in meeting the essential requirements of WFP and its partners for accountability and information for management that would enhance efficiency and effectiveness.
38. **The strategic partnership** with the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development is functioning well but is limited to the context of FFW. The Ministry is officially mandated for the overall coordination of food aid; there is a need to define the role of food aid in Afghanistan's future development strategy. As for other activities, WFP operates with the respective line ministries (Education; Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock;



Refugees and Repatriation; Labour and Social Affairs, Martyrs and The Disabled; Public Health) and cooperating partners on the basis of bilateral Letters of Understanding. WFP field staff have strong, friendly, collaborative and regular relations with stakeholders who generally reported satisfaction with WFP performance as far as responsiveness, collaboration, and technical and material support, are concerned. Roles and responsibilities are well understood and fulfilled.

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## OVERALL ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Overall Assessment

39. In addressing critical humanitarian and social needs and contributing to the achievements of MDGs 1–7, the operation is fully compliant with WFP strategies and policies; relevant to the population’s needs and coherent with the objectives of Afghan national development strategies. However, the logframe is deficient and the operation’s design is complex, leading to a juxtaposition of activities rather than to a comprehensive and coherent programme. The activities were found to be appropriate to the needs and context with few exceptions. Linkages between relief and recovery exist but they came about as a result of field-level relationships established through implementation.
40. Despite severe security constraints, WFP has remained operational in all provinces and almost all districts of the country, which is a major achievement in itself and recognized as such by the Afghan Government, United Nations and donor partners, communities and beneficiaries. The Government, United Nations and donor partners largely rely on WFP as the main player and provider of relief food assistance in disaster and crisis situations.
41. About 70 percent of the food-insecure and vulnerable population has been reached by some kind of WFP intervention. The actual number of beneficiaries increased from 4.7 million in 2006 to 8.7 million in 2008, exceeding the planning figure by 28 percent in 2008. However, for the same year, the tonnage distributed was 26 percent less than planned, implying that beneficiaries did not receive their entire food rations or were assisted over shorter periods than planned. Also, delays of sometimes even more than eight months in food deliveries and distribution – due to a combination of resource shortfalls in 2007, pipeline breaks, security threats and corruption – have affected the effectiveness of the operation. Food that arrives several months after a disaster strikes, after FFW projects are completed or when the school year is over fails to reach the beneficiaries in times of need and to fulfil its objectives.
42. Food costs constitute 52 percent of the PRRO cost, which is similar to PRROs elsewhere and can be taken as an indicator of efficiency, particularly considering the complexity of operating in the Afghan context. Outreach in insecure areas is achieved at substantial additional cost, with risks of losses and delays; this raises questions concerning which additional costs and what risk levels are acceptable.
43. The factors that positively influenced the operation’s efficiency and effectiveness include: a) adequate geographic targeting and generally adequate beneficiary selection methods; b) responsiveness to increased needs resulting from the high-food prices crisis and natural disasters; c) flexible and innovative approaches, especially for implementation in no-go areas; d) generally good relations with partners in terms of collaboration, cooperation, technical and material support; and e) the fact that FFW activities are simple and familiar to communities and in line with their needs.



44. On the other hand, the efficiency and effectiveness of the operation was negatively influenced by: a) the high diversity and lack of coherence of activities, which poses implementation challenges and affects efficiency; b) a combination of resource shortfalls in 2007, pipeline breaks, security threats and corruption leading to distribution delays; c) deficiencies in the M&E system and in the related monitoring of outputs and particularly outcomes of the operation; and d) insufficient staff capacities of WFP and partners.
45. Concerning the likely longer-term impact of the operation, at this stage only assumptions can be made. It can be assumed to: a) contribute to community development processes through its community-based FFW approaches; b) develop human capacity and strengthen the role of women in the economy and society through its FFE/FFT activities, which form an integral part of the United Nations joint Healthy School Initiative and the Afghanistan Integrated Functional Literacy Initiative; and c) help to maintain and improve the nutrition and health status of the population through its relief, health and nutrition interventions.
46. In planning and implementation, WFP collaborates closely with government partners and communities; through “learning by doing” and capacity development measures, they are enabled to assume greater responsibility in carrying out tasks and eventually take them over. Community ownership and the simple technology used in FFW activities are decisive factors for the sustained use and maintenance of activity products or assets. Continued government commitment to FFE is documented by a recent concept paper on a National Food-for-Education Programme aimed at expanding school feeding to all primary schools in the country.

## Recommendations

47. The recommendations are directed to the country office.
48. Streamline and simplify approaches, based on:
  - experience and lessons learned;
  - the capacities available to WFP and the partners it can rely on;
  - well established partnerships with clearly defined roles and responsibilities; and
  - establishment of priorities and linkages between types and geographic areas of future operations derived from a clear, realistic and consistent set of objectives, outcomes and indicators, reflected in a logframe developed by WFP together with its main partners.
49. Adopt in the future PRRO design a fundamentally different, and practical, approach to M&E harmonized with partner approaches. The system should have one layer that ensures basic monitoring functions of distribution and beneficiaries by providing real-time data and information on progress and flaws in implementation; and another layer that generates outcome data to enable WFP and its partners to monitor overall programme performance in relation to achievement of objectives. To achieve this, partners will need capacity development and support from WFP; a precondition for this is a consistent logframe.
50. Manage security risks and challenges. Clearly set out the implications of security threats for the operation, in order to clarify which additional costs and level of risks are acceptable, and which types of interventions have higher priority and justify higher risk levels. Consult with stakeholders and donors on these issues.
51. Avoid pipeline breaks and delivery delays by: i) planning deliveries further ahead; ii) prepositioning food at strategic locations; iii) making use of alternative sources and routes of supply; iv) setting priorities according to urgency of requirements; and v) making



donors aware of the implications of pipeline breaks. If delivery delays are expected, WFP should notify partners, field staff, communities and beneficiaries well in advance and communicate the anticipated delivery date.

52. Explore possibilities of local procurement and, to the extent feasible, utilize them to: i) strengthen local food marketing; ii) generate income for farmers and traders; and iii) help ensure that beneficiaries receive the type and quality of food they are used to. This requires monitoring of the grain market and establishing contacts with grain traders.

⇒ *Relief – General Food Distribution*

53. Clarify targeting criteria to all partners. Beneficiary screening and third-party verification should be done early and comprehensively, particularly in urban areas. Provisions for eligible latecomers should be made.
54. Maintain and extend to future urban GFD the investment made in the Kabul data bank as an instrument for management, monitoring and documentation of social assistance schemes; consider offering it to government partners for wider application.
55. Closely monitor the planned cash/vouchers pilot, especially regarding efficiency and effectiveness and how results compare to GFD and other social safety-net approaches.

⇒ *Food for Work*

56. Harmonize FFW by further structuring the intervention model led by WFP, driven by communities and supported by the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development, with a focus on economies of scale.
57. Clearly distinguish throughout the project cycle between FFW for relief (humanitarian) and FFW for recovery (development). The goal should be for food deliveries to be consistently under the direct control of community development councils at the community level.
58. Implement a “back-to-basics” review of the M&E system for FFW, with strong senior leadership and focus on a small number of relevant FFW indicators.

⇒ *Food for Education/Training*

59. Focus the FFE/FFT component goal on support to basic education and basic skills training. Clearly establish the justification and synergy of activities to achieve FFE objectives and reflect them in the logframe.
60. Extend the provision of incentive take-home rations to girls in grades 10–12 to prevent early drop-out and encourage girls to complete their education.
61. Reconsider the appropriateness of wet school feeding while looking for alternatives to increase vitamin C intake.
62. Develop capacity and provide technical assistance to government staff to support the development of FFE/health and nutrition national policy frameworks with adequate institutional, financial and human resources, with a view to a future and progressive WFP hand-over strategy.
63. Give more responsibility to community development councils for food management and distribution at implementing sites, to improve monitoring at final delivery points and increase beneficiary community commitment.



⇒ *Health and Nutrition*

64. Stop integrating health and nutrition education in vocational training, but strengthen it in functional literacy activities by using action-oriented approaches; continue support to the School Health Initiative.
65. Consider revising reimbursement rates for food deliveries for tuberculosis patients, taking into account the higher transport costs of smaller quantities.
66. Consider distributing locally produced fortified wheat flour to WFP-assisted projects. Expand flour fortification, while working on an exit strategy. Train all Ministry of Public Health laboratory technicians to monitor the quality of locally fortified and imported wheat flour.
67. Establish jointly with UNICEF, FAO and the Government a pilot collaboration in targeted supplementary feeding programmes in Herat and Kabul to address: i) severe malnutrition (UNICEF-supported); ii) moderate malnutrition (WFP-supported); and iii) prevention (FAO-supported). This would strengthen the Government's multi-sectoral response to malnutrition and ensure the sustainability of WFP assistance. A Memorandum of Understanding to formalize this arrangement stating joint targeting, annual workplans and implementation is desirable.
68. Explore the potential for local production of HEBs to stimulate local economies and reduce distribution costs.

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## ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

AFN	afghani (local currency, 50 AFN=1 US\$)
DOT	directly observed treatment
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
FFE	food for education
FFT	food for training
FFW	food for work
GFD	general food distribution
HEB	high-energy biscuits
IDP	internally displaced person
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
TB	tuberculosis
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization