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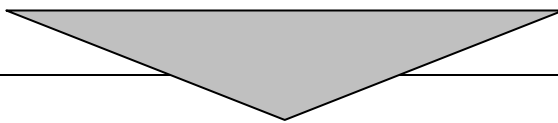
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MID-TERM EVALUATION OF COUNTRY PROGRAMME— SENEGAL (1999–2001)

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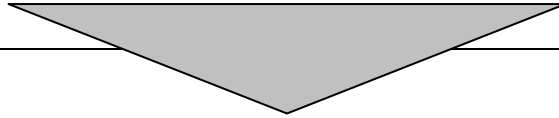
Director, Office of Evaluation (OEDE): Mr A. Wilkinson tel.: 066513-2029

Evaluation Officer, OEDE: Ms D. Tymo tel.: 066513-2566

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Executive Summary



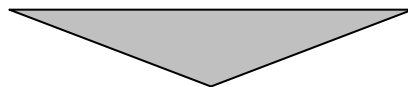
This evaluation focuses on the performance of the Country Programme (CP) in Senegal as a mechanism for effectively planning and implementing the component activities.

The Senegal Country Programme, whose strategic orientation conforms to the objectives of the Government's Ninth Economic and Social Development Plan, contributes to the pursuit of WFP objectives in poverty alleviation. The activities take place in areas where food assistance has a direct effect on the lives of poor populations suffering from food insecurity.

This first experience with the country programme approach in Senegal underlines the need for a rational and solidly prepared Country Strategy Outline (CSO), as well as the importance of the required studies on vulnerability, in order to then make the relevant choices for a Country Programme. The setting up of relevant monitoring and evaluation systems should be encouraged in view of the difficulties involved in obtaining information that can be used to assess the degree to which objectives are actually achieved.

The evaluation does not call into question the social service components (community nutrition and school canteens), whereas the urban sanitation component should be re-examined to bring it in line with the priorities of the Enabling Development policy. It is advisable to group activities of a productive nature (community forestry and food security) into a single component. A participatory approach is recommended for a better identification of activities by the targeted populations and for a more controlled implementation of programme activities. United Nations organizations and national and international NGOs should work together to build a more effective partnership.

Draft Decision



The Board notes the recommendations contained in this evaluation report (WFP/EB.1/2001/6/1) and notes also the management action taken so far, as indicated in the associated information paper (WFP/EB.1/2001/INF/10). The Board encourages further action on these recommendations, taking into account considerations raised during the discussion.



BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR PROVIDING ASSISTANCE

1. Senegal extends over an area of 196,722 km² in Western Africa. It has a population of 9 million and registers a high rate of growth (2.9 percent a year). It is estimated that 60 percent of the population lives in rural areas. Senegal has a Sudanese-Sahelian type climate and only one rainy season. More than two thirds of the active population is engaged in traditional agricultural activities (rain-fed agriculture, cattle rearing and forestry).
2. In spite of the growing competitiveness of the Senegalese economy following the devaluation of the CFA franc in 1994, it has been impossible to recover sustainable economic growth due to the structural weakness of the economy, linked, in particular, to the lack of diversified agricultural production and to the country's proneness to climatic vagaries. Close to 33 percent of the Senegalese population lives below the threshold of poverty (unable to maintain a daily caloric intake of 2,400 kcal.). Poverty is more widespread in the southern and central-northern regions.
3. The fight against poverty and food insecurity is made difficult by constraints of an environmental nature (climatic vagaries cause marked variations in agricultural production from year to year; soil salinization and depletion; wind erosion), and of a human nature (heavy demographic pressure with respect to the environment's potential; rural-to-urban migration; limited participation of women in the development process).
4. The Government's policy aims at satisfying the food needs of the most vulnerable populations in a context of economic liberalization. Meeting these food aid needs implies a need for growth in domestic production and more efficient management of imports. The Government has committed itself to implementing poverty alleviation activities, which means diversifying incomes and improving poor people's access to basic services. In the long term, these measures to alleviate poverty are part of a global strategy to speed up economic growth, thus allowing a growth in domestic production and recovery of the population's purchasing power. In the short term, the Government's measures aim at promoting food security for groups most at risk, including women and children.

SCOPE OF EVALUATION

5. WFP's country programme approach, introduced in 1994, is based on the commitment to focus interventions on the most food-insecure populations and on a limited number of priority activities by applying a series of operational principles.
6. This report is based on the work of an evaluation mission that visited Senegal between 6 and 22 March 2000.¹ The evaluation exercise focused mainly on the performance of the Country Programme (CP) as a mechanism for planning and implementing activities in Senegal. In so doing, it aimed to assess whether the programme approach can be more effective than isolated projects and to provide learning experiences which can be applied in the preparation of a future CP.

¹ The mission was composed of two international consultants (one of whom was team leader), and a national consultant.



7. In particular, the evaluation attempts to establish to what extent the Country Programme has:
- made it possible to modify the ongoing development activities in order to bring them together under an efficient country programme;
 - had an effect on the identification, formulation, budgeting, mobilization of resources and the implementation of activities;
 - strengthened WFP's effectiveness in promoting development (consistency of objectives, geographic coverage of activities, integration with the programmes of other agencies, flexibility in allocating resources); and
 - facilitated the selection of "better practices" whose food aid functions are in line with the principles of the Enabling Development policy.

OVERVIEW OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

8. The first Country Programme for Senegal (1999–2001) was approved in 1998 by the Executive Board for a total budget of US\$11.7 million. The Country Programme has the following overall objectives: a) provide incentives for parents to send their children—girls, in particular—to school; b) encourage mothers to take part in the health and nutrition programme; c) encourage unemployed persons in the cities to make efforts to improve their living conditions; and d) encourage village groups to preserve their environment and to set up small-scale infrastructure for agricultural production.
9. The Country Programme has incorporated most of the previous WFP projects being implemented in the country before 1 January 1999, except for the "food security" activity. The Programme's various components have been re-targeted with the help of a vulnerability analysis carried out in 1997. These are:
- **School Canteens:** Assistance to school canteens began in 1970. The present activity is an expansion of the project implemented from 1992 to 1998. The objective of this component is to contribute to a national education strategy by increasing school attendance and learning capabilities—with particular attention to young girls and children from underprivileged rural areas—by providing sufficient food intake during the day. The number of beneficiaries annually is set at 56,000 pupils. The activity covers 12 departments (out of a total of 30) and has a budget of US\$5.5 million.
 - **Community Nutrition:** WFP's intervention is part of the Government's Community Nutrition Project (CNP) and aims to alleviate malnutrition. The CNP's activities focus on urban and peri-urban areas where malnutrition is most prevalent. Beneficiaries are expectant and nursing mothers and children between the ages of 6 and 36 months suffering from malnutrition. Since the beginning of the project in 1997, their number has reached 445,000, at a cost of US\$4.2 million.
 - **Urban Sanitation:** This project's long-term objective is to improve the living conditions of the populations of ten cities. Its immediate objectives are to organize an effective network of urban waste collection, removal and disposal, making use of manual labour to the furthest extent possible for the rehabilitation of rainwater drainage systems, and the creation of temporary jobs, particularly for unemployed workers belonging to Economic-Interest Groups (EIG). Since the beginning of the project in January 1995, WFP has provided aid amounting to US\$3.9 million.



- **Community Forestry:** This component is aimed at enabling populations to take over the management of natural resources in order to improve food security. Its objectives are: poverty alleviation (sale of forest products and by-products, development of market gardening), food security improvement (water and soil conservation), dissemination of agroforestry techniques as well as promotion of women's participation in the management of natural resources. Geographic coverage is limited to 11 departments selected on the basis of their vulnerability and environmental constraints. The total cost for this activity, which originated in 1992, is US\$1.3 million.
- **Food Security:** This component provides support to farmers' associations in order to re-launch food production within the framework of the Special Food Security Programme, in the southern and south-eastern areas of the country, and the CARITAS Programme in the Thiès region. This activity, which consists mainly of building hydro-agricultural infrastructures, was approved in 1999 with a total cost of US\$736,000.

COUNTRY PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS

Overall Assessment of Performance

10. The Country Programme was set up on the basis of information contained in the vulnerability study carried out in 1997, which has significantly facilitated the geographical targeting of the CP activities. This study provides an overall view of the aspects of poverty and food insecurity; it represents the first necessary, but insufficient step towards gaining knowledge of the situation. It would be advisable to complete the overall picture of vulnerability by conducting more specific studies (for example, in the urban sector) which would lead to a better understanding of the causes of vulnerability, and the population's behaviour and participation in the programme's activities. This information appears to be necessary in order to refine the selection criteria and to obtain the consensus of implementing partners.
11. The school canteens and community forestry components are in accordance with the objectives contained in the draft plan of operations, but the different implementing partners have had difficulty in setting up appropriate monitoring and evaluation systems. Thus, most of the data available mainly concern the number of beneficiaries and the overall level of performance. Little or no information is available for assessing the degree to which immediate objectives are achieved. As regards urban sanitation and community nutrition, the Agency for Public Works (AGETIP) has prepared a monitoring and assessment system that functions, making it possible to determine the amount of progress made in activities with respect to the objectives set. The food security component is still too recent to be assessed.

Coordination and Partnerships

12. A Country Programme Coordination Committee was set up at the start of the CP. It consists of six representatives of AGETIP, CSA (*Comité national de sécurité alimentaire*—National Commission for Food Security) and WFP, who have had some difficulty in meeting. As for the Technical Coordination Committee set up for each component, its functioning is clearly stated in each plan of operations. Only one plan of



operations (school canteens) out of the three approved activities has been signed. The remaining two (community forestry and food security) are currently being finalized.

13. WFP is co-managing the school canteens activity with the Directorate for Scholarships and School Works (Ministry of Education). At the middle level, the partnership is limited almost exclusively to the logistical management of food supplies. Reporting from the field is ensured during each departmental inspection by the person responsible for school canteens. Information exchange and communication between WFP, the Directorate for Scholarships and the regional and departmental partners should be clarified and continued.
14. WFP works in partnership with AGETIP for the urban sanitation activity. A technical partnership via FAO for composting operations could not be set up in spite of the promising experiences in the cities of Rufisque and Bambey. The community nutrition activity is also carried out in partnership with AGETIP. Supplementary food was produced by local private enterprises. CARITAS is the main technical partner responsible for supervising operations under the food security activity.
15. Under the CSO and Country Programme, partnership has been advocated with other United Nations organizations, donors and NGOs to establish harmonization with the programming cycles of UNDP, UNICEF and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as well as with the Ninth Five-Year Development Plan for Senegal. Relations are frequently at an informal level and the existence of an active and above all technical partnership is not adequately demonstrated. However, following UNICEF's commitment to a programme in support of school canteens in the region of Casamance, and as part of the application of UNFPA guidelines, a memorandum of understanding was finalized between WFP and UNICEF in order to formalize these partnership approaches.
16. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) developed in 1998 has identified five components as far as poverty alleviation is concerned: increase and diversification of incomes and employment generation; improvements in access to basic social services through the setting up of community infrastructures; reinforcement of the productive capacities of beneficiaries and improvement of the system for monitoring household living conditions; security networks; and economic advancement of women. The Country Programme activities affect each of these five components, and WFP is involved in each of them together with the other agencies of the United Nations system. However, practical experience indicates that much still remains to be done in order to improve integration in implementing the components.

Integration, Coherence and Concentration

17. Both in the way the activities are conceived and in the way they are currently conducted, there is little or no consistency and integration among the various activities of a social nature (CNP, school canteens and sanitation). On the other hand, activities of a productive nature (community forestry and food security) demonstrate real integration as both have very similar objectives. However, implementing these two components separately is neither a desirable nor a coherent course of action.
18. The tools set up for more efficient targeting have not fully achieved the desired effect in terms of geographical concentration. There is no explicit intention of making several operations coincide within the same area, with the well-known exception of the school canteens and community forestry activities. These are taking place in the same department as a result of the vulnerability study.



Support to the Country Programme

19. As an outcome of the WFP decentralization process, delegation of authority allowed the Country Director to carry out budget transfers which have simplified programme implementation. This has been done, in particular, by re-allocating remaining funds from completed activities (some school canteens) to new ones (community forestry), or by early budgetary allocation to launch some new activities for which there are no resources.
20. Field staff have been awaiting a manual which establishes the various responsibilities involved in the implementation of a country programme, a void which was only recently filled through the finalization of the Programme Design Manual.
21. The regional office for the Sahel at Ouagadougou has been able to provide considerable assistance in various areas, but the Senegal office would have liked further support from the Regional Programme Unit. This is because while the country office has been assigned more responsibilities, the number of personnel has remained constant. Specific training courses would be required on the programme approach, on the preparation of different documents (CSO, CP), and on monitoring and evaluation.
22. The Government has called on CSA to provide its assistance as regards all logistics aspects, in addition to its tasks in providing information regarding markets, areas and groups at risk. The Government is supporting the different activities to the same extent it did before implementation of the country programme approach.

COUNTRY PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

Role and Modalities of Food Aid

23. **School Canteens Activity:** The impact of food aid on increasing school attendance in general, and that of girls in particular, is well known. However, the extent to which girls' education is actually benefiting from this activity is difficult to assess due to insufficient information on initial figures and to the lack of distinction between boys and girls. It is also difficult to estimate the increase in school enrolments among children from disadvantaged rural areas since the only data available are for children attending school, with no comparison made with the overall number of school-age children. However, the qualitative assessment by teaching staff is that food intake has a very positive direct effect on the learning capabilities of pupils.
24. **Community Nutrition Activity:** Food aid contributes to satisfying the nutritional needs of the most vulnerable groups (expectant and nursing mothers, malnourished children), and encourages women to attend the Community Nutrition Centres regularly so that they can benefit from these organized services and improve their knowledge on nutrition and health care. The food distributed is produced locally.
25. **Urban Sanitation Activity:** Food aid has had a positive effect on mobilizing unemployed workers. During its execution, this activity has sometimes been discontinued for long periods of time as a result of the local administrations' failure to meet their financial commitments. Food aid constitutes a very important income transfer for young unemployed persons, especially young women who comprise about 50 percent of participants in the EIG activities in urban areas. As this activity represents budgetary support for the Government and local administrations, it should be re-examined in view of the principles of the Enabling Development policy.



26. **Community Forestry Activity:** Food aid is intended as an incentive for the protection of natural resources. EIGs have priority in receiving food supplies. The contracts between the Waters and Forestry Service and these groups make no mention of the amounts of aid expected, to avoid linking the level of achievement exclusively to the provision of aid. WFP food is often used to prepare collective meals at the time community works are carried out.
27. **Food Security Activity:** Food aid is used to build assets for community use and production. However, only limited amounts of food are distributed during the most crucial period (i.e. the lean season).

Targeting

28. Targeting continues to be a delicate issue within the school canteens activity. The criteria and modalities which have led to geographical targeting continue to be unclear to numerous partners. The schools benefiting from WFP food represent between 10 and 20 percent of those operating in the targeted geographical areas. The selection criteria within the departments considered are often established by the management committees or at the initiative of the school's headmaster. The number of beneficiaries has remained almost the same (56,000) as it was during the previous phase, and food supplies target only about 5 percent of Senegalese children attending school.
29. The urban sanitation activity has been conducted in ten cities since 1995, following a pilot project launched in 1990. The project included sanitation works and the construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure. In 1999, the Government decided to extend this activity to all the village communes and cities in Senegal in order to alleviate poverty and unsanitary conditions in the main urban areas, necessitating a larger amount of WFP resources.
30. The Community Nutrition Centres are located in districts considered as poor, but no exact studies have yet been undertaken providing in-depth information regarding urban poverty. Priority is currently given to densely populated areas with a high prevalence of malnutrition. The population size required for opening a centre has been set at 4,000.
31. Targeting for the food security activity conforms with WFP's basic selection criteria. It involves the two poorest departments in the southern area.
32. Community forestry activities have been targeted as a result of the vulnerability study and according to the severity of environmental problems. The 11 departments targeted correspond to the areas of intervention for other activities, with care given to defining homogeneous ecological areas. Targeting of beneficiaries is based primarily on the extent of environmental problems and communities' interest.

Compliance with WFP's Commitments to Women

33. Following the Government's 1997–2000 Plan of Action in favour of Senegalese women, WFP has organized an awareness workshop together with its partners and set up a monitoring committee responsible for verifying commitments and for monitoring adherence to them during the programming cycle (1999–2001). WFP's commitment has also resulted in the financing of a gender-related training programme intended to help support the five components of the Country Programme and focuses on food management, management functions and local administration.
34. Commitments for the school canteens component provided for the allocation of at least 50 percent of the total activity budget to girls, and for WFP assistance to be given to all



girls in the institutions included. It is impossible to assess the impact of WFP assistance on girls' school attendance because data on school attendance are not gender-disaggregated.

35. Forty-five percent of the 6,000 volunteers for the urban sanitation activity are women, as compared with the 40 percent anticipated. The activity involves a drinking-water component. The 118 running water points set up are managed entirely by women's EIGs. The community nutrition activity assists children and women exclusively. However, women still need to be involved further in the production of supplementary food with a view to achieving self-sufficiency.
36. An estimated 60 percent of resources under the food security component is to be allocated to women. In areas where these activities have begun, in particular the region of Thiès, it is difficult to make any judgements regarding this objective. The types of works to be carried out often require the mobilization of all villagers (building of stone wall enclosures, bridges or well-sinking, setting up of village grain reserves).
37. The plan of operations for the community forestry component provides no explicit indications regarding the role and participation of women in this activity. The only data available pertain to the first internal evaluation exercise. The report states: "Following the implementation of the WFP office's Gender Action Plan in Senegal, the percentage of women beneficiaries for this activity has risen from 33 percent in 1997 to 66 percent in 1998 and 1999". Women receive rations and manage supplies through women's associations.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Activities

38. The data currently available on school canteens mainly concern logistical management, and are obtained from a series of data sheets and registers prepared by the local WFP office. The flow of field data to central facilities is slow and takes place at irregular intervals, thus failing to facilitate rationalized management of supplies.
39. The monitoring and evaluation data available under the urban sanitation component are based on the number of volunteers, the number of communes and the sums allocated in the form of financial compensation. These data are processed every four months by AGETIP, which then sends them to the WFP office. Other data gathered specifically, referring mainly to the quality aspects of the main activities undertaken, also indicate any problems encountered during project execution: efficiency in recruiting and work organization methods, the role of EIG workers' skills, and other information. All these elements provide information about the results achieved and indicate the extent to which local administrations and populations are involved in activities.
40. The most up-to-date monitoring indicators for assessing the efficiency of interventions under the community nutrition component are: number of centres involved, number of children and women receiving supplementary food, number of rations distributed, amount of supplementary food produced by enterprises, amount of food distributed by the centres. These indicators help to assess the progress made by the project, and the number and types of beneficiaries. However, they do not give a precise idea of the impact of the activity. Indicators of impact should be introduced, such as progress in children's malnutrition rates and in nutritional recovery.
41. Current monitoring indicators have not yet been developed for the food security component which is just starting and for which no plan of operations currently exists. However, CARITAS provides overall indicators on the number of rations to be supplied, number of participants in terms of persons/day and number of infrastructures to be built



(stone wall enclosures, grain reserves, wells). Such indicators help assess the level of implementation reached.

42. The plan of operations for the community forestry component provides for an internal monitoring and evaluation system starting with the setting up of a decentralized participatory planning procedure at the community level. The system currently operates on the basis of commitment contracts which help assess actual achievements with respect to the activities planned. A second stage should be set up in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the operations undertaken and the role of food aid.

COMPATIBILITY WITH THE ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY

43. The mainly descriptive nature of the CSO (1997) did not provide adequately relevant analytical data to allow for the design of an effective Country Programme. A number of the development principles contained in the Country Programme are consistent with those subsequently adopted in the Enabling Development policy. (It should be noted that the current CP was approved before the Enabling Development policy was introduced.) On the other hand, the vulnerability study, from which the definition of the criteria of geographical coverage and targeting of beneficiaries originates, is a useful tool for gaining better knowledge of the country, even if further socio-economic studies should be carried out to more clearly define interventions and their target populations.
44. Overall, the Country Programme's activities contribute to alleviating food insecurity in the target groups through two areas of intervention. These are: a) the development of human resources through reinforcement of the educational system and improved access by women and children to health care and nutritional services; and b) environmental conservation and the improvement of living conditions and food security.
45. In terms of compatibility with the Enabling Development policy, one activity in particular requires attention. Before extending the urban sanitation programme, a careful analysis of urban vulnerability should be performed in order to bring WFP's assistance within the scope of the policy.
46. For the food security component, the aim of creating and handing over assets to the beneficiaries is evident, as is the intention to satisfy the needs of the community (wells, anti-erosion barriers, grain reserves, etc.). These infrastructures help implement productive activities while optimizing profitability. The populations are organized in groups and committees for managing and maintaining these infrastructures. The community forestry component (reforestation, water and soil conservation works and village waterworks programme) follows the same pattern.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Programme Targeting

47. This first operational experience through the programme approach demonstrates the importance and need for a rational and solidly prepared CSO which can help make the necessary choices in the development and monitoring of the Country Programme. It is recommended that the country office prepare studies which focus on a representative sample of beneficiaries, so as to create reference areas and assess the impact of investment on the achievement of immediate objectives and on vulnerability.



48. Poverty analyses should be carried out in urban and peri-urban areas in order to improve beneficiary targeting and link WFP food assistance to the acquisition of lasting assets and income-generating activities.
49. Increasing the participatory approach is recommended in order to better identify the priorities of the beneficiary populations, for more controlled project implementation and for efficient monitoring and evaluation.

Programme Implementation

50. While the components of human resources development (community nutrition and school canteens project) are clearly in line with the Enabling Development policy, the urban sanitation activity should be reviewed in order to bring it in line with the new policy. At present, this activity is limited to providing budgetary support for the creation of temporary jobs.
51. It would be advisable to group activities of a productive nature, such as community forestry and food security, within a single activity. In this respect, it is recommended that a tripartite partnership be set up between the Waters and Forestry Service, FAO and WFP, in order to obtain complementary expertise in the areas of food security and environmental protection. Tripartite implementation would be in full accordance with the Enabling Development policy guidelines *vis-à-vis* the creation and development of assets for the poor.
52. The acquisition and generation of assets produced as a result of food aid exist for activities such as community forestry and food security. To fully appreciate the positive impact of food aid, it is recommended that the planned feasibility studies be finalized for income-generating activities such as urban EIGs engaged in the local manufacture of enriched foods at the district level, or warehouses and cereals stores linked to the school canteens and to food security activities.
53. Current management of the Country Programme is essentially based on the logistical data provided by the accounting reports which are based on the different beneficiaries' inventory and food supplies management statements. The information needed for the successful performance of the Country Programme should be supplied by a complete monitoring and evaluation report for each activity. At the present time, it is impossible to make use of the basic data to assess the impact of food aid on the achievement of the CP's objectives.
54. It is recommended that the country office facilitate the setting up of a monitoring and evaluation scheme that is compatible with those of implementing partners. This would allow the country office to determine the information desired and obtain the data required for timely programming and food distribution decisions.
55. In order to obtain quantitative and qualitative data regarding the progress made in implementing the Country Programme, it is recommended that performance indicators be identified to help assess the extent to which objectives are achieved. In this regard, it would be advisable to continue capacity-building training programmes for WFP staff.
56. Basic skills required should be evaluated in order to ensure that country offices possess them, enhance them and keep them up to date through regular training workshops.

Working in Partnership

57. WFP and UNICEF are working jointly to establish a common methodological process for developing UNICEF's school canteens in the Casamance region. This process should



represent an opportunity to extend common activities to the northern areas of the country. It is also recommended that information be made available, in particular at the local level, regarding the eligibility of schools and students for WFP assistance.

58. A more active partnership should also be sought among the organizations of the United Nations system, within the framework of UNDAF, and with national and international NGOs. The modalities of this partnership should be defined within the framework of a specific contract for each of the activities, as is currently being done with UNICEF.



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

AGETIP	Agency for Public Works
CNP	Community Nutrition Project
CP	Country Programme
CSA	National Commission for Food <i>Security</i> (<i>Comité national de sécurité alimentaire</i>)
CSO	Country Strategy Outline
EIG	Economic Interest Groups
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

