

**Executive Board
Second Regular Session**

Rome, 22–26 October 2007

POLICY ISSUES

Agenda item 4

EMERGENCY NEEDS ASSESSMENT: FINAL PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND NEXT STEPS

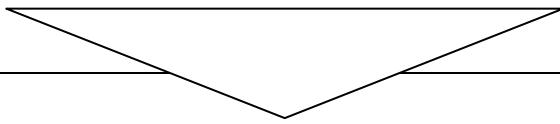
*For information**

E

Distribution: GENERAL
WFP/EB.2/2007/4-C
5 October 2007
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

* In accordance with the Executive Board's decisions on governance, approved at the Annual and Third Regular Sessions, 2000, items for information should not be discussed unless a Board member specifically requests it, well in advance of the meeting, and the Chair accepts the request on the grounds that it is a proper use of the Board's time.

NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD



This document is submitted to the Executive Board for information.

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.

Emergency Coordinator and Director, Mr J. Aylieff tel.: 066513-2287
ODA*:

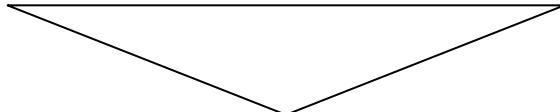
Chief, ODAN**: Mr W. Herbinger tel.: 066513-3123

Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact Ms C. Panlilio, Administrative Assistant, Conference Servicing Unit (tel.: 066513-2645).

* Assessment, Analysis and Preparedness Division

**** Emergency Needs Assessment Service**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In 2004, WFP launched a major initiative to strengthen its emergency needs assessments in four areas, as outlined in policy document WFP/EB.1/2004/4-A and the implementation plan, WFP/EB.3/2004/4-E. The main elements of the initiative are (i) accountability and transparency, (ii) methods and guidance, (iii) availability of pre-crisis information and (iv) building assessment capacities. The progress during the first two years was reported annually to the Board (WFP/EB.2/2005/4 and WFP/EB.2/2006/4-B/Rev.1) and has been externally evaluated by WFP's Office of Evaluation.

This document summarizes the progress of the three-year Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Implementation Plan, highlights the major developments during the third year and outlines the next steps in response to recommendations of the evaluation carried out by the Office of Evaluation and other internal and external reviews.

Achievements during the three years may be summarized as follows:

- **Transparency and accountability have improved.** Assessment reports are now produced for the vast majority of WFP projects and are published. They are subjected to internal quality monitoring; some receive external peer review. As a result, better-quality assessment reports are now available to inform donors' resource allocation decisions.
- **Methodological advances have been made** in areas such as integrating market analysis, strengthening the links between food security and nutrition analysis, identifying chronic and transitory food insecurity, and estimating population numbers. An *Emergency Food Security Assessment Handbook* has brought about greater standardization of methods. These measures have helped WFP to refine its recommendations on the most appropriate type, scale and timing of responses to crises.
- **Pre-crisis baselines have been produced** for 14 countries and food security monitoring systems have been established or enhanced in 13 countries. These products help to improve the timing and quality of assessments and assist WFP, governments and partners in early warning, preparedness, medium-term planning of interventions, geographical coverage and targeting.
- **1,300 WFP and partner staff have been trained,** the majority in basic principles and a smaller number in intermediate and advanced techniques; 600 staff from governments and partner organizations have participated in the basic training. This group is ensuring higher assessment standards, and therefore better responses to crises in the seven regions covered by WFP.

Several challenges remain, many of which have been highlighted in the evaluation carried out by the Office of Evaluation. There is further scope to consolidate and apply the improved methods, sustain a critical mass of trained staff—particularly in regional and country

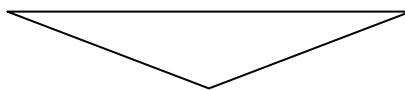
offices—and foster accountability. Important areas to be addressed include (i) developing a food security information strategy and associated staff structure to support programming, particularly through increasing investments in the food security monitoring system; (ii) establishing incentives and mechanisms to improve the links between assessments and programme decisions; (iii) maintaining and building assessment skills, particularly at the local level; and (iv) focusing remaining research on three priority topics, including development of a common approach to measuring the severity of crises.¹ Refinements in these areas will be a focus of WFP's work in the remaining months of the implementation plan and beyond.

Thanks to the vision and support of several donors and the collaboration of partners, WFP has made considerable progress in improving its assessments. There has been a corresponding increase in donor confidence in the credibility of WFP assessments and a more consistent use of assessments by decision-makers.

Increased attention is now being given to the quality of the information and analysis on which programmes and appeals for funding are based. This concern is reflected in the reforms of the United Nations humanitarian system, in the Good Humanitarian Donorship process and more generally in a renewed stress on demonstrably “needs-based” responses. The Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Implementation Plan in WFP is part of this trend and, according to the Overseas Development Institute,² represents the most thoroughgoing attempt at reform in this area by a single agency.

WFP's commitment to assessment and analysis will not end with the conclusion of the three-year implementation plan. Beyond 2007, WFP will continue to strive for enhanced standards in its assessment and food security analysis work, with the aim of supporting the most appropriate type and scale of response to food insecurity and of assisting donors in their resource allocation decisions.

DRAFT DECISION*



The Board takes note of “Emergency Needs Assessment: Final Progress Report on the Implementation Plan and Next Steps” (WFP/EB.2/2007/4-C).

¹ See the “Recommendation Matrix and Management Response” annex of the summary evaluation report for specific responses to OEDE's recommendations.

² ODI. 2007. *A review of the links between needs assessments and decision-making in response to food crises*. London.

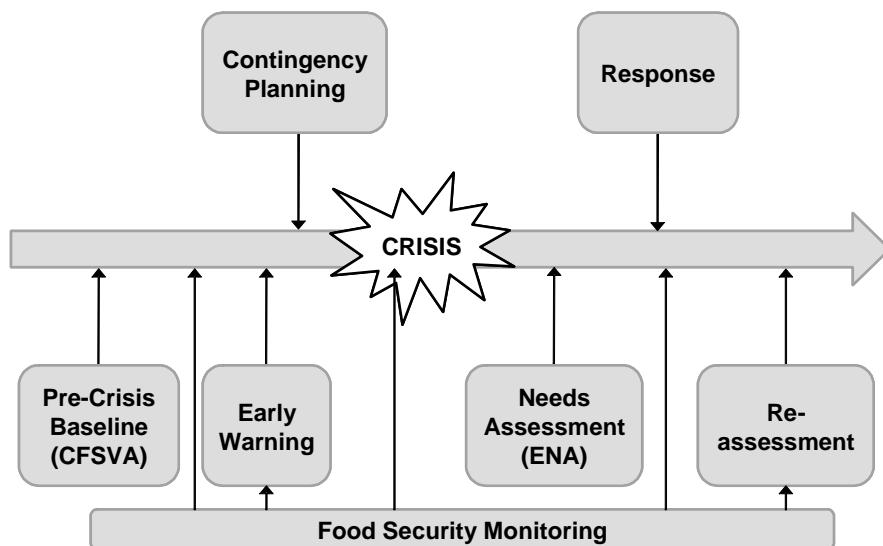
* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document (document WFP/EB.2/2007/15) issued at the end of the session.



BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

1. In response to concerns raised regarding the quality, credibility and transparency of its emergency needs assessments (ENAs), WFP launched a three-year programme of investments to strengthen its ENAs, as outlined in a policy and implementation plan approved by the Board in 2004. The Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Implementation Plan (SENAIP) aimed to improve practice in four areas: (i) accountability and transparency; (ii) methods and guidance; (iii) pre-crisis information; and (iv) assessment capacities and partnerships.
2. The goal is to enable WFP to develop more appropriate and effective responses to food insecurity. This requires improved ENAs and other elements of food security information before and after a crisis. In countries prone to food crises, pre-crisis baselines – comprehensive food security and vulnerability assessments (CFSVAs) – are prepared and food security monitoring systems (FSMSs) are established to track indicators and inform decision-making, including ENAs and contingency planning. ENAs fielded at the outset of a crisis inform programme response; regular reassessments and monitoring help WFP to adapt and safely exit from programmes (see Figure 1). A corps of vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) officers and staff trained in assessments at the country office, regional bureau and Headquarters levels are central to the provision of timely food security information. WFP rarely acts alone: it involves governments, partner agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Figure 1: Food Security Information Timeline



3. The Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity (SENAC) project was established in 2005 to carry out major components of this work. The project is managed by the Assessment, Analysis and Preparedness (ODA) Division's Emergency Needs Assessment Service (ODAN) and Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Branch (ODAV). Regular oversight from donors and technical input from food security experts has been ensured through a steering committee of donor representatives and an advisory group (AG) of technical experts representing academia, governments, NGOs, and United Nations

agencies, which meet regularly to review results and recommend priorities for further work.

4. From the outset, several donors generously augmented the Programme Support and Administrative (PSA) funds allocated by WFP to sustain these activities. The initial donors – the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission (ECHO) and the German Government – have been joined by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Citigroup Foundation, the Danish Government and the French Government. In 2006 and 2007, WFP demonstrated its commitment to SENAIP by advancing funds for ongoing activities pending confirmation of donor contributions.
5. Annual progress reports were submitted to the Board in 2005 (WFP/EB.2/2005/4-E) and 2006 (WFP/EB.2/2006/4-B/Rev.1). The results during the first two years of implementation were independently evaluated by WFP's Office of Evaluation (OEDE; WFP/EB.2/2007/6-A).
6. The priorities for the final year are to (i) finalize and consolidate methods and guidance, (ii) decentralize capacity-building, (iii) identify options to mainstream the essential posts and processes into the Biennial Management Plan (2008–2009), and (iv) develop strategic partnerships on linking responses to assessed needs.
7. This document takes stock of the achievements during the three-year period, with emphasis on the activities in the final year.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS

8. As confirmed by the OEDE evaluation, substantial progress has been made in the areas of (i) accountability and transparency, (ii) methods and guidance, (iii) availability of pre-crisis information and (iv) building assessment capacities. The following section summarizes the achievements and outlines the remaining challenges.

Accountability and Transparency

9. Transparency in assessment is of paramount importance because of the trust it generates between WFP and its stakeholders. A related principle is the accountability of WFP for producing quality assessment products and for making these available to support programming and funding decisions. Progress includes the following:

- In 2004, needs assessments for emergency operations (EMOPs) and protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs) were documented in only 45 percent of cases. In 2007, this had risen to 95 percent. This increase was brought about by the issue of an Operations Department (OD) directive that regional and country directors are responsible for underpinning projects with robust analysis documented in ENA or VAM reports.
- An external website was created on which all major ENA reports are published; none were published before 2005. This gives donors in particular the opportunity to review assessment reports before making funding decisions.
- In addition to disseminating summaries of ENA, CFSVA, and research findings and producing the monthly newsletter *The Assessor* highlighting recent or upcoming



activities, WFP began posting its reports on Relief Web and placing articles on innovative approaches in professional journals.³

- WFP has improved its internal checks and balances on assessment quality and other tools for monitoring results. Checklists have been introduced to evaluate ENA report quality.
 - WFP has organized external peer reviews of a number of its assessment/analysis products to ensure that they meet the highest standards and that areas for improvement are highlighted.
10. The OEDE evaluation concluded that there has been a “cultural shift”⁴ toward improved accountability and transparency, and observable impacts on quality and the credibility of results. It noted that challenges lie ahead, among other things in ways of measuring the accuracy of needs assessments.

Methods and Guidance

11. The 2004 ENA policy emphasized the need to improve assessments by refining and standardizing food security analysis methods and guidance. Gaps were identified in analysing and understanding the effects of food aid on markets, identifying non-food responses, distinguishing between chronic and transitory food insecurity, integrating food security with nutrition analysis and improving population estimates. An additional theme was how to achieve comparability of assessment results between countries and over time and thereby allow prioritization of needs.
12. Progress in this area may be summarized as follows:
- Market analysis tools have been produced for use in food security assessments, baselines and monitoring systems; they are being tested. Results to date are positive, particularly with respect to estimating commercial imports and informal cross-border trade – through a joint WFP/Famine Early-Warning System Network (FEWS-NET) project – determining appropriate response options and providing information for decisions on local procurement.
 - Food security and nutrition guidance was issued in May 2007. When reliable nutrition data are not available, CFSVAs and major ENAs systematically consider collecting anthropometric data to understand more fully the relationship between household food security, health care and child malnutrition.

³ These include:

- (i) WFP. 2006. *Measuring Household Food Security in Emergencies: WFP's Household Food Consumption Approach*. London, Overseas Development Institute (ODI). Also available at: <http://www.odihpn.org/documents/humanitarianexchange036pdf>
- (ii) Mohiddin, L., Sharma, M. and Haller, A. 2007. *Comparing Cash and Food Transfers: Findings from a Pilot Project in Sri Lanka*. Oxford, UK, Emergency Nutrition Network. Also available at: <http://www.ennonline.net/fex/30/fex30.pdf>
- (iii) Beekhuis, G. and Laouali, I. 2007. *Cross-Border Trade and Food Markets in Niger: why market analysis is important for humanitarian action*. London, ODI. Also available at: <http://www.odihpn.org/documents/humanitarianexchange038pdf>

⁴ WFP. 2007. *Evaluation of the WFP Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Implementation Plan*, vol. 1. Rome.



- Greater standardization of methods, availability of CFSVA data and better measurement of shocks now permit WFP to distinguish between chronic and transitory situations in terms of severity and the appropriate response.
 - Guidance on a method for estimating population numbers was issued in August 2007, following consultation with agencies such as FEWS-NET, Epicentre/*Médecins sans frontières* (MSF), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Further collaboration with these agencies is foreseen during the field-testing of selected methods.
 - Standardized guidance reflecting these methodological improvements will be included in the revised *Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) Handbook* planned for the first quarter of 2008 and the updated *FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM) Guidelines (2007)*. Standardized guidance on CFSVAs will be produced by mid-2008.
13. Producing analysis that is objectively comparable across countries and regions continues to elude global food security experts. WFP is approaching this problem through two related initiatives: (i) WFP has commissioned research that shows that the measurement of dietary diversity and food frequency (DDFF) promises to serve as a standard proxy of household food security; (ii) WFP is partnering with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), FEWS-NET, the European Union Joint Research Centre (JRC), CARE, Save the Children Fund (SCF) and OXFAM to develop a standard food-security classification system based on the integrated food security and humanitarian phase classification (IPC) system pioneered in Somalia. The IPC approach does not replace existing data-collection systems or assessments but uses a consensual approach to apply common indicators and thresholds to determine the severity of food security. Stakeholders in this project will use pilot tests in different regions to adapt the classification system and refine the indicators to enable comparison across regions and countries and over time.
14. As confirmed by the OEDE evaluation, these activities have enabled WFP to standardize its needs assessments and make advances in market analysis and methods to measure and compare food insecurity. WFP has followed the recommendation of the evaluation to further field-test certain methods and tools.

Availability of Pre-crisis Information

15. Increasingly, assessment teams have been able to focus on the most vulnerable areas and groups and understand more clearly the underlying causes of food crises by using two tools.
16. The first tool, the CFSVA, is a multi-sectoral pre-crisis baseline providing detailed information on the scale, nature and causes of food insecurity and vulnerability in a country based on household surveys and analyses of secondary data.
17. The second tool, the FSMS, tracks critical food security indicators identified during the baseline. Under the FSMS, WFP and its partners regularly collect and analyse household-level data from sentinel sites. These data, when combined with other data, help to trigger timely preparedness and assessment.
18. These two tools are used in partnership with other food security actors including national authorities, FAO, FEWS-NET and regional organizations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the *Comité permanent inter-États de lutte contre la sécheresse dans le Sahel* (CILSS).



19. Progress with the two tools is as follows:

- Fourteen CFSVAs have been completed and five more are under way or planned to begin by the end of 2007.⁵
- Thirteen FSMSs have been established or strengthened.⁶ A monitoring expert was posted in Dakar to support systems in five Sahelian countries.

20. WFP has worked to enhance the methods for both tools. As recommended by an independent review in 2006, new approaches were field-tested in several CFSVAs to improve analysis of households' access to food and integration of information on risks and trends, markets and nutrition. These approaches will be reflected in augmented CFSVA guidance by the end of the year. CFSVAs provide the data on the current food security situation and analyse exposure to future shocks and their likely impact on different livelihood groups.

21. In addition to providing pre-crisis information to assessment teams, these tools allow country directors to carry out medium-term planning on geographical areas and segments of the population to be targeted, foresee and prepare for slow-onset crises and adjust current operations to changing food security conditions. Donors, governments and partners are likewise finding these tools useful when they make decisions on their own priorities and programmes.

22. Challenges remain in this area. WFP needs pre-crisis information in a greater number of countries and will continue to expand its use of these tools in the coming years. The OEDE evaluation and an Overseas Development Institute (ODI) review of the links between ENA and decision-making⁷ considered that there is a relative under-investment in programme monitoring and noted the potential for FSMS to fill this role if funding is made available. WFP agrees with their conclusion that its projects require an improved information strategy that links pre-crisis information with needs assessment and ongoing monitoring and establishes a clearer process for project adjustment as the food security situation evolves.

Building Assessment Capacities

23. Each year WFP leads or participates in 100 ENAs in partnership with governments, other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). To meet this high demand for assessment expertise, WFP has placed major emphasis on building staff capacity.

24. WFP's vision was to build capacity at three levels. At the first level, WFP planned to identify and nurture advanced assessors who are experienced and skilled in leading complex or in-depth assessments using advanced techniques. These advanced assessors would also train or coach other staff and contribute to research, testing, and field application of new methods.

⁵ Complete: Angola, Comoros, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Timor-Leste, Tanzania Uganda, Occupied Palestinian Territories. Ongoing or planned: Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Iraq and southern Sudan.

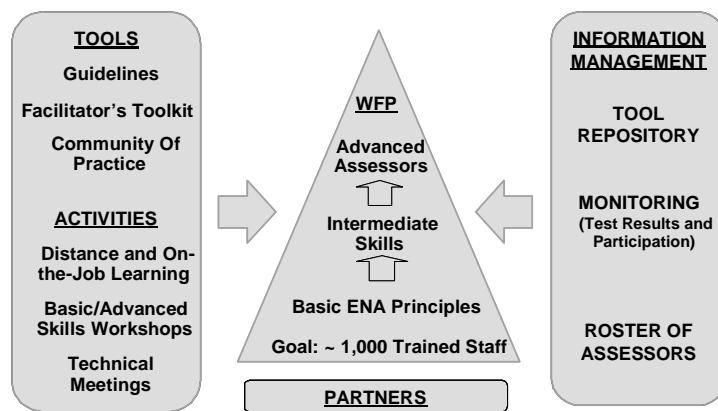
⁶ Ongoing: Afghanistan, Burundi, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Central African Republic, Haiti and Sudan (Darfur). Under way: Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Rwanda and Uganda. Other FSMS are also supported outside of SENAIP, such as the DFID-funded FSMS in Nepal.

⁷ ODI. 2007. *A Review of the Links between Needs Assessments and Decision-Making in Response to Food Crises*, London.



25. At the second level, WFP planned to train programme staff to an intermediate level, allowing them to undertake initial or rapid assessments and contribute as team members in more comprehensive assessments. At the third level, WFP planned to train a large proportion of programme staff and food aid monitors in basic assessment principles and methods to put them in a stronger position to use assessment information in programming and assist assessment teams.
26. This vision was not confined to WFP staff. A principle from the outset was the training of staff from WFP partners, in particular government and NGO counterparts.
27. Finally, WFP planned to underpin this capacity-building strategy with tools and a capacity-information management system (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Capacity Building Programme



28. Progress in this area to date is as follows:
- Fifty advanced assessors have been identified, evaluated and included on the WFP roster.
 - Eleven of these assessment specialists, funded by the SENAC project, have been stationed in regional bureaux since 2005. They have since participated in 150 assessments, led efforts to monitor and improve assessment quality and built capacity in their regions.
 - As of mid-2007, 200 WFP programme staff have been trained at the intermediate or advanced level; 500 WFP staff have been trained in basic assessment principles. In total, 1,300 staff, including 600 from partner organizations, have been trained since 2005 in 52 workshops or through on-the-job learning.
 - Staff are registered on a web-based roster of assessors that is used to match staff skills with forthcoming assessment work and to analyse skills gaps in each region and in WFP. The roster helps users to track staff participation in training and subsequent field experience and to evaluate staff performance in training.
 - Tools have been developed to facilitate learning and information sharing, including distance-learning modules, a facilitators' toolkit for designing and delivering training workshops and a web-based community of practice that comprises 200 assessors at different skill levels.

29. Management of additional learning activities has been decentralized to the regional bureaux to increase the sustainability of training and ensure that training is tailored to country and regional needs.
30. An innovative initiative in 2007 was to build the EFSA and preparedness capacities of government partners by developing action plans in three pilot countries and a strategy for supporting these activities in other countries. The strategy highlights the importance of nurturing country-level policies and institutions and building skills.
31. The OEDE evaluation endorsed the establishment of specialist and generalist assessment staff and commended the quality and utility of the training. The evaluation noted that in the light of continued staff turnover, the improved capacities need to be maintained through additional training, particularly of country office staff, to ensure that sound assessments are conducted and that the innovative methods developed under SENAIP are widely applied. WFP envisages that capacity-building will continue to be a priority in 2008 and beyond.

Linkages to Decision-Making

32. One major theme that emerged over the course of SENAIP was that investments in refined assessment capacities and standards are worthwhile only if they influence decision-making by WFP managers, governments, partners on programme responses and by donors on resource allocation.
33. In 2006, WFP commissioned ODI to review the links between ENA and decision-making.⁷ The review concluded that the food security situation analysis available to WFP decision-makers has improved in the last three years and that as a result WFP response options are increasingly informed by adequate needs assessments. It recommended that these linkages – between needs assessments and response options – be more formally documented. The review concluded, however, that this link between needs assessment and WFP internal decision-making is usually not maintained during the life of a programme, thereby affecting informed decision-making. These findings are largely in accord with those of the OEDE evaluation.
34. The ODI review concluded that there were still several barriers to consistent use of WFP assessments by donors for their resource allocation decisions, in part because donor decision-making cycles are not easily synchronized with WFP programming needs.
35. WFP concurs with ODI's recommendation that more investment should be made in reassessment and monitoring throughout a project's life to allow managers to make adjustments to the project as the food security situation evolves.
36. WFP is working to ensure sound linkages between assessments and decision-making in the following ways:
- Executive summaries of assessment reports are produced that aim to make the main findings and response recommendations more easily accessible to WFP, governments, and partner and donor decision-makers.
 - A matrix summarizing the links between the response options recommended in the assessment and those being proposed in the project submission will be sent to Headquarters by country offices submitting projects to the Project Review Committee (PRC).

- Internal checks and balances on whether EMOP and PRRO documents reflect ENA/VAM findings have already been enhanced. PRCs in which ODA monitored and commented upon this element rose from 70 percent in 2005 to 96 percent in 2006-2007.
37. WFP recognizes the need to make a greater effort to provide information for decision-makers in the right form at the right time and to advocate for action in other sectors when non-food responses are more appropriate.
38. With regard to donor decision-making, WFP looks to continued emphasis being placed on the principles articulated in the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative, and in particular to Principle 6, which calls upon donors to “allocate humanitarian funding in proportion to needs and on the basis of needs assessments.”

THE WAY FORWARD

39. The investments made by WFP and its donors in strengthening ENA capacities have resulted in significant progress in accountability and transparency, improved methods, guidance and pre-crisis information, and augmented assessment capacities and partnerships. As the three-year implementation plan comes to an end, WFP will build on its successes and systematically address areas for improvement highlighted by the OEDE evaluation and the ODI review.

Staff and Assessment Structures

40. Significant investment has been made in building WFP’s capacity to conduct credible needs assessments; WFP will give high priority to maintaining that capacity in the 2008-2009 Management Plan.
41. In addition to the programme staff equipped with a basic understanding of new assessment principles and methods, WFP will have 260 staff capable of carrying out assessments at an intermediate or advanced level, the vast majority of whom will be stationed in the field. WFP will be able to complement its assessment capacity with skilled assessment staff from partner agencies. This body of professionals will ensure that the best possible assessment standards are upheld.
42. In regional bureaux, assessment and VAM staff will be organized into food security analysis units, whose role will be (i) to ensure the quality of assessment and food security analysis activities, (ii) to participate directly in complex and/or in-depth assessments, (iii) to engage in regional partnerships with food security actors and (iv) to promote country-level partnerships. In line with the recommendation of the OEDE evaluation, regional bureaux will emphasize building capacity for assessments and food security analysis at the country level.
43. Fewer staff will be required in Headquarters at the end of the intense SENAIP period. The two units currently dealing with ENA and VAM, ODAN and ODAV, will be merged into one food security analysis service. This service will mirror field structures and support greater integration of the tools WFP deploys at various stages of a crisis and the project cycle, such as CFSVA, FSMS, and EFSA. Headquarters staff will focus on the development of standardized methods and guidance, support to capacity building, quality assurance and monitoring, and direct support to the field to meet peak demand and ensure adequate expertise for complex assessments.



Translating Methods into Practice

44. Ensuring that the updated guidance, directives and procedures developed under SENAIP are applied in a wider range of contexts by a greater number of field staff will be a priority in 2008. This will require sustained support for capacity-building and learning from application, particularly of country office staff and local partners.
45. Work on methods and tools will focus on consolidating and advancing research launched under SENAIP in three areas:
- WFP will be a major player, joining FAO, FEWS-NET, JRC and international NGOs in the development of a standard food security classification system. A five-year multi-agency programme has been developed in two phases: (i) applying a standard classification system in a limited number of countries, refining the guidance based on this experience, and independently evaluating the results; and (ii) applying the revised “common” classification approach to a wider range of countries and exploring the potential for application to other humanitarian sectors. A critical objective will be to develop a system that allows comparison of needs across countries and over time.
 - WFP will continue to pioneer work on tools and methods for market analysis. A workshop planned for December 2007 will bring together experts from WFP, FAO, FEWS-NET, the World Bank, NGOs and academic institutions to share best practice on market analysis in support of food-security programming. Topics will include ways of informing decisions on assisting with cash or food. In 2008, WFP will focus on integrating market analysis into its needs assessments, food security baselines and monitoring systems.
 - To support greater integration of nutrition and food security analysis, WFP will partner with UNICEF, FAO, the World Health Organization (WHO) and international fora⁸ to explore the use of nutritional survey methods in needs assessments and to harmonize the indicators collected through nutritional surveillance systems and food security monitoring systems.
46. WFP plans to continue consultations on these initiatives during 2008 with a smaller group of experts drawn from the advisory group.

The Revised EFSA Handbook: A Preview

The revised *EFSA Handbook* will be published in early 2008 in a modular format to facilitate its updating as practice evolves (e.g. IPC analysis). The *Handbook* will provide more extensive guidance on conducting “initial” EFSA, very short missions undertaken immediately after a sudden-onset disaster or following sudden changes in an ongoing crisis. Increased standardization of food security measurement will permit identification of situations where lives or livelihoods are at risk, refine the estimation of the “food availability gap,” and facilitate the analysis of response options. It will incorporate expanded guidance on the use of market analysis tools.

Strengthening Linkages with Decision-Making

47. Producing higher-quality, more credible needs assessments is clearly not an end in itself. The goal is for WFP managers to use ENAs to determine response options, for partners to use them to decide on interventions in other complementary sectors, and for donors to use

⁸ The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Nutrition Cluster and the Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN) Task Force on Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation.



them in allocating resources. WFP will place emphasis in 2008 and beyond on this critical aspect, with priority given to the following:

- **Improved communication.** WFP will seek to enhance the way it communicates assessment results by providing executive summaries that are more appropriately timed and suited to the needs of decision-makers. The work being carried out with partners on a standard food security classification system will facilitate improved prioritization of needs and allow WFP and partners to refine their advocacy on food, cash, nutrition, health and recovery needs.
- **Greater transparency on response options.** Before recommending responses to assessed needs, assessment teams will collaborate to a greater extent with programme staff from WFP and partners to determine the most appropriate response options and those that are feasible in the given timeframe. This will give donors more confidence that the recommended response options are valid and achievable. Greater involvement of actors in other sectors in determining appropriate and feasible responses should lead to more consistent hand-over and implementation of non-food response recommendations.
- **Well articulated food security information strategy.** WFP will develop an integrated information strategy to support decisions throughout the programming cycle, with more emphasis on forecasting, integration of existing data and reassessment and monitoring.
- **Reinforcing accountability.** A revised OD directive will be issued that emphasizes the need for managers to (i) plan and budget for regular country-level assessments, reassessments and monitoring, (ii) be transparent about incorporating assessment results into project design and (iii) implement ENA quality-assurance and monitoring. The directive will define ENA roles and responsibilities at each level of WFP.

48. WFP will maintain the checks and balances it has introduced on assessment quality and on the linkages between the response options recommended by the assessment team and those proposed in the resulting WFP project.

Funding Beyond 2007

49. Maintaining sufficient capacity for assessment and analysis, particularly in the field, will be a priority in the 2008–2009 Management Plan. WFP nonetheless anticipates the need to turn to donors to request additional funding for a number of priority projects such as integrating nutrition and food security analysis capacity-building in areas such as market analysis, particularly at the country level, strengthening the analysis of response options and communication for decision-making and exploring a standard food security classification approach. Additional assistance with funding CFSVAs and FSMS will also be required.

CONCLUSION

50. With the vision and support of several donors and the collaboration of partners, WFP has made considerable improvements in its assessment practice. These efforts support the goal – frequently expressed in debates on GHD, the Food Aid Convention, and United Nations reform – of allocating humanitarian resources according to need.



ANNEX

STRENGTHENING ENA IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: ACTIVITIES AND FUNDING SOURCE, 2004–2007		
ACTIVITY	2004–2005	2006–2007
Transparency and Accountability		
Communications Strategy (ENA website and access)	PSA; ECHO	PSA; ECHO
ENA report tracking; quality control	PSA	PSA; ECHO
Independent in-depth assessments	PSA; DFID	PSA; DFID
Pre-crisis Information		
CFSVAs and FSMS	ECHO	ECHO; Citigroup
Linkages among ENAs, programme responses, and monitoring	PSA; ECHO	PSA; ECHO
Methods and Guidance		
WFP; UNHCR guidelines	PSA (completed 2004)	–
EFSA Handbook	PSA; DFID PSA; ECHO PSA; ECHO	– PSA; ECHO PSA; ECHO
➤ provisional version (2005)		
➤ testing, adaptation (2005–2007)		
➤ final version issued (2008)		
Revised FAO/WFP CFSAM guidelines	PSA	PSA
Research and field-testing of EFSA methodologies	ECHO	ECHO; CIDA; Danish government; French government
Support to multi-sectoral guidance (CAP, NAF, PCNAs, IPC)	PSA	PSA; ECHO
Training, Partnerships, and Capacity Building		
ENA training strategy and modules	PSA	PSA
ENA training of WFP and partners (including JAM, CFSAM)	PSA; DFID; ECHO	PSA; ECHO
Assessment specialists	ECHO	ECHO
Advanced WFP assessors training	German Government	German Government
National Assessment Capacity Building	-	Danish Government
Management; Administration	PSA; ECHO	PSA; ECHO

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

AG	advisory group
CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process
CFSAM	crop and food supply assessment mission
CFSVA	comprehensive food security and vulnerability assessment
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CILSS	<i>Comité permanent inter-états de lutte contre la sécheresse dans le Sahel</i>
DDFF	dietary diversity and food frequency
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
ECHO	Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission
EFSA	emergency food security assessment
EMOP	emergency operation
ENA	emergency needs assessment
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEWS-NET	Famine Early-Warning Systems Network
FSMS	food security monitoring system
GHD	Good Humanitarian Donorship
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPC	integrated phase classification
JRC	European Union Joint Research Centre
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MSF	<i>Médecins sans frontières</i>
NAF	needs analysis framework
NGO	non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OD	Operations Department
ODA	Assessment, Analysis and Preparedness Division
ODAN	Emergency Needs Assessment Service
ODAV	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Branch
ODI	Overseas Development Institute (UK)
OEDE	Office of Evaluation
PCNA	Post-conflict Needs Assessment



PRC	Programme Review Committee
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
PSA	Programme Support and Administrative (budget)
RAO	regional assessment officer
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SCN	Standing Committee on Nutrition
SENAC	Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity
SENAIP	Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Implementation Plan
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAM	vulnerability analysis and mapping
WHO	World Health Organization