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SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF FOOD FOR ASSETS ON LIVELIHOOD RESILIENCE IN GUATEMALA (2003–2010)

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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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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As one of a series on the impact of food-for-assets activities on livelihoods resilience, this evaluation assessed outcomes and impacts associated with WFP's food-for-assets programming in Guatemala country programme 10092 (2003–2005) and the Guatemala component of regional protracted relief and recovery operation 10444 (2007–2010). It identified lessons for enhancing resilience impacts and the alignment of programming with WFP's Food for Assets Guidance Manual (2011) and disaster risk reduction policy.

Guatemala is a relatively stable, multicultural, middle-income country. Following a 36-year civil war, however, it remains one of the poorest countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and has one of the world's highest levels of inequality. The chronic undernutrition rate among children under 5 in indigenous areas is the eighth highest in the world. Guatemala is prone to recurrent hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, landslides and droughts, and is highly susceptible to the effects of climate change.

Assessment of impacts was constrained by lack of data, but comparative cross-sectional analysis indicated the following:

- Short-term food security benefits were provided to approximately 90,000 people, 42 percent of whom were women.
- Most assets constructed were household assets, most of which remained functional. Household assets had higher survival rates than community assets.
- Positive impacts were reported on livelihoods and the biophysical condition of land. Participant households also reported significantly less migration than comparison groups.
- There were no significant differences in food consumption scores or dietary diversity between participant and comparison groups.
- Participants received training to improve organizational capacity and were more involved in community organizations than comparison groups.

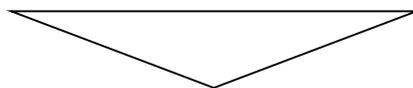
WFP adjusted some activities to facilitate women's participation, and women's empowerment reportedly increased, although 40 percent of women indicated the need to reorganize or reassign their daily activities to participate in food for assets. WFP did not always meet its goals for women's leadership in food distribution committees or for the percentage of women participants relative to the total number.

Communities experienced a range of disasters in recent years, and fewer than 30 percent of beneficiaries reported reduced disaster losses because of food-for-assets activities. Self-assessed disaster preparedness was significantly higher among participant than comparison households, but community leaders reported that communities remained vulnerable and were not well prepared to face recurrent disasters.

Projects experienced shortfalls in budgets and commodities in most years. Interventions were short and delivered a wide range of assets, many of which were household-level practices such as home gardens and composting. These benefited individual women, but a more comprehensive, larger-scale approach would be needed to reduce overall vulnerability.

The evaluation team recommended that the country office reframe its food-for-assets programming to address disaster risk reduction and response; concentrate its efforts on fewer interventions in fewer communities; improve its framework for addressing gender issues through food-assistance-for-assets activities; and develop a more robust monitoring and evaluation system.

DRAFT DECISION*



The Board takes note of “Summary Report of the Evaluation of the Impact of Food for Assets on Livelihood Resilience in Guatemala (2003–2010)” (WFP/EB.1/2014/5-B) and the management response in WFP/EB.1/2014/5-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

Evaluation Features

1. This evaluation assessed the impact of WFP's food-for-assets (FFA) activities in Guatemala over the period 2003–2010.¹ As one of a series, its objectives were to assess the outcomes and impacts of FFA on livelihood resilience, identify changes needed to increase these impacts, and generate lessons for improving the alignment of FFA activities with WFP's 2011 FFA Guidance Manual and disaster risk reduction policy.² The evaluation addressed three core questions common to the series:
 - What positive and negative impacts have FFA activities had on individuals within participating households and communities?
 - What factors were critical in affecting outcomes and impacts?
 - How could FFA activities be improved to address the findings from the first two questions?
2. The evaluation tested a theory of change in which food or cash inputs are provided for work on constructing assets or time spent in training, with the aims of:
 - improving household food security in the short term;
 - improving the biophysical environment, agricultural production and livelihood options in the medium term; and
 - achieving sustained improvements in livelihoods resilience, including the ability to cope with crises, in the longer term.
3. The factors considered necessary for achieving the intended changes/outcomes include:
 - appropriate situational analysis;
 - FFA activities and assets that meet quality standards;
 - technical assistance and other capacities;
 - availability of food and non-food items;
 - complementary inputs from WFP and other actors; and
 - community and/or local government ownership, with adequate arrangements for asset maintenance.
4. The evaluation focused on natural resource assets – soil, water, agricultural land and forests – while also recognizing the contributions of infrastructure and access assets to livelihoods resilience.

¹ In 2013 WFP changed the use of the FFA acronym to mean “food assistance for assets”, covering food, cash and voucher activities for asset creation and training. During the period covered by this evaluation, however, FFA referred exclusively to food-for-asset activities.

² WFP FFA Guidance Manual (2011) and “WFP Policy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management” (WFP/EB.2/2011/4-A). The activities evaluated were designed and implemented prior to adoption of the guidance manual and disaster risk reduction policy, but their goals were broadly similar and the evaluation terms of reference emphasized learning.

5. Conducted by an independent team during late 2012 and early 2013, the evaluation used a mixed-methods approach for data gathering and analysis, including:
 - a quantitative survey of 1,201 households, of which 809 were in beneficiary communities and 392 in non-participating communities, for comparison;
 - assessment of technical and biophysical assets in each community;
 - qualitative assessment of impacts at the household and community levels; and
 - social and institutional analysis of networks and linkages at different levels, especially communities.
6. The main challenges to conducting the evaluation included: i) widely dispersed beneficiary communities, and difficult access to sites; ii) the diversity of livelihood zones in which FFA was implemented; and iii) problems with data. The lack of baseline data limited the evaluation's ability to assess changes in conditions from before to after the interventions. Many assets were household assets, but information about which households received support was not available, so the evaluation relied on self-reporting during the household survey. This challenge was mitigated by triangulating data from different sources and perspectives, including by comparing intervention with non-intervention communities, and participant with non-participant households in intervention communities, using a theory of change to test linkages and assumptions.

Context

7. Guatemala is a multicultural, middle-income country with a population of 14.7 million people.³ Following a 36-year civil war, ending in the 1996 Peace Accords, significant progress has been made in macroeconomic and democratic stability, with stronger public institutions and improvements in health and education.
8. However, inequality and poverty persist, especially in rural areas, where stark disparities continue.⁴ Gross domestic product per capita is about half the average for Latin America and the Caribbean,⁴ and Guatemala ranked 131st of 187 countries in the 2011 human development index, with one of the world's highest levels of inequality⁵ and one in ten Guatemalans at risk of falling into extreme poverty. Gender inequality is the highest in Latin America.⁶
9. More than 50 percent of Guatemalans live in poverty, with less than USD 2 per day,⁷ including more than 90 percent of the indigenous population;⁸ 15 percent survive in extreme poverty, with less than USD 1 a day.⁹ The indigenous population accounts for 55 percent of the poor and 68 percent of the extremely poor.⁹ Illiteracy is 31.1 percent among women overall, and 59 percent among indigenous women.

³ WFP website – <http://www.wfp.org/countries/guatemala/overview> – accessed September 2013.

⁴ World Bank website, accessed 2 October 2012.

⁵ 2012 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report

⁶ 2013 Gender Inequality Index in UNDP. 2013. *The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World* (Human Development Report 2013). New York.

⁷ World Bank. 2009. *Guatemala Poverty Assessment Good Performance at Low Levels*, Report No. 43920-GT, p. ix. March. Washington, DC.

⁸ United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean website, July 2011, from USAID Country-Specific Information: Guatemala.

⁹ National Statistics Institute. 2006. *National survey of living conditions*. Guatemala City.

10. In indigenous areas, chronic undernutrition among children under 5 is 69.5 percent¹⁰ – the highest rate in the region and the eighth highest in the world. Iron deficiency affects 26.3 percent of children under 5. The most vulnerable groups are indigenous women and children living in the highlands and the dry corridor, a semi-arid zone that faces droughts, degraded soils and low agricultural yields.
11. Guatemala is prone to recurrent hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, landslides and droughts, which significantly affect households' productivity, livelihoods and ability to cope with external shocks. Guatemala is also highly vulnerable to negative effects of climate change.¹¹

Programme Description

12. WFP has worked in Guatemala since 1970, providing assistance to rural farmers and vulnerable people affected by crises and disasters since the early 1980s. Between 2003 and 2011, FFA activities were implemented mainly in three regional protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs) and two country programmes (CPs).
13. Together, the activities selected for the evaluation – CP 10092 (2003–2005)¹² and the Guatemala component of regional PRRO 10444 (2007–2010) – accounted for 34.5 percent of FFA interventions and 38.2 percent of beneficiaries in Guatemala over the period. They provided approximately 52 percent of the total food tonnage distributed by WFP in its FFA activities in Guatemala.
14. The total approved budget for the PRRO was approximately USD 53 million, of which 67 percent was received. The approved budget for the CP was approximately USD 21 million, 70 percent of which was received. WFP's PRRO financial systems do not break down resources by individual activity, so comprehensive expenditure data on FFA activities in Guatemala were not available.
15. Approximately 500,000 beneficiaries were reported for the CP, and 250,000 for the PRRO Guatemala component. As shown in Table 1, FFA beneficiary numbers ranged from a high of 34,778 in 2009 for the PRRO, to a low of 2,224 in 2005 for the CP. Approximately 45 percent of PRRO beneficiaries and 22 percent of CP beneficiaries were women.

TABLE 1: FFA BENEFICIARIES						
	2003	2004	2005	2008	2009	2010
CP 10092 activity 4	13 487	5 914	2 224			
Regional PRRO 10444, Guatemala component				17 682	34 778	18 046

Source: WFP Standard Project Reports (SPRs).

¹⁰ 2008–2009 National Maternal and Child Health Survey.

¹¹ Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery. *Climate Risk and Adaptation Country Profile: Guatemala*, April 2011. Washington, DC, World Bank.

¹² In 2006, the FFA activities under CP 10092 activity 4 were cancelled because of funding shortages.

16. The FFA component of the CP targeted vulnerable households living on degraded lands or exposed to adverse climatic conditions. Planned family rations were based on established work norms; delivery was synchronized with the progress of work and timed to be close to the seasonal food gap. PRRO FFA activities lasted for four months; most were implemented during the lean season from April to August. Household selection was based on criteria such as loss of crop production, dependence on subsistence agriculture, status as a single-parent household and the ratio of vulnerable to other household members. Both projects provided training, with the PRRO focusing on disaster response and improving community organizations, and the CP on asset maintenance and women's ownership of assets.¹³

FINDINGS

Asset Survival and Functionality

17. Table 2 lists the asset types identified and assessed by the evaluation, including those for agriculture and land management, forestry/agroforestry, water management, access and other infrastructure. Most assets were for households, with trench composting and home gardens being the most commonly reported. Very few community assets were built. Overall, more than 50 percent of assets survived, with lower rates for tree planting, bench terraces and seedling nurseries, and significantly higher rates – of more than 75 percent – for household rather than community assets.

¹³ WFP project documents.

TABLE 2: ASSET TYPES AND SURVIVAL ¹⁴				
Asset type	Ownership	No. reported	No. found	% surviving
Home gardens	Household	35	31	89
Agroforestry systems/tree gardens	Household	25	22	88
Trench composting	Household	38	33	87
Dead barriers	Household	14	12	86
Opening roads	Community	5	4	80
Live barriers	Household	21	16	76
Continuous terraces	Household	4	3	75
Drainage/infiltration ditches	Household	22	16	73
Household terraces	Household	6	4	66
Forestry/tree gardens	Community	5	3	60
Improved agricultural infrastructure	Community	12	7	58
Massal selection of basic grains	Community	13	7	54
Retaining walls	Community	4	2	50
Tree planting	Household	12	5	42
Seedling nurseries	Community	4	1	25
Bench terraces	Community	-	3	-
No slash and burn	Community	-	16	12

18. Data on the functionality of assets were inconclusive; household surveys reported high functionality, but the asset assessment found fully functional assets in only 5 percent of communities. Triangulation among different evidence sources suggested that larger infrastructure such as stonewalls and terraces achieved greater productivity and long-term potential, but was also more difficult to construct and maintain. Consistent with the emphasis on household assets, respondents reported that families had an important role in asset maintenance, with non-maintenance reported in fewer than 7 percent of cases. However, the inconsistencies between assets reported and assets found should be kept in mind when considering these data.

¹⁴ In a bench terrace nearly horizontal benches are cut into a steep slope to reduce runoff and control soil erosion. Barriers are laid along the contours of agricultural land to reduce water erosion and runoff; live barriers are of vegetation, and dead barriers of non-vegetative materials such as stones. Improved agricultural infrastructure is the *patio hogar* system, designed to address household nutrition and food security. Massal selection is a breeding method wherein a large number of plants having the desirable traits are harvested individually from a standing crop. The seeds from all selections are then bulked; a seed sample is taken and used to plant a population from which desirable plants are selected at maturity. The procedure is repeated for several cycles. For more information, see Rapid Technical Reference and Toolkit for FFA, Annex D in the 2011 *WFP FFA Guidance Manual*.

Biophysical Environment and Productivity

19. Most household respondents reported improved soil conservation, agricultural productivity and vegetation coverage (Table 3). Results indicate a positive association between the number of assets received and the percentage of households reporting improvements, suggesting cumulative effects. On average, participant households reported 2.27 assets each, including both the assets they worked on and those that were built for them.

Biophysical benefit	% of households reporting benefits				
	Overall	One type of asset	Two types of asset	Three types of asset	Four types of asset
Less soil loss	75.4	56.5	67.6	96.7	94.8
Better agricultural production	74.1	54.8	70.5	85.7	91.4
More vegetation coverage	67.0	48.4	64.7	74.7	84.5
More trees	48.2	37.1	40.7	60.4	72.4
More products from trees	36.7	35.5	29.5	46.2	53.4
Less flooding	29.2	24.2	22.0	42.9	43.1
More water available	24.3	24.2	17.0	37.4	34.5

Food Security

20. Assessment of food security effects was constrained by the absence of monitoring data, but comparative analysis of participants, non-participants and respondents from comparison communities indicated few to no significant differences in food consumption scores (FCS) or dietary diversity. FCS scores – taken during the harvest season – were all in the acceptable range, but diets included only 3–7 percent vegetables, fruits and animal proteins, including milk products. Dietary diversity scores did not differ among the three respondent groups, although beneficiaries consumed significantly more beans than respondents from non-intervention communities.

21. As home gardens and composting were the most frequently found assets, more beneficiaries than respondents from comparison communities reported consuming vegetables produced on their own land. Respondents in comparison communities were significantly more likely to have borrowed food or relied on friends or relatives for food than FFA participants. However, more than half of all respondent households reported having insufficient food or means to purchase it at the time of the survey, regardless of programme participation.

22. Although the evaluation found that the overall coping strategies index (CSI) did not improve with FFA participation (see Table 4), there were differences in the coping strategies used. Participant households relied on consuming less preferred and less expensive food, while those in the comparison group restricted adults' consumption to enable small children to eat. However, caution is needed in interpreting these results because CSI trend data are lacking and the scores do not capture the many influences that may affect behavioural responses.

TABLE 4: COPING STRATEGIES INDEX		
In the last seven days how often has your household had to:	Score: participants (mean)	Score: comparison (mean)
rely on less preferred and less expensive food?	4	3
borrow food, or rely on help from a friend or relative?	3	3
limit portion size at mealtimes?	2	2
restrict adults' consumption to enable small children to eat?	4	5
reduce number of meals eaten in a day?	1	1
TOTAL CSI	14	14

Livelihoods and Migration

23. Highly significant differences in effects on livelihoods were recorded (see Table 5), with 77 percent of participant households reporting livelihood improvements in recent years, against only 31 percent in comparison groups. More than 95 percent of participants attributed improvements to WFP's FFA, with 56.6 percent stating that the assets created helped to increase income. However, the small difference in monthly income between participants and comparison groups was not statistically significant (at $P < 0.1$).
24. While there was no significant difference in the proportion of households farming their own land, the evaluation recorded significantly lower rates of migration among participants. Overall, these findings provide reasonably strong evidence of FFA having a significant effect on the livelihoods of participant households.

TABLE 5: IMPACT ON LIVELIHOODS AND MIGRATION			
Impact	Participants	Comparison	Difference
Improvement in overall livelihoods	76.9	31.4	$P < 0.01$
Household earning more than 500 <i>quetzals</i> monthly	54.7	48.7	NS*
Household farms its own land	72.6	74.7	NS*
Migration of household member in last 12 months	30.5	37.5	$P < 0.05$
Overall migration reduced in last 12 months	16.0	8.9	$P < 0.01$

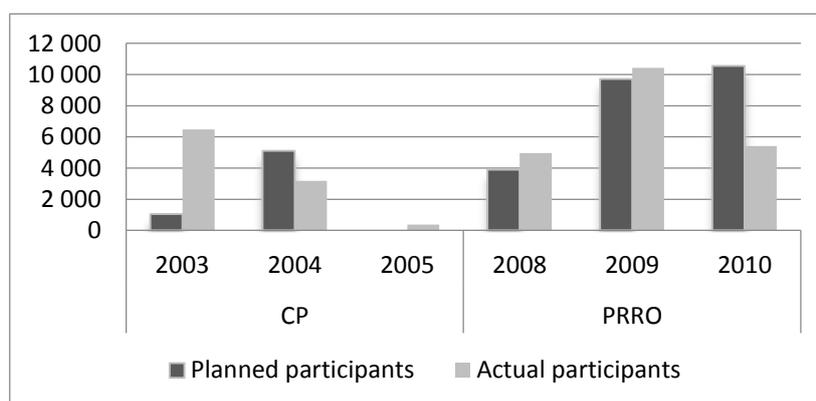
* Not statistically significant.

25. Consistently more survey respondents in beneficiary than comparison communities reported access to community, farmers', youth or women's organizations, with 46.5 percent of FFA participants reporting participating in such organizations, compared with 34.9 percent in comparison groups ($P < 0.01$). The differences were statistically significant for men and women analysed separately. Thirty-two percent of men and 36 percent of women in beneficiary communities reported receiving training to improve organizational and management capacities, compared with 18 percent of men and 14 percent of women in comparison communities.

Women's Participation and Empowerment

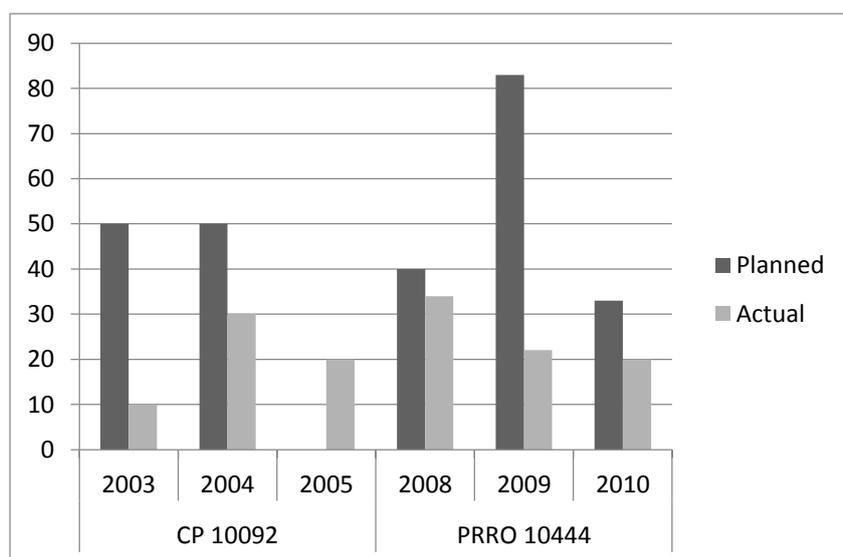
26. In four of the six years covered by the evaluation, more women than planned participated in FFA activities (see Figure 1). However, over all six years, women constituted an average of only 34 percent of total participants, compared with the planned 42 percent. WFP included a higher percentage of women participants than planned in only two years during the period evaluated.¹⁵

Figure 1: Numbers of women participants, planned versus actual



27. The country office planned that women would assume leadership positions in food distribution committees, but annual goals for women's leadership were not usually met (see Figure 2). However, the percentage of household food rations received by women at distribution points rose to 90 percent.

Figure 2: Women in leadership positions in food management committees, planned versus actual (%)



Source: WFP Standard Project Reports

28. The theory of change envisaged a wide range of impacts on women and girls, including some negative ones. For example, the health of pregnant or lactating women could be compromised by participation in heavy manual labour for FFA activities, with potential spillover effects on infants and young children. Recognizing this, WFP adjusted its

¹⁵ All figures in this paragraph are from WFP Standard Project Reports.

programmes. However, 40 percent of women reported the need to reorganize their daily activities or allocate them to other household members, to participate in the FFA programme, compared with only 17 percent of men.

29. Substantially more participants than comparators thought that women's empowerment had increased, with greater roles in community affairs, better access to credit and more important roles in community decision-making. Community leaders and representatives of women's organizations in beneficiary communities considered women's increased participation to be the most important outcome and impact of FFA activities. In comparison communities, representatives of women's organizations reported limited participation in community affairs.
30. In many focus group discussions a more active role for women was considered a key factor in family nutrition status. Home gardens – among the most common assets created – were well targeted to women, who are responsible for gardening and home food production. The women interviewed tended to perceive positive outcomes and impacts from growing their own vegetables and fruit.
31. More men than women reported participating in community organizations – 24 compared with 8 percent – with no significant difference between beneficiary and comparison communities. Approximately 18 percent of women in all communities reported participating in women's organizations. Less than 5 percent of respondents reported participating in agriculture organizations, regardless of sex or type of community.

Resilience

32. Both beneficiary and comparison communities reported facing climate hazards and natural disasters, with droughts, frosts, earthquakes and hurricanes being the most frequently cited. Between 17 and 26 percent of participants reported that FFA interventions had reduced losses from disasters.
33. The evaluation found that self-assessed disaster preparedness was significantly higher among participant households, at 30.4 percent, than comparison households, at 21.4 percent. More than 85 percent of respondents rated the training received – covering technical asset management, disaster preparedness, literacy and general capacity development – as very useful. However, further assessment of FFA disaster training effects was constrained because both participants and comparison groups had received training.
34. It was therefore notable that community and women's leaders in both beneficiary and comparison communities reported feeling unprepared, with few resources at their disposal to face the challenges of recurring disasters.

FACTORS AFFECTING IMPACT

Partnerships and Alignment

35. The Government of Guatemala was WFP's main partner during the evaluation period, with a variety of roles. FFA activities were implemented in collaboration with the *Fondo de Inversión Social* (FIS) in the CP, and the Ministry of Agriculture in the PRRO. The Government was responsible for providing technical assistance, storage, handling and transportation to distribution points. Its frequent inability to assume these responsibilities because of resource constraints resulted in delays and post-delivery losses, affecting

efficiency and effectiveness. More positively, WFP's work with government organizations enabled it to influence policy-level dialogue on food security, disaster preparedness and response.

36. Adequate technical assistance was identified as critical for successful asset development, which requires specialized knowledge of engineering and agricultural development. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was WFP's main United Nations collaborating partner for technical assistance and agricultural inputs under the PRRO, funded by the European Union (EU) Food Facility. Respondents judged this relationship as successful and well institutionalized through complementary roles, with FAO providing the necessary support for the technical design of agriculture-based interventions and for food production.
37. In response to the resource limitations of government agencies, WFP developed relationships with local non-governmental organizations for field-level delivery. Municipal governments also became increasingly important partners, in line with government efforts to strengthen capacities at the municipal level.

Resources

38. Both programmes were underfunded throughout the evaluation period; only 55 percent of the CP budget was actually funded (by 2005) and 71 percent of the PRRO budget (by 2010). Although corporate financial records¹⁶ do not disaggregate among activities, communication with the WFP country office indicated that the FIS FFA activities were suspended in 2005 because they were less than 25 percent funded. Funding gaps and uncertainty reduced the ability of the country office and its partners to plan, deliver, follow-up and monitor activities. According to reports and interviews, implementation was frequently postponed, and rations were not received on time, or of the expected quality and condition. The problems most frequently mentioned by respondents were inadequate technical assistance, by 15.3 percent; tools not available, by 23.7 percent; and lack of knowledge, by 11.9 percent.

Positioning

39. Most respondents reported a high regard for WFP's role in humanitarian assistance, but noted that its role in more development-oriented activities was not well differentiated from other United Nations agencies. Nonetheless, WFP appears to have filled a gap, as most comparison communities received very little or no support in emergency preparedness, emergency response or food aid from other institutions. WFP's clear comparative advantage in emergency response and disaster preparedness was relevant to the range and frequency of disasters in Guatemala, with climate change effects emerging as an additional risk factor.

Implementation Approach

40. In a context of historical mistrust between government entities and local communities, WFP maintained a positive reputation. Working at the municipal level with the mayor, the Office of Women and the Office of Planning, WFP's cooperating partners were effective in facilitating community engagement with the Government. Recent national government efforts to develop municipal capacities, including in women's affairs and nutrition, offer opportunities for WFP to engage further at the municipal and community levels.

¹⁶ WFP Standard Project Reports

41. Most evaluation respondents praised WFP's delivery capacity and ability to react and execute its work quickly, although community focus groups reported some long delays between expected and actual food deliveries. The quantity of food available was also reported to have been unpredictable and less than appropriate for the work done. WFP's records show that the amounts of food delivered were less than planned in four of the six years evaluated, dropping to only 19 percent in one year.¹⁶ Many respondents identified sustained technical assistance after initial asset construction as essential for success. Counterparts were responsible for technical assistance, which was often under-resourced and insufficient.
42. A wide range of FFA activities were implemented through short interventions with wide geographic coverage. PRRO interventions lasted only a few weeks or months, and although CP projects were planned for longer durations, limited funding and partner capacity prevented these plans from being realized. WFP records, validated by the evaluation team, found that an average of eight types of assets were built per community in the CP and five types in the PRRO. Most of these assets were for general agricultural productivity and land stabilization. Home gardens and composting – which are improved practices rather than physical assets – respond to the needs of individual women, who often control them, but they are small-scale interventions that tend to address the disaster risks facing communities only indirectly.
43. WFP's recent FFA programme guidance recognizes that environmental considerations are intrinsically linked to FFA success. Respondents linked environmental conditions to adaptation, resilience and rehabilitation efforts, and raised concerns that climate change will exacerbate the risks of disasters such as floods and droughts. However, despite the environmentally appropriate approach to individual asset formation – such as avoidance of slash and burn, protection of diverse tree species, reforestation and composting – the absence of a comprehensive watershed approach limited impact. The evaluation also found that the environmental awareness of communities and partners remained low despite participation in FFA activities and training.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

44. As outlined in the logic model guiding the evaluation, FFA was expected to address short-, medium- and long-term objectives. The evaluation found that WFP reached approximately 90,000 people in underserved communities, providing food assistance during periods of post-conflict rebuilding and natural disaster and building useful assets, most of which are still functional.
45. Despite the limited monitoring data, the evaluation found medium- and longer-term positive impacts on the biophysical condition of land and on livelihoods, including migration. However, food security did not improve significantly, and communities remained highly vulnerable to disaster risk, despite greater awareness of disaster preparedness. Although the PRRO and the CP implemented FFA interventions in different ways, both projects built assets that aimed to contribute to medium- or long-term food security, livelihoods and resilience.
46. WFP's approach was characterized by large numbers of small interventions, mainly to create private assets such as home gardens and composting. These assets were maintained by households and did not require costly and sophisticated planning or follow-up. However, although they addressed the needs of individual women, they were too small to stimulate significant improvement in food security or affect watershed-level change.

47. Climate change is expected to have various effects, requiring different coping strategies for affected people in Guatemala's diverse eco-geographical environment. To enhance impacts, FFA programming should pay more attention to environmental factors, with asset selection more explicitly based on a watershed approach. Larger, landscape-level community assets would likely have had a more transformative effect on communities than the micro-level household assets created, but strong partnerships and agreements for technical assistance and asset maintenance would be needed to realize these benefits. Focusing on fewer, more substantial assets through longer-term interventions could help ensure that the limited technical capacity and resources available are not overstretched. The WFP country office also needs adequate human and technical resources to inform project planners, managers and cooperating partners.
48. FFA interventions contributed to improving women's roles in their families and, to a certain extent, in community affairs, and many addressed women's situations and needs. However, targets for women's participation in work and management were often not met. Working with the municipal gender support units that are being developed provides an opportunity to improve performance in achieving gender goals.
49. The WFP country office was seen as an active and fair player in Guatemala, especially at the national policy level; overall, WFP's FFA interventions in Guatemala complemented government plans and priorities. The institutional environment for food and nutrition security is dynamic, given the evolving national and international economic and political climates. While the country office worked successfully with a variety of national governmental and non-governmental organizations and international institutions, the long-term sustainability of FFA interventions depends more on the capacity of national actors. More binding and mutually accountable agreements for FFA partnerships would be helpful.
50. As Guatemala is a middle-income country, traditional donors are reluctant to provide resources for long-term development programmes, but remain well disposed to fund humanitarian assistance. The WFP country office's capacity to deliver humanitarian assistance quickly, swiftly and professionally in emergency situations is recognized by all. It could build on this reputation to reframe its FFA activities as disaster risk reduction and response, helping communities to build assets that maintain food security during recurrent natural disasters, including flooding, seasonal drought, landslides and frosts, and linking these activities more directly to disaster response capacity at the local, municipal and national levels. This reframing would also bring activities more into line with WFP's current policy and guidance.

Recommendations

51. **Recommendation 1: Building on its experience and reputation, the country office should reframe its FFA programming towards disaster risk reduction and response.** This will involve developing a strategy and action plan for its FFA approach and then prioritizing, designing and aligning these to Guatemala's diverse environmental, risk and vulnerability contexts. It should include specific plans for enhancing disaster risk reduction and response capacity tailored to the community, municipal and national levels; establishing effective partnerships to ensure the requisite technical skills; and developing staff capacity to enable WFP to play a leadership role with national government and international institutions.

52. **Recommendation 2: To increase the effectiveness of FFA interventions and achieve greater impact and sustainability, the country office should concentrate its efforts on fewer, larger and longer-term interventions in fewer communities, with clear criteria for targeting communities at risk of food insecurity and disasters.** The types of assets: i) should be those that are likely to help prevent disaster damage and maintain food security when disaster strikes; ii) must be selected according to the particular conditions of each area; and iii) should ensure balance among short-, medium- and longer-term benefits.
53. **Recommendation 3: The country office should develop a broad vision and framework for gender issues in FFA, focusing on household food and nutrition requirements during and after emergencies and taking into consideration women's needs, interests and roles in food and nutrition security.** Rigorous analysis should be undertaken to identify barriers to women's empowerment and ways of engaging men in the elimination of these barriers. Women should be fully integrated into FFA decision-making processes so that they can benefit from the empowerment brought by such engagement.
54. **Recommendation 4: The country office should develop longer-term and stronger partnerships at the national, municipal and community levels to ensure that assets are well designed and constructed according to appropriate technical standards and that there is adequate maintenance for the long-term sustainability of its FFA interventions.** The country office should implement a strategy for the knowledge transfer of successful FFA interventions to government partners, emphasizing sustainability at the national, municipal and community levels. It should also develop a clear cooperation strategy for the municipal level, setting out clear actions to be undertaken. Protocols for cooperation should be developed to clarify conditions and responsibilities for food delivery, divisions of labour regarding technical assistance, and the involvement of municipalities in follow-up, maintenance and monitoring at the community level.
55. **Recommendation 5: The country office should develop and implement a robust and systematic FFA monitoring and evaluation system to measure the intended biophysical and socio-economic effects and provide adequate data at the community/municipal level to facilitate ownership and sustainability.**

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CP	country programme
CSI	coping strategies index
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCS	food consumption score
FFA	food for assets
FIS	<i>Fondo de Inversión Social</i>
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
SPR	Standard Project Report
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development