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IMPACT EVALUATION

Evaluation of the Impact of Food for Assets on Livelihood Resilience in Uganda (2005 – 2010)

A Mixed Method Impact Evaluation

Evaluation Report

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Disclaimer

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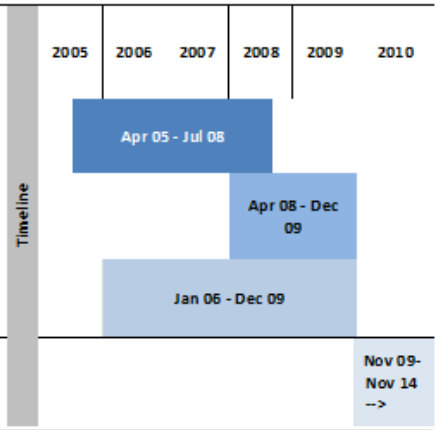
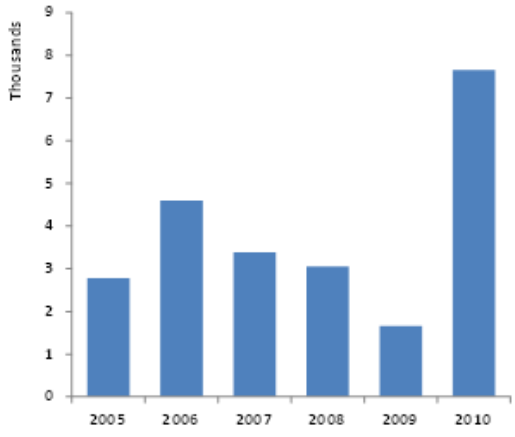
Projects Overview (2005-2010)

Project No.	Project Title	Total Approved Budget (US$ mll)	Confirmed Contributions (US$ mll)	% funded
PRRO 10121.1	Targeted Food Assistance for Relief and Recovery of Refugees, Displaced Persons and Vulnerable Groups in Uganda	414.8	343	83%
PRRO 10121.2	Targeted Food Assistance for Relief and Recovery of Refugees, Displaced Persons and Other Vulnerable Groups	318.3	112.9	35%
CP 10426.0	Country Programme – Uganda (2006-2010)	66.6	21.5	32%
CP 108070	Country Programme - Uganda (2009-2014) Supporting Government-Led Initiatives to Address Hunger in Uganda	222.1	105.9	48%



Geographic coverage of FFA

FFA Food distribution (Mt)



FFA generated assets

Type of FFA asset activity	
Natural resource asset	
Agricultural rehabilitation/ improvement	Land cleared/ opened
	Crop cultivation
	Crop multiplication
	Fish multiplication centres
	Fish ponds ('water ponds – except Karamoja)
	Water Ponds (livestock/ irrigation)
	Demonstration gardens – *by implication may be 1-2 seasons only*
Watershed management/ development	Community woodlots
School enhancement	School woodlots
Infrastructure asset	
School enhancement	Teacher house construction
	Classroom rehabilitation
Rural roads (connectivity)	Community roads, feeder roads
Other	
Community capacity building	Vocational training conducted
Other	Fuel efficient stoves
	IDP/ community buildings (not schools); latrines, kitchens, health posts, water tanks, market shelters

Evaluation Stakeholders

Participants: IDPs and returnees, refugees, host communities, drought/flood affected households, small farmers and women, vulnerable households with spare labour capacity.

Government Authorities: Office of the Prime Minister, Sub-Country and District Officers

WFP Staff: CO, SOs, RO, HQ

UN Agencies: UNHCR, UNICEF, FAO, UNDP, OCHA, UNDP

NGOs: ICRC, Oxfam, IRC, MSF, Aktion Africa Hilfe , Norwegian Refugee Council, Deutscher Entwicklungsdiennst, Concerned Parents Association, Kitgum Concerned Women's Association, Food For The Hungry, Action Contre La Faim, World Vision, Northern Uganda Community Based Child Development, Jesuit Refugee Service, Christian Children's Fund, Christian Councelling Fellowship, World Vision International, International Rescue Committee, Caritas, Arbeiter Samariter Bund, Friends Of Orphans, Catholic Relief Services (CRS)

Key donor: Netherlands, DFID, USAID, World Bank, EC

Sources: Projects Overview: Latest SPRs, Resource situations; FFA food distribution: Country Office; FFA generated assets: Evaluation report; Evaluation stakeholders: Inception Report

*WFP reported FFA caseload for 2005-2010 varied, between projects and years, from 725 to 106,000.

Executive Summary

Introduction

Evaluation Features

1. This independent evaluation assessed WFP's food-for-assets (FFA) activities implemented in Uganda between 2005 and 2010 under four programmes: protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs) 101211 and 101212, and country programmes 104260 and 108070.1

2. As one of a series, the evaluation's objectives were to assess the outcomes and impacts of FFA on livelihoods resilience, identify changes for enhancing these impacts, and generate lessons for better alignment of FFA programming with WFP's 2011 FFA Guidance Manual2 and disaster risk reduction policy3,4 It addressed three core questions:

- What positive and negative impacts have FFA activities had on individuals within participating households and communities?
- What factors were critical in affecting outcomes and impacts?
- How could FFA activities be improved to address the findings from the first two questions?

3. The evaluation tested a theory of change, based on WFP programme guidance, in which food or cash are provided for work on constructing assets or time spent in capacity development, with the aims of:

- improving household food security in the short term;
- improving the biophysical environment, agricultural production and livelihood options in the medium term; and
- achieving sustained improvements in livelihoods resilience, including improved ability to cope with shocks, in the longer term.

4. The factors considered necessary for achieving intended impacts include:

- a supportive external context;
- accurate risk and livelihoods analysis;
- assets that meet quality standards;
- adequate funding;
- the availability of resources;
- technical assistance;
- complementary inputs; and
- local ownership and maintenance.

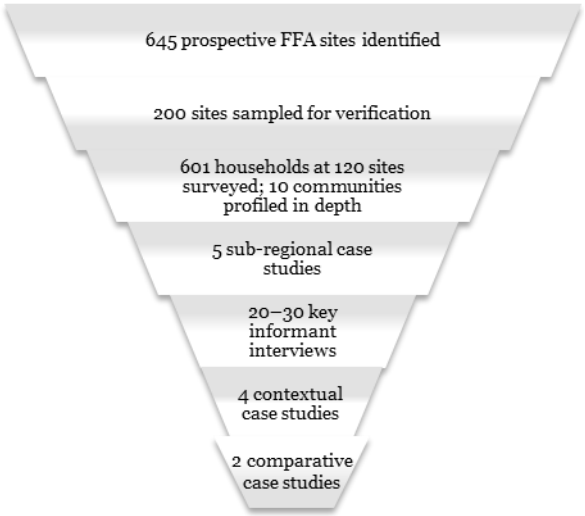
5. Although the evaluation series focused on natural resource assets, this evaluation also considered infrastructure assets such as roads and schools, which were considered particularly relevant to the food security and resilience of returning

1 In 2013 WFP changed the use of the FFA acronym to mean "food assistance for assets", covering food, cash and voucher activities for asset creation and training. During the period covered by this evaluation, however, FFA referred exclusively to food-for-assets activities.
2 WFP FFA Guidance Manual (2011), modules A to E and annexes.
3 "WFP Policy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management" (WFP/EB.2/2011/4-A).
4 The activities evaluated were designed and implemented prior to adoption of the guidance manual (which is being revised) and disaster risk reduction policy, but their goals were broadly similar and the evaluation terms of reference emphasized learning.

populations in the fluid and conflict-affected context of northern Uganda. [5] Reflecting this fluidity, the evaluation considered the contributions of FFA as concurrent elements of the transition from vulnerability to resilience rather than as distinct linear steps.[6]

6. The evaluation's mixed-methods approach is summarized in Figure 1 and included: i) document and corporate data reviews; ii) semi-structured interviews with 30 key informants; iii) focus group discussions in eight communities representing different contexts;[7] iv) direct observation of 169 assets; and v) a household survey involving 601 interviews, 36 percent with women and 64 percent with men.

Figure 1: Overview of the evaluation methodology



Source: Inception Report for this evaluation.

7. Limitations included lack of information on the assets created – location, selection, work norms and standards, implementation logic and baseline data – and of a base from which to make comparisons.[8] The following factors precluded comparative analysis of FFA impacts:

- FFA was implemented in the context of conflict, with no baseline data or records of where, how and why assets were constructed.
- Returns of displaced persons and refugees made it difficult to identify FFA participants; many of the camps that were centres for FFA activities no longer existed.
- Many households were displaced, traumatized and practising extreme coping strategies.
- Large external forces such as peace settlements were likely to have greater effects on livelihood strategies than the FFA interventions had.

5 For the purposes of this evaluation, northern Uganda includes the sub-regions of Acholi, Karamoja, Lango, Teso and West Nile.

6 Based on Pasteur, K. 2011. *From Vulnerability to Resilience: A Framework for Analysis and Action to Build Community Resilience*. Rugby, UK, Practical Action Publishing. The circular model includes livelihoods, governance, hazards and stresses, and future uncertainties.

7 The contexts of the communities in Acholi, Teso and Lango were typified as dynamic, and those in Karamoja and West Nile as chronic.

8 Of the 601 households interviewed, 519 were present at the time of asset construction, and 82 were current users of the assets. Plans to interview a third group of participants who had moved out of the area were abandoned, as these people were too difficult to trace.

- The scale of the WFP programme made it difficult to identify comparison groups who did not receive assistance.

8. These limitations were mitigated by analysis of distribution data, individual recalls of FFA activities, a verification survey, and triangulation of evidence from qualitative and quantitative, primary and secondary data.[9] Evidence was analysed against the theory of change framework and comparisons made across sub-regions.

Context

9. Over the evaluation period (2005–2010), people in northern Uganda experienced severe shocks, including:

- a violent conflict with massive waves of internal displacements, affecting all sub-regions, particularly Acholi, Teso and Lango;
- large refugee influxes, mostly in Western Nile;
- widespread insecurity and cattle raids, mostly in Karamoja; and
- drought, flooding and environmental degradation, mostly in Karamoja and Western Nile.

10. In 2005–2006, 1.6 million people lived in 164 camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs). By 2008, across northern Uganda more than 650,000 people – many of them children – had been abducted at one point or another during the conflict. These problems compounded the underdevelopment and poverty that characterize the region. For example, among districts in Karamoja, adult literacy rates ranged from 8 to 22 percent in 2007, compared with the Ugandan average of 50 to 60 percent.

11. After the 2006–2008 peace agreements, IDPs began returning home, where they faced challenges such as reintegration of child soldiers and rebuilding of agriculture, infrastructure and services. Local governments coordinated these efforts, and the main shocks became natural hazards (see Table 1). Loss of livestock, changes in coping strategies[10] and social upheaval during the conflict changed livelihoods irreversibly.

Table 1: Changes in Shocks to Households Over Time

Year	Sub-regions	Shocks	Prevalence (households) %
Ongoing	West Nile	Refugee influxes	-
2004	Acholi, Lango, Teso	Violence, abductions, mass internal displacements	30–70
	Karamoja, West Nile	Droughts	45–57
	Karamoja, Lango, Teso	Cattle raiding	-
2009	Karamoja	Insecurity, looting of assets	94
	Acholi, Lango, Teso, West Nile	High food prices, poor rains	-

Source: Uganda Bureau of Statistics, National Household Surveys (2005/06 and 2009/10).

12. The main root causes of food insecurity during and after the conflict were lack of access to land and farmers' limited productive capacity in Acholi, Lango and West Nile; and climate stresses and land degradation in the agropastoralist sub-regions of

9 Non-binary comparative analysis – "fuzzy set analysis" – was used to process the large amount of qualitative data from assets verification, focus groups and household data, to identify patterns in variables systematically. Details in the full evaluation report, annexes 6 and 7.

10 In 2005, an estimated 50 percent of the population in Acholi and 30 percent in Lango depended on food aid.

Karamoja and Teso.

Programme Description

13. The evaluation period covered WFP's transition from food aid (2005–2008) to food assistance (2009–2010); Uganda was viewed as a vanguard country for the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2013). Intended FFA beneficiaries were refugees, IDPs, host communities, resettled people and agropastoralists in 645 villages of five sub-regions of northern Uganda.[11] FFA activities were scattered geographically and over time, and varied in intensity within individual areas.

14. Corporate reporting systems for PRROs do not record the locations of assets, or expenditures by specific activities. The evaluation estimated that from 2005 to 2010, 329,000 households participated in FFA activities (see Table 2), with overall programme costs of approximately USD 2.1 million per year – 2 percent of the WFP country office's total inputs in northern Uganda. Up to 90 days of food rations were provided to participants during lean seasons.

Table 2: Estimated FFA Participants by Project, 2005 – 2010

		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
PRRO	101210	19 866	-	-	-	-	-
	101211	28 720	91 552	106 240	12 603	-	-
	101212	-	-	-	21 177	32 280	-
Country programme (CP)	104260	-	8 004	5 435	3 987	725	-
	108070	-	-	-	-	-	49 434
Participants est. (excl. overlap)	EST. TOTAL	28 720	91 552	106 240	21 177	32 280	49 434
GRAND TOTAL: 329 403							

Sources: WFP standard project reports 2005–2010.

15. Collaborating partners included national and local governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Local leaders drew up lists of vulnerable households whose members were free to participate if interested.

16. Community mobilizers and partners designed asset proposals, which WFP approved based on the feasibility of the asset, the availability of technical partners and food, the establishment of management structures, and adherence to WFP's Enhanced Commitments to Women.

Findings

17. At the 200 locations sampled, 169 assets in 77 locations were established within the evaluation reference period.[12] The asset verification exercise found surviving assets in 39 percent of locations.

18. As shown in Table 3, most of the assets found were infrastructure, at 38 percent of the total, and natural resource assets, at 34 percent. The highest percentage of assets observed was in West Nile, with 37 percent, and the lowest in Teso and Lango, with 10 percent.

[11] According to Commodity Movement Processing and Analysis System (COMPAS) data provided by the country office.
[12] Of the 308 assets verified, 11 had unknown construction dates, 108 pre-dated 2005, and 20 were created after 2010.

Table 3: Assets Assessed, by Category and Sub-Region

Sub-region	Total		Asset category					
			Natural resource		Infrastructure		Other	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Acholi	45	26	17	10	13	7	15	9
West Nile	62	37	13	8	31	18	18	11
Karamoja	45	27	20	12	12	7	13	8
Teso and Lango	17	10	7	4	9	5	1	0
TOTAL	**169**	**100**	**57**	**34**	**64**	**38**	**48**	**28**

Source: Verification survey, 2013.

19. Table 4 shows the most common types of asset in each category.13 No single type represented more than 27 percent of the assets created in a sub-region. School woodlots and teachers' houses comprised the largest proportions of assets, at 21 and 14 percent respectively.

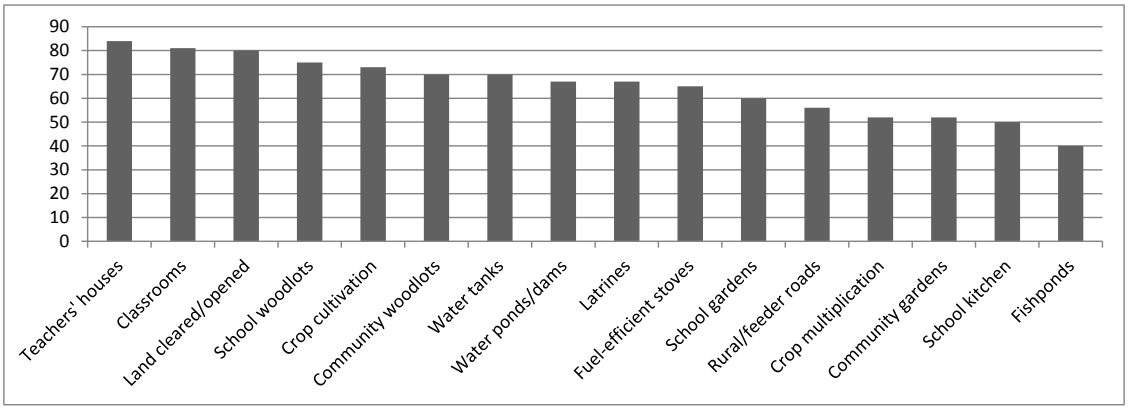
Table 4: Main Types of Assets Constructed by Category and Sub-Region

Sub-region	Natural resource		Infrastructure		Other	
Acholi (45 assets in total)	School woodlots	10 (22%)	Rural/feeder roads	7 (16%)	Water ponds/ dams	5 (11%)
West Nile (62)	School woodlots	10 (16%)	Teachers' houses	13 (21%)	Water ponds/ dams	6 (10%)
Karamoja (45)	School woodlots Water ponds/dams	12 (27%) 4 (9%)	Teachers' houses	7 (16%)	Fuel-efficient stoves	5 (11%)
Teso and Lango (17)	School woodlots	3 (18%)	Teachers' houses	4 (24%)	Class floor maintenance	1 (6%)

Source: Verification survey, 2013.

20. As shown in Figure 2, most assets were functional, apart from fishponds, of which only 40 percent were. Except for in Acholi, most assets had a functioning user group with responsibilities for asset management.

Figure 2: Asset functionality (%)



Source: Verification survey, 2013

13 Types found: 12 natural resource assets, 13 infrastructure assets and 20 other assets.

Effects on the Biophysical Environment

21. The theory of change and WFP's programme documents expected FFA to bring improvements in land productivity. As shown in Table 5, only 14 percent of survey respondents cited environmental benefits as the most significant change attributable to the assets created. In Karamoja, however, 17 percent of respondents cited increased access to seeds as the most significant change to their livelihoods.

Table 5: Perceptions of Biophysical Environmental Benefits (%)

Environmental benefits (14)	Acholi	Teso and Lango	Karamoja	West Nile	Overall
Trees as windbreakers or shade	3	2	1	1	**2**
Modified local climate	2	1	4	2	**2**
Soil erosion control	-	-	1	-	**< 1**
Land reclamation	-	-	-	1	**< 1**
Beautification	-	-	-	1	**< 1**
Increased fuelwood	5	2	1	3	**3**
Increased fish availability	-	1	-	-	**< 1**
Increased access to seeds	-	-	17	1	**5**
Increased crop yields	1	1	2	-	**1**

Source: Household survey, 2013.

22. According to interviews and focus group discussions, cassava multiplication – 2 percent of the assets observed – was a short-lived but influential intervention in Acholi that met the immediate need for cassava cuttings. Rural roads – 5 percent of observed assets – helped returnees to reach their villages and farmland; and woodlots – 24 percent – mitigated environmental degradation around camps. However, the assets created did not overcome larger constraints to agricultural productivity, particularly security, and the need for draught animal traction for land cultivation. As peace returned, people's access to their land improved, partly as a result of road construction, although extra efforts were needed to clear overgrown fields.

23. With 75 percent still functioning,[14] woodlots[15] were more successfully maintained than other assets; qualitative and quantitative data indicated that school woodlots had the highest survival rates, but their productive capacity was limited by their size, the species used, community management, poor maintenance arrangements and weak market connections.[16]

24. The water ponds and dams observed tended to be relatively large and provided water for both cattle and irrigation. Given the importance of agropastoralism, it was significant that these were the only assets identified as benefiting cattle keepers and were few in number, reaching only 3 percent of the beneficiaries identified in the verification survey.

Effects on Food Security and Livelihood

25. The most frequently reported livelihood effects attributed to FFA were the direct short-term impacts of addressing the food gap created when displaced persons returned to their home areas, and of the technical skills acquired, which together

14 Verification survey, 2013.
15 Including community woodlots, not included in Table 4.
16 Asset verification and secondary observation, 2013.

were mentioned by 21 percent of respondents (see Table 6). Other important perceived changes related to social sectors – education and health – mentioned by 21 percent, and economic benefits, mentioned by 19 percent.

26. Across sub-regions, 82 percent of respondents reported that FFA food was directly consumed. The proportion was lower in the dynamic contexts of Acholi, Teso and Lango than in the chronic contexts of West Nile and Karamoja, suggesting that households in areas with returnees were more likely to use food transfers as a source of capital to restart livelihoods, while those in conditions of chronic food insecurity or in refugee settings were more likely to use them to fill a food gap directly.

27. Given the relative importance of woodlots and food transfer benefits, fewer than expected time and energy savings and diet/nutrition benefits at the household level were identified, although there were significant gender differences, as indicated in the following section.

Table 6: Perceptions of Economic, Social and Household Level Benefits (%)

Benefits		**Acholi**	**Teso and Lango**	**Karamoja**	**West Nile**	**Overall**
Direct (21)	Food provision	15	6	22	10	**14**
	Technical skills	3	7	9	10	**7**
Economic (19)	Increased savings or income	6	12	5	9	**7**
	Improved standards of living	9	8	2	2	**5**
	Access to markets and services	9	6	7	3	**6**
	Rural development	1	-	-	1	**<1**
Social sector (21)	Clean water	6	1	2	1	**3**
	Improved sanitation, health and hygiene	5	13	6	3	**6**
	Retention of teachers in remote rural areas	3	13	2	5	**6**
	Increased enrolment of children in school	1	-	-	4	**1**
	Increased attendance of teachers	-	4	1	9	**3**
	Improved education performance	2	4	1	5	**3**
Household-level (1)	Job opportunities	1	-	-	1	**<1**
	Improved nutrition/diet	-	1	1	-	**<1**
	Time and energy savings	-	2	1	-	**<1**
Other (17)	No change/impact/don't know	20	2	12	25	**17**

Household survey, 2013.

Effects on Women and Gender Dynamics

28. Table 7 suggests that higher impacts on women were associated with agropastoral-based livelihoods. In Acholi and West Nile, about half of respondents reported at least one significant positive impact for women, compared with 76 percent in Teso and Lango and 89 percent in Karamoja.

Table 7: Perceptions of Most Significant Changes for Women (%)

	55	76	89	52	**66**
Food provision	6	17	27	8	**14**
Increased savings or income	5	6	8	5	**6**
Group mobilization/organization /motivation	8	4	7	2	**5**
Fuelwood	7	7	6	6	**6**
No change/impact/ don't know	45	24	11	48	**34**

Source: Household survey, 2013.

29. In Table 8, perceived changes in livelihoods in general are compared with perceived changes for women. Direct, economic, social and environmental benefits, such as improved technical skills, access to markets and seeds and standards of living, were reported to be significantly lower for women, while community cohesion and household benefits, such as self-reliance, security, group mobilization, job opportunities, diet and time savings, were reported to be significantly higher.

Table 8: Perceptions of the Most Significant Benefits (%)

For livelihoods overall		**For women**
21	**Direct**	**17**
19	**Economic**	**11**
21	**Social sector**	**11**
6	**Community cohesion**	**12**
14	**Environmental**	**9**
1	**Household-level**	**6**
17	**Other**	**34**

Source: Household survey, 2013.

30. FFA did not challenge established gender roles in which women provide the main productive capacity for agriculture, while men control resources and decision-making. According to WFP field staff and local government, although women did most of the work in FFA consistent with traditional cultural roles, they did not acquire greater control over the assets constructed. However, FFA was found to enhance self-reliance for some women through experience of tasks previously seen as the preserve of men, such as road building.

31. Although environmental benefits were rated lower for women than overall – 9 percent versus 14 percent – perceived benefits from improved access to fuelwood were much higher for women, accounting for two-thirds of the 9 percent of perceived environmental benefits for women. Productive woodlots also provided strong direct benefits for women by relieving the fuelwood collection burden that primarily affects

women and girls.[17] Income-generating assets, such as fishponds, were reported as remaining under men's control.

32. Informants in local government and NGOs suggested that an unintended effect of the encouragement of women's participation in FFA was to exacerbate the erosion of men's sense of responsibility for household production, which originated with effects of the conflict that included loss of livestock, trauma and alcoholism.

Effects on Community Resilience

33. Although WFP's investment in FFA in northern Uganda was relatively limited for the context, FFA contributed to community cohesion, with 6 percent of the significant changes reported relating to group dynamics and mobilization (see Table 9). As noted, this area of benefit was significantly more important to women, for whom these changes were reported by 12 percent of households.

34. Substantive data on longer-term resilience effects were almost entirely absent, but two examples from the evaluation emphasize the need for careful consideration of longer-term unintended impacts. Fast-maturing cassava varieties, accounting for 2 percent of observed assets, were selected to help address the food and agricultural needs of returning IDPs. However, some interviewees expressed concern that these varieties now dominated cassava production, while traditional varieties were more appropriate because they can be left in the field, are less susceptible to diseases and pests, and regerminate year after year.

35. The widespread use of food bags in camps in Acholi, Teso and Lango may have contributed to eroding traditional resilience mechanisms such as granaries after IDPs returned home. The advantages of granaries include lower susceptibility to cross-infestation, and public access, which hinders re-sale and increases women's control of stocks.

Table 9: Community Cohesion Benefits (%)

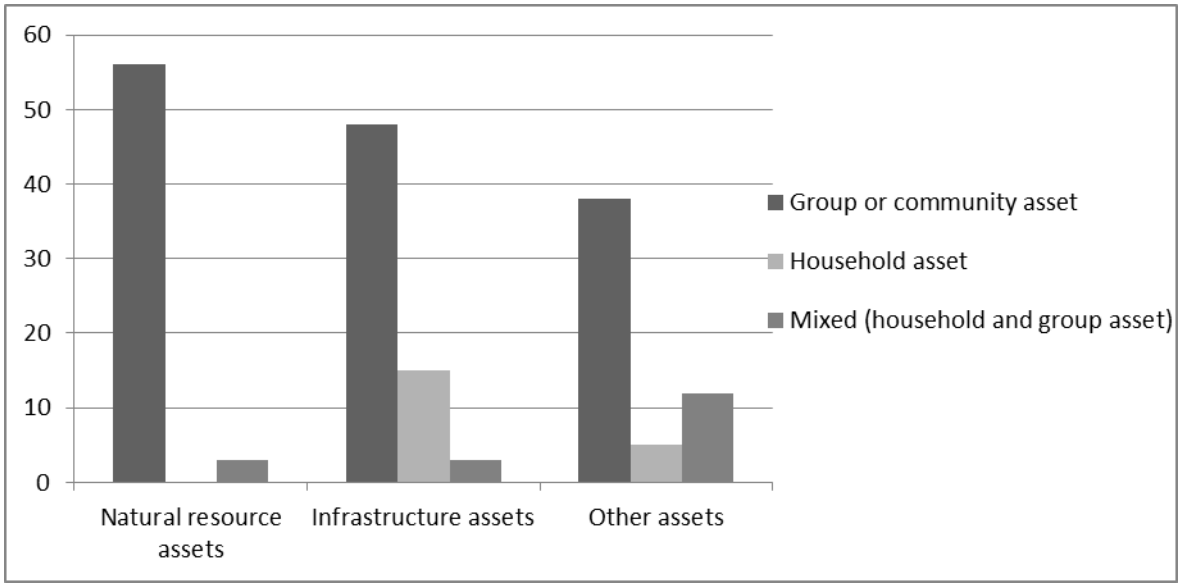
Community cohesion (6)	Acholi	Teso and Lango	Karamoja	West Nile	Overall
Self-reliance	2	1	1	-	**1**
Optimism	1	1	1	4	**2**
Improved security	1	1	-	-	**< 1**
Group mobilization/organization/motivation	3	6	1	2	**3**

Source: Household Survey, 2013.

1. Across all types, most assets were community assets, accounting for 79 percent of the total; 11 percent were household assets, and 10 percent were mixed assets (see Figure 3).

17 According to 6 percent of households, increased fuelwood availability – a result of woodlots – was the single largest impact for women. Overall it ranked as the second most important reported change for women, after access to food.

Figure 3: Ownership, by asset category



Source: Asset verification, 2013.

2. The transition of asset ownership when IDPs left camps was not clear and was not effectively addressed in the FFA design.

3. Qualitative evidence found that FFA activities were managed more sustainably when they targeted host populations rather than temporary residents such as refugees. This finding reflects comparisons of data from the dynamic conflict contexts of Teso and Lango with data from Acholi, where there are more camps.

4. The evaluation found that communities continued to maintain assets long after construction, with more than 80 percent of asset users reporting participation in maintenance. More than two-thirds of asset users were connected to schools, which were the most common beneficiaries of the FFA assets surveyed. However, respondents made few links between school-related assets and higher-level improvements in education (see Table 6).

5. According to WFP records and field staff interviews, asset selection was through community mobilizers who matched community priorities with project requirements. Despite these efforts, however, the survey found that across sub-regions, between 39 and 53 percent of households perceived that WFP had selected the assets constructed.

6. In areas of prolonged conflict – Acholi and Karamoja – more households reported that FFA did not disrupt other productive activities than in less affected areas, with 80–90 and 60–70 percent respectively.[18] The most stable sub-region, West Nile, had the highest perception of disruption, reported by 37 percent of households, suggesting that more refined targeting is necessary in chronic contexts, as has been attempted in Karamoja since 2010.

18 Household surveys.

Factors Affecting Impact

External Factors

7. The effects of external contextual factors on livelihoods resilience are particularly important in the dynamic conflict-affected, transition and chronically food-insecure context of northern Uganda during the evaluation period. The main external drivers of change in livelihoods and resilience identified were: i) reduced insecurity; ii) relatively good weather throughout the year; and iii) market demand from South Sudan.19 The evaluation observed that the effects of these drivers were likely to outweigh the livelihoods effects of FFA interventions, most of which had been selected for their short-term rather than longer-term livelihood impacts.

8. Differences in the functionality of assets among sub-regions suggest that asset type is not the only determinant of long-term functioning. For example, in Teso and Lango, where 89 percent of infrastructure was found to be functional, roads enabled new settlement areas to be established and organizations such as Oxfam and the International Committee of the Red Cross to deliver services in remote rural areas.[20] Assets were more functional where people had complementary support through education, health care, water and agricultural extension.[21]

9. WFP's coordination with government structures and work within the overall relief effort were outstanding, with FFA areas selected with partners. FFA was most effective where programming was done jointly with the National Agricultural Advisory Services or other partners. However, the relationship between WFP and the Food and Agriculture of the United Nations (FAO) was hampered by unresolved design differences between FFA and FAO's Farmer Field Schools, reducing opportunities to deliver technical quality at scale.[22]

Internal Factors

10. The evaluation found four main factors that affected the scope and effectiveness of FFA in northern Uganda:

- the technical quality of the asset design within the local context;
- the capacity and scope for participatory, local-level planning processes;
- the values placed on different asset types by populations under stress; and
- the uncertainties of programme planning, including population movements and contextual changes, staffing and funding.

11. Although FFA activities were reported to boost the morale of WFP field staff by providing opportunities to contribute to longer-term developmental goals, high staff turnover created gaps in implementation and partnerships, with WFP unable to institutionalize a successful mechanism for hand-over and the orientation of incoming FFA staff.

12. WFP's logistics and pipeline were critical to positive impact. Operational factors play a vital role in relationships with communities, and assets were better maintained where there were fewer setbacks. While 44 percent of respondents

19 These were also identified in the WFP 2013 comprehensive food security and vulnerability analysis.
20 Key informant interviews.
21 Fuzzy set analysis in Karamoja, Teso and Lango (see footnote 9).
22 Farmer Field Schools extend context-specific technical assistance to farmers. Associated with FAO, the approach is also used by other organizations. Participation is voluntary: farmers are motivated by the desire to improve their productivity. No direct transfer/incentive is made, so there is often a perception that FFA – by offering incentives for work – can draw farmers away from the schools.

reported no or few problems with implementation, 32 percent of those reporting problems mentioned lack of tools, and 28 percent late deliveries of inputs.

Conclusions and Recommendations

13. Project documents stated that FFA objectives were related to restoring livelihoods and strengthening resilience. In practice, however, 2005–2010 FFA activities in northern Uganda were primarily oriented towards addressing short-term objectives, including immediate relief of food gaps and creation of productive assets. While FFA was intended to be a recovery mechanism for providing food as people restored their livelihoods, recurrent shocks continued to affect the populations targeted by FFA activities.

14. While WFP's FFA operations should be viewed in the context of its far larger relief efforts during the early part of the evaluation period, and the arguably more significant external drivers of livelihoods resilience in northern Uganda, the main finding of this evaluation was that people appreciated the food delivery in times of need. WFP was one of few agencies that responded at scale to the transition from conflict. Stakeholders reported FFA as effective and necessary in: i) filling the food gap experienced by returnees; and ii) shifting the mind-set of communities and other service providers from relief to transition. WFP's operational scale enabled the placing of assets to take advantage of the peace dividend.

15. The conditional transfer modality was introduced when most programmes in the region provided unconditional relief. This helped the gradual shift to recovery programming as populations were expected increasingly to contribute time and resources to their own development. Although loosely targeted conditional transfers represented important progress from hand-outs, they continued the practice of paying for self-help work, which the evaluation observed contributed to dependency among the population. Shifting to household-based vulnerability targeting as early as feasible in the recovery phase would mitigate this risk.

16. Three major patterns were identified from the data:

i) Positive impacts on women were most felt in agropastoral communities.
ii) Challenges with asset ownership were most prevalent in camp settlements, given the transient nature of the population.
iii) Food transfers were more likely to be consumed directly by households affected by chronic food gaps than by beneficiaries in post-conflict return areas, who more readily used rations as a source of capital.

17. Most surviving community assets[23] had a small but positive impact on income at either the community or household level, with 33 percent of the changes reported relating to economic or resource access benefits such as seeds, fuelwood, water and job opportunities.

18. Asset design tended to reflect the urgency of implementation, and focused on providing solutions to immediate problems. WFP's action-oriented approach to FFA was acknowledged as effective and necessary by external informants. The evaluation findings offer several lessons for the design of FFA in transition situations, including the following:

- The programming and design of FFA interventions in conflict and transition

23 Comprising woodlots, ponds/dams/tanks, stoves, gardens and roads – 48 percent of the assets verified.

contexts must be conflict-sensitive, for instance regarding land ownership, and include risk mitigation planning to address emerging environmental challenges.24

- Understanding, supporting and re-establishing traditional management systems such as cattle herding, granaries and traditional varieties are important for resilience.
- The success of FFA depends on performance across all of WFP, and not just the quality of the programme team.

Recommendations

19. Many of the lessons for design and implementation emerging from this evaluation are already being applied by the WFP country office in its current programming for Karamoja. WFP's corporate guidance on FFA programming and on gender programming have also been substantially changed since the period reviewed. Recommendations are therefore intended to support WFP's ongoing efforts.

20. **Recommendation 1: WFP should carry out a corporate roll-out of the updated (2013) FFA programme guidance at the country-office level.** This investment in capacity development and dissemination of corporate guidance is important to mitigate the impacts of the high turnover of field staff and address previously inadequate or lack of training and hand-over. The roll-out should include a corporate prioritized and budgeted plan for the short to medium term timeline to ensure relevance to country office programming needs. [Headquarters]

21. **Recommendation 2: The country office should formally commit to carrying out the requisite follow-up actions to the FFA guidance roll-out for effective knowledge transfer and retention at the field level,** including through: i) participating staff's commitment to remaining in post for a minimum period, to develop effective capacity in the country office; ii) linking the performance plans of participating staff to key areas of the guidance; and iii) planning adequate levels of country office FFA staffing and Headquarters technical support to sustain and extend FFA capacity. [Uganda country office]

22. **Recommendation 3: Jointly with complementary sector partners, develop a strategic FFA plan that ensures deployment of the necessary technical capacity,** based on: i) a three-pronged approach to FFA in resilience-building efforts, comprising integrated gender and context analysis, seasonal livelihoods programming, and participatory community-based planning; ii) a common understanding of how WFP's FFA and other initiatives can complement each other in the transition from relief to development; and iii) a comprehensive analysis of the specific risks faced by communities that integrates gender issues, land ownership and traditional resilience mechanisms. [Uganda country office with Regional Bureau and Headquarters support]

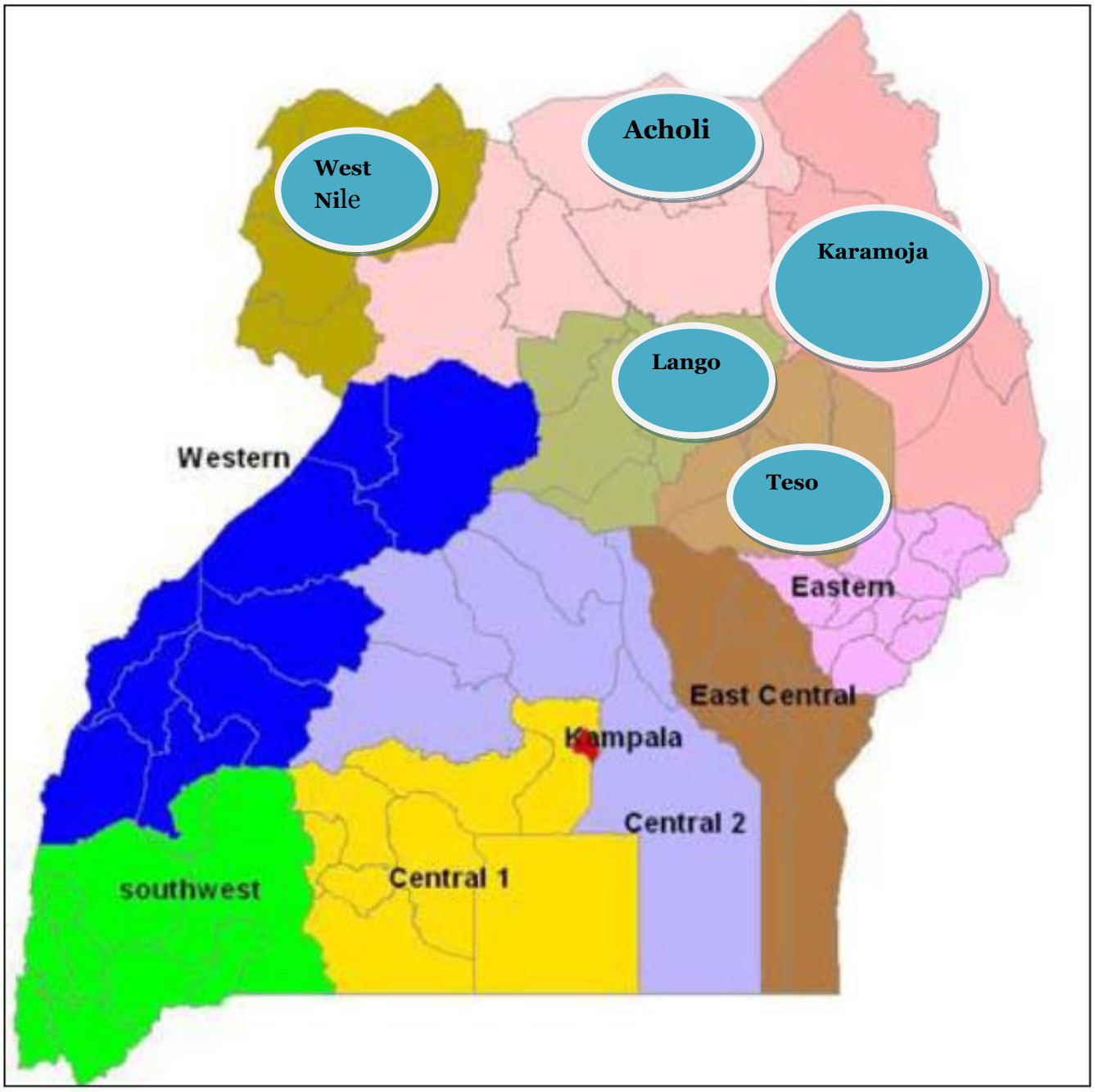
23. **Recommendation 4: Develop a multi-year operational FFA implementation plan that involves country office management, programming, operational and support units, and takes into account the seasonality of activities and the lead times for procurement and delivery.**

24 Such as soil erosion linked to land opening.

This plan should enable the implementation of WFP's corporate objectives in Uganda, pre-empt bottlenecks and include predefined mitigation strategies. [Uganda country office]

24. **Recommendation 5: Include in WFP's corporate FFA guidance, lessons learned for FFA in transition contexts,** related to the early introduction in the recovery phase of vulnerability-based household targeting and of a community communication strategy that emphasizes the time-bound nature of conditional FFA transfers. [Headquarters and country offices]

Map of Uganda with Sub Regions



Source: Comprehensive Food Security & Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA). Uganda April 2009 (WFP 2009)

1. Introduction

1.1 Evaluation Features

1. The Evaluation of Impact of Food for Assets on Livelihood Resilience in Uganda is one of a series commissioned by the World Food Programme (WFP) Office of Evaluation (OEV) to assess the outcomes and impact on livelihoods resilience achieved by FFA, and identify changes needed to better deliver on potential resilience impacts and generate lessons on how can FFA activities be better aligned with the 2011 FFA Guidance Manual and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) policy[25] in five countries (Guatemala, Nepal, Bangladesh, Senegal and Uganda), and for which an overarching methodology to serve both accountability and learning purposes was developed.

2. The evaluation assessed the outcomes and impacts associated with the food for assets (FFA) components[26] implemented from 2005-2010 within four WFP projects in Uganda: Country Programmes (CP) 10426.0 (2006-2010) and 10807.0 (2009-2014), and; Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO) 10121.1 (2005-2008) and 10121.2 (2008-2009). The Terms of Reference (TORs), including objectives and intended users, are presented in Annex 1.

3. The evaluation addressed three core questions: (a) What positive and negative impacts have the FFA activities had on individuals within participating households and communities? (b) What factors were critical in affecting outcomes and impact?; (c) How can the FFA activities be improved to address the findings emerging from the first two questions? Related sub questions and indicators are set out in an Evaluation Matrix at Annex 2

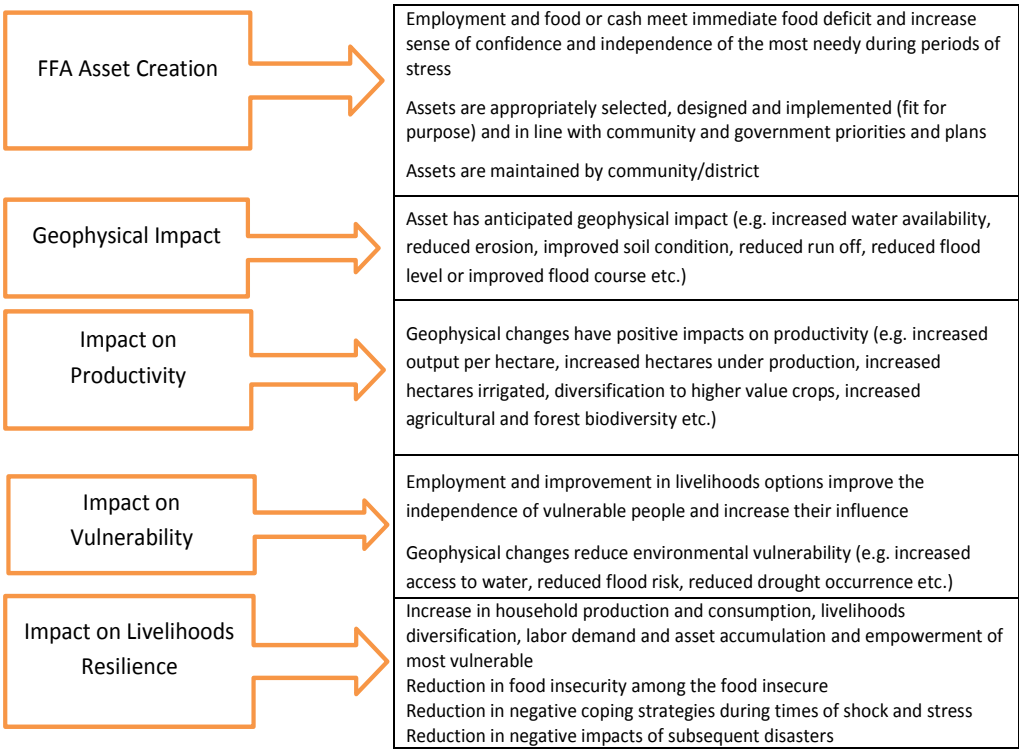
4. The evaluation was conducted by an independent team from IOD PARC[27] over a five month period (February – June 2013). The evaluation team, timeline of activities and details of quality assurance are set out at Annex 3. Annex 4 and 5 respectively provide details of people met and bibliography.

5. A focus was given to natural resource assets[28], based on the assumption that WFP most often works in fragile environments with limited production potential - which was however not the case in most of Northern Uganda (with the exception of parts of Karamoja). The root cause of food insecurity however was largely conflict related: linked to access to land and the productive capacity of farmers – not to land fertility itself. As agreed at inception, the evaluation considered infrastructure (and energy efficiency) assets to be directly relevant to food security and resilience, as roads and schools enabled returnees to access and reopen ancestral lands. Training (food-for-training) was considered as a contributing factor to effective construction or maintenance of physical assets.

6. The evaluation series' refers to a simplified logic model for FFA interventions, based on a theory of change (ToC) derived from the 2011 FFA Guidance Manual and the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Policy and validated through dialogue with WFP staff, partners and beneficiaries during evaluation planning. See Figure 1.

25 The programmes evaluated were designed and implemented prior to the adoption of the FFA Manual and DRR policy. However, goals are broadly similar and the evaluation TOR emphasised learning.
26 including related Food for Training
27 IOD PARC is a UK based consultancy (www.iodparc.com).
28 As recommended in the series' ToR

Figure 1: Simplified ToC for FFA



Source: TOR (Annex 1)

7. The model is broadly linear, with long-term impacts expected to result from compounded short- and medium-term outcomes. In the model, the short term intended impacts relate to the alleviation of urgent food needs through cash/food distribution, and the immediate effects of the assets created. Medium term impacts relate to bio-physical change, increased agricultural productivity and livelihoods options. Longer term impacts concern sustained improvements in livelihoods resilience, primarily derived from the asset created rather than the process of FFA itself.

8. Expected impacts depend on assumed following associated factors being adequately addressed during planning, execution and follow-up:

- Supportive external context;
- Accurate risk and livelihood analysis;
- FFA activities carried out to required standards;
- Adequate and predictable funding;
- Food and non-food items provided;
- Technical assistance and other capacity available;
- Complementary interventions in the same areas by WFP and other actors;
- Community and/or government ownership, with adequate arrangements for asset maintenance and operations.

Food for Assets in Uganda Theory of Change

9. The underlying ToC was adapted to the country context at inception phase, acknowledging the unique setting of the period in focus in terms of multiple complex

emergencies in Northern Uganda[29] where FFA was concentrated. Drawing on the series' ToC, the evaluation team, reconstructed the implicit programme logic[30] used through dialogue with WFP staff, partners and beneficiaries (see Section 1.3 and Annex 11-a).

10. Reflecting the fluid context, in its analysis of findings the evaluation considered the contribution of FFA not as distinct linear steps, but as concurrent elements of change from vulnerability to resilience[31], as well as with the standards for evidence set out in the Evaluability Assessment (of a 'plausible association' existing between the interventions, outcomes and impacts).

11. The mixed quantitative and qualitative methods approach summarised in Fig. 2 included: document and corporate data review, interviews, observation, focus group discussions, and a survey at community level. The evaluation methodology applied a qualitative comparative analysis applying a non-binary approach (reflective of the explicit intervention logic of FFA in Uganda and inherent assumptions made), or 'fuzzy-set analysis' to process the large amount of assets verification and household data generated, to identify patterns in variables thought to be influential (either in terms of WFP's assumptions or in the findings emerging from interviews). To triangulate the fuzzy set analysis, qualitative analysis of key informant interviews and focus group discussions were used. (see Annex 6 for Evaluation Methodology and Annex 7 for details on the Fuzzy set indicators and data analysis process).

12. The evaluation results are drawn from: 601 household interviews (HHS) - 36% female respondents, 64% male; 169 direct asset observations from the verification exercise of assets (AA); 30 key informant semi-structured interviews (SSI) and; two focus group discussions (FGD) per sub-region (eight in total, used as comparative case-studies).

Figure 2 – Overview of Methodology

Source: Inception Mission Report (2013

5 Northern Uganda for the purposes of this evaluation includes the sub-regions of West Nile, Acholi, Lango, Teso and Karamoja.

30 See Table 3 of Inception Report – changes in conceptualisation and use of FFA by WFP Uganda 2002-2010

31 Based on Pasteur, K (2011) in Practical Action, *Vulnerability to Resilience Model*. It encompasses: livelihoods, governance, hazards and stresses, and future uncertainties, framed in a circular model

13. The inception phase had given rise to a case-based approach to the methodology[32], and the initial analysis was constructed around two comparative cases of a dynamic and of a chronic context (as illustrated in Figure 3 below); 'typified' cases based on the nature of populations' movements and their consequent relationships with the assets created. However no significant differences were found within the analysis of the evaluation findings, between these two contexts (see Section 2).

Figure 3: Main characteristics across dynamic and chronic cases

<table>
<tr><th>Case</th><th colspan="2">Dynamic</th><th colspan="2">Chronic</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Main beneficiaries</td><td colspan="2">IDPs
Resettlement</td><td colspan="2">Refugees
Agro-pastoralists</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Host Communities</td></tr>
<tr><td>Period</td><td>2005-2007
(Dynamic early)</td><td colspan="2">2007-2009
(Dynamic late / Chronic) early)</td><td>2009-2011
(Chronic late)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Sub-region character</td><td colspan="4">Dynamic - Acholi, Teso & Lango</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Chronic - West Nile, Karamoja</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Main FFA activities reported</td><td>Teacher houses and classrooms</td><td>Demonstration Gardens</td><td>Land opening/clearing</td><td>Other (community buildings)</td></tr>
<tr><td>Watershed management and school enhancement (woodlots)</td><td>Water ponds, fish ponds and dams</td><td>Rural roads (connectivity)</td><td>Community capacity building</td></tr>
</table>

Source: Compiled by the authors based on WFP programme documents and SPRs

14. The main limitations of the methods included: lack of information on assets created (including location, implementation logic and baseline), and the absence of a comparison base in the implementation context [33]. There are a number of confounding factors in Northern Uganda 2005-2010 that precluded the analysis of impacts using a comparative approach:

- FFA implementation in the context of conflict, with no baseline data (or records of where assets were constructed);
- Difficulties identifying actual FFA participants due to the return of displaced people and refugees. Many of the camps that were centres for FFA activities no longer exist;
- Many households were displaced, traumatised and practising extreme coping strategies;
- Large external forces (such as peace settlements) created significant changes in livelihood strategies, likely to be much greater than effects of the FFA intervention;

32 See Inception Report for details and Annex 6 on Methodology

33 Of the 601 household interviewed, 519 were present at the time of construction, and 82 were now current users. A third anticipated group of participants that would have moved out of the area was abandoned in the absence of a credible means to identify them.

- Difficulty of identifying comparison groups who did not receive assistance given the scale of the WFP programme at the time.

15. The exact locations of assets built using FFA during the period 2005-2010 being unknown, a reconstruction of the total picture was developed at inception by the evaluation team using a data from the Commodity Movement Processing and Analysis System (COMPAS), the recollection of sub-office staff, Vulnerability Assessment and Mapping (VAM) data, concept papers and other sources[34]. This was mitigated by an additional 'verification step' in the methodology (see Annex 7 for Verification Report).

16. As stated, the programme logic was reconstructed through concerted dialogue (of which a workshop with WFP staff). FFA 2005-2010 in Uganda was a broad-based intervention, placing individual assets independently from one another so as to contribute to local goals: buffering against immediate losses (e.g. woodlots around camps), or supporting the population towards self-reliance (e.g. roads allowing them to access abandoned lands). FFA provided a 'bridging' food during seasonal agriculture gaps and promoted a work-ethic, rather than simply providing a 'handout', for those able to work. In assessing impacts, the evaluation team notes that FFA activities could have led to increased production by allowing people to reopen their lands, rather than by strictly a biophysical contribution; or that, by enabling Government expansion into return areas, FFA may have impacted livelihoods resilience other than through impacts on productivity. However there was a need to make assumptions about which fuzzy set indicators were sufficient to represent a variable, and what the external benchmark of that variable was[35]. These assumptions were mitigated by triangulating findings with qualitative comparative analysis of interviews and with the literature review of other evaluations.

17. At the level of assets and households, the absence of baseline data meant that the evaluation was reliant on the veracity of recall information, which in turn relied on the ability of respondents to disentangle FFA from other WFP or other agencies' interventions. This was mitigated through triangulation of data, and by the fact that the scale of WFP programming made it stand-out in respondents' memories.

1.2 Context of FFA Activities in Uganda (2005-2009)

18. The scope of this evaluation covers a period of conflict, multiple refugee emergencies, drought and flooding[36]. WFP was called on to respond to multiple dynamic concurrent emergencies, often operating under the protection of heavily armed escorts[37]. As a large logistical operation, WFP had to continuously predict where its resources would be required and to foresee large internal movements of populations. The challenging nature of the operating environment was reflected in the assumptions made by WFP in its programme documents and in the communications of the international humanitarian community[38].

34 See Inception Report for details, and Annex 6 on Methodology
35 For example, making the assumption that the number of violent incidents reported can represent levels of insecurity; and in determining how many violent incidents were needed to classify a situation as fully insecure.
36 See Annex 9 for profiles of sub-regions based on information assembled by the Evaluation Team during the evaluation and see Annex 10 for detailed collation of relevant secondary data by sub-regions in respect to various aspects including poverty, equality (social exclusion/ gender), climate change, and security.
37 OCHA humanitarian updates from the time.
38 For example, IDPs did not return to their homes as hoped in 2005/06, responding to unexpected increases in violence. Then, with the comprehensive peace plan reached between 2006/08, IDPs moved faster and in larger numbers than agencies – then preparing for a breakdown in the peace settlement (which seemed a strong possibility) – were able to predict.

19. In retrospect, the 2006/08 peace plan was a watershed event in Northern Uganda[39], after which the humanitarian imperative – and stakeholders – switched focus from the wider regions to Karamoja[40]. Local governments replaced the cluster system as the mechanism for coordination, refugees began returning home, and the main shocks became natural hazards (particularly floods). Debates about how to prioritise assistance occurred: some humanitarian agencies, including Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), emphasised the closing of temporary camps and assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) through return packages; the Government, its state security responsibilities and the need to restart production through the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS). WFP and UNICEF had large humanitarian operations seen by some donors as potential capacity to 'build-back-better' social services[41].

20. The period 2005-2010 furthermore included a marked transition for WFP from food aid (2005-08) to food assistance (2009-10). As a vanguard country for the new corporate strategy, this shift was highly visible in Uganda and included a rapid movement of FFA away from the North and West and towards Karamoja.

21. An implicit assumption in most of the planning of the time was that life, and livelihoods, could return to the pre-conflict condition. Interviews with partners revealed that WFP was one of the first agencies to acknowledge that this was not always the case. For some IDPs, the temporary camps became new villages, as they had no homes to return to. Loss of livestock and interceding coping strategies[42] changed livelihoods irreversibly.

22. The populations reached by WFP, including FFA participants, had experienced high levels of trauma and abduction. Between 2005-2006 around 1.6 million people lived in 164 IDP camps. By 2008, more than 650,000 people (many of them children) had been abducted, including 12.7% of Acholi sub-region[43]. Around 34,000 people in Gulu and Kitgum were 'night commuters', working their fields by day and returning to the safety of camps at night. Whilst the poverty headcount of Northern Uganda did reduce (from 63.3% in 2002/03 to 46.2% in 2009/10), it remained throughout the period under review, at about double the national levels[44].

23. The proportion of households experiencing shocks has been high across all sub-regions, however, the nature of shocks experienced has changed significantly over time. In 2004, households in Acholi, Lango, and Teso reported high levels of rebel raids (ranging from 30 to 70%) and an inability to work in fields; West Nile and Karamoja households were heavily affected by droughts (45-57%); and cattle rustling was a major factor in Karamoja, Teso and Lango. By 2009, insecurity and looting of assets was affecting 94% of households in some parts of Karamoja, whereas high food prices and poor rains were the major issues reported by households in the rest of Northern Uganda[45].

24. Overall food insecurity changed considerably over time, with varying trends between sub-regions (see Table 1). Acholi sub-region, the centre of violence and

39 Prior to the 2006/2008 peace plan, Northern Uganda was a complex emergency, with an extensive humanitarian cluster system, strong external coordination and decision-making mechanisms, and an imperative to protect lives and livelihoods
40 Interviews with UN partners, Inception Mission.
41 Interviews from Inception Missions.
42 In 2005, it was estimated that around 50% of the total population in Acholi sub-region and 30% of the population in Lango were temporarily dependent on food aid.
43 OCHA humanitarian updates, UNICEF briefings.
44 Uganda National Household survey data.
45 Ibid.

displacement before the 2006/8 peace plan, recorded a reduction in food insecurity from 33% of the population in 2005 to 2.2% in 2008. West Nile and Lango, affected by refugees and IDPs from regional conflicts, also reported significant drops in food insecurity in this time. Conversely, the agro-pastoralist sub-regions of Karamoja and Teso recorded increases in food insecurity linked to climatic stresses[46].

Table 1: Proportions of the population categorised as food insecure

Year	West Nile	Acholi	Lango	Teso	Karamoja
2005	7%	33%	12%	3%	18%
2008	1.1%	2.2%	1.6-7.2%	5.3%	20.4%

Source: WFP CVFSA studies, 2005, 2009

25. Markets were an important feature of the context – especially in Acholi – with a huge demand emerging from South Sudan. This had both positive and negative consequences for food security, with many farmers selling their crops at a loss because of poor financial literacy and low penetration of cooperatives.

1.3 WFP's FFA Activities in Uganda

26. During the period 2005-2010, FFA was an element within the PRRO 10121.1, PRRO 10121.2, and the CP 10426.0 and CP 10807.0. Annual Standard Project Reports (SPR) report between 725 and 106,240 FFA participants per year across operations (see Table 2)[47]. The primary intended beneficiaries of FFA 2005-2010 were refugees, IDPs, host communities, resettlees and agro-pastoralists affected by drought-flood cycles and raiding[48]. No disaggregated data is available on the numbers of beneficiaries reached, by category.

Table 2: Reported FFA participants by project (2005-2010)

		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	
PRRO	***10121.0***	19,866						
	10121.1	28,720	91,552	106,240	12,603			
	10121.2				21,177	32,280		
CP	***10426.0***		8,004	5,435	3,987	725		
	10807.0						49,434	
Partcipants est. (excl. overlap)	EST. TOT	28,720	91,552	106,240	21,177	32,280	49,434	329,403

Source: WFP SPR for project documents from 2005 to 2010

27. Food distribution records taken from COMPAS indicate FFA activities undertaken in: 645 villages, in 281 sub-counties, in 24 districts, in 5 (present-day) sub-regions (see Annex 11b for a detailed worksheet of FFA from 2005-2010). According to a 2005 independent assessment of the Economic Transfer Value[49] of FFW in Uganda, a household receiving a standard 90 days ration under PRRO

46 Annex 9 and Annex 10 provide, respectively, information on key trends, and a summary of the secondary data by sub-region.
47 As reported per WFP SPR of related project documents for the 2005-2010 period – which are not systematically matched by the data made available to the mission (from the CO COMPAS and/or M&E data bases).
48 WFP Programme documents.
49 Economic transfer value is the local market value of the ration to beneficiaries given as an incentive or as payment during FFW. It indicates the economic benefit value of the programme to each beneficiary during the programme period.

10121.1 received US$69.30 in value at a fully inclusive cost to WFP of US$70.60[50]. However, the same evaluation found that funding shortfalls and redistribution at village level resulted in a reduction of FFW rations of between 50-85% in 2003-2004.

28. Throughout the period 2005-2010, an overall average of some 170, 000 metric tons (MT) of food were distributed annually for all WFP activities in Northern Uganda across the operations. Of this, around 3,000 MT of food were distributed each year for FFA, except for 2010 when the WFP Karamoja Productive Assets Programme (KPAP) increased this to 7,656 MT. The trend with FFA distribution is the reverse of the overall decline in food distribution across all programmes (see Table 3 and Figure 4).

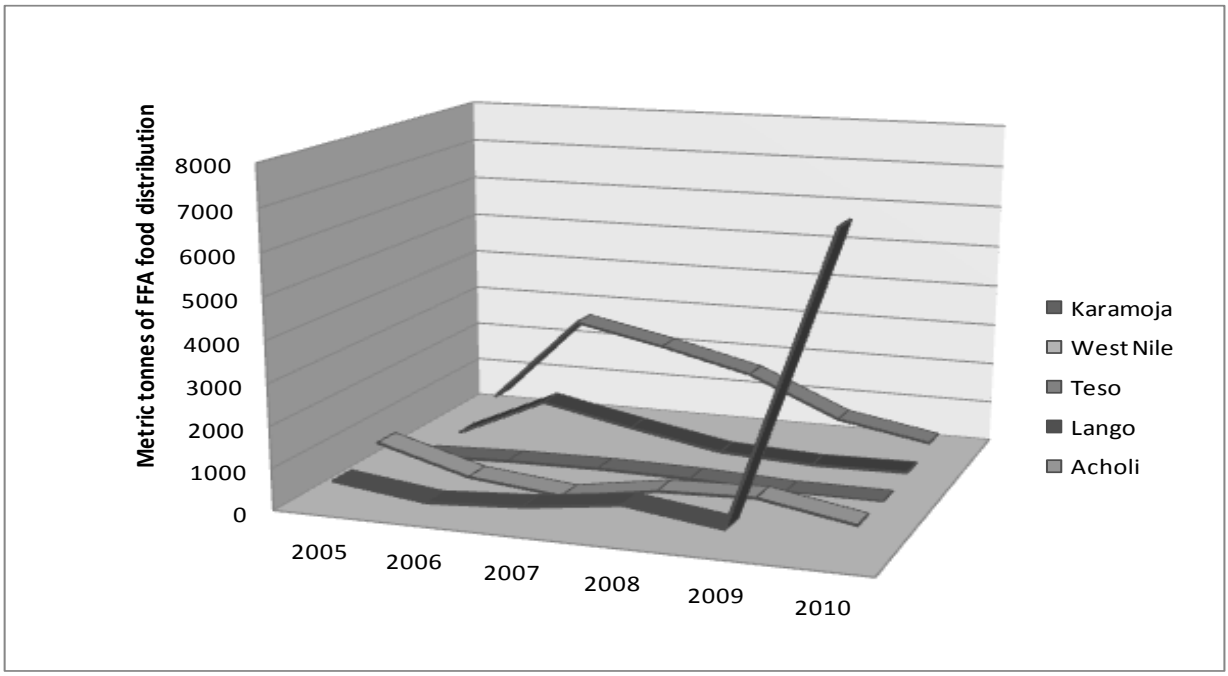
Table 3 FFA tonnage ventilation by sub-regions, as a percentage of WFP total tonnage (all activities)

Sub-region	FFA (Mt)						Time (FFA)Years	FFA Mt (2005-2010)	FFA / Total
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010			
West Nile	939	313	83	439	515	117	6 Y	2,407	10%
Karamoja	628	348	491	777	471	7,24	6 Y	9,963	43%
Chronic context	*1567*	*661*	*574*	*1216*	*986*	*7,365*	-	*12,370*	*53%*
Teso	0	81	114	90	0	0	3 Y	285	1%
Acholi	413	2,61	2,14	1,60	621	214	6 Y	7,601	33%
Lango	0	1,01	559	147	42	77	5 Y	1,842	8%
Dynamic context	*413*	*3,708*	*2,813*	*1,838*	*663*	*291*	-	*9,728*	*42%*
Kampala							1 Y	9	0%
Western	805	231					2 Y	1,037	4%
Total FFA	*2,786*	*4,601*	*3,388*	*3,054*	*1,658*	*7,656*	*6 Y*	***23,143***	***100%***
Total Mt (000')	237.8	212.1	204.8	167.2	137.6	60.9		1,020.5	
FFA % Total Mt	**1%**	**2%**	**2%**	**2%**	**1%**	**13%**		**2%**	

Source: WFP records

50 WFP/EB.A/2005/7-A. The Alpha Value (the ratio of the local market price to the total cost to WFP to deliver the commodity from an external source to the locality) for FFW was 0.784.

Figure 4: FFA distributions (mt) by sub-region



Source: Table 3 above

29. The dynamic situation required WFP sub office staff and implementing partners to innovate. Whilst CP programme documentation laid out the design of activities and participatory processes, WFP staff members serving at the time and historical files reviewed during sub-office visits[51] indicated that activities and beneficiaries were most often selected through negotiation with local leaders based on the field situation (see Annexes 12 to 15 that present sub-regional case studies). For instance, the construction of water assets was sometimes undertaken to engage with landowners who were hosting IDPs and needed a stake in the future value of their land; or cassava fields were planted as a 'raidable' resource on the boundary between Karamoja and Teso to prevent deeper incursion of raiding parties. This innovative (and mostly unrecorded) thinking seems to have often been orientated more towards protection and immediate stabilisation of a fragile peace than to the long-term contribution of an asset to the landscape and livelihoods[52].

30. Leading up to 2005, FFA activities were largely undertaken in a 'recovery' vacuum. As the only major presence operating outside of camps (due to its use of armed escorts), WFP's programmes were called on by the district authorities to help extend the visibility of the national presence in Northern Uganda[53]. Starting in 2008, WFP began to publicly position itself as a driver of innovative and joint UN programming and this would have influenced the strategic use of FFA[54]. Informal arrangements in the post-peace process era led to UN technical staff from other agencies sharing WFP offices and communications equipment: WFP's evaluation of PRRO 10121.0 records seed multiplication being undertaken jointly with FAO. The evolution in thinking about FFA (from support to resettlement, to livelihoods, to

51 Source: interviews during the Inception Mission with serving WFP staff members and former evaluators of WFP activities in Northern Uganda.
52 Interviews with WFP field staff during the Inception Mission.
53 Interviews with WFP field staff during the Inception Mission.
54 Ibid.

market-oriented public works) can be seen in WFP's programme documentation from the time (see Annex 11-a for a summary table on changes of conceptualisation of FFA in Uganda from 2002-2010).

31. In the period 2002-2005, FFA was positioned by WFP Uganda as part of a proactive policy to encourage and support the return of IDPs and refugees to their homes. By 2008, this had evolved to supporting the choices of displaced peoples and allowing them to establish livelihoods wherever they were. By 2009 FFA had begun to be conceptualised in the language of DRR and climate change (WFP Strategic Plan, 2008-2011). Throughout the evaluation period, however, a framing reference has been the concept of self-reliant households. Started as a UNHCR-led strategy for refugees, this had become national policy for IDPs and refugees by 2006/07. The use of FFA reflects WFP Uganda's thinking about self-reliance in this period: shifting from conserving the environment and enabling households to rehabilitate pre-conflict livelihoods, to enabling community adaptation and underpinning market interventions (see Annex 11 a). This is also indicative of the global shift from food aid to food assistance embedded in its 2008-2013 Strategic Plan.

32. Within this overall shift in conceptualisation, the assets reported in SPRs (see Annex 11 b) suggest that field activities were often responsive to movements of populations, political settlements, and periods of violence. This matches the description of how FFA was implemented by field staff and the FFA material of the time. Community Mobilisers worked with communities and NGO partners to assemble proposals for micro FFA activities that were submitted to Sub Offices and assessed by a committee in Kampala for their feasibility, adherence to WFP policy (including gender), and availability of funds. Whilst some work norms appear to have been established, most field staff recall negotiating the number of and size of tasks expected to be accomplished by participating households on a project-by-project basis.

33. Mapping the estimated frequency[55] of activities in SPRs against time reveals that rural road construction has been concentrated in periods of increased instability and during shocks. The planting of trees tends to track periods of concern about large displaced populations creating environmental loss, and land clearance has been a dominant feature of both the resettlement of IDPs in 2007 and the shift of focus to Karamoja in 2009/10.

34. The organisation of SPRs does not make it possible to disaggregate a precise value for the amount of money spent on FFA. However, in terms of metric tonnes, as illustrated in Table 3, FFA represented approximately 2% of WFP's total inputs into Northern Uganda between 2005-2010. Based on overall funding for the four WFP operations active over the same period, it is estimated that FFA equated to $2.1m/ year. Based on WFP's reported aggregate caseload of 329,403 beneficiaries[56], this equates to approx. $US 38 per beneficiary per year: consistent with the stated-above finding of WFP's assessment that actual value transfer was around half of what was planned[57].

35. Other large programmes pursuing similar goals operating at the time in the same areas as WFP FFA programming included: (i) the EU/FAO Agricultural Livelihood Recovery Project (ALREP) (reaching 86,145 direct beneficiaries through

55 Estimated because activities are reported differently over time (e.g. number of woodlots versus acreage).
56 360,157 beneficiaries registered across all programmes, with the number discounted where projects ran contiguously to prevent double-counting.
57 WFP/EB.A/2005/7-A.

approx. $1.25 million/year for 4 years); (ii) LEARN (11,121 direct beneficiaries through $4.2 million for 1 year), and (iii) Restoration of Agricultural Livelihoods in Northern Uganda project (RALNUC)/DAR (103,697 direct beneficiaries through $1.3 million/year for 5 years) funded and run by the Danish International Development Assistance programme. The Government and World Bank Northern Uganda Social Action Fund Project (NUSAF I) also ran a programme ($20 million/year from 2003-2008). See Annex 16 for a review of key programmes implemented in Northern Uganda between 2002-2010.

2. Findings and Results: Outcomes and Impact of FFA

2.1 Asset type, location and functionality

36. While the dynamic/ chronic lens was a useful tool for the evaluation process, analysis of the evidence found that it was not a significant explanatory factor in the observed effects of FFA[58]. Hence, findings are presented by the ToC key elements.

37. For the period in focus, 2005-10, there was a wide and relatively even distribution of FFA activity across 'the north' and often a longitudinal presence (series of years) of FFA in a sub-region. However, FFA represented a very small proportion (1-2%) of the overall food distribution, with the exception of 2010 in Karamoja (13%) that marked the start of the Karamoja Productive Assets Programme (KPAP) and delineated the shift from food aid to food assistance (as illustrated in earlier Table 3 and Figure 3). Overall, the pattern of FFA activity is scattered both in terms of geography/time period and relative intensity within a particular area[59].

38. Prior to the 2006/08 peace agreement, a significant focus of FFA was on public works and infrastructure assets, seen as vital to enabling the re-establishment of communities and their livelihoods. Under the KPAP and NUSAF 2, infrastructure-based FFA was/ is considered integral to the strategy for building-up markets and driving productivity[60]. Table 4 presents an overview of asset category distribution observed across the sub-regions.

Table 4. Overview of assets assessed by category

			Asset Category					
Sub-region	TOTAL		NATURAL RESOURCE		INFRA-STRUCTURE		OTHER ASSETS	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
ACHOLI	45	*26*	17	*10*	13	*7*	15	*9*
WEST NILE	62	*37*	13	*8*	31	*18*	18	*11*
KARAMOJA	45	*27*	20	*12*	12	*7*	13	*8*
TESO & LANGO	17	*10*	7	*4*	9	*5*	1	*0*
TOTAL	169	*100*	57	*34*	64	*38*	48	*28*

Source: Verification Survey, 2013

39. Of the 200 sampled locations, 169 assets in 77 locations were confirmed as having been established within the evaluation reference period[61]. As shown in Table 4, the majority of assets found were infrastructure (38%), and natural resources assets (34%). Most of the assets observed (37%) were in West Nile, the fewest in Teso and Lango (10%). Several different types[62] of assets were found within the three categories, and Table 5 shows the most common types. No one asset type

58 The main explanatory factors through the initial analysis were found to be; (i) presence of camps (IDPs), (ii) sedentary versus pastoral communities and (iii) high levels of prolonged violence versus short-duration violence.

59 Between 2005-2009 a mean of 66,118 participants were engaged across four sub-regions (equivalent to 16,530 per sub-region, including Acholi, West Nile, Teso and Lango, and Karamoja). In 2010, there were 49434 participants in Karamoja alone.

60 For this reason, infrastructure-based FFA was included in the scope of the evaluation and weighted equally as Natural Resource Management (NRM)-based FFA, as stated in Section 1.1.

61 Of the 308 assets verified: 11 assets have unknown construction dates; 108 assets pre-date 2005; and 20 assets were created after 2010

62 As many as 12 types of natural resource assets, 13 infrastructure assets, and 20 classified as "other" were observed

represented over 27% of assets created in a given sub-region. School woodlots and teachers houses comprised the majority of assets constructed (21% and 14% respectively of the 169 assets).

Table 5. Main types of assets constructed by sub-region

Sub-region	Natural Resources		Infrastructure		Other	
ACHOLI (45 assets in total)	School woodlots	10/22%	Rural roads / feeder	7/16%	Water ponds / dams	5/11%
WESTNILE (62)	School woodlots	10/16%	Teachers' houses	13/21%	Water ponds / dams	6/10%
KARAMOJA (45)	School woodlots Water ponds/dams	12/27% 4/9%	Teachers' houses	7/16%	Fuel efficient stove	5/11%
TESO & LANGO (17)	School woodlots	3/18%	Teachers' houses	4/24%	Class floor maintenance	1/6%

Source: Verification Survey, 2013

40. The findings are presented below also around the experiences of the sub-regions[63] and based on the assets verified as originating from FFA between 2005 and 2010. Table 6 indicates the number of interviews held in each sub-region, against the asset verification. A mapping of the key findings, conclusions and of the evaluation's recommendations can be found in Annex 17.

Table 6: Assets verified and interviews held by case study areas

Context	Case Study areas	Asset observations	Households surveyed
Dynamic	Acholi	45	182
	Teso and Lango	17	83
Chronic	Westnile	62	175
	Karamoja	45	161
Total		169	601

Source: Verification Survey

41. Assets were found in 39% of locations where FFA food was delivered 2005-2010: translating into a gross survival rate of 39%[64]. Table 7 provides a breakdown of data on asset survival and functionality. Extrapolating from the sample, all other factors remaining equal, it could be estimated[65] that FFA would have resulted in assets surviving up until 2013 in at least 252 of the original 645 locations identified in the verification stage.

63 See Annexes 12, 13, 14 & 15 for Case Study material gathered by the evaluation enquiry process on Acholi, Teso & Lango, Karanoja, West Nile.
64 Based on Asset Verification Survey.

42. The difference between survival rates calculated based on the verification and household surveys in Table 7 is caused by the fact that HH surveys were only undertaken in communities where some assets had been verified as existing. The main value from also considering the survival rate of assets based on the household survey is therefore to give an indication of the relative performance of assets (compared to each other), rather than the absolute numbers.

43. Soft assets, such as knowledge, are systematically undervalued by communities relative to physical assets[66]. Discussions with communities in Teso & Lango continually found that they tended to think of assets purely in physical terms. This provides particular challenges when moving from building natural resources and infrastructure to capacity development and training. The experience of NAADS has also been that farmers only take up their information services when they also receive inputs[67].

Table 7: Asset survival and functioning

	Proportion of all assets verified	Survival rate of Asset	% Asset surviving (see explanatory paragraph below)	% Asset still functioning
	Based on Asset Verification Survey	*Verification Survey vs SPR reported results*	*HH Survey recall*	*Based on HH Survey* *(* est. based on verification survey)*
School Woodlots	21%	63%	97.1%	74.6%
Teachers'	18%	49%	94.3%	84.2%
Latrine	8%	no	no data	66.7%*
Water Tank	8%	no	87.0%	70.1%
Rural Roads / Feeder	5%	22%	no data	56.6%*
Fuel Efficient Stove	5%	no data	79.0%	65.0%
School Kitchen	3%	no data	no data	50.0%*
Water Ponds/Dams	3%	100%	90.9%	67.5%
Community Gardens	2%	no data	84.3%	51.8%

66 Focus Group Discussions and enumerators reflections from Household Surveys collected during Gulu Workshop.
67 Interview with District NAADS and Agricultural officials.

Community Woodlots	2%	11%	91.6%	70.5%
Classrooms	1%	no	94.7%	81.3%
Fish Ponds	1%	2%	94.3%	40.0%
School Gardens	1%	2%	87.9%	60.6%
Crop Cultivation	1%	no data	89.4%	73.4%
Crop Multiplicatio n	1%	no data	80.2%	52.1%
Land Cleared / Opened	1%	8%	94.9%	79.7%
Others (all less than 2%)	19%	-	-	-

Source: Verification survey and household surveys

44. Similarly, training in FFA was appreciated when linked to the construction of an asset, but was often not recognised when training was conducted as an intervention in its own right[68]. This suggests that physical assets are an important convening tool in FFA, even where the main intervention is based on knowledge or skills transfer.

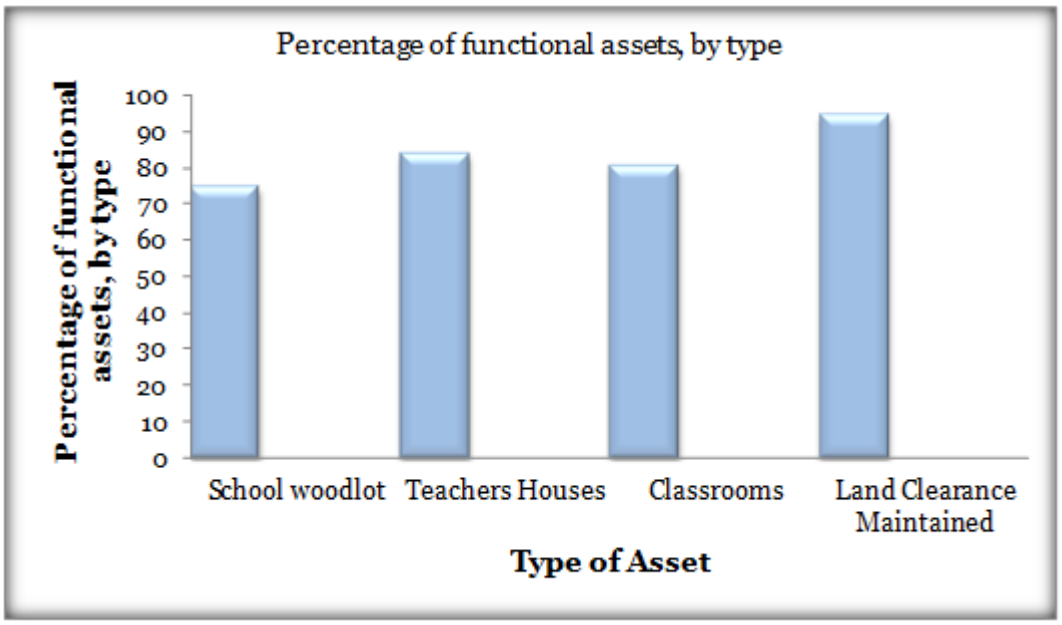
45. The median length of support from WFP FFA in a community was 4 years. In 81% of HHS responses, no suspicion of fund misuse by partners was reported, despite the conflict environment. The most common setback reported by households under FFA was delays in food distribution, accounting for 43% of the 80% of households that recalled problems.

46. Of the 39% assets surviving, the household survey indicated that 84% are owned by groups, and the asset observation shows that the spread of assets created is concentrated around a few main types, as illustrated in Figure 4 (earlier) & Figure 5 (below). Functionality was positively correlated where people also had access to complementary support in the form of education, health care, water and agricultural extension[69].

47. 63% of surviving assets date from the period 2005-2007[70]. The remaining 37% of asset were constructed between 2008-2010. The highest proportion of assets observed still (fully or partially) functioning were teachers' houses (84%), classrooms (81%) and school woodlots (75%). For land clearance, 95% of the opened land was found fully or partially functional. The lowest proportion of functioning assets were fish multiplication sites (25%) and fish ponds (40%).

68 Interviews with local government staff in Teso & Lango, and Acholi.
69 Fuzzy Set analysis on Karamoja, Teso and Lango – see below.
70 Asset Verification Survey.

Figure 5: Percentage of functioning assets by type (2005-2010)



Source: verification survey

48. The assets verification and assessment showed that natural resources assets (woodlots, ponds, agricultural enhancement) were found to be of better design and in better condition than infrastructure ones (schools, roads); overall, 70% of natural resources assets were found by the Asset Verification Survey to be in good or very good condition, although geographical variations exist (see Table 8). These suggest that there are other important determinants of long-term functioning. For example in Teso and Lango, where 89% of infrastructure was found to be functional, roads also enabled new settlement areas to be established and NGOS, such as Oxfam and ICRC, to deliver services in very rural areas[71].

Table 8: Percentage of asset reported to have good design and current condition

		Natural Resource Assets	Infrastructure Assets	Other Assets
Strong Design	Acholi	47%	33%	47%
	Teso and Lango	43%	44%	-
	Karamoja	25%	42%	54%
	West Nile	46%	29%	28%
Very Good Current Condition	Acholi	11%	16%	40%
	Teso and Lango	29%	44%	-
	Karamoja	20%	25%	31%
	West Nile	31%	39%	6%

Source: Asset verification

71 See Annex 13.

49. Factors important for asset survival and functioning were confirmed to be good design, good connectedness within the local area, capacity building and inputs, and existing access to basic services, livelihood opportunities and infrastructure. Some determining factors are within the scope of WFP to manage, including quality of design, linking assets to the landscape, providing inputs, and capacity development. Other factors, such as the presence of infrastructure, agricultural extension and basic services need to be considered by the selection processes. Fuzzy set analysis of data from Karamoja provided a clear set of conditions required to ensure that assets survive and function[72]. The fuzzy set analysis for Teso and Lango likewise identified higher quality design and strong connectedness of assets as having a significant[73] link to the current condition of surviving assets (but no other systematic correlation with any other factor). However, they are not sufficient to guarantee success.

50. Access to basic services is often much higher in camps than in return areas or once camps have closed[74]. This was a common observation in several areas, but is of particular significance in relation to the data from Karamoja that suggested a population's access to basic services was an important factor in determining the continued functioning of assets. This is consistent with WFP's programme guidance on supporting synergies between FFA and school feeding. In the case of Northern Uganda, the decision to withdraw school feeding[75] largely prevented such synergies from being realised within the timeframe under consideration. Some schools still maintain FFA woodlots[76] using their own resources, but most commonly teachers use the fuelwood in place of cooking lunches for the children because there is no food provision at school[77].

2.2 Bio-physical Effects

51. Based on the portfolio of assets undertaken, the evaluation primarily focused on assessing the contribution made to bio-physical changes by woodlots, water ponds, and land opening (in combination with past crop multiplication). These represent 29% of the assets that were verified as still existing (see Table 7).

52. Woodlots, school and/or community linked, (23% of assets) with 75% still functioning (Table 7) have survived and been maintained more successfully than other assets. Both qualitative and quantitative data indicate that woodlots attached to an institution (in particular schools) have survived best. In the dynamic contexts, ownership of woodlots was clear and most have remained highly prized by both sub-counties and schools. The actual productive capacity of most woodlots was however limited by several factors such as size, species used, connectedness, maintenance arrangements (see par. 59).

53. Cassava multiplication (2%) was a short-lived but highly influential intervention in Acholi meeting the immediate need for cassava cutting. Qualitative analysis suggests that WFP was agile with regard to cassava multiplication, accounting for many of the cuttings available in the return period despite issues with

72 There were strong enough patterns in the data that both necessary and sufficient conditions could be identified within acceptable limits of certainty. Analysis of the household interviews and the fuzzy set data for Karamoja both found that access to basic services, inputs (e.g. tools) and capacity development (e.g. training) were significant contributing factors to asset functioning. For example, district agricultural officers observed that communities who were able to restock cattle through NAADS or other partners also seem to have done better at maintaining and extending FFA assets.
73 Significant meaning that it appeared in 90% of cases of strong assets.
74 Interviews with WFP Staff, NGOs, Government and Focus Group Discussions with communities.
75 There is still high demand for SF articulated by interviewees.
76 See Annex 6.
77 An instance of a local initiative (without external support) on school feeding was observed in West Nile. This has been running on a trial basis for a few months following an extended gap from the end of the formal School Feeding Programme.

crop disease and late planting in some locations[78]. NAADS has since picked up this work, but WFP is still remembered for this intervention and it seems to illustrate WFP's advantage of scale and speed.

54. With project appraisal done on a case-by case basis, assets were largely designed in isolation from one another, with light consideration given to creating integrated local-level change[79], and specifically, FFA programming did not undertake integrated soil and water conservation measures. Isolated assets – such as ponds – may contribute to providing water during dry spells, but there is credible anecdotal evidence from partners that they have also led to flooding of settlements in heavy rains[80]. Other unintended negative effects included rural roads enabling charcoal production and distribution, although this could not be quantified.

55. The ToC specifically identifies the productivity of land – as distinct from the productivity of households – as an important dimension of change. Table 9 presents the most significant changes reported, by area of benefits.

Table 9: Perceptions of most significant change in relation to livelihoods

Area of Benefits		Acholi	Teso Lango	Karamoja	West Nile	Overall
Direct Benefits (21%)	Food provision	15%	6%	22%	10%	14%
	Technical Skills	3%	7%	9%	10%	7%
Economic Benefits (19%)	Increased savings or income	6%	12%	5%	9%	7%
	Improved standards of living	9%	8%	2%	2%	5%
	Access to markets and Services	9%	6%	7%	3%	6%
	Rural Development	1%	-	-	1%	<1%
Social Sector Benefits (21%)	Clean Water	6%	1%	2%	1%	3%
	Improved sanitation, health, hygiene	5%	13%	6%	3%	6%
	Retention of teachers in remote rural areas	3%	13%	2%	5%	6%
	Increased enrolment of children in school	1%	-	-	4%	1%
	Increased attendance of teachers	-	4%	1%	9%	3%
	Improved education performance	2%	4%	1%	5%	3%
Community Cohesion Benefits (6%)	Self-reliance	2%	1%	1%	-	1%
	Optimism	1%	1%	1%	4%	2%
	Improved security	1%	1%	-	-	<1%
	Group mobilisation/ organisation/motivation	3%	6%	1%	2%	3%
Environmental Benefits (11%)	Trees as windbreakers or shade	3	2	1	1	2
	Modified local climate	2%	1%	4%	2%	1%
	Soil erosion control	-	-	1	-	<1%
	Land reclamation	-	-	-	1%	1%

78 Multiple sources, including interviews, household survey and focus group discussions.
79 Asset Verification reveals widely geographically distributed (scattered) assets. Interviews with WFP Staff and reviews of activity proposals reveal an asset-per-asset consideration of outputs and outcomes, rather than a view of how individual assets combine into an integrated plan.
80 Specific examples were provided by Caritas in Karamoja.

	Beautification	-	-	-	1%	1%
	Increased fuelwood	5%	2%	1%	3%	3%
	Increased ish availability	-	1%	-	-	<1%
	Increased access to seeds	-	-	17%	1%	5%
	Increased crop yields	1%	1%	2%	-	1%
Household Level Benefits (1%)	Job opportunities	1%	-	-	1%	<1
	Improved nutrition/diet	-	1%	1%	-	<1
	Time/energy savings	-	1%	1%	-	<1
Other (17%)	No change/impact/ don't know	20%	2%	12%	25%	17%

Source: Household Survey

2.3 Land & Agricultural Productivity Effects

56. As shown in Table 9 above, overall, only 14% of survey respondents cited environmental benefits (in terms of land reclamation, access to fuelwood / fish / seeds, increased yields, etc.) as the most significant change attributable to FFA assets. However, a significant different pattern was observed in Karamoja where 17% of respondents cited increased access to seeds as the most signficant change to their livelihoods.

57. The evaluation considered that land productivity had several dimensions relevant to FFA assets in Northern Uganda, set out in Table 10.

Table 10: Assumed relationships between drivers of land productivity and FFA assets

Dimension of Land Productivity	FFA assets predicted as having positive effects (% of overall assessed assets)	FFA assets predicted as having negative effects (% of overall assets)
Quantity of land available	Rural access roads (5%) Land cleared (1%)	
Fertility of land available	Water ponds (3%) Community gardens (2%)	Land cleared (1%) Rural access roads (5%) *Both due to lack of soil and water conservation measures*
Conservation	Woodlots (23%) Fuel Efficient Stoves (5%)	
Improved varieties	Crop multiplication (1%) Crop cultivation (1%)	
Human labour available	Rural access roads (5%)	
Tools available	Tools/other inputs (2%)	

Source: Assumptions based on Programme Design Documentation. Percentage Data from Household Surveys

58. WFP worked well with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Acholi to introduce improved varieties of cassava (although these have unintentionally replaced local systems of resilience – see section 2.6). There is good evidence that staff from both agencies cooperated well in Acholi on this specific issue, leveraging WFP's scale and FAO's technical knowledge to meet a real need for cassava cuttings.

59. Over the long term, FFA's focus on multiplication of food security crops, such as cassava, has not been replicated by farmers own practices, who are planting higher-risk cash crops such as rice. Some sub-counties are starting to issue bylaws to tackle the situation by requiring households to plant at least one acre of a food security crop.

60. Only 1% of respondents reported higher crop yields (because of improved varieties) as the major change from FFA compared to activities linked to improved varieties (multiplication and gardens, see Table 7) representing 5% of the overall effort. Availability of fish was reported as the most significant change by 1% of households: in line with the prevalence of that asset – although all of the fish ponds visited by the evaluation team are now destocked.

61. The evaluation found that rural roads helped people to reach their villages and woodlots to mitigate some of the environmental degradation around camps[81]. But they are unlikely to have independently contributed to addressing the main drivers of productivity in this context: secure access to land combined with draught or mechanical traction.

62. Despite improved security, unrecovered household capacity to open land in Acholi – because of draught-animal destocking and insecurity of land holdings – has prevented the reestablishment of crop rotation[82]. Productivity increases in the dynamic contexts have been driven primarily by the return of peace and people's ability to access their land (to which rural access roads did contribute). Despite this, strong constraining factors remain according to interviews with local government staff. In particular, the capital required to clear overgrown fields and to plant more than 1-2 acres per household. Increased awareness of land ownership has also reduced options for households to maintain, and rotate several gardens[83].

63. In regard to woodlots,[84] the evaluation found that the mix of species[85], the community management arrangements, and the connection to markets were not sufficiently included as design considerations to make income generation a likely outcome[86]. The observed water ponds and dams tended to be relatively large in scale (100-200m^2), being used for a combination of cattle drinking and hand-drawn irrigation of the immediate area around them. However, they were also few in number, reaching only 3% of the beneficiaries identified in the verification survey (although water ponds were the only asset identified as benefiting *Cattle Keepers*).

64. It is difficult to assess the magnitude of the impact of seeds and tools transferred as inputs to FFA, but interviews in Teso and Lango suggested that, in a community that has lost almost all of its tools, the inputs distributed for FFA continue to be valued by participants. In the examples where this issue was raised, tools have been distributed to households but are still used for collective works when required.

65. By far the most prominent risk facing households after the conflict is disputed access to land as evidenced by the majority of the interviews conducted for this

81 Focus Group Discussions.
82 Interviews with Government staff.
83 Interviews with local agricultural officers.
84 There seems to have been clusters of species planted mainly according to what seedlings were available. The size of woodlots – 1-2 acres – was too limited to serve the community around them and post planting silvicultural practices were often absent. Several interviewees at the sub-county level reported that woodlots had encouraged local households to plant seedlings around their homesteads, but it was not feasible to verify or quantify this claim.
85 Asset Verification and secondary observation.
86 Household surveys, focus groups and observation.

evaluation. This determines the extent to which households can establish productive homesteads, and threatens some of the communal FFA assets that were built on donated land. For government and WFP field staff it has raised the issue of how rigorous FFA projects need to be in assessing conflict sensitivity, especially in establishing clear rights to the land on which assets are constructed.

2.4 Effects on Food security and Livelihoods

66. The evaluation considered the aggregate gains to food security and livelihoods from: immediate food security benefit from the 90 days FFW/FFT rations; skills and technologies gained through training linked to physical asset creation; access to markets and employment opportunities including through rural access roads (5% of activities); social sectors' and household level benefits.

67. The most frequently reported change in livelihoods from FFA (see Table 9) was the intended short-term one of bridging the food gap (14% of reported change) created by the return process, and of technical skills' acquisition, those direct benefits representing some 21% of the reported change. Other important areas of perceived significant changes related to social sectors (education and health) and economic benefits (21% and 19%, respectively). Within the latter, there was notable appreciation of improvements in savings or income (7%), and access to other villages and markets (6% of reported changes).

68. The food transfer was at the forefront of WFP's institutional orientation in Acholi, Teso & Lango. Sub office staff recall being under pressure to move and report tonnage of food, even in FFA. The intention that assets should contribute to the recovery was also there, but the priority remained covering the food gap experienced as general food distribution was reduced and people moved out of camps.

69. Across regions, 82% of HHS respondents reported that the food distributed by FFA 2005-2010 was consumed directly by households[87] (see Table 11 below). The direct consumption of the food transfer by households in dynamic contexts (Acholi, Teso and Lango) was lower – 75% – than in chronic contexts (West Nile and Karamoja) – 80-90%. This suggests that households in return areas were more likely to use food rations as a source of capital to restart livelihoods, whereas they were more often used to meet a food gap in Karamoja and among West Nile refugees.

Table 11: Use of food entitlements

	Acholi	Teso and Lango	Karamoja	West Nile	Overall
Consumed	76%	74%	90%	82%	82%
Sold or bartered	7%	6%	4%	8%	5%
Used for seed	6%	8%	4%	2%	4%
Shared	9%	10%	2%	6%	6%
Lost	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%

Source: Household Survey

70. Agriculture – traditionally seen as part of women's role – has witnessed increasing male involvement as options for market-orientated cash-cropping have

87 According to the HHS.

emerged[88]. Rural access roads have contributed significantly to this market access (6% of the direct changes from assets[89] reported compared to 5% of assets created). However, most households are unable to benefit from these market opportunities because financial literacy remains low, productive capacity of households is constrained by lack of traction, poor storage, decreasing terms-of-trade, and the fact that there are few cooperatives to negotiate in the interest of poor households.

71. The gain in technical skills by FFA participants was valued by household survey respondents as much as increased access to markets in terms of the impact on livelihoods. It was not possible to quantify the extent to which these skills are being used or what economic value they now represent.

2.5 Impact on Social and Gender Dynamics

72. The design of FFA activities has implications beyond the programme itself. Many NGOs in Karamoja have chosen to develop their projects based on what is seen to work in FFA[90]. They have also innovated where things have not worked, and could be a valuable source of feedback and design inputs.

73. 94% of current users of surviving FFA assets were found to be local residents rather than displaced persons[91]. This may include a sampling bias of households, but it triangulates well with the qualitative finding that the location of people in Northern Uganda was not a simple model of returning home in one direction. People lived in multiple areas simultaneously, maintaining homes in the large 'mother camps', transition camps, and their gardens in return areas. Roads in return areas are likely to have been built by the people who wanted to use them, even if they were not living there at night. Similarly, woodlots around camps seem to have been established primarily by host populations that were concerned with the degradation of their property[92].

74. Schools are by far the most common beneficiaries of FFA assets. Teachers' houses were a mainstay of asset creation in West Nile, where 78% of users are linked to schools. Even in Karamoja, however, 68% of asset beneficiaries are school-related (students, teachers, etc). Overall, 67% of current users are related to schools (e.g. students or teachers), who bear most of the maintenance costs through Parent Teacher Association (PTA) funds.

75. The effect of assets on human labour availability was not assessed. Any impact of reduced labour availability from young people and children through support to schools – which was not assessed – is considered to be positive rather than negative.

76. Table 12 suggests higher impacts for women were associated with agro-pastoral based livelihoods. In Acholi and West Nile, around half of respondents reported at least one significant positive impact for women, compared with 76% in Teso / Lango and 89% in Karamoja. Women do the most work in FFA in Karamoja. However, this is also the area where 89% of women reported significant impacts from FFA compared to 52% in West Nile. Improved access to food, income, fuelwood and water were at the top of the list of impacts in Karamoja, suggesting that FFA in this setting is addressing women's direct concerns.

88 Data from the SSI tool.
89 This figure is 6% of the most significant change in terms of livelihoods (see Table 10)
90 E.g, Caritas started implementing woodlots and ponds based on WFP FFA activities. Ponds were later found to create a risk of flooding during rains, and were later changed to sub-surface dams.
91 Asset Verification Survey tool.
92 Interviews – primarily in West Nile.

Table 12: Perceptions of most significant changes for women

Reported significant change for women	Acholi	Teso and Lango	Karamoja	West Nile	Overall
	55%	76%	89%	52%	66%
Food provision	6%	17%	27%	8%	14%
Increased savings or income	5%	6%	8%	5%	6%
Group mobilization/organization /motivation	8%	4%	7%	2%	5%
Fuelwood	7%	7%	6%	6%	6%
No change/impact/Don't know	45%	24%	11%	48%	34%

Source: Household Survey

77. A comparison of perceived changes's categories with respect to livelihoods in general (as presented in Table 9) and from the perspective of women is presented in Table 13. Differences were found in all areas, and reported main benefits for women are significantly lower for technical skills acquired (direct benefit area), improved access to markets / standards of living / seeds (economic area). Significantly higher ratings for women were identified in the community cohesion, and household domain, with benefits in terms of self-reliance, security, group mobilisation, job opportunities, diet and time saving. See Annex 8b for details.

Table 13: Comparison of benefit perceptions

Perceptions of Most Significant Change / Benefit		
in relation to livelihoods overall		**to the women in households**
21%	Direct	17%
19%	Economic	11%
21%	Social Sector	11%
6%	Community Cohesion	12%
14%	Environmental	9%
1%	Household-level	6%
17%	Other	34%

Source: Household Survey

78. Women are the main source of productive capacity in relation to agriculture, but men control resources and decision-making. FFA did not challenge these at the household level, but did give women the experience of self-reliance in terms of undertaking tasks (such as road building) previously seen as requiring male labour**.** According to WFP field staff and local government, women seem to have done most of the work in FFA (which is consistent with their cultural role outside of the programme) but have not necessarily had any more control over the resulting assets.

79. Although environmental benefits to women were rated overall lower (9% vs 14%), perceived benefits to women in terms of improved access to fuelwood included under this category were much higher (accounting 6% of the 9%). Household surveys suggest that assets such as productive woodlots seem to have strong direct benefits for women[93]. Woodlots relieve a work burden that primarily affects women and girls (fuelwood collection), whereas income-generating assets – such as fish ponds – are still controlled by men (according to SSI interviewees).

80. Whilst the registration and participation of women in FFA was strongly encouraged by WFP, targeting was based on households[94]. In areas with a high prevalence of polygamy it was feared that women-headed households might fall through the net if only male heads were to register. From the evidence available, WFP appears to have effectively foreseen and averted this potential issue successfully[95].

81. The extensive focus on women's participation across all relief and development agencies was suggested by many key informants in local government and NGOs to have contributed to the eroding the responsibility felt by men for contributing to household production introduced by the effects of the conflict. The loss of livestock, trauma, and alcoholism have combined to disenfranchise many men from the social economy (according to interviews in Teso & Lango). The opportunity to design FFA as a mechanism to address this issue has not yet been explored and the extent to which FFA contributed directly was not possible to assess.

82. Using food as the conditional transfer may have minimised the effects of middlemen and gender based violence compared to partners' uses of vouchers and cash[96]. The evaluation did not collect sufficient data to verify this, but it was felt strongly by some interviewees that (mostly illiterate) women in receipt of cash were vulnerable to having it forcefully taken by male household members or to being conned by more financially literate (male) traders. Food rations are of little interest to these men.

83. During the implementation of FFA, 38% of women participants were pregnant or lactating, and 46% of lactating women changed breast feeding practices because of FFA. This data could be read from many perspectives, and the evaluation is not best placed to make a value-judgement of the impacts – good or bad – other than to flag the issue as one that demands further investigation.

84. WFP Gender policy at the time of FFA implementation (2005-2010) was based largely on differentiation of the sexes. This has now changed in WFP guidance, but it

93 6% of Households stated that an increase in the availability of fuelwood was the single biggest impact for women, under this category, and the second (after food provision) overall. This change could only have come from woodlots. By comparison, all other changes for women – with the exception of access to food (14%) and increased savings/incomes (6%) – were reported less than 5%.
94 Based on interviews with WFP Staff.
95 Triangulated interviews with WFP/Government staff and Focus Group Discussions.
96 According to interviews in West Nile.

had the consequence of not exploring the opportunity for FFA in Acholi, Teso & Lango to address the recovery of specific vulnerable groups, such as young people. The disenfranchisement of youth from traditional social and production systems is an important dynamic in post conflict areas. This was not a central design consideration for FFA.

2.6 Community Resilience Effects & Ownership

85. Although a limited area of investment by WFP in Northern Uganda's specific context at the time, FFA did make some contribution to community cohesion, with 6% of significant changes reported relating to group dynamics and mobilisation, as indicated in Table 9. As noted, this area of benefit was significantly more important in relation to women (12%, see Table 13).

86. FFA linked well with the government's own programmes and indirectly strengthened government structures. Across all case studies, WFP worked well with government and is acknowledged for doing so[97]. Although this has not been measured specifically, it is very probable that FFA has contributed to the capacity development of district and sub-county offices.

87. Many emergency teams moved from Gulu to Karamoja as humanitarian operations in Acholi closed. They took with them a relief perspective when Karamoja is an entrenched and multi-faceted context. Based on qualitative evidence, it has been suggested that the long term presence of WFP and Oxfam in Karamoja may have helped to buttress against this tendency-to-relief, and that the introduction of KPAP 2010 was an important strategic contribution to shifting responses in Karamoja from emergency to livelihood-based programming.

88. The selection of fast-maturing improved varieties was intended to meet the food gap created by the return and minimise exposure to the flood-drought cycle. But greater availability also means that it is these varieties that have now dominated the production of cassava, despite having a number of disadvantages compared to traditional varieties. For example, traditional varieties of cassava could be left in the field as a food security crop, were less susceptible to diseases and weevils, and would re-germinate year-after-year.

89. Similarly, the food economy in camps in Acholi, Teso & Lango, especially the use of sacks, may have eroded the use of traditional resilience mechanisms, like granaries, after the return. Local government experts in Teso and Acholi identified granaries to the evaluation team as the main traditional means of storage. These have a number of benefits from the perspective of resilience, including lower susceptibility to cross-infestation and the public nature of access – making it much harder for a man to sell stocks of food without the consent of his wife. However, granaries were lost during the camps and have not been rebuilt due to fears over theft, the camp-culture of storing in sacks, and a perception among youth of out-datedness.

90. Background hazards including HIV[98], bush fires[99], and low savings rates[100] were not as visible as insecurity, but added up to a major source of vulnerability

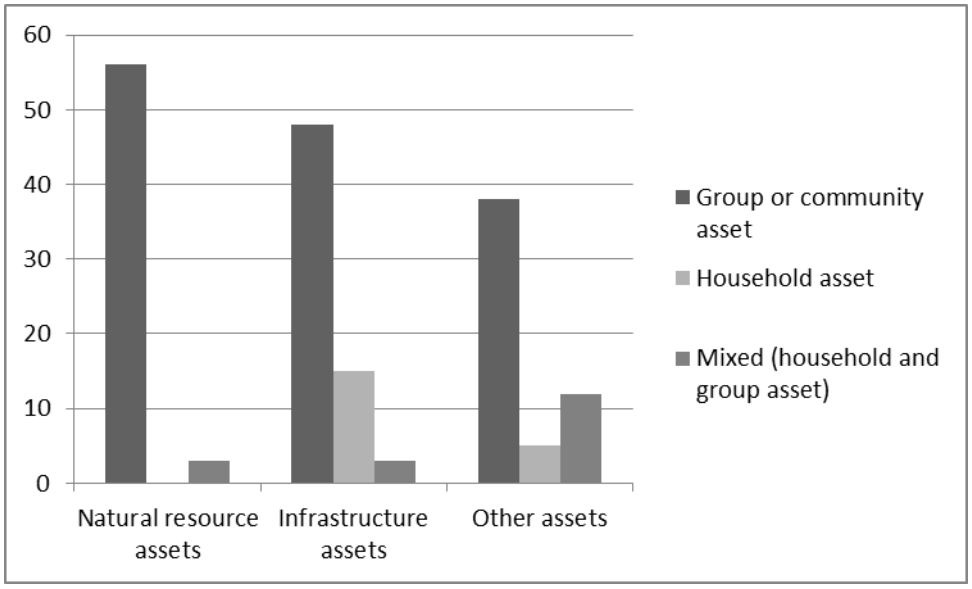
97 Interviews with local government officers at district and sub-county level.
98 According to the Uganda AIDS Commission Country Progress Report 2012, Mid Northern region (including Acholi, Teso and Lango) and Mid Western region are classified as "Deteriorating" with HIV rates higher than the national average. Whilst HIV prevalence in North Eastern (Karamoja) remains lower than the national average, it increased from 3.5%-5.8% in the five years prior to 2011.
99 According to SSI tool.

despite several seasons of good production in agro-pastoral areas. The past three years have provided excellent conditions in many parts of Northern Uganda. However, a whole range of SSI respondents reported that most households held less than six months' worth of savings or reserves. Part of this is caused by poor marketing practices and multiple demands on whatever resources are available. But, according to many FGD and SSI respondents, many households perceive the hunger season as a traditional part of life rather than a risk that can be managed.

91. The evaluation found that communities still come together to maintain assets (as evidenced by the finding that 60% of surviving assets have been adapted or extended, see Section 2.7), the impact of FFA on cohesion and group unity has been secondary. Based on the level of community engagement being undertaken by developmental NGOs in Northern Uganda and WFP FFA in other (non-conflict) countries, this is probably a natural reflection of the basic planning and implementation process that was used: appropriate in a conflict setting but unlikely to deliver the solidarity that might be expected from the more advanced planning processes identified in WFP's current FFA guidance.

92. Most assets of all types were community assets (79%), as illustrated in Figure 6; 11% were household assets and 10% were mixed assets.

Figure 6: Ownership by asset category



Source: Asset Verification, 2013

93. According to sampled households, during FFA implementation, 34% of participants received technical assistance, 29% disaster preparedness training, 15% literacy training, 64% tools and equipment, 57% seeds. Between 80-95% of recipient households found each of these timely and useful. This is much more than for the 8% who received cash from other agencies implementing cash-for-work, for whom 52% found it timely and useful. 75% of households felt technical training was sufficient.

94. In Acholi, Teso & Lango there was a lower level of adoption and extension of assets by communities in areas where there were more camps. In Teso and Lango, a

100 According to the USAID Rural SPEED project research (2007), Uganda has the lowest savings rate in East Africa and the highest unbanked capacity for saving was in Northern Uganda. The World Bank Country Assistance Strategy 2010 estimated the gross domestic savings rate in Uganda at 13.0% in 2010.

high proportion of surviving assets (82%) have been extended by local people compared to Acholi (52%). This fits with a similar pattern in the chronic context of West Nile and Karamoja, suggesting that areas that had camps for the longest periods also had lower rates of communities taking over assets.

95. Overall, the evaluation found that 60% of assets were maintained[101], three quarters through some form of community fundraising efforts. Assets were more likely to be adopted and maintained when they were built by host populations around camps, rather than by IDPs in camps. In Karamoja, 76% of assets have been adapted or extended by the local community. In West Nile this level is 49%. One factor could be the predominance of teachers' houses in West Nile that, in general, appears to be an asset type that does not receive follow-on inputs from communities.

96. Qualitative evidence suggests that FFA activities were found to be managed more sustainably when they were targeted at host populations rather than at temporary residents, such as refugees. This matches with data from the dynamic contexts that associates higher rates of adoption with Teso and Lango (fewer camps) than Acholi (more camps).

97. There is a stronger sense of self-determining FFA activities in both West Nile and Karamoja**.** In the chronic contexts, a higher proportion of households felt that they had exercised decision making over the asset to be built (54% in Karamoja, 39% in West Nile) compared to the dynamic contexts. This may reflect more time available to discuss with communities, more sedentary communities, or a greater general sense among people that they have control over their lives.

Table 14: % of FFA participants responding to Survey

	Acholi	**Lango and Teso**	**Karamoja**	**West Nile**
Decided by WFP	53%	53%	39%	46%
Decided by Schools & Communities	29%	31%[102]	40%	20%
Decided Jointly	14%		14%	19%
Decided by Others	4%		7%	8%
Decided by Government				7%

Source: Household Survey

98. According to WFP historical records and staff interviews at field level, the selection of assets (see Table 14) was based on community mobilisers matching community priorities with minimum project requirements needed to assure feasibility. Despite this, the HHS found that 46% of households still felt that WFP had selected the asset that was to be constructed.

99. The implementation of FFA attempted to bridge between the priorities of communities and the activities that were within WFP's scope to support. In many cases, WFP did not live up to community expectations in meeting their priorities through FFA (as seen by their perception of external asset selection reported above – 46%). Often, however, these priorities related to restoring traditional systems of cultural status – such as restocking herds – rather than to analyses of what investments would provide the greatest benefit. The experience in Teso and Lango,

101 Asset verification survey.
102 Either independently or jointly with WFP

according to WFP field staff, showed that there are practical limits to community-led FFA in transition contexts, and that expectations about the level of participatory planning should be continually revisited as the context changes from recovery to development.

100. The transition of asset-ownership when displaced populations leave camps is not clear and was not considered in FFA. The presence of refugees in West Nile introduced a level of complexity in terms of who owned assets once camps were closed. Although land returned to landowners, assets such as woodlots were returned to local government ownership. This has created a maintenance void, with some assets falling into disrepair as a result.

101. Levels of community ownership may not be as influential as theory suggests. Fuzzy set analysis in Karamoja suggests that higher levels of ownership could be associated with assets in both better and poorer conditions. This runs counter to theory, but could be due to a number of explanations. Firstly, the indicator used to calculate ownership. This was an index built up of household level data and verification data, including: 1) whether the asset was extended by the community, 2) whether there was a functional user group, 3) whether the decision to build the asset was seen to be a local one, 4) whether the asset is linked to an institution, and 5) whether the asset is publicly or privately owned. Assumptions for the development of fuzzy set indicators were informed by the qualitative analysis, including that schools exert more active ownership over assets and that publicly held assets were more likely to be subject to the tragedy of the commons[103].

102. A second explanation could be that even if ownership was high, other stronger factors could determine success and failure – such as the design of the asset in the first place. Thirdly, the fuzzy set was based on assets that survived only, if information had been available on assets that have disappeared then a different pattern may emerge. Finally, the indicator used may not have captured the importance of individual personalities – such as head teachers – in determining whether an asset is maintained or not. However, qualitative analysis of interviews suggests that individuals were often cited as playing a key role when people give examples of maintaining FFA assets.

103. FFA mostly did not disrupt other productive activities in areas highly affected by conflict. Areas most associated with prolonged conflict (Acholi and Karamoja) had much higher levels of households – 80-90% – reporting that FFA did not disrupt other productive activities. In the areas less associated with prolonged insecurity (Teso & Lango, West Nile) this fell to 60-70%[104]. The most stable of the sub-regions, West Nile reported the highest level of interference of FFA with other productive work (37%). This would suggest that more refined targeting is necessary in chronic contexts, as has been attempted in Karamoja since 2010. Women were most affected by the opportunity cost of participating in FFA activities.

103 Tragedy of the commons is the idea that individuals do not assume responsibility for maintaining assets that are held communally because others reap most of the benefit from work done at the individual's own expense.
104 Household Surveys.

3. How does FFA Create Impact

3.1 The Role of External Contextual Factors

104. The overarching context of Northern Uganda is security. Insecurity has a direct bearing on every aspect of life. One of the fuzzy set indicators was an estimation of security based largely on OCHA humanitarian updates from 2005-2009. This analysis found no correlation between levels of security and the current condition of assets, suggesting that WFP is equally able to deliver FFA no matter what the level of insecurity. After the return, land conflict has replaced insecurity as the major challenge to sustainable livelihoods in Acholi, Teso & Lango.

105. An overall finding from the quantitative analysis is that conflict and transition environments – whether dynamic or chronic – are highly complex in terms of the factors that lead to success for FFA. There is no simple recipe for which activities will work best in which circumstances. The programme logic behind the assets that were constructed tended to be simple cause-and-effect based models. Whilst there is no quantified evidence from the evaluation it is a significant likelihood – based on triangulated key informant interviews and focus group discussions – that major contributing factors to the changes in livelihoods and resilience are wider reductions in insecurity, three years of (relatively) good weather, and strong market demand from South Sudan. This is consistent with the drivers identified for Northern Uganda in the 2013 Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerablility Analysis (poverty drought, and insecurity).

106. The FFA programme in Karamoja has continuously evolved, and many of the lessons identified in this evaluation are already part of revisions to NUSAF 2. One of the lessons from experience that came out strongly in interviews of WFP field staff is the critical importance of timing activities according to the livelihood calendar (this is also highlighted strongly in WFP's 2011 FFA Programme Guidance Manual).

107. There were over 300 relief organisations operating in Gulu (Acholi) in 2005. Coordinating the work of these organisations was a major challenge, but ultimately seen as successful. During the relief phase in Acholi, Lango and Teso (2005/06), FFA activities were heavily informed by joint assessments and coordination led by OCHA. This aimed to avoid duplication of effort: an important principle of humanitarian response. WFP field staff exercised best practice in participating in this coordination effort, and in focusing FFA activities on issues that were agreed in advance with other partners (such as roads woodlots, teachers' houses, etc).

108. In reality, however, this discipline may have unnecessarily constrained the scope of activities that WFP was willing to undertake with FFA. In the end, WFP had a small portfolio of assets[105] created as reported under Sections 1.3 and 2.1, and was reliant on partners for implementation, technical knowledge and capacity (see section 3.3). It appears, in retrospect that the aversion to duplication may have led to missed opportunities for FFA to address a wider set of problems (such as water harvesting) simply because in many cases the overlap between WFP and other organisations was at least as academic as it was actual.

109. Few large organisations worked outside the safety of camps, or had the ability to reach into return areas after the conflict. Expecting WFP to not duplicate activities undertaken by other organisations in a handful of sites placed an enormous burden

105 See case studies set out Annex's, 12-15.

on the organisation. The large scale of FFA compared to everything else makes it appear in aggregate as if there is only a very minor possibility of significant loss of value because of duplicated efforts[106].

110. In addition, communities that were able to restock cattle through NAADS or other partners seem to have done better at maintaining and extending FFA assets. This suggests that coordination of FFA is most effective where it goes beyond just avoiding duplication and emphasises joint programming.

111. WFP was outstanding in its coordination with government structures, even where they were weakened or displaced by conflict[107]. There is mostly only positive feedback about WFP's commitment to working with government structures, even if weakened. This has likely contributed significantly to supporting the re-establishment of government capacity in return areas such as Acholi. WFP's long term presence in Karamoja and history of working with government structures is likely to have both strengthened government and provided WFP with the credibility needed to successfully transform the FFA project in Karamoja in 2010. This suggests that long term commitments to partnering with government provided significant programmatic dividends. An area for improvement related to aligning WFP's operational rules with its intention to work closely with government staff[108].

112. Coordination of development partners and government decreased in the peace. Although the District Disaster Management Committees still exist, the level of joined-up response dropped dramatically with the dissolution of the humanitarian cluster system, with no agency stepping into the coordination space. WFP is seen to have been a cooperative partner whenever coordination mechanisms were available, but it has chosen not to use its geographic or temporal scale to actively coordinate the international response through the transition phase. This may be because WFP stands behind government structures, or that other development partners would resist apparent attempts to occupy the coordination space. However, FFA was a major feature of the transition landscape, and options could have been explored at the technical level to use it as a platform for common action.

113. The corporate relationship between WFP and FAO, and unresolved design differences between FFA and farmer field schools[109], was an issue for both interviewed field staff and donors. WFP and FAO did work together in the field, especially in Acholi during the peak of the crisis and the return. This seems to have been based more on the individuals in place than an institutional norm[110]. The majority of respondents from WFP, FAO, and bilateral donors cited strongly-held differences between the Rome-based agencies in terms of technical design (e.g. whether programmes should aim for scale or depth) and modalities (e.g. food distributions being seen as a disincentive for farmers to harvest) as significant barriers to making both organisations' programmes more effective.

106 Based on interviews with both district officers and WFP field staff (who tended to maintain that operations were designed to avoid duplication). It is the opinion of the evaluators that whilst this certainly reflects good practice in emergencies, the risk of duplication may be minimal when considered across the whole area of operations.
107 Interviews with local government and the NGO Forum in Gulu.
108 For example, district staff were upset by the strongly worded waivers they had to sign and the failure to provide the same body armour as worn by WFP staff when travelling in WFP cars – transmitting the message that the organisation does not care about their safety.
109 Farmer Field Schools is a well recognized approach to extending technical assistance to farmers within their context. It is most associated with and championed by FAO, but is an approach also used by other organizations. Participation in the field schools is voluntary: farmers are motivated to take part by the desire to improve their productivity. Unlike FFA, no immediate transfer is made in terms of rations. As a result, there is often a strong perception that FFA can draw farmers away from participating in farmer field schools because of the incentive of immediate payment for work done.
110 Interviews with WFP Staff.

114. The experience in Acholi seems to represent one in which WFP can achieve significant scale with intermediate solutions (such as FFA) and FAO can achieve small scale with intensive solutions (such as farmer field schools – FFS). Much of the description of problems in the relationship came back to unresolved design differences between these respective flagship interventions, particularly in relation to the effect of conditional transfers on FFS engagement. The approach that was taken, of relying on individuals to make it work, has kept the relationship alive but probably reduced the opportunity to deliver technical quality at scale.

3.2 The Role of Internal Implementation Factors

115. There appears to be a link between the level of short-term implementation setbacks experienced by a project and its long-term success according to the fuzzy set data analysis for Karamoja. This suggests that WFP's logistics and pipeline are also critical contributions to ensuring positive impacts from FFA. In the middle of a conflict, where convoys were often operating under armed escort, delays are to be expected and by no means take away from the achievement of the enormous operation that WFP oversaw. Nevertheless, it is worth noting the degree to which operational factors (see Table 14) are not just an addendum to FFA, but form a vital part of the relationship with communities.

Table 15: Perceptions of implementation set-backs by % of respondents

	Acholi	Lango	Teso	Karamoja	West Nile
No Setback Reported	44%	24%	13%	14%	15%
Setback Reported	56%	76%	88%	86%	85%
Inadequate Technical Support	5%	18%	13%	16%	16%
Late or Incorrect Work Measurement	3%	12%	13%	6%	11%
Unavailable or Inadequate Tools	10%	12%	13%	27%	20%
Delayed Delivery of Materials or Inadequate Materials	8%	12%	13%	20%	18%
Lack of Awareness and Capacity	-	6%	-	4%	10%
Misuse of Resources	5%	6%	13%	4%	5%
Too much time needed for Maintenance	8%	12%	13%	6%	5%

Source: Household Survey

116. WFP field staff made a big difference to relationships and the implementation of FFA[111]. Frequent changes in staff, insufficient handovers, and few training opportunities meant that incoming staff depended on finding a good mentor to get to grips with FFA. Sometimes these mentors were partners or government. Relationships were critical to the success of FFA in the dynamic context of Acholi, Teso and Lango.

117. The rations distributed under FFA accounted for around 2% of WFP's total inputs[112] into Northern Uganda, and this in itself constrained the amount of management time that the organisation could commit to it. From the partners' and communities' perspectives, having friendly and communicative field staff was critical

111 Interviews with Government Staff and partners, including NGOs. Focus Group Discussions.
112 SPR analysis.

to good implementation of FFA. Regular turnover of staff – to be expected in a conflict area – often created gaps in these relationships, and WFP was unable to institutionalise a successful mechanism for handover and orientation of incoming FFA staff.

118. WFP is less strong in its relationship and communication with communities[113]. Areas for consideration include local language skills, more time for community dialogue, and the use of traditional structures. When it happened, communication with communities was generally seen as a positive aspect of WFP's work. However, it was only sporadic and highly constrained by time.

119. It may be unrealistic to expect field staff to commit more time to community-level dialogue, but the price of this comes in terms of missed feedback and misaligned expectations. One approach that could have been used was to review the design of project management committees. These were largely based on a hierarchical organisational structure and were specific to the asset. The use of traditional community management structures, or 'flat' (equal-but-different) organisational arrangements at the community level were reported by NGOs to have had greater success as an approach to participation and sustainability.

120. FFA may have contributed in the longer-term to an expectation of payment for any sort of participation in community-related works.[114] Whilst recognised as not unique to FFA the dependency effects of using conditional transfers in this post conflict setting were likely amplified by broad targeting that made participation available to all willing households.

121. WFP Uganda appears to have learnt the value of timing activities according to the livelihood calendar and disaggregating levels of vulnerability to household level. WFP Uganda's only experience of household-level vulnerability-based targeting of FFA in Karamoja introduced in 2010 was very challenging but seen to have been a technical and strategic success[115]: helping to shift away from the perception of Karamoja as a relief operation that could easily have resulted from the large influx of humanitarian NGOs once the Acholi emergency ended. It was the only use of this level of targeting considered under this evaluation.

122. FFA was found to have boosted WFP staff morale at field level by providing developmental opportunities and the chance to contribute to long term goals.

3.3 Interaction between Factors

123. Uncertainty about security conditions and the focus on FFA as a value-transfer mechanism seems to have led to a broad scattering of individual assets that continues – to a lesser degree – until the present day. Similarly, the primary objective of increasing the production of households (rather than conserving and protecting vulnerable landscapes) has remained a predominant design preoccupation. This would suggest that history of a situation and the historical role of WFP (such as perceptions of FFA, skills sets, and culture) can combine to set FFA on a particular trajectory and limit the speed at which the programming evolves.

124. The analysis suggests four main factors as explanations for the scope and effectiveness of FFA as programmed in Northern Uganda (see section 1.3):

113 Focus Group Discussions and interviews with WFP Staff and NGO partners.
114 Evidence drawn from the majority of interviews with key informants.
115 Independent Evaluation of WFP Livelihood Programming in Karamoja, DFID/IOD PARC 2012.

a. The technical quality of the asset design within the local context;

b. The capacity and scope for participatory local level planning processes;

c. The value placed on different asset types by a population under stress; and

d. The window of certainty for programme planning (i.e. can field staff reasonably assume a 10 year engagement with a particular community, or might everyone have moved location within the next 6 months?).

125. Firstly, the strong influence of the quality of asset design and its connectedness to other relevant aspects of livelihoods (such as markets and services for roads, or water sources and fish food supplies for fish ponds). Household data suggests that, through the project-approval process, WFP field staff and community mobilizers were successful in ensuring connectedness. Quality of the asset, however, relied strongly on the relationships that WFP could form in support of specific FFA assets. These relationships were largely ad hoc, and relied on the individuals who were in place to create them and make them work (according to interviews).

126. Secondly, the Northern Uganda experience suggests that there are practical limits to community-led FFA in transition contexts. Whilst local-level planning is a core principle of WFP's FFA guidelines, and is undoubtedly highly desirable, the evidence[116] suggests that community ownership and perceptions of self-determination are extremely difficult to achieve (see Section 2.7). The felt-needs of people (e.g. re-establishing culturally important assets such as cattle) also differed from the assessment of the international community about what WFP was best placed to provide: limiting the perceived responsiveness of WFP no matter what process took place. In the context of the recovery, and the need to support the rapid re-establishment of homesteads, WFP did engage communities and community leaders, but did not implement a fully participatory process[117]. Despite this, many assets seem to have survived based on the value they offer to communities.

127. Thirdly, the household interviews and the experiences of other programmes, especially NAADS, operating at the same time as FFA suggest that people in transition perceive much higher value in food, inputs and physical assets than in access to knowledge services. Even where households report changes in skills and knowledge as being important, these remain secondary to improved access to food. This suggests that physical assets are important convening tools in FFA, even where the main intervention work of a partner is based on knowledge or skills transfer.

128. Finally, FFA was seen as most effective when it is programmed over a long duration in order to build on marginal gains. FFA activities in the post-conflict areas were not designed to be transformational; otherwise they would have been integrated across an entire area.

129. Overall WFP's advantage is seen on the ground in terms of the longevity of its support and its ability to be agile because of multi-year programmatic planning which allows for funds to be readily available for seasonal activity implementation. Planning FFA as at least a medium-term intervention is therefore needed if WFP is to aggregate the marginal gains from multiple interventions into a more substantial contribution to impact. Respondents at all levels in Karamoja echoed the importance of the longevity of support provided by WFP as a result of multi-year programming

116 Source: Household perceptions of who selected assets.
117 According to international benchmarks such as PRA.

and stable funding streams. It was also noted, however, that this is partly premised on the continuous revision of the programme, including updating the menu of assets that is supported.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

130. In drawing conclusions on the impact of FFA the evaluation has applied the V2R framework which provides an inter-related systemic view of change and FFA as a contribution to such change. Central to this is an appreciation of governance (e.g. how FFA enabled the government in Northern Uganda to extend its presence) and protection (e.g. vulnerability of children).

4.1 Overall Assessment

131. WFP's operational scale meant that FFA assets were well placed to take advantage of the peace dividend and other positive drivers. The finding that enhanced design quality could have delivered greater survivability (and therefore impact) of assets does not mean that enhanced design could have enabled FFA assets to have survived had the conflict reinitiated, or if Northern Uganda had just experienced three years of drought-flood cycles. Most stakeholders consulted in this evaluation – including communities, partners, Government and WFP – consider that FFA was effective and necessary for a) filling the food-gap experienced by returnees, and as evidenced by the high proportion of the food consumed, and; b) shifting the mind-set of communities and responders from relief to transition.

132. Overall, it was found that there are very few inherent differences between the stylised contexts of dynamic and chronic. The patterns that did emerge cut across all of the case studies: gender impacts seem to be most felt in agro-pastoral communities; challenges with ownership of assets were most prevalent in areas where people spent more time in camps; and food aid was more likely to be consumed directly by households affected by higher levels of violence.

133. The conclusions below are organised around the broad headings within the generic ToC and with reference where appropriate to the four domains of the V2R Model; governance, adaptation, preparedness and livelihoods.

FFA in Conflict and Transition Contexts

134. FFA in Northern Uganda was focused on conflict-caused issues, enabling IDP return and addressing gaps in other programmes. The displacement of hundreds of thousands of people into camps was the overwhelming focus, with most of the 300 organisations in Gulu orientated around the provision of relief in camps. With FFA, WFP was one of the few agencies that responded to the transition at scale. Nevertheless, the primary focus of activities remained issues directly related to the conflict. These included deforestation caused by school feeding and general food distribution (GFD), and the need to accommodate teachers in school to ensure that the education goals of school feeding were reached.

135. The period of humanitarian coordination[118] resulted in FFA being perceived and practiced mainly in terms of a small portfolio of activities (woodlots, roads, houses, fish ponds, gardens) that were designed and implemented in isolation. These were often connected to – and defined by the needs of – the school feeding activity. Despite FFA being implemented in a wide range of contexts in Northern Uganda 2005-2010 (from civil war and refugee camps, to reopening inaccessible land and a large livelihood shift from pastoral to sedentary farming), the activities implemented

118 Evidence from WFP field staff interviews.

and the mechanisms for implementation did not change much. This suggests that FFA implemented within a transition context is subject to a form of path dependence, with the early programme designs (developed during the conflict period) strongly influencing the scope and logic of later designs.

136. As a result, FFA activities in the post-conflict areas were not designed to be transformational. Instead, the main outcomes appear to be marginal gains in specific aspects of livelihoods – such as fuelwood, shelter, water, or teacher attendance – in specific locations. Some of the unintended negative effects – such as anecdotal evidence of ponds flooding Karamajong settlements or roads enabling charcoal production – may also have been avoided had the design of assets been considered from a more integrated perspective. This is not to say that WFP was not cognisant of these issues. It is rather suggesting that a more effective approach would have required a shift to watershed-based planning[119] instead of continuing on an activity-by-activity basis that had been necessary under conflict conditions.

137. The analysis of data from all five sub-regions of Northern Uganda found that WFP was able to implement FFA to the same level of success regardless of the level of insecurity. Analysis of the relationship between operational set-backs and outcomes suggests that this result is most likely because of the organisational ability to step-up operations, including the decision to continue moving with armed escorts. Assets performing better in the long term are where good technical design (led by programme and partners) has come together with minimal implementation set-backs (which are first and foremost in terms of distribution delays). The success of FFA depends on whole-of-organisation performance by WFP, not just the quality of the programme team.

138. FFA is one of the few very large-scale transition programmes in Northern Uganda; aside from the Government's own programmes. The quality, and orientation, of its implementation relied strongly on which partners were available to support FFA, with the lack of technical capacity inside the partner organisation limiting the range and ambition of assets that could be realised. In both examples of chronic contexts, FFA was significantly larger and had more coverage than other programmes. Partners were keen to work with WFP partly because the organisation has the capability to develop and fund large scale activities relatively rapidly. Communities and government liked WFP because it already has funding in place[120], so when assets were selected they were built quickly. WFP has been unable to exploit this advantage to introduce innovative or holistic FFA activities to areas largely because it is reliant on the number and quality of partners on the ground.

139. Even though FFA is backstopped within WFP by a highly capable operation, a trade off of relying on partners was that it further distanced WFP's line of communications with communities (according to WFP field staff). In dynamic contexts, WFP relied heavily on external technical capacity, with WFP's internal guidance focused mostly on implementation and work norms. WFP field staff were ostensibly project coordinators, responsible for a large number of activities and with very little technical guidance available to them. The primary concern was on agreeing how much of an activity constituted a task, and ensuring that each project could be completed in the allocated distribution window. NGOs, community members, and

119 As is now being piloted with FAO in Karamoja.
120 Source: Interviews with sub-counties and district leaders in three case study sites; with no opposing views. Although projects may have been underfunded overall, resources were in place by the time projects were designed at community level – whereas most NGOs engage communities first and then seek funding.

government staff were the main guarantors of technical quality in the selection and design of assets.

140. In Karamoja the contextual factors of access to infrastructure and basic services (health and education) were found to be important influences on the long term condition of assets, as reported under Section 2.1. Most of these are outside of WFP's control, but serve to emphasise the importance of joint programming and maximising the synergies with complementary activities such as school feeding.

141. The level of insecurity in Karamoja 2005-2009 was so intense that it overshadowed almost all other sources of vulnerability. As stability has returned to the sub-region, there is an expectation on the ground that the main barrier to developing resilient livelihoods has been overcome. There is a danger, however, that this view misses the potential impact of low-intensity background hazards, which in combination can threaten gains made through programmes like FFA. These require a recalibration of the level of risk perceived as significant by programme and field staff as they transition to post-conflict settings.

Geophysical Impact

142. FFA in Northern Uganda was primarily concerned with addressing the immediate challenges facing communities. In West Nile this was the environmental degradation and social strain around refugee camps. In Acholi, Teso and Lango, it was dealing with the effects of civil conflict and displacement, while in Karamoja, it was about assisting people who have lost their traditional livelihoods to cope in a fragile environment. Each of these challenges have a sense of urgency, and WFP has been complemented by many on its action-orientated approach.

143. Cassava multiplication and tree nurseries were pivotal contributions in Acholi. WFP's investment in growing seedlings and providing new cassava cuttings has had multiple positive ripple effects (see Section 2.3). These two interventions were an effective demonstration of what can be achieved when WFP's scale and perceived funding stability are combined with FAO technical advice.

144. However, although WFP was looking at the big picture, overall, short logic-chains for individual assets meant that opportunities to leverage synergies have been missed. WFP programme staff were aware of the potential contributions of assets to wider change, such as the role of woodlots in income generation. However, the actual designs tended to reflect an urgency of implementation and were largely focused on providing a solution to an immediate problem – such as deforestation.

145. The main cause of change has probably been security and good weather, FFA also benefited from both. This evaluation considers the long-run effects of assets constructed 4-9 years ago. Since that time, Northern Uganda has had generally good rains and avoided drought. In combination with increased security, this has enabled households to reopen fallow land and begin producing. Without these contextual factors, it would be unrealistic to expect the same level of impacts from FFA based on the programme design and minimal level of follow-up that has since taken place (with the exception of Karamoja).

146. A factor to come out strongly in the fuzzy set analysis was the importance of complementary livelihood assets – such as oxen and tools. In the case of Northern Uganda, now mostly reliant on rain fed agriculture, this also implies good weather.

Impact on Productivity

147. FFA made a significant initial contribution to food security through transfers, but has had limited impact on productivity in the long run. The food ration was consumed directly by 81% of households, suggesting that FFA met a real need during the return process. The assets themselves, however, have largely added marginal benefits to general livelihood needs such as environmental stability (woodlots), market access (roads) and education (teachers' houses). These contributions continue to be important for communities, but are insufficient in themselves to make a significant impact on the long-term food security of households. The activities that did have a direct link, such as fish farming and cassava multiplication, appear to have been subject to the lowest rates of survival, limiting their wider contribution to long-term food security.

148. Considering the highly isolated nature and relatively small scale of assets created in the 2005-2010 period (section 1.3), it is unlikely that these would significantly mitigate the effects of a drought for very long – with the exception of roads that could be used for relief distribution. Furthermore, the consequences of opening up new land in terms of soil erosion have yet to be felt at scale, but are an almost inevitable consequence of unplanned opening. FFA from the period in question also did not consider this aspect of environmental vulnerability, but it has now been included in WFP's implementation of NUSAF 2[121].

Impact on Vulnerability

149. FFA in Northern Uganda 2005-2010 is unlikely to have reached the most vulnerable households, but it was also not intended to. The design of the projects was based on two assumptions: 1) that all households in the context were vulnerable, and 2) that FFA was an addition to relief food. These assumptions largely made sense for the return period. However, interviews in Rhino camp in West Nile suggest that the most vulnerable were the ones left behind on relief supplies. Once these ceased, they no longer had the same access to support as people in return areas. Aggregate improvements in food security also led to FFA being phased out. This reinforces the lessons WFP has learned in Karamoja[122] that the levels of vulnerability need to be understood in disaggregated terms if FFA is to be most effective as a productive safety net.

150. The conditional transfer modality is relevant in the transition period from relief to recovery, but has a limited shelf-life when targeted at the general population. FFA was introduced when the majority of programming was free relief, and it acted as an important reference point for the shift to recovery programming.

151. Whilst loosely targeted conditional transfers were an important step-on from handouts, they also reinforced expectation among community members of being paid to contribute. This context is not always well appreciated by later development partners who can be frustrated by the apparent contribution of FFA to dependency[123].There appears to be no clear way to avoid the moral hazards associated with conditional transfers, they can only be minimised as much as

121 The Northern Uganda Social Action Fund is primarily implemented by WFP in Karamoja. It is the successor to KPAP.
122According to interviews with WFP staff.
123 WFP, as reported to the evaluation mission within the SSIs, is seen by most people as a leader in the humanitarian space in terms of attempting to address dependency issues at scale. It is seen as a creator of dependency by some of the developmental organisations that come in the peace. Both of these perceptions have some truth to them, and reflect the challenge that WFP faces in occupying the full range of programming, from emergency to development.

possible through shifting to household-based vulnerability targeting as early as feasible within the recovery phase.

152. Insecurity was very visible, but the aggregate of background risks also combine to present significant sources of vulnerability that populations are not attuned to (such as bush fires and HIV – see section 2.6). The security situation in Northern Uganda has inevitably dominated the design of programmes and the perception of most field staff. It has also been a major preoccupation for communities. The intensity of the violence that was experienced by many people likely makes emergent hazards such as HIV and bush fire seem to be fairly insignificant. In aggregate, however, these low intensity risks are also a threat to livelihoods, and WFP's programming is yet to fully respond to these issues.

153. Traditional mechanisms of risk mitigation have not been re-established and FFA has played a role in this. There are two parallel systems of resilience in Northern Uganda. The first is a traditional subsistence system, in which farmers keep multiple gardens or grazing areas spread out, traditional slow-growing varieties are kept in the garden as a food-security crop, and harvests are stored in granaries. The second is a market orientated system, in which diverse crops are grown in a single garden, fast growing varieties are harvested in two seasons, harvests are stored in sacks, and profit from sold produce is kept in village savings and loans.

154. Although it was not intended to do so, the design of FFA perhaps reflected the designers' assumptions by making choices that implicitly favour the market-orientated system. This includes the market-orientation of income generating activities (such as fish farming) and the choice of improved varieties of crops. In doing so, FFA may have inadvertently missed the opportunity to help re-establish the traditional system as a near-term contribution to resilience. This raises the prospect that without access to traditional granaries, low-income farmers risk being caught between subsistence-based and market-based resilience mechanisms without the full benefit of either. Furthermore, while it delivered WFP's medium term objective of re-establishing household production, the focus on improved varieties of cassava missed the opportunity to re-establish the long-term benefits of traditional food security crops.

155. Future FFA would benefit from being planned to be conflict-sensitive around land and ownership. In retrospect, the implicit assumption that the return was a matter of re-establishing a previous normality was fraught with gaps. It is likely that access and control of land will emerge as an issue in other post-conflict settings.

Impact on Livelihoods Resilience

156. In general, activities were primarily designed to address immediate problems rather than create long terms impacts on livelihoods. This was a conscious decision based on the conceptualisation, at that time, of FFA as a recovery mechanism to channel food to people whilst they worked to restore their previous livelihoods. FFA in Uganda was not intended to be developmental and its impacts reflect this, being mostly related to recovery.

157. With one or two exceptions, most surviving community assets (woodlots, ponds/dams/tanks, stoves, gardens, roads) – 48% of all assets – are likely to have had a small but positive impact on income at either community or household level (37% of household-reported changes were related to economic or resource-access benefits). School-based activities – 26% of all assets – account for 13% of reported

benefits, also suggesting small positive impacts (these were not verified using education-system data).

158. At the community-level, most assets are still referred to in terms of their future potential to generate income, rather than their actual performance. In most cases this is because the scale was too small and assets too spread out to generate a micro-economy (e.g. woodlots are big enough to provide wood for teachers to use, but not to generate enough income to maintain a forest-management group). But there are some stories that represent that income potential for FFA when designed well and linked to other interventions[124].

159. Overall, the evaluation team found that most interviewees, even critical ones, agree that conditional transfers were the right mechanism at the right time, and FFA helped to shift the momentum of response from relief to recovery. The programme as it was designed, however, was insufficiently targeted at vulnerable households to perform as a development intervention once the immediate food gap (created by the return) had been bridged.

4.2 Recommendations for how FFA design could be improved

160. Many of the lessons for design and implementation emerging from this evaluation are already being applied by WFP country office in its current programming for Karamoja. WFP's corporate guidance on FFA programming and on gender programming have also been substantially changed since the period reviewed. Recommendations are therefore intended to support WFP's on-going.

161. **Recommendation 1:** *WFP should carry out a corporate roll-out of the updated (2013) FFA programme guidance at the country offices level***.** This investment in capacity development and dissemination of corporate guidance is important to mitigate the impacts of the high turn over of field staff and address previously inadequate or lack of training and hand-over. The roll-out should include a corporate prioritized and budgeted plan for the short to medium term timeline to ensure relevance to coutnry office programming needs. [Headquarters]

162. **Recommendation 2:** *WFP Uganda country office should formally commit to carrying ou the requisite follow-up actions of the FFA guidance roll-out for effective knowledge transfer and retention at field level***,** including through: i) participating staff's commitment to remaining in post for a minimum period, to develop effective capacity in the country office; ii) linking the performance plans of participating staff to key areas of the guidance; and iii) planning for adequate levels of country office FFA staffing and Headquarters technical support to sustain and extend FFA capacity. [Uganda country office]

163. **Recommendation 3:** *Jointly with complementary sector partners, develop a strategic FFA plan that ensures deployment of the necessary technical capacity*, based on: i) a three-pronged approach to FFA in resilience-building efforts, comprising integrated gender and context analysis, seasonal livelihoods programming, and participatory community-based planning; ii) a common understanding on how WFP's FFA and other initiatives can complement each other in the transition from relief to development; and iii) a comprehensive analysis of the specific risks faced by communities that integrates gender issues, land ownership

124 Bungatira Primary School, for example, is estimated to have generated over $20,000 (USD) from its 6 acres of woodlot, and it has now created a community tree nursery in its grounds. The Lunyeko Kunen group in Pabbo has transformed their community cassava garden into a collective farm, the success of which now provides employment for other community members and has attracted additional support from over a dozen developmental NGOs.

and traditional resilience mechanisms. [Uganda coutnry office with Regional Bureau and Headquarters support]

164. **Recommendation 4:** *Develop a multi-year operational FFA implementation plan that involves country office management, programming, operational and support units, and takes into account the seasonality of activities and the lead times for procurement and delivery.* This plan should enable the implementation of WFP's corporate objectives in Uganda, pre-empt bottlenecks and include predefined mitigation strategies. [Uganda country office]

165. **Recommendation 5:** *Include in WFP's corporate FFA guidance, lessons learned for FFA in transition contexts,* related to the early introduction in the recovery phase of vulnerability-based household targeting and of a community communication strategy that emphasises the time-bound nature of conditional FFA transfers. [Headquarters and country offices]

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