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SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION OF EMERGENCY OPERATIONS IN EAST TIMOR

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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 points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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Executive Summary

WFP's operations in East Timor were successful overall, characterized by the commitment and energy of WFP staff. There was a high level of inter-agency cooperation under the umbrella of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), with WFP as a very proactive partner. Although WFP was not well prepared, its reaction time was short, even from a "zero" base (i.e. with no pre-existing WFP field office or presence) in both Darwin and East Timor. The basic food pipeline for the two emergency operations (EMOPs) was adequate, as a result both of the early securing of food stocks in Dili from BULOG, the Indonesian food logistics agency, and of the rapid mobilization of additional food resources. An effective, service-oriented logistics operation was established, and was appreciated by United Nations sister agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and others. WFP food aid achieved the initial objectives of saving lives and maintaining nutrition, and helped provide social stability.

There was an initial overestimation of food needs owing to the lack of reliable data and to the pressure to make rough estimates for an early Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP). Several critical core international staff positions were not filled or were filled for too brief a period. Other weaknesses included poor initial commodity control, ineffective targeting of relief, little substantive progress in honouring WFP's Commitments to Women, poor monitoring of final distributions and programme results, and limited success in effecting a transition from relief to recovery.

If EMOP 06177.0 is to be extended until the end of 2001, the objectives should first be revised in light of the mission's findings and recommendations, and with the benefit of a reassessment of food security and vulnerability, and relief and recovery needs.

Draft Decision

The Board notes the recommendations contained in this evaluation report (WFP/EB.3/2001/6/5) and notes also the management action taken so far, as indicated in the associated information paper (WFP/EB.3/2001/INF/15). The Board encourages further action on these recommendations, taking into account considerations raised during the discussion.



INTRODUCTION

1. The objectives of the evaluation were to analyse the achievements of WFP's emergency operations in East Timor, in particular the degree to which the stated objectives were achieved, and to assess the evolution in programming. The evaluation's primary focus was EMOP 06177.0, which commenced in November 1999 and has been extended twice, currently until mid-2001. The evaluation also considered EMOP 06175.0, which covered WFP's initial response, and Special Operation 06178.0 (logistics support). As of the end of 2000, WFP had received almost US\$40 million for the three operations (80 percent of appeal amounts).
2. Comprising four independent consultants and accompanied, initially, by a member of WFP's Office of Evaluation, the mission spent 25 days in East Timor in February 2001. It then split into sub-teams to undertake fieldwork, visiting eight districts and all WFP sub-offices.

CONTEXT

3. In the aftermath of the United Nations–sponsored ballot on independence, armed militias instigated civil unrest. A large proportion of the population was internally displaced, with most people hiding in the hills and many forced across the border. Houses, belongings, productive assets and food stocks were looted or destroyed. Agricultural production and economic activities were disrupted, and the detrimental impact on food security was immediate.
4. The unique feature of the East Timor operations was the vacuum left by the departure of the governing regime and the professional elite. With no existing WFP country office or presence, the problems created by the absence of an administrative regime—aside from what the United Nations could establish—were compounded.
5. The emergency in East Timor was a complex one, but, although security was initially a dominant issue, following the International Force for East Timor's (INTERFET's) intervention, the persistent conflict and efforts to manipulate food aid that characterize other operations were largely absent.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

6. WFP did not have an adequate contingency plan for the crisis that unfolded in East Timor in the first week of September 1999. One scenario that should have been considered and planned for in the preceding months was that the United Nations ballot on independence would trigger reprisals and considerable population displacement requiring an emergency response that could not be supported from within Indonesia. Such planning would have led to an earlier WFP presence in Darwin.
7. Nevertheless, WFP did respond quickly, flying two staff members into Dili on 20 September, the second day of INTERFET's deployment. These staff members performed well under very trying circumstances and with minimal external support. Additional WFP staff were deployed later, and they too performed well, setting up from scratch, over the following weeks, communications, sub-offices and a transport capacity.



8. WFP's most notable achievement in the early days of the crisis was securing rice stocks in Dili for immediate distribution. In early September 1999, the Indonesian national food logistics agency, BULOG, requested that WFP take over its Dili rice stocks, which were being looted, and replace that rice at another location in Indonesia. The Jakarta country office facilitated this, enabling the WFP advance team to secure a food supply for the initial operation (EMOP 06175.0) following negotiations with the TNI (Indonesian armed forces). WFP's implementing partners commenced distributions in Dili on 24 September. Limited helicopter airlifts beyond Dili also commenced. An initial truck shortage and the need to wait for INTERFET to secure districts remained key constraints on WFP's undertaking distributions beyond Dili for some weeks.
9. WFP was ultimately able to account for only 4,812 tons, instead of the initial food stocks count from BULOG of 6,228 tons, on which the Programme based its reimbursement. It is unclear how this occurred. A large amount was apparently released for distribution without paperwork; some was apparently pilfered at the beginning of the operation.
10. Preparatory discussions of the Indonesia EMOP 6006¹ with implementing partners in Jakarta provided the basis for implementation agreements for EMOPs 06175.0 and 06177.0. In July 1999, WFP had been preparing to include East Timor under its EMOP 6006 and to ship rice from Surabaya. Though the crisis intervened, the Programme was able to confirm that shipment for the East Timor EMOP 06177.0. Though a prudent move, that shipment should not have been called forward when it was realized that food needs had been overestimated.
11. The funding of Special Operation 06178.0 "jump started" the setting-up of a countrywide logistics infrastructure with excellent internal and external communications that provided support for other United Nations agencies and NGOs in Indonesia. WFP assisted at the port in discharging shipments, and trucks imported by WFP provided the backbone for a humanitarian fleet.
12. The early airdrops from Darwin represented an immediate response to acute food needs. However, there was no evidence that the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the hills were dying from food shortages, and the terrain was unsuitable for airdrops, so they were discontinued. The subsequent use of helicopters was necessary to get food to inaccessible areas and to transport seeds, medical personnel and assessment teams. In the crisis phase, WFP also provided vital passenger and cargo "air bridges" between Darwin, Dili and Kupang.

Lessons

- Assessments made in preparation for a crisis have to be developed into contingency plans and regularly updated and disseminated as events unfold in order for them to be useful when a crisis breaks.
- Greater preparation than usual is required to establish the capacity to mount an EMOP in countries or territories in which the Programme has no office and little or no presence. One of the biggest constraints in such situations is having neither a programme to build on nor enough staff with first-hand knowledge of the country or territory concerned.

¹ WFP's response to the drought in Indonesia. The United Nations and the Government of Indonesia had imposed restrictions on distributing relief in East Timor under EMOP 6006, which were lifted in July 1999.



Recommendation

- WFP should strengthen its capacity at the regional level to undertake contingency assessment and planning.

ACHIEVEMENT OF SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES

13. The mission concluded that despite some shortcomings, WFP and its implementing partners responded quickly and adequately, significantly supplementing the food needs of a large proportion of the population. In some and perhaps many cases, WFP saved lives,² although this should not be overstated given that, despite their displacement, people evidently had access to some foodstuffs. WFP and its partners helped to maintain the health and nutritional status of much of the population, or at least prevent worse declines.³ The evaluation team is not aware of any confirmed cases of starvation.
14. Together with INTERFET's presence, WFP food distributions also drew people down from the hills.⁴ And WFP played a vital role in assisting returning refugees.
15. Given the high level of displacement, WFP was right to start with a general feeding programme and subsequently to focus on the districts that had been most disrupted. One of WFP's objectives was to enable returning IDPs to devote all their efforts to rebuilding their homes and restoring their livelihoods by temporarily freeing them from the need to meet their daily food requirements.⁵ This was achieved largely by the general distributions, albeit for a short time and with modest amounts of food. The first round of full rations consisted generally of rice or maize (beans, oil, fish and salt came later), and it took two months to reach 80 percent of the beneficiaries. Although the type and amount of food provided in these rations would have been considered inadequate for anyone without access to other food, as already indicated, most of the IDPs seemed to have such access.
16. More should have been done to reassess the needs of IDPs and returnees through 2000. In particular, UNHCR and WFP should have tested the assumption that returnees would be adequately catered to by existing programmes. They also should have monitored the risk that some returnees might be excluded as a result of their perceived political allegiance. However, WFP did provide follow-up rations to returnees for three months through its implementing partner in Bobonaro District.

Recommendation

- The need for better follow-up of returnees and the possible need for a differential approach based on vulnerability should be taken up with UNHCR urgently.

² The first objective of EMOP 06175.0.

³ This related closely to the second objective of EMOP 06175.0.

⁴ The third objective of EMOP 06175.0 was to "prevent mass migration", and the first objective of 06177.0 was to "facilitate the return and settlement of displaced persons, with special attention to female-headed households".

⁵ The third objective of EMOP 06177.0.



COMMODITY MANAGEMENT

17. There were considerable problems with the "bunching" of arrivals. The United States of America diverted a large shipment of maize to the operation. This began to arrive at the end of November, but owing to the port's low capacity and INTERFET's prioritization of its own needs, when that shipment was due to arrive, the country office was still struggling to unload the shipment organized by the Jakarta office. WFP Dili had asked the WFP Rome Transport Division to delay the United States shipment, but they were reluctant to do so, stating that because the EMOP was intended for only six months (to 30 April 2000), the commodities had to be called forward. In the end, the bulk of the operation's supply of cereals did not arrive until May/June 2000, which again presented discharge problems. As a result, commodities were stockpiled, and despite some efforts at fumigation, there was some insect infestation; this was not a surprise, given the harsh climatic conditions. The mission leader observed one vulnerable group feeding (VGF) distribution where the maize was heavily infested and thus unfit for consumption. Some corn-soya blend had to be withdrawn after delivery, and some edible oil stocks will have exceeded their shelf-life date before the completion of the operation. Also, there are stocks of pulses and canned fish that the country office is having difficulty programming.
18. The commodity tracking system (CTS) got off to a bad start owing to the lack of experienced staff and problems with procedures and documentation. As a result, the record of quantities distributed to beneficiaries is inexact, a problem that cannot be rectified satisfactorily. The reported loss of only 185 tons of cereals out of a total throughput of approximately 39,000 tons is questionable. WFP played a key warehousing role in Dili and in most districts, and deployed temporary storage containers (RubbHalls) where required. The management of warehouses in Dili and Baucau proved difficult owing to the absence of trained workers and the high turnover of WFP staff in the early stages of operations.

Lessons

- Revised estimates of food needs have to be responded to quickly, if necessary by delaying or cancelling shipments. Excess commodities can be programmed over a longer time frame, but the commodities may be difficult to manage and such operations risk becoming supply driven.
- In the event of new emergencies in small countries with limited port facilities, WFP needs to be cautious about resorting to diversions of large grain shipments.
- Initial records of commodities landed, warehoused and distributed are critical for the establishment of the CTS, and require the attention of experienced, assertive staff at the outset.

Recommendations

- WFP should establish a mechanism for rapidly reducing commodity call-forwards and EMOP allocations in the event of an overestimation of food needs. This requires working with donors to establish procedures for rescheduling or cancelling arrivals and diverting shipments between operations.
- Where port facilities (including berthing, storage and transport) are a major constraint, WFP's Transport Division should liaise regularly with the country office and donors to space shipments appropriately and thus avoid bunching.



- Where the climatic conditions are harsh and there is a lack of fumigation facilities, no more commodities should be called forward than can be used before deterioration becomes a risk.
- The country office should call in a phyto-sanitary expert to inspect, evaluate and report on WFP's food stocks in East Timor, and provide appropriate training if required. The remaining nutritional value of cereals that require further fumigation should be demonstrated before distributions of those cereals proceed.
- The country office should establish a clear procedure for examining stocks, responding to reports of infestation, declaring stocks fit or unfit for human consumption and disposing of unfit stocks.

FOOD SECURITY AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS

19. WFP's initial post-ballot assessment of emergency food needs was not as thorough as usual owing to a lack of access and poor data. General estimates were made in large part relying on NGO informants in Darwin. WFP was also under pressure to provide an estimate of food needs for the United Nations' Consolidated Appeal Process. If WFP had had another month to assess needs, the estimate used in the EMOP and CAP would have been much lower.
20. The first joint FAO-WFP assessment in November 1999 compounded this imprecision by overestimating the likely shortfall in food production. Discounted by the country office, this estimate was later corrected in an April 2000 joint assessment that reported that the effect of the crisis on production had been less pronounced than expected and that the output of maize and rice was likely to be "satisfactory".
21. WFP should have reassessed food security and vulnerability at least once later in 2000, in collaboration with its implementing partners, to better define district and intra-district variations and test the efficacy of VGF and food-for-work (FFW) activities. Although many valuable village-level assessments were carried out, often in response to reported problems and proposed programme changes, these were too ad hoc to adequately inform programming decisions.
22. The operation benefited substantially from the support of the vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) officer in Jakarta, but VAM's impact on programming was limited. Proper vulnerability analysis would have required detailed, location-specific follow-up by VAM-trained personnel, but the VAM Unit in Jakarta was under-staffed and under-resourced at critical phases, staff often had other key functions, and staff turnover was high.
23. Also, although regional VAM capacity is valuable, it is unlikely to be able to provide adequate support for a country office lacking data and implementing a major operation where WFP has had neither an office nor a presence. Country offices require a fully dedicated VAM capacity from the outset of an operation.

Lessons

- Urgency associated with the CAP process can lead to less precise WFP estimation of food needs. This is not to suggest that WFP bypass the CAP process but instead that there is a need for immediate improvements in WFP's capacity to make rapid needs assessments.



- If an EMOP is to continue to be well targeted, food security and vulnerability will have to be reassessed periodically (for rural areas in line with the agricultural cycle). Strong VAM support is essential to provide "processed" vulnerability information to programme staff.

Recommendations

- WFP should consider instituting a two-step process for providing initial estimates of food needs. This could involve specifying the amount that is needed immediately and confirming or revising the overall estimate within, say, one month.
- Country offices should document their responses to the forecasts, analyses and recommendations of joint FAO-WFP assessments.
- Food security and vulnerability should be reassessed at least bi-annually in the first year of an EMOP to improve geographic and/or other means of targeting and to test the efficacy of programming.

TARGETING

24. WFP scaled back general rations by shifting to half rations and by reducing the districts covered. On the urging of implementing partners, the Programme also accepted a limited amount of geographic targeting within districts. The approach (but not necessarily the timing) was correct.
25. However, from March 2000, VGF became the principal targeting mechanism and remained in place for a year. In the mission's opinion this was too long.⁶ Once the stress on most communities had subsided with the first harvest in 2000, families and clans probably would have regained the capacity to assist the vulnerable among them without VGF. Some groups, including female-headed households, may still have *tended* to be more vulnerable, but the mission questions the necessity of targeting *all* female-headed households. Social action to empower women may be more effective. This does not, however, limit the need to assist the vulnerable who have been institutionalized.
26. The transition to using VGF as the main targeting mechanism was also constrained by:
- untested indicators of vulnerability, insufficient information on actual vulnerability and lack of community involvement;
 - incomplete and sometimes deliberately inaccurate figures provided by village heads; and
 - resistance and/or lack of capacity on the part of implementing partners, leading to "loose" implementation and monitoring.
27. VGF seems to have been unsuccessful as a targeting mechanism insofar as, when unsupervised, local leaders distributed rations to the *whole* community, diminishing VGF's value to the point where it may have had little discernible nutritional impact.

⁶ The categories included in the VGF activity were female-headed households, single-headed households with more than five children, expectant and nursing mothers, the handicapped, the mentally disabled, orphans (without either parent) under 15, the elderly (over 55), medical patients/the sick, and orphanage institutions. In the EMOP project document, VGF was planned as a more restricted supplementary feeding programme in the context of a general ration.



28. Partly as a result of limited implementing partner participation, little effort was made to target FFW, and no policy for doing so was put in place by the country office.

Lessons

- Successful implementation of targeted programmes requires the active participation of the communities and groups involved, which reinforces WFP policy directives.
- Given the difficulties involved with VGF, geographic targeting may often be a preferred system for targeting, in combination with traditional mechanisms and some charity food distribution through existing local networks, e.g. churches.

Recommendations

- WFP should not continue to apply general categories of vulnerability to targeted distributions in an EMOP without testing the underlying assumptions, including a community's presumed inability to assist the groups concerned itself.
- Future programmes should rely on more location- and time-specific assessments of vulnerability to concentrate assistance seasonally and geographically.
- Where FFW is used in an EMOP, the activities should be targeted to the most food insecure areas and/or population groups, with clear criteria and implementation mechanisms.

FINAL DISTRIBUTION

29. Except in the early stages of the operations, when the shortage of trucks and prevailing road security conditions did cause problems, transportation to extended delivery points (EDPs) by road, sea and air was well managed. WFP's use of barges to land large quantities at or near EDPs was very successful and earned the Programme a well-deserved "can do" reputation.
30. Delivery to final distribution points (FDPs) was challenging, particularly in the wet season, but implementing partners appear to have coped relatively well, with WFP assistance. In the main, distributions have been appropriately "decentralized", with an adequate number of FDPs in most districts. Records of final delivery were generally provided to WFP by implementing partners (although not always in the form required). The transportation element included in landside transport, storage and handling (LTSH) costs appears to have been adequate for delivery up to FDPs. There were some difficulties, however, using the heavy-lift helicopters to reach FDPs, owing to cloud cover.
31. Village heads were not always well briefed by WFP or its implementing partners on the rationale for programmes, and when they were briefed they often did not pass on essential project information to the beneficiaries. Moreover, the communication of major decisions (such as the recent termination of VGF) has been uneven.

Recommendation

- At the outset of an EMOP, WFP should take steps to ensure that the intended beneficiaries are informed of the rationale for the operation and how it will be implemented, including details of eligibility criteria, distribution mechanisms, intended ration sizes, distribution schedules, probable duration of assistance, etc. This



will normally require the posting of public notices (incorporating pictograms to convey the message to the illiterate).

MONITORING OF DISTRIBUTIONS AND EMOP RESULTS

32. The country office recruited and trained monitors and developed formats through 2000, and some effort was made to monitor distributions. But monitoring plans were not fulfilled. The country office maintains that limited national capacity was the obstacle, however the main impediment was that monitoring never became a priority. The responsible officer was given other tasks, and there were no separate resources for independent field visits. Monitoring was incidental to implementation and tended to be ad hoc and reactive. Although a substantial amount of information has been collected, it has not been systematically aggregated, analysed or disseminated. No attempt has been made to test assumptions and little effort has been made to test performance against objectives and targets. The country office is not really in a position to say if particular programmes (such as VGF) have been effective.
33. Implementing partners were responsible for verifying final distribution but undertook only a limited number of post-distribution checks; this is a serious deficiency. It has been said that there was little diversion of food at the village level. This may be true, although the mission did see evidence of some small-scale diversions. Though few complaints were reported, there were also no procedures in place to receive complaints.
34. A major impediment to better targeting and monitoring is the cost of doing so, and implementing partners reported that the funding provided for this purpose in LTSH payments was inadequate.

Lessons

- In the absence of monitoring beyond the EDP, WFP will never be able to say confidently that its operational objectives have been achieved and its responsibilities fulfilled.
- By failing to involve beneficiary communities, WFP is foregoing the opportunity to establish efficient and cost-effective means for reassessing needs, refining targeting, and monitoring distributions.

Recommendations

- From the commencement of an EMOP, country offices should have experienced monitoring staff. Ideally they should form an independent M&E unit, in close coordination with a VAM unit or focal point.
- Management should better formulate priority information needs, and the data collected should be systematically aggregated and analysed at the country office level.
- Implementing partners should be expected to conduct post-distribution checks by randomly selecting a sample of FDPs each month.
- As provided for in the guidelines issued by the Director of the Transport Division on 15 December 1999, the current implementing partner LTSH costs should be reviewed to: (i) take fully into account the costs of distributions; and (ii) consider the eligibility of implementing partner targeting and monitoring costs under WFP other direct operational costs (ODOC).



- WFP should, as a matter of course, institute complaints procedures for EMOPs.

PHASING OF ACTIVITIES AND CONTRIBUTION TO RECOVERY

35. WFP possessed the stocks adequate to maintain general rations (full or half) for another month or two in the most disrupted districts and sub-districts and should probably have done so. The need for continued rations was still there, and continuing rations would have given WFP and its implementing partners more time to focus on developing recovery programmes. Geographic targeting would have been a better mainstay for targeted distributions than wide-scale VGF, which was introduced with inadequate analysis.
36. WFP's drive to introduce widespread FFW activities from December 1999 met with considerable resistance from the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT), which believed that people should not be paid for community work, and from implementing partners, who were concerned about their capacity to implement FFW effectively. Nevertheless, WFP persevered, as if FFW were an end in itself, and often managed FFW on its own.
37. Many FFW projects did nevertheless contribute to the recovery of agricultural production, including the rebuilding of damaged irrigation canals and clearing of land for cultivation. They also enabled the repair of deteriorated or damaged infrastructure, including roads, water supplies and schools.⁷ These were significant contributions. However, the effort tended to be ad hoc, and FFW was often used inappropriately, particularly in the early months.
38. The type of FFW activities, and the mechanisms for approving and managing them, improved over the life of EMOP 06177.0. However, the activities lacked rigour, there was no problem analysis, and their link to food security was not well tested. There was also a false assumption that dependency could develop, even in the first months of a crisis, and that FFW activities would be required to avoid it.
39. A fundamental problem in applying FFW to recovery in East Timor is that the principal obstacles to repairing community infrastructure and services are the lack of materials and tools, technical advice and community leadership. FFW may make it easier for leaders to mobilize the community in some instances, but it could make it more difficult to mobilize the community when food aid is withdrawn.
40. Lack of cash flowing through the economy was a major problem from the outset, one that FFW was never intended or able to address.
41. WFP contributed substantially to recovery through the FAO-WFP seed exchange programme (where unhusked seed was exchanged for relief rice), providing storage and transport for rice seed collection and redistribution. Maize seed was imported with WFP's assistance, although it was not an optimal variety. There was a widespread need for legume seeds that was not met, and there was a troubling gap in the provision of basic agricultural tools.
42. The general conclusion is that WFP made a contribution to short-term recovery but did not make a full transition to recovery. Although the school feeding and assistance to teachers were good initiatives, emergency activities such as VGF tied up the Programme

⁷ Assisting with the rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure, including homes and other facilities, was an objective of EMOP 06177.0.



for too long, and FFW was ad hoc and lacked rigour. WFP could also have played a greater role in restoring community self-reliance by involving communities in planning and implementation.

Lesson

- The transition from relief to recovery is not made simply by phasing out general distributions and promoting FFW. It requires developmental thinking, design rigour and popular consultation.

Recommendations

- The country office should apply more rigour to prospective FFW projects, including problem analysis.
- WFP should be careful in using the term *dependency*; a short document should be prepared as guidance, analysing how dependency may or may not arise in food relief operations.
- Where the local economy is stagnating for want of cash for local transactions, WFP should encourage donors and other agencies to undertake cash-for-work projects.

PARTICIPATION OF EAST TIMORESE, INCLUDING WOMEN

43. There was virtually no participation by East Timorese in the planning and monitoring of EMOP 06177.0. CNRT representatives and others attended various meetings but were rarely really *engaged*. However, there has recently been collaboration with the East Timor Transitional Administration on the planning of a pilot school feeding programme.
44. Village heads played a key role in implementation, conducting general distributions, collecting lists for VGF schemes and proposing FFW activities. However, distribution committees would have been useful to broaden ownership by involving the wider community, including women and younger people. This should have changed radically through 2000.
45. The Gender Action Plan is cursory and deficient as a planning instrument, and inadequate effort was made by the country office to collect gender-disaggregated data. It is evident that no systematic steps were taken to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in decision-making. For the most part, village heads (males) were in charge of distributions, and husbands were regarded as heads of households, receiving rations on behalf of the family. No monitoring was undertaken to determine how rations were handled within the family. Women were certainly a strong focus of the VGF activities; however, VGF distributions were frequently turned into general distributions by village heads.
46. Towards the end of 2000, some sub-offices began to insist that women be included in FFW projects, helping to adhere to WFP's policy that at least 25 percent of project outputs/assets created through FFW be of direct benefit to and controlled by women.
47. Female literacy programmes were introduced by some sub-offices, which was very positive.



Lesson

- Participation by the affected population, including women, in programme formulation, implementation and monitoring does not happen just because it is WFP policy; it has to become an operational priority, reflected in detailed sub-office workplans and supported by standards and procedures.

Recommendations

- WFP needs to place greater emphasis on the participation of affected populations and their representatives in decision-making, including women. The Programme should insist on the establishment of local distribution committees, taking into account gender, age, ethnicity and socio-economic status to ensure fair representation.
- WFP needs to provide practical guidance and training to its staff to ensure their support in implementing its policies concerning participation.
- The country office should continue to take steps to ensure that gender-disaggregated data are collected. Once collected, the data should be regularly analysed to assist management in honouring WFP's Commitments to Women.
- WFP should take steps to work much more closely with the nascent Government of East Timor at the national and district levels, in assessment, planning and monitoring.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION

48. WFP staff worked exceptionally hard—even heroically—to serve the East Timorese people, and operations were well managed in the crisis phase. However, there seems to have been some "drift" in programming for the recovery phase. One reason for this is that there were critical gaps in staffing from the outset, and some key positions remained unfilled. WFP relied heavily on volunteers from within the Programme, and there was high staff turnover. WFP's new human resources policies should facilitate establishing and retaining fully qualified teams for EMOPs.⁸
49. Furthermore, the country office was not always able to provide adequate guidance and support to its sub-offices. Some staff were dispatched without job descriptions and not given adequate orientation. Operational guidelines were not prepared and introduced until several months after the commencement of the operation. WFP did not invest sufficiently in establishing reasonable office space or accommodation for its field staff.
50. Although the security risks to staff were comparatively low, there were risks. Appropriately, security awareness played a prominent role, and from October 1999 until March 2000, WFP shared a security officer with UNICEF, an arrangement that worked well.
51. There was excellent coordination between humanitarian actors and a general willingness to be flexible to achieve common objectives. There was also good coordination between the humanitarians and the military in-country. OCHA made an important contribution by establishing working groups, as did WFP, by adopting a "service" approach in its logistic support unit. However, coordination between the East and West Timor operations was not

⁸ In 2000, WFP created an emergency response roster (ERT) to enable the deployment of trained staff within 48 hours. Together with other preparedness measures, the ERT is expected to improve WFP's capacity to respond to new emergency situations.



optimal—a shortcoming that was common among other agencies involved in the emergency.

Lessons

- WFP's adoption of a "service" approach towards other agencies and organizations is appropriate and cost-effective for donors.
- When it becomes clear that the capacity of local staff is problematic, very substantial resources have to be invested in local staff training.

Recommendations

- WFP human resources policies need to facilitate the establishment and retention of fully qualified teams for EMOPs.
- EMOPs should be formulated more rigorously. They should include a problem analysis, objectives and subordinate outputs, and a statement of key planning assumptions. WFP should develop a means of applying these design disciplines in an emergency setting.
- Key EMOP documents should be regularly updated to serve as a reference for implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation.
- Staff should not be assigned to the field without job descriptions and operational manuals. An experienced officer should be assigned at the outset to guide and support staff in the sub-offices.
- Where WFP operates on both sides of a border, and problems are enmeshed, the regional bureau should oversee the two halves of the operation and consider appointing a coordinator.



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process
CNRT	National Council of Timorese Resistance
CTS	Commodity tracking system
EDP	Extended delivery point
EMOP	Emergency operation
ERT	Emergency response roster
FDP	Final distribution point
FFW	Food-for-work
IDPs	Internally displaced persons
LTSH	Landside transport, storage and handling
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VAM	Vulnerability analysis and mapping
VGF	Vulnerable group feeding

