

# STRATEGIC M&E

## FOOD-FOR-TRAINING COMPONENT



*Survey commissioned by the World Food Programme (WFP)*

The World Food Programme (WFP) implements Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO) worldwide to assist communities that have suffered from a natural or man-made disaster and have yet to re-establish their livelihoods.

The complex humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, bred by the convergence of security, socio-political and economic challenges, presents such a context. Households' livelihoods have been affected, community market structures have been rendered increasingly volatile, and institutional responses and the development of core infrastructure has been constrained.

In response to this situation, WFP in Afghanistan has implemented several cycles of PRRO with the overall objective to support food insecure households with livelihood strategies.

Samuel Hall has been asked by WFP – since 2010 – to provide M&E and strategic expertise to support WFP programming in Afghanistan. As a case study of this collaboration, this document outlines Samuel Hall's work on monitoring of WFP's FFT activities in Afghanistan. The research team assessed the actual social and economic outcomes of its 2009 programme, in order to capture the sustainability and efficiency of the training provided through the FFT programme.

### What is Food for Training?

Food for Training (FFT) is one of the key components of PRRO in Afghanistan. Food insecure beneficiaries are given a

food ration in exchange for their participation in training for income-generating activities (IGA). The food is provided in the form of a dry, take-home ration intended to compensate for the time spent in training and the opportunity cost of foregone economic activities.

### What factors undermine the effectiveness of WFP's FFT programme in Afghanistan?

Basic food distribution to the most vulnerable people belongs to short-term humanitarian aid, whereas training and capacity building are long-term activities aimed at developing participants' social and economic welfare. This contradiction can be difficult to reconcile, and the research team found four factors that still undermine the WFP-FFT programme's effectiveness in achieving these goals:

#### *Internal factors*

- The WFP still had a dogmatic approach of its missions in Afghanistan (provision of a basic set of food items only).
- The WFP still relied on a quantitative and short-term approach that was inadequate with the needs of most participants.

#### *External factors*

- Most of the partner training centres did not have the capacity to develop participants' skills and provide them with an access to the labour market.
- The security context was getting worse, which: a) decreased WFP's

operational capacity in many districts, b) led WFP to hire M&E contractors that could not be fully trusted, and c) may put women training centres at risk in the medium run.

### **What were the review team's recommendations?**

The review team suggested that the training programme start from scratch and be more comprehensive. In the meantime, and in line with general WFP guidelines, Samuel Hall suggested that WFP focus on functional literacy and vocational training exclusively, as teacher training centres did not target the priority population groups (i.e. uneducated women and the poor).

### **How could the capacity of the training centres be improved?**

Firstly, to plan for future programming, Samuel Hall designed a typology of training centres that had been working with WFP on the FFT programme. Based on the kind of training centre, different recommendations were made for improvement.

#### *Professional, Efficient, Ethical, Reliable, and Sustainable (PEERS) training centres*

It was recommended that WFP launch 5 to 8 pilot partnerships with the best training centres in 2011. In these centres, the goal would be to unify the WFP-FFT programme approach by:

- Increasing the quality, quantity, and diversity of the food rations.
- Enhancing the pedagogic content of the training.

Samuel Hall specialises in public sector consulting, socio-economic research and aid and development analysis. We work primarily with humanitarian and development partners, donors, private sector partners and academic institutions.



#### *Basic training centres*

Furthermore, the WFP-FFT programme should progressively enhance the capacity of the large majority of the training centres that could only provide participants with food rations and basic skills, by providing them with a common curriculum (mix of basic technical and literacy skills + portfolio of 3 to 4 main professional skills).

#### *'Garage Institutes' or 'Backyard Centres'*

It is crucial to progressively decrease the number of the lowest quality training centres to avoid that: a) pseudo-trainers create 'ghost-trainees', divert the food rations, and resell the food on the bazaar; b) handicraft SME's take advantage of participants' vulnerability to make money with their productions without paying them; and c) trainees linger in the centre with no real objective on the long-run.

### **How should WFP approach partnerships?**

It was recommended that WFP link its FFT programme with other international and local players' activities. In the longer run and from a development perspective, food delivery cannot be the unique end goal of the FFT programme. As such, the FFT programme could benefit from the practical knowledge of implementing NGOs with long-term commitment to the area to tie some of its curriculum to their long-term programmes.

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