

Talking Points EB2/13: FFA Impact Evaluation NEPAL

INTRO: As for the others in the series, this evaluation identified intended effects as: improved household food security in the short term; improved biophysical environment, agricultural production and livelihood options in the medium term; and, improved livelihoods resilience in the longer term.

The evaluation covered the period 2002-2010, in which food assistance remuneration for 40-70 working days during lean seasons was provided under the C/FFA components of 1 CP and 1 PRRO [100,000 people/year avge].

FINDINGS *Evaluation confirmed overall:*

C/FFA directly contributed to the **immediate food security** of 1 million poor people and their families over the entire period, living in highly remote areas with few other sources of support. This **scale** of this achievement was especially notable in the context of extended conflict, environmental crises, deep poverty and inequality.

Also on the positive side:

- A wide range of assets were built, and most were fully or partially operational, although not covered by formal maintenance arrangements.
- **Short term effects were confirmed** through improvements in food consumption score and other major indicators such as the Coping Strategy Index; and beneficiary communities reported less migration and less reliance on credit to purchase food.
- Important in the conflict context, **community asset construction** was found to build **social cohesion**.
- **There was evidence of positive impacts on** agricultural productivity and crop diversification. However, interventions were mostly small scale, scattered, and insufficient to achieve systemic or **watershed level impact**.

On the other hand, the evaluation found that...

- FFA was less successful in reducing chronic, structural food insecurity...
- Different types of assets provide different levels of benefits to the most poor; asset selection and targeting was **insufficiently precise to address this** and thus limited the medium and longer term benefits of FFA to reach the poorest.
- **Effects on women and girls** were also mixed. Labour and user committee participation was roughly balanced, enabling women to access associated capacity development and help meet immediate household food needs.

- **However**, security and child care issues were a constraint for women; and incomes and food self-sufficiency were slightly higher in male-headed households (13% female headed HH in the survey).

The evaluation identified several Contributing/Limiting factors, especially important for the achievement of intended longer term impacts:

- **Programme strategy, planning & approach is critical** – in Nepal, WFP’s approach aimed for **maximum geographic coverage** within the limits of the inadequate and unpredictable funding available. This meant it concentrated on smaller, scattered, short term projects over the widest possible area. This limits the development of substantial projects and longer term partnerships to provide the depth of support needed to achieve sustained changes in livelihoods resilience.
- Predictable **funding, alignment** with national systems, and effective longer term **partnerships** for technical support, asset maintenance, **complementary services** and handover, are essential to enable WFP to plan for and address the longer-term, structural and systemic impact potential of FFA from the start.

FFA is intended to achieve well-targeted short & longer term impacts, and noting the reference period the evaluation made **7 recommendations to improve programming alignment with current policy and guidance.**