



## Decentralized Evaluation of the Results of WFP's Food Assistance to Temporarily Dislocated Persons in Pakistan from 2015-2017

### BACKGROUND

Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world with an estimated population of 207 million. This number is projected to increase to over 227 million by 2025. From last several years, its northwestern tribal region along the western border of Pakistan with Afghanistan has experienced high levels of instability and insecurity and remains one of the most underdeveloped regions in Pakistan. In the recent past, the country has made significant headway in stabilizing this region, however, this protracted conflict-driven crisis alongside the continued prevalence of major geographic socio-economic inequities continues to jeopardize the food and nutrition security of vulnerable population groups.

To tackle this, WFP has been providing unconditional relief food assistance to the displaced population of Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) for the last several years, followed by provision of six monthly unconditional return food assistance to the same households for their voluntary return to their areas of origin. After the conclusion of return package, selected households are provided conditional food assistance under WFP's Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) intervention to support the rehabilitation basic infrastructure to promote food security, and support early recovery and rehabilitation of livelihoods among the most food-insecure groups. During 2015 – 2017, WFP supported 3.8 million people through these initiatives.

This evaluation has been commissioned by WFP Pakistan. The timing of this evaluation will enable its findings and recommendations to help formulate and improve implementation methodologies and administrative procedures for interventions under the newly approved WFP Pakistan Country Strategy Plan (CSP), 2018-2022.

### OBJECTIVES

Within the overall mutually reinforcing objectives of **accountability** and **learning**, the specific objectives of this evaluation were to:

1. Generate evidence of positive and negative, intended or unintended results of WFP's food

assistance interventions, with emphasis on relief and FFA assistance;

2. Improve the effectiveness of WFP interventions by determining the reasons of observed success/failure and draw lessons from experience to produce evidence-based findings and;
3. Provide an analysis on how WFP interventions are aligned with Government of Pakistan (GoP) and UN policies, strategies, and plans.

### METHODOLOGY

The evaluation took place between November 2017 and February 2018. A summative participatory approach was undertaken for this outcome based evaluation. The evaluation methodology was designed to meet the three main objectives stipulated above through 22 key evaluation questions. These questions covered the underlying evaluation criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability and Coherence. Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (GEEW) was mainstreamed throughout. To respond to these questions, the evaluation team conducted 39 key informant interviews with WFP staff and key stakeholders. Nine Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted, with male and female FGD and FFA beneficiaries in Peshawar and inside FATA. Thematic analysis of qualitative and secondary data was undertaken as emergent themes became apparent during key informant interviews and as assessments and after examination of reports for each FATA agency.

### LIMITATIONS

Limitations included security related access constraints and the need for evaluation team members to acquire a "No Objection Certificate" (NOC) from the Government to enter FATA. Although an NOC for the local consultants was received to visit Khyber Agency, as an additional measure, beneficiaries from four of the FATA agencies were brought to Peshawar so that FGDs could be conducted there. Additional FGDs were undertaken at distribution points in Peshawar and Kohat.

**Overall the evaluation found that Food security within FATA is a dominant issue, as is the need for recovery and rehabilitation especially of the agricultural sector. Although other factors exist, there is a correlation between the location of WFP interventions and improved food security levels. WFP's activities will also have contributed to**

**improved agricultural infrastructure and technical knowledge as a result of the FFA projects and training activities. The programmatic planning logic behind such interventions, implemented as designed, appears to have been well aligned.**

## KEY FINDINGS

The evaluation finds that the GFD and FFA interventions have been implemented in line with the overall project design and logic. Due to the high prevalence of food insecurity (39 percent of GFD beneficiary households had acceptable food consumption score in April 2016), the relief assistance to the TDPs, plus the provision of food rations for six months after their return home, was clearly relevant to beneficiary needs and food requirements.

FFA activities, which have included reparations to irrigation canals, planting of orchards, restoration of market roads amongst other activities were found to be meeting the livelihood and infrastructure needs of the targeted communities. Cash as a payment modality was very much appreciated. The shift from blanket GFD to Food/Cash for work was also in line with changing beneficiary needs. Likewise, FFA activities such as the reparation or installation of protective walls and check dams were clearly appropriate interventions as indicated by the UN Vulnerability Assessment.

Gender has been considered both in project design and implementation, incorporating the targeting of women for inclusion in all phases of the activities that were implemented. The WFP allocated resources for engaging women in project activities on the basis of the WFP HQ gender activity catalogue. During implementation, the WFP team and its co-operating Partners (CPs) have appropriately taken into account key humanitarian guiding principles such as safety, dignity, "Do No Harm", accountability to beneficiaries.

WFP has already undertaken a number of training initiatives to build the capacity of the FATA Government Agency line departments, and, as an exit strategy this would appear the most logical option. The evaluation finds that the Agency line departments themselves, however, believe their capacity needs to be further improved. They feel that this is essential should they need to take over current GFD activities, or have to undertake a significant role in future operations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1:** In light of the persistent food insecurity of the TDPs, and the likelihood that some of them will not return to their places of origin, WFP CO should determine the most adequate food assistance intervention to cover the needs of the vulnerable displaced population in FATA.

**Recommendation 2:** In order to understand the success, failures, best practices and lessons learnt from the FFA activities, WFP should conduct an impact assessment study of FFA activities. This study should include a cost comparison analysis of WFP activities with those of other agencies implementing similar interventions in the region.

**Recommendation 3:** With respect to those FATA Agency districts that have the lowest food security indicators, WFP should target future FFA interventions in collaboration with the FATA Government Line departments.

**Recommendation 4:** By September 2018, WFP should identify further projects aimed at maximizing inclusion of women, adolescent males and disabled community members. Furthermore the projects should, train staff on implementation of these gender-sensitive projects.

**Recommendation 5:** In order to meet programmatic objectives in terms of supporting FFA participants, the FFA participant payment system needs to be immediately reviewed in terms of procedural efficiency.

**Recommendation 6:** FLAs should be revised to last at least 6 months, delays in signature should be addressed and WFP should also consider reducing the number of CPs with long-term FLAs.

**Recommendation 7:** In order to facilitate improvement in both the FFA payment procedures as well as the FLA contractual processes, WFP CO should immediately consider how much centralised authority can be released from Islamabad and handed over to Peshawar.

**Recommendation 8:** As operations move away from relief based GFDs towards more developmental FFA interventions, the internal monitoring system need to follow suit. By mid-2018, WFP need to update its procedures so that monitoring activities capture feedback on programmatic performance through participatory methods, including the feedback of female beneficiaries. Post distribution monitoring reports, reflecting beneficiary feedback should also be initiated by September 2018 and shared with relevant stakeholders.

**Recommendation 9:** In order to improve programmatic impact and reduce costs, by September 2018, WFP needs to determine opportunities for enhanced cooperation in co-operation with other UN agencies operating in FATA. Avenues for collaboration include the conduct of joint assessments, implementation and monitoring visits.

**Recommendation 10:** WFP should develop a plan to eventually handover these activities to the FATA Government line departments based on an assessment of the capacity needs of the Government line departments.

The evaluation is available at: <https://www.wfp.org/content/pakistan-food-assistance-temporarily-dislocated-personsfrom-2015-2017-evaluation-terms-refer>

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