JOINT EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT OF THE ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY OF THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (WFP)

HONDURAS COUNTRY STUDY

VOLUME 1

DECEMBER 2004

This report can be downloaded at the following website:

www.edpevaluation.com

The evaluation has been carried out by a consortium composed by DRN, ADE, Baastel, ECO Consulting Group and NCG. Responsibility for the contents and presentation of findings and recommendations rests with the authors. The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the sponsoring agencies: Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA), Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Department of International Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland; Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, France; Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany (BMZ); Directorate General for Development Cooperation (DGCS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy; United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

German Development Policy

Canadian International Development Agency

Agence canadienne de développement international

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Danida

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité
République Française

Cooperazione Italiana allo Sviluppo
ministero degli affari esteri

USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

JOINT EVALUATION OF EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT OF THE ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY OF THE WFP

HONDURAS COUNTRY STUDY

Development Researchers' Network
(Italy)

Aide à la Décision Economique
(Belgium)

Groupe-conseil Baastel ltée
(Canada)

Eco Consulting Group
(Germany)

Nordic Consulting Group
(Denmark)

VOLUME I:
MAIN TEXT

VOLUME II: (on CD Rom)
ANNEXES:

1 – Honduras: complementary socioeconomic information and WFP project and programme data
2 – HIV/AIDS Additional topics and information for Honduras
3 – Work plan
4 - List of sites visited and people met
5 – Field findings
6 – Bibliography
7 – Map of the sites visited

The evaluation has been carried out by a consortium of DRN, ADE, Baastel, ECO and NCG
c/o DRN, leading company:

DRN srl
Via Ippolito Nievo 62
00153 Rome, Italy
Tel +39-06-581-6074
Fax +39-06-581-6390
mail@drn-network.com

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was prepared during the months of May and June 2004 by the Honduras Country Team: Diacuy Mesquita, Aminta Navarro, Gilles Levesque and Philippe Bâcle. The Team would like to thank in particular the WFP Honduras Country Office for having organized, in an efficient and transparent manner, all the field visits as well as the meetings with key stakeholders in Honduras, and for making available all the necessary background documents and data in a timely manner.

The Team also wishes to convey its most sincere gratitude to the beneficiaries and local actors (WFP Monitors, partners, authorities) for their cooperation and hospitality during the field visits; no effort was spared to share all the relevant information and make the mission the positive exercise it proved to be.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACH	Accíon Católica de Honduras
ADEL	Associations for Local Educational Development
AFE	Administración Forestal del Estado
ANCHA	Alianza Nacional Contra el Hambre
ARI	Acute Respiratory Infections
BANADESA	Banco Nacional de Desarrollo Agricola
CABEI	Central American Bank para América Latina y el Caribe
CB	Capacity Building
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCFH	Catholic Christian Fund Honduras
CEPAL	Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe
CEPENF	Centros de Educación Pre Escolar no Formal
CHF	Canadian Hunger Foundation
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CO	Country Office (WFP)
COHDEFOR	Corporación Hondureña de Desarrollo Forestal
CONEANFO	Comisión Nacional de Educación Alternativa No Formal
CP	Country Program
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSB	Corn Soya Blend
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DOC	Direct Operational Costs (WFP)
DPPC	Disaster Prevention Preparedness Commission
DSC	Direct Support Costs (WFP)
EDP	Enabling Development Policy (WFP)
EFA	Education for All
EMOP	Emergency Operation (WFP)
EQ	Evaluation Question
FAAD	Food Aid and Development (also referred to as EDP)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFW	Food for Work
FHIS	Honduran Social Investment Fund
FSP	Food Security Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GE	Gender Equality
GM	Gender Mainstreaming
GNP	Gross National Product
GoH	Government of Honduras
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HDI	Human Development Index
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative
HPI	Human Poverty Index
HQ	Headquarters
HSP	Health School Programme
ICT	Information & Communications Technology Division (WFP)
IDB	Interamerican Development Bank
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IHNFA	Instituto Hondureño del Niño y la Familia
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INAM	Instituto Nacional de la Mujer de Honduras
INCAP	Instituto Nacional de Capacitación

INFOP	Instituto Nacional de Formación Profesional
IP	Implementing Partner
ISC	Indirect Support Costs (WFP)
LIC	Low Income Country
LIFDC	Low Income Food Deficit Country
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis
LTSH	Landside Transport, Shipping and Handling
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
ME	Merienda Escolar
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
MIS	Management Information System
MOWAWI	German NGO
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
MT	Metric Tonne
NFI	Nutrited Food Intake
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA	UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODOC	Other Direct Operational Costs (WFP)
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PESA	Programa Especial para la Seguridad Alimentaria
PF	Performance Framework
PLWHA	People living with HIV/AIDS
PRAF	Family Allowance Program
PRODELL	Program for Decentralization and Local Development
PROHECO	Proyecto Hondureño de Educación Comunitaria (Honduran project of Communitarian Education)
PRONADERS	National Sustainable Development Program
PRRO	Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RBM	Results Based Management
RBM&E	Results Based Monitoring and Evaluation
RFP	Request for Proposal
SAEH	School Feeding Support Unit
SAG	Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería (Agriculture and Livestock Secretariat)
SC	Steering Committee
SD	Standard Deviation
SETCO	Secretario técnica a la cooperación internacional
SFP	School Feeding Programme
SINREC	Integrated System for Land Registration
SPR	Standard Project Report
TB	Tuberculosis
TOR	Terms of Reference
UBN	Unsatisfied Basic Needs
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNAT	Technical Support Unit (Unidad de Apoyo Técnico)
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United National Population Fund

UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US$	United States Dollars
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme of the United Nations
WHO	World Health Organization
WID	Women in Development

Exchange rate: 1 US $ = 18.68 Lempiras (June 2004)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ..... **i**
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ..... **iii**
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... **ix**
INTRODUCTION **1**
BACKGROUND 1
RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE COUNTRY STUDY 1
1 METHODOLOGY **4**
1.1 KEY FEATURES OF THE METHODOLOGY 4
1.2 DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED AND LIMITATIONS OF THE EXERCISE 7
2 WFP INTERVENTIONS IN THE COUNTRY-SPECIFIC CONTEXT **8**
2.1 THE COUNTRY CONTEXT 8
2.1.1 Socioeconomic data 8
2.1.2 Rural poverty and food security situation 10
2.1.3 Government and donor priorities, policies and programmes addressing poverty and food insecurity 12
2.2 WFP INTERVENTIONS IN HONDURAS 17
2.2.1 Portfolio of interventions and their evolution since 1997 17
2.2.2 Outline of current country programme 18
3 MAIN FINDINGS **20**
3.1 RELEVANCE OF THE WFP COUNTRY PROGRAMME AND EDP 20
3.1.1 The CP's consistency with EDP principles and objectives 20
3.1.2 Relevance to the country policies and context and to international priorities 21
3.1.3 Complementarity and integration with EMOP/PRRO 22
3.2 MECHANISMS, MEANS AND TOOLS INTRODUCED / STRENGTHENED AT COUNTRY LEVEL TO FACILITATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY / COUNTRY PROGRAMME 24
3.2.1 Progress (and changes) in partnership 24
3.2.2 Stakeholder participation and ownership 26
3.2.3 Progress (and changes) in demonstrating results 27
3.2.4 Gender mainstreaming 29
3.2.5 HIV/AIDS mainstreaming 30
3.2.6 Resourcing 31
3.3 MAIN RESULTS OF THE ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY AT THE LOCAL/COUNTRY LEVEL 33
3.3.1 Activity 1: Integrated assistance for vulnerable children and women 33
3.3.2 Activity 2: Investment in human capital through education and training 37
3.3.3 Forestry management project and Activity 3 - Enabling poor households to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods and the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters 43
3.3.4 HIV/AIDS 48
3.3.5 Efficient use of resources at project level 51
3.3.6 Consistency of the results with EDP principles 54
3.4 SUSTAINABILITY 55
4 CONCLUSION AND ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION **58**
4.1 CONCLUSIONS 58
4.2 ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION 61
4.3 FINAL WORD 62

TABLES AND GRAPHS:

TABLE 1: POPULATION, GDP, AND INEQUALITY IN INCOME DISTRIBUTION BY CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRY, 2000 (ABSOLUTE AND RELATIVE NUMBERS) 8
TABLE 2: HDI TRENDS – HONDURAS, 1975-2003 8
TABLE 3: HONDURAS DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS 10
TABLE 4: REGIONAL MALNUTRITION RATIOS 10
TABLE 5: REGIONAL CHILD MALNUTRITION 11
TABLE 6: LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH AND INFANT MORTALITY IN CENTRAL AMERICA, 2000-2005 11
TABLE 7: COMPARISON OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED BY PROJECT/PROGRAMME (IN MT) 17
TABLE 8: SUMMARY OF THE CURRENT COUNTRY PROGRAMME 10074 (2002-2006) 18
TABLE 9: PARTNERSHIP IN HONDURAS 25
TABLE 10: RECURRING SHOCKS (1997-2002) 31
TABLE 11: BENEFICIARIES, ACCORDING TO TARGETED NEEDS, 2003 34
TABLE 12: CHRONIC MALNUTRITION 34
TABLE 13: PREVALENCE OF MALNUTRITION, POST-INTERVENTION, ... 35
TABLE 14: BENEFICIARIES AND SOURCES OF FUNDING 37
TABLE 15: NUMBER OF EDUCATIONAL CENTRES ATTENDED BY DEPARTMENT 38
TABLE 16: SCHOOL DROPOUT LEVELS 38
TABLE 17: ACHIEVEMENT OF THE ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS 45
TABLE 18: COMPARISON OF NUTRITIONAL DIAGNOSTIC, JULY 2003/DECEMBER 2003 (MSF TELA) 49
TABLE 19: SCHOOL FOOD RATION COST ANALYSIS (2003) 52
TABLE 20: SCHOOL FOOD RATION COST ANALYSIS (2004) 52

GRAPH 1: SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMME – NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES AND FINANCIAL SOURCES 32
GRAPH 2: BENEFICIARIES OF ACTIVITY 3 44
GRAPH 3: INFHA (GOH)/ALDESA (WFP) COMPARATIVE COST ANALYSIS – 2000 (IN US$/MT) 53
GRAPH 4: INFHA (GOH)/ALDESA (WFP) COMPARATIVE COST ANALYSIS – 2001 (IN US$/MT) 53

BOX 1: TESTIMONY 1 40
BOX 2: TESTIMONY 2 41
BOX 3: TESTIMONY 3 41
BOX 4: TESTIMONY 4 46
BOX 5: HIV/AIDS PILOT PROJECT (WFP IN PARTNERSHIP) 48

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. On May 4, 1999, the Executive Board of the World Food Programme (WFP) approved the Enabling Development Policy (EDP) to help the organization sharpen the focus of its development activities. The objective of this external evaluation, sponsored by a number of WFP donors, is to assess the efficiency, effectiveness, impact, relevance, and sustainability of this policy. The evaluation had a three-phase structure: a desk phase, completed in March 2004; a field phase that includes a total of seven country studies undertaken between the months of March and July 2004; and a synthesis phase, due for completion by the end of 2004.

2. Within the framework of the overall evaluation exercise, the objective of the country studies was "to contribute evidence-based elements to the overall evaluation process through assessment of EDP-related principles, activities and results in the specific country contexts." In line with the EDP evaluation matrix presented at the end of the first phase of the study, the Honduras country study aimed at assessing the following: the relevance of the EDP to the country and local context; the degree to which WFP's delivery process has been updated to facilitate implementation of the EDP; the results of the EDP at the local and country levels; and the sustainability of the results attained or intended or the likelihood of achieving sustainability. It should also be noted that, in the case of Honduras, several of the changes proposed in the Policy were already evolving prior to its formulation, and therefore the evaluation has treated the EDP as an evolutionary process rather than a rupture, which would have allowed assessments along "before/after EDP" lines.

3. The present Honduras Country Programme (CP) portfolio includes three main channels of food aid: i) Activity 1: integrated assistance for vulnerable women and children, focused on health services and the health condition of expectant and nursing mothers and children under 2 years of age (30% of WFP's contribution to the CP); ii) Activity 2: investment in human capital through education and training, concentrating essentially on the School Feeding Programme (*Merienda Escolar*) (initially 23% of the CP, but increasing with resource transfers from the discontinued Activity 3); iii) Activity 3: enabling poor households to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods, and prevention and mitigation of natural disasters[1] (48% of WFP's contribution to the CP). The document review and analysis, and field mission observations indicate that WFP development programming in Honduras is very relevant to EDP guidelines and principles.

4. WFP development interventions in the country are deemed **relevant** to national policies and programmes (food security, education and health) as well as to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) priorities. The high and still growing proportion of the Country Programme's local resources allocated to the School Feeding Programme (*Merienda Escolar*) is a clear indication of the commitment of the Government of Honduras' (GoH) to addressing the food security situation of vulnerable groups, in particular children attending primary school.

5. The main target group of the **Country Programme (CP),** the chronically food insecure, is in line with national priorities, and the main tool used to identify vulnerable people and areas, Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM), has proven very appropriate to this end. The VAM system was very useful in achieving coherent and relevant targeting, not only for the GoH and WFP, but also for other international players.

6. The progress made and the constraints faced by the WFP Country Office (CO) in implementing Enabling Development Policy directives at country level have been analysed according to the following criteria: i) partnership; ii) stakeholder participation and ownership; iii) demonstration of results; iv) gender mainstreaming; v) HIV/AIDS mainstreaming; and vi) resourcing of the Country Programme and of EDP related measures.

[1] This activity was recently formally abandoned due to budgetary difficulties at the executing agency level, which limited the capacity of the GoH to fulfil its commitments (a more elaborate explanation is presented in section 3.3.3).

7. **Partnership** efforts deployed by WFP with the GoH and the donor community vary in scope and leadership, with the food aid component more thematically focused. In the wake of the Mitch emergency and post-Mitch recovery operations, the WFP CO demonstrated a commendable capacity to enter into short-term project oriented implementing partnerships and long-term EDP-based strategic alliances. The mission has identified two groups of WFP partners based on very different interaction levels: one very proactive in thematic development issues going well beyond institutional collaboration, e.g. GoH ministries of Education and Health, and the United Nations Children's Fund - UNICEF), and the other with uneven interactions (e.g. GoH Consultative groups: World Bank (WB), Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), World Health Organization (WHO), ANCHA. At the local level, WFP promoted complementary alliances with key players by developing implementing partnerships with an impressive number of government authorities, communities, and national and international Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

8. In terms of **ownership and participation,** in Honduras, the CO spared no effort to ensure strong ownership by stakeholders at all levels (national, project and local). The current government administration has taken ownership of and stays closely involved in the School Feeding Programme. At the municipal level, warehouses for the storage and distribution of food are provided to WFP; ownership is ensured by beneficiaries in the control, distribution, use and complementing of food rations to schools and health units. Training and counselling have been significant contributing factors in enhancing the participation of local stakeholders in the various phases of the three basic activities supported by WFP.

9. Despite WFP's **Results Based Management** (**RBM)** corporate guidelines and policies, the mission found that integration of the RBM approach in the Honduras CO/field operations and procedures was uneven, from project concept and design to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). It is the mission's opinion that, in addition to supervision of the food distribution, a comprehensive performance evaluation structure is essential to fully assess and monitor the adequacy, efficiency, relevancy and sustainability of the development results expected in EDP related activities. The current commendable efforts deployed in terms of instilling an RBM culture deserve to be encouraged and supported with added resources.

10. With regard to the **gender equality**[2] (**GE**) dimension, the mission also found a limited and uneven integration of GE as a cross-cutting development theme[3] in Honduras CO/field operations and projects. The integration of a GE expert within the CO staff could be instrumental in supporting substantive GE matters in EDP-related projects.

11. Through its strategic partnerships with the Ministry of Health and well established NGOs (pilot projects), WFP could efficiently provide food assistance targeted and programmed for **HIV/AIDS** victims, without stigmatising or marginalizing them.

12. The global level of **resources** provided by WFP in Honduras experienced a downward trend in the 2000-2003 period, similar to the corporate trend. After reviewing the structural nature of food insecurity in Honduras, the mission concluded that this reduction is not linked to lower levels of "development needs." On the contrary, the human development situation in Honduras remains fragile, and hunger is a severe problem. Nevertheless, the WFP CO was instrumental in achieving decisive progress in the ownership and sustainability of Activity 2, the School Feeding Project (SFP),

[2] Gender *equity* is generally known as the process of being fair to both men and women. Equity can be understood as the means, whereas equality is the end. Equity leads to equality. Gender *equality* means that women and men enjoy the same status within a society, and that women and men experience equal opportunities for realizing their full human rights, and have the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from national, political, economic, social and cultural development. The mission chose to utilize the term gender equality that comprises the notion of equity as a prerequisite.

[3] In reference to the twelve critical issues of Beijing's Platform for Action.

on the part of the government and civil society (with significant and unprecedented private sector funding of the SFP[4]).

13. **Beneficiaries** of the three activities consist of the following: In the case of Activity 1, recognized genuinely vulnerable groups (pregnant women, breastfeeding women, children under 5 years old, the elderly and HIV/AIDS victims under medical/nutritional supervision). Thanks to a strong partnership with the GoH and a clear commitment from various segments of society, the results of the SFP (Activity 2), include expanding coverage from 100,000 children in 1999 to a planned 1,000,000 children in 2005. Activity 3, recently terminated, targeted 50,000 beneficiaries (52% women, 48% men) and 10,000 participants (60% women, 40% men), mostly landless and highly vulnerable people. In order to target extreme poverty along with the most vulnerable groups, WFP has created a Vulnerability Analysis and Monitoring unit (VAM) and a VAM comprehensive model, which is officially endorsed by the GoH and currently used by other players, notably the World Bank's country representation.

14. In the case of **Activity 1,** The Country Programme's main target group, the chronically food insecure, is consistent with national priorities and strategies, and the main tool used to identify vulnerable groups and areas is appropriate to this end. The Honduras CP is achieving what is considered a key EDP objective: to assist and encourage the most marginalized and food insecure populations to actively participate in development initiatives through VAM targeted objectives (food aid initiatives). This has provided more opportunities to participate in the production of assets and to benefit from capacity building activities, which has, to some extent, contributed to the sustainability of the assets produced.

15. In the case of **Activity 2,** pre-school and primary education: the GoH/WFP School Feeding Programme represents a remarkable success in beneficiary coverage, increased enrolment and attendance rates (SFP being instrumental in raising the social demand for basic education even in remote areas, especially for girls), and creating conditions that enable improved educational performance.

16. In the case of **Activity 3,** results achieved, despite premature termination, include the creation of appropriate and lasting assets that are highly appreciated by the beneficiaries and adequately maintained. Observations and findings following field visits confirm the results of a recent evaluation: increased and more diversified production; better response to natural disasters; reduced vulnerability of watersheds and increased access to water. Some of the project sites have achieved the status of demonstration parcels, thus encouraging neighbours to adopt more sustainable land and forest management practices. Nevertheless, the sustainability of some results achieved in particularly vulnerable and extremely poor areas is questioned, given the very limited resources at hand and the limited capacity of some groups to ensure the maintenance of assets.

17. In the mission's opinion, WFP-Honduras has demonstrated a high level of cost efficiency and relevant resource utilization, widely acknowledged by key EMOP, PRRO and EDP project/ programme partners and stakeholders. Further confirmation is provided by the GoH which selected WFP as the prime executing agent for the nationwide School Feeding Programme. Nonetheless, WFP's cost effectiveness objective could be extended from its initial "emergency supply and delivery" mandate to the EDP's long-term use of food aid for development. A fully integrated RBM approach in CO and field operations will be instrumental in providing a comprehensive performance oriented M&E of the EDP results. The mission considers that WFP-Honduras would benefit from more local procurement options (e.g., nutritional variety in food baskets) and enhanced information/knowledge sharing with some UN agencies dealing with nutrition and food aid. UN related strategic alliances in support of EDP thematic funding and wider programming could represent a consolidated approach for WFP to gain stronger leverage and exert better policy influence based on the respective expertise and general synergy.

[4] For example, the second nationwide Teleradiomarathon 2004 raised 10 million Lempiras, more than 100% of WFP's target of 5 million and exceeding the 2003 results.

18. Although they are resource intensive and difficult to sustain without a broad range of institutional commitments, school and pre-school programmes will gain **in sustainability**, as the GoH and parents are able to increase their commitment and contributions towards taking ownership. Partnership and participation are pre-requisites to sustainability and, where WFP interventions are short-term, they must rely on strong and reputable NGOs with respectable track records and comprehensive knowledge of local conditions to take the lead in implementation. Strengthened community organizations and broad leadership skills increase capacity to maintain, use and further develop assets created by programme interventions.

19. Until now, the impact of World Food Program food deliveries on Honduran **markets** appears to have been minimal, as the WFP level of basic commodity purchases has been hampered by chronic shortages in local food production and substantially higher prices for grain and vegetable oil on the local markets. In cases where monetization activities are carried out, a "Bellmon"[5] or disincentive analysis to assess the impact of donated foods on the markets, as suggested by USAID, would be recommended. If access to Honduran local markets represents a desirable and feasible option, fair consideration should be given by WFP HQ to adapting its selection criteria in WFP CO tenders to allow for the purchase of indigenous basic commodities compatible with the selected food baskets. WFP is encouraged to undertake an analysis to measure the impact of donated food on local markets.

20. In light of the above findings, the mission has identified some areas for improvement which deserve attention on the part of WFP:

- In order to implement CP activities in line with EDP principles and objectives, WFP will have to allocate a proportionally higher level of cash resources for: i) management of development activities (rather than for the emergency supply and delivery process, which is well under control); and ii) additional and higher overhead expenses. The latter are deemed justified within a "long-term use of food for development" framework, and for adequate CO integration of corporate institutional RBM, gender equality, and cost effectiveness policies;
- To that effect, the mission foresees the need for an organizational assessment of WFP CO and district operations associated with a sound appraisal of the current and foreseeable level of effort;
- In addition, the professional coverage of specialized needs within "new" development themes, the sourcing of local expertise (vs. HQ) and some capacity building requirements of present professionals and support staff should also be highlighted;
- The mission is of the opinion that before any serious attempt is made to strengthen the implementation of WFP gender equality and gender mainstreaming (GE/GM) commitments in project activities (and possibly in its own operations), the concepts, principles and substance of GE/GM have to be mastered by CO professional staff and integrated in the relevant process (e.g., M&E). The proposed review mentioned above may need to include the benefit that the appointment of a gender specialist would provide, one who would ensure continuous training to in-house staff and outside partners, GE/GM content review of proposals and continuous M&E of results in terms of RBM performance.

[5] Bellmon Analysis is required by US Federal law to determine that: adequate storage facilities are available in the recipient country to prevent the spoilage of waste commodities and that importation of the commodity will not result in a substantial disincentive to or interference with domestic production or marketing in that country.

EVALUATION OF THE WFP ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY HONDURAS COUNTRY STUDY

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

1. On May 4, 1999, the World Food Programme Executive Board approved the Enabling Development Policy (EDP) to help the organization sharpen the focus of its development activities. This external evaluation, sponsored by a number of WFP donors, aims at assessing the efficiency, effectiveness, impact, relevance and sustainability of this policy. The results of the evaluation are expected to: i) provide the sponsoring donors with valuable insights and issues for consideration in relation to future support for WFP development activities; ii) identify measures and mechanisms that could potentially enhance WFP's effectiveness in the design and implementation of its development portfolio; iii) contribute through empirical evidence to a better understanding of the conditions for success and failure of food aid in development activities. During the scoping phase, it was decided that the EDP would be evaluated mainly on the basis of the assessment of the results it has generated. The assessment is to be carried out at global, country and local levels, but with the main focus on the country and local levels.

2. The EDP evaluation consists of three phases: an inception phase, which was completed in March 2004; a field phase, which includes a total of seven country studies to be completed by the end of July 2004; and a synthesis phase, which is due by end of October 2004. In line with the preliminary analysis of the EDP and with the evaluation's intended objectives and focus, four main questions and a related evaluation matrix were identified during the inception phase. They will provide the main analysis framework to guide the various evaluation team members throughout the evaluation process and keep it focused.

3. This report is divided into four main chapters. Chapter 1 presents the methodology employed and difficulties encountered. Chapter 2 describes the Honduras context with respect to food security and food aid issues and outlines WFP interventions in that country. Chapter 3 illustrates the evaluation's main findings at the country, local and project levels. Finally, Chapter 4 presents the country team's main conclusions and makes connections between the findings that have emerged from the various evaluation questions.

RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE COUNTRY STUDY

Basis for country selection

4. In the inception report, **two criteria** were proposed for the final selection[6] of the countries to be visited during Phase 2 of the evaluation. The first is of a **quantitative** nature and refers to the need for a balanced regional representation of WFP development intervention, proportional, as far as possible, to the actual development portfolio per region. The second is of a qualitative nature and refers to the evaluation team's judgement of the contributions that each country study could make in responding to the evaluation questions in a comprehensive manner[7].

[6] The Steering Committee (SC) presented a preliminary list of 11 countries out of which the evaluation team was asked to make a proposal.

[7] The basis for this judgement includes: i) the need to include all the socio-economic contexts in which WFP operates; ii) coverage of the five areas of focus; iii) the presence of particularly interesting activities or experiences that could be the basis for specific case studies; iv) situations where countries have adjusted their development portfolios (new activities or phasing-out of activities – particularly if non-EDP), which may provide insights into the reasons for making changes; and v) existing studies and evaluations that could facilitate the concentration and focus of country team activities.

5. A total of seven countries were thus proposed and the proposal was endorsed by the Steering Committee. These are **Bangladesh, Bolivia, Ethiopia, Honduras[8], Mali, Mozambique and Pakistan**. The countries selected should provide a fair representation of the contexts in which WFP runs its development operations, although it should be noted that the selection process was not undertaken on a statistical basis.

Objectives of the country study evaluation

6. Within the framework of the overall evaluation exercise, the objective of the country studies is "to contribute evidence based elements to the overall evaluation process through assessment of the EDP related principles, activities and results in the specific country context." In line with the EDP evaluation matrix, the country studies aim at assessing:

- The relevance of the EDP to the country and local contexts;
- The degree to which WFP's delivery process at country level has been updated to facilitate implementation of the EDP;
- The results (outputs, outcomes and impacts) of the EDP at the local and country levels;
- The degree of–or chances of achieving–sustainability of the results attained or to be attained.

Terminology used in this report

7. Before entering into a description of the various methodological issues, it is important to briefly provide some clarification on the terminology used in this report, particularly when describing WFP operations.[9] In the case of Honduras, WFP undertakes three types of operations:

a) Emergency Operations (EMOPs): The mechanism by which WFP, in response to a request from a government or the UN Secretary General, provides emergency food aid and related assistance to meet the food needs of people affected by a disaster or other emergency. An EMOP generally lasts no more than 24 months, including extensions, after which any need for continuing relief and rehabilitation/recovery assistance should normally be met through a Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation;

b) Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRROs): The mechanism by which continuing WFP assistance is provided to emergency affected populations, including refugees and displaced persons, once an EMOP has reached its two-year limit, and by which developmental approaches are gradually introduced to promote recovery. PRROs are normally planned, approved and implemented in a three-year cycle. Planning for a PRRO should begin after the first 12 months of an EMOP;

c) Development Operations: The category of food aid programmes and projects that support economic and social development. This category includes rehabilitation and disaster preparedness projects and technical assistance to help developing countries establish or improve their own food assistance. Country Programmes are a vehicle for the provision of WFP development assistance. Country Programmes, which are approved by the WFP Executive Board, consist of a number of specific projects called activities, conducted within a country for a set period (normally five years) to achieve a common goal. These activities are derived from the "key areas of assistance" described in the Country Strategy Outline.

8. WFP operational budgets are organized according to the following costs:

a) Direct Operational Costs (DOC): Any cost that WFP incurs in providing inputs used directly in WFP interventions by beneficiaries, by the government of the recipient country or by other implementing partners. This includes the cost of commodities, ocean transportation and related costs, and landside transportation, shipping and handling (LTSH);

---

[8] Honduras replaced Nepal by a SC decision on February 12, 2004. The selection of Nepal was reconsidered for security reasons.

[9] Sources of definitions: *WFP Glossary* and *WFP Programme Design Manual.*

b) Other Direct Operational Costs (ODOC): Costs related to cash resources normally put at the disposal of implementing partners for capacity building and project implementation;

c) Direct Support Costs (DSC): Costs in immediate support of a project, additional to direct operational costs and that would not be incurred if the project did not exist. These may include non-food items, technical support services, project preparation, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation;

d) Indirect Support Costs (ISC): Costs incurred in staffing and operating WFP headquarters and regional offices, and the standard maximum structure at Country Offices that cannot be attributed easily to any programme category or activity.

9. The results of WFP projects/activities are classified according to three categories:

a) Outputs (output level of the log-frame hierarchy): The products, capital goods and services resulting from a WFP operation, including changes resulting from the operation that are relevant to the achievement of outcomes;

b) Outcomes (purpose level of the log-frame hierarchy): The medium-term results of an operation's outputs;

c) Impact (goal level of the log-frame hierarchy): The positive and negative, intended or unintended long-term results produced by a WFP operation, either directly or indirectly;

d) Sustainability: The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed; the probability of continued long-term benefits; and the resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.

10. Finally, when referring to the Enabling Development Policy (EDP), it should be noted that:

a) Within WFP, the EDP is often referred to as the Food Aid and Development Policy (FAAD);

b) The key policy directives / basic principles referred to in this report are as follows: i) assistance should be provided *only* when and where food consumption is inadequate for good health and productivity; ii) each and every WFP development intervention will use *assistance with food consumption to encourage investment and leave behind a lasting asset*; iii) beneficiaries of food aid and lasting assets should be *poor, food insecure households*; iv) *geographical targeting* should be used to concentrate resources on food insecure areas within recipient countries; v) *timeliness* will be treated as a key aspect of targeting; vi) *clear and objective indicators* should be used to signal when help is needed and also to signal when it is time for phasing out; vii) greater use should be made of *participatory approaches*; viii) *partnerships* should be strengthened; and ix) *cost effectiveness* in terms of the *development results* should be achieved, and M&E should become more results oriented;

c) The five key areas of focus or policy priorities are: 1) enabling young children and expectant and nursing mothers to meet their special nutritional and nutrition related health needs; 2) enabling poor households to invest in human capital through education and learning; 3) making it possible for poor families to gain and preserve assets; 4) mitigating the effects of natural disasters in areas vulnerable to recurring crisis; and 5) enabling households that depend on degraded natural resources for their food security to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods.

11. This report is the result of the following series of activities:

a) A preparatory phase that precedes the country visits, in which the main documents were analysed and an inception report was prepared;

b) A 16 day field/country phase undertaken by a team of four consultants and including: i) briefing sessions with primary stakeholders; ii) interviews at all levels; iii) project visits and consultation with beneficiaries (see Annex 4); and iv) debriefing sessions; and

c) Report preparation and the consolidation of findings (including the correction of inaccuracies through a consultation process with the WFP Country Office).

1 METHODOLOGY

1.1 KEY FEATURES OF THE METHODOLOGY

12. Honduras was part of the list of 11 countries from which the mission was asked to proceed with the selection of seven countries. Once Nepal was excluded due to security problems, Honduras was proposed in light of the following considerations: a) regional representation; b) the size of the development portfolio (Honduras is in the "small country" group, like Nepal); c) the fact that an important regional PRRO was in operation, which would allow for the examination of linkages between the PRRO and the CP, and also of the level of application of the EDP to non-developmental operations; and d) the fact that the EDP areas of focus were well covered (all five areas were covered in 2002).

13. In line with the overall evaluation methodology, the analysis was structured according to two main levels: i) the country level; and ii) the local and beneficiary level.

- **Country level**: The analysis examines the practical implementation of the key concepts of the Enabling Development Policy (EDP), such as partnerships; ownership by governments; targeting of the most vulnerable groups; gender mainstreaming; and demonstrating results and beneficiary involvement in the planning, implementation and evaluation of projects. The country level analysis also included funding and staffing patterns as well as the balance and linkage of the various components (Emergency Operations [EMOP], Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations [PRRO] and Development) in the overall WFP country portfolio and among the five areas of focus;
- **Local and beneficiary level**: The analysis assesses the results of WFP interventions at the project and community levels (i.e., project outputs, outcomes and impact).

14. The **evaluation matrix** developed during the desk phase was the main analytical tool used during the country study, and it provided the basis for the development of interview guides and checklists, questionnaires and a focus group discussion guide. Some points must be highlighted at this stage:

- Regarding Evaluation Question (EQ) 1 (*How relevant is the EDP in terms of the evolving context of poverty reduction and food security*?), it was felt that relevance and coherence needed to be assessed in accordance with WFP's Country Programme (CP) (i.e., the concrete instrument of WFP development programming). A two step approach to EQ 1 was therefore used, consisting of: i) an assessment of the CP's consistency with EDP principles; and ii) an assessment of the relevance of the CP with respect to the country context;
- The evaluation question and sub-questions on sustainability were modified to take into account Development Assistance Committee DAC definitions (see par. 10);
- A sub-question on HIV/AIDS mainstreaming was added[10];
- Certain indicators were revised to take into account Steering Committee (SC) comments on the Phase 1 report and Honduras' experience.

15. The collection of data and performance information for the results and indicators identified in the evaluation matrix required the use of a variety of methods and involved different sources and stakeholders; the Honduran country team made additional efforts to ensure confirmation of their validity[11] and to fill identified gaps in the data collected.

[10] It should be recalled that HIV/AIDS issues were not directly addressed by the EDP since, at the time of its formulation, HIV/AIDS was not yet part of the International Development Agenda. Nevertheless, the team decided to add a specific sub-question, given the negative effects of HIV/AIDS on the health status of the victims and the potential role that food aid (together with other interventions) could play to mitigate its negative effects.

[11] For example, SFP and HIV/AIDS beneficiaries were systematically questioned about the quality of the commodities after one case of unsuitable CSB (worms were detected) was reported to the team.

16. Interviews (assisted by the use of checklists) and the review and analysis of relevant documents were the main tools used for the analysis **at country level**. Interviews were conducted with the following groups of stakeholders:

- **WFP staff** at the country and sub-office levels: These interviews were conducted to determine the progress made and difficulties encountered in promoting EDP principles at the country and project levels;
- **Government representatives** (government institutions are WFP's main implementing partners for most Country Programmes): These interviews were conducted to: i) verify the relevance and coherence of WFP interventions with respect to sectoral policies and assess the implementation mechanisms put in place at all levels; ii) understand WFP's role within the overall framework of the country's poverty reduction and development strategies;
- **UN agencies:** The rationale for contacting UN agencies was twofold, namely to: i) improve the understanding of the role of WFP (and the potential synergies) within the Common Country Assessment (CCA)/UNDAF; and ii) review past, ongoing and possible future partnership agreements between WFP and individual UN agencies;
- **Donors:** In addition to the meeting held with the donors sponsoring the evaluation, the team met with other key donors (including some with no direct relationship or partnership agreement with WFP in the country). These contacts proved very useful in providing the evaluation team with different perspectives and points of view on the pros and cons of the use of food aid in a non emergency context and on WFP's role in such a framework;
- **NGOs:** Despite the fact that NGOs are rarely direct implementation partners of WFP development operations, their knowledge of the country and of food security and food aid mechanisms and issues can considerably contribute to further clarifying the context in which WFP operates. In the case of Honduras, the team interviewed national and international NGOs operating in the areas where WFP operates (when relevant).

17. **Document and data analysis** activities (see bibliography in Annex 6), included: i) project documents and agreements (including other WFP operations); ii) Country Strategy Outlines and Country Programmes; iii) project monitoring and evaluation reports; iv) guidelines and technical notes; v) VAM analyses and reports; vi) partnerships and collaborative agreements; vii) data on food procurement and food markets; viii) national statistics and reports on food security; ix) national and sectoral policies relevant to WFP activities; x) reports and studies from other donors and NGOs; xi) Common Country Assessment (CCA)/UNDAF documents. WFP documents were analysed mainly with respect to the level of application of (and consistency with) the EDP principles of WFP development programming (as well as other operations), whilst analysis of other documents provided indications on the overall relevance of WFP operations (and development in particular) with respect to the overall country context and development framework.

18. **The results** of WFP activities were examined both at the global/project and community levels. The analysis of the overall **results of WFP operations** were based on existing and available progress reports produced by WFP and implementing partners, evaluation reports, and discussions with key informants (government staff, local authorities, NGOs and other donors).

19. Furthermore, evidence arising from **project visits and beneficiary interviews** was a key element in the independent assessment of the actual results of WFP interventions. However, given the size of WFP's operations and the limited number of days at the disposal of the evaluation team, field visits aimed to provide a picture of what is actually happening at project level and to crosscheck the data available in WFP and other reports with the information provided by different stakeholders. At the same time, the mission integrated and supplemented available information and local stakeholders' and direct beneficiaries' views on the results achieved through WFP support. Given the need to restrict the sample in the case of Honduras, priority was given to the three regions (South, West and North) with the largest WFP development portfolios (see Annex 4 for the list of sites). The site and projects selection was carried out jointly with the CO, on the basis of the following criteria:

- Areas where WFP has the greatest project presence (North and West) were taken into consideration;
- Areas targeted with WFP resources, recurrent drought situations, and those with food vulnerability, such as the western region;
- The southern and western regions were prioritised by the VAM system as the areas with the greatest incidence of poverty and food vulnerability.

Activities undertaken

20. In terms of quantitative and factual data gathered by the evaluation team, the two main sources were WFP and various GoH ministries/agencies. Field observations and the following analysis were not oriented to thoroughly assess the veracity of those data but to establish their credibility within the framework of the evaluation.

21. The evaluation team was composed of two Canadian and two Honduran consultants. One team concentrated its work in the south with a particular emphasis on assistance to vulnerable groups and activities related to sustainable management of natural resources, while the other group covered the School Feeding Programme and thematic funding in HIV/AIDS in the west and north[12]. However both groups visited a sample of schools (the School Feeding Program is the prime activity within the Honduras CP) in all three areas, which allowed for a comparative analysis that lead to similar trends and findings. The mission feels that this allowed for adequate coverage of activities and issues. Despite the intense schedule, both groups spared no effort to share and consolidate findings and observations, and compare notes from field visits, which comprised the following activities:

- **Interviews and focus group discussions**: During the project visits, discussions were held with key informants and beneficiaries. Key informants contacted during the field visits included: i) community leaders; ii) NGO representatives operating in the project areas; iii) line ministry staff at the district and community level; iv) project committee members; and v) teachers. Three main rapid appraisal techniques were used during the field visits to gather information: i) focus group discussions were held, which proved to be a very effective way of gathering and cross-checking information[13]; ii) on-the-spot individual interviews (particularly with women) were undertaken when visiting the project sites; and finally iii) direct observation of project outputs was undertaken to assess the quality and use of the assets created;
- **Collection of key information:** A specific checklist was prepared for each of the projects visited, based on the information gathered during the preparatory phase (in Tegucigalpa) and on the evaluation matrix. In line with Enabling Development Policy directives, key information to be collected was essentially as follows:
  - Quality and appreciation of the food delivered;
  - Timeliness of food deliveries (e.g., when compared with actual needs);
  - Beneficiaries' views on the benefits created by the project;
  - Beneficiaries' and key informants' views on the targeting mechanisms of the interventions;
  - Beneficiaries' role in project identification and implementation.

The information collected, though essentially of a qualitative nature, was then consolidated into tables to allow for a more systematic analysis of the findings (see Field findings presented in Annex 5).

22. Finally, during the country study, a joint **briefing session** for WFP Country Office staff and key partners was organized. Following the field visits, **two briefing sessions** were carried out: one with

[12] The selection of visited zones and project sites was done accordingly to VAM and current coverage of the SFP.

[13] In most cases, the mission tried to limit group size to a maximum of 15 people, and separate sessions were held when the presence of key informants or other stakeholders such as WFP monitors was found not to be conducive to the full participation of beneficiaries.

WFP staff and their key partners, and the other with bilateral donors sponsoring the evaluation. The briefing sessions were designed to inform the various stakeholders of the evaluation's objectives and approach and to identify issues that might not have emerged during the inception phase but that might be worth analysing. The briefing sessions were essentially intended to provide feedback to stakeholders and to verify and discuss the preliminary findings of the country study.

23. The mission relied on child malnutrition definitions (global, chronic and acute) and appraisal criteria in use by the MoH and WFP. The mission proceeded on the assumption that these definitions were compatible with UNICEF and WHO definitions. In fact, these definitions serve as the basis and are used in the context of a planned UNICEF-WFP in-depth joint study of child malnutrition. A formal agreement is currently under discussion at the executive level, the purpose of which is to define the nutritional situation of children under 7 years of age in 25 municipalities of Honduras. More specifically, the aim is to categorize children based on established criteria (acute, global and chronic malnutrition, as well as cases of overweight and obesity), and to gain better knowledge of anaemia among children and pregnant women.

1.2 DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED AND LIMITATIONS OF THE EXERCISE

24. The limitations of sound performance monitoring and of the RBM evaluation framework added to the complexity of the evaluation exercise. Hence, aside from the quantitative information and data found in the reporting system, the mission had to rely on stakeholder interviews and its own field observations for qualitative information. It was thus not always possible for the mission to garner development findings from activities because of limited access to performance data, or because the potential impacts are still too embryonic.

25. Several information sources were directly affected by Hurricane Mitch. All databases within the Ministry of Education for example were completely destroyed as a result of the disaster. The absence of hard data to support the findings, added to the absence of baselines and evaluations contributed to the difficulty in assessing the progress towards results in a systematic manner. Appreciation of outcomes or potential impacts is based more on opinions and observation than on quantitative data. Nevertheless, the mission made all possible efforts to utilize triangulation in order to validate findings.

26. Documentation analysis and meetings with WFP staff and key stakeholders confirm that WFP has developed a fair number of strategic alliances with various partners. The team was hoping for more time in individual meetings with local representation of UN agencies (i.e. UNICEF, UNAIDS, PAHO, WHO) to assess, in all cases, the exact nature, extent and quality of these alliances. Given the wide range and high number of activities to cover, the mission acknowledges that some categories of key stakeholders warranted more attention than they received. It would then have been possible to take a closer look at issues such as knowledge sharing and comparative analysis of the costs of food aid with other delivery options.

27. Despite the above limitations, the mission judges it expended all efforts to approach the evaluation exercise in the most pragmatic manner. It also strongly feels that, despite the fact that the sample of projects sites and activities visited and observed are not optimally representative of the "universe" of WFP's development interventions in the country (for example eighteen schools were visited during the field mission, whereas there are more than 300 schools only in one of the four departments visited in the southern region), the combination of information and feedback from a variety of sources tends to support the field findings. The evaluation team attempted to optimise its collective experience when capturing, examining and analysing the data and information collected. It is confident in its analysis and stands behind the major findings of the report.

2 WFP INTERVENTIONS IN THE COUNTRY-SPECIFIC CONTEXT

2.1 THE COUNTRY CONTEXT

2.1.1 Socioeconomic data

28. Honduras is the second poorest country in Central America. In 2000, it had a population of 6.5 million. By 2003, the estimated population (CEPAL) was 7 million. The country has an annual per capita income of US$909; Honduras and Nicaragua are the only two countries in the region with per capita income below $1,000. Income distribution is inequitable: the wealthiest 10% of the population receives 36.5% of the total national income, while the poorest 40% receives 11.8%[14]. Honduras ranks fourth in the world in terms of the largest income gap between the wealthiest 10% and the poorest 10% of its population[15].

Table 1: Population, GDP, and inequality in income distribution by Central American country, 2000 (absolute and relative numbers)

		GDP		Income Distribution (1)			
				Participation in Total National Income			
Country	Population (000s)	Total (Millions in US$)	Per Capita (US$)	Poorest 40%	Very Poor 30%	Poor 20%	Wealthiest 10%
Costa Rica	4,023.5	15,885	3,948	15.3	25.7	29.7	29.4
El Salvador	6,276.0	13,205	2,104	13.8	25.0	29.1	32.1
Guatemala	11,385.3	19,122	1,680	12.8	20.9	26.1	40.3
Honduras	6,485.5	5,898	909	11.8	22.9	28.9	36.5
Nicaragua	5,071.4	2,396	472	10.4	22.1	27.1	40.5
Panama	2,855.7	10,019	3,508	12.9	22.4	27.7	37.1
Total	**36,097.4**	**66,525**	**1,843**				

Source: *Second Report on Human Development in Central America and Panama,* UNDP, 2003.
(1) For 1999, except in the case of Guatemala and Nicaragua, which are from 1998.

29. Honduras has a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.667, which places the country third in Central America, below Guatemala and Nicaragua. Internationally, Honduras ranks 115th out of 175 countries. Honduras' current HDI is below the median for Latin America and the Caribbean, which is 0.777.

Table 2: HDI trends – Honduras, 1975-2003

1975	1995	1997	1998	2000	2002	2003
0.522	0.524	0.544	0.631	0.651	0.638	0.667

Source: *Human Development Report, 1998, 2002, and 2003.*

30. As can be observed in Table 2, Honduras' HDI rose steadily from 1975 to 1998, though its increase slowed in more recent years, due in part to the fact that educational advances during this period did not allow for much improvement in human development levels. Similarly, the health sector, as measured through nutrition indicators, has not shown much progress[16].

[14] United Nations Development Program. *Second Human Development Report for Central America and Panama*, 2003, p. 68 and beyond.
[15] *Human Development Report 2002*, quoted in the *Report on the Millennium Development Goals*. Honduras 2003. UN System. Honduras.
[16] Ibid, pp. 30-31.

31. According to the 2001 census, 46% of the population lives in urban areas and 54% in rural areas[17]. In 1999, according to Honduras' Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), 66% of households (747,000) lived below the poverty line and 49% lived in extreme poverty or indigence. Geographically, poverty is concentrated in rural areas, where 75% of households are below the poverty line, while in urban areas this figure reaches 57%. Although the incidence of poverty fell during the 1990s (decreasing from 75% in 1991 to 63% in 1998), it increased by almost 3% in the wake of Hurricane Mitch, reversing a trend that had until then been positive[18].

32. The Second *Human Development Report for Central America and the Caribbean* (2003) indicates that 53% of Honduras' population lives in extreme poverty, which means that they are unable to satisfy basic daily needs[19]. It is interesting to note that the Government of Honduras (GoH), along with international institutions, indicates that half of the country's population is living in poverty. Similarly, there is a consensus on the main causes contributing to the situation: slow economic growth, low per capita income, unequal distribution of income and access to the means of production, and low levels of education[20]. If the Unsatisfied Basic Needs (UBNs) approach is used, in 1997, 47% of households had one or more UBNs. Similarly, the concentration of poverty was in rural areas, where 58% of households had one or more UBNs, as did 35% of households in urban areas. In 1999, with the passage of Hurricane Mitch, these numbers increased to 48% nationally and 37% in urban areas.

Macroeconomic indicators

33. Macroeconomic indicators for Honduras show that, over the 1990-2000 decade, the country experienced a 3.5% increase in the real GDP per capita (based on 1995 dollars), which is considered very low. In Central America, the regional real GDP per capita growth was 18.7%, rising from US$1,402 to US$1,664. The gap between Honduras and other countries (with the exception of Nicaragua) is very large[21]. In the last few years, the national economy has been characterised as shifting from being a producer to an importer of basic grains. There has been an increase in imported goods and services without a correlated increase in consumption, which would have contributed to positively affect the GDP. From 1998 to 1999, the GDP decreased by 1.9% as a result of the consequences of Hurricane Mitch[22] (see special presentation of Hurricane Mitch in section 2.1.2).

34. As regards per capita social expenditures (Table 3), Honduras has experienced constant increases, going from US$ 41 in 1980 to US$ 45 in 1990, and US$ 75.50 in 2002. However, compared to the rest of the Latin American and Caribbean region, Honduras and Nicaragua are laggard countries, having the lowest per capita social expenditures[23]. In 2002, social expenditures totalled US$ 732.8 million. Its distribution was as follows: Ministry of Education, 61.9%; Ministry of Health, 30.2%; the Honduran Social Investment Fund (FHIS), 5.5%; and the Family Allowance Programme (PRAF), 2.4%. The GoH has made an effort to reduce public expenditures and increase social expenditures, and assign the latter greater priority.

---

17 UNDP. *Human Development Report 2003*. The culture: a means and an end for development, pp. 72-73.
18 UNDAF Honduras. *United Nations Development Assistance Framework. 2000*; PRS HON 2002.
19 Ibid, pp. 40-41.
20 PRS HON 2002.
21 See UNDP, *Second Human Development Report for Central America and Panama*, 2003, p. 69.
22 Sectoral Document, Health. Presentation to *Grupo Consultivo*, June 10-11, 2004, p. 13.
23 CEPAL numbers, cited by UNDP. *HDI Honduras 2003*. Honduras had per capita social expenditures in 1997 dollars of 57, representing 7.4% of the GDP and 34.3% of public expenditures 1998-1999 period.

Table 3: Honduras demographic and socioeconomic indicators

Demographic Indicators	Unit	Honduras
Population (2001)	Million inhabitants	6.4
Urban population (2001)	Million inhabitants	2.9
Rural population (2001)	Million inhabitants	3.5
Population growth rate	%	2.6
Infant mortality rate (2000)	For every 1,000 born	34
Overall fertility rate (2001)	Number of children	3.93
Social and Economic Indicators		
GDP at market prices (2000), UNDP, CA & Panama 2003	US$ (millions)	5.8
GDP growth rate (2000)	%	3.5
Real GDP per capita (2000)	US$	909
Income concentration	Gini Index	0.564
Population living with less than US$1/day (2003)	%	24.3
Total population living below the poverty line (measured in UBNs 1999), PRS	%	48
Urban population that lives below the poverty line (measured in UBNs) 1999, PRS	%	37
Rural population living below the poverty line (poverty line measured in UBNs) 1999, PRS	%	58
Population with access to adequate sanitation services (2001)	%	78
Chronic malnutrition in infants	%	36.2
Farming contribution to the GDP (2002)	%	22.7
Public expenditure in health (2002)	%	30.2
Literacy rate of adults (2001)	%	75.6
Net rate of primary enrolment (2001)	%	88
Public expenditure in education (2002)	%	61.9

Sources: *Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) 2002*; *HDI 2003*; UNDP, *Second Report on Human Development in Central America and Panama, 2003,* and sectoral documents presented to the Consultative Group, June 2004.

2.1.2 Rural poverty and food security situation

Rural poverty

35. Chronic malnutrition rates in Central America range from 23% to 48%, illustrating the fact that children commonly face prolonged and repeated exposure to malnutrition. National average rates of acute malnutrition in Central America mask significant geographic and socioeconomic variations. Groups in marginalized areas, especially children under five years old, are particularly prone to nutritional crises resulting from natural or economic shocks.

Table 4: Regional malnutrition ratios

Country	Total Population			Number of Undernourished People			Proportion in Total Population		
	1990-92	1995-97	1999-2001	1990-92	1995-97	1999-2001	1990-92	1995-97	1999-2001
Central America	28.7	32.7	34.0	5.0	6.5	7.5	17	20	21
Costa Rica	3.1	3.7	4.0	0.2	0.2	0.2	7	6	6
El Salvador	5.2	5.8	6.3	0.6	0.8	0.8	12	14	14
Guatemala	9.0	10.2	11.4	1.4	2.2	2.9	16	21	25
Honduras	**5.0**	**5.8**	**6.4**	**1.1**	**1.2**	**1.3**	**23**	**20**	**20**
Nicaragua	3.9	4.6	5.1	1.2	1.5	1.5	30	33	29
Panama	2.4	2.7	2.9	0.5	0.6	0.7	20	22	26

Source: FAO, *World Food Insecurity 2003*.

Table 5: Regional child malnutrition

Children under 5 years of age, prevalence of:	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Nicaragua
Acute malnutrition (<-2 standard deviation [SD])	1.5	2.5	1.4[24]	2
Acute malnutrition in drought-affected areas (<-2 SD)	2.5	3.2	5.9[25]	3.3
Chronic malnutrition (<-2 SD of height for age)	23	48	38[26]	33

Source: *WFP/PRRO 10212*, *Situation Analysis*, p. 7 (September 2002).

36. As mentioned above, despite the GDP growth, the incidence of poverty has not greatly decreased. More than 70% of Hondurans live in poverty conditions; 63.5% of them in urban areas and 75.8% in rural areas, making Honduras the Central American country with the highest incidence of overall poverty, even compared with Nicaragua and Guatemala. In terms of expenditures per person, per month, in US dollars, total poverty is US$66.60 and extreme poverty is US$ 37.90. This is one of the highest poverty lines for Central America, inferior only to Panama's[27].

Malnutrition and food security issues

37. Honduras places fourth in Central America in terms of infant mortality and third in terms of life expectancy at birth, as shown in Table 6. With respect to Unsatisfied Basic Needs, 64.9% of Honduran households at national level have UBNs. In rural areas, this figure increases to 77.5% and in urban areas decreases to 52.1% of households[28]. There is evidence that the primary cause of childhood death is linked to nutritional vulnerability[29].

Table 6: Life expectancy at birth and infant mortality in Central America, 2000-2005

Country	Life Expectancy at Birth	Infant Mortality (Rate per 1,000 live births)
Costa Rica	78.1	10.5
El Salvador	70.6	26.4
Guatemala	65.9	41.2
Honduras	**71.0**	**31.2**
Nicaragua	69.5	35.7
Panama	74.7	20.6

Source: UNDP. *Second Human Development Report for Central America and Panama*, 2003.

38. Food security is defined as access by the overall population at all times to nutritionally adequate and safe food in the amounts required for normal growth and development and to live an active and healthy life. Food security comprises various components, the most important being: i) the availability of food; ii) access to food; iii) stability in the supply of food; iv) adequate use of food; and v) sustainability of the agri-food system[30].

39. Until the early 1990s, Honduras was nearly self sufficient in producing maize, beans, rice and sorghum, the four grains that constitute the population's basic diet. Since then, there has been a growing food deficit, increasing at a rate of approximately 25,000 metric tonnes per year and, if wheat imports were included, the deficit would increase to approximately 150,000 metric tonnes per year. According to trend projections in the 1990s, the national food deficit was expected to reach 500,000 metric tonnes by 2005. However, the balance achieved by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock already showed a deficit of close to 500,000 metric tonnes in 2001[31]. Climatic shocks (El Niño and Hurricane Mitch, in particular) explain in good part the degradation in food production capacity.

24 National Micronutrients Survey, 1996.
25 UNICEF/WFP Nutritional Assessment 2001.
26 Demographic and Health Survey 2001.
27 UNDP. *Second Human Development Report for Central America and Panama*, 2003, pp. 54-55.
28 UNDP. *Second Human Development Report for Central America and Panama*, 2003. op. cit., p. 59.
29 Health Sector Document. Presentation to the Consultative Group, op. cit., p. 38.
30 Compton, l. Paul, Loma-Ossorio, Enrique, Zelaya, Carlos A. *Food Security in Central America.* Mimeo. w/d.
31 PMA. VAM, op. cit.

40. The limited garden of economic capacity to access the food available in the markets is one of the main causes of malnutrition. The origins of food insecurity can also be found in social marginalization, lack of basic and health services, deficiencies in education and the living conditions of a great portion of the population. All of these alarming poverty indicators are aggravated in the case of vulnerable population segments: women, children and indigenous peoples.

41. Honduras is characterized by a high vulnerability to climatic risk. The regions of the country that are most affected in this regard are the north, which is affected by floods; the south, which includes the departments of Choluteca, Valle and El Paraiso; the southern portion of Francisco Morazán, which is affected by extensive droughts and low crop yields because the lands are not suitable for farming; and the west, which also has totally arid lands and faces extensive droughts.

Hurricane Mitch[32]

- Between October 26 and November 1, 1998, weather patterns associated with El Niño parched crops in large areas of Honduras and Nicaragua, the hardest hit countries, drowned them in others, and hammered them with the devastating winds and rain of Hurricane Mitch.
- In Central America, more than 9,000 people died and nearly 3 million were left homeless. Floodwaters and mudslides swept away private and public structures such as buildings, bridges, roads and power lines. For example, the three storey HQ building of the Honduran Ministry of Education was flooded in the Tegucigalpa city centre, resulting in the complete loss of its official archives, printed documents, electronic data, equipment and vehicles.
- As for food security, fields of maize, beans and other basic crops were laid to waste. Honduras lost more than half its staple maize crop; losses in coffee and other export crops were devastating for the national economy and for its capacity to purchase necessary basic commodities. Honduras faced an immediate humanitarian crisis and a long-term threat to food security.
- International response was swift and effective. WFP responded immediately with food aid through its emergency nationwide network while the government struggled to get organized. Witnesses claim that WFP was instrumental in keeping the social order in disaster areas by avoiding desperate collective attempts to get food. The UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) sought US$150 million for relief and rehabilitation. Later, the FAO organized the distribution of seeds, fertilizer and hand tools to farmers.

  - More than 5,600 people died in Honduras;
  - 24% of the total population was affected;
  - 80% of the GNP was temporary lost.

2.1.3 Government and donor priorities, policies and programmes addressing poverty and food insecurity

Sustainable development and poverty reduction programmes

42. The Honduras Poverty Reduction Strategy was developed in a participatory manner with citizen consultations in 2000-2001. The PRSP enabled the GoH to clearly identify the poverty situation and its underlying factors. It gave priority to five main approaches focused on: i) working to promote a sustainable reduction of poverty; ii) working to support the most marginalized groups and areas in the country; iii) strengthening the participation of civil society and decentralization; iv) strengthening governance and participatory democracy; and v) reducing environmental vulnerability and its impact

[32] FAO. "The state of food insecurity in the world-1999", p. 25.

on poverty. These strategic approaches enable the GoH to focus its resources on more equitable development and also to meet the requirements of international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB).

43. In order to carry out PRSP proposals, the GoH prioritised the education and health sectors. Educational programmes and projects were developed to revive the efficiency and quality of the educational process, such as the Education for All (EFA) Plan[33], Community Education (PROHECO), the Transformation of National Education Project, Associations for Local Educational Development (ADEL), etc. The PRSP have proven to be a multisector development coherence tool for the GoH and its international cooperation partners. According to the Consultative Group of Donors, there is coherence between the government's plan, which is structured by sector, and the PRS, which is structured by programme area[34].

44. The health sector has also emphasized policies to strengthen its strategy and programmes. These policies consist in carrying out a sector reform, providing better access to services, and ensuring the supply and availability of essential medicines and critical supplies. The health sector's paper to the Consultative Group states: "*under the PRS framework, the National Policy on Nutrition becomes a transversal axis that requires support from the various interventions proposed in the six sectoral tables. The main areas of the National Policy on Nutrition are aimed at preventing and treating the nutritional deficiencies of the groups that are at greater risk; guarantee the quality of the food; improve knowledge and practices about food and nutrition among the population; improve the institutional problem solving capacity of the government and private sector to implement the policy; and, to contribute to improving food security in the household. All activities aimed at solving the problem of nutrition are co-ordinated with the national policies on food security.*"[35]

Recent rural poverty reduction[36] measures adopted by the GoH

- Passing of the Law for Financial Strengthening of the Agricultural Producer
- Creation of the Integrated System for Land Registration (SINREC)
- Titling of 10,237 parcels of land for independent farmers in 2002 and 8,870 in 2003
- Management of 243,309 hectares of administrative and plot limits to complete the Agrarian and Forestry Land Register
- Promotion of the Policy of Gender Equality in the Honduran agricultural sector through BANADESA, with an increase in loan ceilings from Lps. 40,000 (US$ 2,140) to Lps. 150,000 (US$ 8,030), equal to the ceiling for men
- Signing of the INAM agreement and creation of the Zamorano Agricultural School to provide technical support to rural women
- Completion by the MoA of the State Policy for the Development of the Agri-food Sector and the Rural Environment of Honduras 2004-2021

45. Poverty reduction is a priority of the GoH, although it is a goal that will be reached in the medium and long terms if conditions are met. One condition, for example, is the feeling of ownership of the PRS by the GoH and civil society, a feeling that is limited at the moment, thus affecting implementation[37]. In the meantime, however, there is a countrywide effort in the education and health sectors to help achieve this national goal. It should be noted that WFP's Country

[33] This was developed in the 1990s.
[34] June 2004 Consultative Group – discussion papers.
[35] Health sector document presented to the Consultative Group in June 2004, p. 18.
[36] Second Progress Report of the PRS, presented to the Consultative Group, June 2004.
[37] Interview by the FAAD mission to Honduras with technical staff at the UNAT (Unidad de Apoyo Técnico/Technical Support Unit), May 2004.

Programme is consistent with these goals and the EDP, as it has the same target population and a compatible conceptual framework that emphasizes investment in human capital as one way to achieve sustainable development.

46. The Poverty Reduction Strategy was formulated by the government of Honduras based on the National Reconstruction Master Plan following Hurricane Mitch and after the Stockholm meeting[38]. Food security was not originally included in the Strategy, nor was land tenure, and the problem of hunger in the country – a problem faced mostly by people in rural areas – is not considered. This Strategy to date has not been implemented in an optimal manner, notably because of a lack of financial resources due to the refusal of the current Government of Honduras to sign a letter of intent with the International Monetary Fund. The GoH presented the Strategy, which included four main sectors (water, health, agriculture and forestry), at the Advisory Group meeting held in June 2004.

47. Despite the government's efforts to carry out the Poverty Reduction Strategy, one of the main obstacles it is facing is the absence of an institution responsible for its implementation. In addition, there is still no system in place to ensure proper monitoring and evaluation of the PRS. However, the government is currently making efforts to meet the millennium goals and is adapting the Strategy according to these.

MDGs and UNDAF

48. The 2000 Millennium Summit reintroduced all the previous commitments since the 1970s with respect to the empowerment and protection of women and children, preservation of the environment, sustainable development of the habitat, etc. Honduras, along with the other nations present (189), signed the Millennium Declaration, signifying its agreement to promote the conditions and actions needed to reach the established objectives by 2015. Due to structural limitations in the economy and in the GoH's capacity to levy revenues, Honduras was thus entitled to financial assistance to implement its PRS through the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC).

49. Agencies within the UN system and international donors have identified the reduction of poverty through programmes and projects that support health and education, governance, democracy and participation. The *United Nations Development Assistance Framework* (UNDAF) document reflects their concern to support the PRS and the achievement of the MDGs through implemented programs. For Honduras, it outlines four overall areas of cooperation: education, health, economic growth and sustainable development, with cross-cutting themes for every programme, project or activity such as the enforcement of human rights, democratic governance, the reduction of poverty in vulnerable and excluded groups, gender equality and support to children and youth.

National food security policy

50. Honduras' PRS aims to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable families. However, food security is not directly addressed through a formal national policy. Hunger is a fact of life for the Honduran poor (63% of the population[39]), and a food security policy is very much needed. The Consultative Group of Donors is contributing to discussions on the strategic importance and positive impact of a national food security policy. A National Nutrition Plan exists in draft form and was recently presented to the June 2004 Consultative Group as part of the health sector position paper. It was also presented by the Government at the G15 meeting[40], but has not yet been presented to the National Congress for discussion and approval. WFP takes an active part in advocacy work to

[38] At the second meeting of the Consultative Group for the Reconstruction and Transformation of Central America, held in Stockholm May 25 to 28, 1999, the Governments of Central America and the international community committed themselves to sharing the responsibility for achieving the reconstruction and the transformation of the countries concerned, thus establishing a long term partnership guided by the priorities defined by the Central American countries.

[39] WFP. VAM document, October 2003.

[40] Through the Stockholm follow-up effort, the highly successful G-15 donors group has been working together closely to ensure the full application of the Stockholm Principles of poverty alleviation, environmental protection, accountability and transparency, civil society participation, and democracy.

promote the Plan. It has taken part in all document development meetings in a strategic alliance with the Ministry of Public Health and other public and private institutions. WFP's advocacy role in this particular case is to ensure that the basic elements of a national food security policy are included in the National Nutrition Plan.

51. WFP also works with two groups that promote food security:

- The "Coalición de Seguridad Alimentaría y Nutrición" (SAN), in which 24 organizations participate and work at promoting a public nutrition policy. This forum is headed by the Ministry of Health;
- The "Alianza Nacional Contra el Hambre" (ANCHA) [National Alliance against Hunger] is a forum that reflects and discusses aspects of food production related to food security. It is headed by the Ministry of Agriculture, assisted by the FAO, AID and other organizations.[41]

52. The discussion regarding the need for a legal framework to support food security has been revived by the UN system as part of the UNDAF framework, with the support of WFP, the FAO and PAHO. Discussions with the GoH revolve around the development of a reference framework for the formulation of public policy, and the legal consequences of such a framework. Yet, no timetable for the effective implementation of the framework could be communicated to the mission in light of its political nature and the public administration implications associated with it.

Main ongoing programmes in the field of food security

53. Due to the complexity of food security as a government issue, the current PRSP deal only indirectly and partially with the problems of food insecurity and food deficit in the country's agricultural production. However, the PRSP establish programmes and projects that will be or are being implemented to achieve rural poverty reduction and that could be linked to food security.[42]

54. The traditional diet of Hondurans consists of grains such as maize, beans and rice, also known as "basic grains," which constitute the population's daily diet. The production of basic grains in 2001 represented 7.6% of the agri-food GDP, and 12% of the agricultural GDP.

55. A policy document is being drafted by the Agri-Food Sectoral Table attached to the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), which states: "Honduran imports come from countries that protect their farmers. The credit conditions that they offer and the complement that, in the same sense, is produced by in-kind food aid, creates distortion in the country grain trade which in turn provokes State interventions that aggravate the distorted situation of such markets."[43]

Education

56. There have been some advances in the education sector in the last decades, mainly at the primary level. Illiteracy has decreased by more than 20 points in the last 30 years; average schooling has increased from 2.3 years in 1974 to 4.6 years in 2004; and the net enrolment rate at the primary level has increased from 78% in 1980 to 86.7% in 1999. In 1997, the growth of the enrolment rate was greater in rural areas (2.5%) than in urban areas (1.5%). Nevertheless, serious deficiencies prevail. Among them, the low coverage at the secondary level (especially in technical and vocational training) and, in post-secondary education, serious problems in repeating grades and dropout rates.

57. Since the 1990s, administrative and institutional reforms have been promoted to increase the efficiency of the delivery of education by the Ministry of Education (MoE). In this context, in 1996 the delegation of functions from the central to the departmental level was promoted by creating Departmental and District Educational Directors' offices.

58. In basic education, the level of schooling and completion rates are influenced by factors such as the frequency of failure, seasonal work, dropout rates, and the high number of over aged students.

[41] The level of WFP's CO participation in ANCHA's activities was judged by some donor community representatives to be uneven and not as optimal as expected.

[42] Annex 1 presents a list of poverty reduction programmes in rural areas that were launched in 2000-2004.

[43] State Policy for the Agri-Food Sector and the Rural Environment of Honduras, 2003-2021, p. 25. Mimeo.

The majority of children who do not complete primary school are repeaters. Among the most relevant causes for this behaviour are the teachers' level of qualification and absenteeism[44] (partly associated with the family's level of poverty), lack of teaching supplies, outdated study plans, predominance of multi-grade schools with teachers unprepared for such working environments, and the lack of pre-school education[45].

59. In 2001, the net enrolment rate for pre-school, primary and secondary school was greater than in any year in the 1990s, as a result of the proportion of 5 and 6 year old children entering pre-school education, which rose from 14.1% in 1990 to 37.3% in 2001. Similarly, the net enrolment rate in primary education increased to 88.3% and to 35.3% for secondary education by 2001.

60. The Education for All (EFA) goal rate for net enrolment by 2015 is 100%. The MoE is confident that the net coverage of 100% will be achieved by 2014, if the 0.94% increase of the net enrolment rate achieved during the 1990s is maintained[46]. External factors (teacher and student strikes) may interfere in reaching the EFA objectives.

61. The net combined pre-school, primary and secondary enrolment rate is 58.1% in urban areas, compared to 46.1% in rural areas. The difference is due mainly to enrolment in secondary education, which is 50% in urban areas and 23.1% in rural areas (seasonal crop labour).

62. Government investment in education became significant between 1990 and 1997, when public expenditures in education grew annually by 3.1%, rising from US$ 195.1 million to US$ 235.1 million. From 1997 to 2002, the growth rate was 14.8%, increasing from US$ 235.1 million to US$ 464.7 million. By 2002, education expenditures represented 7.2% of the GDP and 27.4% of total central government expenditures.

63. Education is one of the GoH's priority areas. This is reflected in the PRS and the Ministry of Education's Strategy and Plan of Action 2002-2006. It intends to fulfil the GoH's commitment to Education for All (EFA), although it should be noted that most projects implemented by the MoE are financed with multilateral funds from international cooperation. EFA is based on objectives set at various international summits, the MDGs, the Honduras PRS, and the government's Plan for Education. Honduras was selected for the Fast Track Initiative for EFA supported by the World Bank[47]. In addition to EFA, the MoE has developed a new National Education Curriculum as well as a Geopositional Map of Educational Facilities, and it is currently completing a Master Plan for Educational Infrastructure, which provides for a database for school infrastructure.

HIV/AIDS

64. The 2003 Human Development Report for Honduras (UNDP) considers HIV/AIDS a cause and effect of poverty, stating that "*Poverty and HIV/AIDS may create a vicious circle.*" Honduras has the highest rate of HIV/AIDS in Central America and the fifth highest in the Americas: UNDP is reporting 17% of the patients or 43% of the HIV/AIDS cases in Central America. According to the most recent figures from the Honduran Ministry of Health, Honduras has 15,009 cases of AIDS, in addition to 4,245 HIV+ cases, for a total of 19,245 HIV infected persons. It is estimated that 30% to 50% of cases go unreported, representing approximately 60,000 persons living with HIV/AIDS. These figures suggest that 1.2% of the population over 15 years of age could be infected without reporting the illness because of a lack of education and fear of discrimination, and because many people at risk do not get tested until the symptoms are visible. The number of reported cases and deaths caused by the disease is growing, a trend that reflects the expansive nature of the epidemic. It is important to note the feminisation of the epidemic: of the total cases reported in 1986, 30% were

[44] Absenteeism is one of the main reasons schoolchildren fail to complete primary school. The main causes of this are insufficient food and a lack of money for school supplies, clothes and shoes. In both school absenteeism and desertion, the most influential factor is economic.

[45] MoH presentation. Op. cit, Fig. 7.

[46] To date, 43% of the goal has been reached.

[47] UNDP. *Millennium Development Goals Report*, Honduras 2003.

women, as were 47% of the cases reported in 2003[48]. Additional information pertaining to Honduras is presented in Volume II, Annex 1.

2.2 WFP INTERVENTIONS IN HONDURAS

2.2.1 Portfolio of interventions and their evolution since 1997

65. As per its UN mandate and until 1980, one of WFP's main objectives is the alleviation of hunger through the delivery of food to duly targeted populations in crisis. In 1970, WFP signed a basic agreement with the GoH to provide food aid, thus beginning collaboration with Honduras. After Hurricane Mitch hit Honduras and Central America, WFP aimed its Emergency Operation (EMOP) and Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) (1999-2001) at emergency assistance and rehabilitation of a productive and social infrastructure, and later at vulnerable groups and pre-school and schoolchildren. Table 7 presents in metric tonnes the quantity of food distributed among the five main projects/programmes between 2000 and 2003 (see brief description of past projects in Annex 1 and details on the current CP in Table 8). The following represent the key activities which led to the current CP as well as an on-going regional project:

Participatory Forestry Management Project (Honduras 5609)

This project was approved in August 29, 1996, began operations in 1998, and lasted five years. The total cost of the project was US$ 10,219.564 with a contribution of the COHDEFOR of US$ 3,115.000 (30% of the total cost). The modality of assistance consisted essentially in food for work (agriculture, soil conservation, environmental protection, social infrastructure). 17,055 beneficiaries were targeted during this activity.

Project for Health and Community Development (Honduras 5691)

This project was planned to last five years (1997-2002). Because of Hurricane Mitch, it started only in 2001 and was extended to 31 December 2003. The project was US$8,890,434, and the estimated numbers of beneficiaries by category are: 19,200 families, 2,500 children, 3,050 pregnant mothers and 4,500 school children.

Regional Prolonged Relief Operation (PRRO 10212)

This is a regional project, which is planned for three years. It launched the operations in March 2003, and should end in February 2006. The total cost is US$66,843,442 of which WFP contributes US$56,622,080. The estimated numbers of beneficiaries by category are: 134,400 women, and 105,600 men, for a total of 240,000 people to whom 34,776 metric tonnes of food will be distributed.

Table 7: Comparison of food distributed by project/programme (in MT)[49]

Year	PRRO 6089	HON 5691	HON 5609	PRRO 10212	CP 10074	Total
2000	26,258.0	1,828.7	1,600.2			29,686.9
2001	7,582.0	2,192.3	5,299.4			15,073.7
2002	9,849.0	1,491.0	2,701.0			14,041.0
2003	1,106.0	1,969.0	321.0	5,166.0	4,799.0	13,331.0

Source: WFP - Country Office, June 2004.

[48] UNDP. *Human Development Report*, Honduras 2003.

[49] Honduras 5691: Project for Health and Community Development; PRRO 10212: Regional Prolonged Relief Operation; Honduras 5609: Participatory Forestry Management Project.

2.2.2 Outline of current country programme

Table 8: Summary of the current Country Programme 10074 (2002-2006)

Objective	Intended Outcomes	Beneficiaries	Cost Estimate (US$)		Current Status
			WFP	GoH	
Activity 1 - Integrated Assistance for Vulnerable Women and Children					
• Increase use of health services by expectant and nursing mothers and their children under 2 • Improve the health condition and nutritional status of children under 2 and expectant and nursing mothers • Increase vulnerable women's knowledge of basic health, nutrition and sanitation	• Attendance of health centres by rural women and their infants increased by 10% per year • Women's health and prenatal controls increased by 25% • The number of children under 2 showing normal growth patterns increased by 90% • The number of women attending health centres who have adopted better nutritional and sanitary practices at home increased by 10% after the first year	Of the 18,000 total beneficiaries, an annual average of 3,600 expectant and nursing mothers and their children under 2 will be assisted with family rations for a period of 180 days. Beneficiaries will come from 33 municipalities in 4 departments of the selected areas	3.2 million	2.3 million	Ongoing
Activity 2 - Investment in Human Capital Through Education and Training					
• Increase school enrolment and attendance, thereby reducing dropout rates • Improve students' nutrition and health status through improved access to complementary rations, health care and sanitation • Increase functional literacy, primarily for rural women	• School enrolment rates for boys and girls increased by 10% • Attendance, especially for girls, increased by 15% • Malnutrition reduced by 10%, short-term hunger relieved • Anaemia reduced by 50%	The beneficiary population will be 125,000 boys and girls for each year of the five-year period. These children will be provided with rations in school for 160 days. In addition, 10,000 women a year will receive food for learning rations as incentives for them to attend literacy classes for 80 days	2.3 million	1.3 million	Ongoing
Activity 3 - Enabling Poor Households to Make a Shift to More Sustainable Livelihoods and the Prevention and Mitigation of Natural Disasters					
• Enable men and women villagers to undertake sustainable forest management techniques • Increase food security and household income for targeted beneficiaries • Increase community capacity for disaster prevention and mitigation	• 10,000 participants per year (50% of them women) trained in the use of sustainable forest management techniques • The household food security and income of participating families improved by 30%, with women controlling at least 50% of the assets created by the activity • Families and communities less vulnerable to natural disasters	Some 50,000 men and women from the most vulnerable food insecure families living in forest areas in the CP selected areas	5.0 million	2.4 million	Ceased operations in 2003 because of budgetary problems: the GoH can no longer respect its initial commitment and COHDEFOR is undergoing an institutional crisis
Supplementary Activity 1: Additional Schoolchildren					
• Attract children to school in selected areas where enrolment rates are lowest	• Make a difference in attendance rates	A total of 60,000 additional schoolchildren in the target areas will be included to increase the impact of the school feeding activity	840,727	285,000	Ongoing
Supplementary Activity 2: Natural Disaster Mitigation to Prevent Forest Fires, Flooding and Drought					
• Prevent and mitigate the effects of flooding, drought and forest fires • Reduce soil erosion and increase moisture retention through the design and implementation of watershed management plans for selected communities	• Risk management plans prepared and implemented in selected communities and municipalities, including the protection of forests against fires and flooding • The capacity of local municipalities and communities enhanced through training • Watershed management plans designed and implemented in selected communities	10,000 men and women from poor rural families in targeted areas during the periods of greatest food scarcity (five months per year)	1.2 million	410,000	Was never launched

66. As of June 2004, Basic Activities 1 and 2 are operational; Activity 3 is officially terminated as a result of budgetary problems at the central level and acute organizational problems within COHDEFOR. The planned supplementary activities – abandoned because Activity 3 the major and driving activity was left out for the above reasons - were consequently replaced by the following additional activities:

- **Assistance to Vulnerable Groups - HIV/AIDS:** This is a pilot project launched in agreement with the Ministry of Health, CARE and WFP. It is carried out in the north coast and San Pedro Sula areas, where the largest concentration of cases of HIV/AIDS is found. The Garifuna ethnic population is being attended by *Médecins Sans Frontières / Médicos sin Fronteras* (MSF). In all interventions with these vulnerable groups, WFP provides food from Basic Activity 1. The partners (CARE, MSF) supplement the food with texturized soya, tuna, etc.;
- **Assistance to Vulnerable Groups - TB:** This project is conducted in co-ordination with the Ministry of Health and with the financial assistance of the GoH Global Fund for HIV/AIDS and TB;
- **Assistance to Vulnerable Groups - Community Kitchen:** This modality is implemented during the critical months of food insecurity (May-August) that affects any given community almost entirely. WFP is currently working in co-ordination with NGOs in the north zone (Catholic Christian Fund Honduras (CCFH) and World Vision). WFP provides the food and the NGOs organize the support community and provide training in food preparation, monitor the weight and height of children and make house calls to breastfeeding and pregnant mothers. The beneficiaries supplement the assistance with what they can reasonably provide, mainly vegetables and wood.

Key Findings on WFP Development Programming

- The WFP Country Programme in Honduras is firmly engaged in development programming and has clearly applied the EDP principles in the formulation of the CP.
- A qualitative change was introduced by prioritising advocacy (raising awareness that food insecurity means that a large part of the Honduran population suffers from hunger); mobilizing the private sector to join the cause; and prioritising investment in human capital in accordance with GoH guidelines, thus making the School Feeding Programme the current backbone of the WFP.

3 MAIN FINDINGS

3.1 RELEVANCE OF THE WFP COUNTRY PROGRAMME AND EDP

This chapter presents an analysis of the relevance of the Enabling Development Policy (EDP). The analysis is based on Evaluation Question 1 (EQ 1) (How relevant is the EDP in terms of the evolving context of poverty reduction and food security?). Two observations must be made. First, at country level, it is felt that the assessment of relevance and coherence should focus essentially on the WFP Country Programme (CP), which is the concrete instrument of WFP development programming, rather than on the EDP. A two step approach to EQ 1 has therefore been used: i) the assessment of the consistency of the CP with EDP principles; and ii) the assessment of the relevance of the CP with respect to the country context. The second observation is that evaluation sub-questions have been reorganized and sometime regrouped to facilitate presentation. The sequencing of the sections is therefore as follows: i) CP consistency with the EDP; ii) CP consistency and relevance with respect to the national context and international priorities; iii) links between Development and other WFP operations; and iv) relevance of targeting.

3.1.1 The CP's consistency with EDP principles and objectives

67. To date, only one CP (2002-2006) has been developed and formulated exclusively for Honduras. However, WFP was already present in the country prior to the formulation of the CP (and EDP), through its involvement in a number of significant development projects. Analysis of the Country Programme and related documents, such as the *Country Strategy Outline* (2001), allowed for an appreciation of the changes introduced that can be attributed directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, to EDP implementation. Although it is not possible to assess with scientific exactitude to what precise extent the changes identified in the preliminary analysis (Phase 1 report) are due to EDP implementation, they appear, however, to be in line with EDP principles and objectives:

- WFP activities are well integrated into the overall framework for poverty reduction with a clear identification of the links between CP objectives, UNDAF and its harmonized programme cycle, and the Honduras government's strategic priorities;
- The VAM is a very thorough, serious piece of work, and forms the basis for the identification of vulnerable groups and areas within the poorest districts of the country;
- The CP displays a sharpened focus on development activities on EDP priority areas. However, the planned investments for Areas of Focus 4 and 5 have changed dramatically following the termination of Basic Activity 3 and associated transfer of resources. The CP clearly links the basic activities with stated areas of focus spelled out in the EDP. In addition, fundamental principles such as partnership and genuine and systematic targeting are well integrated in the CP and in the implementation of field activities;
- The basic activities within the CP have been presented in accordance with several Logical Framework Analysis (LFA) principles, including both output and outcome indicators. The Programme calls for synergies between the activities and assessment of the effects of WFP interventions on people's livelihoods. The LFA is considered by the team as a work in progress. It has not evenly integrated RBM guidelines and principles and presents some confusion with respect to performance indicators and the identification of results;
- Even though no clear-cut gender strategy was formulated, there are signs of gender mainstreaming and gender equality related principles and targets in the project's design;
- During field visits and key meetings, the evaluation team observed the emphasis in the CP on the need to broaden implementing partnerships, strengthen participatory practices, and enhance the co-management of projects, ownership, and the sustainability of assets.

Key findings on the Country Programme's consistency with the EDP principles

- The design of the Honduras CP Activities developed and promoted by WFP is very consistent with EDP principles and directives.
- Several changes brought forward by the EDP were integrated in WFP activities prior to the formulation of the policy. As is the case for other countries, formulation of the EDP appears to have contributed to the development of a CP displaying a more systematic and rigorous application of the key EDP principles.

3.1.2 Relevance to the country policies and context and to international priorities

National policies and programmes

68. The goal of the 2002-2006 CP "to bring about sustainable improvements in food security for the most disadvantaged rural population" supports PRSP and UNDAF policy objectives aimed at reducing poverty and vulnerability and at promoting participation in the development process by socially and economically excluded peoples. The mission recognizes that, in terms of overall objectives and activities, the Country Programme is highly consistent with national food security and poverty reduction policies and programmes.

69. The *Merienda Escolar* (School Feeding Programme – Basic Activity 2) is in line with the Ministry of Education's 2002-2006 plan and Education for All strategy, and more specifically with the *Programa de Escuelas Saludables*. This programme gives tangible form to the Honduran government's will to contribute to the reduction of poverty by investing in human capital. As stated earlier, the government has clearly demonstrated its will to participate in the process by almost quadrupling its contribution to the School Feeding Programme between 2002 and 2003.

70. The IMANAS (*Alianzas Interinstitucionales para el Mejoramiento Alimentario y Nutricional de las Personas Viviendo con el VIH/SIDA*) pilot project, which coordinates activities with CARE and MSF, falls well within the National Strategic Plan against HIV/AIDS 2003-2007 (PENSIDA II). Health care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS, members of their household and children orphaned by AIDS is one of the national priority intervention areas in the fight against HIV/AIDS. WFP's activity in support of "households, women, and children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS" is therefore in line with the Government of Honduras' development strategies. Addressing issues associated with HIV/AIDS is highlighted in the government's urban development strategies, as the disease has progressed the most in urban areas, and there is an increasing need to deal with the effects of AIDS and HIV transmission.

MDGs and UNDAF

71. In accordance with international priorities, the overall objective of the Honduras PRSP is to reduce poverty. To this end, they establish a number of targets for 2015. The targets most relevant to the scope of WFP's mandate are the following:

- Reduce the incidence of poverty and extreme poverty by 24%;
- Achieve 95% net coverage in access to basic education;
- Reduce the infant and child mortality rate by half;
- Decrease the rate of malnutrition in children under 5 to 20% or less;
- Reduce maternal mortality rates by half;
- Achieve parity and raise the Human Development Index related to gender by 20%;
- Implement a strategy for sustainable development.

72. The various programmes, policy measures and specific projects that constitute the essence of the PRSP are based on five strategic guidelines:

- Prioritise actions that tend to reduce poverty in a sustainable manner;

- Prioritise actions that favour the least developed areas and groups in the country;
- Strengthen the participation of civil society and foster decentralization;
- Strengthen governance and participatory democracy;
- Reduce environmental vulnerability and its impact on poverty.

73. In practice, poverty reduction is the overarching goal of all interventions and, within this framework, particular attention is paid to reducing vulnerability and improving governance. There is a recognised role and scope for food aid based interventions, at least over the medium term, to mitigate short-term transient food insecurity and to provide support to specific vulnerable groups.

74. The Country Programme is explicitly consistent with UNDAF. The Country Programme was developed in accordance with the government's Poverty Reduction Strategy and the UNDAF process. Several main thematic and sectoral areas were identified for the UNDAF Food Security Working Group, led by WFP. In rotation with the FAO, WFP also chaired the Gender and Equity Working Group, and actively participated in discussions on environmental and natural resource sustainability, prevention, risk management and disaster mitigation, health and nutritional education, and proactive employment and income.

Key findings with respect to the national context

- WFP development interventions in the country are relevant to, and consistent with, national policies and programmes, as well as with the MDGs and UNDAF priorities.
- The high and still growing proportion of the Country Programme's local resources allocated to the School Feeding Programme (*Merienda Escolar*) reflects the level of priority that the government is currently attributing to investment in human capital.

3.1.3 Complementarity and integration with EMOP/PRRO

75. The CP was developed and built on the partnership strengths demonstrated in the previous PRRO for Central America (PRRO 6089 - Reconstruction and Rehabilitation for Families in Central America Affected by Hurricane Mitch) and the Community Development Projects. Strategies and activities have been revised in order to make the CP more effective, with clear, expected results that are easier to monitor, more coherent at local level and aimed at creating stronger synergies. All of these fall in line with EDP principles.

76. The CP also builds on alliances developed when carrying out PRRO 6089, which aimed at providing integrated assistance. The CP is contributing to strengthening the already important number of women's groups, whose number increased during the past initiative. The strategic alliances formed during the initiative will continue to be strengthened, thus contributing to the sustainability of actions.

77. In accordance with the EDP, WFP adopted a more sustained development approach to optimise its presence in Honduras, a disaster prone country, allowing WFP to work more actively with development partners and government bodies in targeting national development themes such as food security, good nutrition and assistance to marginalized and vulnerable groups.

78. There are clear synergies between PRRO 10212 and the SFP: The PRRO focuses on areas where there normally are drought problems and operates, with its own funds, in times of crisis and in areas where the problem is recurring, in this case, southern Honduras. The Country Program focuses on places where there are food vulnerability problems and with Government of Honduras funds. The PRRO is present in the south because it is a drought area, while the Country Program is merged with the SFP and the Nutrition program in some municipalities.

79. By 2002 the GoH had drafted the national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) in accordance with its commitments related to the MDGs, and WFP adapted the CP in accordance with the EDP and the GoH's PRSP. Several changes followed and opportunities were explored, including:

- Introducing the VAM concept into WFP country operations in order to efficiently target beneficiaries, using broader criteria such as food availability, access to food, consumption and utilization of food;
- Lobbying with the GoH to endorse and use the VAM as a standard planning and decision-making tool (above political interference) to set the priority of actions and target key national objectives (e.g., targeting of land titling, school feeding in rural areas);
- Carrying out complementary activities and/or innovative projects in support of assisting vulnerable groups, such as people with HIV/AIDS or TB; prioritising advocacy (raising awareness of hunger); and emphasizing the usefulness of investing in human capital;
- Placing new emphasis on the School Feeding Programme as a lasting investment that contributes to the sustainable development of Honduras by raising the literacy and numeracy levels of generations of schoolchildren;
- Institutionalising WFP as a privileged and strategic partner of the GoH in its School Feeding Programme (which went from being a WFP CP component backed by the GoH to a GoH national Programme backed by WFP).

Key findings with respect to EMOP/PRRO

- WFP Country Programme was developed and built on the partnership strengths demonstrated in the previous PRRO for Central America (PRRO 6089 - Reconstruction and Rehabilitation for Families in Central America Affected by Hurricane Mitch) and the Community Development Projects.

Relevance of the targeting of the Country Programme

80. An analysis of WFP's VAM, conducted in Honduras prior to the CP, led to geographical targeting of the most food insecure groups, taking into account several key criteria:

- High malnutrition rates
- Low availability of basic food commodities
- Scarcity of available land combined with adverse climatic conditions, absence or rarity of rainfall, or long, dry periods at the early stages of the agricultural cycle.

81. The data that the VAM unit gathered from various sources allowed municipalities to be classified into three groups according to the level of malnutrition found (stunting, underweight and wasting).

82. Given the lack of relevant and reliable gender disaggregated statistical data, the VAM unit expended particular efforts to research vulnerability with a gender perspective. The data available then showed that a serious gender gap prevailed in most areas and that rural women suffered from a clear disadvantage compared to urban women.

83. Families living in extreme poverty and displaying a higher risk of vulnerability live in the rural communities, in particular within municipalities in the southern and western departments, in mountainous regions with limited–if not very deficient–infrastructures and with limited access to markets and basic services. The geographic focus of the CP is obviously on rural areas.

84. The CP decided to concentrate its assistance in 96 municipalities in a contiguous area in the west and south in the departments of Intibuca and Lempira (La Paz, Copan, Santa Barbara, Ocotepeque, Choluteca, El Paraiso, Francisco Morazán and Valle). The total population of the municipalities is around 1,135,000 inhabitants, which represents close to 19% of the national population. The target population includes an important proportion of marginalized and isolated indigenous peoples (Lencas, Xicaques and Maya-Chortis).

85. Several organizations, such as World Vision, Save the Children and the World Bank, are taking full advantage of the invaluable information and data generated by the VAM exercise. For example, the GoH used the VAM results to prioritise the targeting of land titling in the department of

Comayagua. The GoH also took advantage of the VAM exercise to target rural schools where school meals will be distributed, basing its choice not on political largesse, but rather on genuine needs.

86. CP Basic Activities are most relevant to poverty reduction and food security, given that they are being implemented in the most vulnerable regions and that they target the groups most marginalized by hunger. WFP support is geographically targeted at the departments considered most vulnerable using the VAM priority analysis: Choluteca, El Paraiso, Valle, South Francisco Morazán, Ocotepeque, Santa Barbara, Copan, Cortes and Atlántida (HIV/AIDS), Lempira.

87. This targeting is consistent with the PRS and MDGs. However, the *Second Progress Report on the Poverty Reduction Strategy* mentions that it was difficult to achieve the targets set for 2003 for various reasons, the main one being the non availability of HIPC and IMF funding, which resulted from failure to sign the Letter of Intent for the 2002-2003 period.

88. In this context, the contribution made through CP activities has been almost the only steady support received by those parts of the population with food insecurity. In 2003, for Activity 1, 25,333 people received WFP rations; the beneficiaries included recipients assisted through basic food baskets for vulnerable families, community kettles or the distribution of human corn soy blend (CSB). For Activity 2,600,000 children received school meals.

Key findings on targeting

- The Country Programme's main target group, the chronically food insecure, is consistent with national priorities and strategies, and the main tool utilised (VAM) to identify vulnerable people and areas is appropriate to this end.
- WFP carried out lobbying activities with the GoH to endorse and use the VAM as a standard planning and decision-making tool (above political interference) to set the priority of actions and target key national objectives.
- The VAM system was not only very useful in achieving coherent and relevant targeting for the GoH and WFP, but also proved to be a very useful tool for other international players.
- Placing new emphasis on the School Feeding Programme represents a lasting investment that contributes to the sustainable development of Honduras by raising the literacy and numeracy levels of generations of schoolchildren.

3.2 MECHANISMS, MEANS AND TOOLS INTRODUCED / STRENGTHENED AT COUNTRY LEVEL TO FACILITATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY / COUNTRY PROGRAMME

This chapter reviews the progress made and the constraints faced by the WFP Country Office in implementing the policy directives of the EDP (EQ 2) at country level. The various sub-questions presented in the matrix have been slightly reorganized to allow for smoother presentation of findings, according to the following sequence: i) partnerships (EQ 2.4); ii) stakeholder participation and ownership (EQs 2.2 and 2.8); iii) demonstrating results (EQ 2.5); (iv) gender mainstreaming (EQ 2.6); v) HIV/AIDS mainstreaming (EQ 2.7); and vi) resourcing of the CP and of associated EDP measures (EQs 2.1 and 2.3).

3.2.1 Progress (and changes) in partnership

89. Interviews and literature reviews reveal that the WFP Country Office has made multiple and continuous efforts to develop both implementing and strategic partnerships. Before the formulation of the CP and since Hurricane Mitch, WFP had worked and maintained strong relationships with various donors (USAID, CABEI, GTZ, CIDA) and NGOs (CARE, World Vision, Save the Children, MSF, the Red Cross and numerous national NGOs), government institutions and a fair number of municipalities. Historically, government counterparts have been known to bring significant

contributions to the table. Except in the case of Activity 3, which was abandoned, the government's contribution is between 25% and 30% percent of the value of WFP's contribution.

90. As illustrated in the following examples, WFP established alliances with international and local partners to maximize resources and optimise results:

- It cooperated with PAHO, WHO and the MoH to deworm students every 3 to 4 months so they could better assimilate food, and in providing fluoride treatment to school children.
- It works with Plan International through their Quality Schools Programme (similar to the HSP), which builds kitchens and provides utensils, furnishes classrooms and provides educational material and children's utensils.
- WFP cooperates with World Vision for Nutrited Food Intake (NFI); with MOWAWI Food Distribution to monitor and distribute food in Gracias a Dios municipality; and with Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to monitor the food distribution.
- WFP cooperated with the private sector, working with Banco Ficohsa on pre-school care, and with Land O'Lakes to supplement the SFP with chocolate milk and processed cheese.

91. At the local level, WFP promoted complementary alliances with key players by developing implementing partnerships with an impressive number of government authorities, communities, and national and international (NGOs). In terms of partnerships with multilateral institutions and WFP's participation in for a (ANCHA for example) involving GoH and other multilateral agencies, perceptions were mixed. The mission has identified two groups of WFP partners based on very different interaction levels: one quite proactive in thematic development issues going beyond institutional collaboration, e.g. the United Nations Children's Fund - UNICEF), and the other with apparently uneven interactions (e.g. World Bank (WB), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), and ANCHA.[50] Despite the fact that these perceptions remain subjective and based on impressions, WFP may need to revisit the nature and quality of some of its relationships and partnerships.

Table 9: Partnership in Honduras

Implementation Partner	Support, Co-ordination and Monitoring Partners
Activity 1 – Integrated Assistance for Vulnerable Women and Children	
Ministry of Health	• WHO: participated in the baseline survey with the MoH • UNICEF and PAHO: establishment of a nutritional baseline in drought prone areas • WHO and INCAP provide advisers in each field unit • UNFPA participates in the training of trainers • UNICEF provides training material • Field units co-ordinate actions with municipal and local development committees, NGOs (Ayuda en Acción, World Vision), PRAF and the network of health volunteers (health promoters and monitors) and community leaders
Activity 2 – Investment in Human Capital – School Feeding Programme	
Ministry of Education in partnership with the presidency's Healthy Schools Programme	• WHO & PAHO • EDUCATODOS literacy programme • The MoE ensures joint monitoring through the School Feeding Support Unit (SAEH); the Healthy Schools Programme and WFP
Activity 3 – Natural Resources Management – Disaster Mitigation	
AFE-COHDEFOR	• 10 bilateral and UN system donors participate in the Consultative Forest Group • Sub-projects with, Fondo Cafetero Nacional, IFAD / PRONADEL / SAG (Secretaría de Agricultura y Ganadería) and World Vision • PESA (Programa Especial para la Seguridad Alimentaria) / FAO project in the South

[50] A few bilateral and multilateral organisations representatives who were interviewed expressed some reservations regarding the nature and extent of their relations with WFP. Information sharing in some cases was identified as being somewhat inadequate. WFP's participation in ANCHA activities was also deemed below expectations. This information was brought to the mission's attention very late in the process, therefore there was not sufficient time to verify and cross-check this information with other partners.

Key findings on partnership

- In the wake of the Mitch emergency and post-Mitch recovery operations, and in view of the 2002-2006 CP, the WFP CO has demonstrated a commendable capacity to enter into short-term project oriented implementing partnerships as well as long-term EDP based strategic alliances.
- More specifically with UN system representation offices in Honduras, the mission identified two groups of WFP partners based on different interaction levels: one quite proactive in thematic development issues going well beyond institutional collaboration (e.g., UNICEF), the other with limited interactions (e.g., other UN organizations and joint participation in various development groups or GoH programme co-ordination/review meetings).
- The mission believes that it would be beneficial for WFP to seek more long-term partnerships within the UN system based on each partner's specific mandate in support of GoH-UN development programmes in Honduras.
- Notable progress has been recorded across the overall framework of the Development Forum for collaboration between the GoH and the donor community. WFP interventions are fully in line with various recently formulated initiatives aimed at reducing chronic poverty and providing a framework for future collaboration extending beyond a project based partnership.

3.2.2 Stakeholder participation and ownership

92. WFP's counterpart in the implementation of the CP is the GoH, through the Ministry of Health (Activity 1), the Ministry of Education (Activity 2) and COHDEFOR (Activity 3). WFP signed agreements with all of these institutions. As stated earlier, the agreement with COHDEFOR is currently suspended, as that institution does not have the financial resources required to meet its counterpart contribution for Activity 3[51].

93. In the course of the planning and implementation of Activity 1, WFP developed alliances with various stakeholders at all levels in support of beneficiaries (children under 5, children attending primary school, pregnant mothers, HIV/AIDS victims, etc.):

- Political, technical, normative and operational players within the country's health network;
- Municipal mayors and service directors;
- Cooperation agencies such as UNICEF, INCAP/OPS, UNDP;
- Government institutions (SETCO, PRAF, INFOP, INFHA);
- NGOs such as CARE, World Vision, Catholic Christian Fund Honduras (CCFH), Ayuda en Acción (ACH).

94. At the national level, the mission observed that there is ownership of the food aid activities in the ministries of Education and Health, with their staff fully collaborating to ensure that the food aid reaches needy families.

95. At the local level, the mission observed that health personnel, teachers, the local government and community leaders were organized in committees to conduct the distribution, transportation and preparation of meals in an orderly and transparent manner. Mechanisms such as food collection schedules and measures to remove food municipal warehouses in a timely fashion are in place. The training and capacity building activities carried out with representatives of civil society, local government and with the beneficiaries themselves ensure that stakeholders now can not only carry out development interventions, but are also encouraged to develop their feeling of ownership towards activities. The very positive results of the SFP for example represent strong evidence of the genuine, responsible and sustainable participation of these key players.

[51] World Vision, Save the Children, Fondo Cafetero Nacional and other organizations have implemented projects jointly with COHDEFOR. It appears that some activities are still on-going, but no strategy is yet in place to ensure local appropriation.

96. Another significant factor related to participation and ownership is the contribution made by beneficiaries in terms of complementary provisions (milk, condiments, sugar) and in cash for transportation and complementary food items[52]. In many municipalities in the south and west, where the communities are too poor and remote, the mayor himself delivers the food at no charge (the costs borne by the municipality).

97. The teachers in the schools and the doctors or assistants in the health centres fill out control sheets and prepare the monthly food baskets. Community members weigh and distribute the commodity rations to families (HIV/AIDS, breastfeeding/pregnant mothers, children under 2).

98. Due to a number of factors (such as the absence of a kitchen in some school or the length of time needed to cook and prepare some items like beans and maize), commodities are distributed to mothers on a daily basis for preparation at home. This distribution is performed by teachers and members of the parents' committee and constantly supervised by the school or by a designated teacher.

99. Training at all levels has been one of the factors contributing most substantially to enhancing participation of local stakeholders in the various phases of WFP supported activities. This is visible in all three basic activities.

Key findings on stakeholder participation and ownership

- In Honduras, the CO has spared no effort to ensure strong ownership by stakeholders at all levels. The current government administration is closely involved in the School Feeding Programme. At the municipal level, warehouses are provided to WFP where it distributes food; ownership by the beneficiaries is ensured through the control, distribution, use and complementing of food rations to schools and health units.
- In the three regions visited, the mission noted a solid trend in local institutions and WFP project partners in assuming more implementation, supervision, and basic monitoring and reporting responsibilities.
- The mission also noted a positive evolution of the participation and ownership by members of various food aid related committees (e.g., SFP and 'cooking' mothers, parents' associations, district and municipal SFP fundraising, and HIV/AIDS support).

3.2.3 Progress (and changes) in demonstrating results

100. During the 1990s, development co-operation institutions and donor agencies faced considerable external pressure "to become more effective and results-oriented."[53] In the case of WFP Honduras, RBM introduction was noticeable in the latest 2002-2006 CP by way notably of the development of a Logical Framework Analysis (LFA). The LFA however suffers from practical incoherencies at the concept level (activity orientation vs. result orientation) and uneven definitions (e.g. activity, result and performance indicators) for practical applications in M&E.

101. WFP activities carried under the EDP policy are well suited for an integrated and global RBM approach from project/activity concept to M&E. The planned developmental results should be part of the project's 'impact tree/result chain'; the 'causal' activities implemented with relevant results indicators (tracking-down direct developmental effects of WFP investments) and systematically monitored within a results performance evaluation framework.

[52] For some communities, family contributions consist in supplying complementary provisions as identified by the committees; in others, contributions consist of monthly payments to cover the purchase of complementary food.

[53] Source: *Results-Based Management in the Development of Co-operation Agencies: A review of Experience*, DAC Working Party on Aid Evaluation, OECD document by Anette Binnendijk, February 2000. N.B. USAID pioneered the development of performance measurement systems for broader country programming. The UNDP adopted a similar country programme approach based on RBM principles and, since 1999 the WB has extended it to a more strategic approach to planning, implementing, and monitoring development effort at the country level.

102. Recent efforts have been made by WFP Honduras[54] to appraise and enhance its M&E system. However, the mission is questioning the validity of an RBM entry point at the near end of the project's life cycle when not integrated at the concept/design phase. Because monitoring and measuring performance are vital components of the RBM approach, it is important to establish a structured plan for data collection, analysis, and the use and dissemination of performance information. It will document the major elements of the M&E and ensure that comparable performance information is collected on a regular and timely basis.

103. At the project level, the two most recent project documents approved and the subsequent SPR, for 2001- Regional PRRO10212 and 2002- Honduras 10074, introduced references to "outcomes" and to a "results-oriented monitoring and evaluation" system. However, little evidence of complete and coherent integration of RBM principles and tools has been found, as the basic approach remains "activity and quantity" oriented. Evidence is provided by assessing the monitoring data contained in WFP CO's standard monitoring sheets and reporting format (referred to as the *F1, F2, F4* and *F5* forms as well as the *SPR* report[55]).

104. A performance framework (PF) for WFP Honduras would complement the Management Information System (MIS) and management/decision-making tools as well as give operational significance and developmental substance to a results oriented logical framework. The PF strength lies in its ability to represent the cause-effect relationships between WFP activities, scope and developmental results[56] over the lifetime of a programme/project and beyond that for impact assessment. It would prove to be an excellent tool by which WFP could communicate the vision of its Programme to partners and stakeholders as it: i) identifies the strategic objectives; ii) defines a chain of expected results (impact tree); iii) identifies key beneficiaries and stakeholders; and iv) outlines the major activity components and related indicators. The mission could not find evidence of the use of a PF in CO and strongly suggests that such a tool be developed as it would no doubt provide clearer indications of WFP results with respect to the EDP strategic objectives.

105. Several international NGOs, which act as WFP implementing partners, tend to be more familiar with RBM principles and tools, and apply them systematically in their M&E performance oriented process. It is the mission's opinion that WFP Honduras would gain from exchanging experiences with them in view of the systematic integration of RBM practices within the project cycle (from planning to evaluation) in ongoing CP activities.

106. The Country Office will benefit from a comprehensive effort to mainstream an RBM approach in all its activities. The overall exercise will need to be well structured and in line with HQ definitions and policies. There is also an interest in harmonizing/mainstreaming the RBM approach within the monitoring and performance evaluation systems of counterparts, provided there is the necessary capacity building. This would represent an important step toward efficiency and ownership of performance evaluation by local stakeholders, when compared to the traditional approach based on externally led M&E.

Key findings on demonstrating results

- So far, the collection by WFP of performance data and information necessary to allow for analysis and evaluation of the development results–particularly at the outcome level–has been impaired by unevenly defined RBM process and tools and unsystematic performance oriented indicators.
- International NGO implementing partners tend to master RBM principles and tools and to apply performance oriented processes more systematically, providing in recent years clearer indications of WFP results with respect to EDP strategic objectives. WFP would gain in systematizing sharing and of information and experiences with these partners.

[54] The CO commissioned a review of its M&E for the school feeding programme, and a proposal is currently under consideration for its possible extension to other CO project/programme activities (*Propuesta de Systema de Monitoreo y Evaluacion de la Merienda Escolar,* by Margarita Lovon, consultant, December 2003*)*.

[55] *Sistema de Reportes - M&E, WFP Honduras, 2004,* WFP, 2004.

[56] Opus cit.

3.2.4 Gender mainstreaming

107. In general terms, the current CP takes into account women's advancement needs and gender equality considerations. The mission however discovered a confusing picture at the project implementation and M&E levels, where the project tends to maintain a Women in Development (WID) approach rather than the WFP gender equality approach.

108. The focus of the programme's gender strategy consists in working with the beneficiary population using a gender approach. It established the following commitments for women in the 2002-2006 Country Programme (CP10079) and in the Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO 10212):

- Cover the specific nutritional needs of pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers and adolescent girls and increase their knowledge of health and nutrition;
- Expand activities that enable girls to attend school;
- Ensure that women benefit, at least on equal terms, from the assets created through the food for training and food for work activities;
- Contribute to women's control over the distribution of family food rations for emergency aid;
- Ensure that women participate on equal terms in the committees for food distribution and in the local bodies related to the programme;
- Guarantee the incorporation of a gender approach in programming activities;
- Contribute to the creation of an environment that recognizes the important role played by women in guaranteeing the family's food security and encourage both men and women to participate in the elimination of gender inequality;
- Ensure progress in gender equality in the hiring of personnel, opportunities and obligations, ensure that human resource policies are sensitive to gender issues, and offer possibilities for officers to harmonize their personal and professional priorities[57].

109. However, the CP does not include gender equality as a cross-cutting issue. The target population of WFP activities is primarily composed of women and children in Basic Activity 1. In this activity, work continues in the traditional manner, giving women sole responsibility for their children's nutrition and health[58].

110. Until 2 years ago, the WFP program in Honduras comprised mainly agroforestry initiatives, the majority of which were included in Activity 3. The people responsible for the execution of these projects confirm that the participation of women in the various agroforestry activities obviously led to the achievement of certain forms of gender equality. The evaluation team was not in a position to observe women participating because this activity had already been terminated.

111. WFP is committed to the participation and involvement of women. When the CP was initiated, the first steps, in the SFP for example, consisted in organizing and consolidating mothers school lunch committees. This represents an important change regarding its commitment to work with women, since prior to the CP, mothers were not organized, they did not receive food directly and they were not responsible for preparing and distributing food at school centres. Now, women actively participate in committees and in committee activities.

112. In Basic Activity 2, the majority of the participants in the School Feeding committees are women. The fathers contribute by carrying wood and WFP commodities to the school. Traditional roles continue to be followed in bringing food from the school, cooking it, carrying it to the school and distributing it to the children. The mothers are the ones most involved in the School Feeding Programme; there is little involvement from the fathers.

---

[57] For more details on the measures in each commitment: Commitments to Women, Country Programme 10074.0/ PRRO 10212.

[58] Few fathers attend health centres' information sessions on food security and/or health and nutrition; fathers need to be more aware when children are malnourished and know what food should be provided in order to compensate for certain micronutrient deficiencies, such as soya.

113. At the Country Office level, WFP has guidelines to achieve gender equality in hiring, but there are no guidelines for participation in decision-making. In numerical terms, 40% of the officers are women. However, in decision-making positions, all those responsible for Activities 1 and 2 and the VAM Analysis Unit are men, whereas women are in administrative and assistant positions, which are traditional female occupations.

Key findings on gender mainstreaming

- Even though no formal gender equality strategy is clearly spelled out as a cross-cutting issue, gender mainstreaming is a priority of the Country Office, and several measures have been put in place to this end. WFP staff generally acknowledges the need to strengthen women's participation in project activities.
- WFP's approach is based more on the Women in Development approach than on the gender equality approach (the gender equality approach focuses, among other things, on the importance of relations between women, men and children).
- The CO has developed a social network composed mainly of women (school feeding and health committees), but has not achieved the training potential to promote genuine gender equality.

3.2.5 HIV/AIDS mainstreaming

114. In May 2000, the WFP's Executive Board agreed that WFP, in collaboration with new and existing partners, should explore ways of using food assistance to prevent and mitigate the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS. Following the Board's February 2003 decision on WFP project assistance to HIV/AIDS, an HIV/AIDS Unit was established in June 2003 under the Policy and Strategy Division. Consequently, activities that envisage the use of food assistance to mitigate the effects of HIV/AIDS are now part of WFP's development programming.

115. WFP's approach to HIV/AIDS[59] is to target its interventions based on food insecurity and not HIV status. Interventions will address prevention (reducing transmission); mitigation (reducing the impact of HIV/AIDS); and care (providing direct support to people living with HIV/AIDS and their families). In Honduras, WFP has opened programming to accommodate AIDS affected households in highly endemic areas. This includes adjusting food rations and food basket compositions to ensure that HIV infected people receive adequate kilocalories and nutrition[60].

116. In Honduras, WFP's approach to HIV/AIDS is essentially based on implementing IMANAS[61], a joint pilot project run by GoH-CARE Honduras and selected partners (UNAIDS, the University of Illinois, Medicos sin Fronteras[62] and WFP) to assist households and individuals affected by HIV/AIDS.

117. As an opportunistic infection associated with HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) will get WFP assistance in 2004 through a formal agreement for food delivery to UNDP's HON/03/004 project: *Fortalecimiento de la Respuesta Nacional para la Protección de la Salud en VIH/SIDA, Malaria y Tuberculosis* (strengthening the national response for health protection regarding HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria). On a monthly basis, WFP provides a family food basket to 800 selected UNDP families; the daily ration is composed of 700 grams of corn, 200 grams of rice, 375 grams of red beans, 50 grams of vegetable oil and 600 grams of enriched corn soya blend (CSB).

---

59 HIV/AIDS Unit, WFP Rome. *General Briefing Points*, October 2003.

60 San Pedro Sula and Tomabé/Tela (north region)–see map in annex 7.

61 *Alianzas Interinstitucionales para el Mejoramiento Alimentario y Nutricional de las Personas Viviendo con VIH/SIDA* (IMANAS).

62 Honduran component of Doctors without Borders (*Médecins Sans Frontières*, an international NGO).

Key findings on HIV/AIDS mainstreaming

- So far, very little has been achieved in terms of implementation and, given the negative impact that the HIV/AIDS pandemic has had on individuals, relatives, communities and government health bodies, more effort and attention should be paid to implementing the measures envisaged.
- As WFP's approach to HIV/AIDS is based on the implementation of a single pilot project (IMANAS), the replicability of this joint initiative and the evaluation of results, as well as the analysis of best practices and lessons learned, must be carefully examined in a participatory manner by the members of the alliance created for the pilot project.
- Thematic support (funding) and the enhancement of implementing partnerships with other UN agencies are deemed comprehensive and relevant approaches for mainstreaming HIV/AIDS considerations in all activities included in the Country Programme.

3.2.6 Resourcing

118. Faced with a number of recurring environmental disasters since 1997 (see Table 10 below), Honduras was entitled in 2002 to additional Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation assistance through PRRO 10012.0 (valued at US$ 17.888 million), which, in combination with the 2002 Country Project 10074.0 (valued at US$ 17.860 million), represents the primary "new"' resources for WFP activities. It has been a WFP CO practice to channel surplus commodities from concluding operations to ongoing ones (e.g. HON 5609 - Activity 3 to *School Feeding* under CP 10074).

Table 10: Recurring shocks (1997-2002)

Year	Event	WFP Response in Affected Areas in Honduras and in the Region
1997	El Niño (droughts, floods)	EMOP 5949.00
1998	Hurricane Mitch	EMOP 6079.00 PRRO 6089.00
1999	Floods, landslides	PRRO 6089.00
2000	Floods	PRRO 6089.00
2001	Drought Floods	PRRO 6089.00 PRRO 6089.00
2002	Drought	PRRO 6089.00 PRRO 10012.0

119. The year 2003 represented a "stabilized" year for WFP in which the operational resources (commodities) were drawn at a moderate pace from the two main operational projects: 2001 CP 10074 (US$2.38/US$17.86 million - 13.3%) and 2002 PRRO 10012 (US$2.58/US$56.62 million - 4.5%). With the same pace forecasted in the resource utilization for 2004, WFP CO is confident it will hold enough commodities to fulfil WFP's 2004 commitments throughout the year.

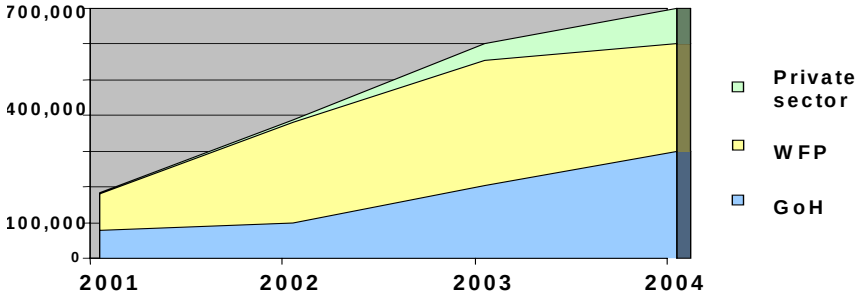
120. In addition, the balance of unutilised commodities from previous emergency/recovery projects is gradually channelled to operational projects in support of development activities (for example: US$0.98 million from HON 5691 in 2003); thus postponing the need for WFP CO to seek approval of additional resources in the current and next fiscal years.

121. A significant change in contributor patterns and availability of resources took place since 2003 (see Graph 1 below) with the GoH (i) taking from WFP the ownership of the School Feeding Programme, (ii) promoting it as a national goal (*Dia Nacional de la Merienda Escolar*) and government country-wide programme as well as (iii) institutionalising private sector and civil society fund-raising activities (including tax incentives).

122. Furthermore, the GoH has taken steps to publicize its ownership of the School Feeding Programme, declaring it an official government initiative supported by WFP, rather than a WFP initiative supported by the GoH, as was previously the case. To that effect, the Honduras National Congress issued the *Dia Nacional de la Merienda Escolar* (national school feeding day) decree in August 2003, promoting the School Feeding Programme and related fundraising activities.

123. As a result, the GoH is steadily increasing its contributions to the SFP: US$0.9 million in 2002, US$3.7 million in 2003 and is expected to increase its contribution to US$5.3 million in 2004). In addition, private sector and civil society fund-raising activities have started to raise significant resources: US$0.5 million and US$0.4 million were raised in 2002 and 2003, respectively, and US$1.0 million in 2004 (200% more than the WFP marketing group's expectations).

Graph 1: School Feeding Programme – Number of beneficiaries and financial sources



Source: WFP-CO 2004. (Country Programme 10074).

124. Growing local interest–as evidenced by the city and district committees engaged in fundraising activities in support of the *Dia Nacional de la Merienda Escolar* (national school feeding day) and a stronger sense of ownership of the School Feeding Programme by the private sector and civil society (see figures in preceding paragraph) have led to increased support through formalized strategic alliances between WFP and its partners, both within the UN system (UNICEF) and outside the UN system with local partners (CARE, PLAN Int'l, World Vision, parents' associations, and coffee and sugar producers' associations). Several government bodies also participate.

125. In terms of "non-food" resources, several WFP project/programme partners are providing, within the context of the implementation of development activities, the required monitoring, counselling, training, etc. For some activities (e.g., SFP), financial contributions and food to enhance the nutritional value of the WFP rations are provided by parents and individuals supporting the programme. No figures were available to substantiate this observation, however strong statements and testimonies in this regard were gathered in the majority of the visits and interviews carried out by the mission.

126. Considerable investment is required, and not only in terms of time, by WFP's limited staff at the CO in Tegucigalpa to carry out its programme. So far, WFP staff has been able to meet its commitments. However, in light of the increased focus on strengthening EDP implementation and on developing a RBM approach, they may encounter difficulties in sustaining their commitment, as their partners and beneficiaries are growing in numbers (e.g., 1,000,000 schoolchildren to feed in 2005) and demanding a wider range of support and assistance (such as integral health care as planned by the Ministry of Health through the *Escuela Saludable* programme).

127. WFP staff members were in general adequately trained in various fields (see Annex 1 for a brief description of training themes and fields). Not all staff members participate in specialized courses, but the office has put in place a systematic knowledge sharing system that ensures that anyone who receives specific training will then organize a workshop on the subject for the benefit of other staff members. At present, a staff training plan is being drawn up. However, WFP, as many institutions, is faced with the problem of staff turnover, which implies an almost permanent initial training process. This also has direct implications in terms of future resource allocations for capacity development.

Key findings in resourcing

- Despite WFP's diminishing contributions to EDP in Honduras, the government, the private sector and progressive elements in Honduran civil society are actively extending the coverage of the School Feeding Programme. The target for 2005 is now set at one million children, as these players steadily increase their financial and personal contributions to the programme. In this way, they are supporting basic education as one of the strategic development targets that form part of the GoH's commitment to both the MDGs and the Education for All (EFA) Programme.
- The government's assumption of ownership of the School Feeding Programme represents not only a significant and symbolic change in programme resourcing, but also a step toward ensuring its sustainability.
- Thematic funding, as a new approach, will be tested and monitored within the RBM policy and, in accordance with the CP, the results will be integrated into wider programming and strategic alliances in order to gain leverage and exert policy influence more systematically.

3.3 MAIN RESULTS OF THE ENABLING DEVELOPMENT POLICY AT THE LOCAL/COUNTRY LEVEL

This chapter deals with Evaluation Question 3 (EQ 3) (results at local and country levels) and Evaluation Question 4 (EQ 4) (sustainability of results). Findings are first analysed for each project by examining food distribution mechanisms, the beneficiaries of the interventions, and the results achieved at the output (food distributed and assets created), outcome and impact levels. Three separate sections then analyse the results achieved with respect to efficiency criteria, consistency of the results with the five EDP strategic objectives, and their prospects for sustainability.

3.3.1 Activity 1: Integrated assistance for vulnerable children and women

128. This is the first activity contemplated in the CP. Its strategic focus is to "create enabling conditions for children under 2 and pregnant and breastfeeding mothers to satisfy their special nutritional and nutrition related sanitation needs". The activity focuses on the delivery of quality health services and on family and community education. It also addresses the creation of lasting effects[63].

129. This activity is justified as a response to problems of "insufficient coverage of health services, food and nutritional insecurity and bad hygienic conditions, which are an obstacle to a healthy lifestyle." The retardation of growth observed in small children is frequently associated with a lack of specific nutrients. Food supplements and adequate training for mothers are required to overcome inherent differences in food ingestion and to prevent the development of irreversible damage during the foetal stage and in infancy[64].

130. Assistance modalities for this activity are as follows: 1) raw rations for breastfeeding mothers, pregnant mothers and children under 2; 2) community kitchens; 3) nutrition supplement centres in health centres and hospitals; 4) assistance to vulnerable groups: HIV/AIDS (IMANAS, *Casa Zulema*, *Fundacion Eduardo Kin*); tuberculosis (Global Fund); orphanages, a home for seniors (Salvador Aguirre), and shelters (Ronald McDonald). WFP provided maize, beans, CSB, oil and rice.

63 2002-2006 CP.

64 *Assistance to Vulnerable Groups*, *Basic Activity 1,* Ministry of Health, June 2004.

Beneficiaries

131. Activity 1 targets the following vulnerable and food insecure groups

Table 11: Beneficiaries, according to targeted needs, 2003

No.	Beneficiaries According to Modality	Total
1	Breastfeeding and pregnant mothers, children under 2 years (raw rations)	12,600
2	Beneficiaries of community kitchens	9,529
3	Children provided with mix (CSB) in nutrition centres and hospitals	1,291
4	Women, men and children living with HIV/AIDS	1,600
5	Beneficiaries of other modalities	300
Total		25,333

Source: *Assistance to Vulnerable Groups, Basic Activity 1*, Ministry of Health, June 2004.

132. One of the first vulnerable groups targeted was breastfeeding and pregnant women and babies under 2 years old with acute malnutrition. Women are identified as having food deficiency by the health centre, and activities are directed at women living in rural areas. These women start their reproductive life very young, between 14 and 16 years old. Generally, they have an average of 6 to 8 children and have a very low level of formal education. The vast majority are single mothers, as is the case, for example, in Orocuina, a municipality of Choluteca Department in southern Honduras. In addition, Honduran women have no access or control over land and its resources, and very limited access to work, as employment is very scarce in that region.

133. People with high food insecurity and living in communities are generally farmers, women, children under the age of 5 and elderly people, with either no land or access to land with low productivity (arid lands), where the lack of irrigation causes drought, a recurrent problem which, in turn, contributes to the high level of poverty.

134. Persons living with HIV include women, men and children who receive treatment through a programme delivered by MSF, beneficiaries who have been rejected by their families and also poor families with no food security. This population is located in the urban region of San Pedro Sula and the city of Tela, in Atlántida.

135. Table 12 shows that chronic malnutrition has decreased by 10% between 1987 and 2001. Despite the positive trend, progress in alleviating malnutrition has been slower than targeted. By 2001, 30% of registered pregnant women had anaemia: 34% of women who were breastfeeding exclusively between 0-5 months were anaemic, compared with 10.5% of women who were not breastfeeding exclusively during that period. The maternal mortality rate was 108 per 1,000 live births[65].

Table 12: Chronic malnutrition

Year	%
1987	43.8
1991-92	42.4
1996	37.8
2001	32.9

Source: *Assistance to Vulnerable Groups, Basic Activity 1,* Ministry of Health, June 2004.

Expected results

136. The expected results are: by the end of the CP the activity in the selected areas will have led to an annual increase of 10% in health centre attendance by rural women and small children; a 25% increase in the health control of women and prenatal visits; a 90% increase in the number of children

[65] Ibid.

aged under 2 years with normal growth; and a 10% increase after the first year in the number of women who attend health centres and adopt better nutritional and sanitation practices at home.

Actual results

137. Expected results are provided in terms of percentages, but available information does not allow to properly assess the level of achievement of the corresponding results to date. For example, the figures for annual attendance to health centre activities by vulnerable women and children under 2 years of age do not include the baseline starting point; the figures are limited to the number of malnourished children under 2 years that were registered in the target communities. Due to the absence of a performance measurement system and of systematic data, it is not yet possible to systematically measure progress towards the above results. There are however indications that the activities are leading towards quite positive facts:

- Table 13 shows that, between 2003 and 2004, acute malnutrition decreased by 3.36% among the 122 beneficiary children.;
- Chronic malnutrition is the most widespread type of malnutrition, and there was a not so significant reduction of 3.34% among the 781 affected boys and girls in the same period.
- In the raw rations component, 2,425 children are no longer considered among the malnourished population;
- 2,998 children have benefited from the community kitchen component;
- In the nutrition supplement component, 798 pregnant women, 3,102 breastfeeding women and 754 women of reproductive age have been reached;
- 1,877 elderly persons in the vulnerable groups component have been reached;
- Although they did not participate in the selection of food items, the beneficiaries feel that WFP made the proper decision in the choice of items offered, because these are part of the basic diet of the Honduran population and particularly of the beneficiaries.

Table 13: Prevalence of malnutrition[66], post-intervention, for the period of January 2003-March 2004

Prevalence of Type of Malnutrition	Year	
	2003	2004
Acute	5.46	2.10
Chronic	34.95	31.34

Source: *Assistance to Vulnerable Groups, Basic Activity 1*, Ministry of Health, June 2004.

138. The prominent results for the Corn and Soya Blend activity include the following:

- By 2003, 2,342 children under 5 years old had received iron and deworming supplements. This activity is done in co-ordination with the Ministry of Health, schools and municipal governments;
- Children in the department of Valle in the south of the country received dental fluoride. The municipality contributed 7,000 children's toothbrushes;
- Nurses and doctors agree that the mix known as "Papilla" (a vitamin fortified version of the corn-soya blend) is effective for the recovery of malnourished children who require this food. The children are guaranteed to recover within the prescribed 90 days.

139. Activity 1 partners (MoH the main one, and others with agreements with the MoH/WFP such as CARE, World Vision, and CCFH) contributed to the appropriate use of food aid by training the beneficiaries and monitoring delivery of the monthly food basket:

[66] **Malnutrition:** Refers to a non-specific, systemic and potentially reversible pathological condition that results from insufficient nutrition or from a change in its use by the organism's cells. It is accompanied by clinical symptoms and occurs with various degrees of intensity. **Acute malnutrition or wasting:** inadequate nutrition in the short term, indicated by the ratio of a child's weight to his or height/length. **Chronic malnutrition or stunting:** an indicator of past growth failure, implying longer-term undernutrition. May lead to serious irreversible growth and developmental delays.

- The women in focus groups from the community kitchen and nutrition supplement centres confirmed they had been trained mainly by associate NGOs, such as World Vision, Save the Children, CARE, and the nurses and doctors in the health centres;
- The interviewees mentioned receiving training in reproductive health, weight and height control, and the prevention of malnutrition, and are now aware of the importance of having well nourished children. Some interviewees in the southern communities (El Ciruelo - Municipality of Texiguat, and San Ramon - Municipality of Liuri) in the department of El Paraiso) received training in accounting;
- The beneficiaries did not confirm receiving any training in gender related matters. When asked whether they knew why WFP asks that the food be delivered specifically to women, they generally responded that it might be because the women are responsible for cooking the food.

Unintended effects

140. When food is provided in the form of raw rations to a certain number of pregnant and breastfeeding mothers and children in a community, organizational spaces are created that lead to the promotion of other income generating activities such as the community pharmacy (San Ramón, Luire, El Paraíso). Another potential impact on communities is the creation of assets to improve conditions in households such as better equiped kitchens and smooth surfaced floors and walls that help promote and reinforce health and hygiene habits in the family and community (El Ciruelo, Texiguat, El Paraíso).

141. Health centre doctors and nurses provide training to pregnant and breastfeeding mothers on ways to adequately prepare the food supplied by WFP and on carrying out basic physical exams to prevent child malnutrition–known as the early warning system (communities of El Ciruelo and San Ramón in the southern region of Honduras).

142. Children who are beneficiaries of the nutrition supplement (CSB) generally recover in 90 days. Once they stop receiving the food, they sometimes return to the health centre after 1 or 2 weeks with problems such as diarrhoea, flu and weight loss, which means they have to be readmitted to the supplement centre. Potential solutions or ways to address this problem do not appear to have been discussed at the local level. The mission feels that this should be addressed at the CO, as it represents an obvious setback to the achievement of expected results in this basic activity.

143. Doctors and nurses at Nutrition Supplement Centres find that, as a result of WFP support, children recover quite quickly (within 90 days as indicated earlier), with fewer cases of collateral illnesses being reported and less demand for medication for childhood diseases (doctors at the Health Centre in Liuri, El Paraíso, southern region of Honduras). This results in obvious savings for the State and for the families.

144. Pregnant mothers who were under nutritional and prenatal monitoring gave birth to children of normal weight and height. There were no cases of severe malnutrition or anaemia among these women and no cases of maternal death in the area in 2003 (WFP counterpart, Ministry of Public Health, southern region of Honduras).

145. There is a financial impact on families and communities that receive raw food rations in times of recurrent food crises. There is less pressure to seek basic foods and thus more time to work as paid workers to supplement their food with their own income (sugar, dairy products, and meat when possible). In addition, men spend more time preparing the small plot of land for planting and producing the food the family requires in normal times, and spend less time working (at very cheap wages) to buy food in times of crisis (discussions with focus groups, community of El Ciruelo, Texigua, El Paraíso).

146. In 2003 in the southern region, 168 breastfeeding women were provided with support and training. By 2004, 144 of them were pregnant again. This seems to indicate that they have difficulty putting the knowledge they gained from reproductive health training into practice. This is due mainly to cultural beliefs, male chauvinism and their own low self-esteem.

Key findings on Activity 1:

- WFP partners in Activity 1 (MoH being the main one, along with those under formal agreements with the MoH/WFP such as CARE, World Vision, CCFH) effectively contributed to the correct use of food aid by providing the required counselling and training to the beneficiaries.
- Project partners and agree that the food distribution had been efficient and that the planned quantities were effectively distributed, and in a timely manner. Very few complaints on the quality of the food commodities were encountered.
- In spite of limited systematic evidence on the achievement of results of activity 1, data and information gathered through interviews, field observations and document analysis announce signs of potential positive outcomes, in particular in relation to the fight against malnutrition.

3.3.2 Activity 2: Investment in human capital through education and training

147. It is important to bear in mind the Honduran context: the educational situation in the country is hardly flattering. Some 30% of Hondurans are illiterate, and the illiteracy rate is even higher in rural areas. Students drop out of school mainly for financial reasons (32%), because of low grades (16%), or for other reasons (15%). A slightly higher percentage of girls (88%) than boys (83%) finish school.

148. In addition to affecting physical and emotional development, a child's nutritional intake also affects learning ability in school. Rural malnutrition is over 42% compared to 24% in urban areas. However, in municipalities with higher levels of socioeconomic vulnerability, this figure rises to between 52% and 80%. In the departments of Intibuca and Lempira, more than 80% of the children suffer from malnutrition; in Copan, La Paz, Comayagua, Ocotepeque and Santa Barbara, more than 52% of children are malnourished. There are studies that show a positive correlation between years of study completed and monthly income. In rural areas, the illiteracy rate is 32.5%, with an average 2.3 years of education (as compared to a 4.6 years average for both urban and rural areas) and a monthly per capita income of Lps. 275 (approximately US$15.18), which is below the extreme poverty line[67].

149. WFP began implementing the School Feeding Programme with a human capital investment objective in 2001[68], in response to EDP requirements. Its counterpart institution was the Ministry of Education, which runs the Healthy School Programme (HSP). The HSP is part of the GoH's effort to reduce poverty through investments in human capital, in line with the PRS and MDGs.

Objectives and expected results

150. The main objectives of the School Feeding Programme are to: i) increase access to pre-school and school education; ii) improve the level of attendance at educational centres; and iii) improve the levels of health and nutrition. The results of the SFP include expanding activity coverage from 100,000 children in 54 municipalities to 788,282 children in 275 municipalities over six years. At the moment, WFP is participating in every municipality targeted for reasons of extreme poverty.

Beneficiaries

Table 14: Beneficiaries and sources of funding

Year	No. of Beneficiaries	No. of Municipalities	Source of Funding
1999	100,000	54	EMOP/PRRO 6089
2000	136,000	79	PRRO 6089
2001	209,435	151	PRRO 6089
2002	390,918	194	PRRO 6089
2003	600,000	234	CP/GoH/PRRO 10212/ PRRO 6089
2004	788,282	275 (from a total of 298)	CP/GoH/PRRO 10212

Source: WFP data, June 2004.

67 INE Statistics 2001.

68 The program implemented to assist with the Hurricane Mitch emergency included school feeding. However, the program simply involved "a delivery of food to all the schools," and did not use the current approach.

151. The expansion of activity coverage is related to the current GoH administration's political will to increase its contributions to almost four times the amount of its past support, exceeding US$900,000 in 2002 and US$3.7 million in 2003. The GoH and WFP have targeted the SFP (Basic Activity 2) in the departments with the greatest nutritional risk using the VAM approach.

152. The food items of the SFP are maize, beans, rice, soya oil and CSB (cereal). The SFP provides a genuine lunch and enables children to have a solid meal at least once a day. The ration provided consists of 160 grams of food/day/child and covers 31% of the kilocalorie deficit and 49% of the protein deficit. An SFP ration cost the equivalent of US$0.09 or Lps 1.50 per day in 2003.

153. The mission learned that a significant[69] number of boys and girls who receive the SFP do not enjoy a full breakfast (or even any breakfast), and the school feeding may represent their only complete meal of the day.

154. The SFP is currently available in the country's 18 departments and in over 90% of its municipalities. Approximately 11,806 centres are served. The distribution by type of establishment is as follows: public rural schools receive 57%, public kindergartens 19%; PROHECO schools 13%; CEPENF 6%; Basic Education Centres (up to grade 9) 3%; and public urban schools 2%. Priority is given to public rural schools, public kindergartens and PROHECO schools. By 2003, the largest numbers of beneficiaries were in the western departments: Santa Barbara, Lempira, Intibuca and Copan (see Table 15). Gender distribution is fairly even, with the exception of the Bay Islands, where 100% are boys, and Yoro, where girls are predominant. In terms of the number of schools assisted by the SFP by department, the table below shows that, by May 2004, six departments (Francisco Morazan, Santa Barbara, Lempira, Intibuca, Yoro y Choluteca) accounted for approximately 50% of the 11,806 educational centres served.

Table 15: Number of educational centres attended by department

Department	Number of Centres	Department	Number of Centres
Atlántida	447	Intibucá	914
Colon	421	Bay Islands	53
Comayagua	783	La Paz	664
Copan:	765	Lempira	960
Cortes	323	Ocotepeque:	438
Choluteca	859	Olancho	834
El Paraíso	761	Santa Bárbara	1,116
Fco Morazan	1,014	Valle	839
Gracias a Dios	234	Yoro	931

155. The indicators from the Departmental Directorate of Education, such as percentage increases in boys' and girls' attendance, show that the SFP makes a satisfactory contribution, allowing parents to send their children to school on time. Similarly, since 2000 the dropout rate has been lower in centres with SFP than in others, as shown in Table 16.

Table 16: School Dropout Levels

Type of Educational Centre	Year			
	2000 (%)	2001 (%)	2002 (%)	2003 (%)
Educational centres with the SFP	3.11	2.66	2.59	2.46
Educational centres without the SFP	2.77	2.79	3.51	2.55

Source: *Statistics from the Departmental Directorate of Education, MoE, 2004.*

156. The mission was made aware that, except for the GoH's request for local basic commodity purchases within the SFP partnership agreement, the WFP level of purchase had been hampered by the substantially higher price of grain, vegetable oil, etc., on the local markets compared to world

[69] The mission noted a strong cultural reluctance on the part of children, mothers and even teachers to admit the lack of breakfast and/or other daily nutritional meal other than the SF, and the ET suspects that the number of hungry schoolchildren is higher and could reach the majority of school boys and girls in some communities.

prices. The mission could not find evidence of a noticeable or negative impact of World Food Programme food deliveries on Honduran markets (chronically in a food deficit situation and having to rely steadily on imports). In the case where monetization activities are carried out, a "Bellmon" or disincentive analysis to assess impact of donated foods on the markets, as suggested by USAID, would be recommended.

157. In a few interviews, stakeholders mentioned that they see access to local markets as a feasible option if WFP adapted its HQ selection standards to allow local varieties of beans and maize in WFP CO national tenders. This could be part of a GoH-WFP strategy to potentially increase the ability to build more efficient basic commodity markets in the future. It could be seen as a tool to stabilize food prices seasonally and from year to year, helping both the projects' beneficiaries and consumers.

Current related social and political issues

158. As per the MoE-WFP standard SFP agreement, participating schools have created SFP committees (for local logistics of the commodities and its cooking and serving), providing an opportunity for interaction among mothers and between the mothers and the school. The SFP has enabled mothers to have a closer relationship with teachers by involving the mothers in education related matters and activities.

159. Various local social stakeholders are being integrated in the SFP through the organizing committees for the *telemarathons* (main national fundraising activity), an opportunity that should be used to rally efforts around the problem of hunger.

160. Recent months have proven to be a difficult time for the government: the National Teachers Union mobilized students *en masse* to challenge the government on their professional status and individual benefits and gains, which had been the subject of a previous formal agreement. The Union's disruptive actions and the resulting social unrest ultimately forced the current government to fire the Education Minister, a strong promoter of in-depth reforms[70] and, by taking over the education portfolio, to conduct negotiations with the union leaders himself.

161. The ongoing unrest in the educational sector resulted in several days of nationwide strikes and, consequently, in closed schools, resulting in negatively affecting school feeding activities. The situation has been problematic for a substantial period of time. For example, more than a hundred days of strikes were recorded in 2003, forcing a majority of school administrators and parents' committees to halt school feeding activities during these strikes.

162. In light of the negative impact that the strikes are having on the progress achieved by the School Feeding Programme in education and health, it is hoped that the negotiations being conducted by the current government will be successful and lead to a significant breakthrough before the end of the school year. Successful negotiations would preclude the cancellation of final exams in 2004, as well as the potential negative repercussions for students and the government, which would have to deal with aggressive street protests. It appears that no agreement has yet been reached several months after the mission.

Main potential effects

163. Field visits and observations and numerous discussions with teachers and mothers led to the identification of significant potential outcomes. In quantitative terms, the following have been observed:

- Increased retention of children at the education centre;
- Increased punctuality and attendance at school;
- Increased enrolment in remote and vulnerable areas, where children are often asked by parents to participate in tasks aimed at improving the economic situation of the family, thus not attending school.

[70] Reforms such as volunteer literacy work done by secondary school students in areas with low literacy and numeracy rates.

164. In qualitative terms (no hard data on the subject could be obtained):

- Better learning and greater retention of acquired knowledge by students;
- Students more inclined to study (the tendency to sleep in class has virtually disappeared) and achieve better academic results;
- The SFP contributes to improving the economic situation of the family, since families now save money because the children eat at school;
- Children have more energy at school (playing, running).

165. In most education centres, the basic menu consists of bean soup with vegetables, rice, tortillas and chimol (finely chopped tomato, green pepper and onion salad); burritos made with fried beans, chopped potatoes and rice; rice and potato tortillas; patties filled with beans, rice and potatoes; bean tibucos; rice pudding; fried beans, rice and vegetables. In addition to the CSB, corn, red beans, rice and cooking oil from WFP, the families of the schoolchildren provide foodstuffs (e.g., chicken, potatoes, spices, sugar, vegetables) from their garden or through monthly financial contributions, according to their capabilities. As well, some teachers supply sugar or other elements from their own pocket when the poorest families cannot afford to contribute.

166. Few schools were able to find sponsors to provide milk, cheese and sugar, which are quite appreciated by children and mothers who are concerned about the nutritional balance of the basic commodities. The evaluation team feels that this is a legitimate concern and that WFP should contemplate, when feasible and relevant, the local capacity to provide the missing nutritional elements, especially in structurally food deficit and minimal food access areas.

167. The "unintended effects" include the following:

- Lasting association of mothers with the education centre, allowing links to be established between teachers and parents that go beyond the school lunch activity. They participate in and are aware of the centre's problems and of the difficulties resolving them;
- Establishment and strengthening of social networks made up of parents, teachers and other community leaders/players revolving around the school lunches, but which can transcend them and become motors for local development;
- Strengthening of values such as solidarity in both parents and children when they have to share food (sugar, for example) or when mothers are looking for ways to face certain situations (support for mothers who cannot fulfil their roles, etc.);
- Co-ordination with other development organizations present in the communities that have helped improve the education centre: improved kitchens, donation of materials and utensils, etc.;
- Adoption by the government of Honduras of the School Feeding Programme as a government policy, which was not planned when the CP was designed.

Box 1: Testimony 1

At the "School Republic of Costa Rica" in Gualala, Santa Barbara, Prof. Yovanni Licona stated that the programme started up again in 2000 (in the past it had consisted of a glass of milk and a cookie, but now it is different). He has been at the school for over 15 years and knows it well. He has kept statistics to compare percentages of retention (which showed an average of 85% before the SFP and 93-95% with the SFP), and passing of grades (80-82% before the SPF and 91-92% with the SFP). In his opinion, the SFP is very important because the parents send the children on time. He mentioned that, at the time of the coffee harvest, students arrive late, or enrol late in March or April, but he is flexible, so that the children do not lose an entire school year. His recommendations were to supplement the food with sugar, because the community cannot contribute that item and many children eat the cereal without a sweetener. If possible, the programme should provide meat and sardines, which the children like. He complained that they received CSB with a worm last year.

168. Many other principals and teachers pointed out that the food assistance is very good because students only miss class when they are sick. In order to receive the SFP, parents must sign a written document in which they make a commitment to send the children to the educational centre on time, with a clean uniform, among other things.

169. School enrolment has increased, as illustrated in Testimony 2 below. A frequently heard opinion in the mothers' focus groups was the supportive role played by the SFP in the family economy in terms of savings (the child eats one meal a day outside the home and his/her share is divided among the rest of the people at home).

Box 2: Testimony 2

In this case, at the School Esteban Guardiola in Lucerna, Ocotepeque, teachers indicated that school enrolment has increased since the SFP began in 2001. In their opinion, the SFP makes parents want to enrol their children in school. Professor Ismael Fuentes, Principal of the School Juan Lindo in Lepaera, Lempira, said that in his educational centre, enrolment rose from 145 children in 2000 to 178 in 2004. The SFP began in 2001.

Year	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
Students	*62*	*76*	*93*	*100*	*103*	*105*

Teacher Yolanda Ramos Ventura, Principal of the School Prudencio Arita, La Labor, Ocotepeque, indicated that eight months earlier she and other teachers had had to go door to door in the community to convince parents to send their children to school. Now the situation has changed: they stay at the educational centre and all the parents come to enrol their children. She feels that the SPF has greatly contributed, because the majority of families in the area live in poverty and the fact that the children will have one solid meal per day helps in the family economy.

170. Another important point that demonstrates WFP consistency with the EDP are the comments made by teachers or mothers that the children have more energy after the SFP and can pay more attention in class. As a result, some teachers have opted to change the schedule for the mathematics class, which is supposed to be first thing in the morning, rescheduling it after the SFP when the children have a full stomach and their attention span increases. Principals and parents have pointed out that malnourished children have seen their class performance considerably improved through the SFP. This aspect supports WFP projects as regards enabling conditions for "concentration and learning." In addition, several teachers of remote areas did share with the mission their *"antes de la Merienda"* (pre-SFP) experience when they had to seek from farm to farm for "hidden" school aged children to register them, after convincing the parents to send them to primary school. The introduction of the SFP in their school and its delivery to the children by the mothers and teachers has induced a fundamental change in schooling habits by which it is now the parents that are coming to the teachers to register their children starting at grade 1.

Box 3: Testimony 3

"*Before, a child would get home and head anxiously for the tortillas. Now he doesn't–he gets home and starts anxiously on the homework assigned by the teacher..." Comment made by a mother in a focus group, explaining why the SFP was good: the children start right away on their homework, since they have a full stomach. –School Prudencio Arita, La Labor, Ocotepeque. "Now they talk about what they do in school... the things they learned..." Comment made by a mother in a focus group. Idem.*

A teacher recounted how Jairo, 10 years old, malnourished and repeating grade 1, considerably improved his learning capacity. In her estimation, last year Jairo could not retain anything and simply could not pass the grade. Last year and this year, Jairo has been receiving the SFP and now his conduct in class has changed. He asks the teacher permission to go to the blackboard, and he told his teacher from the previous year: "Prof. [Marta Elva Mejia], now I can!!!" Truly, with the support of his current teacher, he is learning and will pass the grade this year. Esteban Guardial School.

171. To conclude, the usefulness of the limited statistical data is hampered by the lack of baseline information[71]. It is difficult to measure learning capacity, establish indices of grade promotion and dropouts, and relate them to the presence of the SFP in a quantitative manner. During the field mission, mothers and teachers insisted on the benefits of the SFP for families living in poverty and extreme poverty, as well as for the children, who have shown evidence of change in their behaviour and learning ability.

172. Challenges related to the SFP successes of activities in Honduras: During the field missions, the evaluators were in a position to observe overcrowding of classrooms and the "multiple grades"

[71] The MoE lost all its national archives and electronic data, baseline information and statistics when its three-storey building (HQ) in Tegusigalpa was flooded during the Mitch disaster in 1998.

composition of classes. In the medium term, new classrooms and buildings will be needed, but there will be serious obstacles due to the limited size of lots provided by the government for school installations. As a consequence of current and future increased attendance and participation, the MoE and local communities will need to allocate more land to provide additional space for schools, given the growing coverage of school feeding activities.

173. The recurring teachers' union strikes represent an ongoing challenge in Honduras. They are currently causing schools to close and halting the delivery of school feeding rations, thus limiting the benefits to children who are beneficiaries of the SFP. WFP may want to consider alternatives and examine the possibility of introducing precautionary clauses in agreements with the MoE and local school directors to allow SF committees and parents to ensure feeding of children during teachers' strikes. Because of teachers' absences, the subsequent closing of schools and the fact that the SFP may be relying too much on the goodwill of teachers who are not automatically committed/bound to the SFP, the program may be weakened. Providing more resources and manoeuvring space to parents' committees to access school facilities should be considered.

174. Finally, the mission had, due to the limited data and time available, to put aside the review of the nutritional value of the basic SFP ration and the 'carbohydrates vs. proteins' concern expressed by some poor parents and teachers. Considering the expansion of the SFP and the expertise available within the UN System, WFP should contemplate the review of the nutritional value of its 2004 ration taking into account the local contingencies in providing the missing nutritional elements, especially in structurally food deficit and minimal food access areas.

Main findings on the SFP

- The success in SFP advocacy work as well as SFP national coverage (from 100,000 children in 1999 to 788,282 in 2004) prompted the Honduras National Congress to issue an official decree to institutionalise *El Día Nacional de la Merienda Escolar* (national SFP day) on July 23rd of each year and to promote fundraising activities.
- As regards SFP ownership and sustainability, WFP was instrumental in getting the GoH to increase its financial contributions, which more than quadrupled in a single year (from US$900,000 in 2002 to US$3.7 million in 2003).
- The strategic alliances established with UNDAF agencies (PAHO/WHO/UNICEF), NGOs (World Vision, CCFH, CRS, CHF, Action Aid, Plan International, etc.) and the private sector (national banks[72], a coffee producer association, a milk processing company[73]) were beneficial to SFP beneficiary children (nutritional complements and variety) and extended social accessibility to WFP food aid to other vulnerable groups.
- In rural areas, the mission could clearly establish from interviews and its observations that there is a positive change in the social conscience and progress in ownership regarding the SFP as a result of the intensification and strengthening of the interaction between school parents, members of school boards and teachers, city councils, the private sector and CS representatives.
- The introduction of the SFP in their school and its delivery to the children by the mothers and teachers has induced a fundamental change in schooling habits by which it is now the parents that are coming to the teachers to register their children starting at grade 1.
- The mission feels that the nutritional value of the basic SFP ration (mainly carbohydrates) is a legitimate concern and that WFP should contemplate an update of the nutritional value of its 2004 ration, taking into account the local capacity to provide the missing nutritional elements, especially in structurally food deficit and minimal food access areas.
- Considering the expansion of the SFP and the nutritional expertise built within the UN System, WFP and the GoH may wish to review the nutritional value of the 2004- 2005 SFP ration taking into account the local contingencies in providing the missing nutritional elements, especially in structurally food deficit areas plagued with poor food production and minimal economic access.

72 Honduran banks involved: Ficohsa, Banpais, Banfaa.
73 Land O'Lakes

3.3.3 Forestry management project and Activity 3 - Enabling poor households to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods and the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters

175. Activity 3 was officially terminated in May 2004, but in reality ceased operations in mid 2003. There were two major reasons behind this decision:

- Because of various macro-economical factors, the GoH is experiencing serious budgetary problems and thus implemented major cuts across several ministries and government organizations, including COHDEFOR. The GoH can therefore no longer respect its initial commitment with regard to this activity;
- COHDEFOR is currently under scrutiny by the Ministry of Justice in relation to several cases of corruption on the part of past and/or present senior officials. This evidently does not foster a favourable partnership between WFP and the executing body of Activity 3.

176. As stated earlier, Activity 3, as described in the 2002-2006 CP, was designed and developed based on the results and lessons learned of the Participatory Forestry Management Project (see Annex 1 for details on this project), which ended in 2002. Since Activity 3 began operations in 2002 and ceased them less than a year later, it is virtually impossible to isolate the results pertaining to the latter, especially given the limits in the nature and scope of the monitoring system in place at WFP and the limited capacity of COHDEFOR to capture results. The following analysis essentially covers the results of the project HON 5609. The project was evaluated jointly by COHDEFOR and WFP in 2003 and provided a number of significant results. The findings presented emanate in part from the highlights of the evaluation. They also integrate observations made during field visits, which confirm some of the stated results. After consulting COHDEFOR, WFP CO, partners and beneficiaries, and following field visits and observations, the main findings of the report seem to reflect the field reality.

177. The resources of this activity were reallocated to activities 1 and 2. However, through PRRO 10212, the WFP has continued working with food-for-work and in road and land recovery activities through alliances with NGOs present in the area such as World Vision, Save The Children, CCFH, Ayuda en Acción and others.

Forestry Management Project – Hon 5609 (1998-2002)

Beneficiaries

178. The project aimed at increasing the household income and food security of 17,055 persons, including a fair proportion of indigenous people, located in the poorest forest communities of 262 villages within 57 Honduran municipalities, selected on the basis of poverty indices and the potential for forestry management activities. The villages were chosen through a consultation process involving all relevant actors according to their interest and potential to carry out economically viable forest management models and various activities (water source protection, communal nurseries, agro-forestry plantations, etc.). This activity aimed at enabling households dependent on degraded natural resources for their food security to switch to more sustainable livelihoods, a change that would also help prevent and mitigate natural disasters by protecting the environment.

179. The beneficiaries of the project were located in six forest areas. An annual average of 10,108 families were targeted in 35 municipalities, or 160 communities (the country's strategic plan envisaged reaching 50,000 men and women over a period of five years). In order to participate, the beneficiaries had to meet the following conditions: agree to be paid in food, be over 16 years of age, agree not to work elsewhere, and own less than ten hectares of land. The distribution of recipients by gender is 65.8% men and 34.2% women. Beneficiaries chose the areas where they worked, developed the work plans and identified priority activities.

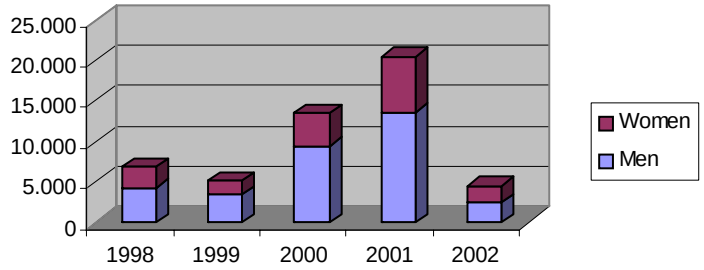
180. The long-term objective of the project was to increase, in a sustainable manner, family revenues and seasonal food security in the poorest forestry communities. This was to be achieved through the implementation of forestry management plans, which would generate revenues using a participatory approach. The shorter-term objectives of the project were to:

- Enable men and women villagers to adopt sustainable forest management techniques;
- Increase the food security and household income of targeted beneficiaries; and

- Increase the community capacity for disaster prevention and mitigation.

181. In the short term, the expected outputs were to i) ensure that peasants took part in the regeneration of forests, and ii) improve peasants' knowledge of economically and ecologically viable forestry and agro-forest management techniques.

Graph 2: Beneficiaries of Activity 3



Source: Standard Project Report – HON 5609 WFP CO - *2003*

Main Outputs

182. The project was divided into three main fields of activity: the first two gave priority to communities that had signed forest management agreements, guaranteeing them the right to enjoy the fruits of their labour in the long term; the third involved training.

183. The first field of activity consisted in various actions such as planting and maintaining fruit trees; planting stands of trees for multiple uses; planting stands of trees for lumber production; conducting agro-forest operations; operating tree nurseries; and protecting watersheds and water sources. The activity mobilized 7,600 people in 262 hamlets; the beneficiaries worked five months a year for five years. There were 20 people per group. The average ration distribution was 38.6 per participant per year. The second field of activity involved maintaining municipal tree nurseries; maintaining plantations for the reforestation of young forests; and engaging in forest fire prevention. The activity mobilized 9,000 people in 262 hamlets. The average ration distribution was 75.7 per participant per year. The training component–the third field of activity–covered social topics (group organization and operation, leadership and communication, starting a company, participatory rural appraisals, nutrition and food hygiene); forestry techniques (designing and implementing work plans, watershed management on a micro scale, manual sawing, operating tree nurseries and plantations, forest protection, growing mahogany trees); and administrative issues. The activity produced 12,678 person/days of technical training. In 1999, the project was merged with an adult education programme (EDUCATODOS), which contributed 188,280 person/days. Consequently, 200,958 person/days of the planned 243,242 were achieved. This activity therefore reached 83% of its target. However, cuts in project funding since 2002 dramatically reduced this part of the project. The success of the training is, however, visible. Field observations confirm that various new methods have been introduced and have proven to be reliable.

184. The cost of the project was US$ 10,219,564, and it employed 41 people fulltime. It received 24,490 metric tonnes of food from WFP; 21,469 metric tonnes were distributed in 5.6 million rations. The minor loss resulted mainly from badly adapted storage conditions or from warehouses that were too far from the point of distribution. Distribution was ensured through the food for work programme (it is interesting to note that the food was distributed based on the results achieved, e.g., numbers of meters of wall built). The project also distributed tools that were significantly helpful after Hurricane Mitch and the droughts in 2000, 2001 and 2002.

Table 17: Achievement of the activities and outputs

Activity	Objective	Achievement	%
Field 1			
Protection and maintenance of watersheds (hectares)	12,418	16,597	133
Community tree nurseries	1.2 million	6.8 million	566
Forestry plantation (hectares)	2,300	1,172	51
Fruit plantations	2,506	353	14
Municipal plantations	2,300	674	29
Forest guards (fire protection)	285	517	181
Field 2			
Municipal tree nurseries	800,000	2,7 million	337
Maintenance of teak plantations (hectares)	581	1,526	263
Maintenance of lumber plantations (hectares)	3,066	1,892	62
Maintenance of reforested areas (hectares)	11,972	6,391	53
Maintenance of young forest (hectares)	18,148	1,929	11
Field 3			
Training person/days	243,243	200,227	83

Source: Revisión de las actividades del PMA/AFE COHDEFOR 5609, *Abril 2003,* and Standard Project Reports – HON 5609

Main outcomes

185. This project allowed the beneficiaries to actively take part in the regeneration of forest resources; it was conducive to the reforestation process, which, through tree nurseries and plantation operations, is protecting the resource. A significant number of people within forestry organizations or associations benefited from relevant capacity building in the area of sustainable forestry management, which is not only financially viable but also environmentally friendly.

186. Several agro-forestry companies were established after communities signed forest management agreements and obtained the right to use and manage municipal forests. The villagers run these companies, which cover substantial areas (for example, the company in Valle Bonito covers 1,486 hectares; another in San Andrés is responsible for 1,614 hectares).

187. Other agro-forestry products have been developed, such as the planting of mahogany trees and pines, and include the setting up of field demonstrations for the community to observe and learn new processes and practices. Fire monitoring brigades (groups of 20 to 40 people) were created. Today, more than 500 groups take part in limiting and controlling the number of forest fires.

Actual and projected impacts

188. With the establishment of 28 forest companies, the project exceeded the project objective, which was to put 20,000 hectares under forest management plans. Moreover, the project made it possible to protect 16,597 hectares, maintain 2,787 hectares, and reforest 6,390 hectares. In five of the six areas, a forest protection company was established. It seems that the majority of established groups have maintained their status and have developed a commercially viable volume of lumber sales.

189. The mission had the opportunity to examine various improvements achieved with the development of irrigation systems that contributed to the diversification of production (large vegetables gardens). The activity promoted vegetable growing in all project areas through the distribution of free test seeds. The positive results were rather quickly disseminated to neighbours, and the new farming activity makes it possible to improve food supplies and thus living conditions and quality of life. Soil control and quality have been enhanced by ploughing furrows and constructing terraces and have facilitated subsistence farming and increased families' food supplies. The beneficiaries live in areas where subsistence farming is difficult, but the project nonetheless enhanced their self-sufficiency.

190. Local markets were not negatively affected in the targeted communities, which are not self-sufficient in the production of WFP's food package (corn, rice, beans and oil). The same can be said

of the national level: Honduras imports corn on an annual basis for industrial use, and is barely self-sufficient in its production of beans and rice. As for vegetable oil, the country produces a surplus, which is exported to neighbouring countries. However, families targeted by this project do not have the financial means to buy oil.

191. The project prevented populations from migrating to zones perceived as more favourable but that would in turn be impoverished by the influx of people and the overexploitation of farmland.

192. The food for work system has led to better nutrition for the populations and has improved their self-esteem. Indeed, the assistance is not only external; populations participate in the activities and strengthen them. The acquired assets are considered by all recipients as invaluable and sustainable.

Enabling poor households to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods and the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters

193. The goal of Activity 3 was to enable poor households to implement improved strategies to achieve sustainable livelihoods. The planned immediate objectives for Activity 3 were to: i) enable men and women villagers to undertake sustainable forest management techniques; ii) increase the food security and household income of targeted beneficiaries; and iii) to increase community capacity for disaster prevention and mitigation.

194. The intended outcomes are stated as follows: i) 10,000 participants per year–50% of them women–trained in the use of sustainable forest management techniques; ii) the household food security and income of participating families improved by 30%, with women controlling at least 50% of the assets created by the activity; and iii) families and communities less vulnerable to natural disasters.

195. During the first year of the project, Activity 3 had planned to target 50,000 beneficiaries (52% women, 48% men) and 10,000 participants (60% women, 40% men). The actual number of people reached was well under the number planned: 10.4% of the beneficiaries were reached, while 52% of the targeted participants were involved in activities.

Box 4: Testimony 4

"We have produced nursery plants in order to grow papaya and apricot, we have also built wells that enable us to water our plants in this high part of the Mountains El Triunfo. This food has also greatly helped the poor population, which has never received any help from other institutions before. These fruits that are sowed in collective and individual parcels feed our families and the surplus is sold in order to get some money to cover the other familial necessities." - Marleny Ochoa, Santa Teresa-El Yano, El Triunfo, Choluteca.

"With this food, we have been able to put into place communal gardens that produce chilli, garlic, cucumber, sweet potatoes, beans and corn. Moreover, we have received material such as pipelines in order to undertake irrigation projects. We have also much appreciated the advices given by technicians in order to improve production, the environment and our way of living." Félix Amador, Duyusupo, San Marcos de Colon.

"The close collaboration between these two projects, Proyecto Ordenación Forestal Participativa and Proyecto de Desarrollo Rural de Centro Oriente, was instrumental to getting the appropriate technology with regards to micro irrigation in hillside zones. It also contributed to protecting communal micro basin and basic infrastructure projects. Food aid as an incentive to undertaking these activities led to an increased participation from recipients." Ing. Federico Trece Ramos, Director de PRODERCO, SAG/FIDA.

Main outputs

196. Quantitative results for 2003[74] pertaining to the activities carried out are as follows:

- 63% of the plant production component was achieved;
- 94% of planned agro-forestry plantations –essentially fruits– were completed;

[74] WFP reports.

- Family vegetable gardens were particularly successful, with 111,077 square meters as compared to the 75,000 square metres which were initially planned (148% achievement);
- More than half of the training programmes were successfully carried out.

197. In fact, despite a slowdown of activities due to budgetary problems and internal problems within COHDEFOR, a fair number of initiatives were launched with relative success. The mission had the opportunity to examine several collective and family plantations demonstrating viable and sustainable assets, especially those related to disaster mitigation, which is comforting to beneficiaries as they can now overcome some of the recurring vulnerable conditions they are confronted with due to severe climatic conditions.

Outcomes

198. The limited number of activities carried out compared to what was planned also led to a limited number of (actual and potential) outcomes: pest control measures were not deployed; consequently, populations are very vulnerable to recurring "langosta" attacks. The most potentially lasting results are the ones that can be observed in the watershed management and protection measures. The great majority of beneficiaries who benefited from initiatives related to this component spontaneously confirmed that the measures put in place to protect and maintain watersheds are appropriate, viable, sustainable and require little maintenance.

199. Obviously, the project did not achieve the expected results. However, the mission had the opportunity to visit various project sites that benefited from the past project. In general, the assets created are lasting and paved the way for not only better practices, but also for a diversification of economic activities that have had a direct impact on the populations. All the sites visited, with the exception of one, confirmed the following:

- Improved capacity to cope with natural phenomena (drought, forest fires, torrential rains, erosion);
- Improved agro-forestry production and diversification of cultures;
- New and more lucrative productions (cashew nuts, locally consumed vegetables) and potentially increased current revenues;
- New revenues encouraging complementary activities in some areas (hens, pigs).

200. Some very vulnerable and remote areas which were the subject of sound development initiatives but which were abandoned after the food for work activities present disquieting deficiencies in their capacity to sustain the results of the activities. This is the case of a community in the Ojojona region that can barely maintain the forest fire prevention measures put in place with WFP support.

Key findings on the Participatory Forestry Management Project and Activity 3

- Food aid delivered to support project activities is conducive to the creation of appropriate and lasting assets that are highly appreciated by the beneficiaries and are maintained in an adequate manner.
- Observations and findings following field visits confirm the results of a recent evaluation: increased and more diversified production; better coping with natural disasters; reduced vulnerability of watersheds; increased access to water.
- Some of the project sites gained the status of demonstration parcels, thus encouraging neighbours to adopt more sustainable land and forest management practices.
- The sustainability of results achieved in some particularly vulnerable and extremely poor areas (the case of the Ojojona community, for example) is worrisome given the very limited resources at hand and the limited capacity of some groups to ensure the maintenance and sustainability of assets.

3.3.4 HIV/AIDS

201. Within the framework of HON 5691 – *Health and Community Development* project and HON 10074 – *Honduras Country Programme (2002- 2006)*, food aid was provided to 1,600 beneficiaries of the IMANAS pilot project (see description below).

Box 5: HIV/AIDS Pilot Project (WFP in partnership)

***Alianzas Interinstitucionales para el Mejoramiento Alimentario y Nutricional de las Personas Viviendo con VIH/SIDA*- IMANAS (& *Medicos sin Fronteras*)**

The GoH **National Policy on HIV/AIDS** was adopted in 1998 and a Strategic Framework for the National Response to HIV/AIDS (2001 to 2005) was approved in 2001. Similarly, Honduras' Sustainable Development and **PRSP** policies include multi-sectoral measures to address HIV/AIDS pandemic issues. Thus, prevention and control of HIV/AIDS have been considered in the national development agenda. Honduras' national response to HIV/AIDS includes, among its 10 intervention areas, the following topics: i) information, education and communication and the promotion of behavioural change; ii) prevention of mother-to-child transmissions; and iii) the provision of care and support to HIV/AIDS infected and affected people.

Within the **WFP Country Programme** (2002-2006) **framework**, under Component #1, "*Integrated Assistance to Vulnerable Women and Children*," WFP is participating in the joint pilot project (IMANAS) with the supply of food baskets to selected HIV/AIDS beneficiaries (individuals and their families) and is part of the strategic alliance composed of several institutions and organizations active in the field of health and HIV/AIDS. The University of Illinois is also contributing to the nutritional aspect of the project by supplying soya enriched flour.

As the main partner to the Ministry of Health's *Secretaria de Salud* and the National Forum on Aids (*Foro Nacional del SIDA*), CARE International-Honduras is IMANAS' implementing leader, co-ordinator, and active body to channel institutional synergy. Several joint activities are carried out to optimise the outputs and outcomes of HIV/AIDS activities and prevention initiatives and to provide the necessary care and support to those living with HIV/AIDS (PVVS) at the family and community levels. A national HIV/AIDS forum was conducted in 2003 to promote solidarity, multi-sectoral complementarity and synergy to reach sustainability in impacts and achieved results.

The project also intends to support all members of the strategic alliance in achieving their institutional goals to protect, preserve and improve the health status and living conditions of HIV/AIDS affected individuals, their families and loved ones.

The IMANAS pilot project is directly targeting 300 families (approx. 1,600 people) living with HIV/AIDS in five cities selected based on highest concentration of declared/suspected cases in Valle de Sula (i.e.: San Pedro Sula, Villanueva, El Progreso, La Lima) and the Central District (Tegucigalpa).

The long-term objective is to improve the health status of food insecure HIV/AIDS infected/affected households through nutritional intakes with:

i) support for home based care for HIV/AIDS affected households;
ii) support for HIV/AIDS orphans;
iii) the strengthening of community based capacities for local level participatory planning and action against HIV/AIDS.

The project consists essentially in the provision of food baskets (composed of red beans, corn, CSB [corn soya blend], vegetable oil and micronutrient fortified blended food products) to cover the monthly food requirements of bedridden patients and other household members as well as that of children, who are also encouraged to attend or reintegrate school.

Training in nutrition as part of home based care (health); capacity building (equipment and training in income generating activities) and other activities in favour of HIV/AIDS affected households are encouraged by access to WFP food aid.

202. IMANAS project staff and participating paediatric medical doctors (Mario Rivas Hospital and Pulmo-Thorax Hospital, San Pedro Sula, and Tela HIV/AIDS clinic) did confirm general medical findings that with adequate nutritive food and vitamin intake, their HIV patients (adults and children)

rapidly gain weight and tonus (see the following table and graphs demonstrating medical monitoring results in those health centres), and thus quickly respond to drug treatment[75].

203. More specifically, infected adults (*Adultos*) and children (*Niños*) quickly respond to WFP food intake as they shift from undernourished to normal weight and even to obese (*Desnutridos-Eutroficos-Obesos),* as demonstrated in MSF monitoring of the Tela cases (two following illustrations). Several cases were reported where the combined treatment of "therapeutic food ration plus HIV drugs" allowed the infected individuals to keep working and/or return to work, earning income and caring for their families. The same was true for some children, who were reported to have been able to return to school.

Table 18: Comparison of nutritional diagnostic, July 2003/December 2003 (MSF Tela)

Adults

July 2003

Undernourished	30
Normal weight	93
Overweight	40
Obese	11
TOTAL	174

54 new patients were added to the samplimg of the pilot project

December 2003

Undernourished	18
Normal weight	132
Overweight	55
Obese	23
TOTAL	228

Children

July 2003

Undernourished	18
Normal weight	11
TOTAL	29

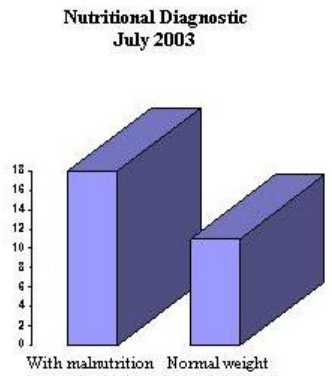
10 new patients were added to the samplimg of the pilot project

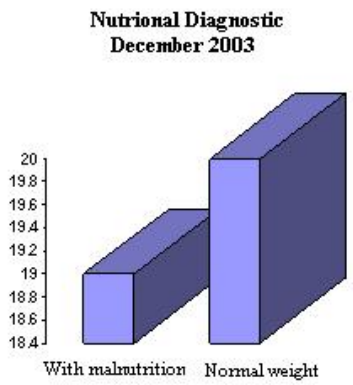
December 2003

Undernourished	19
Normal weight	20
TOTAL	39

Source: Médecins sans Frontières Monitoring Report on Tela cases, June 2004

204. In July 2003, at the starting point in the children medical follow-up of the food aid assistance by MSF- IMANAS, the health team was facing the situation of a majority of children with malnutrition (18 compared to 11 with normal weight). Five (5) months later, the situation was corrected even with new cases added during the period (20 normal weight compared to 19). MSF is convinced that in 2004 the initial situation will be reversed with two thirds of normal weight compared to one third of underweight.





205. Apart from the inter-institutional co-ordination built in with MoH projects and in donors Consultative groups, the mission is not in a position to appraise the level of effective co-ordination, information/knowledge sharing and formal relationships among WFP, FAO and UNAIDS.

[75] In fact, one in three HIV-infected people worldwide is infected with TB. In some countries, WFP food rations are provided to TB patients to enable them to avoid interrupting their treatment and provide food to their families. Source: "*Food Aid and HIV/AIDS–Food is Critical in the Fight against HIV/AIDS*," www.wfp.org, June 2004.

Main findings on HIV/AIDS

- The health specialists and pilot project partners interviewed believe that food aid is essential in the fight against HIV/AIDS. Ensuring that infected people (incl. children) and their families living in hunger-afflicted regions receive food assistance appears to be essential not only for the patient's treatment but also for family and social acceptance. It lessens the negative effects on the family in a number of ways, mainly by improving food security and securing the livelihoods of those affected by the illness.
- Food aid can prolong the lives of infected people. With plenty of the right kind of nourishment, HIV positive individuals have been seen to respond better to drug treatments, maintain their strength and regain their body weight, all of which helps halt the devastating progress of HIV to AIDS. In several cases, it allowed the infected people to keep working or return to work (or to school), earning income and caring for their families.
- HIV prevention and AIDS awareness campaigns are conducted by local groups as part of WFP's food distribution activities. Raising community awareness, small group discussions and video presentations were effective ways of spreading individual HIV prevention messages.
- Apart from the inter-institutional co-ordination integrated in MoH projects and donor consultative groups, formal relations between WFP, the FAO and UNAIDS appear to be tenuous at the CO level, which differs from the closer institutional linkages existing at the HQ level in Rome.

Lessons learned

- HIV/AIDS and malnutrition often operate in tandem–poor nutrition increases the risk and progression of the disease, while HIV/AIDS may trigger malnutrition.
- Food must be an integral part of any care package for people living with HIV/AIDS. Affected persons need both drugs and food. Treatment drugs often must be taken on a full stomach in order to be effective.
- For a person living with HIV/AIDS, good nutrition not only helps lengthen survival time and improve quality of life, it enhances the body's ability to fight opportunistic infections and may improve the effectiveness of drug treatments. Better nutrition can allow HIV positive individuals to be more productive for longer.
- Helping a parent stay alive can allow for stability in the family structure and the transfer of important life skills–including educational, social, cultural and agricultural skills. Children with healthier parents are also more likely to be healthier themselves and stay in school.
- According to the findings and results to date, thematic funding in HIV/AIDS from WFP and other donors would be directly beneficial to infected individuals, their family and community.

Recommendations

- WFP HIV/AIDS related activities to be built into all of WFP's regular programming categories: emergency, recovery and development.
- WFP to target its HIV/AIDS interventions: i) through thematic funding and specific collaboration agreements with reputable NGOs; and ii) based on food insecurity (VAM) level as well as individual HIV status and the anticipated family risk level.
- Interventions to address prevention (reducing transmission); mitigation (reducing the impact of HIV/AIDS) and care (providing direct support to people living with HIV/AIDS and their families).
- WFP to adjust/extend its CP programming to accommodate AIDS affected households in highly endemic areas by: i) Re-assessing (and modifying if need be) the nutritional value of its food rations and monthly food basket composition to ensure that they provide kilocalories and nutrients according to the medical state of beneficiaries; ii) Initiating a dialogue with the GoH and relevant development partners to identify regular programming areas using adapted tools such as an HIV/AIDS needs assessments (based on IMANAS lessons learned) and the VAM to expand food assistance to reflect the grassroots reality of HIV/AIDS countrywide.

3.3.5 Efficient use of resources at project level

206. All the sites visited and all the community leaders (mayors) and focal groups interviewed mentioned that they receive the food on time and that the food, with rare exceptions,[76] arrived in good condition. Partners in this activity (MoH is the main one, and there are partners with agreements with the MoH/WFP such as CARE, World Vision, CCFH) contribute to the appropriate use of food aid by training beneficiaries and monitoring the delivery of monthly food baskets.

207. As a whole, beneficiaries feel that the food distribution to date has been efficient and that there have been no delays in the delivery or distribution. In general terms, WFP Honduras and its institutional, NGO and UN project/programmes partners do agree that the commodities distributed and the resources allocated were sufficient.

208. During the Hurricane Mitch emergency, the GoH was overwhelmed by the extent of the disaster, but WFP acted promptly by distributing food supplies across the entire country according to its UN mandate[77]. The experience and credibility gained during the EMOP and PRRO were instrumental in WFP becoming the reliable SFP partner for the GoH to undertake the administration and distribution activities with the needed transparency and efficiency. To that effect, every educational centre (kinder and primary school currently) whishing to access the SFP must endorse a MoE/WFP formal commitment and comply with requisites pertaining to parents and teachers.

209. Generally speaking, with all projects/activities combined, the number of WFP beneficiaries has followed a decreasing trend in the annual distribution of commodities (investment) during the post-Mitch period (2000-2002). But in 2003, the number of WFP beneficiaries rose by about 100% with a lesser WFP investment (-5%), the main contributing factor being the effective implementation of the GoH-WFP strategic alliance for the SFP (Activity 2)[78]. For 2004, the WFP CO expects to maintain its efficiency in ongoing projects, as: i) the GoH-WFP strategic alliance plans to expand Activity 2[79]; and ii) a leverage effect is taking place by having WFP food aid matched by substantial GoH and private sector contributions.

210. The mission was able to confirm through interviews with beneficiaries and stakeholders at various levels that timetables for WFP supply and delivery of basic commodities (e.g., school feeding and therapeutic food baskets) are usually met.

211. At the operational level, from August 1997[80] to December 2003,[81] direct operational costs (DOC)[82] minus the commodity costs decreased and averaged 17.25% (from 20.05%). Similarly, in line with process streamlining and scale economy in the "supply and delivery" of commodities, direct support costs (DSC)[83] decreased from 13.42% (1997) to an average[84] of 2.14% (2003). Similarly, WFP Honduras' project cost also benefited from a decrease of WFP's indirect support costs (ISC)[85] from 12.21% (1997) to an average[86] of 8.48% (2003) in proportion to "Total WFP Costs."

---

76 In some communities visited, complaints were made about food in bad condition, such as CSB with a worm, mouldy rice, and many preservatives.. However, this occurred last year in one delivery only. The monitors who were consulted acknowledged that the incident had occurred and that there was no way to exchange the damaged foods.

77 Different individuals mentioned to the mission that WFP decisive actions in the early hours of Mitch and prompt food distribution in the capital and in larger towns avoided a major social catastrophe (wide-scale looting and break-ins for food).

78 800,000 SF beneficiaries in 2003.

79 1,000,000 SF beneficiaries expected in 2004.

80 Project approval document Honduras 5691.00, August 20, 1997.

81 WFP. Standardized project report: PRRO 12212 (January 1-December 31, 2003), and WPD-SPR: Honduras 10074 (January 1-December 31, 2003).

82 DOC = commodities, external transport, land transport, storage, handling, other.

83 DSC = staff, technical support, travel, office, vehicles, equipment, other.

84 Average of the two major operational projects (#10074.0 and #10212.0), based on the WFP-SPR of December 31, 2003.

85 ISC = WFP Headquarters operations and services (e.g., international RFP and suppliers contracting).

86 Op. cit.

212. Efforts by WFP Honduras to become efficient have resulted in an impressive low cost school feeding ration of US$ 0.09 (2003) and, as planned for 2004, of US$ 0.08/ration (see table below). The 2004 forecast might not stand the negative impact of transportation fees affected by a long-term increase in local gasoline prices following the current turmoil in international crude oil markets.

Table 19: School food ration cost analysis (2003)

Commodity Requirement		Commodity		Q&Q		Sea Freight		LTSH		ODOC		DSC		ISC	Total Costs
Type	(MT)	Rate	Value	Rate	Value	Rate	Value	Rate	Value	Rate	Value	Rate	Value	7.0(%)	(US$)
Maize	0.00007	130.00	0.009	4.00	0.00028	110.00	0.0077	49.00	0.00	1.12	0.00008	20.98	0.0015	0.0015	0.02
Rice	0.00005	195.00	0.010	4.00	0.00020	110.00	0.0055	49.00	0.00	1.12	0.00006	20.98	0.0010	0.0013	0.02
Pulses	0.00003	425.00	0.013	4.00	0.00012	110.00	0.0033	49.00	0.00	1.12	0.00003	20.98	0.0006	0.0013	0.02
CSB	0.00002	275.00	0.006	4.00	0.00008	110.00	0.0022	49.00	0.00	1.12	0.00002	20.98	0.0004	0.0006	0.01
Veg. oil	0.00002	710.00	0.014	400	0.00008	110.00	0.0022	49.00	0.00	1.12	0.00002	20.98	0.0004	0.0013	0.02
Total	**0.000190**		**0.05130**		**0.000760**		**0.02090**		**0.0093**		**0.000213**		**0.00399**	**0.0061**	**0.0925**

Source: Data produced by WFP CO Honduras staff upon specific evaluation team request – June 2004

Table 20: School food ration cost analysis (2004)

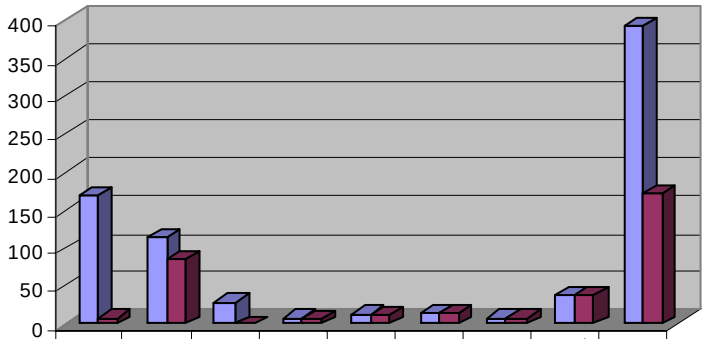
Commodity Requirement		Commodity		Q&Q		Sea Freight		LTSH		ODOC		DSC		ISC	Total Costs
Type	(MT)	Rate	Value	Rate	Value	Rate	Value	Rate	Value	Rate	Value	Rate	Value	7.0(%)	(US$)
Maize	0.00006	130.00	0.008	4.00	0.00024	100.00	0.0066	49.00	0.00	1.12	0.00007	20.98	0.0013	0.0013	0.02
Rice	0.00003	195.00	0.006	4.00	0.00012	110.00	0.0033	49.00	0.00	1.12	0.00003	20.98	0.0006	0.0008	0.01
Pulses	0.00003	425.00	0.013	4.00	0.00012	110.00	0.0033	49.00	0.00	1.12	0.00003	20.98	0.0006	0.0013	0.02
CSB	0.00003	275.00	0.008	4.00	0.00012	110.00	0.0033	49.00	0.00	1.12	0.00003	20.98	0.0006	0.0010	0.01
Veg. oil	0.00002	710.00	0.011	4.00	0.00006	110.00	0.0017	49.00	0.00	1.12	0.00002	20.98	0.0003	0.0009	0.01
Total	**0.000165**		**0.05**		**0.00066**		**0.0182**		**0.0081**		**0.0002**		**0.00346**	**0.00531**	**0.0812**

Source: Data produced by WFP CO Honduras staff upon specific evaluation team request – June 2004

213. Considering that WFP Honduras processes the commodity supply and delivery to regional storage facilities in a grouped way, the food basket ration cost in Activity 1 (Assistance to Vulnerable Groups incl. HIV/AIDS and TB) benefits as well from WFP's efficient procurement and logistics (savings from massive commodity procurements worldwide).

214. In addition, a comparative cost analysis was carried out to evaluate the in-country logistics costs associated with GoH and WFP food aid operations based on the actual 2000-2001 cost per sub-activity. It was shown that the GoH's "handling" of the logistics was about 130% (2000) and 175% (2001) more expensive than WFP's own processing for the same years. As a result of these findings, the GoH made the decision in 2002 to withdraw from LTSH and to mandate WFP to carry out all logistical aspects of the commodity supply and delivery based on WFP's low costs, efficiency and transparency in results, as detailed in the following graphs:

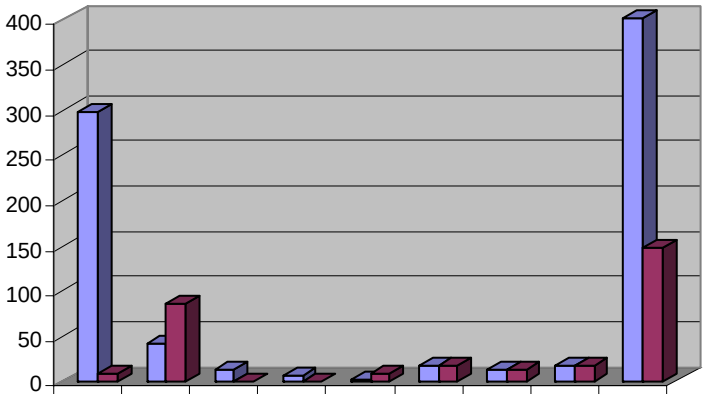
Graph 3: INFHA (GoH)/Aldesa (WFP) comparative cost analysis – 2000 (in US$/MT)



	Desaduanaje	Transporte	Descarga	Revision	Supervision	Remarco THC	Fumigacion	Movimiento	Total
INFHA	169.2	114.5	29.28	7.55	13.08	14.66	7.5	38.02	392.5
Aldesa	7.63	85.26	0	6.72	11.79	14.66	7.5	38.02	171.6

Source: WFP. "*Análisis de Costo entre IHNFA y PMA (Utilizando A A.R.Pineda Como Agente Aduanero y Superintendente y Contratacion De Transporte Segun Shortlist Del PMA)*," by Hyoung-Joon Lim, July 2002.

Graph 4: INFHA (GoH)/Aldesa (WFP) comparative cost analysis – 2001 (in US$/MT)



	Desaduanaje	Transporte	Descarga	Servicios Portu	Supervision	Remarco THC	Fumigacion	Movimiento Conte	Total
INFHA	297,9	41,73	11,95	6,62	0,69	17,05	12,62	17,24	404,9
Aldesa	7,42	85,17	0	0	7,45	17,05	12,62	17,24	146,8

Source: WFP. "*Análisis de Costo entre IHNFA y PMA (Utilizando A A.R.Pineda Como Agente Aduanero y Superintendente y Contratacion De Transporte Segun Shortlist Del PMA)*," by Hyoung-Joon Lim, July 2002.

215. As regards efficiency in procurement, supply and logistics, the percentage of commodity losses at project level is a key indicator that WFP is monitoring ongoing projects. Currently for CP HONDURAS 10074 and Regional PRRO 10212, the two major projects in 2003, the reported "loss" ratios[87] for 2003 remain low, at a fairly acceptable 1%.

216. The quality of the commodities has been questioned on a few occasions in 2003 by beneficiaries, when local cases of suspicious food were verbally reported or mentioned in WFP monitoring forms. The testimonies given to the mission indicated that no such cases had been noticed in 2004 so far. The WFP CO and local reactions maintain that these cases being so few in

[87] SPR-HONDURAS CP 10074, December 31, 2003; SPR-Regional PRRO 10212, December 31, 2003.

number, the most practical attitude is to wait for formal complaints and to replace the unsuitable commodity whenever possible.

217. The Logistics and Purchasing Unit did several attempts to purchase locally sourced food basket items, especially vegetable oil and red beans, but was confronted to much higher commodity prices than those quoted on the international markets to WFP HQ. Until now, local purchasing is not contemplated as a viable procurement source by WFP CO officials.

Key findings on efficiency at project level

- There is a need for clearer, more detailed and performance oriented (RBM) indicators to signal when food assistance is needed and when it is time for phasing out.
- Nonetheless, the mission considers that the WFP CO should be more diligent in sharing cost information (comparable food baskets and nutritional rations) with UN agencies dealing with food aid, and that even on a sample basis the cost of food aid should be constantly monitored to allow comparability with other commodities (e.g., local bean varieties) and supply options (e.g., local sourcing from medium-sized producers or groups of producers).
- WFP's cost-effectiveness objective could be considered in terms of expected development results that can be achieved through a results oriented M&E.
- Until now, the impact of World Food Programme food deliveries on Honduran markets has been minimal, as the WFP level of basic commodity purchases has been hampered by the substantially higher prices for grain and vegetable oil on the local markets. When access to local markets represents a desirable and feasible option, some consideration should be given by WFP HQ to adapt the selection criteria for basic commodities to allow for the purchase of local varieties in WFP CO tenders.

3.3.6 Consistency of the results with EDP principles

218. The results of the WFP Honduras CP were briefly measured against a selection of key principles inherent to the EDP implementation.

- Food assistance is provided only when and where food consumption is inadequate: due to the consequences of chronic shocks and the disaster prone nature of the country, availability of adequate food sources for vulnerable groups is a constant concern;
- Food aid assistance is to be implemented with the idea of leaving behind a lasting effect: with the termination of Activity 3, results will remain limited as compared with what was planned. In addition, the sustainability of some of the results is doubtful. The SFP is achieving lasting results thanks notably to the strong involvement of local players, in particular the GoH which is very much dedicated to the SFP;
- The lasting effects benefit the poor as well as food insecure households: the VAM contributed to adequately identifying the poorest beneficiaries and households;
- WFP objectives will be limited to the five focal areas: all activities of the Honduras CP are well defined following the criteria of the focal areas;
- Timeliness - providing assistance at the opportune moment and phasing out at the appropriate time: both activities 1 and 2 have not experienced significant problems with timeliness. Exit strategies are not however explicitly formulated in the official documents. Nevertheless, the SFP is addressing this issue thanks to its strategy that consists of very closely involving the GoH and transferring more responsibilities to local partners;
- Participatory approaches will be encouraged to clearly understand beneficiaries needs and promote their participation in various stages of the activities: both activities 1 and 2 have ensured adequate participation of beneficiaries and participants, not only during design of the activities, but in their implementation and monitoring;

- Proactive partnerships: results are uneven in this regard. The CO could be more proactive with some members of the UN system;
- Setting-up an RBM approach and system: while some efforts have been deployed in this regard, there remains much work to be done in this area (proper accounting system for costs analysis, RBM oriented results and indicators).

Key finding on the consistency of results in terms of EDP principles

- Overall, results emanating from the CP are in large part consistent with EDP principles with the exception of demonstrating and reporting on results, and proactive partnerships which will require more attention.

3.4 SUSTAINABILITY

219. WFP's notion of sustainability resides in the ability to have the central government, municipal governments and communities gradually assume responsibility for a development issue or a problem. This is notably achieved through advocacy work on the part of the WFP CO.

a) Institutional level (Central Government): the government is in the process of establishing legislation to institutionalise the School Feeding Program, and decreeing a National School Feeding Day. There is currently a bill before the National Congress aimed at the creation of a specific fund in this regard and at including it in the general budget;
b) Municipal government level: local actors assist in carrying out the activities by storing, distributing and watching over food;
c) Community organizations: parents' committees which receive the food, ensure transportation to their communities, watch over and monitor its storage as well as prepare and distribute food to the students in school centres.

220. For Activity 1, several key sustainability criteria emerge: the participation of beneficiaries in the entire process from identification to monitoring of projects; the incorporation of activities in municipal Plans of Action; the development of local planning capacities through training and project implementation; and, contributions from local, municipal, departmental and national counterparts, as well as the beneficiaries' practice and retention of the knowledge received through training and/or other capacity building activities.

221. For SFP (Activity 2), the sustainability criteria include: training and participation in programming (cooking and carrying of food) and management of the commodities at the school level; the support of municipal counterparts in covering local operating costs (transport, handling, storage); NGO complementary support (e.g. audiometric, dental care); the involvement and support of parents' committees and communities; training in and awareness raising on nutrition, hygiene and health issues.

222. In terms of human resource development, if children remain in schools and complete the primary education cycle, this will contribute to improving their living conditions in the long term. According to the EDP, girls who achieve higher educational levels contribute to lower rates of malnutrition when they become mothers. This is directly related to knowledge retention, a fact widely discussed with the teachers, who say that their students get better grades and can retain knowledge better, most notably in math class (which has resulted in programming changes by several teachers: math classes are now taught after the *Merienda,* when children are more alert and demonstrate better reasoning).

223. The sustainability of the SFP can also be seen in the establishment and/or strengthening of local educational and social networks. The SFP contributed to the establishment of SFP committees, in which mothers interact amongst themselves and with the school and teachers. They now present themselves at the school more frequently and are aware of its difficulties and needs. "*Before, the mothers*

and fathers only came [to the school] on the day the marks were given, if at all... Now they always come to take the food, to bring the food, to give the food... well, there are always at least five mothers every day in the school!" – Prof. Gustavo Adolfo Ramos, Escuela Francisco Guzman, San Luis, Santa Barbara.

224. As for the community, the issue of hunger is motivating social stakeholders in the area to work more closely together. During the fundraising *teleradiomarathon* for example, the WFP monitor designates a local authority (the mayor, district director or himself) to support meetings of NGOs, and representatives of other institutions to organize the event in their community. These constitute potentially permanent networks that could deal with the hunger issue in their respective areas and communities.

225. Financial sustainability: the SFP will be sustainable as long as the GoH (through a budget allocation decreed by law and provided for in the National General Budget), civil society and private sector provide economic support to improve the situation of people who are extremely vulnerable, knowing that these people will in turn contribute with their own work, provision of food supplements and, at times, meagre funds (as they already do in a significant number of the schools visited by the mission).

226. Ownership by local governments: to the extent that municipalities make budget allocations to the SFP, however small they may be, the mission has seen a trend where local governments become more willing to assume financial responsibility for people who, due to low income, low food production or lack of land ownership, do not have sufficient access to food. Local ownership is conducive to enabling conditions for shared responsibility.

227. At an individual level, nutrition, education, literacy/numeracy, skill development and empowerment are benefits that will continue to improve the lives of beneficiaries. Given the emphasis on human capital investment (Activity 2) and on training and literacy (Activity 1), these benefits must be sustained to reach the expected development outcomes and impact results. It is recognized that nutritional levels are fragile and, for example, can decline for schoolchildren (indications by teachers tend to confirm a noticeable weight loss after a prolonged school break or closure (union strikes) in food insecure/vulnerable communities).

228. Regarding Activity 3, the mission was able to observe the continued operation of committees to maintain and use assets following termination. But there is no clear economic indication of how far or how long they will be able to go, given the harsh and adverse climatic and soil conditions, combined with the very precarious economic state of the communities.

229. Institutionally, partnership with other agencies and NGOs creates conditions of sustainability for WFP projects, which are essentially short-term and highly focused. Also promoting sustainability is the increase in the participation of women and the development of more broadly based leadership capacities.

230. In 2004, WFP reduced the SF ration; so far, the mission has not detected any disengagement from the SFP nor the disappearance of any of the programmes, but it would be appropriate to monitor the situation, particularly regarding nutrition, school attendance and community participation.

231. In the context of Honduras, phasing out should be seen as a long-term strategy. Furthermore, the use of food aid to support education and HIV/AIDS affected households should not be seen as an instrument limited in time, but rather as a permanent feature of Honduras' social policies for which WFP could support thematic funding.

232. When access to local markets represents a desirable and feasible option, some consideration should be given by WFP HQ to adapting the selection criteria for the basic commodities to allow the purchase of local varieties in WFP CO's tenders.

Key findings on sustainability

- For Activity 1, several criteria of sustainability have proven to be necessary: participation of beneficiaries in the entire process from identification to follow-up of projects; incorporation of activities in municipal action plans; generation of local planning capacity through training and project implementation; and contributions from local, municipal, departmental and national counterparts, as well as the beneficiaries' practise and retention of the knowledge received through training and/or other capacity building activities.
- For SFP (Activity 2), the criteria of sustainability included: training and participation in programming (cooking, transportation) and management of the commodities at school level, support of municipal counterparts in covering local operating costs (transport, handling, storage); NGO complementary support (e.g. audiometric, dental care); involvement and support of parents committees and communities; training and sensitising to issues of nutrition, hygiene and health.
- Although they are resource intensive and difficult to sustain without a broad range of institutional commitments, school and pre-school programmes will gain in sustainability, as the GoH and parents are able to increase their commitment and contributions towards taking ownership.
- Partnership and participation are key to sustainability and, where WFP interventions are short-term, leadership in implementation has to rely on reputable NGOs with a respectable track record and comprehensive knowledge of local specifics.
- In the context of Honduras, phasing out should be seen as a long-term strategy. Furthermore, the use of food aid to support education and HIV/AIDS affected households should not be seen as an instrument limited in time, but rather as a permanent feature of Honduras' social policies for which WFP could support thematic funding.
- Strengthening of community organizations along with broad leadership skills increases the capacity to maintain, use and further develop assets created by programme interventions. Nonetheless, clearly spelled-out exit strategies with related milestones need to be developed by the Country Office.
- When access to local markets represents a desirable and feasible option, some consideration should be given by WFP HQ to adapting the selection criteria of the basic commodities to allow the purchase of local variations in the WFP CO's tenders.

4 CONCLUSION AND ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

233. The mission considers that the WFP Country Programme in Honduras was developed with the necessary consideration for EDP principles and guidelines. WFP EDP programming in Honduras is deemed relevant for effectively assisting the GoH in achieving its national priorities and international commitments (as far as commodity supply and food security are concerned). At the project level, the results achieved are considered satisfactory with respect to: i) the EDP and EDP strategic objectives and principles; ii) the needs of target groups; and iii) assistance to national policies and priorities. Given the overall soundness of the WFP CP and VAM (both in terms of key principles and activity formulation), the evaluation team supports the claim made by GoH representatives, stakeholders and beneficiaries that WFP projects have been a needed and welcome contribution in the overall achievement of a fair level of developmental results (planned and unplanned) in Honduras. The mission can confirm the efficient implementation of approved projects with a reasonable level of confidence based on field visits in the southern and north-western regions.

234. The Honduras CP is achieving what is considered a key EDP objective: to assist and encourage the most marginalized and food insecure groups to actively participate in development initiatives through VAM targeted EDP activities. With the appraised food aid initiatives (in particular the SFP), rural parents are more inclined to leave their children in school, thus effectively reducing the traditional migration of families associated with seasonal crops and reducing the resulting absenteeism of schoolchildren. In addition, EDP initiatives have provided more opportunities to participate in the production of assets or to benefit from capacity building activities, which have to some extent contributed to the sustainability of assets produced.

235. The institutionalisation of the VAM has greatly contributed to a highly relevant **targeting** of the hungry and food insecure groups of rural areas (SFP, vulnerable mothers and children under 5 years) and one special group in urban areas (HIV/AIDS victims) as identified in GoH PRSP and WFP EDP sectoral policies. VAM results have also been very useful in the context of World Bank, FAO and UNICEF efforts. Targeting at the rural level is highly successful when systematically applying the VAM approach, contributing to more focused coverage by the Country Programme. While it is generally recognized that poverty is increasing in peri-urban areas, plans and timetables of the GoH and WFP for extending the SFP to those areas are not clear.

236. The strengthening of strategic **partnerships** has been one of the priorities of the WFP Country Office (CO). WFP succeeded in developing a vast network of partners and in strengthening its relations with certain UN partners. UNICEF and WFP, for example, have built a very positive relationship whereby respective assets and capacities are combined in the launching of projects. However, the mission could not determine to what extent WFP and other UN partners proactively collaborate with each other to push forward an agenda addressing food security, thus creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the EDP. In addition, based on several discussions with donors and multilateral organizations, institutional links between WFP and some organizations within the UN system[88] seem to vary in comprehensiveness. Such actions (e.g., comparing efficiency issues) would allow for better identification and scoping of synergy. Thanks to such transparency and knowledge sharing, the organizations involved will be in a better position to appraise their specific results and respective expertise with respect to development goals and agendas as well as potential complementarities.

[88] The mission received mixed perceptions of the efficiency and relevancy of WFP development activities and of WFP's capacity to quickly share information. The mission was not in a position to validate these perceptions, but strongly encourages WFP to maintain and/or enhance inter-institutional collaboration as well as information and knowledge sharing.

237. Within the Honduran context, WFP project/programme **exit strategies** will be encouraged as early as during the project design stage or, when a potential exit strategy is not initially included, at a point where sufficient resources are still available to provide practical and pragmatic options that will sustain the achieved results, ownership and mitigation of project risks.

238. With regard to resources, those provided by WFP have experienced an overall downward trend in the 2000-2003 period and, as per CP forecasts, will suffer a drastic reduction in the 2003-2006 period. The mission is concluding that reduction is not linked to lower levels of "developmental needs" in Honduras (still a food deficit[89] and disaster prone country), but rather to an overall decrease in the availability of development resources from WFP. With the decisive progress achieved in ownership of Activity 2 (SFP) by the government and in the significant participation of the private sector in the funding of this activity, the downward trend (2000-2003) in WFP's contributions has not resulted in a reduction of CP coverage; on the contrary, it doubled in 2003.

239. The long-term GoH commitment to a permanent nationwide SFP (with a goal of 1 million schoolchildren by 2005) and the significant 2003 increase in GoH funding (up by nearly 400% from 2002) substantiate a definitive progress in SFP ownership and sustainability by the GoH, thus reducing the probability, in the mission's opinion, of WFP having to request additional support funding/contributions from the donor community to maintain and expand the programme.

240. WFP Honduras has demonstrated a high level of cost and resource utilization efficiency which is still acknowledged by EMOP, PRRO and EDP project/programme partners and stakeholders, as indicated by the notable selection of WFP by the GoH as prime agent for the nationwide School Feeding Programme. Nonetheless, the mission considers that WFP should pay more attention to local procurement options and ongoing information/knowledge sharing with UN agencies dealing with food aid, and that, even on a sample basis, the cost of food aid should be constantly monitored to allow comparability with other supply options. WFP's cost effectiveness objective could be extended from the superseding "supply and delivery" mandate to the PRSP, EFA and EDP development results now expected from a longer-term use of food aid for development, which can be achieved by WFP Honduras through a fully integrated RBM approach and a comprehensive performance oriented M&E. Thematic funding, as a new approach, will be tested and monitored as part of the RBM policy, and, in accordance with the CP, the results will be integrated into wider programming and strategic alliances to gain more systematic leverage and policy influence.

241. In general, the mission is very confident that several conditions are in place to ensure the sustainability of results achieved to date. Sound implementing and strategic partnerships at both the national and local level will most likely be sustainable. Furthermore, EDP results are likely to be **sustainable** due to a number of key factors, including:

- Thematic funding (commodity distributions) focused on development themes where food aid (nutrition) is a key success factor (e.g. HIV/AIDS, child malnutrition and school attendance);
- Grassroots level contributions conducive to beneficiary participation and ownership;
- Government endorsement and participation at community, district and national levels with effective resource allocations (not merely cash contributions).

242. With the implementation of the EDP, WFP is formally entering a non-traditional area. The added value of WFP in the development portfolio is not clear to all partners and parties. Yet, the mission strongly feels that food aid is essential in the context of MDGs, EFA objectives and support to world emergency concerns (e.g. HIV/AIDS). In Honduras, WFP is an essential and reliable partner of the GoH in the national School Feeding Programme. The GoH counts on WFP's efficiency, transparency, neutrality, and low logistical costs in expanding coverage of this program that now has a national scope.

[89] HONDURAS: Included in the *Low-Income, Food-Deficit Countries* list as per UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/43/178 of December 20, 1988.

243. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and well-established NGOs, WFP could efficiently provide its food assistance targeted and programmed for HIV/AIDS victims without stigmatising or marginalizing them. NGO training and beneficiary guidance were instrumental in making the commodities comprising the monthly "food basket" palatable and culturally acceptable without serious constraints on effective delivery of food assistance.

244. WFP partners in Activity 1 (the MoH being the main one, along with those under formal agreements with the MoH/WFP such as CARE, World Vision, CCFH) effectively contributed to the proper use of the food aid by providing the required counselling and training to the beneficiaries.

245. As a commonly shared qualitative evaluation by project partners and beneficiaries, it was felt that food distribution has been efficient, with the planned quantities distributed, very few complaints on the quality of the food commodities, and minimal delays encountered in the delivery and distribution. As a result, the mission considers that the WFP CO and its regional staff, in keeping active with EDP long-term use of food aid projects beyond emergency recovery operations, appears in a better position to retain its planning, implementing and logistics capacities in addition to its "new" development contributions as a cooperation partner of the GoH.

246. Municipalities and communities were selected and targeted using the VAM analysis within the PRSP perspective. The mission is of the opinion that it provides more efficient results in the targeting, implementation and achievement of project objectives (and of the PRSP long-term goal of poverty reduction) by supporting families that are truly the most vulnerable in terms of food security, without the usual cultural or political bias which was previously limiting the effective level of achieved project/programme results.

247. Based on visits and discussions, the mission judges that the SFP committees are functioning well and appear well organized with a fair to active level of participation by committee members (including a good proportion of men), and that they are participating in the provision of food rations to the children in an appropriate way. In addition, a good opportunity for the social integration of mothers such as the one presented by the committees contributes to enhanced parental participation in school life. The SFP committees expressed an interest in additional capacity building activities on creative ways to prepare the food rations for the children.

248. The premature termination of Basic Activity 3 (sustainable livelihoods and prevention/mitigation of natural disasters) obviously affected the achievement of results in the sense that only a limited number of outputs have been delivered. The mission had the opportunity to examine several project sites and observe that many of the assets in place will be long-lasting and sustainable, thanks on the one hand to the appropriateness and quality of the work and on the other hand to the enhanced capacities of participants, who now have the tools and knowledge to maintain the assets. In a few very vulnerable areas where the population is in a severe state of poverty (in Ojojona, for example), the mission fears that the sustainability of certain assets may be in jeopardy. Given the severe scarcity of resources, the extreme poverty of some of these remote areas and the termination of food for work activities (which essentially allowed for the only complete meal of the day for the population during the dry season), assets such as forest protection measures (fire barriers) may be weakened with time if they are not maintained and bring the areas back to a state where proper protection against certain natural disasters cannot be ensured. The mission strongly feels that WFP and the COHDEFOR should at a minimum identify the most vulnerable areas and/or groups where the sustainability of results is not ensured, and assist in developing a strategy, potentially with other partners, to preserve these key and precious assets.

249. In a country structurally "at risk" like Honduras, it is crucial for UN System institutions to maintain their ability to quickly and effectively respond to emergencies. WFP's EDP programmes/projects offer an efficient means to develop and enhance the capability of WFP Honduras staff to take leadership and respond to emergencies and food crises.

250. Except for the GoH's request for local basic commodity purchases within the SFP partnership agreement, WFP's level of basic commodity purchasing has been hampered by the substantially

higher prices of grains, vegetable oil, etc. on the local markets, thus minimizing the impact of WFP food deliveries on Honduran markets. Any collaboration in modelling WFP's "potential" impact on local markets or interest in looking for more efficient markets in the future will be linked to the structural food vulnerability situation of the country and the pending Food Security Policy of the GoH.

251. When access to local markets represents a desirable and feasible option, some consideration should be given by WFP HQ to adapting the selection criteria for basic commodities in order to allow local variations in WFP CO national tenders.

4.2 ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

252. The mission is concerned that, to implement the CP along EDP principles and according to its strategic objectives, WFP will have to allocate a proportionally higher level of cash resources for: i) the management of development activities (rather than for emergency supply and delivery processes, which are well under control); and ii) additional and higher overhead expenses. The latter are deemed justified within a "long-term use of food for development" framework, and for the adequate CO integration of corporate institutional RBM, gender equality, and cost effectiveness policies. The mission foresees the need for a comprehensive organizational assessment of WFP CO and district operations associated with a sound appraisal of the current and foreseeable (EDP) level of effort. In addition, professional coverage of specialized needs within "new" development themes, the sourcing of local expertise (vs. HQ) and the capacity building requirements of present professionals and support staff should also be highlighted.

253. In M&E terms, the WFP CO has streamlined the quantitative "women's participation / beneficiary" information gathering part of its process. The mission could not substantiate the same progress in the qualitative aspects of women in development or in the substantive matters of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. The mission is of the opinion that before any serious attempt is made to strengthen the implementation of WFP gender equality and gender mainstreaming (GE/GM) commitments in project activities (and possibly in its own operations), the concepts, principles and substance of GE/GM have to be mastered by CO professional staff and integrated in relevant processes (e.g., M&E). The mission could not, apart from its mandate, assess the level of integration and use, at the CO level, of WFP corporate GE/GM guidelines, but would consider this highly relevant in the proposed organizational review of the CO.

254. Given the current workload of CO and field staff and the potential significant expansion of the SFP, the mission considers that WFP, particularly the monitors, will face serious constraints limiting their ability to ensure adequate monitoring of their activities. Creative and innovative measures (including periodic spot-checks and pre-determined sampling of skills to be monitored) will need to be pursued and developed in order to optimise use of their time. The mission confirmed that extensive monitoring in rural areas, where a majority of communities are difficult to reach, is a daunting task. Similarly, the mission is concerned about the risk the Country Office runs when stretching its own human resources to their absolute limit. The mission invites caution regarding maintaining the rate of expansion of WFP activities without a sound and comprehensive organizational assessment to integrate additional EDP development activities (e.g., thematic funding, RBM system integration). If the WFP CO wants to be a fully effective development partner of the GoH (in-between food crises and natural disasters), an adaptation and/or adjustment of their current operations and level of effort in terms of monitoring & evaluation will need to be contemplated in the short term.

A few key points to conclude

Key factors for success identified by the mission:

- Genuine and strong participation by local partners and beneficiary communities in the project cycle, from design to implementation;
- Sustained and strong dialogue with public authorities (national, departmental and local);
- Active participation in programme activities and ownership by public institutions;
- Good control mechanisms (efficient management, delivery, quality control);
- Synergy among various WFP operations.

Key problems identified by the mission:

- Need to enhance the level of 'specific value added' based strategic partnerships with key donors, in particular within the UN system;
- Need to formulate clear and partner co-ordinated exit strategies;
- Confused RBM approach, unsystematic definitions of development results and limited performance indicators in CO project cycle), uneven RBM capacity among WFP team and GoH institutional partners;
- Limited capacity to demonstrate tangible and measurable results;
- In a long-term perspective to support its EDP, WFP Honduras should rely on an organizational and CB needs assessments of its CO professional and local monitoring team with a view to supporting selected additional development themes, within the WFP corporate RBM approach to performance monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

Challenges ahead

- Focus thematic funding based on efficient long-term use of food aid;
- Managing the consequences of termination of Activity 3.

Key recommendations

***WFP should*:**

- Reinforce communication as well as information and knowledge sharing among key current and/or potential partners, in particular UN system organizations;
- Carry out a comprehensive organizational assessment of WFP CO and district operations associated with a sound appraisal of the current and foreseeable level of effort in view of an fully efficient and effective implementation of EDP;
- Secure cash resources to ensure effective implementation of the EDP (RBM, gender mainstreaming, capacity development of staff members, extensive field-based monitoring, etc.);
- Define clearly spelled-out partner co-ordinated exit strategies.

GoH should:

- Define, jointly with WFP CO, a strategy aiming at securing and maintaining the key assets created through Activity 3 and HON 5609 (Forestry Management Project).

4.3 FINAL WORD

255. On the subject of WFP's CO and field **human resources**, the mission wants to acknowledge their high level of professionalism, personal commitment and dedication. The mission wants to highlight their willingness to tackle WFP non-traditional assistance areas/themes and self-motivation as well as to promote WFP within prominent political, economic and social sectors of Honduras.