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MID-TERM EVALUATION OF PRRO CAMBODIA 6038.00

Food Aid for Recovery and Rehabilitation in Cambodia

Number of beneficiaries	1,815,400
Duration	Two years (1 January 1999 to 31 December 2000)

Cost (United States dollars)	
Total cost to WFP	43,010,465
Total food cost	25,921,952
Estimated total cost	43,366,590

ABSTRACT

Protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) Cambodia 6038.00 provides unique geographical coverage of targeted communes in all but one of Cambodia's 23 provinces. Food aid mitigates the worst effects of chronic poverty, economic shocks, and natural and man-made disasters. WFP's food security strategy in Cambodia complements and anticipates future development programmes. WFP acts as a catalyst for a more integrated recovery strategy in specified areas. The majority of food interventions in the country are through food for work, which is essential for closing the pre-harvest hunger gap (the three-month period when food reserves are exhausted, usually because of debt payments). The relatively fewer social sector activities provide complementary inputs for vulnerable groups in rural and urban areas. WFP's role in post-war Cambodia also includes advocacy for the hungry poor, through targeting, information and intervention. Although WFP's vulnerability analysis and monitoring are already advanced, greater clarity and cohesion are required in targeting methods and in measurement of effects and impact. A greater variety of projects and a more sustained presence in targeted communes are also recommended. Increased capacity-building of staff and partners is seen as a key to full recovery. Finally WFP should further support the process of decentralization and commune-level institutional building implemented by the Royal Government of Cambodia.

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted for consideration to the Executive Board.

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 point(s) indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
CARERE	Cambodia Area Rehabilitation and Regeneration Project
CDP	Central delivery point
CRC	Cambodian Red Cross
EDP	Extended delivery point
EQIP	Education Quality Improvement Project
FDP	Final delivery point
FFW	Food for work
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation Agency
HDI	Human Development Index
IDP	Internally displaced person
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MoEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
MoWVA	Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs
MRD	Ministry of Rural Development
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PET	Protracted emergency target (commune)
PFD	Partners for Development
RTC	Regular targeted communes
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping



GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. The broad goal of PRRO 6038.00 is sustained food security among the chronically hungry poor, along with the promotion of re-emerging social cohesion and support systems. The objectives are to:
 - a) build and rehabilitate essential assets, facilitate reconciliation and promote self-reliance among the poor;
 - b) contribute to improving the quality of life; and
 - c) provide immediate relief from hunger to those groups temporarily unable to meet their basic food needs.
2. The breakdown of each of these programme components in 1999 is:
 - a) community rehabilitation and recovery (food for work): 82 percent of food aid allocation, 1,328,000 beneficiaries;
 - b) social sector: 13 percent of food aid allocation, 74,000 beneficiaries;
 - c) emergencies: 5 percent of food aid allocation, 115,000 beneficiaries.

OVERVIEW AND CONCLUSIONS

3. The mid-term evaluation of PRRO 6038.00 is unique in two respects: Cambodia was the beneficiary of the first application of the PRRO as an official WFP programme category. It is also the first country in which an evaluation of the PRRO category has been undertaken. The Cambodia PRRO was conceived and developed as an umbrella operation for a group of protracted recovery activities, with a small contingency for relief activities. In examining PRRO 6038.00, the evaluation necessarily asks the following questions: Are the operation's goals and objectives consistent with the complex realities on the ground? To what extent are the type, relative balance and coherence of the operation's activities an appropriate response to Cambodia's accelerating recovery and stability? Because the PRRO was designed for only an initial two years, an evaluation of it must also be forward-looking, asking whether or not the recovery programme should be continued.
4. In the aftermath of political unrest in 1997, normalcy returned to Cambodia in late 1998 with the creation of a new coalition government, the country's regaining its seat at the United Nations and, in April 1999, its formal admission to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Although political stability is taking hold, the country's population remains extremely vulnerable to the economic threats posed by poor access to goods, basic services, education, employment, income opportunities and, in many areas, food. Cambodia produces a small annual rice surplus, but poor purchasing power and geographical isolation of the country's majority rural population lead to continued food insecurity.



5. Although substantial private and public investment has yet to take place, international financial institutions are beginning to make significant commitments to Cambodia. WFP is the only agency, however, with countrywide coverage, working in targeted communes in 22 of the 23 provinces (with food for work (FFW), and in all 23 provinces if social sector projects are included). The Programme not only provides a food-based safety net for the chronically and transient poor; but it also—through its geographical presence and poverty data resources—acts as a catalyst and advocate for future development interventions. In short, WFP effectively fills the gap while the country awaits more regular development assistance. The mission believes that it is vital for WFP to retain this profile and role in Cambodia throughout the transition period.
6. Although Cambodia's economy is stabilizing, with communities slowly being rebuilt and refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) almost all resettled, formidable challenges remain. National social support systems are extremely depleted, and the country's Human Development Index (HDI), at 0.509, is among the lowest in Asia. More than 40 percent of the rural population live below the poverty line. The capacity of the Government remains extremely weak; salaries for the over staffed civil service (about 160,000) average less than US\$20 a month; absenteeism is rife; and allegations of corruption and impunity are widespread. Economic and political reform is greatly needed and would greatly enhance aid effectiveness.
7. The PRRO will need to remain flexible and responsive to the changing realities on the ground. To help promote social cohesion among previously antagonistic communities, for example, WFP will need to continue working in the new "reconciliation" areas, those areas that have only recently come under Government control. Once stability is restored in these areas, farming, trading and transitory employment are usually swiftly re-established. Other areas, however, remain particularly inaccessible. It is also important for WFP to note the inward migration of large numbers of people to some less populated reconciliation areas, where land is more readily available.
8. Five percent of WFP resources in 1999 were allotted to emergency response (including the repatriation of 40,000 refugees) and 13 percent to social sector activities (public and community health projects, human resource development and training and assistance to vulnerable groups such as (street children, orphanages, day-care centres, prosthetics centres and school feeding programmes). WFP's key sectoral and geographic emphasis, however—representing about 82 percent of total food aid allocation—has been on community recovery and rehabilitation, conducting mainly FFW activities to improve infrastructure, with the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD) as the main operational partner.
9. For WFP social cohesion is a by-product of two mechanisms: community participation in rebuilding assets and assisting civil authorities in establishing a presence in newly opened areas. Clearly, cohesion cannot be empirically measured, but evidence suggests that the process is accelerated and reinforced through appropriate WFP-assisted interventions (e.g. the construction of schools and health centres, the implementation of adult literacy programmes) coupled with the bolstering of local leadership. The most common FFW activity has been road construction. Although vital, this activity is only one in a range of options available. The mission believes that WFP should explore additional options involving a more sustained presence in all areas. Recovery should be an incremental and localized process in which a food-based safety net offsets the worst effects of chronic and transitory food insecurity at the household and village levels, and complements other development measures that lead towards sustainable food security.



10. The mission also found that the selection of projects for the social sector component, benefiting about 74,000 people each year, has not adhered to explicit criteria or prioritization, and has instead relied more on the perceived efficiency and reliability of implementing partners.
11. The transition from recovery to development is premised strongly on the ability of WFP to build and reinforce capacity at the national and local levels. The next PRRO must include a comprehensive strategy, including measurable outcomes, for the development of staff, partner and community human resources.
12. Finally, there is increasing evidence that stand-alone WFP/MRD projects, particularly those generated through FFW, are less technically viable and sustainable than those conducted with third partners having additional resources and, in some instances, a more concentrated field presence. This is particularly noticeable in the construction of roads. WFP does not give additional support to communities to maintain the assets created by FFW, although the *seila* (khmer for “foundation stone” - a decentralized village, commune and provincial-level planning) process in the Northwest has begun to identify community inputs in this respect.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

13. Recent recovery trends include, *inter alia*, relative political and social stability, a partial return to a functioning cash economy, the settlement and gradual rehabilitation of hitherto transient population groups and increasing responsibility assumed by government bodies. WFP’s response to this has been the identification of more diverse and better-understood beneficiary groups, the creation of a greater number of productive assets, an increase in participation and greater linkage with complementary donor programmes. In many of WFP’s targeted population groups, however, food security remains extremely precarious.

Food Security

14. Food insecurity in the country is localized and household-specific rather than national. The FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment in February 1999 noted a 3 percent increase in paddy harvest from the previous year, with a total domestic rice availability of 2.24 million tons. With utilization requirements of about 2.21 million tons (based on a per capita annual rice consumption of 151.2 kg), Cambodia’s small surplus was thus 30,000 tons. Preliminary estimates of the 1999/2000 harvest are encouraging, though widespread food insecurity at the household level persists. This continuing need for food aid is tied to several interrelated issues:
 - a) interdistrict and household production/consumption variations, caused by poor access, a weak marketing infrastructure and lack of purchasing power;
 - b) substantial (illegal) exports of grain to neighbouring countries;
 - c) poor farmers’ selling major portions of their produce immediately after harvest to repay high-interest rate debts;
 - d) low agricultural productivity caused by poor access to improved seed, fertilizers, irrigation and credit;



- e) heavy population pressure on land;
- f) limited off-farm income opportunities, declining access to common property resources (forests and rivers) and poor prospects for seasonal rural-urban migration;
- g) uncertainty of land tenure leading to low investments and forced take-overs; and
- h) poor access to health services.

Land Tenure

15. For 84 percent of Cambodia's population, land is the most important productive asset and store of accumulated wealth. With the major economic reforms of 1989, the Government attempted to implement an effective land management policy, ensuring that land be distributed to private individuals and reintroducing private ownership of land. The complexity and lack of clarity of these new regulations, however, have caused many conflicts, including land encroachment, land grabbing and increasing incidences of landlessness, especially among vulnerable groups. According to the law, land can be occupied and used, but cannot be sold; yet, people continue to sell and transfer land. In addition, owing to the lack of a distinction between common and state property, millions of hectares of Cambodia's forest and agricultural land have been granted to private companies and individuals for long-term investment and concession exploitation.
16. The mission believes that where WFP has invested in local land use, it should combine its efforts with local advocacy (e.g. property guarantees with provincial governments) and exert sustained pressure at the national level, in conjunction with other United Nations agencies, to ensure that basic land rights be upheld and respected.

RECOMMENDATION

WFP's advocacy role, both local and national, should include efforts to obtain minimum guarantees of individual and community ownership of assets generated and supported by the operation. This should include, for instance, ensuring that land cleared through FFW remain the property of the beneficiary family.

Targeting

17. The mission was impressed by the pioneering and innovative work of the WFP Cambodia Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit. For the largest component of the PRRO, FFW projects, WFP relies on the area-based targeting of communes (usually about 8 to 15 villages). The selection of communes is based on various indicators of poverty, food insecurity, and past conflicts. Within these targeted areas, WFP is less concerned about targeting specific households or individuals, mainly because participation in FFW activities is generally high, reaching between 60 and 80 percent of the male and female population, with the highest participation rates among the poorest households.
18. The issue of targeting, the mission found, warrants continued attention in several areas:
- Targeting is often a complex process, demanding a significant amount of staff time and attention.
 - Different targeting criteria and levels of rigidity are being used to identify regular targeted communes (RTCs) in chronically food-insecure areas and protracted emergency target communes (PET), a distinction that may no longer be useful in a post-conflict context.



- Annual changes in targeting criteria and procedures have caused some lack of continuity and some uncertainty for longer-term planning.
 - WFP's targeting process is not always conducive to a more integrated and collaborative approach with partner organizations working in the same district or region but not necessarily in the same communes.
 - Too much emphasis may have been placed on geographic targeting at the expense of food-insecure beneficiaries with specific vulnerabilities, who would have been targeted using agro-ecological, demographic or livelihood criteria.
19. Recently, WFP introduced a new geographic targeting index with five indicators of poverty and food insecurity: (i) agricultural land per capita; (ii) forest coverage, (iii) women's literacy; (iv) dependency ratio and (v) access to safe water sources. The mission has expressed some concern about the adequacy, validity and reliability of these indicators. Although their thorough comparison with other available poverty data is acknowledged, this does not necessarily imply that they are the most relevant for targeting WFP assistance. In defining, using and changing indicators, the rationale should be clearly explained and the data involved should be properly questioned.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- *There should be less emphasis on commune-specific targeting. WFP should move towards the concept of clustering communes and integrated regional planning.*
- *Similar methodologies and criteria should be phased in for targeting RTC and PET communes. Targeting criteria for beneficiaries of social sector activities should be more clearly defined.*
- *WFP should review the appropriateness of the current targeting process, taking better account of regional differences, specific local food economies and income strategies and the data quality associated with certain indicators.*
- *WFP should identify distinct target groups with common food insecurity and vulnerability characteristics, (e.g. young widows, the handicapped and chronically ill, the underemployed landless) and design targeted interventions to address their specific needs.*
- *WFP should continue to give substantial weight to the qualitative assessments made by experts familiar with local conditions; the role of the VAM Unit should be not to drive the process, but to inform it with complementary data.*

Monitoring and Evaluation

20. The 1997 evaluation of protracted relief operation (PRO) 5483 found a "disappointing lack of data on benefits derived from project activities" and "no satisfactory system for monitoring programme effects". WFP thus made a commitment under PRRO 6038.00 to improve measuring of the operation's effects on beneficiaries. This evaluation mission noted major efforts and progress in designing improved monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. Three major socio-economic, health and nutrition surveys, conducted in 1998 and 1999, clearly show that the poorest and most food insecure population groups and poor women have been major beneficiaries of WFP in Cambodia. By allocating, in the short term, about 20 kg of rice per beneficiary per annum, or almost 15 percent of annual rice needs, plus other minor but valuable food items through FFW projects, WFP significantly helped close the hunger gap and helped beneficiaries avoid such high-risk and costly coping strategies as enforced debt, work in landmine-infested areas and the sale of assets. These surveys offer little information, however, on the long-term impact of WFP Cambodia's presence (improved infrastructure, health, etc.) The effects of social sector



activities are also unclear, although the mission noted improvements in monitoring these activities. Furthermore, the rich reservoir of data assembled by VAM still seems to be underutilized.

21. The most serious concern is the need for greater clarity in the stating of expected achievements. With the exception of some basic output indicators, critical programme effects and impact indicators have not been systematically identified and operationalized.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- *WFP should identify clear, measurable indicators for short-term impact (relating to filling the hunger gap) and long-term impact (e.g. food security, social cohesion, reduced health risks) and the quantitative targets for these indicators.*
- *The current M&E plan for 2000 should be reviewed to (a) establish a more realistic work plan, including specific research questions, a conceptual framework for data analysis, and more narrowly defined indicators, and (b) include a comprehensive report on the operation's effects and impact. WFP might also benefit from more senior consultancy input on related to food security.*
- *Assessment of programme effects should become part of the regular monitoring and reporting system, incorporating indicators that could form the basis for (longer-term) impact assessment. Regular narrative and quantitative reporting on the effects of the operation on beneficiaries' lives should be emphasized.*

Gender priorities

22. WFP supports the work of the Ministry of Women's and Veterans' Affairs (MoWVA) and various NGOs that focuses on improving women's quality of life. As a follow-up to the 1998-99 WFP baseline surveys (which included significant research on the socio-economic, health and nutritional status of women and children), the Programme carried out a gender survey in 1999 that provided valuable information for strengthening the impact of WFP activities on women and households. Preliminary results of this survey served as a reference for the First National Conference on Gender, held in Phnom Penh in September 1999.
23. Although half of the 1,6 million rural poor participants in the FFW component of this PRRO are women, the 1999 WFP gender survey found that the project has not reached as many rural poor households, particularly those headed by single, young females with children (one of the poorest and most food-insecure groups in rural villages). These very poorest households cannot afford to wait several weeks for distribution of the food ration, yet are often the last to know about programmes such as food for work. When they do know about them, a shortage of labour at home and lack of access to child-minding facilities frequently prevent them from participating.
24. It should be noted that among WFP Cambodia field staff, the percentage of females has increased from 15.7 percent to 35 percent between 1997 and 1999.



RECOMMENDATION

- *In order to identify and address the major constraints to the participation of households headed by single young females participation in FFW activities, and to build on the recommendations of the 1999 WFP gender study, the Programme should consider working more closely with MOWVA. This might include the identification of complementary and alternative interventions that specifically address the food security and nutritional needs of households headed by young women with children.*

Technical Proficiency of Food for Work

25. In November-December of 1999 the local engineering consultancy firm SAWAC conducted a technical assessment of 57 projects randomly selected from the 2,448 FFW project agreements implemented across the country in 1999. SAWAC's main conclusions were:

- the quality of *roads* constructed through FFW projects was "fair to good", though some roads had been constructed with poor-quality materials, leading to erosion;
 - *canals* were inconsistent in design and durability; and
 - *culverts* complied well with their agreed-upon design.
26. SAWAC recommended: a) the use of a single format for registering work output and related food calculation; and b) that WFP establish internal guidelines for reconciling the food allocation with the actual and agreed-upon work output.
27. Community groups implemented 80 percent of the FFW projects. SAWAC noted that greater community involvement was necessary for consistent maintenance of assets created. However, WFP currently has no plans for providing additional food for maintenance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Annual technical assessments of FFW projects should continue, though the assessments should also compare recently completed projects with those undertaken in the past three years.*
- *Technical assessments should compare stand-alone WFP/MRD projects with those supported by other technical assistance or by maintenance agreements with development agencies. A cost-benefit analysis should include recommendations drawn from such a comparative study.*

Social Sector Activities

28. About 13 percent of WFP's assistance supports public health care, social service delivery and human resource initiatives, benefiting approximately 70,000 people a year. In 23 provinces, WFP works with more than 100 partners, including government agencies and NGOs. In the current PRRO, the strategic focus highlights four interrelated objectives: income transfers (in training), treatment incentives (Tuberculosis patients), direct nutritional supplements (specific vulnerable groups) and the distribution of health information (at food distribution sites).



RECOMMENDATION

- *The selection of projects within the social sector should adhere to explicit criteria and prioritization rather than rely solely on the perceived efficiency and reliability of implementing partners. In terms of sustainability, greater emphasis should be placed on projects implemented through Government ministries.*

Nutritional Issues

29. The nutritional situation in Cambodia is the worst in SouthEast Asia. Studies by WFP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and health NGOs suggest that although lack of access to food is a significant factor, malnutrition is more commonly associated with low levels of education, inadequate child care and weaning practices, and lack of access to public health services.
30. Although FFW has a short-term positive nutritional impact in the lean season, without complementary investments in health services, education, child care and development interventions leading to improved food security, the programme is unlikely to have a significant impact on the cycle of malnutrition and poverty. WFP's only development project for Cambodia, project Cambodia 6188.00 (Supplementary Feeding of Mothers and Young Children in Food-Insecure Areas), addresses some of these concerns.
31. WHO, UNICEF and WFP plan a quick action national nutrition surveillance programme for 2000, with the reactivated RGC's National Council for Nutrition, of the Government acting as the interministerial partner.

RECOMMENDATION

- *WFP should expand its collaboration with UNICEF and with government agencies and NGOs that specifically address family health and care issues. Where appropriate, activities under WFP's quick action project (project Cambodia 6188.00) should be more closely linked to FFW projects.*

School Feeding Pilot Project

32. In Takeo Province, WFP has joined the World Bank Education Quality Improvement Project (EQIP) and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MoEYS) in a school feeding programme that supports (to date) 61 schools (about 37,500 children) in the province. The objectives are to increase girls' and boys' access to education, attention spans and achievement in basic education, and to support complementary activities such as training in health, hygiene and nutrition within the schools and the wider community. Funded in part by the community, the programme provides the children with breakfast each day before school.
33. National indicators pointing to extremely poor school attendance, grade repetition and high drop-out rates, especially for girls, provide adequate rationale for a concerted inter-agency effort to revitalize the school system as a whole. The mission believes that the pilot project should be continued in line with EQIP/MoEYS' priorities, pending further research on impact and sustainability.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- *The school feeding pilot project should be retained in those school clusters where additional inputs from EQIP/MoEYS are available. Where possible, complementary area programmes in health, hygiene and nutrition should be implemented to encourage further community mobilization and commitment.*
- *The country office should explore optional funding mechanisms for this project outside the PRRO as early as possible, preferably before the end of 2001.*

Rice Banks

34. Successful rice banks can help to counter the chronic cycle of debt in rural areas whereby a large percentage of farmers' produce is sold or surrendered to traders immediately after harvest. Since 1996 WFP has widely implemented village rice banks with some success. In 1999, the Programme supported 68 village-level rice banks (356 tons), benefiting about 35,600 people. Three rice banks in Kampong Thum were linked to German Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ) credit training projects; another 14 in Kracheh and Stueng Traeng were linked to technical support provided by the NGO Partners for Development (PFD). Although the MRD has a rice bank staff member in each province, the sustainability of these projects will depend on the presence of a strong technical partner to monitor them.
35. The 1997 evaluation of PRO 5483 lamented the poor performance of rice banks supported by WFP in the UNDP/Cambodia Area Rehabilitation and Regeneration Project (CARERE) area, where all but one collapsed due to poor management. Success of the rice banks under the PRO was clearly linked to training in credit facilities and strong community involvement. The current mission also found evidence of the paramount importance of credit management, specifically, for instance, in the greater efficiency demonstrated in areas where the credit programme supported by the European Union was under way. The mission encourages the further development of rice banks with explicit entry criteria and closer monitoring of output. As far as possible, these projects should also be linked to technical assistance in storage.

RECOMMENDATION

Rice banks should be extended in targeted communes, contingent upon a prior understanding of credit modalities and a strictly monitored outcome. Standardized bookkeeping, contracts and reporting formats should be developed by the MRD and WFP with an understanding that WFP's initial food input be, as always, a one-time-only, start-up contribution.

CAPACITY-BUILDING: OPERATIONAL PARTNERS

36. Capacity-building is an important implicit component of the PRRO strategy. WFP's PET areas in particular have suffered from a paucity of operational partners, especially NGOs, a situation likely to change as these areas become secure. The PRRO planning Workshop hosted by WFP Cambodia in February 2000 included an invitation to NGOs to build more comprehensive partnerships with WFP. This has already elicited a positive response. Meanwhile, WFP faces the following constraints to building effective partnerships, especially with government counterparts:



- the rather limited managerial and implementation/technical capacities of government counterparts;
- budgetary constraints (an inability to pay adequate salaries to attract or retain competent staff, and the necessity of training and supplementing the salaries of its main national counterpart, the MRD); and
- an inability to set clear guidelines on the extent to which the Programme will contribute to building NGO partner capacity (other than invitations to national workshops, etc.).

RECOMMENDATION

- *As part of an exit strategy, WFP should develop a training schedule with its partners. The ability of these partners to secure funds for needed inputs/services must be determined within the three-year PRRO extension.*

Capacity-building: Local Communities

37. Basic capacity and local initiative are much lacking. The CARERE/*seila* village-and-commune-level planning process presents opportunities for the targeted beneficiaries to become implementing partners, with the involved communities responsible for planning, executing and contributing to projects. The replicability of this five-province programme might be compromised, however, by the haste with which the Government wishes to introduce decentralization.

RECOMMENDATION

WFP should become more fully involved in facilitating commune/village-level discussions generated by the seila process and its equivalent in other areas. This might include, for instance, helping village animators become more aware of project possibilities based on food aid.

Capacity-building: WFP staff

38. The mission found country office management systems, interpersonal relationships and general office efficiency to be exemplary.
39. Efforts in building WFP's staff capacity have included ad hoc training by WFP international staff with counterpart national staff, overseas training and giving some staff temporary duties in other programmes. As a first step towards handing over responsibilities and management to the Government, three national (professional) officers have been hired. Simultaneously, the number of international staff is being reduced. In 1996, international staff were relocated from the provinces to the country office, leaving national staff in charge of provincial offices.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- *Staff capacity-building efforts should be placed within a clear career development strategy. Further efforts should be made to establish a framework for staff training, the selection of trainees and appropriate subject areas to broaden the range of staff skills and experience.*
- *A monitoring system should be established to assess progress made in achieving capacity-building among staff and implementing partners.*

Logistics

40. More than 20 years of WFP presence in Cambodia have resulted in substantial local knowledge and experience, including well-developed transport, storage, and handling systems and well-trained local support staff. Local food procurement activities have been added to the logistics portfolio.
41. A countrywide network of 11 warehouses has been established. WFP currently has the capacity to transport commodities from the port to central delivery point (CDP) by road or rail; from the CDP to the extended delivery point (EDPs) by road, rail or barge; and from the EDPs to the final delivery point (FDP) by road. The main operating partners have been the Cambodian Red Cross (CRC) and the Rail Transport Company, the commercial agent of the Cambodian Railway Transport Cooperation. The CRC operates a fleet of 39 WFP-owned trucks and provides a maintenance service. Depending upon availability and seasonal constraints (flooding), several methods of transport are available. Air transport is not part of WFP's current operations.
42. Local WFP staff and the CRC have had some training in WFP systems. Reporting of stocks, receipts and dispatches is maintained, but not in a completely standardized form. Warehouse management systems, though similar, are currently not standard.
43. Partial procurement of rice and iodized salt is undertaken locally by WFP's logistics unit. Of the total rice procured and delivered in 1999 (24,500 tons), approximately 55.5 percent (13,600 tons) was purchased locally. Local procurement is expected to increase in 2000, with a number of rice suppliers able to meet WFP demands.
44. The past political and economic situation required secondary transport (CDP to EDP and EDP to FDP) assistance from WFP's main partner, the CRC. Since 1997, as security has improved and the Cambodian commercial transport sector has grown, alternative commercial options have become available.
45. In phasing out operations with the CRC, initially 36 percent (15,000 tons) will be delivered through the CRC and 64 percent (25,000 tons) via the commercial sector. At the end of 2000, pending a review of efficiency and cost savings involved, all secondary transport will be subcontracted to commercial carriers. With the economic and security improvements in Cambodia, every indication shows that competitive bidding within a growing commercial transport sector should establish reliable partners.
46. Because of their age and conditions, the WFP-owned, CRC-operated assets (vehicles, workshop equipment and tools) now have only a small resale value, but a real local-market value. Since there will be a reduction in transport tonnage for the year 2000, the number of WFP trucks required by the CRC should be reduced. The balance of WFP assets should then be disposed of, subject to agreement between the country office and the CRC. Two options are to: a) donate all assets to the CRC as part of WFP's capacity-building strategy, or b) sell all assets to the CRC or to WFP's commercial transport partners in exchange for transport services or maintenance and repair.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- *The transfer of transport operations from the CRC to the commercial sector should continue, with the final handover completed by the end of 2000, pending a full review of the cost-effectiveness of the arrangement.*
- *WFP should develop a strategy for the disposal, by the end of 2000, of WFP-owned, CRC-operated assets (trucks, workshop equipment and tools).*
- *WFP should introduce regular training for logistics warehouse staff in warehouse management, loss and spillage management and reporting procedures. Standardized reporting forms and procedures should be introduced as a matter of urgency.*

Exit Strategy

47. The PRRO (in its current and foreseen expansion phase) should give increased attention to “enabling development” programming principles, including the strengthening or reorientation of existing partnerships or resource allocations. Inevitably, this implies a greater demand for management and the technical capacities of partner agencies.
48. The two-year time frame of PRRO 6038.00 has brought WFP in line with the Government’s five-year planning cycle and the programme cycle of other United Nations agencies, as represented in the five-year United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) draft (under consideration). No exit strategy as such was prepared for this PRRO. The fact that the PRRO was submitted in 1998, during a period of social and political turmoil in Cambodia, was itself a constraint to planning. The mission accepts the necessity for a continuing recovery programme based on a gradual handing over of responsibilities to Government partners coupled with a more comprehensive capacity-building programme.

RECOMMENDATION

- *In preparing a PRRO expansion, WFP should examine each component of the operation with a view to gradually phasing out support for certain activities, in line with the recovery time frame. A realistic assessment should be made of the conditions necessary for the evolution of certain components into development projects; the closure of certain operation elements should also be anticipated within the time frame. The Government, NGOs and intergovernmental partners should be involved in planning the new PRRO to ensure a clear understanding of and commitment to an exit strategy and to its inherent risks and assumptions.*