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## **EVALUATION REPORTS**

**Agenda item 6**

*For consideration*



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## **MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION OF THE IMPACT OF FOOD FOR ASSETS ON LIVELIHOOD RESILIENCE IN NEPAL (2002–2010)**



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## NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

**This document is submitted to the Executive Board for consideration.**

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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## BACKGROUND

1. This document responds to an impact evaluation of WFP's cash- and food-for-assets (C/FFA) activities in Nepal, particularly in the context of disaster reduction. The evaluation was part of a series on the impact of food for assets on livelihood resilience; management recognizes emerging cross-cutting themes, notably the need to ensure maintenance of assets, to adjust monitoring systems to gather lessons, and to improve approaches to partnerships.
2. The evaluation suggests that short-term impacts were largely positive, through the rapid delivery of food aid in remote communities that received little other support, and in building resilience in communities where hazards are a normal part of life. Management welcomes the finding that the assets built contributed to increased accessibility and agricultural gains.
3. Cash- and food-for-assets activities in Nepal were found to have less of an impact on chronic and structural food insecurity. The evaluation attributes this, in part, to the prioritization of small, short-term projects, and highlights the need for institutional alignment and complementarity to address longer-term structural problems. Management recognizes this need and notes that since the evaluation reference period (2002–2010), WFP has adjusted its approach to C/FFA under the new country programme (CP), in line with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the Government's plans and priorities, and taking into account changes in the country context.
4. Some evaluation recommendations have therefore already been addressed. In particular, community-level consultations have resulted in revised village development plans and the development of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy.
5. Additional actions addressing the evaluation findings, and implementation timelines are presented in the attached matrix. Management will continue to examine contextual and implementation factors and their interactions to inform project design for achieving similar positive results elsewhere.

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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p><b>Funding strategy</b>  <b>Recommendation 1: In collaboration with Headquarters, the country office should develop a funding strategy for the new CP that ensures a minimum three-year funding commitment from all sources, to deliver the long-term livelihood resilience impacts expected from C/FFA activities.</b> The subsequent recommendations assume that a shift towards such longer-term planning and financing is possible.</p>	<p>Country office</p> <p>Country office</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The capacity to undertake activities in support of government priorities is strongly linked to the availability of reliable multi-year resources.</p> <p>Action 1: The country office will continue its advocacy for multi-year donor funding commitments, using every available channel.</p> <p>Action 2: The country office will develop a funding strategy in consultation with the Partnership and Governance Services Department (PG) and the Bangkok Regional Bureau (OMB), focusing on the new CP and aiming to achieve funding commitments of at least three years.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>July 2014</p>
<p><b>Twin-track programme strategy</b>  <b>Recommendation 2: The country office should adopt a more flexible programming approach for C/FFA that is better adapted to Nepal's diversity and geography in site-specific operational contexts</b> by employing the twin tracks of: i) wide coverage and short-term interventions focused on meeting the immediate food needs of the greatest number of the poorest and most vulnerable groups; and ii) more focused, longer-term programming aiming at building the livelihood resilience of vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>Country office</p> <p>Country office</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The new CP (2013–2017) aims to address long-term chronic food insecurity while meeting short-term needs by providing participants with cash transfers, a combination of food and cash, or food only, depending on the market situation. The programme operates only during the lean season when beneficiaries have the greatest needs and the time to participate in asset creation.</p> <p>The country office will continue to improve its approach, in line with the FFA Programme Guidance Manual and in consultation with Headquarters units and the regional bureau.</p> <p>Action 1: The country office will continue strengthening its context and trend analysis to identify convergences among recurring food insecurity, exposure to shocks and aggravating environmental factors, and will apply this analysis to determine the geographic coverage of C/FFA interventions.</p> <p>Action 2: The country office will identify more communities in targeted areas that might benefit from longer-term interventions as funding becomes available.</p>	<p>December 2014</p> <p>December 2014</p>



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<p><b>Theory and evidence of change</b>  <b>Recommendation 3: With support from the regional bureau and Headquarters, the country office should develop a theory of change that describes the intended results of C/FFA activities on short-term food insecurity and long-term livelihood resilience in varying operational contexts, for different household categories, and for different types of assets.</b> It should also identify and address the associated factors needed to achieve objectives, including partnerships, non-food items, construction quality and follow-up maintenance. The theory of change should build on advice in the FFA Guidance Manual, while the experience in Nepal should inform the refinement of WFP's corporate FFA theory of change. The country office should draw on support from the regional bureau and Headquarters to develop a comprehensive monitoring and impact evaluation plan based on the theory of change, which identifies data needs for continuous learning, programme adaptation and measurement of results and effectiveness.</p>	<p>Country office</p> <p>Policy, Programme and Innovation Division (OSZ)</p> <p>Country office</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>C/FFA activities under the ongoing CP focus on addressing chronic food insecurity by building on synergies with the CP's nutrition and education components and with programmes by other development actors.</p> <p>Between 2010 and 2012, actions that demonstrated and enhanced the outcomes of C/FFA programmes included the development of a comprehensive M&amp;E strategy, the establishment of a baseline and the completion of gap analysis at the village level.</p> <p>Action 1: The country office will conduct seasonal livelihood programming consultations with communities, partners and local government, using FFA guidance and support from Headquarters units and the regional bureau.</p> <p>Action 2: Corporate M&amp;E guidance for FFA is being aligned to the new Strategic Results Framework and will be informed by the global multi-partner Food and Nutrition Security Resilience Measurement Technical Working Group, which is developing global standards for the M&amp;E and measurement of resilience.</p> <p>Action 3: The country office will align its M&amp;E system to the corporate guidance on M&amp;E for FFA, as it becomes available.</p>	<p>December 2014</p> <p>December 2014</p> <p>January 2015</p>
<p><b>Targeting</b>  <b>Recommendation 4: To ensure that the benefits of long-term C/FFA programmes reach the poorest, the country office should target specific households based on local context analysis and household wealth ranking.</b> WFP should develop more detailed analysis of the needs of individuals and households from different cultural and socio-economic groups, to enable the monitoring of results on households' livelihood resilience in different contexts.</p>		<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>The country office recognizes the need to improve its targeting approach and will continue to do so, in line with government policies and criteria for targeting those most in need. It currently targets C/FFA activities at the district and village development committee levels using information available through the Nepal Food Security Monitoring System, which is jointly owned by the Government and WFP and well established.</p> <p>The transfer value for C/FFA participants is set below the minimum wage established by the Government. This enables the programme to follow a self-targeting approach by attracting only those most in need and without alternative sources of income.</p>	



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	Country office	<p>Given this and the relative homogeneity of targeted communities in terms of poverty and food security levels, the development of individual-/household-level targeting would not be efficient from a cost–benefit perspective. This approach would require extremely costly primary data collection. WFP’s current targeting modality is fully aligned with the methodology used by the Government.</p> <p>Action 1: The country office will use the corporate FFA guidance to strengthen targeting mechanisms to: i) meet the needs of households without able-bodied members in targeted areas; and ii) identify the asset types that would benefit the various groups within a given community, such as the landless.</p>	December 2014
<p><b>Partnership strategy</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation 5: The country office should undertake a partnership review, then develop and implement a strategy for partnerships that deliver the short- and long-term objectives of C/FFA.</b> The strategy should include the Government, communities, international and national non-governmental organizations and the private sector, for value chain development; development partners such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; and donors. It should build on the theory of change (recommendation 3) to link partnerships to expected impacts, and help position WFP relative to its own and its partners’ comparative advantages. The partnership review would also identify key partners for capacity development and hand-over (recommendation 7).</p>	<p>Country office</p> <p>Country office</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The current development context calls for a partnership review to maximize synergies and build on comparative advantages. The CP action plan (CPAP) includes a clear division of labour with government counterparts, but more can be done.</p> <p>Action 1: Under the current CP, the country office will review existing partners to identify how best to position FFA in relation to livelihoods and which strategic alignments with partners are required to maximize complementarities.</p> <p>Action 2: The country office will continue to strengthen its strategic partnerships with the United Nations Children’s Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and other actors such as the Ministry of Agriculture to enhance long-term food and nutrition security. WFP will develop formal agreements with these agencies in line with the CPAP and the UNDAF.</p>	<p>December 2013</p> <p>December 2014</p>



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	Country office	Action 3: The seasonal livelihood programming consultations described under recommendation 3 will assist the selection and identification of new partners with complementary programme activities aligned with the expected impacts and outputs of the theory of change.	December 2014
<p><b>Asset maintenance</b>  <b>Recommendation 6: To ensure that assets are built to maintainable standards and that long-term support is available to maintain them, the country office should identify – at the asset design stage – responsibilities and institutional arrangements at community, district and/or national levels for long-term maintenance.</b> Maintenance plans should be developed and implemented for each category of asset, including formal agreements where needed, social mobilization, capacity development and resourcing needs.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.            Despite progress, such as the partnership with a private engineering company to support quality control of the assets created, the country office recognizes the need to undertake further actions.</p> <p>Action 1: In line with the corporate FFA guidance, the country office will develop detailed implementation guidelines with a clearly defined management strategy and roles and responsibilities of institutions at the local level, including district and village development committees and government agencies.</p>	December 2014
	Country office	Action 2: The village development plans being prepared will include the development of maintenance strategies for the diverse assets created.	December 2014

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<p><b>Hand-over</b>  <b>Recommendation 7: The country office should reach agreement with the Government on the development of a functioning and sustainable government system for responding to food insecurity, to enable the eventual managed hand-over of C/FFA implementation.</b> This would be similar to the hand-over of responsibility for food security monitoring already in progress. Hand-over planning should take into consideration Nepal's changing aid modalities – such as sector-wide approaches – and successful models from other country offices. Appropriate financial support will be needed to support this work.</p>	<p>Country office</p> <p>Country office</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The country office is working with the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development on the Rural Community Infrastructure Works programme, which has already been implemented in several districts without WFP's support. Under the current CP, WFP operates within existing government frameworks and programmes.</p> <p>The country office will continue to support the Government's capacity to deliver C/FFA activities efficiently and transparently, building on global best practices.</p> <p>Action 1: The country office will increase the number and quality of training programmes for government staff, organize joint field visits, and expose government staff to FFA activities in regions where local governments have assumed or are assuming full responsibility for implementation.</p> <p>Action 2: The country office will sign an operational agreement with the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, which will include government budget requirements, in line with the CPAP.</p>	<p>December 2014</p> <p>December 2014</p>





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## ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

C/FFA	cash/food for assets
CP	country programme
CPAP	country programme action plan
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFA	food for assets
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework