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EVALUATION REPORTS

Agenda item 6

For consideration

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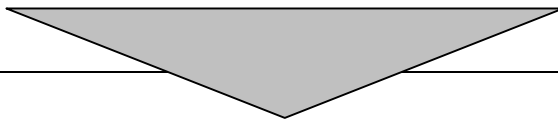
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SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION OF PROTRACTED RELIEF AND RECOVERY OPERATION—IRAN 6126.00

**Food Assistance and Support for Repatriation of
Iraqi and Afghan Refugees in Iran**

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Note to the Executive Board



This document is submitted for consideration to the Executive Board.

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 protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) has not been implemented as designed, and opportunities to strengthen important aspects of the World Food Programme's operations in Iran were consequently missed. The country office did not conduct the planned socio-economic survey, did not proceed with the PRRO strategy of targeting and adjusting rations within and between camps, and did not provide assistance to vulnerable refugees at large as planned. Instead, the country office focused on improving commodities usage accountability and on putting in place screening procedures to limit camp caseload additions. The former activity was put into practice with success, but the screening procedures introduced a practice of excluding many children from rations, contrary to WFP and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) policy. The new procedures also introduced an unfair distinction between refugees who were part of the old caseload and new arrivals, while ignoring broader targeting issues raised by the 1998 Joint Food Assessment Mission (JFAM).

The country office's PRRO implementation has been effective in logistics/contracting and commodity control. Operational efficiency and accountability were markedly improved during the PRRO, which was necessary and represents a considerable achievement. Food security and impact monitoring have yet to be put in place, however, and the operation has generally been weak in programming, which is reflected in an ad hoc approach to implementation and the indecisive handling of the question of assisting non-camp refugees.

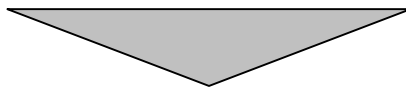
Relations between WFP and UNHCR were generally poor during the period evaluated. WFP and UNHCR do not have a Joint Action Plan for assisting refugees in Iran, as foreseen in the global Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and there is no tripartite agreement between WFP, UNHCR and the government counterpart, the Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants (BAFIA).

The operation was 78 percent resourced against assessed requirements for the camps up to the end of 2001. The deficit resulted in periodic commodity shortages, particularly in the first nine months of the PRRO, and short supply to the refugees assisted (numbering 62,200 at the end of 2001). In caloric equivalents, beneficiaries received an average of 1,257 kcal per person per day over 18 months, 75 percent of the 1,680 kcal planned. Afghan refugees, who are probably the most vulnerable to food insecurity, fared worse than Iraqi refugees, as a result mainly of larger overall supply deficits. In the absence of nutritional surveillance it is impossible to assess the impact of undersupply. Although Afghan refugee children appear to be doing less well than local Iranian children, the evaluation mission did not see frank malnutrition.

The PRRO project document was not based on a recovery strategy, and no efforts were made to develop one during implementation.



Draft Decision



The Board takes note of the recommendations contained in this evaluation report (WFP/EB.3/2002/6/5) and of the management action taken so far, as described in the associated information paper (WFP/EB.3/2002/INF/15). The Board encourages further action on these recommendations, with considerations raised during the discussion taken into account.



INTRODUCTION TO THE EVALUATION

1. The objectives of the evaluation were to:
 - assess the efficiency, relevance, effectiveness, coherence and sustainability of WFP assistance under the PRRO to improve the current operation's implementation and assist with planning the next phase;
 - assess the usefulness of the PRRO category both as a resource window and as a programming instrument; and
 - provide accountability to the Executive Board.
2. The evaluation team¹ visited Iran from 25 January to 19 February 2002. The team spent 17 days in the provinces and visited 7 of the 29 refugee camps assisted by WFP. The mission also visited a small number of refugees not living in camps, in each of the four provinces visited. Debriefings were conducted in Tehran (separately) with the country office, donor representatives and BAFIA. While a briefing was held with UNHCR/Teheran at the start of the mission, UNHCR did not attend the final de-briefing, although invited to attend.

CONTEXT OF PROTRACTED ASSISTANCE TO ENCAMPED REFUGEES

3. The Islamic Republic of Iran borders Iraq on the west and Afghanistan on the east, countries that have undergone considerable civil and military strife, generating large numbers of displaced people and refugees. Iran has maintained a generally liberal approach towards refugees and hosted a large number for many years, more than any other country in the world. WFP has been active in Iran for 15 years and has provided food assistance to Afghan refugees since 1987, through one emergency operation (EMOP), nine protracted relief operations (PROs) and now PRRO 6126.00, and to Iraqi refugees since 1988 through three EMOPs, six PROs and PRRO 6126.00.
4. There are approximately 2.65 million refugees in Iran, including 2.35 million Afghans.² Only 3 percent reside in camps (approximately 78,000, of whom 49 percent are Iraqi Arabs, 10 percent Iraqi Kurds and 41 percent Afghans). There are differences among these populations. The Iraqi Arabs generally have better housing and higher levels of self-reliance, followed by the Iraqi Kurds and the Afghans. The disparities in self-reliance appear to be related to the camps' proximity to employment opportunities (including casual and seasonal labour) and to special assistance provided to Iraqi Arabs by various organizations based on political and religious affinities.
5. The ration, which has been in place since 1997, is premised on all refugee households being able to earn enough money to provide at least 20 percent of their own food requirements. In apparent contradiction to this, the project document for the preceding PRO 5950.00 (1998–2000), reckoned that only 30 percent of adult male refugees living in camps had found some employment outside the camps. The evaluation team believes,

¹ The mission comprised a team leader (emergency and development expert), a local nutritionist and an Evaluation Officer (WFP/Rome). A second international consultant had been recruited, but withdrew from the mission soon after it started due to unanticipated health problems.

² Based on 2001 registration by the Islamic Republic of Iran.



however, that although opportunities vary considerably from camp to camp, the proportion of male refugees finding work (including casual labour and seasonal work) is much higher than 30 percent. Following the registration of both documented and undocumented refugees during February and March 2001, a new refugee law was adopted by the Iranian Islamic Consultative Assembly (the parliament) in April 2001, coming into effect 23 June 2001. Article 48 requires that all foreign nationals not benefiting from a work permit (i.e. almost all refugees) must leave the country, unless they face “physical threats” if they return to their place of origin. Article 48 is also associated with a stricter interpretation of the labour laws, and the Ministry of Labour has made some moves to restrict the employment of refugees in the construction industry.

6. Non-camp refugees (97 percent of the total) typically reside in the provinces bordering their country of origin and in major urban areas. They do not receive food assistance. It has long been suspected, although never demonstrated, that there are pockets of vulnerable refugees who are in as much need of assistance as, if not greater need than, refugees in camps.
7. The Government has increasingly stressed the financial burden of refugees on Iran and the need for greater international assistance. The Government is now seizing the opportunity to collaborate with the United Nations in the repatriation of Afghans, but it seems unlikely that the camp population would be included in the first phases of a voluntary repatriation programme.

OVERVIEW OF THE PRRO

8. The Executive Board approved PRRO 6126.00 in May 1999. The PRRO was to have covered the period 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000, but the preceding operation, PRO 5950.00, was extended, and implementation of the PRRO did not commence until a year later, on 1 July 2000. The PRRO was then extended twice, until 30 June 2002, and may now be extended to the end of 2002.
9. PRRO 6126.00 is in effect an extension of PRO 5950.00, and the two project documents have the same components and similar targets, with the exception of (b) below, which was to have marked a change. The stated goals of the PRRO are to:
 - a) ensure that basic food needs for survival of the refugees in camps are met (planning figure of 84,000 beneficiaries);
 - b) provide food to refugees outside camps, based on vulnerability criteria (provision for 40,000 beneficiaries);
 - c) through an oil incentive, encourage girls to attend camp schools set up by the Iranian Government, at the same time contributing to the household budget as well as to the household’s food intake (target of 7,000 beneficiaries); and
 - d) support the UNHCR-assisted repatriation of refugees by providing a one-time wheat package of 50 kg upon departure, as a transitory ration until the returnees find more regular supply systems in their home countries (provision for 12,000 beneficiaries).



10. The basic uniform daily ration for the PRRO consists of 280 g of wheat flour,³ 100 g of rice, 20 g of oil, 30 g of pulses and 15 g of sugar. These total 1,680 kcal,⁴ 80 percent of the 2,100-kcal standard reference full ration for an ambient temperature of 20°C and light activity levels.
11. The vulnerability criteria for identifying the non-camp refugees to be assisted were to have been developed following a socio-economic survey of presumed pockets of vulnerable refugees. This survey was not conducted, and the refugees have not been assisted.
12. From 1 October 2001 to 30 March 2002, Afghan refugees in Iran were assisted under regional EMOP 10126.0, “Emergency Food Assistance to Refugees and Vulnerable Populations in Afghanistan”, rather than under PRRO 6126.00. The escalating crisis in Afghanistan did not, however, substantially affect the PRRO because Afghans managing to enter Iran were not referred to camps assisted by WFP.

ASSESSMENT OF THE PRRO

Strategy and Design

13. The 1998 JFAM recommended that WFP adopt a more targeted approach to food assistance to refugees in Iran, including targeting within and among camps and targeting that considered the needs of vulnerable refugees outside camps. This approach was incorporated in the PRRO project document. It was an appropriate strategy because it had become apparent that: (a) there were substantial disparities in the base levels of self-reliance among the camps; and (b) focusing solely on the camps and ignoring the at-large refugee population risked missing equally needy or needier refugees. Neither aspect of the strategy was implemented.
14. Two long-standing recovery elements were continued under the PRRO: (i) an oil incentive to encourage girls to attend schools in refugee camps; and (ii) support for UNHCR-assisted repatriation of refugees. However, no further thought was given to developing a recovery strategy during either the PRRO’s formulation or its implementation. It has to be noted that the PRRO guidelines are ambivalent on recovery where they state: “Each PRRO programme may include one or more of three main components—protracted relief, protracted refugee and recovery”.⁵ This seems inconsistent with the spirit of the policy paper “From Crisis to Recovery” (approved by the Board in May 1998), which sets out the rationale for the PRRO approach.
15. The Iran PRRO project document lacks an analysis of gender relations and the special needs of female refugees, and the design does not methodically address the Commitments to Women. This lack of guidance and direction is compounded by the lack of a gender action plan for WFP in Iran.

³ Originally specified as 350 g of wheat grain.

⁴ According to the PRO/PRRO project documents, the daily ration is equal to 1,900 kcal, but this is incorrect.

⁵ PRRO Guidelines: chapter I, paragraph 1.3, and chapter IV, paragraph 4.3.1.



Recommendations

- ⇒ The PRRO guidelines should be reviewed to clarify ambiguity with respect to recovery strategy and components. The mission's view is that recovery should be a standard component in any PRRO, irrespective of whether it relates to a protracted relief or a protracted refugee situation.
- ⇒ The country office should develop a recovery strategy in close consultation with UNHCR. The strategy should focus on enhancing self-reliance, and include discrete activities, such as the literacy training for women that has worked so successfully in other refugee camp environments—e.g. the Bhutanese refugees in Nepal—and support for health facilitators.
- ⇒ Every effort should be made to undertake an analysis of gender relations and the special needs of women among the refugee caseloads and to better address WFP's Commitments to Women in the next PRRO project document.

Implementation

⇒ *Fundamental Departures from PRRO Document and WFP/UNHCR Policies*

16. The country office did not proceed with the PRRO strategy of targeting and adjusting rations within and between camps. BAFIA's opposition to such adjustments was undoubtedly a factor. Also, the country office failed to assist vulnerable refugees outside the camps. In both these cases, the country office thought these tasks would be very difficult to accomplish and questioned the efficacy of a socio-economic survey, either within or outside the camps.
17. Instead, the country office agreed to continue assisting the then-existing camp caseload and put off the question of assisting refugees outside the camps, focusing instead on improving the accountability of commodities usage and establishing screening procedures to limit additions to the camp caseload. Accountability for the use of food had been weak but was tightened up significantly. The country office did this by gaining access to the camps and instituting a routine of quarterly camp visits. This was a leap forward compared with the prevailing situation. The effort to keep numbers down can perhaps be explained by anticipated resourcing difficulties. Nevertheless, it resulted in WFP's assisting substantially fewer refugees than had been planned.
18. JFAM recommendations represent consensus between WFP and UNHCR, and changes in the resulting strategy should be mutually agreed upon and documented, but were not. More important, as PRRO design documents contain strategies and related outputs that have been approved by the Executive Board, fundamental changes to those strategies and outputs should be approved at some level beyond the country office—perhaps, in some cases, by the Executive Board. For this PRRO, no clearance was sought for any change, although it is also the case that WFP has no clear procedures for doing so. This raises not only issues of authority but also the practical problem of when a country office adopts a different strategy and it is not documented or reviewed; in this case, planning tends to become ad hoc. Moreover, inappropriate practices go unchallenged, such as excluding children from rations, contrary to WFP and UNHCR policy.
19. WFP's Emergency Needs Assessment Guidelines (October 1999) state that the food and nutrition situation of refugees should be systematically reviewed at least every 12 months, but this was not done in Iran for more than three years. The first JFAM since 1998 commenced in February 2002, immediately after this evaluation. The 1998 JFAM



recommended that a socio-economic survey be conducted to further determine the household food economy and nutritional status of refugees in camps and those presumed to be the most vulnerable outside camps. This recommendation was incorporated into the PRRO project document. However, neither WFP nor UNHCR acted on it, and as a result neither agency has had the benefit of any new information that would have assisted in determining if correct quantities of food were being provided to the right refugees. Nor did either agency put in place monitoring mechanisms to indicate when ration adjustments could be made or targeting introduced.

20. The strategy introduced by the country office in 1999, on the office's own initiative, to limit WFP's commitments involved only adding to beneficiary lists the following:
 - newborn children when they reach 2 years of age, and only then if they are not the fourth or subsequent child in the family, resulting in the exclusion of approximately 3,880 refugee children by the end of 2001;
 - new refugee families and individuals entering camps already assisted by WFP who belong to the following groups: female-headed households, widows, unaccompanied children, disabled, or unassisted elderly (3,102 "new" refugees entering the camps did not meet these criteria); and
 - refugee families and individuals in camps newly recognized by WFP who meet the above-mentioned socio-physiological criteria (this excluded 5,952 refugees, or 80 percent of refugees in the one refugee camp added—Torbat-e-Jam).
21. The screening procedures not only introduced the practice of excluding children, contrary to WFP and UNHCR policy, but they also introduced an unfair distinction between refugees who were part of the old caseload and new arrivals, while leaving to one side the broader targeting issues raised by the 1998 JFAM.
22. Neither WFP nor UNHCR checked to see if any of the refugees excluded were in need of food assistance or considered assisting households that could not access employment and were destitute (as requested by BAFIA and on occasion UNHCR). The country office should have recognized that it was too restrictive to rely solely on socio-physiological criteria to screen refugees for a basic general ration. Such an approach can easily exclude refugees vulnerable to food insecurity. The country office now needs to change its overall approach to targeting, dropping the narrow focus on limiting caseload additions and taking up the issue of how better to tailor assistance to actual needs.

⇒ *Management and Logistics*

23. WFP improved operational efficiency during the extension of PRO 5650.00 by contracting private companies in Iran to transport all commodities other than wheat flour to the camps. This improved delivery, and the commercial arrangements (handling, storage and transportation of rice, pulses, oil and sugar) worked efficiently during implementation of PRRO 6126.00. Leakages are low, and occasional minor losses in transit are recovered. However, there is a problem with the arrangement with the State Organization for Grains (SOG) for the delivery of wheat flour to the camps, which was not commercially contracted. Provincial BAFIA offices have partially ameliorated delays caused by the long wait for formal approval (from both the central and the provincial SOG) by borrowing against WFP's commitments, but this has imposed difficulties on BAFIA offices, and the gaps are not always filled.
24. Although the country office's PRRO implementation has been operationally strong in terms of logistics/contracting and commodity control, it has been weak in terms of programming. Important aspects of the PRRO document were not followed, and the



approach to assisting non-camp refugees demonstrated indecision. Some national staff felt inhibited about expressing their views and contributing to decision-making, a factor that limited productivity. It should also be recorded that although improving the accountability of WFP's operations in Iran was vital and stands as a great accomplishment, the former Country Director was regarded as overly confrontational in his meetings and correspondence with BAFIA and UNHCR, and in his staff management.

25. The weaknesses in programming highlight the need for an international programming officer. This is not to suggest that members of the country office have been under-performing. On the contrary, the mission was impressed with the staff's calibre; and it should be borne in mind that the country office was without a Country Director for seven months of the PRRO's implementation.⁶

⇒ *Monitoring Commodity Utilization, Food Security and Programme Impact*

26. The 1998 JFAM noted that reports on commodity utilization were a "theoretical" exercise. The country office turned this around, gaining physical access to the camps and instituting routine (quarterly) camp visits. This reflects the very considerable efforts made by the country office in 1999/2000.
27. Food security and impact monitoring were not instituted, and therefore there has been no information upon which to base ration adjustments and/or targeting. The 2002 JFAM may provide this information. Nevertheless, the country office should not rely solely on infrequent JFAMs and should establish food security and impact monitoring, or possibly, as an alternative, advocate the introduction of periodic UNHCR/WFP/BAFIA rapid verification exercises focused on testing the assumptions underpinning rations and targeting ("mini-JFAMs").
28. UNHCR is supposed to organize regular nutrition surveys, maintain effective nutritional surveillance and establish an effective monitoring and reporting system, with special attention given to qualitative information on the socio-economic status of refugees per the global MOU. These tasks are not done in Iran.

⁶ The former Country Director left in late 2000. A temporary replacement was posted on temporary duty (TDY) for some two months, from July until early September 2001. The current Country Director arrived on 19 September 2001.



Recommendations

- ⇒ WFP should anticipate changes and the need for revising PRRO strategies and planned outputs by developing (a) mechanisms for reviewing and approving changes recommended by the country office; and (b) review procedures to be applied at least annually. These procedures should ensure that protracted relief and recovery strategies and planned outputs are relevant and appropriate and that they reflect experience gained during implementation, as well as changes “on the ground”. In both cases, changes have to be properly documented to guide implementation.
- ⇒ Socio-physiological criteria are useful proxy indicators of vulnerability to food insecurity. However, they should not be relied upon in future for screening refugees for inclusion on general ration beneficiary lists.
- ⇒ The country office should stop distinguishing between its “old” caseload and “newcomers”/“new camps” and should assess the needs of all encamped refugees recognized by UNHCR on the same basis. Until such assessments are made, all encamped refugees previously excluded by the country office should be provided with the uniform ration.
- ⇒ The practice of excluding children under 2 years of age and restricting the number of children assisted per family to three should cease, and those previously excluded should be added to the beneficiary lists.
- ⇒ The country office should develop a strategy for adjusting rations more closely to actual food needs in order to increase efficiency in the use of scarce resources. The evaluation mission’s preferred approach is to institute a revised general ration, to be adjusted to meet the food gap of the different refugee groups (Afghani, Iraqi Arabs and Kurds), supplemented with additional food assistance for the minority assessed as being unable to cope (or at risk of not being able to cope) on the general ration.
- ⇒ The country office needs to supplement the information provided by JFAMs, either by establishing food security and impact monitoring or advocating the conduct of periodic UNHCR/WFP/BAFIA rapid verification exercises focused on testing the assumptions underpinning rations and targeting (“mini-JFAMs”).
- ⇒ The country office should determine with UNHCR if it is necessary to conduct a nutrition survey in the refugee camps and in areas where vulnerable non-camp refugees are concentrated. The country office should also suggest to UNHCR that support be provided to health centres in camps to ensure the appropriateness and quality of data regularly collected.
- ⇒ If no credible assurances on wheat supply are forthcoming from SOG, the country office should tender for a commercial alternative. This would require a budget revision to include internal transport, storage and handling (ITSH). The country office should attempt to maintain a capacity to borrow wheat from the Government in the event of a delay in shipment.

Results Obtained

⇒ *Meeting the Basic Food Needs of Refugees in Camps*

29. At the end of 2001, WFP was assisting 62,200 refugees (59 percent Iraqi and 41 percent Afghan) out of a total encamped population of 78,000. The planned beneficiary number was 84,000 encamped refugees.



30. From mid-2000 to the end of 2001, WFP delivered to the refugee camps an average of 78.8 percent of assessed commodity requirements, 11,798 out of 14,981 tons. There were considerable variations between commodities (see Table) and camps. Overall performance improved in the second nine months of implementation, from 68.4 percent to 89.1 percent.

**PERFORMANCE IN DELIVERING COMMODITIES TO CAMPS
MID-2000 TO END 2001
(as a percentage of tons delivered against requirements)**

Commodity	Percentage
Wheat flour	92.1
Rice	45.0
Oil	92.0
Pulses	60.9
Sugar	72.0
Total	78.8

31. The commodities delivered are equivalent to an average of 1,334 kcal per beneficiary refugee per day, or 79.4 percent of the 1,680-kcal planned ration. The average kilocalories consumed are somewhat fewer than this, as Afghan refugees receive bread from camp bakeries (rather than the wheat flour received by Iraqis) that appears to be consistently underweight. This reduces the average (Iraqis and Afghans together) to 1,257 kcal per person per day, 75 percent of the planned ration. Afghan refugees, who are probably the most vulnerable to food insecurity, fared worse than the Iraqis due mainly to larger overall supply deficits. They received an average equivalent of only 1,108 kcal per person per day, 66 percent of the planned ration. Thus, Afghan refugees in camps have to meet 47 percent of their food needs from their own resources to arrive at a standard of 2,100 kcal.
32. In the absence of adequate nutritional surveillance it is impossible to say what impact this undersupply has had on the refugees. Weight-for-age data collected in camp health centres suggest that refugee children are not doing as well as Iranian children among the host population, but the evaluation mission did not see obvious signs of malnutrition, and at no time was it suggested that such malnutrition existed. There is no weight-for-height survey data to support any conclusion in this respect.
33. It was envisaged that WFP would assist all refugees in camps recognized by UNHCR, but only approximately 62,200 out of 78,000 encamped refugees, or 80 percent, are currently assisted. It is not known what impact this has had on the 20 percent excluded, but it can be presumed to be negative given that the means of exclusion were largely inappropriate.

⇒ **Meeting the Basic Food Needs of Refugees outside the Camps**

34. No assistance was provided to refugees outside the camps, other than the 5,000 rations given to BAFIA each month for distribution at its discretion. The country office was reluctant from the outset to proceed with a component that included food aid to people outside the camps—despite the fact that such aid was included in the project document—primarily because it expanded WFP's commitments into a new and problematic area. Nevertheless, discussions concerning the identification of vulnerable refugees and potential implementing partners continued intermittently with BAFIA, and the country office is



ready to assist vulnerable refugees on lists provided by BAFIA. Relying on these lists is problematic though, and unless the country office can corroborate the emergency needs of those refugees put forward by BAFIA, assistance should be limited to activities with a “recovery” element and linkage to repatriation that are focused on Afghans in areas where vulnerability is reported to be high.

35. Although provincial BAFIA officials seemed ambivalent about support for non-camp refugees, senior BAFIA official requested that WFP proceed with assistance to non-camp refugees and specified that the ceiling should be 200,000 refugees, not the 40,000 planned for the PRRO.

⇒ *Other Activities*

36. WFP introduced an oil take-home ration as an incentive for girls to attend primary schools in refugee camps in 1997, an activity that has continued under the PRRO. Steady progress has been made with it over the years, and it is rightly regarded as a successful activity despite the fact that the reduced target set for the PRRO of 7,000 girls enrolled was not quite achieved (5,841 by the third quarter of 2001, or 83 percent of the target). There have also been some problems with the delivery of the oil to camps for distribution to families. On average, only 71 percent of requirements have been met over 18 months.
37. For several years WFP has also been assisting Iraqis who repatriate, and this has continued. The planning figure for the PRRO was 12,000 persons, but only 1,500 Iraqi refugees had been assisted by the end of 2001 (with 40 kg of wheat flour each). In the case of Iraqi Kurds, this low figure is the result of the termination by UNHCR of the voluntary repatriation programme when the Government of Iraq insisted that the refugees be repatriated at a border point that entered government-controlled territory. In the case of Iraqi Arabs, the main factor in their not being assisted in great numbers appears to have been simply that UNHCR did not request WFP to provide assistance when repatriations were being organized.
38. BAFIA remains negative to food-for-work (FFW) activities and will consider FFW only in addition to monthly care and maintenance rations.



Recommendations

- ⇒ The country office should ensure that Afghan refugees receive their full entitlement of bread from camp bakeries of 364 g per person per day. The issue of whether or not refugees should receive baked bread or wheat flour should be independently assessed.
- ⇒ Non-camp refugees should be assisted if their need for a general distribution can be cogently demonstrated. Otherwise, assistance should be limited to activities with a “recovery” element and/or a linkage to repatriation focused on Afghans in areas where vulnerability is reported to be high. The country office should consider using vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) to identify where these activities should be established.
- ⇒ The country office should determine how the 5,000 rations provided to BAFIA for distribution at its discretion have been used to date, and should discontinue this assistance if targeting is unsatisfactory and adequate monitoring cannot be instituted.
- ⇒ The country office should review the oil incentive for girls’ attendance at camp schools to guide future programming.
- ⇒ WFP and UNHCR should determine the need to continue to provide food in Iran to repatriating Iraqi refugees.

Partnership and Coordination

39. WFP’s most important relationships in Iran are with BAFIA and UNHCR. BAFIA is very capable and has generally contributed positively to the PRRO’s implementation. Despite some friction over the years, the relationship is cordial and businesslike. WFP is respected for the continuity of its assistance. WFP relations with UNHCR have at times been fraught, and collaboration has been weak as a result. The country office is now trying to rectify this.
40. On a number of occasions in 1999/2000, UNHCR requested that WFP provide food assistance to refugees, but WFP did not do so because the refugees did not meet the Programme’s socio-physiological criteria or because WFP did not think it appropriate to provide assistance to the camp in question. These issues remained unresolved at the field level and should accordingly have been addressed by the respective headquarters in Rome and Geneva.
41. WFP and UNHCR do not have a Joint Action Plan for assistance to refugees in Iran, as provided for in the global MOU, and there is no tripartite agreement between WFP, UNHCR and BAFIA.

Recommendations

- ⇒ WFP and UNHCR should conclude a Joint Action Plan for assistance to refugees in Iran, incorporating a clearly enunciated strategy for camp and non-camp refugees, with linkages to the anticipated repatriation operation and including a phase-out strategy for assistance to the camps.
- ⇒ The country office should consider advocating the conclusion of a tripartite agreement between WFP, UNHCR and BAFIA.



Resourcing Issues

42. The operation was only 78 percent resourced against assessed requirements for the camps up to the end of 2001. This resulted in periodic commodity shortages and short supply to refugees, particularly in the first nine months of the PRRO. There have been some delays with wheat shipments, but these have generally been dealt with by WFP's borrowing from SOG. Although resourcing has greatly improved recently, this is based on the current caseload, which excludes 20 percent of encamped refugees and makes no allowance for assisting refugees outside the camps.
43. An international programming officer and a second national monitoring officer should have been hired. The planned budget for the socio-economic survey was inadequate and would not have permitted the survey to be properly conducted.

Recommendations

- ⇒ The country office should be strengthened with an international programming officer and a second national monitoring officer.
- ⇒ Additional resources should be earmarked for assistance to non-camp refugees.
- ⇒ A realistic budget should be prepared to carry out additional food needs assessments.

Meeting WFP's Commitments to Women

44. BAFIA disaggregates population and distribution statistics, collected during quarterly monitoring visits, for refugee camps and provides this information to WFP. BAFIA's data show that 47.9 percent of beneficiaries of the general ration are female. However, data is not collected or used to analyse women refugees' circumstances or concerns.
45. The broader problem here is that the country office does not have a strategy for identifying and addressing the strategic needs of refugee women or for improving their status. It is apparent that the camp setting and its restrictions exacerbate the many disadvantages women already have to bear. In the vast majority of camps, women cannot go out to work and rarely leave the camp, facing harassment when they do. Women are not involved in camp management and have few activities.
46. Men are registered as heads of households, although men, women and adolescents variously line up to receive the household ration. The issue of control of the family entitlement has not been examined. It is recognized, however, that addressing the Commitments to Women raises a human resource issue for the country office.



Recommendations

- ⇒ The country office needs to formulate a strategy for improving the status of refugee women and addressing their strategic needs. The office should raise the issue with UNHCR, suggesting that the gender focal points for the two agencies prepare a joint WFP/UNHCR refugee gender strategy for consideration.
- ⇒ The country office should consider what changes, if any, are required to give effect to WFP's Commitments to Women, including whether or not to strengthen women's access to food and control within the family by putting women in charge of the distribution system and/or by distributing rations directly to them.

Environmental Impact

47. When there have been large influxes into camps there have been occasions when fruit and other trees from surrounding farmland have been cut for fuelwood, but with the stabilization of the camps this problem has abated. Most encamped refugees use kerosene or gas, rather than fuelwood, for cooking and heating.



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

BAFIA	Bureau for Aliens and Foreign Immigrants
EMOP	Emergency operation
FFW	Food-for-work
ITSH	Internal transport, storage and handling
JFAM	Joint Food Assessment Mission
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
PRO	Protracted relief operation
PRRO	Protracted relief and recovery operation
SOG	State Organization for Grains
TDY	Temporary duty
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VAM	Vulnerability analysis and mapping

