



2. Methodology

2.1 The evaluation model employed

The evaluation model was a utilization-focused approach³, concentrating on intended use by intended users. This involved a preparatory mission to India to discuss the evaluation design and focus with participants, full discussion of the research tools with the CO, joint decision making as to project sites to be visited, participation by CO staff as observers during key informant interviews (except in some cases with beneficiaries), an interim sharing of findings with CO staff, detailed discussion of recommendations, two debriefings in Delhi, (one for government staff, and one for UN and international agencies), one debriefing in Rome, and wide circulation of drafts of this report. Utilization-focused approaches are sometimes perceived to involve a trading off of evaluation ‘objectivity’, because of their more participatory approaches, but have been found to promote greater evaluation use, and are increasingly in use, including within the UN system and humanitarian field.

The evaluation team reviewed the Programme Evaluation Standards, and UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards, to ensure compliance with current good evaluation practice.⁴ Confidentiality and dignity of respondents, including beneficiaries, was ensured by explaining fully the purpose of the evaluation during interviews, and making clear to respondents that all evaluation findings would be confidential. The CP and Operational Contract Logical Framework Analyses (LFAs) were used as the main benchmarks against which to measure results. The CP LFA is included as Annex 2. The level of focus was on outcomes and outcome indicators because this was viewed as the most appropriate level for a mid-term review. The CP was unlikely to have achieved significant impacts within a three year period, but should have moved beyond outputs.⁵

2.2 Background literature review and missions

The methodology included:

- Review of background documents, including: relevant WFP policies and evaluations; GoI planning and evaluation reports; CO planning documents, advocacy products, VAM reports, self-evaluations completed in 2006 as a key element feeding into the MTE; good practice studies; monitoring reports; WFP State Office reports; other agency literature; and academic literature (see the bibliography on page 73 to 78 of this report for further details).
- A preparatory mission by the evaluation team leader to Rome and New Delhi for ten days in February 2006, to interview WFP HQ staff, and to discuss the orientation of the evaluation with WFP HQ, CO and counterpart staff.

³ Patton, M. (1997) *Utilization-Focused Evaluation. The New Century Text*. London: Sage Publications.

⁴ Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (1994) *The Programme Evaluation Standards*. London: Sage Publications; UNEG (2005) *Standards for Evaluation in the UN System*. New York: UN Evaluation Group.

⁵ The UN definition of an outcome is as follows: ‘The intended or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention’s outputs, usually requiring the collective effort of partners. Outcomes represent changes in development conditions which occur between the completion of outputs and the achievement of impact.’
<http://www.undg.org/content.cfm?id=823>



- Development of an evaluation matrix which also served as a questionnaire throughout the evaluation (see Annex 3), and which was circulated to relevant parties before interviews.
- A four week evaluation mission by four evaluation team members, which included interviews in Delhi, and field visits to Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, and Uttaranchal for discussions with WFP State Office staff, counterparts, and beneficiaries. States were selected on the basis of the need to cover each of the three core programming areas, geographic representation, and resource allocation by the CO. Between them, these States received 84 per cent of core programme resources between 2003 and 2005. The evaluation team interviewed all relevant WFP staff, GoI staff, and international agency staff, carried out extensive interviews with State level government and NGO staff, and interviewed some 700 beneficiaries in 35 villages, mainly in focus groups. For a list of those interviewed see Annex 4. For background to the evaluation team members, see Annex 5.
- Peer review of the evaluation methodology and report by three peer reviewers.

2.3 Evaluation of advocacy, WFP's catalytic role and capacity building

The evaluation team reviewed academic and agency literature on the evaluation of advocacy and capacity building. Few relevant sources were found. Respondents noted that there is limited experience in evaluating either of these areas in WFP, and that this MTE is the first systematic evaluation of input to WFP's Strategic Priority 5.

In terms of evaluating WFP's advocacy role, there is agreement that advocacy is a 'messy' process – a process that is not linear. Attribution is particularly difficult given multiple actors: 'The most fundamental problem in undertaking M&E/Impact Assessment (IA) of advocacy work is failing fully to understand the nature of the advocacy process—its multiple aims, multi-layered structures, shifting timeframes, and the nature of the power structures it aims to influence.'⁶ Policy dialogue 'is something of a "black box": very few people really understand how it happens.'⁷ Perhaps the most systematic evaluation of advocacy in the development field is being undertaken by Action Aid, and the initial findings of this study emphasize the importance of:

- Identifying the different dimensions of advocacy work and its outcomes.
- Recognising that advocacy can work at different levels which may, but do not necessarily, reinforce each other.
- Monitoring processes as well as outcomes.
- Monitoring policy implementation as well as policy change.

Advocacy is increasingly being carried out in networks or coalitions. Acknowledging the collective nature of advocacy work and focusing less on questions of attribution is key, realising that there is need to establish a balance between who takes credit, and when to take or not to take credit.

⁶ Coates, B. and David, R. (2002) 'Learning for change: the art of assessing the impact of advocacy work.' *Development in Practice* (12), 3&4, 539.

⁷ Tyler, S and H. Mallee (2006) 'Shaping Policy from the Field.' In *Communities, Livelihoods and Natural Resource Management: Action Research and Policy Change in Asia*. London: ITDG.



Several of these points are relevant for this evaluation, in particular the need to assess processes, and policy implementation. This evaluation assessed advocacy through a review of the advocacy program objectives and indicators, a review of the main advocacy products and discussions with WFP partners and users about the efficacy of these products.

A key element in WFP's attempt to play a catalytic role in helping governments to establish and manage national food-assistance programmes has been support to national capacity. A recent book on evaluating capacity development notes: 'Organizational capacity development is a highly complex and little understood process, the results of which are difficult to measure. For this reason, cross-checking, triangulation, and validation of evaluation results with stakeholders are especially useful.'⁸ The typology developed in this book between capacities that an organization needs to carry out in its day-to-day activities (operational capacities, such as staffing levels and staff training) and the capacities needed for the organization to learn and change in response to changing circumstances (adaptive capacities, such as leadership and strategic thinking) was also helpful. There have been evaluations of capacity development in the UN system from which the evaluation team drew.⁹ All of these sources, as well as the WFP *Enabling Development* and *Building Country and Regional Capacities* policies, were used for the formulation of questions in the evaluation matrix.

The main data sources for assessment of advocacy/model building and capacity development were interviews, in particular in Delhi with CO and counterpart staff, and with State Offices and counterparts. The main CO advocacy strategies and programming were reviewed based on these interviews. Two sections of the evaluation matrix were dedicated to advocacy/model building, and capacity development (Annex 3). The evaluation team also interviewed by phone three WFP COs in Latin America concerning the new role of some COs in providing mainly technical and capacity support to governments.

2.4 Evaluation of core programming and pilots

The main data source for assessment of the three core programmes was two self-evaluations on ICDS, and one each on FFE and FFW. These self-evaluations also served as support documents to the MTE. The ICDS and FFW self-evaluations were carried out by research organisations, with WFP guidance, and can be considered as semi-independent reviews, while the FFE self-evaluation was carried out by CO staff. The terms of reference and methodologies for the self-evaluations were reviewed by the evaluation team prior to agreeing that these would be the main data source, and the evaluation team also met twice with one of the research organisations involved, in order to review the methodology and findings.

Findings from the CO self-evaluations were triangulated with evaluation team field visits. Questionnaires were prepared for analysis of the three core programmes, and household level interviews. Agreement was reached between the CO and the evaluation team that 50 per cent of village visits would be arranged by the CO, and 50 per cent would be surprise visits. The methodological approach at the village level was to hold on arrival a focus group discussion

⁸ IDRC (2003) *Evaluating Capacity Development*. Ottawa: International Development Research Centre.

⁹ In particular UNFPA (2003) *UNFPA's Support to National Capacity Development: Achievements and Challenges*. New York: UNFPA Evaluation Report 20; UNDP (2005) *Measuring Capacities: An Illustrative Catalogue to Benchmarks and Indicators*. New York: Capacity Development Group, Bureau for Development Policy; Economic and Social Council (2004) *Effectiveness of the UN development system and its operational activities: capacity of the system to provide country level support and develop national capacities*. New York: Substantive Session of 2004, Agenda Item 3, Conference Room Paper.



with up to 20 villagers, to analyse in overview the core programmes, and during that discussion to establish the location of three to five poorest households in the village. These households were then visited to assess the extent to which WFP support had reached the most food insecure households. The evaluation team also ensured that approximately 50 per cent of respondents were women.

The evaluation team also examined other aspects of CO programming, including the Adolescent Girls Programme, the Food for Human Development pilot, and the planned HIV/AIDS programme. Fortification supported by CIDA was assessed as part of the overall ICDS programming.

Details on evaluation limitations and bias are set out in Annex 6.