

3. The organisational relationships of OEDE at the governance level, with reference to the Executive Board and Bureau, Executive Director, the Core Management Team, and the Executive Staff; and the roles and responsibilities of OEDE in relation to other HQ departments (e.g. Policy, Operations).
4. The decentralised approaches to evaluation, including the roles and responsibilities of OEDE vis-à-vis the Regional Bureaux and the Country Offices.
5. Relationships with, and responsibilities vis-à-vis WFP's cooperating partners, including the nature of stakeholder engagement before, during and after the evaluation process.
6. The quality of the evaluations undertaken and commissioned by OEDE and to some extent by Regional Bureaux/Country Offices. This includes the conduct of the actual evaluation, the quality of the evaluation reports, the independence of evaluation teams and team leaders (consultants), the ways in which OEDE enables them to produce credible reports including the ways stakeholders are facilitated to comment on draft reports (e.g., when do comments become an infringement on independence and when are they warranted to ensure standards of evaluation reports).
7. The use of evaluation results and follow-up. Important aspects: the ways in which evaluation results are disseminated and lessons used both within WFP and by others (donors, cooperating partners, etc.); the responsibility for the follow-up of recommendations with management; and how follow-up is undertaken and monitored.

1.5 Methodology

While the Review framework and questions guided the aspects to be investigated, the methodology was designed using a mixed methods approach to (i) allow new and important issues to emerge, with additional data collection done as the Panel's understanding deepened; and (ii) enable triangulation (cross-checking to verify information) based on data collection methods as well as the sources of information. Due to the nature of the Review the methods employed were primarily qualitative. An inductive approach – seeking patterns rather than testing hypotheses – guided the gathering and analysis of information.

The three criteria or dimensions used for the analysis – independence, credibility and utility – relate to both objective and subjective judgements. The UN's normative framework (the UNEG Standards and Norms, as well as the OECD DAC criteria used in this Review) is based on a mixture of corporate, cultural and perception-based standards. The source information for the Review is therefore drawn from an analysis of WFP's organisational structure, related financing, corporate managerial practices and the opinions of staff regarding the three di-

mensions. The latter's perceptions relate to WFP's readiness to utilise evaluation and are hence particularly relevant in an assessment of an organisation's evaluation function; they have therefore formed a significant component of the Review's source data.

A total of 124 persons were interviewed. Interviewees were not randomly selected but chosen to represent views from key parts of the organisation and, more importantly, to express opinions on and provide experience from evaluation that clearly reflect the use of evaluations and how they may influence decisions. The locations of the field visits and meta-evaluations guided the selection of many of the interviewees. Others were selected by the Panel, in consultation with OEDE, as representatives of the organisational units with which OEDE interacts or which are key stakeholders in the evaluation function. The Panel further selected external stakeholders based on the same criteria. Together they provide, in the Panel's opinion, a rich reflection of the views on evaluation within WFP.

Key steps of the Review:

1. *Preparation of the Review Approach and Work Plan*

This was done in dialogue between the Peer Panel, the Review advisors and the OEDE. The Peer Panel conducted a first desk study, followed by the development of the Review framework and questions during and after the first meeting of the Panel. A work plan was established during the first meeting in Rome, which also served to familiarize the Panel and advisors with the evaluation function of WFP.

2. *Collecting factual information*

A more extensive desk review by the advisors followed. This was guided by the Review questions to gather factual information and identify pertinent issues for further investigation. The desk study was supplemented by semi-structured interviews by the advisors with key persons in Rome. This resulted in a preliminary draft report with factual information provided to the Peer Panel and to OEDE for verification and comment.

3. *Wider consultation within WFP*

Further data collection from WFP staff was carried out through a web-based survey sent to 482 WFP staff.

4. *Assessing the quality of WFP evaluations*

A meta-evaluation of twelve OEDE and decentralised evaluations was conducted by the advisors, based on a modified version of the ALNAP Quality Proforma. They were selected to (i) include a mix of Country Office and OEDE managed evaluations, (ii) ensure a geographical/regional spread, as well as a mixture of (iii) programme and (iv) evaluation type. The results of another 17 meta-evaluations by independent ALNAP assessors between 2000–2004 were also considered. Interviews

to further elucidate issues of quality were conducted (mostly by telephone) with evaluation team leaders and evaluation managers as well as Regional Bureaux/Country Office staff.

5. *Deepening understanding of perspectives from the field*

Visits were made to WFP Regional Bureau and Country Offices in Johannesburg, Lilongwe, Jakarta, Bangkok and Vientiane where WFP staff, partners and other stakeholders were interviewed. These locations were selected based on the convergence of a number of factors: (i) geographical coverage; (ii) inclusion of meta-evaluation countries and regions; (iii) date of the evaluation between 2005–2007, to focus on the most recent situation as well as facilitate staff recall and availability; (iv) type of programme (PRRO, EMOP, CP and Regional); (v) the type of evaluation or review (Mid-Term Evaluation, Real Time Evaluation RTE, After Action Review AAR); and (vi) timing of the visits (availability of the advisors and relevant Country Offices to host the visits).

6. *Testing and deepening understanding of facts and perspectives:*

Peer Panel interviews in Rome

The Peer Panel interviewed in person selected stakeholders at WFP headquarters, as well as, by telephone, key persons in the field. These interviews focused on further investigating key issues raised during the earlier steps of data collection and analysis. A group discussion was held with fourteen members of the Executive Board, present after an open invitation to attend the engagement. Individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with Executive members, Division Directors, several Regional and Country Directors and staff, as well as OEDE.

7. *Verification of preliminary findings*

A preliminary assessment by the Peer Panel was made based on all the evidence gathered through the different methods and captured in a draft Review report which was then submitted to OEDE for their comments. The main Review meetings took place on 25 October, where the Panel interacted with OEDE and several key WFP officials on the draft report content. Opportunity was thus given to test and refute the findings.

8. *Finalisation of the Professional Peer Review Report*

The Review meetings brought to light additional aspects for crosschecking and for final consideration. This was done and the final Professional Peer Review report submitted to OEDE on November 5th.

1.6 Limitations and challenges of the Review

1. It was difficult to find staff and stakeholders at field level who had been directly involved in the evaluations under review. Many of the sources had fairly scattered and limited experiences of evaluations. The rotation of personnel in the organisation and limited recall of