

## TALKING POINTS (shortened) EB.2/14 - CPE Uganda (2009-2013)

### DESCRIPTION

- This evaluation covered WFP's portfolio in Uganda from 2009 to 2013, under the 2009–2014 country strategy. As for all evaluations in the CPE series it addressed: i) alignment and strategic positioning; ii) strategic decision-making; and iii) performance and results. Since this was the first in the series to cover a portfolio period entirely framed by a country strategy,<sup>1</sup> the evaluation also assessed its appropriateness & added value.

### CONTEXT

- The period covered by the evaluation was one of stabilization and peace consolidation. Economic growth<sup>2</sup> over the last decade has enabled Uganda to reduce the national poverty rate<sup>3</sup>, but major regional and socio-economic disparities remain, and Uganda hosts<sup>4</sup> very high numbers of refugees<sup>4</sup>.
- The portfolio operated through 5 operations (1 CP, 2 PRRO, and 2 EMOPs) to focus on 3 core areas i. food assistance to vulnerable populations in Karamoja and refugee populations across the country with emergency humanitarian assistance (EHA); ii. food & nutrition security interventions (FNS); iii. agricultural & market support (AMS).

**FINDINGS:** The evaluation presents a **MIXED** picture overall.

#### A. Six main positive findings:

1. The country strategy built on WFP's strengths in operating at scale. It helped strengthen WFP's strategic positioning, guided advocacy for pro-poor policies, and enhanced the scope for policy and programmatic coherence, including through linking relief and development<sup>5</sup>.
2. While food distribution was still considered by many to be WFP's core competency, the evaluation confirmed a changing external perception of WFP away from being the "food and logistics" agency – owing much to its work on nutrition<sup>6</sup> and grain quality standards<sup>7</sup>, for which the Government acknowledged WFP's crucial support.

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<sup>1</sup> 2009–2014 Uganda CSD – 1<sup>st</sup> under WFP's 2009–2013 Strategic Plan.

<sup>2</sup> Growth = 6–10% / year

<sup>3</sup> Poverty national: 31 -25% from 2005-2010. 2009, Karamoja poverty rate 75%, cf 24.5% nationally; adult literacy rate 6% cf 67% nationally (2007). Stunting >30 percent in most areas.

<sup>4</sup> Uganda has hosted large numbers of refugees for decades; in early 2014, WFP was assisting 330,000 people, including recent arrivals from South Sudan

<sup>5</sup> Link emerg – dev: evidenced by portfolio's successful combination of RELIEF [EHA, safety nets through GFD in EHA and FNS activities; and DEVELOPMENT through FNS and AMS]

<sup>6</sup> research in fortification and micronutrients to support development of national policies

<sup>7</sup> WFP AMS activities have been instrumental in establishing market standards and WFP's sustained advocacy for regional standards in the grain trade facilitated the creation of institutions and mechanisms such as the Uganda

3. Although funded to meet only about half of requirements, WFP interventions were found relevant and well-aligned; and were recognized for their substantial scale and coverage<sup>8</sup>, with only the Government's interventions achieving similar coverage.
4. Reflecting the CSD's priorities, the period saw a major shift in the CO's expenditure pattern away from emergency towards transition and development<sup>9</sup>. WFP enhanced its engagement and alignment with Government, and by end of 2010 had moved from blanket towards targeted assistance, away from emergency humanitarian assistance. This shift was found by the evaluation to have reflected needs, national context, and government priorities.
5. Interventions were based on systematic assessments, and periodic reviews led to appropriate adjustments in programme design, targeting and partnerships e.g. in Nutrition and Agric & Market Support.
6. Overall, WFP's food and nutrition security interventions were effective when assessed against respective targets (although less so from a social protection perspective); school feeding appeared to have a positive effect on enrolment and attendance rates; and, evidence indicated that AMS activities were having effects on policies and markets, showing potential for scaling-up.

## **B. On the less positive side:**

- While strategic direction and analysis was strong, delivery and tracking of results lagged behind. Technical and field staff capacity did not match the CO's strong strategic and analytical capacity. Whilst WFP made high-level investments in the development & communication of the CS, under-investment in programme design and implementation capacity prevented full realization of objectives.
- Dissemination and assimilation of the CS at all levels of the country office was uneven and implementation not always as coherent as the strategy. Although the evaluation noted improvements since 2012, reporting systems remained mainly input/output-oriented, with limited outcome monitoring and analysis. With outsourced monitoring, opportunities to address weaknesses & maximize strategic partnership opportunities were missed.
- GFD reached more beneficiaries but with smaller and with less distribution/transfer cycles than planned.<sup>10</sup> Facing consistent funding shortfalls, WFP met its humanitarian target deliveries only in 2011.

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Commodity Exchange and warehouse receipt systems, which promote quality standards for maize in the country. ii) research in fortification and micronutrients to support the development of national policies

<sup>8</sup> Reaching an average of 1.2 million people annually, fluctuating between 729,000 and 2.5 million

<sup>9</sup> EHA in 2009 = 100% of expenditure in 2009, down to only 29% in 2013.

<sup>10</sup> Whilst five were planned annually, only three or four were carried out each year.

- **Capacity issues** underlay several weaknesses in implementation including: FFA, delivery delays and protection handling. Recurrent pipeline breaks jeopardized effectiveness and efficiency of all activities, undermining the adequacy and predictability of GFD transfers in particular. Delayed distributions – postponed, rescheduled or conducted after dark – were a major concern for both refugees and cooperating partners. Besides resource constraints, other influencing factors – such as weaknesses in WFP’s secondary transport and logistics arrangements - are within WFP’s control.
- Despite the 2013 Joint Resilience Strategy of FAO, UNICEF, WFP , and some technical collaboration between FAO and WFP on AMS and FFA, **limited progress has been made towards an integrated approach with FAO on agriculture and resilience –related work in Karamoja**. While appreciating WFP’s small-holder agricultural development efforts, external stakeholders<sup>11</sup> emphasized the need for effective delivery, and clarification of respective roles and mandates between the two agencies. While Government demonstrated strong ownership of the grain quality standards and market development initiatives, **hand-over strategies** were limited and uncertain.

***... on gender and protection***

- Whilst WFP targeted women successfully, the emphasis was on women’s participation in activities rather than analysis of gender-based roles and needs. The evaluation found that both gender & protection received inadequate attention during programme implementation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS** were formulated to feed into the new CSD process and programme cycle, and focus on:

- WFP positioning (social protection and safety-net, resilience, scale-up of SCP);
- Sustainability (dual approach of service-delivery & advocacy);
- Results-focused strategic planning and implementation;
- Operational improvements, including operationalization of gender and protection policies.

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<sup>11</sup> Government, UN agencies, donors and cooperating partners.

## ADDITIONAL NOTES

### E.g. of appropriate programme modification

- 1 – nutrition interventions: with low supplementary feeding programme coverage in the early years, WFP Uganda modified its approach to include **community-based supplementary feeding (CBSF)** - led to increased Karamoja coverage from 53% (2009) to 71% (2011). The evaluation's community focus group discussions indicated a sustained increase in outreach of supplementary feeding.
- 2 – AMS interventions: initially emphasized (a) infrastructure, (b) private sector and (c) market development. Later appropriately **revised to target smallholders** directly through: (a) support to satellite collection points, (b) training of farmers' organizations, and (c) capacity development of national authorities in grain quality standards. Satellite collection points (SCP) faced challenges in attracting very poor farmers - however, WFP Uganda piloted different models of household storage facility, and linked collection points to small-scale credit institutions such as Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLA). Evaluation Focus group discussions and beneficiary interviews suggested that these efforts were showing results, with smallholders beginning to use SCP facilities, and, by 2013, VSLAs having mobilized about \$339,000 in savings;