

**FINAL**

**SYNTHESIS REPORT**

**ECHO-funded WFP programme in Afghanistan  
ECHO-funded WFP programme in Eritrea  
ECHO-funded WFP programme in Tanzania  
ECHO-funded WFP programme in Serbia**

**August 1-12 and 18-23, October 1-21, 2002**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE SYNTHESIS REPORT

This report presents a synthesis of the findings and recommendations from the evaluations of WFP-Country programmes in Afghanistan, Eritrea, Serbia, and Tanzania.

In the Executive Summary and the narrative text -sections 1 to 7- of this report footnotes provide for references to relevant sections in the four country reports.

### ES1. PROGRAMME EVALUATED

Evaluated action:	Food assistance to refugees, drought victims, war-affected persons and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). World Food Programme activities funded by ECHO.
Countries:	Afghanistan, Eritrea, Serbia, and Tanzania
Consultants/Evaluators:	QUEST-Consult, Mr W Klaassen, Teamleader and Logistics, Mr A van der Heide, Nutrition
Period of evaluation:	The evaluations were carried out between August 1 and October 21, 2002.

For an overview of the funding of ECHO in the WFP programmes in Afghanistan, Eritrea, Serbia, and Tanzania reference is made to section 2.2 of this Synthesis Report.

An oversight of additional funding of ECHO to other implementers and agencies in the four countries and regions is provided in annex 2.

### ES2. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The global objective of this evaluation was to assess the set-up and impact of the WFP programme and to review the part played by the ECHO contribution. This evaluation has been carried out in four countries (Afghanistan, Serbia, Tanzania and Eritrea). Conclusions and recommendations should be drawn on the future working relationship between ECHO and WFP.

The specific objectives were to have a structured evaluation of the results of the WFP actions, examining relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and, if appropriate, sustainability and the development of durable solutions, followed by consideration of the way these results have been achieved.

### ES3. METHODOLOGY OF THE WFP EVALUATION<sup>1</sup>

The evaluation involved visits to the headquarters of WFP and ECHO in Brussels and Rome and WFP and ECHO regional offices in Rome, Kampala and Nairobi where discussions were held with senior staff and files were studied. This was followed by field visits to Afghanistan (11 field days), Eritrea (9 field days), Serbia (5 field days), and Tanzania (9 field days). Field meetings were held with the key staff of WFP, the Implementing Partners (IPs), the ECHO Field Experts, and with beneficiaries. Visits were made to warehouses, Extended Delivery Points (EDPs) and Final Delivery Points (FDPs). Prior to departure the team debriefed WFP senior country officers on its findings. Finally there were follow-up visits to the offices in Brussels and Rome and there were joint debriefing meetings in November 2002 and February 2003 after WFP and ECHO provided comments to two versions of the draft reports. The evaluation was implemented in accordance with the ToR (annex 1) and the 2002-edition of Evaluating Humanitarian Action Funded by the Humanitarian Aid Office of the European Commission.

### ES4. FUTURE CO-OPERATION OF WFP AND ECHO

The co-operation between ECHO and WFP is based on common principles and mandates for humanitarian assistance and operations in saving lives and combating hunger. This has led to long-term working relations between both organisations in several countries. The volume of funding by ECHO is considerable compared to other donors. The nature of funding -financial donations- is valued and welcomed by WFP complementing the in-kind funding of other donors.

<sup>1</sup> The evaluation has used Edition 2002 of Evaluating Humanitarian Action Funded by the Humanitarian Aid Office of the European Commission as a guideline

The evaluators underwrite the prevailing opinion in WFP that the co-operation between both organisations is a substantial contribution to the humanitarian task of both. Despite the positive feelings within both organisations it is apparent from the evaluation that incompatibilities of procedure and regulations exist that could be simplified in order to improve operations. It was found that this has in some instances deterred interrelations between staff and the organisations at large and led to difficulty to operate smoothly, effectively and efficiently. In order to further expand the co-operation but at the same time improve the quality of it a number of recommendations are suggested in this synthesis report and in the individual country reports<sup>1</sup>.

#### **ES4.1. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT FROM PAST PERFORMANCE**

The World Food Programme (WFP) had grown fast in recent decades; in the process, some aspects of its work have kept up with the growth and some need strengthening. Building a professional worldwide organisation that began with the process of decentralisation is evidence of the WFP awareness that its work is not simple. In its approach serious attempts are made to integrate VAM (Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping)<sup>2</sup> and its Commitment to Women<sup>3</sup>, in the mainstream of its work. In view of WFP operational cost effectiveness, initial studies are being undertaken<sup>4</sup>. A special task is ahead for WFP to further develop its organisational processes in such a way that management and operational controls have stronger links and that, during operations, planning and activities are presented in a more detailed and understandable way<sup>5</sup>.

WFP is strong at its core task, which is procuring and moving commodities. It now has to strengthen other aspects of the work. The first step is an analysis of these aspects:

- How WFP uses -and should use- its 'political influence' and the 'principles' underlying its work<sup>6</sup> to help projects get started and to close down and to develop and maintain strong relations with donors and National Governments and ensure that they remain involved with the programme in order that WFP keep the operations on the right track, and keep the pipeline supplied;
- How, despite indications of favourable (low) unit prices resulting from economies of scale, it must be understood that the spending in the logistics system itself seems to be high. Assessment of the cost-effectiveness of the logistics system needs to take into account that WFP reporting currently is not based on actual spending but on the anticipated and budgeted spending on components<sup>7</sup>. Under the time constraint of the evaluation this issue could not be assessed in depth but it recommended that a follow up review would be of value.
- How food can be used as part of a rehabilitation package and be included in the Linking Relief Rehabilitation and Development (LRRD) programme<sup>8</sup>, carried out by Implementing Partners (IP);

WFP has provided a common services to the aid community with positive effects to the emerging structures in the country. These common serves are United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), ICT and the establishment of the United Nations Logistics Centre.

The UNHAS flight operations have, under the management of WFP, after initial problems, operated well since January 2002, especially within the country. Under the prevailing conditions continuation of the flight services are recommended. Improved communication between the users of the service is suggested to consolidate the forum for communication between users and service providers about quality of the flights and arrangements.<sup>9</sup>

The UNJLC has created a fast data bank covering the physical infrastructure in the country with low threshold access for stakeholders. The information from UNJLC should be standardised and made

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 6.1; Eritrea 5.5; Serbia 5.5

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.1, 3.5, 7.1, 8.1; Eritrea 2.1, 3.1, 3.5, 5, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 8; Serbia 3.1, 7.1

<sup>3</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.4, 7, 7.4, 8.1, 9; Eritrea 3.4, 7.2, 8; Serbia 3.1, 5.8, 6; Tanzania 3.1, 3.4, 6.4, 8

<sup>4</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 4.4, 7.3; Eritrea 5.1, 7.3, 7.4; Serbia 5.1, 6.2, 7.2, 7.3; Tanzania 5.1, 7.3, 7.4

<sup>5</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 4.4, 8.3; Eritrea 4.2, 4.3, 4.4; Serbia 4.4, 6.3, 7.3; Tanzania 4.4, 7.3

<sup>6</sup> Refer to: Serbia 5.1, 5.5; Tanzania 5

<sup>7</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 4.4, 7.3; Eritrea 5.1, 7.3, 7.4; Serbia 5.1, 6.2, 7.2, 7.3; Tanzania 5.1, 7.3, 7.4

<sup>8</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 2, 3.5, 6.1, 6.2, 7.5; Eritrea 6.5, 7.4, 8; Serbia 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 8; Tanzania 6.5

<sup>9</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 5.1

available to CIMIC and in needs planning how some of the information can be processed and be made available to GoA departments.<sup>1</sup>

- How it can ensure that needs assessments are sharper and incorporate the knowledge and skills of IP organisations;
- How it can take Implementing Partners into a true partnership, make better use of their skills, more provision for support and capacity-building, and also in a corporate sense, understand that the poor performance of the pipeline does impair the performance, damage the reputation and even threaten the existence of an IP<sup>2</sup>;
- How it can appreciate the need to understand the differences between people it helps as beneficiaries, for instance gender and culture. Recognise the skills that can be utilised, how households influence nutrition and that through a greater understanding it can deliver a better service.

#### **ES 4.2. FUTURE ECHO-WFP CO-OPERATION: RECOMMENDATIONS GAINED FROM THE FOUR-COUNTRY EVALUATION**

In view of the future working relations between ECHO and WFP the following recommendations are generalised from the four country studies and the synthesis report:

##### **1. That WFP should strengthen its undoubted capacity to procure and move large quantities of food, by:**

- i) Further optimising 'high quality' management information systems (e.g. COMPAS, LTSH spreadsheet software, pipeline planning and projection) in order to improve:
  - Internal communications between field and management,
  - Monitoring procedures<sup>3</sup>,
  - Reporting to donors<sup>4</sup>,
  - Making pipeline information readily available to IP organisations. Providing early warning information of anticipated pipeline problems while continuing to monitor and analyse what is needed to avoid pipeline problems related to sourcing<sup>5</sup>,
- ii) Making transport budgets, actual costs of transport and the reporting more accessible and transparent<sup>6</sup>. A more thorough budget analysis is recommended in order to assess cost-effectiveness of components in the logistic system<sup>7</sup>. Given the time constraint for the evaluators, in-depth analysis was not possible.

##### **2. That WFP should continue to build on the skills it has in the following areas:**

- i) Consolidate the principles underlying its operations which guide its response to political pressures<sup>8</sup>; these pressures may distort the true picture of need (Serbia, Eritrea), or make procurement distorted (Serbia) or perhaps keep refugees dependent (Tanzania);
- ii) Further strengthen its ability to offer a more flexible profile as partners to Governments (Eritrea) and provide for more capacity-building of IP organisations<sup>9</sup>;
- iii) Build better partnerships with NGO IPs by making better use of their reports and additional specific information and knowledge (Serbia); treating them more as equals (Serbia); through better joint programming and evaluations (Afghanistan), providing general and routine information to IPs on the pipeline projections (Afghanistan). All this would help to build "best practice". See item 6. For text references see previous item.
- iv) Strengthening Research Tools, using the expertise of both VAM and IPs, that would include: bottom-up Needs Assessments that begin with the household (Serbia, Afghanistan); research into the underlying causes of malnutrition (Eritrea, Tanzania); all

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 5.2

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.5, 4.2, 6.2, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2, 10; Tanzania 6.3, 7.1, Serbia 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2, 9

<sup>3</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.3, 3.4, 4.4, 6.1, 7.1, 8.1; Eritrea 2.1, 3.4, 4, 4.4, 5, 5.1, 6.3; Serbia 2.1, 3.4, 4, 4.4, 5, 5.1, 6.3, Tanzania 3.4, 4.4, 6.3, 7.1

<sup>4</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.4, 8.2, 8.5; Eritrea 3.4, 5.1, 7.4; Serbia 5.1, 6.1, 6.2, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4; Tanzania 3.4, 5.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4

<sup>5</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.5, 4.4; Serbia 4.4, 7.3

<sup>6</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.4, 8.2, 8.5; Eritrea 3.4, 5.1, 7.4; Serbia 5.1, 6.1, 6.2, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4; Tanzania 3.4, 5.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4

<sup>7</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 4.4, 7.3; Eritrea 5.1, 7.3, 7.4; Serbia 5.1, 6.2, 7.2, 7.3; Tanzania 5.1, 7.3, 7.4

<sup>8</sup> Refer to: Serbia 5.1, 5.5; Tanzania 5

<sup>9</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.5, 4.2, 6.2, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2, 10; Tanzania 6.3, 7.1, Serbia 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2, 9

- these tools should incorporate the point of view of the female beneficiaries (women roles as care-takers, female-headed households etc)<sup>1</sup>;
- v) Reformulate existing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) procedures, both in quantitative and qualitative terms (in all countries). Design procedures in such a way that M&E include 'impact', 'lessons learnt' and 'best practice' and suggest ways to utilise the outcomes<sup>2</sup>;
  - vi) Develop early long-term planning. Include formulas and strategies to avoid or lessen the effects that pipeline failure have on beneficiaries and implementing NGOs (Afghanistan). Consider alternative approaches in relatively resource-rich areas e.g. Cash-for-Work (Afghanistan) for beneficiaries who are physically able, formulate exit strategies from the early stages of the operations<sup>3</sup>;
  - vii) Encourage the funding and sourcing of WFP, through stronger 'sales' techniques. WFP public relations measures should emphasise the humanitarian principals and the human aspect of its operations for the beneficiaries more than the technical performance and capacity, e.g. in transport. Special attention is needed to deal with pledges by the international community that are not fulfilled (Afghanistan);

### 3. That ECHO could:

- i) For reasons of cost-effectiveness and in order to avoid the risk of duplication, explore with WFP the option of WFP implementing the full cycle of activities, including procurement, logistics and distribution. This would shorten the chain of involved agencies and their IPs by removing areas of potential overlap of WFP and for instance UNHCR or any other implementer<sup>4</sup>. The evaluators are aware of the regulatory function of the Memorandum of Understanding between both Organisations. For smaller programmes the cost-effectiveness of funding through WFP could be compared with implementation options offered by capable international NGOs (Serbia, Tanzania) or government departments (Eritrea);
- ii) Consider -depending on the conditions- a medium long-term presence in Afghanistan;

### 4. That ECHO and WFP could strengthen their Organisational Relationships & Procedures by:

- i) Although the organisations share mandates and objectives, procedures are often incompatible. The incompatible procedures leading to negotiations and proposal reformulation -often beyond the remit of the Country Offices- taking more than one year<sup>5</sup>. There is a need to take steps to address this in a way that does not compromise the quality of future planning and operational contracts. See next point;
- ii) Establishing a WFP-ECHO Senior Technical Group to facilitate the outcome of the Strategic Dialogue, sort out procedural differences and consider the recommendations of this evaluation for implementation<sup>6</sup>;
- iii) At HQ level, hold meetings of senior staff to discuss relevant issues and build better personal relations<sup>7</sup>;
- iv) That ECHO and WFP pay specific attention to the implementation of the new Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement between EC and UN;

### 5. Gender

That WFP could recognise that, within needs assessments, VAM etc. the institutionalisation of gender within WFP is still patchy. Despite a sound policy document and genuine steps to employ women further strategies are needed to make it strengthen female participation overall. Extra effort is required to employ female national staff (as done in Afghanistan). Approaches adopted that address

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3, 3.5, 7; Eritrea 3.1, 3.2, 5, 7.2; Serbia 3.1, 7.1

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.3, 3.4, 4.4, 6.1, 7.1, 8.1; Eritrea 2.1, 3.4, 4, 4.4, 5, 5.1, 6.3; Serbia 2.1, 3.4, 4, 4.4, 5, 5.1, 6.3, Tanzania 3.4, 4.4, 6.3, 7.1

<sup>3</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.5, 4.2, 6.2, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2, 10; Tanzania 6.3, 7.1, Serbia 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2

<sup>4</sup> Refer to: Serbia 5.1, 7.2; Tanzania 5, 7.2

<sup>5</sup> Refer to: Serbia 2.1, Afghanistan 10, Eritrea 2

<sup>6</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 6, 8.5; Eritrea 5.5, 7.4; Serbia 3.4, 7.4; Tanzania 7.4

<sup>7</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 6.1, 8.5; Eritrea, 7.4. 5.5; Serbia 5.5, 7.4; Tanzanian 5.5, 7.4

for instance the interests of families and women in Afghanistan, dropout school girls in the Tanzanian camps, or issues associated with food problems<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 7.4; Eritrea 8.2, 3.1, 6; Tanzania 8, Serbia 3.1, 6.1

## **1 SYNTHESIS REPORT: OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION AND METHODOLOGY USED<sup>1</sup>**

This report is the synthesis of the evaluation of the WFP programmes in Afghanistan, Serbia, Tanzania and Eritrea, requested by ECHO. The ToR (Terms of Reference) did not prescribe in detail the content of the report. It mentions that the synthesis report is an "overall report on the global co-operation aspects of ECHO and WFP" and this is specified in the global and specific objectives. Conclusions and recommendations should be drawn as to how ECHO and WFP work together in future, both overall (synthesis report) and in the specific programmes examined (country reports).

The reason for the overall evaluation is in the Article 18 of Regulations (EC) 1257/96, which states "that the Commission shall regularly assess aid operations financed by the Community in order to establish whether they have achieved its objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of future operations".

For the overall evaluation it wishes to "assess the set-up and impact of the WFP programmes in Afghanistan, Serbia, Tanzania and Eritrea, and to see the part played by them in the ECHO contribution".

From these individual country programme evaluations, conclusions and recommendations should be drawn as to how ECHO and WFP should work together in the future, both overall and in the specific programmes examined. And to "have a structured evaluation of the results of the WFP actions in each of the four regions under examination, regarding relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and, if appropriate, sustainability and the development of durable solutions, followed by consideration of the way these results have been achieved".

### **METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation was carried out in three stages: the first stage was (the) briefings with ECHO Headquarters in Brussels and in WFP Headquarters.

The second stage was the period of field studies, briefings and debriefings in Regional Bureaus for the Balkan and Eastern Europe in Rome, WFP regional office for Eastern Africa in Kampala and ECHO regional office in Nairobi. These included studies of relevant files and documents. Country offices of WFP and ECHO were visited in Afghanistan, Serbia, Tanzania and Eritrea for discussions, file studies and were also bases for fieldwork. In Eritrea there is no ECHO office and contacts were with the EC Delegation. Intensive field visits to WFP programmes were made, meeting beneficiaries, IPs, Government Ministers, local government officials and leaders, other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) etc. Finally de-briefings were held with the EC delegation and the WFP country office senior staff. File and document studies complemented the information.

The third stage was that of reporting the findings, conclusions and recommendations. During report drafting, after the fieldwork had been completed, the exchange of information with WFP offices continued. After the fieldwork WFP-HQ was visited again for additional information and reflection. All draft reports in two consecutive rounds of comments discussed with WFP and discussed in de-briefing meetings (on November 18-19, 2002 and February 20, 2003) in Brussels in the presence of both ECHO and WFP representatives before reaching its final status.

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<sup>1</sup> The evaluation has used Edition 2002 of Evaluating Humanitarian Action Funded by the Humanitarian Aid Office of the European Commission as a guideline for the evaluation.



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## 2 COUNTRY STUDIES

### 2.1 THE FOUR COUNTRY PROGRAMMES PERIOD 1999-2002

#### **Afghanistan**

In Afghanistan, WFP works with drought- and war-affected victims and other vulnerable groups through general distributions, Food-for-Work (FFW) and FOODAC (Food-for-Assets Creation), Supplementary feeding and Food-for-Education programmes. General distributions are now only for IDPs in camps. The specialised programmes are mainly for road construction, wells, dams, school rehabilitation or construction, bakeries, school feeding, etc. WFP is responsible for the procurement and transport of food to the EDPs and from there the IPs do the distribution. WFP carries out Food Needs Assessments through Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) studies and FAO/WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment Mission (CFSAM).

#### **Serbia**

In Serbia, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for the distribution of food to refugees from Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. WFP distributes food aid to the 'social cases' or victims of the collapsed economy such as pensioners. IDPs from Kosovo received food aid from the ICRC (International Committee of the Red Cross) through the Serbian Red Cross (SRC). WFP is responsible for the procurement and transport of food to the EDPs. UNHCR is responsible for the food aid distribution to the refugees. IPs do the final distributions. In Serbia, WFP/UNHCR Joint Food Assessment Missions (JFAM) are the main tool for needs assessment.

#### **Tanzania**

In Tanzania over 500,000 refugees in 15 camps from Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) receive every two weeks food aid from UNHCR/IP. WFP is responsible for procurement and transport. UNHCR has contracted IPs for distribution. WFP is member of the Joint Food Assessment Mission. WFP-Tanzania is also responsible for the logistics of food supply to Burundi, DRC and Uganda. It will also administer the pipeline for some countries in the drought stricken southern-Africa region.

#### **Eritrea**

In Eritrea, food aid is given to IDPs in camps who are victims of the war. They are mostly people coming from war-affected areas. WFP also at present gives food to drought victims. Food is procured and shipped by WFP and port handling and transport is done by the Eritrean Relief and Refugee Commission (ERREC). Distribution is in the hands of the local administration. Food needs assessments are carried out by the local administration with help of government agencies like NFIS (National Food Information System). Needs are negotiated with WFP.

WFP plays a key role in and often leads the Joint Food Assessment Missions (JFNAM) and other assessment exercises. The organisation also carries out food security and household food economy surveys and some nutritional survey work has been done. WFP has taken up co-ordination by organising bi-weekly or periodical food co-ordination meetings, an important tool for information sharing at the field level.

## 2.2 COMPARATIVE DESCRIPTION OF THE 4 EVALUATED WFP PROGRAMMES

The following operational contracts of ECHO were involved in the evaluation in the period 1999-2002:

### VOLUME OF ECHO FUNDING IN THE WFP IN AFGHANISTAN, ERITREA, SERBIA, AND TANZANIA

Country <sup>1</sup>	ECHO Operational contract	Purpose	Amount	WFP EMOP/PRRO code	Total budget of EMOP/PRRO
Afghanistan	ECHO/AFG/210/2000/04001	food aid to drought victims	1 MEURO	EMOP 6259	\$ 60,568,189
	ECHO/TPS/210/2002/27010	logistic support	1 MEURO	SO 10130 Special Operation	\$ 40,292,147
	ECHO/TPS/210/2001/21002	flight operations	2.225 MEURO	SO 10163 Special Operation	\$ 10,053,152
Serbia	ECHO/TPS/214/1999/07180	food aid to refugees & social cases	10 MEURO	EMOP 6136.02	\$ 89,954,071
Tanzania	ECHO/TZA/210/1999/10002	food to aid refugees	5 MEURO	PRRO 6077	\$ 274,302,815
	ECHO/TZA/210/2000/01005	food to aid refugees	10 MEURO	As above	As above
	ECHO/TZA/210/2001/01005	food to aid refugees	15 MEURO	10062	\$ 167,087,525
Eritrea	ECHO/TPS/210/1999/10002	Food aid to war victims/IDPs	3.5 MEURO	EMOP 6044	\$ 85,758,603

Information concerning additional funding by ECHO to other implementers and agencies in the four countries and regions is provided in annex 2.

The funding in the It concerns a total funding in the four countries of 47,725 MEURO mainly for food aid and its related costs and a special activity in Afghanistan for logistics and flight operations inside the country during the period 1999-2002.

The Implementing Partners, mostly national or international NGOs, carry out the distribution to the beneficiaries in all countries except Eritrea where it is done by the government (ERREC). When it concerns refugees, WFP co-operates with UNHCR as the responsible agency for distribution as it is the mandated agency for refugee care and protection. WFP and UNHCR have recently concluded a Memorandum of Understanding, which shapes and defines their relationship, roles and responsibilities. Both WFP and UNHCR contract IPs for final distribution work. The evaluators support a WFP proposal to carry out a pilot scheme in some countries whereby the IP organisation will be responsible for the whole logistics cycle, being procurement, transport and distribution, as this would shorten the organisational chain.

## 2.3 AREAS OF SPECIAL ATTENTION

### WFP' ROLE IN 2002 AND BEYOND

WFP is a programme that has grown enormously in the last decades. It is an important organisation and mandated to play a political role. As an observer in the discussions between Government of Tanzania and UNHCR concerning repatriation of refugees and in Afghanistan where the organisation was present right through and after the 09-11 crisis and worked close with the new government. It has consolidated its ability to do core activities well -the procurement and movement of food in support of the poor and the hungry. In places like Tanzania it shows capacity to adapt the food basket

<sup>1</sup> Data from WFP, Office of Evaluation and Monitoring

it purchases and moves. It is already demonstrated that it can provide a different type of presence in different countries with varied needs. It has begun a process of self-analysis, reviewing VAM and studies on cost-effectiveness (section 3.2.), and building the more nuanced skills that transcend the mass importing of food commodities. See also section 6 of this report.

### **BUILDING FURTHER ON WHAT WFP DOES WELL**

WFP should strengthen its undoubted capacity to procure and move large quantities of food by:

1. Making transport budgets and accounting to donors more understandable and transparent (all countries);<sup>1</sup>
2. Making pipeline information routinely available to IPs in addition to the existing co-ordination meeting;<sup>2</sup>
3. Analysis of how sourcing and fundraising prevents pipeline problems: use a less formal and standardised information and appeal system from HQ to communicate with donors, emphasise the real life issues of the populations received from the COs and present the uniqueness in the work that WFP is doing<sup>3</sup>
4. Optimising the use of the management information systems for improving its reporting to donors;<sup>4</sup>
5. Consolidate the principles underlying its operations, which guide its response to the political environment it is working in, or perhaps keep refugees dependent.<sup>5</sup>

### **WFP AND POLITICAL INFLUENCE**

The political challenges in the four countries are set out below. The key question is how WFP balances its political weight with its foundation principles. This is crucial because both can seriously add value to the work of WFP and its partners.

In Tanzania repatriation, at least for the refugees from Burundi and the DRC, is unlikely for some time. So the future of half-a-million refugees depends partly on the Government of Tanzania (GoT) who could allow them to start farming and supporting themselves. As the feeder of the camp residents, WFP supports a status quo, which brings a great deal of money into Tanzania; it needs to ensure that pressure on the GoT is kept up.

In Afghanistan the continuity of flow through the pipeline was irregular, with times of failure and consequently shortages to distribute and probable hunger. Some IPs were forced to lay off staff; the promises made to the people of Afghanistan by the International Community have not yet been well translated into cash and kind: WFP -as the organisation with a long-standing base in the country- can play a role in terms of advocacy towards the governments who pledged but did not come forward in view of sourcing of the programmes.

In Eritrea, a strong Government controls the logistics and distribution of the food aid operation, providing ability in policy and implementation of logistics operations but also demanding full rations for a greater number than the regional VAM drought assessment came with. WFP does not take an operational role but is involved with monitoring of the distribution, does adjust appeals accordingly and furthermore does focus on capacity-building, material and advisory support.

Food can be a political -or economic- tool, and reliance on food aid makes it less necessary to revive the agricultural sector. As such, food aid to refugees who are not able to produce any food themselves, even where it is theoretically possible (Tanzania) or when full rations may be given to too many people (Eritrea) slows LRRD (Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development) or makes it impossible. It was noted by the evaluators that in Tanzania WFP/UNHCR carried out a comprehensive study on ways to reduce dependency on food by the refugees ("Towards increased food self-reliance for refugees in western Tanzanian Camps", WFP/UNHCR, April/May 2001). The difficulty of

<sup>1</sup> Refer to : Afghanistan 3.4, 4.4, 7.3, 8.2, 8.5; Eritrea 3.4, 5.1, 7.4; Serbia 5.1, 6.1, 6.2, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4; Tanzania 3.4, 5.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4

<sup>2</sup> Refer to : Afghanistan 3.5, 4.4; Serbia 4.4, 7.3

<sup>3</sup> Refer to : Afghanistan 4.4

<sup>4</sup> Refer to : Afghanistan 4.2, 4.4, 7.1, 7.2, 10; Eritrea 4.1, 5, 6, 6.1, 9; Serbia 3.4, 4.1, 5.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.3; Tanzania 4.1, 4.4, 6.2, 7.3

<sup>5</sup> Refer to: Serbia 5.5, 5.1; Tanzania 5

implementing LRRD objectives in the framework of food programmes does not lead to an opinion that food aid is for that reason inappropriate but rather that political decisions have important side-effects on food aid, for instance on LRRD, as mentioned above.

In similar vein, in Serbia the Government requested the WFP not to procure food locally as it claimed that the country ran into food deficit after years of food surplus. If it is recommended that policies and principles are a key in WFP policy (for example that one should purchase cheaper, nearer and more cost-effective and support the local economy) there could have been a change for one year but thereafter to resume local procurement: a different decision.<sup>1</sup>

### **3 KEY AREAS OF EVALUATION**

#### **3.1 FOOD SECTOR**

The food sector normally covers the entire process of food aid operations: food needs assessment, the targeting, the distribution, the monitoring, the impact measurement etc. The four country reports give details about these issues; the lessons to be learnt from them are partly found in chapter 2. However special attention must be paid to overall issues about food security and nutrition, VAM and impact.

##### **i) Whether food aid is necessary**

Food aid in Serbia is according the criteria "not food deficit and not underdeveloped" and not a country where food aid is a necessity. However, during the economic boycott and with the presence of large numbers of refugees at war and after the revolution the phasing out was an appropriate decision. In the other countries, given the present conditions, it is. In Tanzania food aid is needed until the refugees are repatriated or allowed to settle and grow their own food. In Eritrea it is certainly necessary for many given the drought, presence of IDPs and the large number of young men in social and military service. Afghanistan faces a long slow process of reconstruction the areas where drought is still reducing harvests so the need for food will continue for some time.

##### **ii) Whether food needs assessments were properly done**

The types of assessments seem to be determined at the beginning of the operations; the findings, and those of other organisations involved, could be more convincingly fed back into the management of the operation. Within a limited remit the assessments are usually done with professionalism (Serbia, Tanzania, Afghanistan). In Afghanistan countrywide Vulnerability Assessments are carried out on a yearly basis and the VAM unit conduct Rapid Emergency Food Needs Assessments (REFNA)<sup>2</sup>. Following results of assessments, operations are being reviewed and adjusted. In Serbia the types of food distributed do not match the nutritional needs of the target groups since the problem was access to food, not availability of food. In Tanzania, though, the food basket has been adapted in a detailed way to meet needs and food preferences.<sup>3</sup>

There is a need to improve the tools of food security and nutrition surveys, questioning whether food aid is the most appropriate intervention and using the results. In addition, the bottom-up approach, starting with the household, needs to be added where lacking, to the top-down macro harvest assessments.

##### **iii) World Food Programme or World Food Aid Programme**

WFP Eritrea's analysis of "Self Reliance in Food Security" leading to "Poverty Reduction" is mainly in practice expressed through feeding programmes to reduce hunger and malnutrition; food-for-agriculture, soil and water conservation, provision of tools, FfW to rehabilitate water supply and sanitation systems, food for health (e.g. for people with HIV/AIDS), food for improving infrastructures, food to increase Government Capacity, to diversify income and food to improve education and to increase the enrolment of girls etc.

<sup>1</sup> Refer to : Serbia 5.5, 5.1; Tanzania 5

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.5

<sup>3</sup> Refer to : Afghanistan 3.1, 3.5, 7.1, 8.1; Eritrea 2.1, 3.1, 3.5, 5, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 8; Serbia 3.1, 7.1

In Afghanistan, needs assessments are made through measuring the difference between estimated needs minus estimated local production minus a percentage for coping strategies. Food security approaches, malnutrition rates and the aetiology of malnutrition should be taken more into consideration, following pressure to change from specialised agencies. In Serbia, food security approaches and the nutritional situation are not analysed. Full rations are given to a maximum of three persons in a family.

A real analysis of the causes of food insecurity and of the aetiology of malnutrition should be carried out in detail especially in the three above-mentioned countries. When the real problems are not analysed it is difficult to have effective concepts of how food aid can solve development-related problems. Examples encountered were the discussions in Afghanistan about cash-for-work instead of food-for-work and in Eritrea the emphasis that NGOs such as DIA (Dutch Interchurch Aid) and CONCERN give to the integration of anthropometry into a food security approach.

WFP VAM and Nutrition Units on Headquarters level all stressed the need for a global concept on food security at household level, and the role of proxy-indicators such as anthropometrical data. In practice, WFP does not employ a full-time Nutritionist in Afghanistan and Serbia. WFP-Eritrea has employed a Nutritionist since 2001. This shows that a shift occurs towards a wider and more complete approach for WFP in operations instead of mainly food aid.

#### **iv) VAM (Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping)**

The need for VAM is generally accepted. Only in Afghanistan and now in Eritrea was there a permanent VAM Unit. (Tanzania has a VAM unit but it does not work in the refugee camps -UNHCR has a health unit, which is also in charge of nutrition). WFP-Eritrea has (June 2002) a VAM section in the Programme Unit, staffed with a half-time International consultant and a full-time National Officer. VAM did many surveys in Serbia and produced regularly a bulletin.

VAM's main role in general is analysing the factors influencing vulnerability and looking for ways to reduce it. Access and availability of food are important objects of study. VAM uses different approaches, among others the use of satellite images, crop assessments, market studies, household food economy approaches and anthropometrical surveys. The analysis of all this gives the necessary information on vulnerability risks and the food situation in the households. This information leads to major decisions about food aid or not, the extent of rations; if not, the alternatives that are necessary.

In Afghanistan, however, the MoH (Ministry of Health) food security and nutrition expert mentioned the fact that VAM is integrating the more overall approach where nutritional and also food security data are included instead of the methodology used in the 2002 Food Needs Assessment. VAM is now working towards the use of complete tools such as VAM countrywide assessments as a food-aid-planning tool, joint FAO-WFP CFSAMs and REFNAs.

In Eritrea, DIA and Concern mentioned the lack of an integrated approach of VAM because these organisations paid much attention to nutritional and food security assessments. VAM Eritrea puts strong emphasis on satellite images and food economy assessments, while above-mentioned NGOs were of the opinion that it would not be adequate. However, VAM carried out a large nutritional survey in 2002. The food economy approach is a good "complementary" tool because it provides indications and information about the sources of income and food within families. This information is based on data collected through interviews in the households and although based on interviewed perceptions -mere indications. These need to be complemented by more exact information like anthropometrical data, which gives information about the acute and the chronic situation of nutrition.<sup>1</sup>

#### **v) Whether it was the right type of food**

In Serbia the types of food distributed do not match the nutritional needs of the target groups. People got rations of wheat and oil -calories- when they needed proteins and vitamins. The problem was access to food, not availability. In Tanzania the food distributed was well balanced, meeting not only needs but also food preferences.

<sup>1</sup> Refer to : Afghanistan 3.1, 3.5, 7.1, 8.1; Eritrea 2.1, 3.1, 3.5, 5, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2, 8; Serbia 3.1, 7.1

**vi) Whether the priorities of the WFP matched those of others**

The roles of WFP food aid are to support the poorest of the poor during a time of acute economic hardship and poverty with food. In Serbia however, the priorities of the beneficiaries and the IPs were expressed as: help with the physical and mental consequences of war and support for the local economy. The mental load of the years of fighting is also a priority for returnees in Afghanistan, although the continuity of food supplies is probably seen as the top priority of all partners.

ECHO, in consultation with WFP and the IPs, could explore the possibility of food aid being part of a package focussed on rehabilitation and development with stronger LRRD. For non-food related activities WFP could contract an IP with specific expertise.

**vii) Effectiveness of the programme****MONITORING**

In Serbia the monitoring was done in a maximum of about 33% of the distributions and through household visits. The evaluators reviewed monitoring reports and suggest also a provision of qualitative monitoring indicators. In Eritrea, WFP monitors 50% of distribution sites but the need is to do more monitoring with ERREC, with the results being fed back into assessment and planning.

Monitoring should get much greater attention and include qualitative and impact aspects. It is essential that the results be used.<sup>1</sup>

**EVALUATIONS**

In the four programmes, with exception of Afghanistan FOODAC and Bakeries projects, no project specific evaluations were carried out as included in the operational contract. WFP says that the budget line 'Evaluation' in the Operational Contracts with ECHO is regarded as un-earmarked funding of the Office of Evaluation and Monitoring/Division of Oversight Services. Although the country programme level evaluations are being carried out by WFP, none such has been done in the four countries under scrutiny. Systematic project level reviews or evaluations, with IPs, should become a routine task for WFP; these should address needs and effects from household level up and use qualitative as well as quantitative indicators. As ECHO includes funding for evaluations in each operational contract specific agreements should be made about the way the evaluations are implemented.

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Impact looks at the wider effects of the actions and can be short-term or long-term, intended or unintended, positive or negative, macro or micro. However, impact is not measured in WFP programmes though all programmes have food aid monitoring. Even in the narrative final reports to donors, impact is not mentioned to any detail. To work on impact measurement, clear criteria must be formulated and an impact monitoring system set up. As long as this is not done, LRRD -in terms of ECHO- or PRRO -in terms of WFP- can hardly be formulated because of a lack of appropriate information<sup>2</sup>.

**viii) WFP reporting**

The quality of the standardised reporting, both narrative as well as financial, is a serious cause of concern. The reporting provides very limited information and is often sent very late. Urgent improvement is needed. It is recommended elsewhere in this report that the proposed WFP-ECHO Senior Technical Group will include the upgrading of the reporting in its remit.<sup>3</sup>

**3.2 THE LOGISTICS SYSTEM****3.2.1 THE COMMODITY TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS SYSTEM**

The WFP logistic system, the software, hardware and infrastructure in the four countries visited are well up-to-standard. There are differences from country to country but all country offices and sub-offices are connected to COMPAS, the communication system that is established in 60 countries, that monitors and tracks food quantities and controls movements through the logistic route from initial supply and point of departure to EDP. WFP-Eritrea is in the process of establishing the system in

<sup>1</sup> Refer to : Afghanistan 3.3, 3.4, 4.4, 6.1, 7.1, 8.1; Eritrea 2.1, 3.4, 4, 4.4, 5, 5.1, 6.3; Serbia 2.1, 3.4, 4, 4.4, 5, 5.1, 6.3, Tanzania 3.4, 4.4, 6.3, 7.1

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.4, 3.5, 4.2, 7, 7.3, 7.4, 8, 9; Eritrea 3.4, 6.4, 7.5, 8; Serbia 3.4, 6.2, 6.4, 7.1; Tanzania 3.4, 6.4, 7.3

<sup>3</sup> Refer to : Afghanistan 3.4, 4.4, 7.3, 8.2, 8.5; Eritrea 3.4, 5.1, 7.4; Serbia 5.1, 6.1, 6.2, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4; Tanzania 3.4, 5.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4

ERREC/GoE (Government of Eritrea) and facing capacity problems in doing so, though in the other countries COMPAS is well established. The application of COMPAS in Afghanistan and Eritrea is limited as yet and needs strengthening.

WINGS (WFP-Integrated Network Global System) provides budgetary and operational information and validates operations and costs of commodities handling, against SI (Shipping Instruction) and donor identification. It is coupled to COMPAS and is not yet functional in Eritrea and to a limited extent in Afghanistan.

The Pipeline projection reports on and projects the flow of commodities through the different components of the logistics system (port, transport system, warehouses, EDPs, etc.) against the requirements in order to predict shortfalls within the planning horizon of six months and is working to varying degrees of perfection in all countries. The pipeline software is of good quality and a reliable planning, monitoring and management instrument. It functions well and pipeline irregularities are mainly due to sourcing problems. WFP should disseminate pipeline information on routine basis using electronic mailing lists, as many IPs did not receive the pipeline information on a regular basis. Inadequate information to explain pipeline irregularities as well as its recovery, was mentioned by IPs and ECHO field offices. In all countries pipeline failure or problems result from inadequate resourcing of the pipeline and not directly from the handling capacity of the pipeline.<sup>1</sup>

The transport activities by road, rail or barge were generally well organised and the storage infrastructure is adequate although improvements are still needed in some of the ports or to the proximity of the EDP store to the target group, leading to improved cost-effectiveness.

Across the logistics infrastructure, control systems are in place, physical or computerised and applied<sup>2</sup>.

#### **i) Whether the logistic system is relevant to the requirements of the programmes**

In all four countries, the logistics system infrastructure, both hardware and software-components are well chosen and well managed. In all countries improvements, in terms of applications, especially linking the control and monitoring functions of the systems to management, and training staff to work better with the system are recommended. In Eritrea the COMPAS system is being transferred to ERREC. This process has just started and requires much support from WFP in terms of training, transfer of staff and provision of infrastructure.

The logistics hardware and infrastructure, and the management by WFP or by the national Government are relevant to the objectives of the programmes.

#### **ii) Whether the logistics systems are effective and appropriate**

The logistic systems in all countries visited are functioning well. The system in Eritrea is fully operated and managed by ERREC. In Afghanistan the logistic system remained functioning well under peak-pressure during the large transfers in the last months of 2001. In Tanzania the system has a dual function, it provides for the need within Tanzania but also for the surrounding countries in the eastern and southern region. All systems are adequate, effective and show that WFP has built strong logistics and the evaluators found strong indications that due to the economies of scale the overall unit costs of WFP compares favourably with other implementers. A problem that could not be studied in-depth by the evaluators was the cost of the logistic system, which is around 50% of each operational budget, which seems to be high compared to actual costs. See next point.

#### **A specific question: cost-effectiveness of the logistic system**

WFP is aware of the need to improve on cost-effectiveness. Comparative studies on cost-effectiveness of WFP and major international implementers are currently implemented. In addition to these useful studies it is recommended that also the cost-effectiveness of WFP internal systems and programme are scrutinised to see where improvements are possible.

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.5, 4.4; Serbia 4.4, 7.3

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 4.2, 4.4, 7.1, 7.2, 10; Eritrea 4.1, 5, 6, 6.1, 9; Serbia 3.4, 4.1, 5.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.3; Tanzania 4.1, 4.4, 6.2, 7.3

Despite the importance of the question of cost-effectiveness, the evaluators were unable to go in-depth into the matter due to profound time limitations. Assessments were done during discussions in all countries, in the regional offices and HQ.

Several of these discussions focussed on the discrepancy between the sum of assessed actual costs of the logistics' system components –e.g. procurement, international transport, local transport, storage and distribution- as assessed by the evaluators and the total amount, unspecified, in the Operational Contracts. The latter were always considerably higher than the former, while the differences were clear neither from discussions nor from the information of the LTSH spreadsheet.

As there was not enough time for the evaluators to analyse this matter in-depth, it is recommended to study this matter in detail.<sup>1</sup>

WFP has adopted the principle and policy of full cost-recovery of all direct and indirect costs related to each donation. The LTSH spreadsheet should be used increasingly as an operational tool to monitor local costs. Presently the LTSH sheet is only used in the project formulation phase, when there is expansion or when projects are reviewed.

Along with its studies and optimising the usage of the LTSH spreadsheet WFP should keep the donors informed about its endeavours improving its cost-effectiveness. Discussions should be had with donors about how projects could be re-programmed for the sake of increased cost-effectiveness. It should be stressed that reprogramming should not be regarded an activity done because 'something is wrong' but a logical step in the management cycle aiming at optimising the programme. Lower unit and operational costs should offer an incentive to WFP however, rather than a disincentive, for example, decreased funding available for staff costs. By doing so WFP would gradually build a culture of openness and transparency in its organisation and programmes.<sup>2</sup>

### iii) Whether the systems are providing for efficient operations

The WFP logistic systems are effective but need urgent address in terms of efficiency. There are indications that unit costs are generally favourable, resulting from economies of scale. However, the systems run with high transport costs in the budgets, which are largely unexplained, both in the budgets as well as the reporting. Great improvement is required in the administrative substantiation of the budgets and also the reporting is not such that justification can be found, while WFP does possess the management information systems to do better. See also previous items.<sup>3</sup>

It should be noted that the budget procedures and reporting format of both organisations are different and hence inadequate budgeting leads also to inadequate reporting. It is recommended that the proposed WFP-ECHO Senior Technical Group should address this matter.<sup>4</sup>

### iv) Whether the system strengthens the process of LRRD or sustainability

WFP long-term presence in operations in some of the countries creates some positive side effects in terms of creation of jobs and strengthening expertise and skills and improving infrastructure such as ports, roads and bridges, etc. In the approach of WFP its contribution to rehabilitation and development is limited. Further reference is made to section 8 on crosscutting issues.<sup>5</sup>

### v) Whether procurement has been done in a way most relevant to rehabilitation in the country

Generally WFP has established arrangements for local or regional procurement. This is an important endeavour as it has considerable advantages, more cost-effective commodity prices and transport costs, often a more diversified food basket, which fits better to the preferences of the beneficiaries and has a strongly reduced lead-time. WFP-Tanzania did considerable local procurement and established structures and procedures to increase this in future. In Serbia, due to limited local reserves WFP was requested by the Government not to procure from the local market. In Afghanistan considerable regional procurement took place. International procurement or in-kind contributions, which are not competitive when local procurement is possible, must be regarded as a serious error.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 4.2, 4.4, 8.3; Eritrea 4.1, 5.1; Serbia 5.1, 7.3; Tanzania 5.1, 6.3, 6.6

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 4.4, 7.3; Eritrea 5.1, 7.3, 7.4; Serbia 5.1, 6.2, 7.2, 7.3; Tanzania 5.1, 7.3, 7.4

<sup>3</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 4.2, 4.4, 5.2, 7.3, 8.3; Eritrea 2.1, 5.1, 6.3; Serbia 5.1, 6.3, 7.2; Tanzania 4.5, 5.1, 6.3, 7.2

<sup>4</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 6, 8.5; Eritrea 5.5, 7.4; Serbia 3.4, 7.4; Tanzania 7.4

<sup>5</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 2, 3.5, 6.1, 6.2, 7.5; Eritrea 6.5, 7.4, 8; Serbia 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 8; Tanzania 6.5

<sup>6</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.5; Eritrea 2.1, 5.1, 6.3; Serbia 5.1, 7.3; Tanzania 4.2, 5.1, 6.3, 6.6



### **3.2.2 CONCERNING COMMON SERVICES IN AFGHANISTAN: UNHAS, ICT AND UNJLC**

WFP has provided common services to the aid community with positive effects to the emerging structures in the country. These common services are United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS), establishment and strengthening of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the United Nations Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC).

The UNHAS flight operations have, under the management of WFP, after initial problems, operated well since January 2002, especially within the country. Under the prevailing conditions continuation of the flight services are recommended. Improved communication between the users of the service is suggested to consolidate the forum for communication between users and service providers about quality of the flights and arrangements.<sup>1</sup>

The UNJLC has created a fast data bank covering the physical infrastructure in the country with low threshold access for stakeholders. The information from UNJLC should be standardised and made available to CIMIC and in needs planning how some of the information can be processed and be made available to GoA departments.<sup>2</sup>

The ICT project has carried out a large number of activities and the applications of telecommunications and security for staff have considerably improved. In the final reporting of WFP the areas of spending of the ECHO contribution should be identified.<sup>3</sup>

### **3.3 ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS**

The adequacy of a logistic system depends to a large extent on the quality of communication and the appropriateness of the organisation, the procedures and operational processes. In order to improve the organisational relationship between WFP and ECHO the following is suggested. It should be taken note of however, that the ToR did not prescribe a full organisation study, and hence the suggestions are formulated in brief only. Further reference is made to the country evaluation reports.

#### **TO CONTINUATION OF THE EXISTING STRATEGIC DIALOGUE**

WFP and ECHO have important mandatory and policy reasons to co-operate. However, the procedures and regulations of both organisations are diverse and often incompatible. The Strategic Dialogue of the leadership of the organisation is crucial to further the objective of improving the co-operation of both organisations.<sup>4</sup>

#### **TO BRINGING BOTH ORGANISATIONS AND STAFFS CLOSER**

Concerning mutual vision and communication between both organisations and individual staff there is a considerable task for both organisations in the direct future. In order to enable smooth co-operation in future, work needs to be done on understanding the structure of both organisations, the positions, authority and mode of communication within and between the organisations.<sup>5</sup>

The following issues need attention to improve relations and the effectiveness of communications:

- i) Comparing decentralisation and centralisation tendencies in both organisations and its consequences and effects;
- ii) Clarifying roles of both organisations in view of their mandate and objectives;
- iii) Agreeing on differences of working documents and related procedures;
- iv) Internal communication procedures within both organisations;
- v) An outline concerning the question as to 'who will communicate with whom about which authority on which issue';
- vi) To strengthen personal contacts and communication between staff and the modus operandi for WFP Liaison office to meet regularly with ECHO staff.

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 5.1

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 5.2

<sup>3</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 5.3

<sup>4</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 6, 6.1, 8.5; Eritrea 5.5, 7.4; Serbia 3.4, 5.5, 7.4; Tanzania 7.4

<sup>5</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 6.1, 8.5; Eritrea, 7.4. 5.5; Serbia 5.5, 7.4; Tanzanian 5.5, 7.4

## **TO ESTABLISH A SENIOR TECHNICAL GROUP**

In addition to the discussions in the Strategic Dialogue, a Senior Technical Group of senior staff is needed from both organisations' HQs, consisting of highly powered technical staff to operationalise the outcome of the discussions. The Senior Technical Group would further study the different ways ECHO and WFP experience impediments in their co-operation and identify the areas of comparative advantage for co-operation of both organisations.

Other areas for consideration of the Group would include assessment for implementation of the recommendations of this evaluation report, identify incompatible regulations and procedures for project applications, financial administration and reporting. It would further include harmonising the perceived difference between the Protracted Relief and Rehabilitation Operation (PRRO) -which are regarded by WFP as its project document- and the project proposals as expected by ECHO, which are different in format and nature, revision of the needs assessment and proposing ways to institutionalise best practice while also advise on the communication between both organisations -who communicates with whom on which levels of authority about which matters.<sup>1</sup>

The UN-EC Framework Agreement supersedes the recommendation concerning the establishment of the Senior Technical Group<sup>2</sup> and its implementation should be within the understanding of the agreement.

## **4 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES OF THE FOUR PROGRAMMES**

### **4.1 LINKING RELIEF, REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT (LRRD)**

The relief situations in two out of four countries are complex by nature, notably Afghanistan and Eritrea. Although in a totally different context, populations in both countries suffer from long-term war and community-base violence combined with drought. In Afghanistan extra vulnerability was created for women and children during the Taliban rule while harsh climate conditions and accessibility in Afghanistan add to the problem. Eritrea has a strong centralised system of Government and a policy with limited tolerance for NGO development. In both countries there is a mixed group of beneficiaries: IDPs, refugees and drought victims.

In Tanzania refugees are located in camps and have restricted freedom to move and virtually no access to land or means of production for local markets. As a consequence, the potential and practical levels of self-reliance must be regarded as low. In Serbia the options for the 'social cases' are much greater, although political and economical infrastructure have undergone dramatic changes, they are still relatively new and the people do not have a history of taking personal misery in their own hands. In terms of LRRD the first issue of consideration would be to assist with local self-sufficiency food production and enabling some marketing. There is considerable potential in Afghanistan, Serbia and Eritrea. In terms of developing the community social and political structures and the support required from the Governments of Afghanistan and Serbia are already on their way. Eritrea has a strong indigenous culture but it is not really understood by the aid community. There is no clear evidence that the PRRO projects of WFP have contributed significantly to the process of rehabilitation. It should not be overlooked however that the PRRO projects have longer-term objectives, while most of them were initiated only recently.<sup>3</sup>

### **4.2 GENDER**

Gender interests are generally under stress in societies in turmoil. Traditional role patterns of women and men are most often thoroughly disturbed. For women and children this often leads to greater vulnerability and need for protection. In Afghanistan the position of women in the traditional society has suffered from twelve years of Taliban rule. Women have limited or no access to education, health, employment and participation in the society. This all had a negative impact on health and nutritional

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 6, 8.5; Eritrea 5.5, 7.4; Serbia 3.4, 7.4; Tanzania 7.4

<sup>2</sup> Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement between the European Community, represented by the Commission of the European Communities and the United Nations, 2002

<sup>3</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 2, 3.5, 6.1, 6.2, 7.5; Eritrea 6.5, 7.4, 8; Serbia 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 8; Tanzania 6.5

status of women as well as on children. WFP does address this in trying to employ women at all levels in the organisation and targeting on women in food distribution.

The Government of Eritrea is aware of the central position of women in the household where they are the ones who manage the money and the food in the often female-headed households of the post-war. However, special arrangements concerning food and nutrition have not yet been institutionalised in the structures and the implementation of the policies. As WFP does not have access to the actuality of distribution there are limited hands-on possibilities to ensure that women do benefit. WFP does incorporate gender in the VAM approach.

In Serbia women have a stronger position than in the other programmes. In the home and family they do have a stronger position as caretaker and the distribution and food collection is done to women or men. The linkage from relief to rehabilitation has been incorporated in the PRRO being implemented but the impact is yet unobservable.

In the camps in Tanzania, female participation has considerably improved the quality of the programme. Women's contribution is evidenced in gender awareness in the JFAMs, the camp management (several women are members of the camp management)- and the planning and execution of the distributions. Women participate in all steps of planning and decision-making, both in the aid organisations and as beneficiary representatives. The benefit would be greater in the Tanzanian refugee context if the women in particular were less isolated from the mainstream of society. The role of the NGOs is of particular importance in addressing gender issues as they have generally strong knowledge of the local culture and position of women/girls, men and children.<sup>1</sup>

#### **4.3 THE ELDERLY**

Care of the elderly in traditional societies is normally the responsibility of male children, however a tradition often disrupted by war and drought. Food aid programmes have paid special attention to this vulnerable group. In Afghanistan little information is available about the elderly and the way they are integrated and cope. Pensioners were seen selling their ration in order to have some cash. The best way of caring for the elderly can only take place when the underlying causes and customs are known and can be addressed.

#### **4.4 CHILDREN**

Children are extra vulnerable, both as victims of the war and the drought and also as a result of the position of women in the society. Young girls access to education has been a great problem. The health and nutritional situation of children is still very problematic. Special feeding programmes for children make malnutrition rates in the communities benefiting from food aid low. However, areas not benefiting from food aid, or with a food basket not well suited to children have much higher malnutrition rates. WFP has paid special attention to nutritional status in all programmes through a system of nutritional surveys carried out by the national MoH jointly with humanitarian agencies.<sup>2</sup>

#### **4.5 ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**

Rural population concentrations and their migrations cause considerable pressure on natural resources and environment. In Afghanistan knowledge about the environment is still limited while in Tanzania after several decades of refugee care experience is considerable. The size of the settlement is the main determinant of the degree of damage to the environment; this needs to be controlled, and reduced to within the carrying capacity of the environment. However, durable solutions and inputs are not included in the funding of WFP food aid programme. Projects with an environmental focus, including reforestation, introduction of fuel-saving cooking devices have been funded through other EC instruments including the European Development Fund and other agencies.<sup>3</sup>

#### **4.6 HIV/AIDS**

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.4, 3.5, 7, 7.4, 9; Eritrea 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 5, 6, 7.2, 8; Tanzania 3.1, 3.4, 6.4, 8; Serbia 3.1, 5.8, 6.1, 7.1

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 8.1, 9; Eritrea 3.2, 6.2, 8; Serbia 3.2, 3.3, 6.1, 8; Tanzania 3.2, 3.3, 6.1, 6.4, 7,8

<sup>3</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 7.4, 9; Eritrea 7.5, 8; Tanzania 6.4

The spread of AIDS is determined by several factors. Amongst these is culture, behaviour and the importance society apporions it. In Eritrea many young men are in the army and the social services, with high HIV-prevalence among soldiers transmitted by uncontrolled sexual activity. Their reintegration into society has a high risk factor and means in the long-term continuous food insecurity among the rural population. WFP is in the process of combating this by the Food-for-Health programmes carried out by specialised NGOs. In Afghanistan no detailed information is available. It is not of a high priority but that does not mean that no attention must be paid to it. In future HIV/AIDS can become a problem when society returns to normal and frequent and intensive movements of people will occur such as with the refugee streams. In the refugee camps the population density is an important determinant for the prevalence of AIDS. An additional problem related to HIV-prevalence is the high frequency of rapes of women and young girls in the camps adding considerably to the already high prevalence of HIV- infections (Tanzania). This implies greater problems in the future regarding food security.<sup>1</sup>

#### **4.7 A CORPORATE APPROACH FOR WFP**

WFP has met a challenge where it stands in between the donors and the beneficiaries and has to act professionally towards both. In view of its performance a corporate approach is needed at all levels whereby cost-effectiveness, transparency and communication are the key words. WFP has met the challenge and performs its core activities decisively: in Eritrea it has to prove its additional value, that WFP has skills and knowledge that are unique and can be shared with the Eritrean institutions. If WFP adopts a profile, which is stronger at facilitating than at implementing, it would further strengthen the links with the GoE; it would show a developmental quality of WFP to the outside world and would probably gain additional support.

### **5 WFP AND PARTNERS IN GENERAL**

#### **5.1 WFP IN A WEB OF ACTORS AND ROLE PLAYERS**

WFP as a big international organisation working often in an environment of emergency and instability has to relate to with many actors, including the donors. It has certainly two roles when relating to donors, which may conflict:

i) The first is to influence major decisions about the start or end of Food Aid, the selection of beneficiaries and decisions as to the type of Food Aid they need. But WFP can also influence the modus operandi -whether to use local procurement, managing the relations between host populations and refugees who are often better off; it can be sensitive to other issues such as gender. All such decisions should be based on the needs of beneficiaries and not of donors, so WFP needs to consistently and openly keep the interest of the target groups in mind.

ii) But WFP's second role is to persuade donors to keep the food pipeline flowing, keep host Governments willing to tolerate refugees. It also has to act in a more corporate way -integrating principles into core business, emphasising cost-effectiveness, making visible the important job WFP is doing.<sup>2</sup> This evaluation favours a robust WFP, skilled in communication with powerful actors in its network, focussed on an advocacy role, lobbying donors and -host- Governments creatively and persuasively on the basis of the humanitarian principles and WFP mandate.

#### **5.2 RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOVERNMENTS**

In Eritrea WFP faces a challenge to offer a flexible profile as partner to the Government as facilitator and adding value. Key issues in the relationship with Serbia and Tanzania are mentioned above.

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 9; Eritrea 8; Serbia 8; Tanzania 8

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.5, 4.4; Serbia 4.4, 7.3

Because WFP has such an important role in the sourcing of the pipelines, it needs to develop a stronger 'sales' technique to show its capacity, even more so through using its long-term planning and pipeline projections more effectively. It is acknowledged that the information and planning systems in WFP are of a high quality producing a lot of planning material. However, WFP needs to focus on the way that the data and plans become effective in terms of sourcing: firstly to 'sell' these to Governments and/or donors and secondly to ensure that long-term planning reflects the commitments related to -long-term- pledges of Governments/donors. The latter is the main problem of limited supply through the Afghanistan pipeline after May 2002.

### **5.3 PARTNERSHIPS WITH IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS**

WFP does emphasise the importance of equality in the relationship with its IPs, this is reflected in the annual consultations and the nature of the contracts with IPs. However, in the different countries visited many IPs signalled WFP's problem in establishing optimal relationships with implementing partners on a basis of equal respect. The result is a number of complaints. In Serbia the Implementing Partners regard WFP as a 'top-down organisation', not offering enough opportunity for professional dialogue. In Afghanistan WFP is seen as a key agency with an inclination to go its own way, without a natural tendency to share and communicate with other actors. In Tanzania in many ways standards are set by WFP, often as the Food Mover, but with flexibility. In Eritrea there are no IPs and the facilitating roles of WFP towards ERREC has shaped up well over the past years.

In Serbia, IPs in Belgrade and the field said that WFP does not request reports and that there is no response if reports are being sent. Also, when suggestions are made in IP meetings, e.g. concerning management of the FDP stores there is often limited or no response. As a consequence information gets lost, as well as information on best practice, impact and transparency. Capacity development of the local IPs, in Serbia and Afghanistan, is very limited. In Serbia and Afghanistan IP reporting and capacity-assessment of key IPs should be initiated and responded to with capacity development and coaching. It was noted in the field and from comments from WFP Belgrade that WFP intends to address this and that Local Committee Meetings (LCMs) have been introduced. WFP-Afghanistan has allocated USD 6 million for expenditure related to support and capacity development of IP organisations, especially local NGOs, and the Government. No details were available on the allocations to each of them. WFP has already done an assessment of all IPs according to a matrix of criteria. It is obvious that the matter of IP-capacity development is addressed by WFP, but the evaluators observed that the IPs are not yet aware of it.<sup>1</sup>

### **5.4 BETTER TOOLS, BEST PRACTICE**

It is not surprising that with the rapid growth of WFP and the somewhat isolation from its IPs, a concern with "Best Practice", "Quality Control" and "Cost-effectiveness" has not yet become central although WFP has started to do so. Concerning cost-effectiveness, an issue at the core of the organisation in terms of corporate thinking, does get increasing attention. Internal and comparative studies are being implemented by WFP. At executive and management level it has been expressed that situations need eliminating where there is surplus funds at the end of a project: funds must be managed actively during a project and budgets adjusted so that no surplus arises. The task WFP is facing is to implement these policies and principles at every level in the organisation and reflect on it in transparent reporting.

The concept of Best Practice is particularly relevant when identifying need and when developing the best intervention to match that need. Now is the time to select and use tools jointly with the IPs, agree on Best Practice, as a learning organisation would do, using the expertise of both VAM and IPs and other actors. These would include:

- ❖ Bottom-up Needs Assessments that begin with the household, needs to be strengthened in Serbia-linking food needs assessment with monitoring and in Afghanistan conducting Rapid Emergency Food Needs Assessment (REFNA);
- ❖ Research into the underlying causes of malnutrition (Eritrea, Tanzania);

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.5, 4.2, 6.2, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2, 10; Tanzania 6.3, 7.1, Serbia 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2, 9

- ❖ Tools that incorporate the point of view of the female beneficiaries (women roles as caretakers, female-headed households);
- ❖ Better tools for improving monitoring and evaluation, both in quantitative and qualitative terms (in all countries); the evaluations should include "impact", "lessons learnt" and "best practice";
- ❖ Developing early long-term planning, including:
  - Strategies to deal with pipeline failure and its effects on beneficiaries and implementing NGOs (Afghanistan)
  - Alternative approaches in relatively resource-rich areas e.g. Cash-for-Work (Afghanistan) and exit strategies (Serbia).
  - This planning could draw information from COMPAS (Commodity Movement Processing and Analysis System) etc.

## 5.5 AVOIDING A CHAIN OF ORGANISATIONS AND REPETITION

WFP and UNHCR co-operate in projects for refugees. Both organisations operate from their Memorandum of Understanding, which defines their roles and responsibilities. For reasons of cost-effectiveness, avoiding the risk of duplication and that both organisations build extensive organisational and international staff infrastructure in the field (UNHCR-Tanzania) it is recommended to shorten the chain of involved agencies. The Evaluators subscribe to the suggestion made by WFP that it would like to be in charge of all logistics, but also of distribution instead of UNHCR.<sup>1</sup>

For smaller programmes, e.g. Serbia, Tanzania, WFP could be compared for cost-effectiveness with capable NGOs (Serbia, Tanzania) or Government departments (ERREC-Eritrea).

## 5.6 GENDER

WFP needs to recognise that within needs assessments, VAM etc. the institutionalisation of gender is still patchy despite a sound policy document.

During the nineties, WFP was developing a strong gender approach. In 1995 it published "Commitments to Women", an ambitious document which includes for example a commitment to the education of girls. By the end of the decade WFP was working with UNHCR to keep girls in school in Afghan refugee camps, developing distribution systems for food through women and projects for income generation for IDP women. They seem to have made progress in recruiting women at all levels including, for example, in different field posts and country offices. All countries visited accord interest to gender policy development but especially WFP-Afghanistan expressed special interest to develop and implement gender policy. That gender remains a key issue in WFP policy is reflected by the Executive Board approval of the new Enhanced Commitments to Women (ECW).

It is recommended that WFP fully implement its Gender Policy 2003-2007, including the Enhanced Commitments to Women, in order to continue to improve its performance on gender issues.<sup>2</sup>

## 6 WFP AND ECHO IN PARTICULAR

### 6.1 COHERENCE OF WFP AND ECHO MANDATES AND OBJECTIVES

Amongst ECHO's main objectives is "saving lives" during emergencies and WFP is "combating hunger and malnutrition". ECHO as a donor has in fact to a large extent the same objectives as WFP has as food aid agency, but ECHO is not restricted to funding food aid: it may fund projects in other sectors, like WatSan (Water and Sanitation). ECHO may also be a process facilitator and focus on linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD). In the WFP-PRROs several LRRD issues are also addressed.

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Serbia 2, 5.1, 7.2; Tanzania 5, 7.2

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 3.4, 3.5, 7, 7.4, 9; Eritrea 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 5, 6, 7.2, 8, 8.2; Tanzania 3.1, 3.4, 6.4, 8; Serbia 3.1, 5.8, 6.1, 7.1

This means that what ECHO and WFP want to do in the field during emergencies does not differ -the objectives of both organisations are "coherent". It must be mentioned that ECHO as a donor works also with other agencies, NGOs, ICRC etc. Many of these agencies have also a working relationship with WFP as partner or IP in food distributions. ECHO field offices do have a responsibility to monitor the organisations funded by ECHO.

WFP has in some countries (Afghanistan, Serbia) difficulty in appreciating the dual role and function of ECHO: ECHO as a donor as well as the monitoring agent. WFP feels that it should be regarded as distinct from other IPs like NGOs. This is an important issue and it is suggested to deal with it in the existing Strategic Dialogue and the WFP-ECHO Senior Technical Group, which it is recommended to be established. In Afghanistan and Serbia this phenomenon plays an important role.<sup>1</sup>

## 6.2 COMPATIBILITY OF ECHO AND WFP PROCEDURES

WFP programme and funding procedures are as follows. WFP -at country, regional and headquarter level- prepares a project document for an EMOP (Emergency Operation) or PRRO (Protracted Relief and Rehabilitation Operation). This project document is examined and approved by the Executive Board (EB) in which main donors like USAID (United States Agency for International Development) and the EU (European Union) and bi-lateral donors are represented or are present as observers. After approval, WFP looks for donors and negotiates funding both in the country or internationally through the WFP resource department.

ECHO works through "decisions" for an emergency or ongoing humanitarian situation in a country. The decision is from a given date and period. The ECHO country office tells potential partners of the possibility of funding, the preferred area of intervention and may discuss with the potential partners the specific contents of a possible project document. The potential partner submits a formal request to ECHO-HQ. The field office makes an appraisal and analysis, which is sent to Brussels, where the desk officer does his/her own analysis, which can lead to the acceptance of the funding request.

Often the ECHO country office informs the WFP country office; first discussions are held about a possible intervention and costs. The WFP Headquarters prepares the project document and proposed budget for ECHO. This is officially sent to ECHO Brussels through the WFP Liaison Office.

In two countries (Serbia and Eritrea) operational contract negotiations and ultimately reformulation of the project document took all together more than one year. Notwithstanding the importance of reaching a mutual agreement in programmatic terms, it is hard to accept that an important contribution, both in terms of its effect on the beneficiaries as well as for WFP is delayed for between one or two years before it comes into effect. Disagreement on the budget lines, cost-benefit issues, operational costs and salaries for international staff etc. were the main points of contention in funding, resulting in the formulation of a number of operational scenarios and the selection of the one (scenario 2) which would meet the requirements of both the best.<sup>2</sup>

Another issue is that WFP requests funds for a certain number of months inclusive of salaries and other costs like transport, while the food aid operation lasts one or two years. This means that during the emergency, HQs were negotiating and disagreeing on budget problems while beneficiaries had to wait, food-short. Another difficulty is the short project cycle of ECHO -6 to 12 months-, which does not fit with the often slow onset and reporting of operations of WFP.

Much of this has to do with the incompatibility of the procedures and planning formats in both organisations. Executive management has dealt with this in both organisations in ad hoc discussions, which led to the formulation of some scenarios for WFP-ECHO financial planning for project funding. Some 'speaking points' have also been dealt with in the Strategic Dialogue meetings by the leadership of both organisations.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 6.1; Serbia 5.5

<sup>2</sup> Refer to: Serbia 2.1, Afghanistan 10, Eritrea 2

<sup>3</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 6, 6.1, 8.5; Eritrea 5.5, 7.4; Serbia 3.4, 5.5, 7.4; Tanzania 7.4

After the contract is signed, 85-95% of funds are sent without delay. ECHO normally funds activities with a given amount and time frame (for example six to twelve months) within a EMOP or PRRO lasting officially a given time period (for example eighteen months). ECHO requests, through its contracts, reports of activities and finance within a certain time and according to ECHO standards. WFP makes "standardised final reports". These reports generally do not arrive in time at ECHO level and have limited narrative and financial information; WFP says clearly that to comply is impossible.

This all indicates that both ECHO and WFP have the same main objective but incompatible procedures, making working relations difficult and causing many disagreements.

### **6.3 CONCERNING ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS WFP – ECHO**

WFP and ECHO have organisational structures, procedures and regulations differing in many ways and hampering effectiveness. To address this the top leadership in both organisations has set out a number of strategy meetings, the Strategic Dialogue, to further the objective of improving the co-operation of both organisations. It is recommended that the Strategic Dialogue be continued and a high-powered Senior Technical Group be established for the operationalisation of the output of the Strategic Dialogue meetings and to assess and see to the implementation of the recommendations of this report.

Concerning improvement of the organisational and staff relations it is important to study key organisation issues like de/centralisation, mandates and objectives and communication within and between the organisations and its effects for the organisations. Reference is made to section 3.3.

The Senior Technical Group is suggested to cover the following matters: to operationalise the outcome of the 'strategic dialogue' as well as assessing how to implement the recommendations of this evaluation report. Other issues are: the incompatibility of the regulations for project applications, financial administration and reporting; harmonising the perceived difference between the PRROs - which are regarded by WFP as its project document- and the project documents as expected by ECHO, which are different in format and nature; revision of the needs assessment; proposing ways to institutionalise best practice; advising on communication between both organisations -who communicates with whom on which levels of authority about which matters.<sup>1</sup>

The UN-EC Framework Agreement supersedes the above recommendation concerning the establishment of the Senior Technical Group<sup>2</sup> and its implementation should be within the understanding of the agreement.

## **7 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: IN VIEW OF FUTURE ECHO FUNDED PROJECTS**

In this section the Lessons Learnt, Conclusions and Recommendation from the 4 country reports have been summarised. They have been numbered and grouped under headings, which appeared to be most important from the evaluation' ToR. Where needed reference is made to the particular countries.

As the conclusions and recommendations are related directly to the text of this synthesis report, no further references to the texts of the four individual country reports have been made.

### **7.1 LESSONS LEARNT**

WFP has long-term experience, for decades in Tanzania, which has become a regional hub for central and southern Africa projects and lessons have been learnt. In Eritrea, Serbia and Afghanistan

<sup>1</sup> Refer to: Afghanistan 6, 8.5; Eritrea 5.5, 7.4; Serbia 3.4, 7.4; Tanzania 7.4

<sup>2</sup> Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement between the European Community, represented by the Commission of the European Communities and the United Nations, 2002



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conditions on the ground and hence in the approach and operations of WFP differ and hence important lessons have been learnt. These are summarised in this section.

- i) Food needs assessments should not only determine the question of whether or not to provide food or not but also the diversity of the food basket, taking into account on one side the nutritional, household and food security situation and, on the other, considering whether food aid is the most appropriate solution to the problem.
- ii) In joint operations between WFP and IPs it is important that IPs are involved in all phases of the project cycle and that WFP incorporates as much as possible the lessons learnt both by IPs and WFP in new programmes or strategies.
- iii) Monitoring of operations is of great importance but when it is done without impact measurement and without lessons learnt, WFP is missing key information for new programmes and strategies.
- iv) Pipeline management is a central management tool that needs to be strongly integrated with resources development and management at macro level, as well as management at country and area level.
- v) The management information systems in WFP would allow for high quality reporting but are currently not optimally used.
- vi) Decentralisation in WFP, a positive but complicated process, is in its beginning stages. The increasing autonomy in decision-making at sub-office level within the country can only be successful if it goes hand in hand with decentralising the authority over materials, resources or budgets.
- vii) Agreements about local food procurement need to be formalised, operationalised and reported in detail between ECHO and WFP to avoid any agreement to procure locally to enforce local agricultural development while in reality food is imported from other continents.
- viii) Food needs assessments should not only identify the main question -food or not- but should clearly show whether food procurement could be done locally or not, considering agricultural production. ECHO participates in most needs assessment missions so can underline this objective. Formalising and operationalising agreements on this issue are a pre-condition.
- ix) Without harmonising procedures and regulations between ECHO and WFP, project implementation and professional relations between them will suffer, both unable to live up to their initial commitments. The two organisations have the same main objectives: combating hunger and saving lives. Harmonising procedures and regulations between ECHO and WFP will also prevent the delays caused by long-drawn-out negotiations.
- x) Given the mandate of WFP, the activities and direction of the organisation require fine-tuning from country to country. In Eritrea WFP has taken a position of process facilitator, capacity development and monitoring agent. Local aspirations and capacities are strong and able to carry out WFP's historic mission of food supply operator; this challenges WFP to find new ways of implementing its mandate.
- xi) In complex and changing political situations like in Serbia and in the absence of a 'food-deficit' and 'underdeveloped' socio-economic situation the use of food aid may be a sensible option and a good analysis has to be made to make an appropriate choice. In the Serbia case, the choice for food aid before the revolution was a good one -afterwards it was not. The exit strategy was right but was formulated late. A good macro monitoring system of the programme at policy-making level must be set up in order to be constantly aware of the real needs of the programme, the alternatives and especially the exit strategies.

xii) An important lesson is that a professional and extended needs assessment is carried out jointly with ECHO, other donors and partners as observers. In this way responsibilities for the food needs assessment are shared, it creates a venue for discussing professional ideas while WFP and IPs are being informed about donor approaches. The resulting document can serve as a scenario for smooth implementation.

## **7.2 FOOD AID, FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION SECTOR: NEED ASSESSMENTS**

1. Looking at the four countries there is clearly professionalism and expertise in Needs Assessments within WFP and its partner organisations. However the techniques used can leave out certain aspects of the total nutritional picture as indicated below.

In Afghanistan malnutrition rates among young children are very high for stunting but not too high for wasting. Half of the young children have arrears in growth; micronutrient deficiencies are widespread among children and women. The household food security situation needs more analysis but there are indications (UNICEF Kandahar and MoH food security consultant) that at family level, the main problem is not access to food but the lack of diversity of the food basket. In 2002 the WFP Crop and Food Supply Assessment improved the methodology of the needs assessment; results are expected to be more reliable and more household-orientated. Food needs assessments do not take into consideration the position of mothers and children in the families. This makes the system not very gender-friendly.

In Tanzania, chronic malnutrition rates are high among children who have been in the camps for up to four years receiving 100% rations -the aetiology is not known.

2. In Serbia the mandate of the WFP limited their ability to provide a food basket that fitted all the nutritional needs of the small children and other vulnerable groups. The mandate was to provide basic food like cereals, beans, oil etc. but no fresh food like vegetables, fruits etc. In the Serbian circumstances hunger was not the main problem; the problem was lack of quality food with no access to these foods in the markets, a large post-war psychological burden -and poverty.

It is recommended that WFP pull into its needs assessments the expertise within national structures. WFP can join even more in the efforts of the Food Security and Nutritional Surveillance System (Afghanistan): it can also include VAM expertise more into the decision-making, giving VAM a stronger voice on issues such as alternative approaches to beneficiary assistance.

3. WFP should exploit increasingly its own adaptability and problem-solving ability; changing needs assessment techniques (Afghanistan) will change the food need identification, both the quantities and the types of food. If there is high chronic malnutrition rates (Tanzania), the causes can be identified, attention be given to the beneficiaries in the camps but also to the host population outside where conditions are much worse. If the food basket provided by the WFP, and the mandate that defines it, do not meet beneficiaries' needs -then WFP can only agree that the important thing is beneficiary needs, not mandates that should never be absolute. ECHO and WFP should design strategies in situations like Serbia to ensure that food does indeed address the nutritional needs.

### **THE CONTEXT OF MALNUTRITION**

4. Beneficiaries needing food, need it in a political context. In Tanzania, if refugees could receive normal inputs of seeds, tools and land, they could become fully food-secure within two years -a political issue. In Eritrea, food aid has been delivered correctly according to the plan and without great irregularities and IDPs and refugees in the camps have benefited as planned. But outside the camps in the host populations, where aid is not given, negative indicators are much higher, for example in the drought-affected areas. Many drought-affected areas are food-insecure not only because of the failure of the rains but through lack of labour, and lack of adequate agricultural inputs. All this is political.

It is recommended that WFP will address these problems, an overall approach is needed which has a role for food aid among other approaches. WFP can help, for example, the Government of Eritrea (GoE) by giving VAM support more directly to the GoE structures.

5. It is concluded that food security and nutrition surveys could be carried out in a more systematic way in order to guarantee a more adapted approach. Normally this is the task of specialised agencies but WFP could have notified this problem through its monitoring system and IP feedback. Attention

was paid to the factors influencing the vulnerability of the beneficiaries but not how to combat them through food aid.

It is suggested that in similar situations WFP should analyse through food security and nutrition surveys (in addition to the food economy approach and the overall vulnerability assessments) whether food aid is the most appropriate intervention -though carried out by WFP in many other countries. In Serbia, the availability of food was not a problem but access to good food was. This means that institutions such as VAM should be better integrated into the programme unit and be given a stronger voice on issues such as alternative approaches and exit strategies.

### **TARGETING OF BENEFICIARIES**

6. In several countries there is serious debate about the type and number of beneficiaries, debate with IPs (Serbia) or partner governments (Eritrea). In Serbia it is difficult to identify those who benefit from the "grey" economy, in Eritrea the context has features of a complex emergency. This discussion must continue as part of the refinement of needs assessments. A change of methodology in food needs assessments means a change of targeting and surely in the number of beneficiaries.

It is recommended that WFP continues the process of refining the needs assessments and responding to changes in the criteria of targeting and selecting the beneficiaries. In this process IPs and their knowledge should be more profoundly integrated and utilised.

7. It is a technical recommendation that VAM should develop a series of proxy indicators on how to identify and measure the presence of grey incomes. All WFP operations in the world have to deal with the involvement of beneficiaries in the "grey economy". WFP headquarters could possibly assess the impact of this problem and eventually develop a set of proxy-indicators on how to identify and measure its presence.

### **ALTERNATIVES TO FOOD AID: CASH-FOR-FOOD/CASH-FOR-WORK**

8. IPs and ECHO-field staff has emphasised that in the resource-rich countries or areas (Afghanistan, Serbia), Cash-for-Work would be an appropriate approach to support local marketing of crops and provide support to families.

The evaluators suggest that ECHO and WFP would carry out research to study the effects of implementing Cash-for-Work projects to determine whether and if so, where Cash- and Food-for-Work might be appropriate and what the best approach and modus operandi would be to implement it.

## **7.3 MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

### **TRANSFORMING ROUTINE INFORMATION INTO MANAGEMENT DECISIONS**

9. The management information systems (COMPAS, WINGS and Pipeline Projections) are of high quality and provide much information that is being used for day-to-day operations. Systems are not working optimally in all countries (Eritrea, Afghanistan) but in Eritrea additional capacity has been added to enable ERREC to track non-WFP food shipments. The objectives of upgrading the management process by linking the 'output' of the 'management information systems' to the management and to thus improve this on the basis of 'up-to-date information' and subsequently an improvement on reporting is apparently not sufficiently pursued by ERREC. Additional support by WFP is needed, and WFP is prepared to provide it. The evaluators confirm the difficulties encountered in view of retaining trained staff in the structure.

10. WFP has made a beginning of a decentralisation process in the organisation. An example of this positive trend in WFP is the authorisation of local senior staff to decide on local contracts with IPs to a maximum amount of 2,000 mt. This had led to implementation of a considerable number of small-scale locally based projects. However, sometimes sub-offices within the country are informed late of the shortage of food (failing controls) and the sub-offices and staff relationships with the contracted IP organisations were very tense as there was no food available for a number of these projects.

It is a key recommendation that when the organisation embarks on decentralisation, not only the authority should be decentralised –being able to make decisions to establish local projects to a maximum of 2,000 mt- but responsibility for the resources and the food should also be decentralised.

Operational controls and management checks need to be coupled to decentralised initiatives to ensure that at the each level the authority and the means are available for action.

### **MONITORING**

11. The four country programmes have different approaches to monitoring, the coverage is assessed to be 35 to 50% of all actions. Serbia has post-distribution monitoring, but IPs suggested ways to have monitoring more effectively done. IP expertise is not as yet adequately incorporated.

WFP is in the process of changing and improving the monitoring system. The role of WFP would specifically be- capacity development, training of IPs and local groups, gathering and formulation of benchmarks and 'best practice', administration of the monitoring data bank and designing systems so that monitoring information flows back to the field as management information. If monitoring is inadequate because of a budget deficit, the donors must give it more attention.

### **EVALUATION**

12. Although ECHO funded projects/programmes have a budget line in the Operational Contracts for the conduct of evaluations, in the countries visited no overall evaluations have been carried out. It was commented by WFP that the funds from this budget line are utilised to put M&E systems in place.

It is recommended that WFP should start exploring the impact of its programmes, gathering lessons learnt and identifying best practice. All this could be done in partnership with IPs.

## **7.4 LOGISTICS**

13. The evaluators confirmed that the creation of efficient and effective logistic systems and the movement of large quantities of food is an area of WFP's best expertise. The reinstatement of the logistics system in Afghanistan after the turmoil in the second half of 2001 and the way local staff and short-term emergency staff kept the systems going is one example. The large hub and spokes of Central -and currently Southern Africa- is another. These have systems in functional terms, up-to-standard and adequate for obtaining from far and sometimes procuring locally (Tanzania) and regionally food (Afghanistan), transporting it and reaching through IPs the beneficiaries. The different components in the system -communication, transport, storage and management and controls- are in place but not sufficiently interrelated, each functioning to some degree in isolation.

It is recommended that more attention be given to linking the components of the logistics cycle - including procurement- this will help ensure that the response is in line with assessment. Controls and monitoring systems in place and utilised as tools of management. Pipeline projections are timely and known at sub-office. Within the country office management, organise details concerning contracts with the IP organisations. Winterisation planning linked more to local stocks than availability from pipelines. All stages of the cycle are interactive, depending on and responding to each other.

14. WFP uses good quality management and operational software but passing the information to partners -IPs and ECHO- needs more attention. It is recommended that WFP should link monitoring (controls) and management decisions systematically as suggested in the text of this report. IPs and other stakeholders should be informed on a routine basis -mailing lists- about the details of planning and management within WFP.

### **PIPELINE PERFORMANCE**

15. Pipeline performance problems in Afghanistan, Tanzania and Serbia were not caused by the physical properties of the pipeline but by inadequacies of the sourcing. One resultant problem was that in Afghanistan, stocking up for the 2002-2003 winter was not possible. The slow-down mode of operation of the pipeline is detrimental for all, the beneficiaries, the IPs, and WFP and puts extra strain on their relationships.

This points at a need to have stronger and less formal appeals sent out from WFP-HQ to the donors to address the pipeline sourcing in time. WFP Rome does already play a key role but may have to be more alert, with creatively showing to the donors the unique role and responsibilities of WFP, as was suggested by representatives of major donors (DFID, USAID). The issue of reminding donors of their pledges in the past may also be taken as a task of WFP (Afghanistan).

16. In Tanzania and Afghanistan especially, food distribution has suffered because of shortages in the pipeline. In Tanzania, pipeline problems related to lack of donations causing ration reductions in 2000 and 2001 of 20% to 40%, although food rations to vulnerable groups were kept at 100% as a safety net. In Afghanistan the problems were worse, affecting the nutrition status of the beneficiaries, the return and integration of refugees and IDPs and the activities and even existence of the IPs. There are in all countries examples of early warnings going out to WFP-HQ and management taking decisions on the basis of pipeline software outputs. The key issue is that food shortage predictions will lead to a more profound, creative and aggressive appeal as opposed to formalistic fundraising and networking with donors.

### **COST-EFFECTIVENESS OF WFP**

17. WFP has emphasised the importance of increased cost-effectiveness and efficiency. This is reflected in a decision of the WFP Executive Board which has requested the Secretariat to embark on a comparative study of the support budgets of comparable NGOs focussing on mandates, case studies of interventions, business processes and cost structures and cost comparisons. This study has started and will be submitted to the EB in February 2003.

The evaluators were unable to study the cost-effectiveness issues in detail due to time constraints. Costs issues have been assessed in discussing the cost factors with different actors, however this did not allow for firm conclusions. All information from interviews and from budgets, point to relatively high costs, especially for transport and logistics and related costs, which amount to approximately half (around 50%) of the total budget. The budgets, as approved by ECHO, contain no information or explanation about the quotes while also the financial reports do not justify and explain the amounts expended.

It is recommended that the budget line for logistics be worked out in greater detail and additional information provided.

18. At the field level, the cost-effectiveness of projects can be improved by using the LTSH spreadsheet as a standard tool to monitor actual prices against budgeted costs. This will have positive effects on the financial planning as well as on the possibility to re-programme ongoing projects.

It is suggested that WFP keeps the donors well informed about the way it improves cost-effectiveness and attempts to re-programme on the basis of LTSH applications. Donors and WFP should make sure that increased cost-effectiveness and lower unit costs should offer an incentive, rather than a penalty for WFP, for instance by decreasing staff costs once the unit cost of the operation decrease.

It is recommended that a detailed study on cost-effectiveness be implemented, focusing on operational factors across the logistics cycle. Research should include the internal costing factors within WFP operations and the structure itself as well as comparable analysis with other international UN agencies and INGOs. This would include also optimal use of staff. In Eritrea the number of upper level staff for programme activities is high compared to the sub-offices. In contrast the sub-offices have only two to three assistants per office with high workloads.

It is recommended that in such situations the task descriptions of the programme unit and the staff posts in the Unit be reviewed. Reducing the numbers in the higher brackets of the organisation and strengthening the sub-offices is recommended.

19. In similar vein it is suggested that ECHO embarks on a study comparing the cost-effectiveness of agencies who have received ECHO funding for food aid, including WFP, other UN-agencies, governmental structures like ERREC and INGOs, in order to optimise cost-benefit as a policy issue. In principle the party who best combines competence with cost-effectiveness and other qualifications could be regarded as a candidate for funding by ECHO.

20. WFP has a comparative advantage in operating large quantities of food over great distances, possesses considerable food and nutrition expertise and is used to working under political pressure and being a counterpart of the host government. Given these important capacities WFP should continue to be funded for large programmes in which programme planning, monitoring and reporting will be improved. In smaller programmes it is recommended that both competent international NGOs and WFP be considered for implementation

### **OTHER SUPPORT TO THE AID COMMUNITY**

21. In Afghanistan WFP is supporting flight operations, United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) and ICT (Telecom and IT) activities. These projects have proved of great importance and have improved security as well as smooth operations. The United Nations Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC) has created a fast databank covering the physical infrastructure in the country of location where there is low threshold access for stakeholders.

It is recommended to continue for the near future with the services of UNHAS, establishing and consolidating a forum for communication between users and service providers about the improvements to quality of the flights and arrangements. Concerning UNJLC it is recommended that increasingly information from UNJLC should be standardised and made available to CIMIC; orientation and planning should be done to see how some of the information can be processed and be made available to GoA departments.

### **EXIT STRATEGIES**

22. More should be done to plan the exit strategies, both in terms of country programmes as well as exit strategies of assistance to beneficiary groups. In Serbia WFP worked in consultation with donors on a exit strategy as reflected in EMOP 6136.02, PRRO 10116.0. The phasing-out of 'social cases' was formulated in consultation with the Government.

Development of exit strategies on different levels is related to the need for programme planning and management on project level, country and regional levels. This requires a permanent management and monitoring instrument that will monitor the long-term achievements against long-term intentions and objectives, with clear understanding of local and regional changes in the context. This would avoid a situation where donors influence WFP to prepare for exit.

### **DONATIONS AS KIND OR CASH? INTERNATIONAL OR LOCAL/REGIONAL PROCUREMENT?**

23. Support from donors in cash gives WFP far more flexibility to respond to real needs and procure locally. ECHO and few international bilateral donors have done well to enable WFP to procure wheat in Iran, Pakistan and Kazakhstan, utilising the three countries to help cope with the emergency outside and inside Afghanistan. Local procurement is also recommended in view that the food is often better appreciated by the beneficiaries, it avoids imbalance in the food basket, improved cost-effectiveness and a shorter rapid availability of the commodity.

It is recommended that WFP further strengthens its existing policy that donors would provide their support in cash for procurement locally or from the region.

24. Sometimes food commodities have not been procured locally (Serbia) on request of the Government not to do so in order not to exhaust local surpluses. In these cases there was also no regional procurement, despite regional surpluses.

ECHO and WFP should look again at the sourcing of food aid if national governments do not approve of local payments and insist with greater strength that sourcing must, wherever possible, be locally or regionally bought, for obvious economic reasons.

## **7.5 RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARTNER ORGANISATIONS**

25. In the four countries there are perhaps three kinds of partner relationships: In Serbia and Afghanistan, the partners include INGOs or national NGOs. Several partners felt that the relationship was unequal, sometimes even as a 'contractor-type' relationship. In Tanzania and Serbia the partner is UNHCR, another UN agency, and with more-or-less equal standing with WFP. In Eritrea it is a strong Government agency, ERREC that implements the programme. Here, the relationship is still being negotiated.

As the evaluation findings indicate that the IPs regard WFP as an organisation which operates "top-down" instead of a "bottom-up" organisation it is suggested that WFP does focus on the way it works with IPs. More work in terms of understanding the relations is needed as WFP argues that it works according to a bottom-up approach and involves IPs in all aspects of the programmes.

26. The relationship between WFP and UNHCR is regulated through the WFP-UNHCR Memorandum of Understanding, an important document that describes the mutual roles and responsibilities. The WFP-

UNHCR MoU<sup>1</sup> guides the co-operation between both agencies. It is recommended that at operational level the division of tasks and responsibilities should be monitored to ensure that no duplication and repetition occurs.

In view of future working relations between the EC and UN agencies, collaboration will be formulated in the light of the UN-EC Framework agreement (2002).

27. IPs have mentioned that they would like to be more involved with needs assessments, improved communication of information, more training, more input from IPs into decision-making and jointly done evaluations. Implementing Partners are mainly contracted agencies in charge of distribution (Tanzania, Serbia). WFP and the IP should discuss how to prevent the feeling or reality that "top-down" management prevails and that more equal relationships with Implementing Partners will be established. IPs should not feel as if they are contracted on "cheap terms".

28. Another aspect mentioned by the NGOs and confirmed by WFP is the level of 'flat rate' payment. These are low and IPs are not in all cases informed how these rates can be augmented.

Relations with partners should be strengthened through a better joint programming and evaluation system. This would lead to a better assessment of work, criteria and flat rates for the IPs. These recommendations would certainly improve both performance and the quality of interventions.

WFP is an important partner of ERREC (Eritrea) and other GoE institutions. The relations between the institutions are good. WFP has committed its support for a strong food security policy by offering its VAM services to be integrated into the national structures.

VAM should integrate or be a complementary structure to the GoE structures such as NFIS. WFP can facilitate and strengthen the collaboration amongst agencies concerning questions about targeting and criteria for needs assessments; an example is better integration of anthropometrical surveys into needs assessments. In this way WFP can really add value.

29. In countries where the added value of WFP is not in its hands-on operational role it has an important task rather in facilitation, capacity development (Eritrea) and developing local structures in co-operation with NGOs. The evaluators confirm that WFP has taken an appropriate position in Eritrea, with new tasks, such as capacity development of actors and support of processes in the GoE, and these are already appreciated. This is a relatively new situation for WFP but offers new opportunities to implement its mandate more in line with the policy of the LRRD of ECHO.

30. Redistribution of the food within the communities (Eritrea) is based on the local culture of sharing resources. Better knowledge of this process would lead to better understanding of the approaches of the local structures in the GoE and also in the communities itself. It is recommended that surveys by ERREC and WFP be done to get a better understanding of these processes, which would include a gender perspective.

31. ERREC (Eritrea) is a competent and cost-effective implementer of logistic operations. The losses incurred are minimal. The management system in ERREC and WFP do not match very well but both communicate effectively. The introduction of COMPAS into ERREC is relevant as it would add to innovation in the organisation and eventually increase capacity.

It is supported that WFP, COMPAS staff should be further integrated in ERREC and WFP to add to the existing training and infrastructure.

32. The WFP-Tanzania programme is strong in areas where WFP is often weak; it assesses from household level upwards; the assessments are analytical and profound; the programme is responsive to the needs of beneficiaries. It is recommended that WFP stay conscious of what it has developed in Tanzania, working with UNHCR so that if it takes over as main distributor these positive aspects are not lost; in addition, the programme has lessons for activities in WFP as a whole.

33. Friction existed between UNHCR and the IPs concerning budget cuts imposed on UNHCR, which UNHCR passed onto the IPs without applying cuts to its own budget. The IPs threatened to

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<sup>1</sup> Memorandum of Understanding between the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme (WFP), July 2002

discontinue work. These kinds of processes seem to be beyond the control of the donor and WFP, but should be noted and avoided.

It is recommended that the relations between the Contracting Agency and implementers are monitored to ensure that they do not affect the programme negatively. In this regard the evaluators also note that the agencies should not deploy international staff where local staff or IPs are already present to implement the project (UNHCR Tanzania)

## 7.6 WFP AND ECHO

34. ECHO and WFP share humanitarian elements in their mandate and have expressed an interest in co-operating in the humanitarian field. However, relations between WFP-Rome and ECHO-Brussels are not smooth. Across all the programmes, difficulties exist between WFP and ECHO in planning, communicating and co-ordinating. This is largely related to profound differences in systems and procedures in both organisations. The Strategic Dialogue of the top leadership of WFP and ECHO is an important and essential initiative to bring both organisations closer and help them to co-operate more smoothly.

35. Budgets with the operational contracts, agreed between ECHO and WFP do not provide an acceptable degree of detail. As a consequence, reporting does not provide sufficient information, identification of lessons learnt and applicable best practice. In addition to this the flow of information at the levels of the Headquarters from WFP and ECHO leaves much to desire, both in terms of quality and quantity. This is a structural problem that cannot be addressed at the operational level, but only at executive level.

36. The distance between both organisations needs urgent address. WFP and ECHO should focus on improving the mutual vision and communication between both organisations. The following issues need attention:

- ❖ Comparing decentralisation and centralisation tendencies in both organisations and their consequences and effects;
- ❖ Clarifying the roles of both organisations in view of their mandate and objectives;
- ❖ Agreeing on differences of working documents and related procedures;
- ❖ Internal communication procedures within both organisations;
- ❖ An outline concerning the question as to 'who will communicate with whom about which authority on which issue';
- ❖ Strengthening of personal contacts and communication between staff and the *modus operandi* for WFP Liaison office to meet regularly with ECHO staff.

37. At the Executive level of both organisations the Strategic Dialogue is a meaningful and important meeting. In view of addressing the operational principles between both organisations it is proposed that a Senior Technical Group, consisting of highly powered technical WFP-ECHO officials from HQ level be established to study the different ways ECHO and WFP experience impediments in their co-operation. This group should identify areas of comparative advantage and worthwhile co-operation for both organisations.

Areas for consideration of the Group would include; to operationalise the outcome of the 'Strategic Dialogue'; an assessment for implementation of the recommendations of this evaluation report; the incompatibility of the regulations for project applications; financial administration and reporting; harmonising the perceived difference between the PRROs -which are regarded by WFP as its project document- and the project documents as expected by ECHO, which are different in format and nature; revision of the needs assessment; ways to institutionalise best practice; the communication between both organisations -who communicates with whom on which levels of authority about which matters.



The UN-EC Framework Agreement supersedes the above recommendation concerning the establishment of the Senior Technical Group<sup>1</sup> and its implementation should be within the understanding of the agreement.

38. The evaluators found that the quality of the reporting of WFP leaves much to be desired, even though the organisation has high-quality management systems (COMPAS, WINGS, and Pipeline software). It is also said that the donors need more information about the spending of the funding. The financial and narrative reporting is extremely short and has very little detail. The Senior Technical Group would be best placed to look to provide direction on the nature of the FPA, Format of the Operational Contracts and reporting requirements.

39. It may be concluded that donors are diverse. Criteria for programmes and reporting quality are not standardised. ECHO's criteria for implementation and reporting are the same as for an NGO. WFP has difficulty with it that requirements for NGOs and WFP may look almost the same. It is recommended that ECHO should expect from WFP better quality reporting than presently received. The format and procedure of the reporting is a topic that both organisations may discuss and agree upon.

40. The evaluators observed that generally, ECHO-WFP relations at the country level are sound, based on professional standards and good personal relations. It shows that working relations get better when staff in different organisations communicate on a personal level. Both organisations should recognise that personal relations between staff may in many cases be instrumental for improved professional relations -and take steps to create conditions to achieve this.

#### **ECHO AT COUNTRY AND REGIONAL LEVEL**

41. The expertise at the ECHO Regional Office in Nairobi is considerable and the office has played a positive role in support of ECHO-Dar Es Salaam and the project in Eritrea. It participated meaningfully in the JFAMs as an observer and has provided considerable input. The staff contributed by making much information available to the evaluators. Continuation of the role of the Regional Office is of importance for the country programmes in the region.

42. In communication with representatives of NGOs in Kabul and in the Sub-office within the country, as well as in a meeting with donor representatives, many positive remarks were made about ECHO-Kabul and its technical, professional and personal commitment of staff -also its role of translating the policy of ECHO-Brussels in a clear and applicable way. ECHO will be able to continue to play an important role in Afghanistan in the near future. If the tasks of ECHO have to be phased over to the Delegation, then it is recommended that the some capacity of ECHO be retained, possibly at a low level by having one staff member responsible for the ECHO funding, to ensure that its activities can be revitalised quickly if needed in Afghanistan.

### **8 FUTURE CO-OPERATION AND RELATIONS BETWEEN WFP AND ECHO: RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE WAY FORWARD**

In this section the focus is on the future relationship between WFP and ECHO. Both organisations have an interest in further establishing and developing their working relations: in their mandates they share elements concerning humanitarian assistance. WFP has expressed its appreciation of the role ECHO plays as a donor: the funding has been consistent over a number of years in the four countries under scrutiny, while its contributions in cash have had extra value in situations where donations were mainly in kind.

This section aims at pointing out the key issues, which should be on the agenda of WFP-ECHO meetings in the future. The technical details and recommendations are not repeated here as these have been dealt with sufficiently in the country reports and, in a broader perspective, in this synthesis

<sup>1</sup> Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement between the European Community, represented by the Commission of the European Communities and the United Nations, 2002

report. This section looks at three areas: i) Institutional aspects, ii) Organisational aspects, and iii) Operational aspects.

## **8.1 INSTITUTIONAL ASPECTS**

In this report, the institutional aspects refer to the principles, which are the basis of existence of the two organisations. This includes the -felt- mandates, the political and institutional culture, the ideas and visions within the organisations. One can say that institutional aspects are invisible but in the daily existence of the organisation they determine how an organisation functions, how it relates to other organisations and interacts with its general environment.

It is recommended that WFP and ECHO executive and other key staff will get together in well-prepared workshops in which they will spell out which the key paradigms and principles are at the core of WFP and ECHO. Emphasis will be on those issues, which have shown through their effects that they are very influential in WFP-ECHO working relations. This could include perceptions of both organisations; organisations (WFP/ECHO) perceive themselves in a specific way and this may not be congruent with the way they perceive each other; WFP does not want to be confused with the IPs, though both are funded by ECHO; ECHO as a donor, has generally a professional presence in the field and its implementation is focused due to its monitoring work with the IPs: is this double role rightfully created by ECHO on the basis of its mandate? Is it acceptable to WFP? Are there implications for the relationship that ECHO -a donor for WFP- is not a member of the UN? Is the ECHO mandate in harmony with the mandates of other EC instruments, which may be involved with the same country or regional programme? Given that an organisation like WFP, high status in the hierarchy of global governance, is answerable to ECHO, which is owned by a regional government, does this have implications? This leads to the question as to whether sufficient authority can be exerted by ECHO concerning reporting, transparency, etc. These are only examples of what needs to be discussed; others are issues that help create a culture of co-operation and a working relationship between the two organisations.

## **8.2 ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS**

There are many definitions of what an organisation is. In this report the term refers to the observable structure and arrangements/procedures established and justified by the institutional base mentioned above.

In organisations, two main components are discerned: 1. Organisational structure, and 2. Organisational processes. Below a path for exploring WFP and ECHO features and functioning is proposed in order to understand better where the organisations have difficulties working together. The discussion is specifically linked to the WFP-ECHO relationship. The recommended steps in the analysis include:

1. To discuss and map the degree to which WFP is effectively decentralised and to which level -HQ, Liaison Office Brussels, regional offices, COs- and the way authority, resources and competence have been allocated. To assess strengths and weaknesses;
2. To discuss the degree to which ECHO is centralised and how it is positioned in relation with other EC instruments. To assess strengths and weaknesses;
3. To assess the relations, the tasks and responsibilities, the authority and resources allocated to the ECHO country and regional offices. To assess strengths and weaknesses;
4. To describe the current procedures of communication between the different levels of authority within both WFP and ECHO. To assess strengths and weaknesses;
5. To discuss the best possible arrangements and procedures for communication between the different levels of the two organisations. The guiding question to address with this topic is: who speaks with which level of authority about which matters and to whom;
6. To derive from the above a set of clearly described procedures and regulations that can be used from day-to-day within and between both organisations.

This process needs to be focussed sharply and specifically on the areas where WFP and ECHO co-operate to ensure that the analysis remains relevant. Although general internal factors and context

variables are important, it needs to be constantly kept in mind that the prime purpose of this exercise to find solutions to the issue of smoothing WFP-ECHO relations and co-ordination.

### **8.3 OPERATIONAL ASPECTS**

The most systematic way of analysing operational aspects is that key staff from WFP and ECHO meets to discuss the modus operandi of WFP's and ECHO's co-operation. In order to do this selectively it is recommended that the analysis follows the management cycle, which should always include the following elements: 1. Planning, 2. Implementation, 3. Monitoring, 4. Feed-forward of Monitoring Information and Feedback of Management Information, 5. Evaluation, and 6. Reporting.

From the management cycle the areas are identified where co-operation between WFP and ECHO has been complicated.

For each of the operational aspects discussed, quality codes should be agreed upon. Examples are 'type and quality of the assessment tools' for planning and project design, 'non-/acceptability of delay margins', 'quantity and quality levels of reporting', 'transparency', 'co-ordination with other implementers and funders' in the same project, etc.