

برنامج
الأغذية
العالمي



Programme
Alimentaire
Mondial

World
Food
Programme

Programa
Mundial
de Alimentos

**Executive Board
Annual Session**

Rome, 3–6 June 2014

EVALUATION REPORTS

Agenda item 7

For consideration



Distribution: GENERAL
WFP/EB.A/2014/7-B*
30 April 2014
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

*Reissued for technical reasons

SYNTHESIS REPORT OF THE EVALUATION SERIES ON THE IMPACT OF FOOD FOR ASSETS (2002–2011)

**And Lessons for Building Livelihood
Resilience**

This document is printed in a limited number of copies. Executive Board documents are available on WFP's Website (<http://executiveboard.wfp.org>).

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.

Director, OEV*: Ms H. Wedgwood tel.: 066513-2030

Senior Evaluation Officer: Ms J. Watts tel.: 066513-2319

Should you have any questions regarding availability of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Conference Servicing Unit (tel.: 066513-2645).

* Office of Evaluation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report synthesizes the main findings from mixed-method evaluations in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Nepal, Senegal and Uganda that assessed the impact of WFP's food-for-assets activities and identified lessons on how to improve the orientation of food for assets towards achieving livelihoods resilience objectives.

The evaluations covered a period of organizational change. In 2011, WFP introduced new policies and guidance documents related to food for assets, including a new disaster risk reduction and management policy and the Food For Assets Guidance Manual. The evaluations assessed activities carried out in 2002–2011, which were designed and implemented under different guidance and objectives. While focusing on assessing the medium- and longer-term effects and sustainability of these past efforts, the evaluations also provided lessons on how food-for-assets activities could be better aligned with new policy and guidance.

The evaluations found that in the short term, WFP was effective in providing food and employment to people in underserved communities during periods of civil unrest and natural disaster, and built useful assets in the process. The overall impacts seen in many areas included those related to resilience: livelihoods, income-generating opportunities, land productivity, social cohesion and gender dynamics. However, improvements in food security were limited.

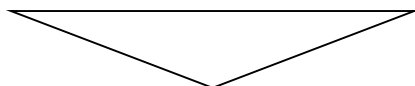
Results were achieved in the face of contextual constraints, including disruption of the social fabric by conflict and recurrent disasters, and often with incomplete funding and resources, including technical assistance. Asset interventions reached people in need, most of whom were in isolated communities that received little other assistance.

Women benefited significantly from food-for-assets activities through employment and access to resources and the creation of assets targeted to women and subsequently falling under their control. Improvements were seen in women's position in the community and households, including in budget management, with the increased social connectivity and freedom of movement that resulted from food-for-assets activities affecting women's roles more broadly in the household and society.

These findings confirm that food for assets is an appropriate mechanism for contributing to the delivery of WFP's 2011 corporate policy on disaster risk reduction and management and the Strategic Plan (2014–2017) with its focus on resilience. The directions set in the 2011 Food for Assets Guidance Manual, updated in January 2014, are in line with the evaluations' findings concerning factors important for the achievement of impacts, but more needs to be done to ensure that this guidance is consistently applied.

The synthesis report recommends that food-for-assets activities be brought into line with current policy and guidance; adequate funding be secured corporately, at least for the transition; strategic planning in country offices position food for assets as a resilience and disaster risk reduction measure; WFP strengthen its efforts to provide guidance and support to regional bureaux and country offices; two studies be undertaken on food security and gender dynamics; and monitoring systems be revised for better outcome monitoring.

DRAFT DECISION*



The Board takes notes of “Synthesis Report of the Evaluation Series on the Impact of Food for Assets (2002–2011)” (WFP/EB.A/2014/7-B*) and the management response in WFP/EB.A/2014/7-B/Add.1*, and encourages further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

* 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.

INTRODUCTION

1. This report synthesizes the main findings from six mixed-method evaluations assessing the impact of WFP's food-for-assets (FFA) activities and identifies common lessons on how to improve the orientation of FFA to achieve livelihoods resilience objectives. Five of the evaluations on the impact of FFA on livelihoods resilience in Bangladesh, Guatemala, Nepal, Senegal and Uganda were conducted in 2012–2013 by WFP's Office of Evaluation. The sixth evaluation included in the synthesis, on the impact of the Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transition to More Sustainable Livelihoods (MERET) programme, was commissioned by the Ethiopia country office in 2012.
2. The evaluations covered a period of significant change in WFP's organizational context for FFA. In 2011, WFP introduced several new policies and guidance documents related to FFA, including a new disaster risk reduction and management policy¹ and the FFA Guidance Manual. The evaluations assessed activities carried out in 2002–2011, which were designed and implemented under different guidance and objectives. They focused on medium- and long-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 new policy and guidance.
3. FFA² activities are one of WFP's largest areas of investment over time. Measured by food tonnage equivalent and programme expenditure from 2006 to 2010, FFA activities were the second largest of WFP's food distribution modalities, after general food distribution.
4. WFP considers FFA activities as having the potential to generate impacts on immediate food security, temporary employment and incomes through the provision of cash or food transfers as compensation for short-term employment on labour-intensive projects. In addition, the assets created and the work carried out to create them are thought to protect and promote livelihoods, economic growth and development. There is growing international interest in the potential contributions of FFA activities to empowerment and to building resilience to crises and shocks.
5. Typical FFA activities include rebuilding infrastructure, supporting access to markets, restoring the natural resource base, and enhancing water management and agricultural productivity while protecting the environment. Many FFA activities aim to reduce risk and increase households' capacity to manage shocks. When applied at a significant scale, FFA may also contribute to reducing climate risks, or foster communities' adaptation to these risks. The evaluations focused on natural resource assets – soil, water, agricultural and forests – while also recognizing the contributions of infrastructure and access assets to livelihoods resilience.
6. A logic model applied in the evaluations outlined expected short-term benefits from FFA, including increased cash/food availability and food access, and the immediate effects of the asset – such as flood protection – which could result in an immediate reduction in vulnerability. Medium-term benefits may be realized when the asset continues to provide protection and leads to increased land productivity and agricultural production, greater income-generation opportunities, better physical access to markets and social services, etc.

¹ WFP/EB.2/2011/4-A.

² The terminology used for FFA has changed over time. In 2011, the new terminology “food assistance for assets” was adopted to reflect the use of food, cash or vouchers for asset creation. However, during the evaluation reference period country offices were still using “food for assets” or “food for work”.

Long-term benefits can include reduced vulnerability, improved livelihoods³ and increased resilience.⁴ How the activities were carried out was expected to affect the attainment of results, with strong contextual analysis, participatory planning and integration with other sectors being among the important factors for achieving expected impacts.

METHODOLOGY

7. The evaluation methodology applied across the five countries in the evaluation series included:
 - quantitative household surveys;⁵
 - focus groups of community members and leaders;
 - technical appraisals of assets and associated biophysical changes;
 - key informant interviews;
 - social and institutional analysis; and
 - review of secondary data.
8. The impact evaluation in Ethiopia was not part of the series but used a similar methodology.
9. In each country, methods were adapted to respond to contextual variations. Findings were generated from the triangulation of data from different sources. Data were collected and analysed by gender where possible. Limitations constraining the evaluations' impact assessment included absence of or inconsistencies in data over time; changes in programming over time; and limited records and data on individual assets and participating households. The significant programme and contextual variations among countries limited cross-country comparability. Evidence of change was derived mainly from perceptions reported in household surveys, which in all but one case were applied to participant and comparison populations.

COUNTRY CONTEXT

10. There was substantial diversity among countries. All but Guatemala are low-income countries. Poverty has been reduced in some countries, but remains high, and the benefits of economic development are unevenly distributed. Although a middle-income country, Guatemala has one of the highest levels of income inequality in the world, and half of the population is poor. Gender inequality exists in all countries. During the evaluation reference period, conflict or post-conflict transition was a significant factor in Guatemala, Nepal,

³ A livelihood comprises a household's capabilities, assets and activities for securing basic needs – food, shelter, health, education and income. Assets can be human, including health and education; social, such as community networks; financial; physical, such as productive tools and livestock; or natural, such as water and soil fertility. A livelihood is sustainable if it manages and mitigates the effects of external stresses and shocks, maintains or enhances the household's capabilities and assets, and provides for future generations. (WFP. 2009. *Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis Guidelines*, Rome.)

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

⁵ Rather than conducting a new survey in Nepal, the evaluation team used data from a 2010 end-line survey.

Senegal and Uganda, leading to social upheaval and disruption of livelihoods, sometimes irreversible. Rapid and steep increases in food prices were another factor. All countries experienced natural disasters, such as drought and cyclones, and many faced general land degradation and were at risk of climate change effects. Across the countries, there was considerable diversity in programming to respond to specific contextual issues and in the role and profile of FFA in overall country portfolios.

SHORT-TERM BENEFITS

11. FFA activities provided food and, in some cases, cash transfers and employment to 3 million food-insecure people affected by shocks that threatened their livelihoods and food security. WFP was often one of few organizations operating at scale in remote or dangerous areas. There was evidence that food provision was not always timely or adequate for needs. FFA activities were underfunded and funding was variable and unpredictable.

MEDIUM-TERM BENEFITS

12. Asset survival is a minimum condition for medium-term impact. As shown in Table 1, most of the asset types assessed were more than 50 percent functional at the time of the evaluation. On average, in Ethiopia 100 percent of the assets observed were functional, in Bangladesh 86 percent, in Nepal 72 percent, in Guatemala 71 percent, and in Uganda 65 percent.

% that were functional	Type of asset
90	Flood protection
87	Agricultural 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

13. There was strong evidence of increased land productivity, agricultural production and income-generating opportunities. Comparable quantitative data were not always available, but the evaluations confirmed modest changes in incomes, assets and employment. For instance, there was plausible quantitative and qualitative evidence of positive income effects associated with asset creation in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Nepal and Senegal while in Guatemala the differences in land assets and associated incomes between participant and comparison households were not statistically significant. In Uganda, where no comparison

group could be identified, positive but small effects over time, resulting from asset creation, were reported on savings, income and standard of living.

14. Some assets delivered multiple benefits to livelihoods or resilience. For instance in Bangladesh, although the primary purpose of dyke construction was flood protection there were 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. Respondents in Guatemala, Nepal and Senegal linked gardens and agroforestry to agricultural diversification, improved dietary diversity and income-generation.

LONG-TERM BENEFITS

15. Ethiopia's was the only programme planned specifically to address longer-term livelihoods resilience, and all programmes predated WFP's 2011 resilience-oriented policies and guidelines. Nevertheless, a striking positive finding is that FFA activities contributed to significant improvements in livelihoods in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Nepal and Senegal, and limited improvement in Uganda. Improvements in social cohesion reported by focus groups and survey respondents in Bangladesh, Guatemala, Nepal and Uganda were particularly important as many of these countries had either recently experienced or were recovering from conflict.
16. There were muted and mixed findings on longer-term food security and dietary diversity, although increased access to agricultural inputs and markets from road construction, and increased awareness of nutrition and gardening from training were reported in several evaluations. Significant improvements in food consumption scores and dietary diversity scores were reported in Ethiopia only. Table 2 summarizes the findings, but overall even where improvements were seen in food security indicators, populations still faced significant periods of food insecurity.

TABLE 2: LONG-TERM FOOD SECURITY AND DIETARY EFFECTS	
Bangladesh	No difference in household ability to provide three meals per day No difference in dietary diversity
Ethiopia	Increased fruit and vegetable production, mostly for sale Significant improvements in food consumption and dietary diversity scores, but substantial periods of food shortage persist
Guatemala	Comparison households more likely than beneficiaries to borrow food Beneficiary diet containing more beans Most households reporting insufficient food or means to purchase food, regardless of programme participation
Nepal	Small improvement in food consumption score among participants Shorter lean season Better security of crop yields No reported improvements in structural chronic food insecurity
Senegal	Beneficiary diet containing more fruit and meat Children in beneficiary households consuming more meals per day Adults in beneficiary households eating fewer meals per day but of better quality – more fruits and meat
Uganda	Increased access to food-related resources – seeds, water, fish

IMPACTS ON WOMEN AND GENDER DYNAMICS

17. In all countries, women were targeted and significant short- and medium-term impacts on women were found. On average across all countries and projects, 48 percent of participants were women, with a low of 28 percent in Guatemala and a high of 80 percent in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, significant improvements in women's participation were reported when the country office made concerted efforts at both the policy advocacy and operational levels. Women benefited directly when assets were controlled by them and selected specifically to satisfy their needs and interests, such as in Guatemala, Nepal and Uganda. In Bangladesh, Guatemala and Senegal, participation had an empowerment effect through, for instance, household budget influence, social network support and freedom of movement, and the position of women in the household and society improved. Where women had management responsibility in food distribution committees they reported an increased sense of empowerment. Community-level changes in gender dynamics were reported in some cases, notably in Bangladesh and Ethiopia, although these changes were linked to broader social changes in society.
18. Reported shortcomings in the targeting of women as FFA participants included the trade-off in workload distribution between FFA activities and childcare and home duties, and security issues, particularly when travelling to work in remote areas. Some countries addressed issues associated with women's participation in FFA by creating worksites adapted to women's needs. In the case of illness or competing demands on their time, women were often able to send other family members to replace them in FFA activities. Men participants were less likely to send replacements than women. There is need for greater attention to the potential effect on overall nutrition balance when physically demanding labour is added to the burden of food-insecure women, considering the higher nutritional needs during pregnancy and breastfeeding.
19. Goals for women's participation were not always met in Guatemala or Nepal, reportedly because of traditional gender norms, limited opportunities for women to participate in community organizations and decision-making, women's heavier workloads and lack of time for other work, and the demanding physical labour required by many FFA activities. In spite of the benefits, in all countries except Ethiopia for some indicators, women-headed households were worse-off than men-headed households. The absence of men who had migrated was mentioned as a significant factor that has negative effects on women-headed households in Bangladesh, Guatemala and Nepal.

FACTORS AFFECTING IMPACT

20. The logic model developed for the evaluations presented factors expected to influence the results, and evaluation teams also documented the unexpected factors identified during evaluations. Factors included those over which WFP had some control and those outside WFP's direct control but affecting its performance.
21. Functionality was more closely associated with type of asset, ownership, degree of asset completion, and smoothness of programme implementation – meeting delivery schedules, the availability of materials and supplies, etc. – than age of asset.
22. Substantial confusion about responsibilities for asset maintenance was reported, and few asset maintenance plans were found. Most existing plans were for assets associated with institutions, such as schools and roads in Uganda. These were integrated into the Government's maintenance programme, which was often not fully resourced or adequate.

There was less confusion about responsibility for maintenance of private assets, although some individuals expected WFP or another entity to maintain them.

23. Where assets provided immediate and substantial benefits in protecting lives, land and possessions, communities were willing to assume their maintenance. Some types of asset required more technical capacity and/or specialized materials or equipment to maintain than others. If these needs exceeded the capacity of the community or outweighed the perceived benefits, assets were not as well maintained.
24. Slow-onset risks such as land degradation required a combination of assets and a longer time horizon before risk reduction benefits became evident. Such assets also required long-term maintenance before benefits were realized.
25. Effective systems for identifying appropriate assets for the context, and technical support for asset planning and construction were essential but often not in place. In Ethiopia, FFA was well integrated into government programmes and technical protocols, with strong processes for community engagement in priority-setting and decision-making. Awareness-raising and training to build understanding of the root causes of environmental degradation was a high priority and complemented the asset development, thus increasing the commitment to asset maintenance. The strong emphasis on community participatory planning was linked to MERET's positive impacts in building community ownership, capacity and responsibility for assets. In Bangladesh, Senegal and Uganda, asset maintenance was found to be successful when user groups had specific responsibilities.
26. Except in Ethiopia, the evaluations found limited evidence of a comprehensive community-led approach to asset planning and the delivery of a comprehensive package of assets that balanced short-, medium- and long-term risk reduction, or of complementary programming with other agencies. Communities did not always fully understand programme modalities, including payment norms and selection criteria. Planning for a more comprehensive approach was recently started in Bangladesh, Guatemala and Nepal.
27. Factors affecting gender impacts included the targeting of assets to women's needs, gender-sensitive worksites, and flexibility in adapting to women's competing demands. In Bangladesh and Nepal, women's participation in FFA was facilitated by the creation of worksites with separate sanitation facilities, childcare services, shade for resting, and secure overnight facilities. In Guatemala, the size of food bags was reduced so that women could carry them more easily. In several countries women facing illness or conflicting demands on their time were often able to send other family members to replace them in FFA activities.
28. Most countries lacked partnership strategies for identifying the players needed to support programming from strategic positioning, developing supportive policies or securing funding, to field-level planning and targeting, project implementation, asset design and construction, and maintenance and sustainable uptake by government or community systems. Technical support for asset construction, and the institutionalization of assets into government plans were particularly vital elements that were often inadequately covered. Most evaluations also found an absence of planning of complementary programming to maximize the benefits and longer-term impact of FFA on sustainable livelihoods and resilience-building.
29. The Bangladesh programme was highlighted as a good example of the mobilization of different types of partner. The evaluation demonstrated that the involvement of different actors in planning and decision-making added transparency and mutual accountability built trust and shared power. Ethiopia's MERET programme also worked in partnership with government authorities, including on national capacity development and national and regional technical training alongside community activities. Some of MERET's principles and practices have been adopted by the public works component of the Ethiopian

Government's Productive Safety Net Programme. In Nepal, technical assistance was facilitated by partnership with an independent engineering surveillance team to develop a technical monitoring system for asset quality assurance and technical guidelines on asset quality monitoring.

30. In all countries except Bangladesh funding problems during the evaluation reference period were reported.⁶ Funding of FFA activities faced shortfalls of up to 65 percent and was variable and unpredictable. Funding unpredictability affected asset completion; communities did not always continue to work if rations were not provided on time, and assets were not completed if materials and supplies were not available when needed.
31. When FFA was used in early recovery after an emergency, small and short-duration interventions based on geographical targeting of the communities most at risk of food insecurity were planned to reach the largest number of food-insecure people across wide geographic areas. This approach was consistent with the historical institutional context as the programmes predated the current resilience and risk reduction policy and FFA guidance. While the approach enabled WFP to meet short-term food security objectives, impacts on livelihoods and resilience were more limited.
32. FFA activities were often geographically scattered and carried out in isolation from one another and from other types of intervention, by either WFP or other actors. There was little evidence of integrated local-level planning to bring outcome-level change. The Ethiopia programme was an exception with its integrated community watershed planning approach. Bangladesh concentrated on a limited range of flood-protection assets that were well targeted to reducing flood risk and damage.
33. The self-targeting approach to identifying participants did not provide sufficient confidence that interventions reached the poorest and most excluded groups. This risk was compounded by the selection of assets, which were not always targeted to the most vulnerable. Some assets, such as those for land improvement, irrigation and drainage, are of greatest benefit to landholders, and poor people may benefit only indirectly through possible employment as farm labourers. In Ethiopia, landless people had access only to communal land, on which in some areas they cut trees or fodder to generate income. Other assets such as drinking-water systems were accessible and of benefit to all.
34. Limitations found in monitoring systems included inconsistencies in the data collected over time; lack of appropriate household-level information; inconsistent collection or unsystematic handling of food-basket and post-distribution monitoring data; inadequate financial information by activity within projects; and lack of adequate information on processes and geophysical conditions. Country offices sometimes introduced innovations in monitoring – a positive example being the community-level participatory monitoring in Nepal – but lacked adequate corporate support. Changes in objectives, indicators and programming during the evaluation reference period also limited the ability to use monitoring data to assess outcomes.

⁶ In March 2014, the country office indicated that Bangladesh was also experiencing significant budget shortfalls for its FFA activities.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

35. The evaluation series confirmed that in the short term WFP was effective in providing food and employment to people in underserved communities during periods of civil unrest and natural disaster. Useful assets were built in the process. Medium- and longer-term impacts were seen in many areas, including some aspects related to resilience: overall livelihoods, income-generating opportunities, land productivity, social cohesion and gender dynamics. However, improvements in food security were limited.
36. Results were achieved in the face of severe contextual constraints, including disruption of the social fabric by violent and/or long-standing conflict and recurrent disasters, and often with incomplete funding and resources, including technical assistance. Asset interventions reached people in need, most of whom were in isolated communities that received little other assistance.
37. These findings are significant considering that only the Ethiopia programme was operationally oriented towards achieving resilience objectives, although stated goals in the other countries were broadly aligned. These findings confirm that FFA is an appropriate mechanism for contributing to the delivery of WFP's 2011 disaster risk reduction and management policy and the Strategic Plan (2014–2017) with its focus on resilience. The directions set in the 2011 Food for Assets Guidance Manual, of which a new version was released in January 2014, are in line with the evaluations' findings concerning factors important for the achievement of impacts, but more needs to be done to ensure that this guidance is consistently applied.
38. Women benefited significantly from the FFA activities evaluated, not only through the direct benefits of employment and access to resources, but also through the creation of assets targeted to women and subsequently falling under their control. Impacts on gender dynamics were also seen, with improvements in women's position in the community and households, including in budget management; the increased social connectivity and freedom of movement that resulted from FFA activities affected women's roles more broadly in society and the household. Benefits to women were enhanced when work programmes were designed with women's needs in mind, the assets created were directly linked to women's concerns, and women were engaged not just in work, but also in the planning and management of FFA activities.
39. More information is needed to increase understanding of why the improvement found in food security indicators was not larger. FFA is one of many factors likely to affect food security in a community. How FFA is implemented – for instance, the level of community participation and the inclusion of training or awareness raising – is likely to affect food security. In-depth, periodic assessment of FFA's contribution to agricultural production, market access and their relationship to food consumption could help build understanding and position FFA appropriately in the larger context. Such analysis would have to capture the contributions of different types of asset in different contexts.
40. Planning to ensure FFA's appropriateness, coordination and complementarity should be given higher priority. Linkages among different types of asset, and complementarity between type of asset and higher-order goals should be sought to enhance resilience-building objectives. Limits on funding and capacity would require a focus on fewer, better-concentrated activities.
41. Planning that establishes links between FFA and resilience would also help address the funding problems faced in many countries, by making WFP's work relevant to disaster risk reduction and linking it to the climate change adaptation and major regional and

country-specific resilience-building efforts that interest development-oriented donors and governments.

42. Many of the populations in the areas covered by the evaluations faced prolonged conflict, and FFA made an important contribution to social cohesion in such contexts. If projects were more explicit about resilience objectives in conflict and post-conflict environments, the potential contribution to social cohesion and trust-building in post-conflict situations could be better planned and strengthened.
43. In most countries, WFP's geographical/community targeting approach was not sufficiently sensitive for highly differentiated communities. More detailed analysis of the needs of individuals and households from different socio-economic groups would enable more appropriate FFA interventions. A flexible approach is needed to ensure that assets are targeted to the needs of different socio-economic groups and communities in different livelihood contexts.
44. Without clear responsibilities for maintenance there is a risk that assets will fall into disrepair and will not be useful in the medium and longer term. Long-term maintenance of assets depends on several factors that need to be integrated into programme planning: ownership and use rights of the asset; targeting of assets to address risk; and the capacity of households, groups, communities, government or others to carry out maintenance. Lack of maintenance may also result from poor or incomplete design or construction that leaves an asset functioning poorly and not delivering its intended benefits. Arrangements for maintenance should be developed in the planning stage and include budgets, partnerships and a process for formal hand-over and integration into existing systems, with clear roles and responsibilities. More investment in community organization and planning can help ensure that assets are well targeted to community needs so that communities develop a sense of ownership and responsibility.
45. Planning of FFA should include analysis of partners and their roles, and a process for engaging and negotiating joint implementation agreements with partners. Partnerships are essential for successful FFA programmes in filling roles that WFP cannot perform and complementing WFP's contributions. Particularly important, and often missing, are partnerships with technical line ministries and organizations that have in-depth technical knowledge of asset construction and quality control, and partners with complementary programming expertise and resources for enhancing the longer-term impact of FFA on sustainable livelihoods and resilience building.

Recommendations

46. **Recommendation 1: WFP country offices, supported by regional bureaux and Headquarters, should commit to bringing FFA programmes into line with current policy and guidance, to maximize the opportunities for FFA to contribute to protecting and strengthening livelihoods and resilience.** WFP should make a corporate commitment to acquiring dedicated funding to ensure that country offices have the necessary support from regional bureaux and Headquarters to update their FFA programme plans and activities as necessary. Specific areas for action and funding are discussed in the following recommendations.

47. **Recommendation 2: More attention should be paid to positioning FFA appropriately to the context, building on WFP's comparative advantages, complemented by those of partners, ensuring the sustainability of efforts, and building partners' commitments to allocating financial and other resources.** In country offices where FFA is used to improve livelihoods and resilience, senior management should carry out a process of strategic planning for FFA activities that focus on resilience and disaster risk reduction, involving the partners needed for design, implementation, maintenance and institutionalization. Such plans should be fully aligned with WFP's corporate guidance on FFA, WFP's country strategies, national frameworks and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks.
48. **Recommendation 3: WFP's Policy, Programme and Innovation Division (OSZ) should provide more support and guidance to regional bureaux and country offices by:**
- 3a) reviewing the new FFA guidance to ensure that it takes into consideration issues raised by the evaluations, such as maintenance, social cohesion, gender and macro-level and household targeting, and update the guidance manual as needed; this should involve only refinement, as the recently revised guidance is already a high-quality programme support tool;
 - 3b) increasing training and technical assistance for country offices in the approaches introduced in the FFA guidance manual that address not just the technical issues of asset design but also integrated contextual analysis, seasonal livelihood programming, community-based participatory planning, institutionalization, national capacity development and other issues; and
 - 3c) ensuring complete roll-out of the new guidance manual to WFP programme staff at country offices – including translation into Spanish and French – and further development of the knowledge and information system to capture and share good practices; this is especially important because of the different levels of progress in the new directions among country offices.
49. **Recommendation 4: OSZ should undertake two studies to address issues raised in the evaluations for which more information is needed.** In partnership with WFP's Gender Office and Nutrition Advisory Office, OSZ should carry out a study on the impacts of FFA activities on women, particularly women's nutrition and health, and the opportunities for additional linkages to nutrition generated by a focus on gender issues. In-depth analyses of the food security of FFA participants are needed to increase understanding of how FFA activities could contribute more to food security. These studies should be carried out in countries that are adopting the new FFA approaches, to inform and refine tools and programme modalities. The studies should be aligned to programme cycles to inform programme design, and be carried out before 2016.
50. **Recommendation 5: The Performance Management and Monitoring Division, in collaboration with the Office of Evaluation, should review the lessons from evaluations that relate to baselines for and monitoring of FFA, and update corporate monitoring and reporting systems to make them more effective for FFA outcome and impact monitoring.** Regional bureaux and country offices should then ensure that funding and staffing are available to meet monitoring and evaluation requirements.

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

FFA	food for assets
MERET	Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transition to More Sustainable Livelihoods
OSZ	Policy, Programme and Innovation Division