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SUMMARY REPORT OF THE THEMATIC EVALUATION OF SCHOOL FEEDING IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evaluation focused on demonstrating how WFP's school feeding can address the needs of people in emergency contexts, with a view to learning from current practice and improving future implementation. Three field studies, desk research and a survey questionnaire constituted the basis of the evaluation. Readers are encouraged to refer to the full technical report for greater detail.

The evaluation found that school feeding projects implemented in emergencies are challenging for WFP in terms of constraints such as security restrictions, limited accessibility to affected areas, and limited capacities of local partners and governments; this is especially true when limited technical expertise is available. In situations where WFP offices cannot manage these challenges, the responses developed can be problematic, particularly with regard to targeting, the alignment of emergency school feeding programmes with educational support programmes and implementation at the school level. To develop such programmes, WFP must be able to articulate the comparative advantages of emergency school feeding programmes in its strategic planning and interaction with partners, which will increase the technical demands on WFP staff.

The evaluation identified locally-driven programme planning as an essential element of response to these challenges. WFP often has to compensate for lack of direction from government partners who in development situations would play a greater role in defining the parameters of school feeding interventions. In the absence of reliable educational data from the government, WFP has to develop other strategies to understand the educational challenges and design its programmes on the basis of nutritional and educational needs. A possible approach is to enhance partnerships with organizations supporting primary education.

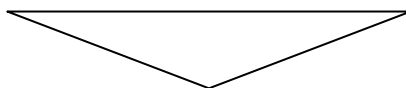
In designing emergency school feeding projects, WFP has to address the implementation constraints affecting support for the most vulnerable groups of school-aged children. The choice of implementation modalities has to take into account constraints such as limited cooking facilities and avoid delays in distributing food to pupils. A feasibility appraisal is therefore required, in particular for the most remote and vulnerable schools. Budgetary implications have to be considered in locally driven project planning and sufficient funds made available.

Governments have a limited role in emergency school feeding projects compared with such schemes in development situations, but WFP must seek as much government cooperation as possible. Emergency school feeding projects can provide opportunities for capacity-building in government agencies that can be built on in the longer term.

There is no clear distinction between school feeding in emergency or development contexts. The issue is to recognize that in addition to emergency-related challenges, constraints in development situations will be exacerbated in emergencies. To support emergency school feeding, WFP must provide comprehensive guidance and support to the programmes.



DRAFT DECISION*



The Board takes note of “Summary Report of the Thematic Evaluation of School Feeding in Emergency Situations (WFP/EB.A/2007/7-A) and encourages further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

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



OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND APPROACH OF THE EVALUATION

1. The purposes of this evaluation are to draw lessons for future emergency school feeding (ESF) programmes, identify aspects of ESF on which further guidance is needed and inform the WFP policy paper on food for education (FFE). The evaluation does not address the efficiency of ESF.
2. It is based on observations from the field on WFP practices in ESF in emergency operations (EMOPs) and protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs), (i) the context of the emergency, (ii) the context of the operation, (iii) the features of the ESF programme and (iv) the objectives of the programme.
3. The evaluation consisted of a desk study, three field visits to countries with ESF operations,¹ an e-mail survey distributed to ESF project managers in country offices and an analysis, including a workshop to review and process the data.²

WFP AND SCHOOL FEEDING

Synopsis of WFP's Support to Education

4. WFP's FFE support focuses on primary education, with some attention to pre-schools or child development programmes. Support for non-formal education is considered food for training (FFT). Attempts to promote integrated programming such as the joint WFP/United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) "Essential Learning Package" are meant to ensure complementary support for education and nutrition, health and hygiene activities.

Emergency School Feeding in the Context of Education in Emergencies

5. Education in Emergencies (EiE) focuses on (i) promoting access to safe learning environments, (ii) providing knowledge and skills to enable young people to cope in emergencies and continue their education, (iii) ensuring protection and support for children and young people affected by crises, (iv) enhancing the role of teachers in protecting and educating children and (v) facilitating the coordination of those involved in education in emergencies.
6. ESF is peripheral to this: the contribution of food assistance to educational goals in emergencies is not discussed in depth. Certain EiE documents mention school feeding as an access strategy,³ especially for girls,⁴ but the literature does not discuss the role of ESF in the context of education for girls and boys affected by emergencies. This scarcity of information is part of the rationale for this evaluation.

¹ Sudan, Pakistan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

² The team included an evaluation specialist, two experts on education in emergencies and a nutritionist.

³ The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) *Good Practice Guide on School Feeding* and the *INEE Minimum Standards* refer to school feeding as an effective strategy to attract children to school and increase enrolment.

⁴ See INEE's *Good Practice Guide on Women's and Girls' Education*.



Main Findings of the Evaluation

7. WFP has unique strengths in food delivery in acute and prolonged emergencies, but the challenges of school feeding in emergencies, which are different from those of general food distribution, have yet to be overcome. One challenge is the need to understand the education system and children's educational needs resulting from the emergency. To achieve this, WFP needs educational partners, but it often has to compensate for partners' weaknesses, which may be compounded by the emergency. WFP must be able to specify the comparative advantages of ESF and its feasibility for partners: a clear strategy is needed to optimize the formulation of objectives and targeting, and to link ESF programmes to other education support programmes and ensure the quality of food support projects at the school level.

The Low Coherence Between ESF Objectives, Beneficiary Needs and Implementation Realities

8. In most of the school feeding projects studied, ESF objectives were not fully consistent with the needs of beneficiaries: project documents at times referred to "standard" objectives such as the reduction of gender disparities and the increase of primary school attendance or set broad objectives to cover a variety of school feeding activities in a country-wide operation.⁵
9. Consequently, the objectives did little to guide implementation: WFP field staff frequently did not follow them; at times they formulated their own objectives that were more consistent with needs than the original ones. Cooperating partners were often not aware of the WFP objectives either and defined their own for their projects, for which they would merely seek, and usually receive, WFP's support. In some situations, stakeholders had differing perceptions of the practicality of ESF objectives. Such different perspectives can have a positive impact on beneficiaries, but they need to be formally endorsed by WFP.
10. Stakeholders identified ESF aims other than WFP's objectives, ranging from nutritional goals such as "helping to meet nutritional requirements", "increasing food security at school" or "closing the food gap" to goals of psycho-social and physical protection. A frequently mentioned alternative objective was to facilitate a return to normality for children affected by an emergency. In Pakistan, this meant providing an incentive for students to resume regular schooling as soon as possible to offset the trauma of the earthquake. Interviewees in Sudan and DRC mentioned the facilitation of play during breaks or the improvement of social cohesion among students after conflict. All these issues relate to the psycho-social needs of children in emergency contexts that WFP and other humanitarian organizations should consider when formulating emergency responses.
11. In situations characterized by high food insecurity and malnutrition, WFP has to focus resources on the nutritional needs of the most vulnerable people. Some donors object that school feeding does not necessarily address such problems and may even compete for resources with programmes that aim to save lives. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that WFP guidance directs school feeding and ESF programmes not to focus on nutritional objectives. Some country offices find it difficult to justify ESF projects in view of overwhelming needs in their areas.

⁵ Standard school feeding objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan (2006–2009).



The Comparative Advantage and Effectiveness of ESF as a Project Type

12. Assessing the educational situation and identifying the main needs and constraints is a challenge in emergency contexts, exacerbating the difficulty of implementing ESF; this and the lack of coherence between objectives and needs, and the shortcomings in implementation at the school level⁶ have reduced the effectiveness of some ESF projects.
13. School feeding can be effective when nutritional improvements are a prerequisite for achieving educational objectives. Supporting education through school meals is a unique way of improving the quality of learning by alleviating short-term hunger and reducing late-morning absenteeism when children leave classes to find food. Low enrolment and attendance, however, can be caused by unaffordable school fees, inaccessibility of schools or discrimination against certain groups. Work to improve enrolment and attendance needs to be based on an understanding of such barriers in a given situation; not all of them can be addressed by school feeding, and some require specific action.
14. Many interviewees acknowledged indirect benefits of ESF. A frequently mentioned benefit was increased community participation as parents participated as cooks or through parent-teacher associations (PTAs). However, the benefits of involving communities have to be weighed against the risks of overburdening them. Other benefits linked to rapid return to normality include group activities such as eating or playing together; regular school lunches also help pupils to socialize in school.

Comparative Advantages of Different ESF Delivery Modalities in Emergencies

15. The choice of food and delivery modality becomes particularly significant in emergency situations. The modality largely determines the conditions that have to be in place before food delivery can start and the infrastructure needed for smooth implementation. The type of modality is particularly important in volatile, impoverished or resource-poor emergency or recovery contexts in terms of, for example, preparation times, the relative and perceived value of the food, support for and supervision of food preparation and the requirements for additional inputs and infrastructure.
16. To prepare daily meals, schools need kitchens or cooking facilities, storage to protect food from misappropriation and spoilage, and water for cooking and cleaning. Under-resourced schools cannot provide these inputs and are therefore excluded from the programme or have difficulties preparing the meals. Communities also have to provide resources: parents are often called on to contribute food or non-food items; many poorer schools struggle to provide these inputs and are therefore at a disadvantage. Depending on the objectives, less demanding modalities such as biscuits or take-home rations may be alternatives.
17. The choice of food and implementation modalities in relation to project objectives and the target population is therefore a strategic one. Current guidance on modality selection does not provide the context-specific information or selection criteria to enable WFP staff to design optimum interventions for emergency situations.

⁶ These shortcomings can include the time taken by teachers to complete reports, lack of storage and kitchen facilities, timeliness of food preparation and the food support required from the community.



Ensuring Minimum Conditions and Providing Complementary Activities in ESF Programmes

18. School feeding programmes are not stand-alone interventions. Depending on the implementation modality, they require schools to have sanitation, water and hygienic cooking and storage facilities. In communities where these conditions do not exist, WFP needs to work with partners such as UNICEF to provide the necessary infrastructure. The challenge is to ensure that schools that could benefit from assistance are not excluded from the programme because they do not meet inappropriately high minimum conditions.
19. **Recommendation.** School feeding programmes are unlikely to deliver educational or nutritional outcomes without the support of complementary programmes. To ensure that they help to improve educational indicators, school feeding programmes need to be linked to the work of ministries, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Main Considerations for Choosing the Implementation Strategy for ESF Projects

20. The choice of implementation mechanism is critical to every ESF project. Partnering with government organizations has the potential to improve government capacity and hence sustainability, but it increases the risk of political interference. Working with cooperating partners (CPs) can allow complementary resources to be channelled to communities through the double WFP/CP inputs and reduces WFP's transaction costs, thereby increasing the geographical reach of the programme. But suitable CPs are often not available to support the most vulnerable groups, for example because of limited capacity, security concerns and high implementation costs. In some situations, working directly with communities is often WFP's only option, but it is the most challenging and resource-intensive approach and requires high levels of staffing and technical skill.
21. WFP's relationships with its CPs have the potential to exploit synergies between CP priorities and WFP's mission, but the common "client-contractor" relationship prevents this. WFP has not always been able to access partners' expertise in education to increase its own understanding and capacity. The case studies show that WFP has been more reactive than proactive in shaping its implementation strategy.

Possible Challenges in Targeting ESF Activities Under Emergency Conditions

22. Targeting criteria and processes need to take account of needs and resources. This is currently limited because (i) educational indicators have a minor role in geographical targeting and school selection and (ii) needs assessments do not identify the areas of greatest need where school feeding might be most effective.
23. WFP also has to link targeting to the logistics challenges and delivery costs. If this is not done, the most vulnerable schools may not receive food because unforeseen logistics problems raise the cost of delivery to remote locations above the budget limit. More flexibility is needed in adjusting this limit to meet the conditions of the emergency.



The Limiting Influence of Internal and External Constraints on ESF Implementation

24. Emergencies create severe constraints for humanitarian actors such as WFP that affect: (i) WFP's ability to access information for education-related needs assessments and to plan programmes on the basis of needs; (ii) its capacity for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and ability to adjust programmes on the basis of lessons learned; and (iii) timely and regular delivery of food.
25. External constraints affecting ESF are insecurity, insufficient transport infrastructure, low capacity in government agencies and schools and low management capacity or absence of CPs. These constraints reinforce each other: CPs have difficulties operating in insecure areas; poor roads make transport to remote schools prohibitively expensive for CPs, which forces WFP to cancel support or deliver food itself.
26. These constraints, particularly the lack of educational data for planning, increase the pressure on WFP's resources and can exacerbate internal constraints such as the lack of ESF guidance and the scarcity of staff with school feeding skills. Even with skilled staff, however, sub-offices have limited latitude to take advantage of opportunities for cooperation or to overcome external constraints.

Sustainability Issues to be Addressed in the Implementation of ESF

27. As in development situations, ESF programme sustainability is linked to WFP's ability to involve government agencies. The combination of acute needs and low government capacity in emergencies makes this task more challenging; WFP may have to choose between allowing more effective implementation in the short-term or taking a longer-term perspective and building the capacity of the government. The relative importance given to these priorities and the strategies to address them will depend on the situation.
28. The sustainability of school feeding depends on the extent to which WFP and its partners involve communities in planning and implementation. Community participation has to be part of the design of a programme: it will not develop on its own. WFP's support for education must be part of the development and stabilization of the education sector, which means that WFP has to link ESF with other initiatives.
29. Where WFP uses ESF as a tool for linking relief, recovery and development (LRRD), field staff must be sensitized and empowered to build capacity or increase community involvement without requiring quantitative performance targets: exclusive focus on quantitative targets ignores qualitative achievements such as establishing linkages with local producers or building community capacities to produce or procure supplementary food. Recognition of qualitative achievements in performance assessments will give staff a greater incentive to pursue such opportunities.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

No Categorical Distinction Between School Feeding and Emergency School Feeding

30. Emergency and development situations often have common features such as inadequate infrastructures and governments with low organizational capacity; there is no definite line between them. School feeding programmes can experience similar context-related and organizational challenges in both sets of circumstances. The important distinction is the degree to which the challenges affect programming and response time; these may often be more acute in emergency situations. Threats to the security of WFP and CP staff and beneficiaries are likely to affect the implementation of school feeding.

Implementation Challenges are Associated with Individual Context Features

31. Certain challenges are systemically linked to the programme context: limited community and household resources result in reduced ability to put in place the infrastructures to meet the operational requirements of ESF projects; poor access to target populations makes it harder for WFP to find CPs that can assist remote communities.
32. The challenge for WFP is to develop responses for each context rather than an overarching approach for ESF. Approaches developed by WFP programmes – for example providing rations for mothers to prepare meals, as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or providing financial and logistics training for new education authorities in the Sudan – can inform more context-specific ESF programme design in the future provided they are effectively disseminated.

Designing ESF Projects in line with Local Conditions is Central to Increased Effectiveness

33. ESF assistance does not always reach the schools that would benefit from it most, primarily because WFP is not using opportunities for context-specific design of ESF for particular contexts. Improvements would enable WFP to assess educational needs in the design phase, consider the cost implications of targeting and identify the operational implications of different delivery modalities.
34. The organizational causes of this design weakness are the lack of context-specific expertise, guidance and tools to implement ESF and the prevailing culture of decentralized decision-making in WFP. The standard tools and procedures are either not specific enough or fail to reflect the educational rationale of ESF projects. There is only limited understanding that school feeding projects require an educational perspective and a design that responds to more than vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) assessment, and hence little sense that staff need technical training or that ESF programmes should be designed for individual situations.
35. A significant gap is limited availability of staff who understand the strengths, weaknesses and challenges of each ESF modality such as choosing the right approaches or overcoming implementation problems caused, for example, by lack of kitchens and water points. There are few WFP staff with a clear understanding of the support role of ESF in the education sector.



Tension Between “WFP Targeting” and “Provision Of Complementary Inputs”

36. Two factors that reduce the effectiveness of ESF projects are imprecise targeting and lack of complementary inputs. Improvements in needs assessment and more precise targeting may make coordination with other educational and nutrition/health activities more difficult; increased coordination with United Nations agencies and NGOs involving adoption of their criteria carries the risk that WFP’s targeting principles may be compromised: nutritional considerations, for example, might be left out of the targeting process. Improvements are needed in both areas: WFP has to find a balance between increasing the accuracy of its targeting and improving coordination with its partners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

37. A summary of the main recommendations of this evaluation is given in the Annex.

ANNEX: RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE—THEMATIC EVALUATION OF SCHOOL FEEDING IN EMERGENCIES		
OEDE recommendation	Action by	Management response and action to be taken
2.2 To provide educational expertise during assessment and planning, WFP should cooperate with external education experts who can provide country-specific understanding of education-related challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ ODAN/ODA 	PDPF/ODAN: ODAN has the main responsibility for ENAs; PDPF will provide support in identifying experts. Educational needs will be incorporated into needs-assessment training modules.
2.3 The school feeding guidelines should address programming principles to apply when deciding the rationale of ESF objectives.		PDPF: Agreed. PDPF will update the guidelines, which will clarify the objectives of ESF, taking into account the findings of the thematic evaluation.
Recommendation 3: The targeting process for support through ESF should ensure that WFP can reach schools in the most food-insecure and vulnerable areas.		
3.1 With vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) support, WFP should develop tools for mapping educational needs, identifying constraints to food deliveries and ways in which communities can contribute to projects. This will make it possible to design projects on the basis of greater understanding of cost and logistics implications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ ODAV 	PDPF/ODAV have designed an education module to be incorporated into the VAM comprehensive food security and vulnerability assessments; the module will enable VAM to provide information to guide the design of WFP education programmes. Logistics staff, not VAM, undertake logistics capacity assessments to determine the factors hindering food delivery. Information on community participation can be collected through the feasibility study, not through a large VAM household survey.
3.2 Synchronizing WFP's targeting priorities and processes with those of partner organizations will be a major challenge. WFP has to take into consideration the food insecurity of potential target populations; the targeting criteria of partners may be different. WFP will have to develop clear guidance for country offices and sub-offices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ PDPN 	PDPF: Agreed. This will be taken up in the revision of the school feeding guidelines on the basis of an agreed definition of ESF objectives PDPN: Any clear evidence of nutrition problems in target populations should help to refine targeting. Where general rations are also provided, the nutritional needs of school-age children are expected to be covered.
Recommendation 4: Modalities and minimum standards should be chosen in relation to the objectives and the context, with attention to the risk of excluding the most vulnerable.		
4.1 To help staff to design appropriate ESF projects for a given context, guidance should include advice on which ESF modalities are most suited to particular objectives or environments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF 	PDPF: Agreed. PDPF will work with country offices to develop ESF modalities in low-resource and fragile environments. This will be taken up in the revision of the guidelines.



ANNEX: RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE—THEMATIC EVALUATION OF SCHOOL FEEDING IN EMERGENCIES

OEDE recommendation	Action by	Management response and action to be taken
<p>4.2 Where minimum conditions for ESF do not exist, WFP should prioritize actions to ensure that infrastructure will be put in place, for example through FFW or FFT. Where resources or partners for this are not available, WFP staff should consider selecting less demanding ESF modalities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ Regional bureaux 	<p>PDPF: The main responsibility for this seems to be at the field level; PDPF can develop tools and guidelines and revise ESF guidelines. ESF modalities will be developed according to local realities. The INEE minimum standards are a sound base to adopt and are flexible for low-resource contexts.</p> <p>ODP/ODB: Agreed. The need to remain flexible is recognized: conditions vary from one emergency context to the next.</p>
<p>Taking advantage of opportunities for strategic partnerships</p>		
<p>Recommendation 5: ESF projects can be more effective if accompanied by complementary activities: WFP should have a strategy to ensure these are provided, considering in particular the potential of strategic partnerships</p>		
<p>5.1 ESF project formulation should reflect the fact that school feeding can only have a supporting role in terms of educational improvements. WFP management must develop an appreciation of the role of ESF in relation to other interventions in terms of educational objectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ TPSS ➤ Regional bureaux 	<p>PDPF: Disagree with the first sentence: ESF can achieve educational improvements by itself, though effects can certainly be enhanced by linking with complementary activities. Primary responsibility for sub-office staff training seems to be with country offices and regional bureaux, supported by TPSS. PDPF can assist with development of training materials.</p> <p>TPSS: Will work with ODO and PDPF to ensure that technical guidance is accessible through the <i>Programme Guidance Manual</i> and other sources.</p> <p>ODP/ODB: Agree that food can only play a supportive role, especially in an emergency context. Educational gaps should be compared to the pre-crisis situation: anything more ambitious should be considered under a regular school feeding programme. WFP food aid can only enable children to go to school and to be attentive in class. On the second sentence: it is already being done.</p>
<p>5.2 Given the above, WFP should aim for complementary programming with strategic partners in education such as UNICEF and should look for synergies with partners to ensure that minimum operating conditions can be put in place over time. Increasing WFP's participation in education clusters is gaining in significance as United Nations reform and establishment of education clusters is finalized at the global level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF 	<p>PDPF: The main responsibility for this seems to lie at the country level. PDPF is following this up at the global level, for example by participating in the Advisory Group for Education Cluster. UNICEF is developing activities related to education in emergencies or fragile states, in which WFP aims to partner. Such a partnership is already being modelled in Sierra Leone.</p>



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OEDE recommendation	Action by	Management response and action to be taken
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ODO/Regional Bureaux 	<p>ODO: WFP's resources are in principle limited to food, but country offices and regional bureaux are encouraged to engage in partnerships, for example with United Nations country teams or other working groups, with the aim of coordinating activities and achieving optimum impact. Often, as in this report, WFP's most important and natural partnership – with the government – is only marginally addressed; it might be more appropriate to encourage government to assume a coordinating role.</p> <p>ODP/ODB: Agreed that partnerships are crucial to complementary activities. But it is difficult for WFP to guarantee them, given that partners are not always available. This is already happening in regular settings; no reason why it should be different in ESF.</p>
<p>5.3 Field level agreements (FLAs) should be developed with CPs so that the food assistance can create synergies between ESF and CPs' complementary support programmes; FLAs should take programmatic issues into account more fully, including budgeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ODO ➤ PDE 	<p>ODO: FLAs are formulated jointly by partners and WFP, with provision for budgeting for non-food items. But FLAs have to be within the limit of previously approved project budgets. The guidance in the <i>Programme Guidance Manual</i> includes a detailed project proposal to be attached to the FLA. The responsibility for the application of the FLA rests with country offices.</p> <p>PDE: WFP projects could be jointly designed with partners; project proposals outlining any programmatic point can be attached to FLAs. FLAs with cooperating partners should not be subject to substantive changes.</p>
<p>5.4 WFP may wish to align with national education-sector plans, where these exist. In the absence of such plans, WFP should consider aligning ESF with the educational support programmes of donors or United Nations partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ TPSS ➤ Regional bureaux 	<p>PDPF/TPSS: The main responsibility for this lies at the field level; PDPF has a supporting and backstopping role in coordination with TPSS. This needs to be pursued during programme design and implementation. PDPF has started working with partners on aligning programming in education. Where possible, WFP will work with governments from the outset to align school feeding with national sector plans.</p> <p>ODP/ODB: Agree with the recommendation in principle, but it remains to be seen how far national programmes exist for education in emergencies. May be problematic where national governments do not control the entire national territory. Aligning WFP programming with NGOs, including local ones, is also critical.</p>



ANNEX: RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE—THEMATIC EVALUATION OF SCHOOL FEEDING IN EMERGENCIES

OEDE recommendation	Action by	Management response and action to be taken
5.5 WFP should consider more fully the skills and expertise of potential CPs in education, community participation and mobilization, and logistics capacities as criteria for partnerships.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ Regional bureaux 	<p>PDPF: This seems mainly a recommendation for field offices. It is clear, though, that communities need to be more closely involved in cases where there is no state legitimacy.</p> <p>ODP/ODB: Agreed, though “more fully” needs to be qualified: potential partnerships in emergency contexts are often limited in number and it is often a choice between a weak partnership to be improved over time as opposed to no partnership at all.</p>
Improving quality in implementation		
Recommendation 6: WFP should recognize the potential of the nutritional benefits of ESF and optimize it where severe food insecurity and malnutrition among schoolchildren hampers learning		
6.1 The proposed food basket has to be sufficient in quantity and quality to ensure that ESF makes a meaningful contribution to children’s nutritional requirements, especially if they are not addressed by any other support. The tendency to reduce the food basket to less than 30 percent of daily energy requirements should be avoided. Guidance on formulating the food basket needs to be more specific in outlining its potential outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ PDPN 	<p>PDPF: In an emergency situation, the general food distribution ration should meet the basic requirements of beneficiaries; the school feeding ration is an extra meal providing 30–40 percent of a schoolchild’s daily energy requirements. We could review the guidelines, keeping these considerations in mind.</p> <p>PDPN: The recommendation is not specific: the food given at school is not intended to cover children’s nutritional requirements, which are covered by the household general food ration. The food in school is intended as an incentive to bring children into school.</p> <p>Normally, depending on the type of school – half-day, full day, boarding school – WFP aims to cover different percentages of the requirements. Suggestions on how to go about these are given in the recently updated school feeding guidelines and the guidance note on nutrition objectives in school feeding programmes, which pay particular attention to micronutrient issues.</p>



ANNEX: RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE—THEMATIC EVALUATION OF SCHOOL FEEDING IN EMERGENCIES

OEDE recommendation	Action by	Management response and action to be taken
<p>6.2 Given the lack of scientific evidence on the nutritional benefits of school feeding, resulting partly from methodological limitations, WFP must align with strategic partners or research institutions the school health and nutrition sectors that investigate nutritional outcomes and indicators. WFP's school feeding in development contexts might provide a better potential for investigations; lessons learned would benefit ESF.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ PDPN 	<p>PDPF: Partnership could be considered under different initiatives: Focusing Resources on Effective School Health (FRESH), Essential Package, Nutrition Friendly Schools.</p> <p>PDPN: School feeding programmes generally do not have nutritional objectives, given that school meals can only provide part of children's nutritional requirements. We feel, however, that it is possible to address micronutrient deficiencies through school feeding. Acceptability trials of multi-micronutrient powders are going on in two school feeding programmes; depending on the outcomes, this approach may be taken further. Unfortunately, there are not many strategic partners in the school health and nutrition sectors, nor funding to carry out more in-depth studies on nutritional outcomes; there are also ethical considerations. In this sense, there is not much difference between ESF and regular school feeding.</p>
<p>Recommendation 7: WFP should explore ways to improve ESF monitoring systems and to improve feedback from the field as a prerequisite for project adjustments and improvements.</p>		
<p>7.1 Monitoring needs to incorporate a more qualitative, result-oriented approach to complement quantitative data. This would entail an increased amount and quality of data collected, in particular on aspects of (i) food preparation, consumption and acceptance, (ii) the timing of feeding, (iii) substitution of home meals (e.g. measuring food intake at home on school days compared to non-school days) and (iv) educational issues such as quality of teaching and learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ CMEA 	<p>PDPF is revising its baseline survey in community participation and making it INEE compliant; this will mean collecting more qualitative data, and will include aspects of protection and safety. Regarding the revision of M&E tools, PDPF is already working on adapting the <i>Standard School Feeding Survey</i> to ESF and EiE needs.</p> <p>CMEA: The insertion of an M&E application into WINGS-II will ensure more consistent data collection methods, and consequently more accurate, timely and useful analysis and reporting. The <i>M&E Toolkit Builder</i> is almost ready for roll-out; it will be used to design monitoring systems based on best practices and corporate indicators for measuring processes, outputs and outcomes.</p>



ANNEX: RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE—THEMATIC EVALUATION OF SCHOOL FEEDING IN EMERGENCIES

OEDE recommendation	Action by	Management response and action to be taken
<p>7.2 Where possible, WFP should increase the number of field monitors to improve monitoring-related tasks, including data analysis. Training may be required, particularly in qualitative monitoring. WFP should also seek more collaboration with school feeding partners with an interest in improving the effectiveness of collaborative ESF projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ Regional Bureaux 	<p>PDPF: The main responsibility for follow-up seems to be at the field level. It is unclear whether more food aid monitors would improve monitoring and evaluation. As this document recommends in 7.1, the issue is one of more qualitative data. Qualitative data collection through better-trained monitors from sampled schools may be the best alternative.</p> <p>ODP/ODB: Agree with the recommendation and with PDPF's comment. The issue is a perennial one for WFP. "Monitoring" has increasingly been interpreted as "gathering data for quantitative reporting on process and output", without sufficient analysis of these data and with insufficient attention to qualitative and outcome monitoring and feeding analyses back into corporate learning. M&E system expansion entails large costs, which should be looked into.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8: WFP should design training tools for ESF and place experts to improve the use of technical guidance in the design and implementation of ESF in the field.</p>		
<p>8.1 Training tools need to be designed to familiarize staff members managing ESF projects; the tools should include guidance on project features, programme design, available resources and the potential of strategic partnerships in implementing ESF.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ TPSS ➤ Regional Bureaux 	<p>PDPF/TPSS: Agreed. PDPF and TPSS should work on this jointly, particularly on design of training tools and support of training activities, for which the field has the main responsibility. Education could be included in the WFP emergency training.</p> <p>ODP/ODB: Agreed. The training should also include qualitative monitoring and problem identification. Alternatively, it may be preferable to ensure that existing training material takes into account the peculiarities of ESF. A holistic approach is likely to be more efficient in achieving desired outcomes of behavioural change in relation to improving the use of technical guidance, especially if the technical guidance already exists.</p>
<p>8.2 WFP should enhance its capacity to make full-time technical experts available who can function as a resource for ESF implementers in the field, to be consulted during needs assessment and design, monitoring, scaling back or expansion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PDPF ➤ TPSS 	<p>PDPF/TPSS: Agreed, within budget possibilities. The main responsibility for this lies with TPSS, in coordination with PDPF and regional programme advisers.</p>



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CMEA	Common monitoring and evaluation approach
CP	cooperating partner
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EiE	Education in Emergencies
EMOP	emergency operation
ESF	emergency school feeding
FFE	food for education
FFT	food for training
FLA	field level agreement
FRESH	Focusing Resources on Effective School Health
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
LRRD	linking relief, recovery and development
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NGO	non-governmental organization
ODA	Analysis, Assessment and Preparedness Service
ODAN	Emergency Needs Assessment Branch
ODAP	Emergency Preparedness and Response Branch
ODAV	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Branch
ODB	Asia Regional Bureau
ODO	Office of the Director of Operations
ODP	Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Bureau
OEDE	Office of Evaluation
PDE	External Relations Division
PDP	Strategy, Policy and Programme Support Division
PDPF	School Feeding Service
PDPN	Nutrition Service
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
PTA	parent-teacher association
TPSS	Technical Programme Support Service
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAM	vulnerability analysis and mapping