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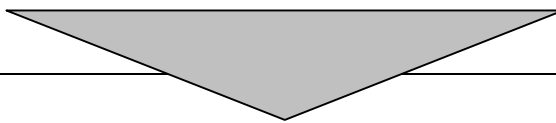
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SUMMARY REPORT OF THE THEMATIC EVALUATION OF THE WFP COUNTRY PROGRAMME APPROACH

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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

In 1994, WFP introduced for its development activities a new policy framework called the country programming approach. In the 34 countries where it has been implemented, this approach has replaced the project-by-project approach, which had made it difficult to relate WFP assistance to overall national planning and development priorities.

This thematic evaluation relied mainly on an analysis of the summary and full reports of 15 individual country programme (CP) evaluations using common terms of reference that were carried out during 2000–2001. Key informant interviews and a review of relevant policy documents were also used.

Most of the CPs evaluated were first generation, with antecedents that pre-dated the 1994 policy framework, and met the criteria used in the evaluation to assess the achievements of the CP approach. Many of them were considered transitional, however, and are expected to meet the criteria more fully in the second and subsequent programme cycles.

Where the CP approach has been implemented, WFP has usually made changes to pre-existing interventions to make them more focused and more integrated, rather than introduce new activities. Positive changes associated with the CP process include improved geographic targeting of development activities to food-deficit regions and enhanced coherence between WFP-supported development activities and the priorities of host governments.

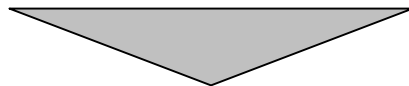
Another benefit of the CP approach has been better integration into coordinated United Nations programming (and into wider aid coordination efforts), particularly within the context of the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process—although the CCA/UNDAF process itself has varied in depth and usefulness from country to country.

The CP approach has been reinforced by related efforts to improve the development effectiveness of WFP programming, especially the Enabling Development policy initiative, introduced in May 1999. This has resulted in better-designed and -executed Country Strategy Outlines (CSOs) and CPs, in particular because of the strong focus on sounder problem analysis and the selection of appropriate people-centred activities. The policy has also encouraged greater use of vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) techniques.

The CP approach has been hampered in some countries, however, by problems in establishing and providing adequate budgets for programme support costs. Other impediments include the need for more staff with competence in core development skills, and the need for effective results-based monitoring systems. As these impediments are addressed, the CP approach should contribute more strongly to improving the effectiveness of WFP support to development programming. Some countries with small development programmes, however, have experienced particular difficulty in implementing the CP approach, and the rationale for introducing CPs in some of these countries should be re-examined.



Draft Decision



The Board takes note of the recommendations contained in this evaluation report (WFP/EB.3/2002/6/8) and of the management action taken so far, as described in the associated information paper (WFP/EB.3/2002/INF/18). The Board encourages further action on these recommendations, with considerations raised during the discussion taken into account.



PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHOD OF THE THEMATIC EVALUATION

1. The purpose of the thematic evaluation¹ of WFP's country programming approach was to provide an objective report to the Executive Board on the progress made in implementing the CP approach. The evaluation was also intended to provide information on the contribution of the CP approach to furthering the effectiveness of WFP's development programmes.
2. In 1994, WFP introduced a policy framework called the country programming approach, which, *inter alia*, was intended to improve the planning of WFP development interventions and their coherence with national development priorities.² Replacing the project-by-project approach, the new approach implied some fundamental changes to the way WFP planned and programmed food aid, based on a people-centred and food-needs strategy and using the national policy framework as the anchor for WFP's engagement. A CP should be a coherent and focused response to those strategic objectives of a recipient country that coincide with the strategic objectives of WFP and other assistance partners.
3. The report is based on an evaluation process that began in late 1999, when the decision was taken that evaluations of WFP CPs would be used as the major component for the thematic evaluation of the CP approach, to be reported to the Executive Board. As a result of that decision, generic terms of reference (TORs) for the evaluation of CPs were developed early in 2000 and field-tested during the Malawi CP evaluation carried out in March/April 2000.
4. These generic TORs represented an essential component of the thematic evaluation. They had the effect of ensuring that each of the subsequent CP evaluations would address the same core issues, using consistent methodologies and reporting within a common structure. As a result, the ensuing CP evaluations represent a series of in-country case studies that serve not only as evaluations in their own right, but also as sources for the thematic evaluation.
5. By the end of 2001, there were 15 CP evaluations available for review (both full and summary reports). In addition, the thematic evaluation was able to access four summary evaluation reports for evaluations carried out in late 2001 and early 2002. The evaluations included samples from six of WFP's seven regional groupings (Eastern Europe being the exception, having no CPs).³
6. In carrying out the 19 CP evaluations, the evaluation teams conducted document reviews, key informant interviews and site visits relating to a wide range of WFP support-to-development activities. Although they did not focus on assessing the effectiveness or impact of individual activities, the multi-disciplinary teams did examine the integration of those activities into CPs and their relevance to shared WFP/host country priorities, goals and strategies. In all, the evaluated CPs covered 65 development activities

¹ The evaluation was carried out between September 2001 and February 2002 by an internationally recruited consultant, with support for analytical work from the OEDE Chief Evaluation Officer.

² The three key reference documents on the CP approach are: CFA 37/P/7 (April 1994), CFA 38/P/6 (October 1994) and CFA 40/8 (October 1995).

³ CP evaluations covered by the thematic evaluation are: Bolivia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Pakistan, Senegal, Yemen and Zambia. By early 2002 there were approved CPs for 34 countries (out of the 55 countries where WFP has a development presence). The eventual number of CPs may be around 40.



with combined WFP budgets in excess of US\$640 million and commodity commitments of more than 1.6 million mt.

7. The CPs ranged in size from Lesotho, with some US\$6 million in commitments, to Ethiopia, with over US\$141 million in commitments and 357,000 tons of commodities. Ethiopia alone represented some 22 percent of the total commitments for the 19 CPs evaluated. In terms of the number of development activities in a given CP, the scale ranges from Lesotho, with one implemented activity, to Malawi with seven.⁴
8. In terms of total value, relief operations comprised some two thirds of all WFP programmes and operations in the 19 countries evaluated. Just two countries, however—Ethiopia and Kenya—accounted for almost two thirds of the total portfolio value for the 19 countries studied for the time periods concerned. The relief operations in Ethiopia and Kenya were some 83 and 94 percent, respectively, of WFP operations in the two countries.⁵
9. The CP evaluations carried out according to the common methodologies, approaches and reporting structures designed for the thematic evaluation covered well over half of all current WFP CPs (19 out of a current 34 approved by early 2002), including many of the major ones.
10. In each CP evaluation, the evaluation teams focused on:
 - a) determining the extent to which the CP reflected implementation of the CP approach as described in key WFP reference documents;⁶
 - b) assessing the extent to which the CP approach had contributed to more effective development programming by WFP;
 - c) identifying factors that enhanced or impeded the ability of country offices to implement the CP approach effectively;
 - d) identifying and recommending changes that could improve WFP's capacity to implement the CP approach; and
 - e) assessing the extent to which the CP approach could be an effective means of advancing the principles outlined in the Enabling Development policy document.⁷
11. The teams used a number of key criteria for assessing the extent to which a CP approach had been implemented in the countries where the evaluations were taking place. These criteria can be summarized as:

⁴ The 19 evaluated CPs supported development activities in the following main categories: school feeding/literacy programmes (21.2 percent), primary health care and vulnerable group feeding (22.1 percent), food-for-work/food for assets activities (48.2 percent) and "others" (8.5 percent).

⁵ Some observers have argued that in some countries emergency/relief and rehabilitation operations may cross-subsidize development planning and programming needs (at least with staff support). Four of the countries evaluated, however, did not have relief operations under way at the time. For 11 countries, relief operations were substantially smaller than development programmes in dollar terms. Thus, cross-subsidization from relief to development programming may have been likely and significant only in the cases of Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique and Zambia, where relief operations exceeded 50 percent in value terms of total operations. On the other hand, development programmes may support relief operations, to the extent that they provide pre-existing facilities and staff for the early stages of a new emergency.

⁶ See footnote 2.

⁷ The Enabling Development policy was adopted by the Executive Board at its Annual Session in May 1999 (document WFP/EB.A/99/4-A). By mid-2001, approximately 85 percent of the active development portfolio had been reviewed to ensure compatibility with the new policy.



- a) the extent to which projects that were ongoing before the establishment of the CP were altered or refined to fit the CP approach;
 - b) the extent to which the CSO and CP process in each country included an analysis of national and sub-national food insecurity and vulnerability for targeting development assistance;
 - c) the extent to which the CSO and CP process resulted in an identifiable strategy for WFP development programme assistance in areas such as implementing partner choice, geographic targeting and sector targeting;
 - d) the existence of specific developmental objectives at the CP level as opposed to the former project level; and
 - e) evidence that the resulting CP exhibited the four required characteristics of integration, coherence, focus (concentration) and flexibility.
12. A series of Headquarters interviews and presentations was carried out at each major stage of the evaluation process. Key WFP Headquarters staff were interviewed on three separate occasions during the evaluation—in February 2000, during the preparation of the draft generic TORs for CP evaluations, and in September and November 2001, during the process of synthesizing evaluation results from the first 15 CP evaluations.⁸

OVERVIEW: STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES AT THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME LEVEL

13. One of the key relationships illustrated by the CP evaluations is that between the CSO and the CP, specifically the timing and linking of the CSO process and CP development and approval. Evaluation teams noted that it was understandable that the CP development process was reasonably flexible and that the CP should change to reflect changing conditions in the country, even if that means moving away from some aspects of the CSO.
14. Of the 19 evaluated CPs, 13 were reported to have a recognizable strategy. The strategies outlined in these and their associated CSOs concentrated on targeting to the most vulnerable communities and regions defined as the most food insecure. They also focused on capacity development, especially human resource development.
15. Six of the CPs evaluated were lacking an identifiable driving strategy—Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Pakistan and Yemen.⁹ One of the most significant recurrent problems in linking CPs to a specific strategy occurs on those occasions where there is a long delay between the CSO and the approval of the CP.
16. Most important, when CP-level strategies are explicit, the objectives specified for development support at the CP level are usually linked to the stated objectives of the development activities being supported in each country.

⁸ Interviews were held with representatives of the Operations Department, Strategy and Policy Division, Office of Evaluation and Monitoring, the Administration Department, the Resources and External Relations Division, and with VAM specialists, members of the Enabling Development task force and specialists in areas such as gender, procurement and budgeting. During a week of meetings in November 2001, three briefings on the preliminary findings were presented at WFP Headquarters. Telephone interviews were also carried out with the regional programme advisers in the decentralized bureaux.

⁹ For several of the countries, however, the situation has improved in this respect in the second-generation CPs, for example, Pakistan.



ACHIEVING A COUNTRY PROGRAMME APPROACH

The Basic Pattern

17. By applying the criteria listed in paragraph 11, the evaluation teams were able to establish that 12 of the 19 CPs evaluated met the requirements for substantially implementing the CP approach. The evaluations of Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Pakistan and Yemen, however, concluded that the approved CP approach had not been substantively implemented, although in the case of Lesotho this was related more to country office capacity and management issues.
18. In CPs where the evaluation teams concluded that a CP approach had not been implemented, there was a strong tendency for WFP-supported development projects or activities to continue in isolation, independently from one another. This raises an important issue as to what can reasonably be expected in the way of altering development projects or activities as a CP moves from one cycle to the next, so as to enhance linkages and improve overall synergy. In particular, many of the evaluations noted that WFP's partners, including other United Nations agencies and bilateral donors—especially partner agencies in host governments—were comfortable with the WFP project approach and resisted changes in projects (especially ending pre-existing projects) in order to respond to the CP approach.
19. On the other hand, there were important improvements in the targeting of development activities supported in a country if that targeting met the requirements of the CP approach. Those programmes assessed as having met the CP criteria were more likely to include activities with an improved geographic, sectoral and target group focus, usually on the most vulnerable and food insecure. They were also more likely to include some features of greater integration into donor coordination processes and the priorities of the host government.

Assessing the Need for Food Aid

20. The CP evaluations reveal a trend in strengthening the analysis of hunger and food insecurity, although the extension of VAM methods has been somewhat slow. A systematic “hunger analysis” was completed for 14 of the 19 countries as part of the development of their CSOs and CPs, but only five of these analyses explicitly used VAM as a targeting tool. The evaluations noted that there was a need to improve VAM capacity at the country office level and to extend VAM methods to the community and even household level as far as possible, so that the micro-level targeting of development food aid could be improved.



Integration, Focus, Coherence and Flexibility

21. The CP approach was expected to result in improvements in integration, focus, coherence and flexibility.¹⁰ Overall, there has been much more improvement in integration and focus than in coherence; achieving flexibility seems often to depend on factors other than the CP approach.

⇒ Integration

22. Evaluation of the 19 CPs illustrates that those classed as meeting the basic criteria for implementing a CP approach are more closely integrated in a range of processes extending beyond WFP. Such CPs were more clearly consistent with national government priorities and targets in reducing vulnerability, food insecurity and hunger. They also tended to be more directly linked to processes for aid coordination in the United Nations system and with other donors.
23. The CP evaluations did not include in their TORs an assessment of the progress of the CCA/UNDAF process in each country. In some countries the CCA/UNDAF process was still in the early stages and was sometimes viewed as a pro-forma exercise. In general, WFP country offices have participated meaningfully in the CCA/UNDAF process, and the CP approach has helped them do this. As programming cycle coordination and harmonization inside and outside the United Nations proceed, it is reasonable to expect the integration of the WFP CP into this process to increase over time.

⇒ Concentration (or Focus)

24. As already noted, greater emphasis on targeting within CPs has resulted in improvements in the concentration of development activities on the most vulnerable and food insecure regions of the countries concerned. However, there is still considerable scope to improve targeting at the sub-regional level.
25. It could be argued that the improvements in the targeting of individual projects or activities could have been achieved outside a CP approach. However, this overlooks the fact that a significant portion of the CPs evaluated showed some evidence of a common approach to targeting across more than one activity.

⇒ Coherence

26. The evaluation teams tended to frame the issue of coherence in two different ways. The first way concerned the extent to which WFP-supported development activities were consistent in their orientation to the higher-level objectives and strategies of the CP as a whole. As already noted, for the 13 CPs meeting the criteria of the CP approach, this aspect of coherence was positively rated. For them, the objectives expressed at the activity

¹⁰ Defined as follows:

integration: the core WFP activities are consistent with and targeted to the stated strategic priorities of the Government and other United Nations agencies, in particular within the UNDAF framework;

concentration: food aid is targeted to the poorest regions and the most food insecure households, and is used to support the most appropriate activities in the given socio-economic context;

coherence: the degree of complementarity and internal linkages among the main elements of the CP, and the external linkages to other government and donor development activities;

flexibility: extent to which resources may be switched between activities within a CP or there is room to re-focus or re-orient an activity during a given CP cycle.



level were consistent with those at the CP level and with the strategic direction chosen for the CP.

27. The second aspect of coherence dealt with by the evaluation teams concerns the extent to which WFP-supported development activities in each country show signs of having been chosen either to be complementary to one another, for example by focusing on different target groups or communities with different needs but similar levels of food insecurity, or to develop synergistic links with one another. While improvements have been made in geographic targeting, most evaluations note that more needs to be done to develop linkages across activities or to make them more complementary.
28. Some WFP managers in the countries evaluated have questioned whether it is possible or even desirable to expect large WFP-supported development activities to be effectively linked by a coherent set of objectives. Such activities might be managed by different counterparts, have different key stakeholders and be widely separated geographically or be different in terms of their duration. The CP approach is intended gradually to reduce this type of isolation, however, so that linkages from one activity to another can be developed, enhancing synergy within the CP. This is particularly important in small-programme countries where focus, concentration and coherence in the activities supported may reduce the burden of design, management, implementation and monitoring borne by the country office.

⇒ *Flexibility*

29. A key feature of the CP approach as described in reference documents was the intention that WFP support-to-development programming be made more flexible. The CP evaluations have generally not emphasized any significant increase in the flexibility of WFP support-to-development programming arising from the CP approach. However, this is an area where recent evaluations seem to be more positive in their findings than those carried out during 2000 and 2001.
30. The question of flexibility is inherent in issues of budgeting rules and procedures, however, and with other pre-conditions such as the existence of trained staff who are able to assume responsibility for the increased delegations in an efficient manner.
31. In general terms, the evaluation teams reported positively on the level of authority delegated to country offices but reported a lack of precise understanding of what functions had or had not been delegated. The first-generation CSOs and CPs were developed in the absence of detailed guidelines, although the basic policy documents were available. Similarly, a number of evaluations reported that some managers were unclear as to their authority to move resources from one development activity to another.
32. Finally, it was noted that assessment and allocation of programme support costs was a significant constraint on programming flexibility in 12 of the 19 evaluations. WFP faces a challenge in securing and allocating adequate budgetary funds in support of the complex processes of planning and implementing development programmes. Unfortunately, these processes are not related directly to the quantity of food aid shipped, which has been used as a basis for calculating direct support costs (DSC).
33. This problem is much broader than the formula used to allocate costs, since it relates to the larger question of securing and allocating adequate funds for investing in appropriate levels of programme design, implementation and monitoring.



Contributing to Development Effectiveness

34. The evaluation teams found it difficult to evaluate the contribution of the CP approach to improving the effectiveness of WFP support-to-development activities. This constraint arose from the fact that the CP approach is one element in a range of initiatives inside and outside WFP aimed at improving the effectiveness of food aid as a resource for development.
35. The CCA/UNDAF and Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) processes, for example, are intended to improve the integration and coordination of development assistance at the national level. Similarly, the Enabling Development policy document¹¹ and subsequent task force have emphasized development practices in keeping with the CP approach. WFP's own process of decentralization and the establishment of the regional bureaux are intended to strengthen the link between national development policies and the WFP planning process.
36. It was thus not possible for the evaluators to consider the CP approach in isolation from ongoing efforts to improve development cooperation in general and WFP food aid in particular. Rather, they focused on how the CP approach could be seen to strengthen parallel efforts at improving development activities and how these efforts in combination were contributing (or not contributing) to improved development effectiveness.
37. Finally, it should be noted that several of the evaluated CPs were in the early stages of implementation and could not be expected to provide much evidence of an increase in effectiveness. Despite these limitations, 13 of the evaluated CPs demonstrated an increase in development effectiveness, although more time was needed in most countries to be able to assess enhanced effectiveness at the activity level in terms of outcomes and impact.
38. In summary, the evaluations report the following improvements in development effectiveness flowing from the CP approach:
- improved targeting of WFP development assistance at the sub-national level;
 - a stronger WFP process for development programming that allows and encourages more engagement from host governments;
 - strengthened WFP capacity for participation in the CCA/UNDAF process;
 - clearer linkages between each WFP-supported development activity and objectives at the national level;
 - a programming framework that supports the development planning policies and practices described in the Enabling Development policy; and
 - a framework of strategies, goals and objectives that could serve as a basis for assessing the results of WFP support to development at the national level.

¹¹ According to the Enabling Development policy, WFP's assistance is to be focused where there is a food consumption problem necessitating food aid inputs. The policy focuses on five priorities for the use of food aid in development. See document WFP/EB.A/99/4-A for details.



FACTORS ENHANCING OR IMPEDING IMPLEMENTATION

Factors Enhancing Implementation of the CP Approach

39. The evaluations noted the following factors as contributing to efforts to implement the CP approach fully:
- There is ongoing integration of WFP into United Nations reform and donor coordination initiatives, especially the CCA/UNDAF process, which can provide an opportunity for the Programme to play an important role in national food insecurity and vulnerability discussions and policy-making.
 - There are ongoing efforts within WFP to promote full implementation of the Enabling Development policy, which like the CP approach, sees as a priority the careful and integrated design of development activities using food insecurity as an entry point.
 - VAM methods and capacities within WFP are potential elements of a CP approach, since they can help in defining target populations for WFP assistance to development activities if those activities are to use food aid effectively. The application of VAM methods, variable in extent and quality in the past, appears to be improving. Strengthening VAM capacity at country office level was one of the most common recommendations of the CP evaluations.
 - Authority has been decentralized to the country office level, and the regional bureaux have been created.
 - WFP's policy on Commitments to Women (CW), which has been in effect since 1996, has improved the situation analyses undertaken for CSOs and improved gender-sensitivity, particularly among WFP field staff.¹²
 - There is a continuing stream of policy statements and initiatives relating to the use of food aid in development; in particular, the Programme Design Manual has been made available. During 2002, the new monitoring and evaluation guidelines will be included.

Factors Impeding Implementation of the Country Programme Approach

40. The evaluators noted the following impediments to the CP approach:
- inadequate budgetary allocations available for the non-food costs of developing and implementing CPs;
 - lack of understanding by some country office staff of how much budgetary flexibility is appropriate and allowable, especially with regard to re-allocating resources from one development activity to another;
 - the need for WFP staff with core skills and experience relevant to development programming, especially in smaller country offices; skills in development programme and activity design, results definition, monitoring and evaluation, gender analysis and VAM are particularly needed;¹³

¹² This summary report does not go into detail about the CW. A separate thematic evaluation presented to the same session of the Executive Board examines the subject in depth and has drawn on the CP evaluation reports as part of its resource material.

¹³ Intensive staff training has recently been undertaken, however, including training in the use of logframes for planning and designing new CPs and activities.



- the absence of clear objectives and results expectations in WFP-supported development activities carried over from former programme/project cycles; and
- lack of baseline data in some cases and the absence of adequate systems for monitoring the results of WFP-supported development activities.

THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME APPROACH AND THE ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY

41. The evaluation teams in each country were charged with assessing the CPs and their constituent development activities in terms of the policies and recommended practices emanating from WFP's Enabling Development policy initiative.¹⁴ Judgements were based mainly on whether or not the groups targeted and the activity sectors chosen for each development activity coincided with the five focus areas outlined in the Enabling Development policy document.
42. As noted in the "Report on the Implementation of the Enabling Development Policy— from Theory to Practice", presented to the Annual Session of the Executive Board in May 2001, it is still too early to appreciate the longer-term impact of this policy. All CPs are reviewed for their compatibility with Enabling Development, and those activities that are not compatible are adjusted or phased out. Reorientation of WFP's development portfolio has been achieved through three approaches: VAM targeting methodology, a shift towards the promotion of human rather than physical assets and a refining of partnership strategies, particularly for complementary technical and non-food inputs.¹⁵
43. Seventeen of the 19 CPs can be classed as compatible with the Enabling Development policy and most of its associated practices, 15 fully and two partially, in that the sectors of programme concentration coincided with several of the goals of the policy. Most of the evaluation reports noted areas where development activities needed design improvement to be fully consistent with the policy. In particular, the evaluations noted a need to improve targeting to hungry poor families by extending analytical methods to include micro-analysis.

CONCLUSIONS

44. The evaluation results reported above support the following conclusions:

Achieving a Country Programme Approach

- Despite the fact that the evaluated CPs were first generation, three quarters of them had achieved substantive implementation of the CP approach. With a few exceptions, CPs not meeting the criteria for implementing the CP approach are expected to do so in future programme cycles.
- There has been a tendency for WFP-supported development projects and activities to continue with little change from one programme cycle to the next and to be implemented in isolation. More time and effort are needed to improve internal CP coherence.

¹⁴ Many of the evaluated CPs pre-date this policy, which was introduced in May 1999.

¹⁵ See document WFP/EB.A/2001/4-A, dated 4 May 2001.



- Essential features of effective implementation of the CP approach are a demonstrable link from the CSO to the CP and the presence in the CP of objectives expressed at the programme and activity levels. Where such objectives are lacking, full implementation of the CP approach is difficult to achieve.
- The CP approach has coincided with improvements in the assessment of the need for WFP food aid in support of development programming and in improved targeting.
- The CP approach has increased the coherence of WFP planning with national development priorities and facilitated integration with coordination efforts by other donors, including the United Nations. The CP approach has also served to improve the focus of WFP-supported development activities, particularly in a geographic sense.
- In each of the 13 countries with a strong CP, there are coherent linkages between individual activities and the strategies, goals and objectives of the CP. It has been more difficult to establish appropriate linkages across different activities in a given country.
- Flexibility, particularly in the movement of resources between activities, has been improved mainly as a result of decentralization of authority to the country office. More needs to be done, however, to make field staff more aware of the flexibility available.

Contributing to Development Effectiveness

- The CP approach has been supported by new WFP programming processes and policies, including the Enabling Development policy and the research that led up to it, as well as improvements in organizational decentralization and the analysis of vulnerability.
- The improvements in development effectiveness attributed by evaluation teams to the CP approach include improved targeting, improvements in the credibility of WFP's programming approach among partners, clearer links from projects to national objectives and the provision of a logical basis for assessing the results of WFP support to development at the national level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

45. In light of the findings and conclusions reported above, this evaluation recommends the following:
- a) While continuing application of the CP approach for the planning of its support to development as a general rule, WFP should retain a project approach in small-programme countries that find it difficult to assemble the human and financial resources necessary to implement a full CSO and CP approach; such countries may be capable of supporting only one core project.¹⁶
 - b) WFP should consider to what extent protracted relief and recovery activities and provision for emergency response can be better covered in future CP documents, so as to make such documents more inclusive of total WFP operations in a given country, particularly where relief and rehabilitation activities represent a major part of WFP's overall operations.

¹⁶ It should be noted, however, that the evaluations did not show a direct correlation between the size of the CP in dollar terms and the quality of design and implementation of the CP and its constituent interventions.



- c) The generic TORs for future CP evaluations should be revised to better address activity outputs/outcomes and impact and the relationship between the CP and relief/rehabilitation and emergency activities in the same country, as well as links to the CCA/UNDAF and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) processes.
- d) WFP should re-examine the method used to calculate and assign DSC to CPs; complex processes of designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating development programmes and activities are not directly related to the volume of food commodities absorbed by the activities.
- e) WFP should assess the criteria used for recruiting and assigning country office staff with a view to determining how core skills in development programme planning and implementation are used as criteria in staffing. In a programme with over 80 percent of global resources directed to relief operations, a critical question may be how to ensure that sufficient numbers of staff with development expertise are available to support development programming.¹⁷
- f) WFP should allocate resources for the continued and enhanced training of country office staff in core skills relating to development, such as development project design, monitoring and evaluation, and gender analysis.
- g) WFP should continue to encourage WFP country office participation in national development strategy dialogue, PRSPs and CCA/UNDAF processes as a means of further strengthening the CP approach.
- h) In keeping with the draft Policy for Results-Oriented Monitoring and Evaluation, WFP should strengthen the monitoring and evaluation capacity of regional bureaux and country offices so that they are able to participate in evaluations of second-generation CPs and activities and ensure that CPs have appropriate monitoring indicators to measure integration, focus, internal and external coherence, and flexibility.
- i) To the extent that human and financial resources allow, consideration should be given to extending targeting to a more specific level, possibly to the household level.
- j) While geographic concentration of activities has been improved, greater attention should be given in future CPs to enhancing linkages among activities.

¹⁷ Short-term consultants and outside experts currently provide country offices with skills in such areas as gender, programme design, monitoring and evaluation. These persons may represent a cost-effective response to staff and skills shortages but they should be managed by competent WFP officers.



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CCA	Common Country Assessment
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
CP	Country Programme
CSO	Country Strategy Outline
CW	Commitments to Women
DSC	Direct support costs
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
TORs	Terms of reference
VAM	Vulnerability analysis and mapping
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework

