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SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION OF PRRO TAJIKISTAN 10231.0

**Food Assistance to Vulnerable Groups and
Recovery Activities**

NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for consideration.

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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report synthesizes the findings of an independent evaluation of Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation 10231.0 in Tajikistan, approved for July 2003–June 2005 and extended to December 2006. The evaluation was commissioned by the Office of Evaluation and carried out in April 2006.

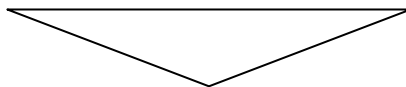
The purpose of the evaluation was to inform a strategic discussion on the future shape of WFP's programme in Tajikistan in the face of declining resources. The evaluation mission was to focus particularly on the role of WFP and food aid in Tajikistan.

Tajikistan remains the poorest of the countries established after the break-up of the former Soviet Union. The evaluation mission found that food aid is still relevant to livelihood recovery there. Given the fact that resource levels have fallen, the country office is to be commended for questioning the continued need for and relevance of food aid and for concerning itself with sustainability and exit strategies. The country office currently faces the risk of a drastically downsized operation followed by withdrawal from Tajikistan in the near future.

WFP corporate guidance recommends that all projects include an exit strategy. However, at the time of design of the operation, little thought was given to negotiating an exit strategy with partners, including the Government of Tajikistan. The evaluation mission identifies the need for WFP to develop a responsible exit strategy aimed at ensuring that the joint achievements of WFP and the Government do not collapse when WFP assistance is withdrawn.

The aim of an exit strategy is to ensure that the benefits of WFP's activities continue after the phase-out. It is not a requirement that activities be continued beyond the end of the project, but the mission recommends that solutions be found to enable sustainable activities such as food for education, tuberculosis support and supplementary feeding to continue with other resources. The mission concludes that a continuation of the current operation is needed to enable the country office to design and implement an exit strategy by consolidating and phasing out WFP support and incorporating the activities into the government budget. WFP should make each activity under the new operation conditional on a time-bound exit strategy agreed with the Government; this includes cost-sharing agreements in which WFP's contribution would decrease to zero over an agreed period.

DRAFT DECISION*



The Board takes note of the information and recommendations set out in “Summary Report of the Evaluation of PRRO Tajikistan 10231.0” (WFP/EB.2/2006/6-B) and encourages further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by Board members during its discussion.

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.



EVALUATION SCOPE AND METHOD

1. This report synthesizes the findings of an independent evaluation of Tajikistan Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) 10231.0 that was undertaken from 5 to 27 April 2006 on behalf of WFP's Office of Evaluation (OEDE). According to WFP's evaluation policy, all programmes longer than 12 months must be evaluated once they are in the project cycle to render accountability to the Board and to enable WFP and its partners to learn from the experience. This evaluation was requested by the country office to inform the design of a new phase of assistance after December 2006.
2. The objective of the evaluation was to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of PRRO 10231.0 with a focus on the role of WFP and food aid in Tajikistan to inform discussion on the future of operations in the country. Evaluation methods included (i) desk reviews of documentation, including analysis of food distribution, (ii) vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) and monitoring data, (iii) interviews with staff of WFP, ministries, United Nations agencies, donors and implementing partners, (iv) visits to WFP field offices in Khujand, Kulob and Qurghonteppa, (v) visits to 33 projects in 15 of the 22 priority districts and (vi) interviews with local authorities, sub-project committee members, participants and beneficiaries. Evaluation findings were shared at meetings with the country office, the regional bureau, the Government, United Nations and non-governmental organization (NGO) stakeholders and Headquarters.

CONTEXT FOR PRRO 10231.0

3. Tajikistan is a landlocked low-income food-deficit country that is still recovering from independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, a civil war in 1992–1997 that took the lives of 50,000 people and a drought in 2000–2002. After 1991, gross domestic product (GDP) growth declined sharply because of the breakdown of the command economy and transition to a market-based system, the collapse of economic ties with republics of the former USSR and the end of the allocation from Moscow that financed 40 percent of the country's budget.
4. Tajikistan, the poorest of the states of the former Soviet Union, continues to suffer from high levels of poverty and food insecurity: per capita GDP is only US\$316 per annum; 64 percent of the population live below the national poverty line of US\$2.15 per day. Despite 9.4 percent GDP growth for 2001–2005, the economy stands at 63 percent of the 1990 level. The country is dependent on exports of cotton and aluminium and on remittances accounting for 50 percent of GDP from 800,000 Tajik citizens working in the Russian Federation. Average earnings have increased, but income and expenditure inequality has increased, particularly in rural areas. In spite of commercial imports and international food aid, access to food remains a significant challenge for 1.05 million people – 27 percent of the rural population – who live in marginalized food-deficit areas.
5. Social indicators, which fell after independence, have not regained previous levels: Tajikistan has the highest infant mortality rate in Central Asia – 89 deaths per 1,000 live births. Incidence of malaria and tuberculosis (TB) remains high. The 2004 National Nutrition Survey showed prevalence of global acute malnutrition of 7.6 percent and global chronic malnutrition of 31.4 percent. The education system suffers from falling attendance, a widening gender gap, increasing barriers to full participation by vulnerable groups, low teacher salaries and deteriorating infrastructure.



6. WFP has been active in Tajikistan since 1993, providing US\$172 million in support of two PRROs and two emergency operations (EMOPs). PRRO 10231.0 was launched in July 2003 to reach 1.5 million beneficiaries in two years with a food commitment of 142,084 mt valued at US\$75 million. Resource allocation was 65 percent for recovery and 35 percent for relief. PRRO priorities support the National Development Strategy (NDS), the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Needs Assessment.
7. The main constraint on implementation of PRRO 10231.0 was low levels of funding: at the original closing date in June 2005 it was only 44 percent resourced. Diminished resources led to a reduced operating budget with the same operational and reporting requirements as larger country operations; as a result, staff members were overstretched. Low funding levels continue for contributions to Tajikistan, where other humanitarian actors have announced their intention to discontinue assistance. Major donors will discontinue development assistance to Tajikistan and may even exit from the country in 2007. A number of WFP's NGO partners that depend on these donors are uncertain of future funding; others are questioning the continued relevance of food aid.
8. On the government side, the main constraint is that ministries are not as responsive as local authorities and communities to assistance based on food aid. This has been exacerbated by slow and incomplete implementation of land privatization and agricultural liberalization, which has prevented small farmers from achieving food security through their own production.

IMPLEMENTATION

9. Because of low funding levels, the closing date of the PRRO was extended to the end of December 2006. In February 2006, the project was downsized by de-earmarking 47,067 mt and cutting the budget to US\$51.7 million. In November 2005, the Russian Federation contributed 13,350 mt of wheat flour to the PRRO, 11.6 percent of total resources, which should be enough for the rest of the project.
10. In-kind donations accounted for 55 percent of total contributions, of which 37 percent were cash contributions to procure wheat and pulses in Kazakhstan, which improved the cost efficiency of the operation. The cost of regional purchase, including transport, is less than half of the costs related to in-kind contributions.¹ The only commodity that the country office buys locally is salt in the absence of crop surpluses available for local purchase.
11. Despite low funding levels, between mid-2003 and mid-2005 the country office maintained the original project targets, resulting in overspending of direct support costs (DSC) compared to the level of contributions. In response to the operating budget shortage, 22 staff posts have been cut since mid-2005 and two of the four sub-offices and related storage facilities have been closed. In spite of these cost-saving measures, the operation will face a DSC shortfall in December 2006, leaving carry-over stocks for a new phase of the operation but no DSC to support distribution.

¹ Average total cost per mt delivered to WFP warehouses for in-kind contributions in 2005 was US\$515/mt, whereas the same goods could be purchased in Kazakhstan and delivered to extended delivery points at only US\$221/mt.



12. Resource shortfalls reduced implementation rates in 2004 and 2005. As contributions dried up, the country office chose to focus scarce resources on activities such as food for education (FFE) that were likely to show the most impact and on those such as TB support and supplementary/therapeutic feeding and some food-for-work (FFW) projects where WFP had commitments with partners receiving complementary funding from other donors. Vulnerable group feeding (VGF) distributions and the beneficiary caseload were reduced. From mid-2005, the country office discontinued activities related to food security, food for training (FFT) and income generation (IG), and institutional feeding for psychiatric patients.
13. As of the end of December 2005, the project had delivered 74,443 mt, 52 percent of the planned tonnage. Actual deliveries averaged 116 percent of the planned amount for school feeding, 58 percent for disaster relief, 50 percent for VGF, 26 percent for health and nutrition, 25 percent for FFW, 21 percent for FFT/IG and 13 percent for food security. There were 1.2 million beneficiaries, 85 percent of the planned total, but only at the cost of spreading resources more thinly.

RELEVANCE, EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY, SUSTAINABILITY AND CONNECTEDNESS OF WFP SUPPORT

Relevance

14. All of the activities supported by PRRO 10231.0 are relevant to livelihood recovery and to the Government's development strategies in the NDS and PRS; VGF and disaster relief are still relevant in the absence of adequate social protection. Activities such as FFE, FFW and FFT/IG are appropriate because they address the causes of poverty and food insecurity; VGF and disaster relief address only its symptoms. Supplementary and therapeutic feeding and support for TB patients mainly address the symptoms, but nutrition education for mothers of malnourished children helps to address some of the causes.
15. Food aid continues to be relevant for VGF, FFE and health and nutrition, but it is no longer appropriate as a tool for food security or IG projects. In a post-emergency situation, farmers and women's groups need sustainable access to inputs, production credit and markets rather than food assistance. FFW is relevant for infrastructure rehabilitation only in highly food-insecure areas and among households with limited access to land or IG opportunities; elsewhere, cash for work is more relevant than FFW.

Effectiveness of Food Aid for the Activities

⇒ Food for education

16. FFE has been effective in increasing school attendance from 85 percent to nearly 100 percent. Teachers have reported that a hot meal at school has increased children's attention spans and alertness. In the higher grades, take-home rations for girls in grades 5-11 have helped to decrease the gender gap in enrolment. School feeding has helped to increase teacher attendance, but it has not had much impact on school enrolment in primary grades because the baseline was already nearly 100 percent.



⇒ *Vulnerable group feeding*

17. As a result of WFP food assistance, VGF beneficiaries reduced their food expenditure from 74 percent of total income to 48 percent during the period of WFP assistance, but once rations had been finished, food expenditure returned to its previous level. VGF has been largely ineffective for livelihood recovery because assistance is unpredictable and spread thinly, the livelihood effects are ephemeral and targeting is weak despite house-to-house verification by WFP.

⇒ *Contingency fund for disaster relief*

18. WFP food assistance for the relief of natural disasters continues to be relevant. WFP food assistance is reported to be timely and effective, and to have reduced the indebtedness of disaster victims. There is a good linkage between VGF for disaster victims and FFW for house construction in resettlement areas.

⇒ *Food for work*

19. FFW was effective for asset creation because the country offices and sub-offices worked almost exclusively with partners able to ensure adequate non-food inputs and supervision of the engineering aspects. The quality of assets was high because rations were released to beneficiaries only when work was certified as complete and a user committee had been put in place to maintain them.
20. The objective of FFW as stated in the country office results-based management (RBM) matrices is “increased ability of food-insecure households to manage shocks”, but most beneficiaries reported that the resource transfer had no long-lasting effects. The contribution to livelihoods is localized and short-term.

⇒ *Health and nutrition*

21. The food incentive attracted vulnerable people to seek and complete treatment for TB and acute malnutrition. The effectiveness of food aid in supporting TB treatment is proved: treatment completion is 94 percent with food as opposed to 54 percent without food; with food, 88 percent of patients completing treatment are cured, as opposed to 63 percent without food. Other positive outcomes include reduced contagion and a reduced risk that failure to complete treatment could lead to multiple-drug resistance.
22. Therapeutic feeding was effective because it saved infants’ lives. In most cases, supplementary feeding enabled malnourished infants to reach 85 percent of standard weight within three months. A secondary goal was to bring about behavioural changes in mothers as a result of nutrition and health education; such changes have not yet been tracked.

⇒ *Activities dropped from the PRRO*

23. The activities dropped from the PRRO included provision of seeds, fertilizer and food rations under food-security sub-projects because they did not enable vulnerable households to achieve food security: the activity helped households to grow a first crop, but it could not be sustained beyond the first harvest. FFW was effective in enabling vulnerable women to participate in vocational skills training; the training was effective and many of the beneficiaries became self-employed. It would still be valid if resources including adequate backstopping were available. Institutional feeding of psychiatric patients did not achieve



WFP's objectives of livelihood recovery because it was a resource transfer to the Government.

Cost Efficiency

24. FFE was the most cost-efficient of all the PRRO activities; FFW was the least cost-efficient. FFE was efficient because the ration included pulses, which are expensive on the local market: the cost to WFP of transporting FFE rations from the United States was the same as the cost to a beneficiary of buying the same food locally; the cost of a hot meal at school is only US\$0.12 per day per pupil. FFW was the least cost-efficient activity because the ration was mainly wheat flour, which is cheap on local markets: the cost of bringing a 1 kg FFW ration from the United States was US\$0.51 compared with US\$0.37 to buy it locally. If WFP could buy in Kazakhstan, the price of bringing in 1 kg of wheat would be US\$0.22, which would significantly improve cost efficiency because most of the wheat sold in the local market is imported from Kazakhstan and WFP can deliver it more cheaply because it buys in bulk and distributes directly to beneficiaries.

Sustainability

25. The most sustainable activities were FFW and TB treatment; the least sustainable were VGF, institutional feeding and food security.² Sustaining supplementary and therapeutic feeding and FFE poses major challenges.
26. Infrastructure built or rehabilitated through FFW will probably be sustainable because the assets are durable and user groups are in place to maintain them. The benefits of VGF last only as long as the food stocks last the household; the activity is not sustainable by the Government in the absence of food aid, and there is no exit strategy.
27. For the TB programme, benefits to patients appear to be sustainable: the default rate is only 1 percent; re-admissions are 5–10 percent, mainly because of resistance to drugs, but the TB programme itself is not yet sustainable without WFP food assistance. The same is true of supplementary and therapeutic feeding: default and readmission rates are acceptable but the activity can probably not be sustained in the absence of WFP food assistance. The collapse of operations in three centres handed over to the Ministry of Health is a source of concern: problems included low salaries, a high turnover of staff and a lack of budget for visits to villages to identify malnourished children. Continuation of supplementary and therapeutic feeding also depends on funding from Action Against Hunger (AAH) beyond April 2007, which is uncertain.
28. With regard to FFE, improvements in school attendance and pupils' ability to concentrate could easily be lost if WFP withdrew from Tajikistan. School feeding is dependent on food aid, so it could collapse if WFP assistance were to end without a negotiated exit strategy. On the positive side, the Government has included a school-feeding programme for primary schools in the NDS.
29. The sustainability of food-security sub-projects is doubtful. A one-off grant of seeds and fertilizers and food assistance was enough to enable the beneficiaries to begin food crop production, but not enough to enable them to achieve food security or to sustain production in successive years. The FFT/IG sub-projects are sustainable; many enterprises are making a profit.

² Disadvantaged groups are given a one-off grant of food and good quality seed and fertilizer to enable them to start growing wheat or potatoes.



Connectedness

30. WFP assistance under PRRO 10231.0 is better connected with long-term assistance by other actors than it was under previous projects. The project design called for the country office to outsource implementation to partners, but WFP opted to carry out more direct implementation in partnership with local authorities and communities.
31. WFP's decision to shift FFE from NGOs to district education departments helped to build local ownership. Cooperation between WFP and the Ministry of Education at the central level is not strong, but the mission found good cooperation at the regional and district levels between WFP field offices and local authorities, which transported food from the final delivery points (FDPs) to schools; the communities regularly supplied firewood and complementary food. The government and community contributions were systematic and consistent. The local spirit of contribution is an opportunity on which WFP could capitalize as an element in an exit strategy.
32. VGF operations were well connected with local authorities through involvement of sub-district and village leaders in drawing up beneficiary lists and in distribution. WFP verified beneficiary lists directly and oversaw food distribution. Connections with village organizations could be strengthened to offset domination by appointed sub-district and village heads. Links with the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Welfare need to be strengthened to improve integration with social-protection systems.
33. WFP disaster relief is well connected with the Ministry of Emergency and other donors through WFP's membership of the Rapid Emergency Assessment Coordination Team (REACT).
34. For FFW, WFP shifted from reliance on United Nations and NGO partners to direct implementation in partnership with local governments, district agriculture and water departments and communities.
35. The TB programme is embedded in the Ministry of Health; there is complementarity between WFP's short-term provision of food aid and the long-term benefits of the directly observed treatment short course (DOTS) programme. AAH tried to involve the Ministry of Health in the activities of the supplementary and therapeutic feeding centres, but the response was disappointing.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Assessment

36. Assessment is a major issue: three vulnerability assessments were undertaken in connection with PRRO 10231.0 with different methods, each identifying different areas of the country as food-insecure. As a result, users were reluctant to trust the results. None of the 7 highly food-insecure districts identified by the 2003 assessment coincided with any of the 12 highly food-insecure districts identified by the 2005 VAM assessment. The results of the second VAM were so controversial and politically sensitive that a third assessment had to be undertaken in Rasht Valley and Badakhshan in an effort to resolve the controversy.



⇒ *Linkage between assessment and programming*

37. There is poor correlation between assessed needs and quantities of food programmed in the priority districts defined by the two main VAM studies. Over-programming and under-programming are evident.

⇒ *Use of assessment data*

38. The intended data users found the 2005 VAM survey difficult to use in carrying out district-level targeting and virtually impossible to apply at the sub-district level. The country office feels obliged to use it for targeting, however. The cluster approach was controversial and rejected by data users because it artificially combined incongruous groups of vulnerable people. Averaging across communities in a district and across districts in a zone often resulted in an inaccurate aggregate picture, which complicated targeting rather than clarifying it. The overall survey approach may be statistically valid in theory, but this application of the theory did not yield a sound basis for informing programming decisions; hence it has low operational usefulness because it was not cost-efficient.

Targeting

39. Geographic targeting was weak over time and across project activities. Lack of conclusive assessment data was a challenge in district-level targeting, but programming at the district level did not link well with the VAM baseline survey. FFE districts seemed to be inherited by historical accident rather than through correlation with identified food-insecure districts.
40. VGF targeting effectiveness was doubtful because of lack of consensus on beneficiary selection criteria, weakness in screening checklists, the rotation of people on beneficiary lists, unreliable coverage of households with no breadwinner and food redistribution in communities. In spite of house-to-house verification of beneficiary lists, beneficiary rotation and food redistribution contributed to errors of inclusion – non-poor households – and errors of exclusion – many food-insecure households were not covered.
41. FFE is weakly targeted because it covers 1,700 schools in 44 districts. District selection reflects the priorities of WFP's former NGO partners rather than VAM data. In assisted schools, FFE covers 100 percent of primary-school pupils, without regard for their poverty status. The decision to focus on grades 1–4 and to target only rural areas was appropriate, as was the decision to provide a take-home ration for secondary-school girls in the Rasht Valley because of a gender gap in the region.
42. The assumption that FFW is self-targeting to food-insecure people does not hold in Tajikistan. The promise of 250–300 kg of wheat flour per household is attractive in comparison to the uncertainty of finding daily employment, so households are keen to obtain FFW despite the low value of food rations relative to the daily wage. As a result the more enterprising households try to obtain FFW, which tends to crowd out disadvantaged households. Nonetheless, the assets created through FFW benefit whole communities.
43. Health and nutrition activities tend to be self-targeting because the incidence of TB and acute malnutrition is disproportionately high among poor households and vulnerable groups.
44. The beneficiaries of food-security activities and FFT/IG are not the poorest or most vulnerable people; the evaluation mission endorses the country office's decision to remove them from the caseload.



Monitoring

45. The country office has made a smooth transition to RBM and outcome monitoring, particularly for health and education indicators, but improvement is required in FFW and VGF outcome reporting.

Enhanced Commitments to Women

46. The country office is to be commended for meeting all the Enhanced Commitments to Women. But declining resources pose a problem. The main project activities that benefit women more than men are school-feeding take-home rations for girls, FFT/IG and nutrition education for mothers of malnourished infants. The country office's decision to expand take-home rations for girls to the 22 highly food-insecure districts makes sense for the next PRRO, but it does not make sense to start a new activity when the project is within six months of closing. The country office's decision to drop FFT/IG is likely to reduce the proportion of women among beneficiaries, but the evaluation mission endorses the decision because FFT/IG supervision is more time-consuming than other activities, and staff are already overstretched.

Capacity-Building

47. WFP has tried to build local capacities in connection with PRRO activities. But capacity-building requires a willing partner, and the Government has not always been willing to participate. The greatest success with capacity-building under PRRO 10231.0 was at the district level and below in connection with FFE: local government personnel, school officials and parents are systematically engaged in implementing school-feeding activities and appear to possess the capacity for it. In the health and nutrition sector, capacity-building in the Ministry of Health has been stronger for TB programmes than for supplementary and therapeutic feeding. Little capacity has been built in connection with other activities.

LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE

Exit Strategies

48. WFP policy requires all project documents to include an exit strategy. The first paragraph on exit strategy in the PRRO 10231.0 document implied that the follow-on to PRRO 10231.0 would be a development project. But in the light of scarce resources for WFP's development portfolio, it would be difficult to make the transition to a development project.
49. The evaluation mission identified the need for WFP to develop a responsible exit strategy that ensures that the joint achievements of WFP and the Government do not collapse when WFP assistance ends. A responsible exit strategy increases the likelihood that benefits to households can be sustained. The activities might be entrusted to other agencies or handed over to government departments and integrated into the government budget.



Connectedness and Partnership

50. The Government of Tajikistan clearly appreciates WFP's activities, though the level of connectedness with central government varies: the Ministry of Emergency Situations and the Ministry of Health, for example, are more involved with WFP activities than the Ministry of Education. At the provincial and district levels collaboration is strongest with the education department. Part of the problem at the national level is the high turnover of ministers and the political nature of appointments. WFP aims to continue its existing links with provincial leaders, for example in Sughd, and to develop closer links with provincial leadership elsewhere.

Lessons Related to the PRRO Category

51. The original design of the PRRO was too ambitious and too optimistic about resources. Although the civil war and drought emergencies were over, the design called for a larger and more ambitious project than any of the previous operations. Future PRRO designs should foresee different scenarios depending on different resourcing hypotheses.
52. Implementation arrangements for a PRRO are likely to differ from those for an EMOP, even if the activities they finance are similar. If a government is too weak to respond to an emergency, an EMOP can be implemented mainly through United Nations and NGO partners. But if WFP's ultimate objective is to facilitate a transition from emergency to development, and if the WFP exit strategy depends on a seamless handover to a government, PRROs must work in coordination with local authorities and government ministries from the outset.
53. Before exiting from a country, WFP must ensure that the benefits of its activities can be sustained beyond the end of the project. It is not a requirement that the activities themselves be sustained beyond the end of the project, but the most promising activities – in this case FFE, TB support and supplementary feeding – should be able to continue with other resources. It is not in WFP's interest to let its achievements end when it withdraws, so in the mission's view a new operation is needed to enable the country office to implement an exit strategy.

WFP's Future Programme in Tajikistan

54. The country office should refocus the operation in line with the availability of resources and judge the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of each activity and its likely contribution to national and international priorities, including the MDGs. The evaluation mission endorses the country office decision to focus its scarce resources on FFE plus health and nutrition while continuing to support VGF and FFW on a reduced scale. It should continue to earmark contingency funds for response to natural disasters.
55. The evaluation recommends extending the project closing date to enable FFE to cover the school year and to give time to negotiate the design of a new PRRO. The follow-on PRRO would be aimed at consolidating and phasing out WFP support and incorporating the activities into the government budget. WFP should make inclusion of each activity under the new PRRO conditional on an agreed time-bound exit strategy. Each exit strategy should include cost-sharing agreements in which WFP's percentage contribution would decrease each year of the new PRRO. In mobilizing the Government's share of the future PRRO budget, project designers should capitalize on existing contributions by district and local authorities and communities. WFP should earmark resources for the cost-sharing pilots.



RECOMMENDATIONS

56. The evaluation recommendations and the corresponding management responses are given in the attached matrix.

**ANNEX: MANAGEMENT RESPONSE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION—RESPONSE MATRIX**

Recommendations (April 2006)	Action by	Management response and action taken (July 2006)
Funding		
WFP Headquarters should be proactive and provide a funding forecast for future operations instead of waiting for a project to be approved before it starts looking for resources.	Fundraising and Communications Department (FD)	The Donor Relations Division (FDD) has initiated its process well in advance of project approval in terms of forecasting, but this needs to be systematized in all operations. It is in place for BPR projects. FDD recognizes that its involvement needs to be from when the project is being prepared; it would request the country office and regional bureau to engage FDD so that FDD and the Operations Department (OD) can be partners in assessing the level of resources that would or could be made available.
WFP should enquire into the interest of non-traditional donors to Tajikistan such as Russia, Turkey, and China, and lobby for cash donations to improve the efficiency of the operation.	FD; regional bureau, country office	<p>Country office: Agreed. The country office has started lobbying donors locally.</p> <p>Regional bureau: Agreed. The Turkey country office has a budget allocation for fundraising and is working with the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs on partnership activities, including support for WFP operations. The Turkey country office will continue to seek additional funds from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Tajikistan PRRO within this framework.</p> <p>FDD: Discussions are in progress with regard to the Russian Federation. A portion of their 2005 resources were made available.</p> <p>In the case of China, an updated list of operations has been provided, and Tajikistan has been included.</p> <p>In the case of Turkey, a small contribution was received early on; Turkey has been encouraged to become a regular contributor to this operation.</p>
In case of serious shortfalls for the next phase of the operation, WFP should ensure sufficient funds to allow the exit strategy to be implemented in order to avoid defaulting on phase-out negotiations with government, e.g. through multilateral funds.	Programming Service (ODMP)	The need for multilateral resources will be seriously considered to ensure a smooth phase-out, but a more realistic and coordinated option is to work with FD to develop a resource-mobilization strategy to ensure adequate resources to meet project requirements.





**ANNEX: MANAGEMENT RESPONSE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION—RESPONSE MATRIX**

Recommendations (April 2006)	Action by	Management response and action taken (July 2006)
PRRO design		
<p>New PRRO designs should specify different sets of activities and targets for different funding scenarios; project designers should avoid over-optimistic assumptions about resourcing, especially for a second PRRO and adjust resource targets and outputs to likely funding scenarios.</p>	<p>Emergencies and Transitions Unit (PDPT)/Office of the Director of Operations (ODO)/regional bureau, country office</p>	<p>Country office: Agreed.</p> <p>Regional bureau: Agreed. The New Business Model (NBM) would address the scenarios of different funding levels. The regional bureau will use NBM for all new projects as of mid-2006.</p> <p>PDPT: The PRRO design is not the place to outline different funding scenarios; they should be part of in-country operational plans. The upcoming targeting guidance will have a section on making targeting and in-country resource allocation decisions in the light of different funding scenarios.</p> <p>ODO: The PRRO document should not set out different funding scenarios: it should be based on needs. As pointed out by PDPT, in-country operational plans could include several funding options.</p>
<p>All PRRO designs should include a time-bound exit strategy that is negotiated and agreed with government and partners and involves gradual transfer of activities as well as their funding to the appropriate government agency.</p>	<p>Policy, Strategy and Programme Support Division (PDP)/regional bureau, country office</p>	<p>Country office: Agreed. Once the evaluation report is finalized and translated, the country office will start discussions with central and regional government partners. The results will be reflected in the new PRRO.</p> <p>Regional bureau: Agreed. WFP needs to link its exit to government policies and strategies relevant to WFP's objectives, and to the activities of other partners, especially bilateral partners and the World Bank.</p>
Vulnerable Group Feeding (VGF)		
<p>WFP Tajikistan should scale down VGF to cover only the 10 percent chronic food insecure or discontinue it completely. It should liaise closely with the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Welfare,+ in order to ensure that the VGF caseload is adequately taken into account in government social-protection strategies.</p>	<p>Country office</p>	<p>Agreed.</p>
Contingency fund/disaster relief		
<p>WFP should continue to earmark contingency funds for disaster relief.</p>	<p>Country office</p>	<p>Agreed.</p>

**ANNEX: MANAGEMENT RESPONSE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION—RESPONSE MATRIX**

Recommendations (April 2006)	Action by	Management response and action taken (July 2006)
Food for education/direct feeding		
School feeding should continue in the existing caseload of schools until the end of the PRRO; phase-out of VAM “yellow” districts should wait until the next PRRO.	Country office	Agreed. How much WFP phases out of yellow districts will depend on how much and how quickly the Government can phase-in.
If resources are too scarce to enable FFE to continue covering all of the VAM “yellow” districts, WFP should offer to cost-share 50:50 with local government and communities. HQs should earmark resources for these pilots to enable the country office to honour its share in the agreement.	Country office	Agreed, subject to receiving resources for these pilots from FD or ODMP.
If WFP withdraws from FFE in some of the VAM “green” districts it should, through the Dept. of Education, document what happens to school attendance rates and children’s concentration on their lessons after school feeding stops.	Country office	Agreed.
Food for education/take home		
WFP should not start-up FFE/take home in new schools during the last year of the current project, deferring the start-up until the next PRRO.	Country office	Agreed. However, the country office questions the usefulness of starting-up in any new schools if the next PRRO is a phase-out PRRO ending in 2009.
Food for training/non-formal education		
WFP should not pursue FFT/IG under the next project.	Country office	Agreed.
Food rations should not be used in lieu of wages to support enterprise development in non-emergency situations and WFP should always monitor how profits are divided between the implementing partner and the workers.	PDP/regional bureau, country office	PDP: Agreed. Country office: Agreed. Regional bureau: Agreed.





**ANNEX: MANAGEMENT RESPONSE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE
SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION—RESPONSE MATRIX**

Recommendations (April 2006)	Action by	Management response and action taken (July 2006)
Food security		
WFP should only implement food security sub-projects in emergency situations and only on land under household control; in case of sub-projects on <i>dekhan</i> farms, it should monitor whether the food assistance is a resource transfer to the collective farm as opposed to the workers; WFP should monitor what happens to beneficiaries' production one year after the food assistance has ended.	PDP/regional bureau, country office	PDP: Agreed, but specifying that it is context-specific to Tajikistan. Country office: Agreed. Regional bureau: Agreed.
Institutional Feeding		
WFP should only support institutional feeding in emergency situations as it is a resource transfer to government and has no lasting impact on livelihoods; there should always be an agreed exit strategy.	PDP/regional bureau, country office	PDP: Agreed, but with qualifications of institutional feeding, which can cover a range of activities: some such as school feeding are acceptable outside an emergency; others such as support for institutions such as orphanages are discouraged outside an emergency. Country office: Agreed. Regional bureau: Agreed.
Assessment		
WFP should assist the country office to adapt and refine the 2005 VAM findings in order to make them useful for programming, using secondary data and key informants.	VAM/VAM Headquarters, VAM regional bureau	VAM Headquarters will work with the regional bureau and country office to review and integrate secondary data, particularly on nutrition, to update the 2005 VAM findings to make them more responsive to programming information needs. VAM regional bureau: Agreed. VAM regional bureau will continue to assist in refining findings – it has already done this by re-collecting data and re-verifying the findings of the 2005 VAM study. The country office will have to share with the regional bureau any recent updated secondary data available; VAM will provide support.

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SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION—RESPONSE MATRIX**

Recommendations (April 2006)	Action by	Management response and action taken (July 2006)
WFP should prepare guidance for COs on how to use a VAM assessment for programming and how to refine geographic targeting by triangulating VAM information with other surveys, secondary statistics, local knowledge and/or RRA.	VAM	VAM Headquarters will prepare guidance for country offices on carrying out VAM analysis for targeting. VAM and the Emergency Needs Assessment Branch (ODAN) are promoting the use of the integrated phase classification developed by FAO Somalia, which uses a multi-stakeholder survey and secondary data for geographic targeting. Data sources for this approach are based on various sources, including rapid rural appraisal (RRA). Guidance on the use of phase classification for targeting has been prepared by the Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity (SENAC) initiative for circulation and pilot testing. A Targeting in Emergencies policy was approved at EB.1/2006.
Linkage between vulnerability assessment and programming		
Linkage between assessment, programming and monitoring should be strengthened at all levels. A system should be established to permit a comparison of planned and actual delivery with assessed food needs at district level to ensure that the food goes to the neediest.	Country office	Agreed.
Targeting		
Adequate resources should be targeted to the most food-insecure districts and stricter adopted criteria for targeting within districts and within villages.	Country office	Agreed.
Monitoring		
WFP should assist the CO to develop a sub-project monitoring and reporting database that captures the linkage between assessment, programming and monitoring.	Office of Performance Measurement and Reporting (OEDP)/regional bureau, country office	OEDP: Agreed. The Common Monitoring and Evaluation Approach (CMEA) team will discuss with the regional bureau and country office the possibility of testing the monitoring and evaluation application under development before the end of 2006, provided that financial resources are available. Country office: Agreed. Regional bureau: Agreed. This would also be addressed within the expected CMEA initiative.





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SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION—RESPONSE MATRIX**

Recommendations (April 2006)	Action by	Management response and action taken (July 2006)
Capacity building		
WFP should build capacity of government to continue FFE, TB support and school feeding and therapeutic feeding after it withdraws from the country.	Country office	Agreed, but resources are required and this PRRO has been historically under-funded.
Connectedness		
WFP should negotiate implementation and exit strategy agreements for FFE directly with provinces if an agreement cannot be made with central government.	Country office	Agreed.
WFP'S future programme in Tajikistan		
WFP could extend the current PRRO until end-June 2007 to enable it to cover the entire school year, and to have time to prepare a new PRRO with the objective of phasing out responsibly based on an exit strategy negotiated with government.	Country office	Agreed. Budget revision already approved and released in WINGS, extending the PRRO to the end of June 2007.

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

AAH	Action Against Hunger
BPR	Business Process Review
CMEA	Common Monitoring and Evaluation Approach
DOTS	directly observed treatment short course
DSC	direct support costs
EMOP	emergency operation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FD	Fundraising and Communications Department
FDD	Donor Relations Division
FDP	final delivery point
FFE	food for education
FFT	food for training
FFW	food for work
GDP	gross domestic product
IG	income generation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NBM	New Business Model
NDS	National Development Strategy
NGO	non-governmental organization
OD	Operations Department
ODAN	Emergency Needs Assessment Branch
ODMP	Programming Unit
ODO	Office of the Director of Operations
OEDE	Office of Evaluation
OEDP	Office of Performance Measurement and Reporting
PDP	Policy, Strategy and Programme Support Division
PDPT	Emergencies and Transition Unit
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
PRS	poverty-reduction strategy
RBM	results-based management
REACT	Rapid Emergency Assessment Coordination Team
RRA	rapid rural appraisal
SENAC	Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity
TB	tuberculosis
VAM	vulnerability analysis and mapping
VGf	vulnerable group feeding