How to plan and undertake a Self-evaluation

Monitoring & Evaluation Guidelines

WFP

United Nations World Food Programme
Office of Evaluation

How to plan and undertake a Self-evaluation

Overview

Introduction. The purpose of this module is to explain how to plan and undertake a self-evaluation.

Why is this Module important?

The introduction of WFP's new evaluation policy calls for an increasing number of operations to be self-evaluated. In addition to being able to show the results of an operation and take the necessary corrective action, WFP staff will add to their own experiences through planning and managing these exercises. Following WFP's evaluation policy, criteria and standards, this module explains the key steps and procedures related to the planning and implementation of a self-evaluation.

As well as describing when and why evaluations should be undertaken in WFP, the module explains what a self-evaluation is and who should be involved in undertaking it. It outlines possible self-evaluation scenarios and the related activities. The module also describes what a self-evaluation report should look like and provides guidance on how evaluation findings can be made useful to local and corporate stakeholders.

What does this Module aim to achieve?

This module has the following objectives:

- To explain when and why evaluations are undertaken at WFP and describe why it is important to involve key stakeholders when clarifying the need for an evaluation.
- To describe the evaluation criteria and standards applied at WFP.
- To describe the link between the Logical Framework and WFP's evaluation standards and criteria.
- To define what a self-evaluation is and when it should be conducted.
- To describe who should be involved in a self-evaluation and explain the possible roles of different stakeholder.
- To describe the various levels of partner and beneficiary participation during a self-evaluation and provide guidance on the appropriate level of their participation in different situations.
- To describe the procedure for planning a self-evaluation.
- To describe major areas of concern regarding the management of a self-evaluation.
- To explain the procedures related to the drafting and finalisation of a self-evaluation report and describe the format that the report should follow.
- To explain what evaluation results can be used for and provide guidance on how this can be done.

What should be reviewed before starting?

- What is RBM Oriented M&E
- How to design a Results-Oriented M&E Strategy for EMOPs and PRROs
- How to design a Results-Oriented M&E Strategy for Development Programmes
- How to Plan an Evaluation
- The Country Office Reporting Guidelines

Section Titles and Content Headings

- An Example of an Recommendation Tracking Matrix and how It can be used
- An Example of how Evaluation Findings can be turned into Lessons

Clarifying the Need for an Evaluation

Introduction. This section explains when and why evaluations are undertaken in WFP, and it describes why it is important to involve key stakeholders when clarifying the need for an evaluation.

Deciding on the Type of Evaluation

For evaluation, at least 1 of the following 3 exercises must be undertaken during or after the lifetime of an operation lasting longer than 12 months.

Country office self-evaluations should be undertaken for all operations lasting longer than 12 months and should take place prior to the planning of a new phase or at the operations' close.

Country office- or regional bureau-led evaluations (using consultants) should be undertaken for:

- Any operation at any time if a management need arises and if issues cannot be dealt with through self-evaluation; and
- Any operation if the cumulative budget of all phases exceeds US$50 million and if the last evaluation of the operation took place more than 3 years before.

OEDE-managed evaluations should be undertaken for:

- All first-generation Country Programmes;
- Any operation if the cumulative budget of all phases exceeds US$50 million and if the last evaluation of the operation took place more than 3 years before (if such an evaluation is not undertaken by the country office or regional bureau);
- Any operation, thematic or policy evaluation requested by the Executive Board or by senior management.

Agreeing with Key Stakeholders on the Need for an Evaluation

Evaluations should normally be programmed and budgeted during project design and be reflected in the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) workplan. An evaluation may also be programmed on an ad hoc basis by management or at the request of the Executive Board. It is nevertheless important to revisit the rationale for an evaluation, to clarify why it is being undertaken, what issues it will address, and whether its cost will be justified.

Evaluation is first and foremost an important management tool, enabling WFP to review its performance, take decisions, learn from experience and account for its actions, thereby improving the Programme's ability to deliver quality results. Evaluations also support accountability and learning at the country level, by providing stakeholders with the information necessary to assess the performance of WFP and its partners, and to learn and agree on ways of improving the performance of WFP-assisted operations.

Evaluation for accountability purposes looks at past performance to determine the degree of success or failure. Evaluation for learning seeks to improve future performance by determining the reasons for success or failure. WFP evaluations generally contain both elements, with more weight given to one or the other depending on the key purpose and timing of the evaluation. In both cases evaluation is concerned with comparing what has been achieved with what was planned.

In relation to the overall M&E strategy, evaluation is the component that follows up on the baseline study and enables WFP to assess expected and unexpected changes that have occurred as a result of an operation.

When planning and clarifying the need for an evaluation, it is vital that stakeholders are consulted early on, and their role in the evaluation discussed. Experience has shown that such an approach greatly strengthens stakeholder ownership of an evaluation's findings, an important prerequisite for later acceptance of those findings and of the recommendations.

It may be useful to prepare a concept paper as the basis for discussion within WFP and with stakeholders, to help decide whether or not to go forward with an evaluation. A concept paper differs from the eventual terms of reference, as its main purpose is to establish early on the rationale for undertaking an evaluation.

It is also important to be clear on what funds are available for the evaluation, whether additional funds are required, and where those funds might come from. Evaluations are usually funded from direct support costs (DSC). This emphasises the need to programme an evaluation early on and earmark funds for it in the operation approval document.

Country offices can also seek funding and/or team members from interested donors or partners at the country level, or from available grant facilities. The type and scope of an evaluation will be determined partly by the funds available.

Examples of Stakeholders and Their Potential Involvement in an Evaluation

WFP stakeholders can be grouped as follows:

- Full-time and contracted WFP staff;
- Partners at the national level, such as government ministries, United Nations agencies, multilateral and bilateral donors, and NGOs with a national presence;
- Institutional partners engaged in WFP activities; and
- Participants and beneficiaries in WFP activities.

Stakeholder involvement can take many forms – discussing the evaluation concept paper; commenting on the TOR; participating as members of a mission; joining in data collection or analysis, or reviewing and commenting on the evaluation report. It might be useful to establish a small task force of key stakeholders drawn from the above groups. The task force's role would be to assist in preparing the TOR and supporting the evaluation mission.

Examples of Elements That should be covered in a Concept Paper

A concept paper can serve as an early negotiation tool between the country office and stakeholders, setting out expectations and requirements. Suggested elements for inclusion in a concept paper are:

1. Why the evaluation is required (for example, to generate learning for the preparation of the next or another similar operation, or because beneficiary contact monitoring indicates that the operation might not produce the intended results);
2. Who the stakeholders are (e.g. partner agency, government, and donor);
3. The proposed timing of the evaluation;
4. The scope of the evaluation and the key issues to be examined (a brief preliminary outline);
5. The evaluation approach and methods to be used (a brief preliminary outline);
6. Who will undertake the evaluation.

What Evaluation Standards and Criteria are applied at WFP

Introduction. This section describes the general evaluation standards and criteria applied at WFP.

Evaluation Standards and Criteria Applied at WFP

Evaluations must meet the following standards:

- **Evaluations must be useful and used**

  The evaluation must serve the information needs of the intended users. This requires that the needs of all stakeholders be identified and addressed. Reports should clearly describe the operation being evaluated, including its context, and the purposes, procedures and findings of the evaluation. Findings and reports must be disseminated in a timely manner, and implementation of evaluation recommendations must be ensured by the country office.

- **Evaluations must be accurate**

  The evaluation must reveal and convey technically adequate information about the operation, in order to determine its worth or merit. The evaluation report must be evidence based, showing clearly how the evaluation team applied the methods and how the findings were arrived at. Findings must always be triangulated, i.e. supported by several different sources (e.g. key informant, beneficiary and direct observation).

- **Evaluations must seek to reflect the reactions of beneficiaries**

  Evaluation planning must provide for adequate consultations with representative beneficiary groups, with attention given to including the perspectives of males, females, children, and other vulnerable groups as relevant to the operation. Evaluation teams must make use of rapid rural appraisal (RRA) methods whenever possible and should use beneficiary observation and consultation as a key element of their field visits.

- **Evaluations must not be confrontational**

  Evaluations are most effective if done in a constructive manner. Stakeholders should be involved early on and should be allowed to express their information needs. Evaluations must be perceived as helpful and as providing added value, with their key objective being to improve performance.

- **Evaluations must be independent and impartial (unless undertaken as self-evaluations).**

  Evaluators should not have been involved in any stage of the operation being evaluated. The evaluation should be complete and fair in its examination and recording of the strengths and weaknesses of the operation. Differing viewpoints, if they exist, should be presented in the report.

The evaluation criteria that are generally applied by WFP, and that should be reflected in the evaluation objectives, are:

- **Relevance**

  The extent to which the objectives of an operation are consistent with beneficiaries' needs, country needs, organisational priorities, and partners' and donors' policies.

- **Preparation and design**

  The process by which the operation was identified and formulated, and the logic and completeness of the resulting design.

- **Adequacy**

  The adequacy of inputs in relation to the carrying out of the activities.

- **Timeliness**

  The timeliness with which inputs are converted into outputs and outputs are converted into outcomes.

- **Efficiency**

  How cost-efficiently inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into outputs.

- **Effectiveness**

  The extent to which the operation's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

- **Outcome**

  The medium-term results of an operation's outputs.

- **Impact**

  Positive and negative intended or unintended long-term results produced by an operation, either directly or indirectly.

- **Sustainability**

  The continuation of benefits from an operation after major assistance has been completed.

- **Connectedness**

  In the case of EMOP/PRRO only – ensuring that activities of a short-term emergency nature have been carried out in a context that takes longer-term and interconnected problems into account.

- **Coverage and targeting**

  The appropriateness of operation-level targeting of objectives to the local situation, the objectives' compliance with WFP's targeting objectives at the policy level, and the extent to which the planned coverage has been achieved.

- **Partnerships and coordination**

  The appropriateness of the partnerships that have been established with governments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and agencies; the effectiveness with which those partnerships have been managed to support the achievement of objectives.

What is the link between the Logical Framework and WFP Evaluation Standards and Criteria

Introduction. **This section describes the link between the Logical Framework and WFP's evaluation standards and criteria.**

Linking the Logical Framework to WFP Evaluation Standards and Criteria

WFP's evaluation standards and criteria are closely linked to the operation design as outlined in the Logical Framework below.

Logframe level	Information Required	Evaluation Criteria
IMPACT	**Contribution of the operation to wider and long-term objectives.** What have been the long-term changes to the lives of the beneficiaries; can these changes be attributed to the operation or programme? **Have impact indicator targets been achieved/are they likely to be achieved?**	**Impact** - progress towards achievement of long term objectives. *'Making a difference in the long-run.'*
OUTCOME	**Actual achievement of outcome targets compared to the plan.** Were targets achieved - who benefited and how? If targets were not achieved, was this due to poor performance, poorly specified indicators, or problems with operation design; what are beneficiary perceptions of the operation - how do they perceive their lives to have changed? **Have outcome indicator targets been achieved/are they likely to be achieved?** **Realisation of assumptions.** How did factors outside management control affect achievement of the outcome; did operation design adequately take these into account? Have assumptions been monitored and if so, has this resulted in a change of strategy when indicated?	**Relevance** - Addressing the right problems with the right approach as well as WFP's core mandate responsibilities and national policies. *'Meeting the real needs of beneficiaries.'* **Outcomes** - Extent to which outputs have resulted in the achievement of the outcome or component outcomes. **Effectiveness** - Extent to which an operation has attained its objectives. **Coverage & Targeting** - Have targets been met and the right people benefited at the right time? *'Meeting the right needs.'* **Sustainability** - Prospects for self-reliance and continued utilisation of services after WFP assisted operations have been completed. *'Continuation without outside help.'* **Connectedness** - whether the EMOP/PRRO operation in responding to acute and immediate needs, was taking longer-term needs and problems into account.

Logframe level	Information Required	Evaluation Criteria
OUTPUTS	**Actual achievement of output targets compared to the plan.** Who received food aid and other services; were targets met; could performance have been better achieved through a different approach? **Have output indicator targets been achieved/are they likely to be achieved?** **Realisation of assumptions.** How did factors outside management control affect achievement of outputs; did operation design adequately take these into account?	**Effectiveness and efficiency** -. Testing the quality, quantity and timeliness of outputs and the cost-efficiency with which they were delivered. *'Doing the right things and doing them well.'* **Timeliness** - Testing the timeliness of outputs. **Sustainability** - Prospects for continued delivery of services after WFP assisted operations have been completed. *'Continuation without outside help.'*
ACTIVITIES	**Actual start-up & completion dates compared with plan.** Beneficiary selection criteria and processes. Was food aid delivered effectively by WFP and its partners; did the organisational arrangements work; were there any delays or time-savings; what effect did any deviations have on the operation? **Realisation of assumptions.** How did factors outside management control affect completion of activities; did operation design adequately take these into account?	**Efficiency** - Achievement of an optimum relationship between cost, quality & time. **Timeliness** - Timeliness of activities and processes. **Coordination** & **Partnership** - Taking a joint approach to problem solving and delivery. *'Working well together.'* **Sustainability** - Prospects for continuation of activities after completion. *'Continuation without outside help.'*
INPUTS	**Actual input quantities and costs compared to budget.** Were resources provided and utilised according to plan; were inputs provided at least cost and to the desired standards of quality and quantity; if not, how did this affect the operation?	**Adequacy** - Having adequate and timely inputs to carry out activities. *'Securing support and being prepared.'*

What is a Self-evaluation and when should It be conducted?

Introduction. This section describes what a self-evaluation is and when it should be conducted.

Self-evaluations in WFP

- In line with WFP's M&E policy, every operation lasting more than 12 months must be evaluated.
- A self-evaluation is one way of examining the implementation of an operation in terms of the effectiveness and efficiency of its inputs, activities and outputs. Self-evaluation, as the name suggests, is an evaluation planned and managed by those who are entrusted with the design and delivery of a WFP operation. In other words, a self-evaluation is undertaken by the project implementers themselves (Country Office, government counterparts and partner agencies), with or without external facilitation.
- Self-evaluation is now an integral part of country office reporting and is required before a new operational phase is prepared or as a close-out at the end of an operation.
- When an external evaluation will not be held, a self-evaluation should be conducted. Given the resource constraints for conducting external evaluations (which are managed by WFP's Office of Evaluation[OEDE], the Country Office or the Regional Bureau), most operations will require a self-evaluation.
- For operations of at least 12 months duration (including those lasting less than 12 months that have been extended) for which no expansion is anticipated after completion, a terminal self-evaluation report (SER) should be written at, or shortly after, closure. The SER should use information from government or implementing partner (IP) final reports, if these have been received, but should not be delayed if they are not yet available. A terminal SER should, in any event, be prepared within 6 months of the closure date.
- For Emergency Operations (EMOPs), Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRROs) and development activities (whether they be stand-alone or part of a Country Programme) for which expansion is contemplated, or for situations in which an EMOP is to be evolved into a PRRO, a mid-term SER should be undertaken. The mid-term self-evaluation should be timed to take place before the planning of the new phase.
- WFP's approach to self-evaluation is not rigid. Rather, the county office may consider a range of methods, the choice being based on the scale of the operation, the extent to which elements of the M&E strategy are already in place (e.g. a logical framework, an M&E Plan, reporting flows and formats and an implementation schedule) and the availability of resources to carry out the self-evaluation.
- While participatory methods are favoured, the appropriate degree of participation should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Who should conduct a Self-evaluation?

Introduction. This section describes who should be involved in a self-evaluation and the possible roles of the different stakeholders.

Who should conduct the Self-evaluation

The country office, together with its implementing partners (IPs), should take full responsibility for the planning and conducting of self-evaluations. The involvement of partners and beneficiaries (women and men) as part of the self-evaluation team will vary from operation to operation. While regional bureau representatives may be invited to participate in the exercise, the country office manages the process and advises stakeholders of the findings.

As a matter of principle, it is recommended that WFP staff, rather than consultants, should plan and manage the self-evaluation and write the report. This will maximise the self-learning process and increase ownership by the country office. The role of consultants should be limited to providing methodological and technical guidance or facilitation at critical stages of the process.

The amount of work related to the planning and management of a self-evaluation will depend on the type of self-evaluation that is to be conducted. However, the country office evaluation manager should expect to commit a minimum of 3 to 4 weeks of more or less full-time work in which to plan and manage the exercise.

Examples of the appropriate Role of Consultants in a Self-evaluation

If country office staff and IPs have adequate skills and knowledge, the use of consultants should be avoided. However, external expertise may be required in some elements of a self-evaluation, including:

- Helping to determine the appropriate evaluation methods.
- Helping to determine an appropriate sampling strategy.
- Assisting with statistical analysis, inference and the interpretation of data.
- Facilitating a stakeholders' workshop.

Determining Partner and Beneficiary Participation during a Self-evaluation

Introduction. This section describes the various levels of partner and beneficiary participation during a self-evaluation. In addition, it explains what level(s) of participation is (are) appropriate in different situations.

Participation in WFP

In WFP, participation is defined as a people-centred approach, which has the highest probability of success because it offers the potential to strengthen the voice of the most vulnerable. Participation involves women and men, allowing them to influence their own food security through processes of empowerment. These processes increase knowledge, skills and, thus, self-reliance. At a minimum, this implies consultation, knowledge exchange and equitable arrangements for the sharing of benefits.

Where possible, WFP should maximise the level of beneficiary and partner agency participation during a self-evaluation, within the constraints of cost, time, human resources, security, logistics and technical knowledge.

Determining Beneficiary and Partner Participation during a Self-evaluation

For a self-evaluation, the approach selected depends on various factors, including the degree of partner and beneficiary involvement in the self-evaluation process. Although related to participatory data collection methods, participation in the context of self-evaluations refers to the extent to which partners and beneficiaries are included as part of the "self" during the self-evaluation. Participatory data collection is only 1 way of increasing the participation of beneficiaries and partners in the self-evaluation process.

The degree of participation of beneficiaries and partners as part of the evaluation team differs by operation and context. 4 self-evaluation scenarios are presented in the following paragraphs, along with recommendations as to when they should be used and estimations of the time needed to complete them. These are only illustrative examples and, in practice, many more finely defined scenarios exist.

An Example of a Self-evaluation as an Internal Desk Exercise

Scenario 1

This scenario is recommended for well-documented operations that are relatively simple in design and that have few IPs. It is a low-cost option, requiring less time and staff involvement at the country office. A facilitator may assist by organising an internal workshop at which to discuss tentative conclusions and recommendations with WFP staff and partners.

This kind of self-evaluation is limited by: i) the lack of participation or feedback from beneficiaries or IPs; and ii) when results are circulated within WFP only, a low level of transparency and little partnership building. This option is likely to be chosen only when there are limited funds or staff at the country office. It is the least preferred choice.

Suggested steps for Scenario 1

- Prepare a short evaluation concept paper.

- Review the relevant documentation (including the project approval document, all progress reports: quarterly progress reports [QPRs], Project Implementation Reports [PIRs], situation reports [SITREPs], Standard Project Report [SPR], Country Office Reports [CORs], correspondence files and evaluation studies carried out by other agencies or the government).
- Write the evaluation report.
- Share the findings internally (or with local partners).

Timeframe: 1 - 2 weeks.

An Example of a Self-evaluation as an Internal Exercise with some Fieldwork (various methods can be used)

Scenario 2

In contrast to Scenario 1, in the second scenario an effort is made to validate the evidence from progress reports and other documents by carrying out a short field survey. The self-evaluation is planned and managed by WFP, with the help (if necessary) of a local consultant. The role of non-WFP stakeholders is to review the draft report at a workshop or through other means.

Suggested steps for Scenario 2

- Prepare a short evaluation concept paper.
- Prepare Terms of Reference (TOR).
- Review the relevant documentation (as described in Scenario 1).
- Plan and conduct a limited survey of beneficiaries and partners.
- Analyse data and write the report.
- Hold internal (or joint) review meeting at which to share and discuss evaluation findings.
- Disseminate the report internally (or with partners).

Timeframe: 2 - 4 weeks.

An Example of a Self-evaluation as a Joint Exercise with Partners

Scenario 3

In the third scenario, the self-evaluation is regarded as a joint exercise to be carried out with partners. This allows the IPs in the operation to take a full role in the planning and implementation of the evaluation exercise. They will be part of the "self" in the self-evaluation, and will benefit from the learning process. Findings will be relevant to their own procedures and future operations, as well as to WFP's.

Exact roles and levels of engagement will vary. WFP may not be the lead evaluator in cases where it is not the largest or most active player. The self-evaluation may be conducted by a team, supported by 1 or more consultants. When WFP is the lead evaluator, the WFP self-evaluation format in country office reporting should be used.

Suggested Steps for Scenario 3

- Prepare a short evaluation concept paper.
- Form the evaluation steering committee.
- Prepare TOR.
- Review the relevant documentation (as described in Scenario 1).
- Plan and conduct a survey of beneficiaries and partners using a joint field team (partners and WFP).
- Analyse data and write the report.

- Organise a workshop at which to share and discuss the evaluation findings.
- Finalise the report and disseminate it externally.

Timeframe: 4 - 8 weeks.

An Example of a Self-evaluation as a Joint Exercise with Partners and Beneficiaries

Scenario 4

The last scenario represents the most inclusive participatory evaluation approach because it aims to include beneficiaries at all stages. Special efforts will have to be made to open channels of communication or to apply procedures that allow beneficiary representatives to play an active role. This will be new territory in many countries, and is especially difficult with the most vulnerable WFP clients. Nevertheless, local committees are used in many operations, and such formal or informal bodies may well be able to attend meetings, document experiences, carry out fieldwork, etc.

Suggested Steps for Scenario 4

- Prepare a short evaluation concept paper.
- Form the evaluation steering committee (with beneficiary representatives).
- Prepare TOR.
- Review the relevant documentation (as described in Scenario 1).
- Plan and conduct a survey of beneficiaries and partners using a joint field team and involving beneficiaries as more than merely passive respondents (methods of data collection will vary).
- Analyse the data and write the report.
- Hold a workshop (including beneficiary representatives) at which to share and discuss evaluation findings.
- Finalise the report and disseminate it externally.

Timeframe: 8 - 12 weeks.

How to plan a Self-evaluation

Introduction. This section describes the procedure for planning a self-evaluation.

Procedure for planning a Self-evaluation

Step 1: Write TOR for the Self-evaluation.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the self-evaluation should be written as a detailed guide to the evaluation process, clarifying the evaluation objectives and scope, and the roles and responsibilities of all the WFP staff, implementing partners (IPs), beneficiary representatives and external consultants who might assist with the self-evaluation. A TOR is simply an expansion of the concept paper (e.g. it can use the same headings).

While the concept paper outlines a preliminary general statement of the rationale, scope, the stakeholders involved and the methods and outputs of a self-evaluation, the TOR provides a more detailed description, including itemizing the specific tasks of each party involved in the evaluation. A sound and detailed TOR is an invaluable tool that helps to provide accountability and, if discussed with stakeholders, create ownership of the evaluation.

It is good practice to review all the available documentation, such as project documents and progress and evaluation reports, that may provide useful insights into the issues that the evaluation should address.

When writing the TOR, check whether the objectives of the operation that is to be evaluated are clearly stated. Without clear operation objectives, evaluation will be difficult because the criteria against which results should be measured will not be clear. In emergency operations, these difficulties are exacerbated by the fact that objectives, even when they are stated, are likely to be modified as the situation evolves.

The following tools are suggested to assist in improving the clarity of operation objectives:

1. **Logical framework analysis**, which establishes a hierarchy of objectives for a particular operation;
2. **Strategic frameworks**, which set overall objectives for the international community's response that are to be adhered to in all emergencies (e.g. United Nations agency country strategic framework, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA] appeal);
3. **Country or response strategies**, which establish objectives in the build-up to, or at the onset of, a particular emergency.

A specific TOR should be developed for any external consultants that are hired to assist the country office staff to plan and manage the self-evaluation. These TORs will be based on the evaluation TOR, but will focus specifically on the tasks and deliverables of the consultant.

Step 2: Determine the Budget.

The next step is to ensure that funds are available to undertake the preferred form of self-evaluation. All WFP operations should include a budget line to cover monitoring and evaluation activities. For the self-evaluation, the country office should seek funds from the direct support cost (DSC) budget, or request a budget revision to accommodate the additional funds. For desk reviews, few or no incremental funds will be needed. Self-evaluations entailing significant primary data collection may require a budget of US$10,000 or more. The exact budget will depend on the scale and complexity of the operation, the amount of fieldwork required, the number of workshops to be held and the need for consultancy support. It is important to recognise that a good self-evaluation costs money and staff time. Do not economise too much or try to achieve too much with too little money.

Step 3: Determine the Timing.

In terms of the project cycle, a self-evaluation exercise should take place either at the mid-term stage or at termination. For mid-term evaluations, it is necessary to work backwards from the point at which recommendations will be needed for planning the next phase, so that the evaluation can be completed in a timely fashion. It is helpful to develop a time line with a checklist of key events that are relevant to the self-evaluation.

Be sure to include when and to whom the evaluation report will be disseminated, as this will help to remind those analysing the data and writing the report of their target audience.

The simpler internal desk review may require only 1 to 2 weeks of work, while the more elaborate joint evaluations with fieldwork may require from 1 to 2 months. The maximum period recommended is 3 months. Self-evaluations in excess of this imply excessive costs and staffing requirements. Whatever the time period determined during the planning stages is, be sure to stick to deadlines in order to ensure that findings are useful for designing and planning future interventions.

Step 4: Engage Partner Agencies and/or Government in the Evaluation Process.

The effective engagement of WFP's partners, such that they play an active role and eventually gain useful learning experiences from the self-evaluation, requires that they are contacted early on in the process. Ideally, at the design stage of the operation the concerned partner agencies and government departments will be aware that a self-evaluation will eventually take place, and that their involvement will be sought.

At the beginning of the self-evaluation exercise, invitation letters and planning meetings will help to set up an appropriate liaison process for the evaluation, including a steering committee and, where required, review panels. Agreements to share relevant documents or field records will be made. The possible terms and funding of any partner agency staff involvement in fieldwork will be agreed. The rights of different parties to determine the scope and methodology of the self-evaluation and to edit or control the publication of its results must be clarified. It is important that ownership of both the process and the final outcome is agreed.

Normally, WFP expects to retain ultimate control over these areas when it is the sole funding source. However, in the case of joint donor operations, or when government or partner agencies are making their own contributions, agreement over management of the self-evaluation will be critical and should be finalized before work begins.

Step 5: Plan how the Beneficiaries will participate.

Beneficiary participation in self-evaluations varies from operation to operation passive to active. Some thought will be needed on how best to approach the relevant communities, which are often very vulnerable or inaccessible. Are beneficiaries, for example, difficult to reach, no longer in the same place, or unable/unwilling to assist in the evaluation?

In the case of refugee camps or school feeding programmes, local structures can be consulted. In addition, WFP has established relief committees or similar representative bodies in many countries, and these too may be consulted.

In order to capture the most relevant views from the beneficiaries' perspective, careful planning will be needed to identify and contact the right groups, particularly in the case of women and children. Tracing beneficiaries who have moved or who have no fixed abode (such as pastoralists or temporarily displaced persons) is especially difficult and requires planning and adaptable approaches in the field. Consider different data collection methods that can increase cost-effectiveness, but be sensitive to beneficiary circumstances and experiences.

Step 6: Assemble the relevant Documentation.

Obtaining the most recent progress reports can be difficult if the IP or government office is slow in responding to requests for information. In general, a self-evaluation should not be delayed because reports have not yet arrived. This is especially true when primary data collection is part of the evaluation exercise and a schedule and planning have already been developed for field-work. To minimise the degree to which delays in receiving documentation disrupt the evaluation exercise, a request for all relevant and recent reports should be issued to implementing offices at an early stage, well in advance of the start of a self-evaluation.

A Demonstration of Self-evaluation Timeline and Checklist

Evaluation task	When? (insert actual dates)	How long?	Who?	Done?
Concept paper drafted and circulated	As early as possible, and at least 2 months before the evaluation is required	1 week	Country Office Evaluation Manager	
Concept paper approved	1 week after circulation	1 week	Country Office and, in some cases, Regional Office	
Evaluation steering committee selected	After concept paper approved, but process of identification can start earlier	1 week	Country Office Evaluation Manager	
TOR drafted	About 1 week after concept paper approved	3 days	Country Office Evaluation Manager	
TOR reviewed and approved	After above	1 week for internal; 2 weeks for external	Evaluation Steering Committee and key stakeholders (e.g. Country Office management, government, partners)	
External facilitator contracted (if necessary)	After above	2 weeks	Country Office Evaluation Manager with Ssteering Committee	
Develop draft budget	Concurrently with TOR development	1 week		
Finalise budget and approval	Concurrently with TOR development	1 week		
Background material collected and reviewed	Can begin before step 1	In parallel with step 1	Country Office Evaluation Manager	
Team trained (if necessary)	Once methods agreed	2-3 days	Facilitator or Country Office Staff	
Field itinerary proposed and agreed	Arranged with IPs; depends on shared logistics	Depends	Country Office Evaluation Manager	
Fieldwork	As per TOR, plus any changes	1-2 weeks	Country Office Evaluation Team	
Data analysis	After fieldwork	1-2 weeks	Country Office Evaluation Team assisted by Facilitator	

Evaluation task	When? (insert actual dates)	How long?	Who?	Done?
Draft report prepared	1 week after analysis	10 days for Country Office Manager	Country Office Evaluation Manager and Team	
Review of draft report	1 week	2 weeks	Evaluation Steering Committee, Country Director, Regional Office and relevant key stakeholders	
Comments incorporated and report finalised	1 week	1 week	Country office Evaluation Manager	
Recommendation matrix prepared and negotiated	On acceptance of draft report		Country Office Evaluation Manager together with action units	
Report disseminated to government partners, partner agencies, WFP regional office, WFP OEDE			Evaluation Steering Committee	

A Demonstration of a Self-evaluation Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference PRRO Assistance to Persons Displaced by Violence (IDPs) Colombia

Introduction - Violence has existed in Colombia throughout much of this century, but has escalated progressively since the mid-1980s as it is used to foster economic as well as political interests. One of the main consequences has been the forced displacement of about 1.5 million Colombians.

In the mid-1990s, the Colombian Government asked WFP to find more operational and durable solutions so that internally displaced persons (IDPs) could move from relief to recovery. IDPs are among the priority beneficiary groups indicated in WFP's Country Strategy Outline 1996-2001. A first PRRO was approved in 2000 with a 2-year time frame. Given the continued protracted nature of forced displacement in Colombia, it is now anticipated that the PRRO will be extended for at least another 2 years. A full development programme will be impossible until IDPs can return or resettle in safety, and until land tenure issues have been resolved.

The key strategic goal of the PRRO is to foster food security and socio-economic recovery. Five key objectives are outlined in the design document:

1. Cover food deficits in order to restore human capacity and enhance social cohesion.
2. Support initial settlement, resettlement and return in order to facilitate reintegration into society.
3. Mitigate the impact of future crises.
4. Elaborate a replicable PRRO model.
5. Contribute indirectly to the peace effort.

Project Status

The programme concentrates on recovery and includes a protracted relief component. The programme itself has been divided into 5 strategic areas as illustrated in the following table.

Strategic area	% of programme
Municipal level	45
Urban areas	20
Return or resettlement	10
Advocacy and training	10
Contingency planning	15

The PRRO will most likely be extended beyond July 2002 while a new PRRO is submitted for approval and funding.

Scope of the Evaluation

An OEDE evaluation for this PRRO is scheduled for 2003. However, it is timely to undertake a self-evaluation now in order to inform the planning of the next phase of the PRRO, July 2002-2004. The self-evaluation will cover all the elements of the PRRO since its planning in 1999, including the role and inputs of IPs and the government. Given that this is a mid-term evaluation, the focus will be on outputs and outcomes, rather than impact (scope).

Evaluation Objectives

- To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the PRRO to date.
- To generate recommendations that will inform the design of the next phase.

Key Issues to be examined (within the context of the SER format)

- **Risk and assumptions management:** The role of food aid and WFP's presence in (for example) strengthening local resistance, risk elements for recipient communities and partners, and the extent to which implementation has been able to adapt to any changes in the risks and assumptions based on which the PRRO was designed.
- **Targeting:** The effectiveness of the targeting methods used in the PRRO to realise cost savings and containment for both relief and development.
- **Role of advocacy:** Has WFP been able to advocate for the rights and needs of IDPs?
- **Quality and relevance of food for work (FFW):** The design, execution and sustainability of FFW activities.
- **Land tenure issues:** Does the PRRO address these effectively?
- **Participation:** have effective participatory methods been chosen and applied? Has the programme contributed to empowering male and female IDP groups?
- **Leakages:** What is the extent of losses in the current programmes? What steps has WFP taken to avoid or minimise the level of diversion or taxation through selecting particular delivery channels, supervising distributions and monitoring end-uses? The extent to which WFP food assistance may have fed into the local war economy through diversion or taxation.
- **Role and effectiveness of contingency planning.**
- **Security and Protection issues:** The extent to which the precarious security situation in Colombia has been affected by the implementation of the PRRO; the extent to which WFP has been able to protect IDP beneficiaries.
- **Resourcing:** Has the PRRO been resourced successfully and have resources addressed adequately the needs of the population? Are some components of the PRRO more easily resourced than others (if so, the reason and the possible impact on non- or underfunded

activities should be analysed)? How effective is local resource mobilization versus international resource mobilization?

- **Coordination:** Functioning of the United Nations thematic theme for the displaced, as well as of non-governmental (NGO) and other coordination efforts; constraints and successes regarding coordination activities; link to the development activities of regular development agencies.
- **Partnerships:** Working arrangements with NGO IPs in implementation, strategy development and vulnerability assessment of displaced aspects.
- **Effectiveness of partners:** The Government of Colombia in playing its role within the PRRO's implementation, counterparts at different levels (policy and operational - at the central as well as the field level) in cooperating for the success of PRROs.

Method

The self-evaluation will use a variety of methods including review of internal progress reports and other reports on IDPs; participatory workshops in 5 departments; visits to pre-school and school feeding projects that are using an assets development matrix, Venn diagrams and focus groups as tools; a beneficiary questionnaire; and 2 workshops with members of the national coordination team and NGO partners. Both beneficiaries and partners will be involved in the gathering of findings.

Timetable

The self-evaluation will be conducted over a 1-month period from mid-October to mid-November.

The country office is working on Parts 1 and 2 of the COR in collaboration with partners and with a deadline of 10 October 2001. A work schedule for the fieldwork and workshops will be proposed by 12 October in order to ensure the full participation of partners given the security considerations and other practicalities.

The draft report, in the form of the COR Part 4, will be presented at a workshop in early December 2001. All the main IPs and WFP staff from the regional bureau will be invited to this workshop. A final report, which takes comments from this workshop into account, will be prepared by the end of December 2001.

Team Composition

A facilitator is to be contracted to:

- Work with the country office to refine the proposed method for the self-evaluation and produce a short paper outlining the method and time line up to and including completion, and submission to the regional bureau/headquarters, of Parts 1, 2 and 4 of the COR;
- Depending on the proposed data collection methods, assist the country office in facilitating the data collection process by, for example, facilitating the analysis of fieldwork results and preparing and facilitating internal or joint workshops in order to ensure that the questions in part 4 of the COR are adequately addressed.

The facilitator should have considerable management/policy experience of food assistance for IDPs. The facilitator will support WFP, national counterparts (Red de Solidaridad and the Colombian Institute for Family Welfare) and partners in carrying out the self-evaluation with appropriate tools and mechanisms. The team will work and report in Spanish.

Other staff involved will include WFP and partner field personnel.

Budget

Funding for the self-evaluation will be provided from WFP resources. The PRRO contains a small budget line for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities. In addition, the government and NGO partners will support the work with limited use of staff and vehicles.

How to manage a Self-evaluation

Introduction. This section describes the major issues of concern regarding how to manage a self-evaluation.

How to manage a Self-evaluation

Once the self-evaluation is under way, the Country Director or the Programme Adviser responsible for the evaluation is concerned with managing the process in order to guarantee a quality product. The following are the major issues.

Team Management

The first requirement is to ensure the timely assignment of WFP staff and recruitment of external personnel. Field staff, consultants and seconded personnel from other agencies may all be involved in the self-evaluation at different stages. They will need training or briefing, coordination in the field, replacement (when necessary) and supervision to ensure that they deliver the agreed outputs.

To maximize the benefits of a collaborative process, the team should have opportunities to share concerns and compare findings as the work proceeds. You should provide a clear work schedule, followed by close and frequent supervision in the field. Ensure that there are good communication channels, sufficient field allowances and other support arrangements. Having back-up personnel is a sound approach, so training 1 or 2 reserve personnel can help solve unexpected disruptions during fieldwork.

Quality Control

Although a well-managed team may work well together in collecting data, the manager must verify interviews - whether they concern facts or opinions - at all stages of the fieldwork. The self-evaluation manager must be aware of errors, biases or gaps in the data in order to take action. Valuable techniques include the spot-checking of interviews, triangulation with other sources of information and spotting errors during data processing.

Ensuring Participation and Transparency

In order to ensure a transparent exercise, it is important that stakeholders participate in the self-evaluation in the way that was agreed during the planning stages. Stakeholders should be encouraged to attend meetings, take part in fieldwork and provide the agreed resources. Regular weekly progress reports will help to keep them informed. A well organised design review workshop prior to collecting data, and a meeting or workshop to review the draft report at the end are critical stages in ensuring participation and transparency.

Preparing the Self-evaluation Report

Introduction. This section explains the procedures related to the drafting and finalisation of a self-evaluation report and describes the format that the report should follow.

How to prepare the Self-evaluation Report

It is best practice for members of the country office team conducting the self-evaluation to write the self-evaluation report themselves in order to bolster learning and ownership of the process. In self-evaluation reporting, unlike in external evaluation procedures, external consultants should provide only a facilitation role, and possibly assist with analysis or write some of the report's technical sections.

The draft report is reviewed and commented on by concerned stakeholders, including the regional bureau. Given the complexity of humanitarian assistance operations and the frequent inadequacy of documentation and data, it is vital – for reasons of credibility and competence – that the draft report is shared widely and that adequate time is allowed for the preparation, receipt and consideration of comments.

If revisions to the report are needed, it will be the responsibility of the Country Office Evaluation Manager to prepare them and to produce a final report that is acceptable. The Evaluation Manager may need to negotiate or mediate among the key stakeholders, especially in the case of an evaluation report that provokes emotional or negative reactions.

When the final report is presented, the Evaluation Manager has a quality control function and should review critically its contents, compliance with the TOR, relevance and accuracy.

An Example of what the Self-evaluation Report Format should look like

In line with the minimum standards of WFP's Country Office Reporting guidelines a self-evaluation report (SER) should be written in the Form 4 below that is divided into 10 sections. In writing the SER a 3 step approach is proposed. Note that Form 1 (the Operation Details) in the County Office Reporting guidelines covers standard information on the nature and progress of an operation that should be considered in a self-evaluation.

Step 1: Complete the narrative section.

The narrative section in the self-evaluation report should have the following 10 sections.

1. Summary

- As a matter of principle, reports for all evaluations should be preceded by an evaluation summary. This summary should contain the main findings, recommendations and lessons of the evaluation. Summaries of Country Office-managed evaluations are not submitted to the Executive Board but should be submitted to OEDE for possible inclusion in the Evaluation Memory System.

2. Evaluation Purpose and Method

- Describe the purpose of carrying out the self-evaluation. Is it for a mid-term or a terminal stage and what does the evaluation hope to achieve? Outline the methodology used in conducting the self-evaluation. Who carried out the work, what was the role, if any, of technical assistance, local partners, the regional bureau and others. What was the budget and timeframe?

3. Background to the Operation

- Include here a brief description of the operation: how, why and by who was it formulated? Was there a pilot, quasi-emergency or quick action project before? Outline the context to the operation: the government policy if any in the concerned sector, and the political and economic context. What other assistance was in place from other donors or from WFP? Outline the formulation process, and the needs assessment work that took place.

4. Quality of Design

- Here the task is to offer a critical review of the quality and coherence of the design. Was it the most appropriate to meet the needs identified? Should the operation have been formulated differently? What was the role of food aid in meeting the needs identified? What was the link between food aid and other assistance? Is the strategic orientation of the operation compatible with relevant WFP policy?
- Comment on the stated purpose(s) in terms of how realistic it was in the above context, how measurable and whether the outcome was specific to the planned inputs, or whether it relied on a range of external factors in order to reach success. Was the stated purpose at the right level i.e. did it describe a development change in the target beneficiaries, or was it in fact expressing only the supply of services? Did the objective reflect the situation analysis presented in the planning document? To what extent are the objectives still valid?
- Lastly, comment on the assumptions in the design document: were they reasonable to make at the time? Were the risks appropriately identified and then addressed in some way by mitigatory measures?

5. Achievement of Purpose

- Here the aim is to judge (either at mid-term or at completion) the success or failure of the operation. Based on the evidence available, how effectively has the stated purpose(s) been reached? Were malnutrition rates reduced as foreseen? Have displaced persons recovered their means of livelihood? If the self-evaluation is being conducted at the mid-term stage, what additional measures may be needed to improve the chance of achieving the desired purpose? Any unintended effects created as a result of the operation should be discussed in section 7 below. Your final judgement will need to be made after evaluation of the achievements at activity and output levels.
- A comment should also be made on the extent to which the (longer term) goals are/were also being contributed to. This may be difficult to assess, and will require evidence from a number of secondary sources. No conclusive judgment may be possible.

6. Effectiveness and Efficiency of the Operation

- Describe the effectiveness of the delivery/ creation of outputs: especially the creation of assets in the hands of the beneficiaries, or the evidence that the targeted population was actually fed with the correct rations. Were the expect numbers fed or assets constructed in the planned timeframe? Was the food ration appropriate in terms of quantity and quality?
- A second dimension is the efficiency of output delivery. Were they provided in a cost-effective way? What did it cost to deliver the designated ration to the beneficiary, compared to the cost of procurement? How smoothly and efficiently were the various areas of implementation managed?

  Comment on the:
  - **Assessment and approval process: significant delays and causes.**
  - **Commodity sourcing and delivery: identify difficulties, losses and how solved.**
  - **ITSH: how financed, adequacy of original rates, revisions.**
  - **Food management: adequacy of logistic arrangements, storage, transport, staff-**

- **ing, audits and accounts.**
- **Operation costs: compare actual with planned estimates.**
- **Monetization: was it justified, were the prices fair?**
- **Relations with other donors, the concerned UN agencies.**
- **Implementation performance of IPs.**
- **Assistance from WFP regional and head offices.**
- **Monitoring and Reporting - Were reports on time and complete? What problems were faced? Are data reported in a gender disaggregated manner?**

7. Targeting

- This section quantifies the number and type of beneficiaries to whom services were extended. It deals with targeting: how reliable were the selection criteria and procedures for distribution? Were the poorest reached and what is the evidence to show this? Within general food distribution, targeting concerns the poorer / hungrier members living within the targeted communities/ districts/emergency zones. In FFW operations, targeting concerns both access by the poorer (yet physically able) households to the work opportunities provided under FFW and to the assets themselves once created/rehabilitated. How has food insecurity, vulnerability and beneficiary figures been assessed and subsequently adjusted as the operation evolved?
- The second area to address is 1 of participation in the process of planning food distribution and monitoring. What kinds of local mechanisms for building participation were used, and how did they function? The role of beneficiaries in each of these areas should be assessed.

8. Cross-Cutting Issues

- The focus here is on cross-cutting issues and specific sustainability factors related to WFP policy commitments. Two main areas should be covered:
  - **Gender issues: Assess the extent to which the operation has met the gender commitments of WFP in terms of (i) food access by women, (ii) access to power structures and decision-making, (iii) access to resources, employment, markets and trade. Assess the human resources used by WFP itself including the gender balance. Refer to the Commitments to Women Checklist in WFPGo.**
  - **Environment issues: Are there any intended or unintended effects on the environment as a result of the operation? Refer to the Environmental Guidelines in WFPGo.**

9. Phase out and sustainability (Terminal COR) / Justification for Extension (Mid-Term COR)

- This section examines, for self-evaluations conducted at the end of an operational phase (terminal self-evaluations), the phasing out and take-over arrangements for the services and structures provided under the operation. The areas of concern are addressed through a number of possible sub-headings : economic, institutional, technical, social (including gender), participatory mechanisms, environmental.
- For self-evaluations conducted at Mid-term, this section assesses whether continuation of the services by WFP is needed into the future. If so, what kind of services and what modifications are needed compared to the present operation? The same sub-headings allow the various issues about a future extension to be detailed. These include the financial and economic needs of an extension, the possible institutional arrangements, the type of technical elements to be considered and the need for technical assistance, the social perspectives of relevance including targeting and gender.
- The preceding narrative sections provide the justification for arriving at a number of conclusions, recommendations and lessons for use in the extension of the current operation, or for more general improvement in future operations. The following section will therefore

provide a basis for subsequent institutional learning and follow-up action by WFP and its partners.

10. Conclusions, Lessons and Recommendations

- Lessons and Recommendations are treated together under 10 sub-headings. The Conclusion for each sub-heading should succinctly summarise the evidence already brought out in the report and state why the findings are of general interest to WFP. Recommendations and Lessons are specific and concrete. They aim to improve future operations of a similar nature, and should consist of prescriptive statements and be practical and implementable. In the context of a Mid-Term SER, they should be specific to the next phase. In the context of a Terminal SER, they should be applicable to a broader class of situations. Recommendations should be addressed to a particular office or position that should be responsible for follow up (whether within WFP, a donor, government agency, IP or even beneficiary group). Lessons are more general and should make a contribution towards WFP's future strategy and direction.
- There are 10 sub-sections where conclusions, recommendations and lessons, if identified, can be entered. They should be stated briefly – 1 or 2 sentences in length. Cross-reference should be made to the earlier part of the report for more detailed justification. The 10 sub-sections cover:

• Design issues: how should the next phase or other similar operations be better designed in the light of this experience?		
• Co-ordination • Financial control • Food management and supply	➔	How can WFP improve the management and resources and food and non-food delivery in the future?
• Participation: how should WFP improve the level of participation amongst its partners and beneficiaries in planning, management and evaluation?		
• Targeting: in what ways could WFP improve the effectiveness of its targeting criteria so as to reach the intended beneficiaries?		
• Gender: how can WFP ensure that its commitments to gender equality in planning, managing and sharing resources are better fulfilled?		
• Environment: in what areas could WFP ameliorate any negative environmental consequences of its assistance?		
• Technical assistance: how can WFP make better use of technical personnel?		
• Recommendation for full evaluation		

- OEDE in WFP will take these findings from different operations and group them together by these headings to build up a corporate body of lessons. These will in future be of use to the different Regions and in WFP's global efforts to improve its work.
- Recommendation for full evaluation: the final recommendation is to propose whether the operation would merit consideration for a full scale evaluation as an independent evaluation managed by the Country Office or Regional Bureau or by OEDE.

Step 2. Incorporate comments from the Implementing Partners and Government.

- The Mid-Term and Terminal self-evaluation will be based to a large extent on the final reports of implementing partners (and these will be stored at the Country Office). The conclusions, lessons and recommendations drawn in the SER should in principle be discussed, particularly where they are pertinent to the implementing partners and host government. They should have the opportunity to review these and learn from the report. Comments received from IPs concerning the SER findings may be attached and placed on file for reference in the future.

Step 3. Sign Off and Circulate Report.

- The responsible officer should sign the SER in the space provided at the bottom of the form below. He/she would then take the completed SER to the Country Director or Director of Operations for signature. All CORs need to be reviewed in the WFP Country Office before being sent to the Regional Bureaux for review and comment, and finally to WFP Headquarters. A Country Office Management Report (COMR) will perform this task of aggregating the results from several CORs in order to present an overview of the portfolio of all operations in the country on a semestral basis.

Country Office Report	COR Draft Final Version May 2002
FORM 4 : SELF-EVALUATION (AT MID-TERM OR TERMINAL STAGE)	
Use this template to structure the written report	
Operation Title:	
1. Summary	
2. Evaluation Purpose and Method	
3. Background to the Operation	
3.1 Origin of operation **3.2 Context, government policy, other assistance sector, previous WFP operations** **3.3 Formulation process, beneficiary needs assessment**	
4. Quality of Design	
4.1 Appropriateness of rationale and operation strategy **4.2 Relevance of food aid** **4.3 Objectives:** ● Realism ● Measurability ● Specificity **4.4 Validity of assumptions and risk assessment**	
5. Achievement of Purpose	
5.1 Purpose **5.2 Long-term goals (Govt. and WFP)**	
6. Effectiveness and efficiency	
6.1 Effectiveness **6.2 Efficiency** ● Assessment and approval process ● Commodty sourcing and Delivery ● ITSH ● Food management ● Costs ● Monetization ● Relations with donors ● Implementation performance of IPs ● Assistance from RB/HQ ● Monitoring and reporting	
7. Targeting	
7.1 Type and number of beneficiaries **7.2 Level of Participation:** ● in planning ● during implementation ● in monitoring	
8. Cross-Cutting Issues	

Country Office Report	COR Draft Final Version May 2002
8.1 Gender 8.3 Environmental	
9. Phase out and sustainability (Terminal SER) or Justification for Extension (Mid-Term SER)	
9.1 Economic 9.2 Institutional 9.3 Technical 9.4 Social (including Gender) 9.5 Enviromental	
10. Conclusion, Lessons and Recommendations	
10.1 Design 10.2 Coordination (Govt. IPs) 10.3 Financial control 10.4 Food management supply 10.5 Participation 10.6 Targeting 10.7 Gender 10.8 Enviromental 10.9 Technical Assistance 10.10 Case for a full evaluation	
11. Comments from Government or Implementing Partner	
12. Report distribution	
Prog. officer Country Director Regional Bureaux	Date Date Date

Using Results and learning from Evaluations

Introduction. This section explains what evaluation results can be used for and provides guidance on how this can be done.

The Potential of technically adequate and useful Evaluations

The greatest value of evaluations lies in their immediate use, application and, where appropriate, influence over future programmes and policies, locally as well as corporately. An evaluation can be used for:

- Improving management.
- Changing/modifying the existing operation strategy, including the outputs to be produced.
- Improving monitoring.
- Improving/modifying/adding partnerships and partner inputs.
- Assisting in decision-making -- whether or not to proceed.
- Providing inputs for policy-making.
- Providing guidance/advice/lessons for the design or redesign of the next phase of an operation.
- Providing information for advocacy and fund-raising.
- Updating information on the livelihoods of WFP beneficiaries.
- Providing independent assessment of the results being achieved.

Using and learning from Evaluation Results

In the past, the use of evaluation results has been criticized because findings have not been turned into action and evaluation reports have simply been shelved.

To ensure that this does not happen, evaluation results should be disseminated widely to all concerned stakeholders, immediately after the evaluation.

As well as circulating the report, it is very effective to hold discussion groups, workshops or even retreats at which to discuss the findings and implications of an evaluation. Such events can provide an opportunity to discuss the design of the next phase of an operation.

If evaluations are to serve their purpose, decisions must be made about which recommendations to act on, who should implement those actions and when the actions should be taken. To enhance the usefulness of evaluations, a recommendation tracking matrix (RTM) has been developed by WFP's Office of Evaluation (OEDE).

The RTM mechanism allows evaluation stakeholders to track the implementation of evaluation recommendations and provides management with an opportunity to reflect critically on those recommendations. Although the RTM has been developed as a tool for the Executive Board, country offices are encouraged to use it for their own evaluations.

While learning can usually be generated from the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation, it may help to go one step beyond and identify lessons that can be learned. In their simplest form, lessons enable us to avoid reinventing the wheel or constantly falling into the same traps. A lesson differs from a finding or a recommendation in that it is applicable to a generic situation rather than to a specific circumstance.

An Example of an Recommendation Tracking Matrix and how It can be used

The RTM requires a precise management response to evaluation recommendations.

When the evaluation report has been finalised, the evaluation manager should transfer its recommendations to the RTM and identify the unit responsible for responding to and taking action on each recommendation. For accountability reasons, it is important that the responsible unit is identified as specifically as possible (at least by unit, and preferably by sub-unit, e.g. country office finance unit). The momentum of the evaluation should be maintained by circulating the RTM immediately for management responses and planned follow-up action.

Evaluation recommendation (January 2000)	Management response	Action officer/unit	Review of action taken (September 2000)
1. Increase the involvement of **NGOs** in country X's **CP** design and implementation	This is agreed to be a weak point of the current **CP**; prior to the preparation of the next **CP**, the country office will identify ways of ensuring greater involvement of **NGOs**; a plan of action will be included in the upcoming **CSO**	Country Office Programme Unit	As per the **CSO**, the country office organises a series of workshops to ensure the involvement of interested/relevant parties (including **NGOs**) in the design of the **CP**
2.			
etc...			
CP = Country Programme **CSO** = Country Strategy Outline **NGO** = non-governmental organization			

An Example of how Evaluation Findings can be turned into Lessons

It is important to note that, at the operational level, the most useful outcome of the evaluation will be its recommendations. The learning, or lesson, that can be drawn from findings and recommendations is most useful if applied to future situations and shared with others (i.e. inform policy-makers, apply to project design elsewhere). Evaluators and evaluation stakeholders are therefore encouraged to identify lessons, as well as recommendations, that may have a wider application in WFP and to identify the appropriate end-users of such learning (e.g. relevant technical or logistical units at headquarters). End-users may also be found at the national level – in particular if the lesson identified has a bearing on national policy-making or the work of other donors and agencies.

Learning output	Definition	Application	Example
Finding	A factual statement	Situation-specific	No training on gender issues has been provided; only 10% of FFW has gone to female beneficiaries
Conclusion	A synthesis of findings	Derived from a specific situation, but may also be applicable to a class of situations	Gender concerns have not been taken into account throughout the execution of the operation
Recommendation	A prescriptive statement	Prescribed for a specific situation, but may also be applicable to a class of situations	Training on gender issues should be provided to all WFP and IP partner staff
Lesson	An instructive generalisation based on a learning experience	Generic – not situation-specific if applied corporately	Unless staff and IPs are sensitised and trained on gender concerns, an operation will not address gender concerns and equal and fair access to WFP resources appropriately
FFW = food for work **IP** = implementing partner			

Module Summary

What has been covered in this module?

Following WFP's evaluation policy, criteria and standards, this module explained the key steps and procedures related to the planning and implementation of a self-evaluation.

As well as describing when and why evaluations should be undertaken in WFP, the module explained what a self-evaluation is and who should be involved in undertaking it. It outlined possible self-evaluation scenarios and the related activities. The module also described what a self-evaluation report should look like and provided guidance on how evaluation findings can be made useful to local and corporate stakeholders.

What additional resources are available?

For further information the following modules and resources might be useful:

- How to plan a Baseline Study
- How to Plan an Evaluation
- How to manage an Evaluation and disseminate its Results
- Choosing Methods and Tools for Data Collection
- Going to the Field to collect Monitoring and Evaluation Data
- How to consolidate, process and analyse Qualitative and Quantitative Data
- Reporting on M&E Data and Information for EMOPs and PRROs
- Reporting on M&E Data and Information for Development Programmes

How to plan and undertake a Self-evaluation

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World Food Programme
Office of Evaluation and Monitoring

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