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EVALUATION WORK PLAN FOR 1997-98

Agenda item 6



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EVALUATION WORK PLAN FOR 1997-98

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted for endorsement and guidance to the Executive Board.

Pursuant to the decisions taken on the methods of work by the Executive Board at its First Regular Session of 1996, the documentation prepared by the Secretariat for the Board has been kept brief and decision-oriented. The meetings of the Executive Board are to be conducted in a business-like manner, with increased dialogue and exchanges between delegations and the Secretariat. Efforts to promote these guiding principles will continue to be pursued by the Secretariat.

The Secretariat therefore invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document, to contact the WFP staff member(s) listed below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting. This procedure is designed to facilitate the Board's consideration of the document in the plenary.

The WFP focal point for this document is:

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Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Documentation and Meetings Clerk (tel.: 5228-2641).



EVALUATION WORK PLAN FOR 1997-98

Looking back

1. An evaluation work plan for the biennium 1996-97 was presented to the Executive Board in 1996 (WFP/EB.2/96/6-B), with the intention that a similar indicative plan would be presented for 1997 and 1998.
2. Of the 20 evaluations of projects/operations planned for 1996, all but two were initiated in 1996. Reporting on these evaluations to the Executive Board carries over into 1997. All of the 10 other (thematic) initiatives planned for 1996 were initiated and the Office of Evaluation (OEDE) made a significant number of contributions to WFP's internal dialogue on these issues. Two of the studies ('Evaluation of the Dutch Quality Improvement Grant' and the 'Evaluation Memory System - Phase One') could be concluded. The other initiatives - with or without modifications - will be rolled forward into the 1997-98 work plan.
3. Evaluation reports and related outputs of OEDE were shared and discussed with recipient governments, the Executive Board, cooperating United Nations and bilateral institutions and, of course, with various WFP divisions. The computer-based storage and retrieval of evaluation reports have made satisfactory progress. The special publication series has turned out to be more difficult to launch than anticipated. However, efforts in this area will continue. Evaluators and evaluation findings have contributed both to the shaping of WFP's policies and strategies and to the formulation (or reformulation) of projects, programmes and operations.
4. OEDE staff participated actively in the elaboration of efficient evaluation approaches within the United Nations system, and in exchanges with bilateral assistance partners (e.g., multi-donor evaluation in Rwanda). A major focus was the improvement in the evaluation of emergency assistance operations - a concern that will be carried over into the planning of the next biennium.

Orientation of the Evaluation Work Plan

5. WFP's overall strategic priorities, particularly those fostering "*a people-centred approach to food aid*", "*advocacy for the hungry poor*" and "*increased accountability*" provide a substantive and methodological orientation for the proposed evaluation work plan.
6. The WFP Strategic and Financial Plan 1996-99 calls upon OEDE to raise the quality and increase the quantity of information on the performance of WFP activities. Evaluations must gain added insights into what works, what does not work and why. Such knowledge can then form the basis for changes in the programme mix, implementation strategies and future policy proposals to the Executive Board.
7. In order to contribute to WFP's resolve for increased effectiveness, and a more strategic and outcome-oriented approach to management, OEDE has a high degree of autonomy. It acts as an evaluation entity, as a facilitator of feedback on evaluation findings, and as a catalyst and advisor to the various divisions in their self-assessment efforts.
8. In accordance with this mandate, OEDE is complementing its traditional focus on accountability and physical target achievement with a stronger emphasis on strategic



relevance, policy achievements and performance vis-à-vis strategic targets. The results obtained from the various evaluation exercises should be relevant to the particular activity being examined; even more importantly, the results should contribute to improvements in the effectiveness and efficiency of future activities and of WFP's operations as a whole.

9. The key objectives of evaluations and studies are therefore to:
 - a) provide lessons for future initiatives;
 - b) contribute to the evolution of appropriate policies and procedures; and
 - c) contribute to strategic decisions.
10. Evaluation activities focus on projects and emergency operations on the one hand, and on the other on procedures and special issues.
11. Priority concerns for OEDE in 1997-98 are:
 - Evaluation of emergencies
 - Effects (or impact) of food assistance on special beneficiary groups
 - Focus of food assistance in development programmes
 - Feedback mechanisms for evaluation findings and lessons learned
 - Enhancement of WFP's overall performance orientation and "evaluation culture"
12. Evaluations are managed by OEDE staff members who are supported by independent external experts. Where appropriate, evaluations are organized in cooperation with agencies of recipient countries and/or donors. Missions are funded out of OEDE's budget. In some cases, additional support is sought from donors. Increasing emphasis is placed on "joint evaluations" with other agencies, donors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
13. The output of OEDE is documented either as 'evaluations' (which are of a more definitive nature and presented to the Executive Board), or 'studies' (which are of a more preliminary nature and not formally presented to the Executive Board). In line with United Nations system usage, the work plan for evaluation is organized into the components listed below.

Evaluations of projects and operations

- ♦ Development projects
- ♦ Protracted refugee and internally displaced person projects (PROs) and emergency operations (EMOPs)

Programme Evaluations

Sectoral Evaluations

Thematic Evaluations

- ♦ Food assistance issues
- ♦ Process or organizational practices



Defining the Evaluation Work Plan

14. The evaluation work plan focuses on areas of concern to the Executive Board, WFP's executive staff and line managers. Criteria for selecting particular initiatives for evaluation include:
- Evaluations mandated by the Executive Board
 - Significance in the overall portfolio
 - Potential of learning for future decisions

Evaluations and Studies for 1997-98

15. As in the past, the proposed work plan was elaborated on the basis of information received from exchanges with a broad spectrum of WFP stakeholders. Of the tasks to be initiated in 1997, several will not be concluded and reported on before mid-1998. A summary of evaluations and studies for 1997-98 is listed below.

Evaluations of Projects and Operations

→ Development projects

Burkina Faso 3326 (Exp.1) - Rural development

Nepal 5572 - Rural community infrastructure works

Pakistan 4185 - Promotion of primary education for girls in Balochistan and North-West Frontier Province

India 2206 (Exp.6) - Support to Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

Namibia 4500 - Pre-primary and primary school feeding

→ PROs and EMOPs

Former Yugoslavia 5142 (Exp.4) - Assistance to refugees, internally displaced persons and war-affected people

Eastern Zaire 5390 (Exp.3) Regional - Burundese/Rwandan refugees

Cambodia 5483 (PRO) - Programme for rehabilitation to assist returnees, displaced persons and vulnerable groups

Tajikistan 5253 (also as part of sectoral evaluation on settlement) - Food assistance to returnees, displaced and war-affected persons in Tajikistan

Rwanda in transition (joint evaluation with others)

Programme Evaluations

WFP support to Tunisia (summary evaluation of WFP food assistance)

Sectoral Evaluations

Lessons learned from food aid contribution to Mother and Child Health (MCH): How to address critical food needs of women and children. (Inheritance of hunger)

Food assistance and natural resources

Settlement projects/settlement in post-conflict situations



Thematic Evaluations

→ Food Assistance Issues

A review of key strategic issues in WFP-assisted emergency operations (e.g., phasing in/phasing out of interventions; linkages with post-emergency planning)

Food aid strategies for indigenous communities in food-assisted projects in Latin America

An analysis of the value added to basic education by school feeding

Part-payment of wages

Analysis of cost-sharing modalities between governments and WFP (e.g., WFP experience in Colombia)

→ Process or Organizational Practices

Assessment of WFP's current performance tracking systems

Establishment of an annual portfolio review based on manager ratings

Mid-term evaluation of organizational change

Ad hoc studies

Evaluations and Studies related to WFP's Organizational Change Initiatives

Evaluation Memory System and Feedback on Lessons Learned

Emergency evaluation procedures/emergency 'planning framework'

Preparatory planning for programme evaluations (e.g., benchmarking)

Revision of OEDE's evaluation manual

Recommendation tracking and feedback follow-up system

Annual evaluation training courses

Regional performance evaluation training workshops

Board Decision Requested

16. The Secretariat requests endorsement of the general thrust of the proposed evaluation work plan for 1997-98. The Secretariat also seeks the Executive Board's guidance on the orientation of future evaluations and studies.



