

**REVIEW OF AUSTRALIAN SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE
COMMUNITIES IN COX'S BAZAR**

April 2018

REVIEW OF AUSTRALIAN SUPPORT FOR VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES IN COX'S BAZAR: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Enhanced Food Security and Nutrition (EFSN) programme has been a successful investment. There is ample evidence of effective outputs and good evidence of effective outcomes for the target population for some components. Initial income generation activities are still going after the end of the programme, or beneficiaries have adapted. The income generation component of the programme has overcome initial suspicions to generate a range of economic and non-economic outcomes for women, including increased status and confidence, limited additional mobility, and knowledge. The refugee influx has impacted on beneficiaries in areas of intense settlement. It is not yet clear whether the arrival of a captive market is a threat or an opportunity for women entrepreneurs or how it will affect long-term sustainability.

2. Evidence for the success of the income generation/behaviour change communication component of the programme with ultra-poor women is stronger than for the community-based management of acute malnutrition and school feeding components. Further reflection is needed on the inclusion of school feeding components in integrated nutrition programmes of this kind, particularly given that in this case it consumed over half the expenditure and stronger evidence of outcomes will still be required.

3. For Australia the partnership with WFP has been a good example of the country approach of working with a limited number of trusted partners. Australia has added value to the programme while allowing WFP to take the overall responsibility for delivery, and the knowledge and relationships developed have enabled additional contributions to the refugee relief effort to be made quickly and with confidence.

4. Reporting and limited field enquiry suggest that the WFP voucher scheme for registered refugees is working well, although it is unlikely to have been transformative for households or women's position in them. The best indicator of effectiveness is that WFP is being asked by Government to roll it out as the preferred food distribution method for the whole refugee population.

5. WFP has invested heavily in its implementing partners with a range of training, accompaniment of implementation and encouragement and oversight. Partners describe the relationship as collaborative, not contractual. The quadrupling of targets for a new programme will be a challenge given the availability of local partners and the range of emergency related activities they are already implementing.

6. WFP has evolved its responsiveness within the DFAT partnership. The annual narrative report has been a helpful departure from normal reporting practice and the initiative to contract Helen Keller International (HKI) has been a valuable learning experience (and should be continued for a further round). The 2017

refugee influx diverted staff and hollowed out WFP capacity in Cox's Bazar to carry out end of programme activity including ensuring reporting of outcomes, but the country office is taking steps to stabilise the position. There is scope to align responsibility for results monitoring and reporting more closely with operational functions to improve learning and accountability.

7. As Australia moves to a wider partnership at the country level, there will be less detailed dialogue about specific projects. However, the EFSN experience has raised a number of generic issues that might usefully be covered in a wider partnership dialogue. These include the sustainability of community-based interventions, the integration of specific measures for people with disability, monitoring and evaluation practice and the potential results from school feeding.

8. The review team would like to record its thanks to WFP who agreed to host the review despite the pace of humanitarian activity in Cox's Bazar, and to Romena Parvin of the Australian High Commission who accompanied the team throughout and provided valuable insights.

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1. Introduction

1. In 2014 Australia committed AUD6.8 million for the three years to August 2017 to the World Food Programme to support improved nutrition in one of the poorest districts in Bangladesh.¹ Together with contributions from DFID and ECHO, the contribution supported WFP's Enhanced Food Security and Nutrition (EFSN) programme under its country programme (CP) and direct nutritional support for registered Rohingya refugees in two official refugee camps, under a Protracted Relief and Rehabilitation Operation (PRRO).

2. In August 2017 events in Myanmar caused a massive influx of Rohingya refugees in to Cox's Bazar. In the space of a few months over 650,000 people crossed the border and are being cared for by the Government of Bangladesh with extensive support from the international community. This has had two major implications for the activities supported by Australia up to the influx:

- At a management level, staff administering EFSN were diverted for emergency humanitarian work or joined other agencies. The normal post-programme activities, including collecting monitoring data, were disrupted, as described later in this report.
- More importantly, the context for both elements of the programme, EFSN and support for registered refugees, has changed dramatically, affecting the sustainability of some of the outcomes from EFSN, changing assumptions about any successor intervention, and requiring the roll-out of food distribution systems developed under the PRRO to an unexpected extent.

3. This review, commissioned by DFAT, was carried out in January 2018. While the terms of reference required it to concentrate on the outcomes of the 2014-17 period, the implications of the influx are covered insofar as they affect dialogue that DFAT will need to have with WFP about future nutrition interventions in Cox's Bazar, as DFAT moves to generalised support for WFP's country programme.

2. The programme

4. The set of activities to which Australia contributed covered WFP's core humanitarian support for registered Rohingya refugees, while broadening the scope of its activities to improve nutrition outcomes among the host population in Cox's Bazar (into which a large number of unregistered refugees had become integrated). DFAT's original contribution of AUD6.8 million was intended to be allocated flexibly between the EFSN and the PRRO. EFSN followed an Australian-supported pilot phase in 2013-14 and had broadly three components:

¹ The total for the initiative (INK 969) stood at AUD17.8 million at the time of the review following successive additional Australian commitments to work with refugees in Cox's Bazar. These additional amounts were beyond the scope of the review.

- The provision of livelihoods grants and monthly support allowance, with a package of behaviour change communication activities, to 9,600 poor women in three upazillas (Teknaf, Ukhiya and Moheshkhali) aimed at increasing assets, income and savings and enhanced personal confidence among beneficiaries.² Other expected outcomes were increased incidence of breastfeeding, greater dietary diversity and changes in household hygiene practices. This activity is mainly referred to as the Enhancing Food Security (EFS) component of EFSN, and this usage is adopted in this report.
- Community-based management of acute malnutrition (CMAM) in the form of supplementary feeding for pregnant and lactating women and children of 6-59 months identified as vulnerable through anthropometric testing, supplemented by behaviour change communication activities, aimed at reduced malnutrition among target groups.
- Provision of nutritious biscuits to primary school children, backed by a learning package for children, teachers and parents on good nutrition, aimed at improving school enrolment and attendance.

5. Overall, the activities were expected to lead to changes in household power dynamics, greater and more varied food consumption and reduced stunting and wasting in targeted communities. The three activities were carried out to a large extent in the same unions, although coverage was not exactly the same for all three in every upazilla. WFP entered into partnerships with three local NGOs and two international NGOs to implement EFSN.

6. WFP intends to operate an expanded form of EFSN in Teknaf and Ukhiya upazillas beginning in 2018.

7. The PRRO for 34,000 registered refugees in the pre-influx official camps is a long-standing WFP activity carried out in association with the Government of Bangladesh and UNHCR, although it has evolved over the years. In 2014-17 it covered general food distribution through a voucher scheme; targeted food supplements; and school feeding. It was aimed at safeguarding the food security of refugees, treating and preventing acute malnutrition, and encouraging school enrolment, attendance and retention.³

8. WFP reporting to development partners has normally been done through Standard Project Reports. These were developed for WFP's traditional operations, but are not suitable for reporting specific operations such as EFSN within the country programme because the country programme is reported as a combined activity. In consultation with contributing partners WFP therefore agreed to provide an annual narrative report on EFSN, recording results against the project logframe. The first such report was provided in 2015.

² Outcome statements from the EFSN logframe

³ Outcome statements from WFP standard project reports

9. With DFAT encouragement WFP contracted Helen Keller International (HKI) to implement a quantitative and qualitative study of the outcomes of EFSN. HKI carried out a baseline survey of treatment and control areas in December 2015 to January 2016, and an endline survey in August 2017.⁴ Much of the evidence for the effectiveness of the programme is drawn from this high quality study.

3. The review

10. The objectives of the review⁵ were:

- *To provide independent confirmation that the evidence used by DFAT to make judgements of effectiveness (progress towards outcomes) during implementation has been robust and comprehensive.*
- *To review processes for design, targeting, monitoring, reporting and partnership management within EFSN that are relevant to the future relationship between WFP and development partners who will contribute at country programme level from 2018.*

11. DFAT has taken a close interest in this programme and has regularly assessed it and the partnership with WFP as above satisfactory during implementation. There is significant robust evidence of effectiveness of the EFSN programme, particularly in the HKI study. It was agreed in preparation for the review that less emphasis would be placed on the first objective. The review therefore examined the means by which information on effectiveness of EFSN had been collected, without trying to replicate previous data collection, and sought to identify results that were not captured by the agreed reporting. For the PRRO, the review was limited to confirming that the e-voucher scheme operated by WFP in the camps was meeting minimum nutritional needs and was well accepted by the authorities and beneficiaries.

12. In the interests of maximising utility of the review, greater emphasis was placed on the second objective. Australia has decided to extend its support in 2018 to the overall WFP country programme, which will include a continuation of operational presence by WFP in Cox's Bazar for the foreseeable future. The move by Australia to support the totality of the WFP country programme means that a new form of partnership will need to be developed between DFAT and WFP locally, particularly as WFP itself seeks to reposition itself within the changing requirements of Bangladesh. The opportunity was taken in this review to examine processes of programme design, delivery, monitoring and communication within EFSN, and the direction of travel within these processes, that may be relevant to the evolution of the future partnership between DFAT and WFP.

⁴ "Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition (EFSN) Programme in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh", Helen Keller International, 2017. Because WFP retains an option to ask HKI to do a further study of sustained outcomes, this survey is also labelled in some contexts a midline survey. In fact it represents end of programme outcomes.

⁵ The review team were John Winter, Team Leader, and Jennifer Mudge, Gender Specialist

13. The review included:

- Document review, particularly of reports containing evidence for outputs and outcomes;
- Key informant interviews with staff from DFAT, WFP, WFP's cooperating partners (including at least one representative of each of the local NGOs who had supported implementation) and as many Government officials in Cox's Bazar as could be fitted into the schedule as possible (giving reasonable but not systematic coverage);
- Group discussions with a sample of self-help groups of women beneficiaries of EFS, two schools receiving school feeding and a sample of users of the WFP e-voucher scheme in the official refugee camps.

Limitations

14. The review relied for evidence of effectiveness on WFP reporting and the independent HKI study (it should be noted that WFP reporting is drawn in turn from implementing partner reporting that was itself subject to third party monitoring by the reputable local NGO SARPV, and that some outcome data in WFP reporting comes from separately commissioned enquiries). In line with the agreed emphasis of the review, no primary data collection or spot-checking of results was carried out. Field visit schedules were circumscribed by security and the need to be back in Cox's Bazar by nightfall. Consultations with EFS self-help groups were determined by logistical feasibility and groups were not selected by the review team. They included groups in all three upazillas where the EFS was active, and covered all the income options that the project had promoted. The sample included one group heavily impacted by the expansion of the refugee camps following the influx. The limited sample provided consistent qualitative evidence of positive change.

15. The review was carried out before the due date for the annual narrative report for 2017 for EFSN and the WFP Standard Project Report on the PRRO. WFP reports that it and its partners have carried out some of the outcome monitoring envisaged in the EFSN logframe but not all, understandably given the situation on the ground. There may be further outcome data to be collected which this review was not able to take into account. However, the HKI report covers most of the areas of change predicted in the logframe and so largely compensates for the lack of 2017 data from other planned monitoring. WFP will rely on it in reporting end of programme outcomes.

4. Did Australian support meet its objectives?

16. Australia's financial support and interest were critical in ensuring that WFP could implement EFSN in three districts. Support for the PRRO was less critical, since it absorbed a small proportion of the Australian grant and was in any case supported by a range of other donors.

17. In the absence of 2017 outcome reporting from the programme, the HKI study has been used in this review to assess performance against objectives for EFSN. For the most part the study covers the outcomes predicted in the implicit theories of change for EFS and school feeding (table below). As discussed below, the HKI study was not intended to provide evidence of outcomes for CMAM.

Table 1: Implicit theory of change

EFSN	IF poor women are trained in income generation activities AND receive financial support AND are organised into groups AND receive targeted behaviour change training with their families THEN they will pursue the activities, grow household assets and savings and increase their confidence.
School feeding	IF schools receive sufficient high-energy biscuits for all pupils AND pupils receive a package of nutrition learning THEN enrolment, attendance and retention will rise.

EFS

18. The primary beneficiaries of EFS were approximately 9,400 ultra-poor women and their families (against a target of 9,600).⁶ By comparing outcomes for these women against a baseline taken around 18 months earlier and against a control group, HKI is able to demonstrate that the intervention contributed to:

- Increases in scores for household food consumption and dietary diversity
- Increases in household asset scores
- A fourfold increase in average income for women (compared to a 50% rise in control areas)
- Almost universal contribution by beneficiary women to household income (up from two thirds, and suggesting that income generating initiatives have been maintained)
- A significantly higher rise in self-assessed confidence levels among women than in control areas
- A threefold increase in households with good hand washing practices
- A reduction in the use of strategies to cope with food shortage

19. Qualitative findings support the picture of change at household level. Participants reported greater knowledge of nutritious food, of good nutrition practice in pregnancy, the importance of exclusive breastfeeding and greater freedom to put learning into practice because husbands and mothers-in-law had

⁶ 9481 is the figure given for the end of 2016. Since HKI were unable to locate 61 participants in July 2017, it seems likely that this figure declined a little by the end of the project. An unknown number of unregistered Rohingya refugees who were beneficiaries of EFS appear to have moved closer to the camps in the last few months to access humanitarian aid.

participated in training. Women participants were more likely to make or share a range of household decisions than they were at the beginning of the programme, and were more likely to do so than women in control areas.

20. The self-help groups into which women beneficiaries were organised as part of the project have emerged as a factor in transforming their lives. One unconfirmed estimate obtained during the review was that more than 50% are still meeting four months after the end of the project. The small sample of groups visited during the review had group savings. Unexpected (but not surprising) outcomes from group formation include collections for members with health or family crises, access to and distribution of welfare items such as blankets from government or NGO sources, lobbying local authorities for and obtaining public services such as roads, tube wells and repairs to graveyards, and advocating against child marriage. Some groups have initiated group income generation activities with joint savings, an outcome that suggests high levels of mutual trust and shared objectives. There appears to have been spillover communication from the groups to the wider community following behaviour change sessions. A number of leading women from self-help groups have been nominated to membership of apex groups that are large enough to be eligible for registration with Government departments as community based organisations (CBOs) or cooperatives. Some CBOs have been registered and now have access to Government grants.

21. The consolidation of attitudes and practices through group formation is a well-tested part of programmes that target ultra-poor women. The increase in common social capital generated by the groups sits alongside improvements in nutrition as an impact of the programme, and like improved nutrition is a gateway to further changes in women's lives. WFP staff close to the programme recognised the potential for the groups early on and encouraged their development. They represent a rich seam of experience that is well understood by WFP staff but does not appear in formal programme monitoring or reporting (see section 9 below).

CMAM

22. Outcome information shows that for the cases of acute malnutrition targeted, recovery rates were high (over 80%). Default and non-response rates increased slightly over the programme period; the reasons should be addressed in the 2017 narrative report. However, the significance of the programme is not so much in its case management as in the effectiveness of its coverage. The project set out to measure change in overall stunting and wasting rates in the three upazillas, but at the time of preparing this report this assessment had not been completed. HKI were not required to examine the effects of CMAM, or to carry out anthropometric measurement. WFP will need to satisfy itself in due course that nutrition indicators in the target area improved as expected.

School feeding

23. At output level the school feeding programme met its targets and maintained its supply pipeline except when interrupted by weather conditions. At outcome level the indicators for the school feeding component of EFSN were enrolment, attendance and retention in schools receiving high-energy biscuits. The HKI study records a decline in the rate of fall of enrolment in the programme schools (although enrolment still fell), compared to a largely unaltered rate of decline in control areas. Both spot and recorded attendance rates fell slightly and retention rates were about the same. The study does not provide sex-disaggregated data, so it is impossible to say whether school feeding had a differential effect in attracting boys and girls to school. The 2016 annual narrative report speculated that children were attending non-government schools in preference to the government schools covered by the scheme. In principle such suggestions should be based on evidence if they are included in annual reporting.

24. The 2017 narrative report should provide further reflection on this data. Whatever the reasons for the decline in participation, more thought needs to be given to the rationale for a school feeding component, especially given that it absorbed 58% of estimated expenditure to the end of 2017. WFP's own evaluation of school feeding in Bangladesh in 2011 concluded that

*"The achievement of learning outcomes arises from a complex set of interrelated factors, of which school biscuits are one input. While the evaluation showed some positive impacts on attendance and drop-out rates, there is no consistent pattern of the effect on overall performance in programme schools relative to control schools. This limited impact on critical education outcomes reflects shortcomings in the education system – limited contact hours, high student-to-teacher ratios, large class sizes, poor infrastructure, etc. – and economic pressures on households."*⁷

25. With the knowledge that school feeding is only one factor in enrolment and attendance, its inclusion as part of an integrated nutrition programme could be more carefully argued in future. There may be excellent reasons for believing that in the right circumstances it provides wrap-around support for other interventions; but in that case a more nuanced set of indicators needs to be developed.

26. One of the arguments for the intervention may lie in the package of educational resources that goes with it. The review team found great enthusiasm among the limited number of children and parents consulted for learning within the curriculum and at home about food and nutrition and for caring for school gardens. This outcome did not figure in programme reporting, although it was felt by WFP and NGO staff most closely concerned to be a valuable result. However, different evidence would have to be gathered to support such a conclusion.

⁷ "Bangladesh School Feeding Impact Evaluation", WFP, 2011

EFSN as a whole

27. In the programme document the three components were described as “integrated and converging”, and in the 2016 narrative report as taking “a comprehensive life-cycle approach to addressing underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition”. The achievements of the three components stand on their own merits, but there is no evidence in the reporting that they were managed as a whole and the synergies are not clear. The geographical coverage of the components was similar but not identical. NGO representatives reported that where the components were run by the same implementing partner there was coordination over timing of activity and collaboration over behaviour change communication messaging, but the activities were run by different teams.

28. WFP field staff were able to report mutual reinforcement of the three components (eg some EFS beneficiaries also received supplementary feeding, and messages to beneficiaries about the importance of sending children to school were reinforced by the availability of biscuits at school). However, there does not seem to have been an intent to demonstrate mutual reinforcement at a strategic level. This may not have mattered in the long run if the three components all contributed to improved nutrition across the three upazillas, or added to WFP’s credibility more widely. However, if they are to be repeated as a package, it would be good practice to develop a stronger theory of change explaining how the components are together necessary and sufficient to meet proposed outcomes. This should also lead to an examination of what proportion of total expenditure is appropriate for each component.

PRRO

29. The nutrition interventions for registered refugees supported through the PRRO largely met their objectives. Eligible refugee families drew a varied ration and as a result had satisfactory food consumption and dietary diversity scores in 2016, following intensive behaviour change communication in 2015. Results are not available for 2017, but refugees report that dietary diversity has gone down since the influx as a result of a clamp down on work outside the camps, which used to provide cash for supplementary items. The e-voucher scheme is popular with households. The woman of the household is the primary cardholder. Cardholders consulted during the review stated that they found the shops easy to use and that there was no family conflict over use of the card, since the woman’s responsibility of deciding the family diet was consistent with traditional roles. Private sector contractors appear to have lived up to their contracts to keep shops stocked with goods meeting WFP quality standards, and the system for notifying price changes following market movements is working well. An indicator of the effectiveness of the e-voucher system is that Government and WFP are collaborating on rolling it out to the generality of the new refugee population as a substitute for the current distribution of bulk rations.

30. The treatment of acute malnutrition in the camps is judged by WFP to have had satisfactory outcomes for those treated, although levels of malnutrition remain persistently high because of poor living conditions and health risks.

31. As for school feeding programmes in the community, school feeding in the camps does not appear to have halted a continuing drop in enrolment of both boys and girls (2016 data), although retention for girls was slightly better than for boys (85% to 83%), reflecting national averages. WFP notes that “positive incentives are ... struggling against high levels of demotivation related to the camp schools not being nationally certified, and more general disenchantment on self-investment noting the very limited opportunity for higher study, or qualified work.”

5. Was contributing to the EFSN programme an efficient intervention?

32. Australia’s commitment was directed towards the range of WFP’s operations in Cox’s Bazar, on the understanding that WFP would draw on it as required to finance the constituent activities. The modality was consistent with the strategic approach developed by the Australian aid programme in Bangladesh of working with trusted partners with strong management capacities to amplify a limited budget and to make the most of scarce administrative resources, and to use its position to encourage cooperation between partners. In the judgement of the review team, based on interviews with DFAT and WFP staff, the modality had multiple efficiencies for DFAT:

- It built on an existing global relationship between Australia and WFP based on a standard multilateral agency assessment carried out by DFAT that allowed assumptions to be made about alignment between corporate priorities and about the basic soundness of WFP management systems;
- It allowed Australia to work with an agency that was well established in the Cox’s Bazar area, engaged in a supportive policy dialogue with the Government of Bangladesh and local officials, identified as working for both refugees and the host population and largely independent of the political sensitivities that have affected the ability of a number of international organisations to operate in this politically difficult district;
- It enabled Australia to direct support even-handedly to refugees and Bangladeshi host communities through a single commitment, so avoiding potentially politically charged choices;
- It was based on activities for which WFP had a proven track record in Bangladesh and on a two-year pilot in Cox’s Bazar;
- It acted as a gateway investment for additional commitments of AUD11 million over the years 2015-17 following further refugee crises to support WFP’s wider response, without the need to negotiate further agreements.

33. DFAT has been able to rely on WFP’s global value for money framework as an assurance that it attaches high priority to efficiency and economy. The

Comprehensive Due Diligence Assessment (CDDA) of the country office in 2016 found that

“WFP has in recent years significantly strengthened its focus on value for money, including with a dedicated framework and guidance documents. Procurement is based on competitive tendering as the general policy and preferred method, and the procurement processes at the CO appear to be well-established and with due attention to costs, including for locally obtained food, goods and services.”⁸

34. Specifically in this programme, the introduction of e-vouchers and the consequent shift of responsibility for large-scale procurement and logistics to the private sector have added to the efficiency of the food distribution programme in the official camps. WFP’s beneficiary targeting systems and experience with the distribution of cash in rural contexts have provided additional reassurance that the risks of leakage have been managed; there were no incidents of cash going missing in the implementation period.

35. The CDDA also noted that WFP would need to develop new ways of accounting for value for money as it justifies resources allocated to more complex outcomes within its country programme. For example the successor programme to EFSN will need to consider in more depth than in the previous phase the relative value of interventions such as school feeding with widespread impact (but where it is difficult, in this context, to generate clear evidence of success) and more intensive inputs such as EFS.

36. One of the recurring themes of progress reporting in the Australian aid programme in Bangladesh is that partnerships do not equal light-touch management. The High Commission has deployed one programme manager more or less full time on the partnership with WFP, with significant inputs by a Second Secretary.⁹ The formal governance arrangements were intended to be a quarterly meeting between WFP, DFAT and DFID, although in practice this was not always convened, and an annual consultation on results. But the DFAT programme manager has had more frequent contacts with WFP staff, adding value to the programme through exchanging information on risk, negotiating reporting arrangements, pursuing improvements to monitoring and evaluation practice (a theme identified by the formative evaluation of the pilot programme) and drawing on DFAT expertise in working with people with disability to integrate this issue into implementation of the EFS component.

37. Australia’s willingness to allow its contribution to be used flexibly across the Cox’s Bazar programme was recognised by WFP as a major contribution

⁸ Comprehensive Due Diligence Assessment of World Food Programme in Bangladesh, DFAT, 2017

⁹ The dialogue over the programme was intensified by frequent visits to Cox’s Bazar by DFAT staff monitoring successive humanitarian crises in 2015, 2016 and 2017. In practice it would be difficult to distinguish time spent on humanitarian monitoring on the one hand and engagement with the programme on the other.

to their efficiency, allowing them to balance earmarked and unearmarked contributions against annual requirements, and in particular to allow an uninterrupted flow of funds to EFSN, which depended for its success on timely inputs.

6. Did the programme target women appropriately?

38. The social environment for women in Cox's Bazar is more restrictive than in other parts of Bangladesh. Women were the primary beneficiaries of the set of interventions supported by Australia, and women were targeted appropriately, both in terms of the criteria applied to identify vulnerable beneficiaries and in well-chosen intervention approaches. The food voucher system in official camps reinforced (if not pioneered) women's household decision-making around food and provided a measure of choice (though beneficiaries would prefer more, particularly meat and fresh fruit). Baseline figures show that the women targeted for EFS were largely without education or income or engaged in subsistence agriculture (see box). Behaviour change messaging was taken on board and shared as well as applied in situations of unexpected need, such as stopping a child marriage from going forward. Women involved in IGAs reported significantly higher degrees of confidence, ability to speak out (including in mixed-sex groups), sharing in more and weightier decisions at home and significant improvements in income and assets. Indeed, aspects of confidence and business know-how were clearly demonstrated during the focus group discussions held for this review.

Targeting criteria for EFS

The criteria were developed during the pilot phase, and were based on extensive experience in Bangladesh of targeting ultra-poor interventions. The basic requirements for household inclusion were:

- Owning less than 20 decimals of land (about one fifth of an acre)
- Not receiving any other livelihoods programme
- Microcredit less than Tk8000 or no loan

In addition households had to pass two of the following four tests:

- Not less than 4 members
- Dependent on irregular work
- No productive assets
- Every child of primary school age being out of school

On registration households were asked a set of additional questions designed to identify participants with disabilities and make special provision for them.

39. Faced with initial hostility from influential figures in the community and neighbours who advised women selected for EFSN not to accept help from "Christian" sources, the programme drew on good practice by extending

behaviour change communication to potential gatekeepers in their lives, including husbands and mothers-in-law, and created village committees to support programme initiatives and advocate for its benefits.

40. As discussed elsewhere in this review, the formation of self-help groups for poor women is clearly a key element to the success of EFSN. Unofficial estimates are that seven months after receiving their last visit by a project-related Community Development Officer, half of the SHGs continue to function, although illiteracy presents a challenge to long-term sustainability. The groups visited by the evaluation team reported meeting monthly and contributing between 100-200Tk per month into formal group savings (which ranged from 44,000 to 76,000 Taka), with nearly all members having ongoing IGAs.

41. Group and individual IGAs ranged in nature from the typical (cow and goat rearing, betel farming) to the unexpected (investment in nearby salt cultivation and pigeon rearing). Several of the groups with whom the team spoke took pride in civic activity such as helping a member in need (one member was in hospital at the time of the visit, having just had a caesarean thanks to the financial contribution of the group) and charitable giving.

42. Change in highly conservative social norms takes time. Although household power dynamics may be shifting, women still have to make accommodations with those social norms in order to carry out their income earning activities. The range of acceptable outside contacts is limited – women are not expected to sell their own produce or merchandise in bazaars, and must either sell it privately from their homes or send their husbands or children to market. Some women sidestep limits on mobility and market access by bringing goods (or having them brought) to their own villages to sell to neighbours, for example saris, hair ornaments and women's underwear. In the case of fish drying, which is profitable but requires family labour and supplies relatively distant markets, women must depend on their husbands for the success of the business.

7. How did the partnership with WFP in Cox's Bazar advance Australia's policy interests in Bangladesh?

43. The partnership contributed to objective 2 of Australia's Aid Implementation Plan for Bangladesh, that of building resilience by reducing vulnerability and improving inclusion in the growing economy. By concentrating on women's social status and economic empowerment and on early years nutrition EFSN addressed two key drivers of exclusion: barriers to women's participation in the economy and long term health problems stemming from childhood deprivation. It also responded to Australia's priority set out in the DFAT Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy to create pathways for women into economic activity. Working with WFP enabled Australia to participate in the provision of nutrition safety nets for refugees whose plight was a matter of deep global concern at a number of points in the implementation period. Throughout the period Australia also had a wider interest in stability and poverty

reduction in this part of Bangladesh given the area's role as the origin for unregulated migration, including by sea. In successive Aid Quality Checks the High Commission makes the assessment that working through WFP was not just the most effective, but the only viable, way to channel support to the district.

44. The High Commission's association with the programme enabled it to keep in close touch with developments in the district through contacts with WFP, NGOs and local government officials. Despite its minority contribution, Australia is identified in the district as a reliable and constructively engaged donor and nationally as an informed interlocutor with the Government when required. As an illustration of its close relations with stakeholders, Australia was the only development partner invited to accompany the Joint Assessment Mission by WFP, UNHCR and the Government of Bangladesh in the official refugee camps in May 2016.

45. As noted above, the partnership was a vehicle by which Australia was able quickly and flexibly to deploy additional humanitarian assistance during the Andaman Sea crisis in 2015 and influxes of Rohingya refugees in 2016 and 2017.

8. How well did WFP manage the programme?

46. WFP has been active in Cox's Bazar for many years and was able to draw on its knowledge of the complex political and social situation in the district and on a range of established relationships to justify DFAT's assessment that it had comparative advantage in implementation of programmes in the area.

47. The original EFSN programme document setting out plans to operate in five upazillas was prepared before funding was guaranteed. In the event the programme had to be limited to three upazillas to match the available funding. The estimated outturn, still subject to the preparation of final accounts by WFP, was as follows:

Table 2: Expenditure against original (pre-reduction) budget

Intervention	Original programme budget	Estimated expenditure to end 2017
EFS	USD 8.4 million	USD 4.6 million
CMAM	USD 2.9 million	USD 2.7 million
School Feeding	USD 12.23 million	USD 10.1 million

Source: WFP

Because WFP staff have moved on it is not clear whether a revised budget was prepared, or what the rationale was for applying the reductions unevenly across the three components. However, the project was managed throughout with regard to the availability of funding, and the funding pipeline appears to have been secure, with no recorded problems of delays due to shortage of funds or additional approaches to funding partners. The PRRO was subject to some cost escalations resulting in additional approaches to funding partners. This situation should

largely be avoided in future as all WFP country activities begin to be run together with flexibility to move funds between them.

48. Implementation of EFSN was delayed in 2015 owing to political unrest and the effects of a cyclone. There were further challenges in 2016 with Cyclone Roanu and the deterioration of the security situation that affected the availability of Australian volunteers and the overall ability of WFP to monitor the programme. Nevertheless, WFP managed to deploy resources so as to catch up with end-2016 targets and the final outcomes demonstrate that the early problems were successfully overcome.

49. One of the focus questions for the review was the extent to which WFP had built up constructive relationships with the implementing partners (local NGOs) on which they relied to deliver the EFSN programme in the three upazillas and the nutrition programmes in the camps. Interviews were carried out with staff or ex-staff of the Society for Health Extension and Development (SHED), the Resource Integration Centre (RIC) and Mukti. Respondents confirmed that there had been strong mutual understanding of the objectives for the activities for which WFP wanted to partner with NGOs, and of what WFP expected from partners. Implementation plans had been drawn up and targets set in a consultative way. Reporting requirements were perceived as clear and reasonable. In general, they felt that the relationship had been a partnership to which each side contributed rather than a contractual relationship. WFP had been frequent visitors to field activities and had contributed ideas and mentoring support. As a matter of WFP general country practice, there is a transparent annual review process for each partnership, generating an action plan and commitment by WFP to help to fill capacity gaps where these are identified.

50. WFP mobilised significant resources to enhance the skills of partner staff in financial management, income generating activity development, gender and behaviour change communication. WFP contracted specialist organisations to develop BCC modules and to train partner staff in the subject matter and in modes of delivery. The training and the BCC modules were regarded as high quality and relevant. It is unclear what lasting benefit the partners received and continue to receive from WFP investment, particularly since staff migration to other NGOs and international organisations is high. However, it appears that WFP has a sound and replicable model for partnership with national NGOs that meets immediate delivery needs.

51. It has been essential to maintain close relationships with Government of Bangladesh officials at district level. Those who work directly with WFP, including in the Office of the Refugee Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner, confirmed in review interviews that they regard WFP as reliable, flexible and fast. Implementing partners also drew on their contacts with Government officials to involve them in providing, for example, agricultural training for EFS beneficiaries. Sectoral officials at upazilla level expressed a wish to continue working with EFS-type projects in future.

52. With encouragement from the High Commission and technical input from DFAT, WFP made efforts during 2016 to integrate the needs of people with disabilities into the working of the programme and into the BCC modules. WFP brokered partnerships between its implementing partners and Handicap International (HI, now Humanity and Inclusion) to identify appropriate income generation activities for women with disabilities, to make special financial provision for them to attend meetings and put them in touch with rehabilitation and psychological services. HI reported that RIC and SHED took on these additional activities with enthusiasm, but the implementation period (tied to the availability of funding) is recognised by HI and WFP as having been too short and WFP has undertaken to plan more intentionally for it in the next phase.

9. How did WFP perform as a DFAT partner?

53. WFP has consistently been rated highly in all aspects of the DFAT annual partnership assessments. It has been responsive to Australian concerns and requirements for information. The annual narrative report for EFSN is a new departure for WFP but is clear, comprehensive and arranged to account for progress against the logframe. The report for 2016 contained more detailed information and reflection than its predecessor. Like all international organisations, WFP has faced challenges in turnover of international staff. There have been five principal contact points for funding partners in the WFP country office in the three years of the programme, although the impact on communications with DFAT has been mitigated by DFAT's frequent visits to Cox's Bazar. Following the refugee influx in August 2017, staff were pulled away from management of EFSN on to other duties, or left to join other organisations. Country office management recognises that capacity to carry out end of project management, including reporting, was severely compromised in that period, but is now taking steps to restore capacity in advance of the next phase.

10. Were monitoring, evaluation and learning adequate for the scale of the intervention?

EFSN

54. The logical framework for EFSN reflects an implicit theory of change for each of the three strands of activity. Change at impact level is expressed in terms of food security and diversity and child nutrition (timelines are not specified, but this kind of long term change may be outside the scope of the project period). At outcome level an interesting variety of change achievable within the project period is measured with appropriate indicators, including assets, savings and confidence of beneficiaries and changes in household behaviours.

55. Process monitoring (up to output level) has largely been the responsibility of the implementing NGOs through monthly reports and, in common with other WFP field operations, is notably comprehensive. Implementing partners employed an Upazilla Project Monitoring and

Implementation Officer with responsibility for data collection and monitoring. Implementation reporting was supplemented by the engagement of third party field monitors who accompanied implementing NGOs in their field visits and who were particularly important, along with WFP staff, in assuring the integrity of cash distribution.

56. Outcome monitoring was intended to rely on:

- Implementing NGOs for facilitated self-assessment of participant confidence through the self-help groups (results presented in accessible spider diagram format), an excellent initiative to involve beneficiaries themselves in monitoring of changes in their lives;
- WFP-contracted enumerators who carried out at least one round of household surveys;
- Nutrition surveys by partner organisations.

57. Given the disruption to normal monitoring during 2017, the engagement of HKI to carry out a parallel study of outcomes has been a lifeline for M&E arrangements. It largely confirms the direction of change reported by WFP in 2016 but, as a quasi-experimental panel survey using comparisons with control households and in-depth qualitative investigation, it provides a convincing set of supplementary data. WFP has an option to commission HKI to undertake a follow-up survey, possibly in 2019, focussed on sustainability of outcomes. There is some doubt as to whether the methodology can be carried on into a third round, since the expansion of EFSN to 40,000 households in Ukhiya and Teknaf may represent saturation coverage and thus the loss of control groups. It is for WFP to decide whether and how to undertake a third round of the study, but in principle the current contract with HKI provides a vehicle for generating important knowledge about sustainability (see section on sustainability).

58. It is important to recognise that WFP as an organisation and in the country office is adapting to account for outcomes well beyond those against which it has traditionally measured itself (commodities distributed and people reached). The EFSN logframe measures up to good practice and reflects WFP's growing experience of complex nutrition interventions. Just as importantly, it was actually used for data collection and reporting. The review team discussed with WFP two possible further improvements to M&E practice for the next phase:

- *Ownership and use of monitoring data:* Responsibility for programme implementation lay largely with the Cox's Bazar sub-office, who oversaw the process monitoring carried out by implementing partners. Outcome and impact monitoring were mainly the responsibility of specialist M&E staff in Dhaka. The implication is that process monitoring went with management while outcome monitoring was a combination of oversight by the country office and a service to funding agencies that required outcome data for accountability purposes. Because senior staff in the sub-office have changed it was not possible to determine what effect this had on overall management

during implementation. However, split responsibilities for M&E make it more difficult in principle for those with management accountability to incorporate outcome monitoring into their own learning, reflection and reorientation processes;¹⁰ and to ensure that outcome monitoring is adapted to reflect in data collection the changes that field staff know are happening.¹¹ It would be helpful to allocate overall M&E and reporting responsibility with that for implementation at sub-office level. There is an argument for M&E maintaining a degree of distance from management to ensure rigour, but it is also possible to have a management-led process that builds in independent analysis and challenge at agreed points.

- *Capturing unexpected change*: The logframe is set up to capture foreseeable linear change. However, discussion with WFP staff in the sub-office suggests that parallel narratives of change are emerging, particularly around intra-household change as a result of successful behaviour change communication, and the contribution of self-help groups to the social capital of beneficiaries.¹² At one level the programme undersells itself if it is not generating reportable information about such changes. At another, this is management information that needs to be formalised to be fed into strategic thinking about what behaviour change communication to concentrate on, and how far the project should extend its reach to support the sustainability of groups. M&E systems can be adapted in very simple ways to capture unexpected change, for example by recording regular reflection by field staff, or managers may choose to commission different sorts of data collection in response to emerging issues; a longitudinal or case study methodology, for example, could provide rich insights into the processes of change at individual, household and community levels. The key is to have a system for revisiting the theory of change at regular intervals and testing whether it is describing observable change, and where necessary feeding adaptation of the theory into M&E practice.

¹⁰ As an illustration, the sub-office team carried out a useful lessons learned workshop at the end of the EFSN programme covering operational improvements that could be made to the EFS component with the benefit of hindsight. But to make full use of collective experience of the programme, a parallel exercise using outcome data would be needed to draw strategic lessons, for example, on the balance of expenditure between the three components.

¹¹ For example, the emergence of self-help groups as determinants of social change for beneficiaries is not covered by the logframe but is well understood by field staff.

¹² The importance of groups is not, of course, in itself unexpected given widespread experience of ultra-poor support in Bangladesh. But it is “unexpected” in the sense that the logframe did not state it as an outcome.

59. Monitoring and evaluation of the nutrition interventions in the camps does not raise the same issues because the outcomes are less complex and the beneficiary population is stable and easily monitored.

60. A 2012 WFP evaluation of food assistance for long term refugees established that WFP support increased food consumption and dietary diversity and reduced negative coping mechanisms for registered refugees (although outcomes for unregistered refugees living in host communities appeared to be better because they had a wider range of networks and coping mechanisms).¹³ The basic task of M&E is therefore to demonstrate that food distribution is working, that families are obtaining a reasonable diversity of food and that targeted nutrition interventions for pregnant and lactating women and small children are maintaining a satisfactory nutritional status. One of the spin-offs of the e-voucher scheme is that WFP has access to real time information on families' use of the ration system and the range of goods that they are buying in ration shops. This enables WFP to identify practices such as the (rational) over-buying of rice in order to trade for goods not available in the system. Nutrition among vulnerable groups and school feeding outcomes in the camps are regularly monitored.

11. How sustainable are the results of the EFSN?

61. There is strong evidence from other programmes providing livelihoods for ultra-poor women that the benefits in terms of income, assets and social status are sustained well after the intervention period.¹⁴ Increased confidence and mobility linked with income generation skills and savings habits have been shown to be transformative for ultra-poor households. WFP aimed to entrench the prospects for sustainability by ensuring that behaviour change communication was directed at potential gatekeepers in women's lives, including husbands and mothers-in-law. The findings of the HKI study as well as consultations with self-help groups confirm that the intervention changed intra-household power relationships with positive effects on women's ability to earn incomes and to put learning into practice.

62. The role of self-help groups in ensuring sustainability of outcomes needs further investigation. As noted above, there is as yet no firm data on the number of groups still meeting four months after the end of the programme, and no comparison of outcomes for beneficiaries who are still part of a group and those who are not. WFP's evaluation of its FSUP project found that group membership was not a key determinant of sustained income and assets, although

¹³ "The Contribution of Food Assistance to Durable Solutions in Protracted Refugee Situations; its impact and role in Bangladesh: A Mixed Method Impact Evaluation", WFP, 2012

¹⁴ See, for example, BRAC annual reporting of its TUP programme, and WFP's own "Sustainability Assessment of the Impacts of the Food Security for the Ultra Poor (FSUP) Project implemented by WFP in North-West Bangladesh", 2016

it went on to recommend that the sustainability of self-help groups be further examined.¹⁵ However, in the particularly socially conservative circumstances of Cox's Bazar, self-help groups may have more of a role in ensuring continued mobility of beneficiaries (to the limited extent this has been achieved) and in sustaining collective action (see section 4 above). One ex-field coordinator thought that the programme should have made provision for continued support to groups. This will need consideration in the design of the next phase. Three years is a very short time for sustainable change to be entrenched. If the programme is to bring within its scope the far-reaching changes demonstrated over the past three years through EFS, it will need an expanded time horizon with shifting inputs over the period. It is stretching WFP's mandate for it to take on institutional support for self-help groups, but providing for sustainability through handover to other sources of support may be an option.

63. There are emerging routes to sustainability through making links with Government programmes and services. At the community level, self-help groups have already received extension services within the programme and local officials are in principle happy to respond to requests for continued support. Registration of apex groups offers a link to public and aid funding and training as well as expanding women's market linkages and knowledge of services. One local official interviewed stressed that moving the groups from informality and project-dependence to formality and independence is the key to sustainability of their benefits. At the policy level, the introduction of income generation strategies to the Vulnerable Groups Development (VGD) scheme, and the roll out of a national school feeding programme, both of which WFP is supporting, means that Government social safety net policy is beginning to converge in some areas with NGO-led efforts to relieve ultra-poverty and to encompass large scale feeding previously carried out by international agencies. WFP is alive to the possibilities of greater cooperation with Government in these areas and therefore of growing long term sustained institutional capacity to manage such interventions.

64. The review considered whether the refugee influx affected the sustainability of EFS. Direct impacts have come in the form of the closing off of space to undertake income generation activities in the neighbourhood of expanded camps, as well as wider changes to the well-being of beneficiary households (pressure on living space, water and firewood and security concerns). Indirect impacts come in the form of recent lower prices for livestock and labour and higher prices of everyday commodities in the shops that affect overall household budgets in the intervention districts. The context in which individual decisions were taken about livelihoods at the beginning of the project has changed markedly. There are some indications that the effects are not always to dampen enterprise: in one group visited during the review on the outskirts of the mega-camp, five beneficiaries had switched their assets into small shops. The market is adapting to meet the increased needs of a swelling refuge population.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ "Rapid market Assessment in Cox's Bazar", ACF, September 2017

EFS beneficiaries, individually and collectively, are in principle producing goods demanded by refugees. WFP and at least one agricultural officer met during the review are interested in the possibilities of a large and probably stable market on their doorstep. However, the medium term effects on beneficiaries are a matter of speculation at present. Experience elsewhere suggests that the poorest suppliers find it the most difficult to break into supply chains even when demand is increasing. A gender-sensitive market analysis would be required to inform livelihoods choices for beneficiaries in the next phase.

12. Conclusions and recommendations

65. In the new country level partnership DFAT and WFP will aim for a different sort of dialogue from the one they had over EFSN. It is unlikely that DFAT will be seeking detailed project level reporting. These conclusions therefore focus on some potential issues for dialogue across the WFP country programme arising from the EFSN experience.

66. The EFSN program has been a successful investment and an important vehicle for the closer partnership developed between DFAT and WFP over the last three years. There is ample evidence of effective outputs and good evidence of effective outcomes for the target population for some components. Evidence for the success of the income generation/behaviour change communication component of the program with ultra-poor women is stronger than for the community-based management of acute malnutrition and school feeding, but WFP is in a strong position to undertake a further phase from this year drawing on the lessons of the past three.

67. Judging by the reporting evidence so far available, the most effective component of EFSN (the EFS) was not the one on which most money was spent. As the country office moves to a greater emphasis on resourcing for results, complex programmes such as EFSN will need a stronger theory of change that links components and justifies relative allocations. *(Section 4)*

Recommendation: The Australian High Commission should maintain a dialogue with WFP over the new EFSN design as part of the new partnership based on the conclusions of this review.

68. The progress made by self-help groups in two years has been remarkable and may be a factor in the sustainability of individual livelihood outcomes. More information is needed on what has happened since programme closure, to feed thinking on the level of support required in the successor programme. Because institutional support for rural networks may not be WFP's core business, medium term support may need to be brokered from other sources. *(Sections 4 and 11)*

Recommendation: The Australian High Commission should work with WFP to ensure that the sustainability of EFS self-help groups is tracked (perhaps through the HKI contract) and lessons drawn for future interventions.

69. Some progress was made with the integration of the needs of people with disability into EFSN, but by the admission of all concerned it needs to be carried out more intentionally and from the start of any programme. *(Section 8)*

Recommendation: The Australian High Commission, drawing on DFAT resources where necessary, should continue to provide expertise and other support to WFP to define an approach to people with disability in the new programme.

70. The indicators adopted in both EFSN and the PRRO for the success of school feeding showed backward trends, although there may have been other unmeasured benefits. Further thought needs to be given as to the place of school feeding in integrated nutrition programmes and on appropriate indicators, taking into account the national drive for universal school meals that WFP is supporting. *(Section 4)*

Recommendation: the Australian High Commission, as a donor to education at the national level, should maintain a dialogue with WFP and the Government of Bangladesh on the value of school feeding in Bangladesh and appropriate measures of success.

71. WFP has developed capacity for more complex monitoring and evaluation at the country programme level and its monitoring and reporting on EFSN have been robust and comprehensive. Further potential improvements include aligning M&E responsibility more closely to programme management and making arrangements to ensure that the full story of change from complex interventions is told. *(Section 10)*

Recommendation: The Australian High Commission should encourage and support, as part of its regular dialogue with WFP, WFP's continuing development of monitoring and evaluation systems and reporting practices that are appropriate for tracking and accounting for the outcomes of the country programme.

Annex 1

FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN COX'S BAZAR, BANGLADESH

Plan for evaluation of DFAT contribution

Background

DFAT has requested an evaluation of its contribution to the EFSN programme implemented in Cox's Bazar by the World Food programme from mid-2014 to the end of 2017. The total cost of the operation has been USD28,631,701 million of which the Australian contribution has been AUD19.5 million. The remainder has been financed by UK DFID and the EU.

Initiative INK969 in Aidworks also covers a contribution to WFP's Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) covering food security in Kutupalong and Nayapara refugee camps. Although assessed as one initiative in successive DFAT annual quality checks, the PRRO is reported on separately by WFP and is a humanitarian operation parallel to the main outcomes of the EFSN. The evaluation will cover the women's empowerment and school feeding aspects of this operation.

Objective

The initiative and the partnership with WFP have been assessed by DFAT as above satisfactory during implementation. There is significant internally generated evidence of effectiveness of the EFSN programme. Australia has decided to extend its support in 2018 to the overall WFP country programme, which will include a continuation of a similar on the ground role for WFP in Cox's Bazar for the foreseeable future. The evaluation will not therefore be required to inform future policy in respect of support to WFP; nor is it intended to explore impact beyond the limits of the programme logical framework, for which more time would need to have elapsed and a wider time slice of WFP intervention would need to be taken into account. The first objective of the evaluation (accountability) is therefore:

To provide independent confirmation that the evidence used by DFAT to make judgements of effectiveness (progress towards outcomes) during implementation has been robust and comprehensive.

The move by Australia to support the totality of the WFP country programme means that a new form of partnership will need to be developed between DFAT and WFP locally, particularly as WFP itself seeks to reposition itself within the changing requirements of Bangladesh. The potential requirements for this partnership were set out in a due diligence assessment of WFP in late 2016 and have been the subject of discussion between the organisations since. Some of the risks to an effective country programme and the partnership lie in the need for capacity development within WFP Bangladesh and its ability to manage a transparent dialogue with its funding partners. The opportunity will therefore be taken in this evaluation to

examine processes of programme design, delivery, monitoring and communication within EFSN, and the direction of travel within these processes, that may be relevant to the evolution of the future partnership between DFAT and WFP. The second objective of the evaluation (knowledge generation) is:

To review processes for design, targeting, monitoring, reporting and partnership management within EFSN that are relevant to the future relationship between WFP and development partners who will contribute at country programme level from 2108.

Users

The primary users of the evaluation will be DFAT staff at the Australian High Commission in Dhaka. Secondary users will be WFP Bangladesh and DFAT staff in Canberra who manage the global partnership with WFP.

Overall approach

The evaluation will be undertaken through desk review of programme documents and reports, interviews with DFAT and WFP staff managing the Cox's Bazar programme and other specialist staff where required (including M&E and gender). A set of interviews will also be carried out in Cox's Bazar with as many implementing partners as possible, with Government of Bangladesh education and health staff and with the office of the District Commissioner. The purpose of these interviews will be to provide at least impressionistic collateral for the quantitative data generated by the programme's M&E system, and to test the current quality of partnerships managed by WFP in the district. Group discussions will be undertaken with representative beneficiaries of cash grants and with self-help and savings groups.

No primary data collection will be undertaken beyond the proposed interviews.

Limitations

The time available for work in Bangladesh is two weeks plus report writing time. This is proportionate to the confidence DFAT has in WFP as an implementing partner and is sufficient for the limited objectives set out above. The duration has also been set to avoid undue pressure on WFP at a time when it is still trying to cope with a humanitarian crisis. The limited duration will to some extent limit the flexibility to follow up emerging issues. There will be little opportunity to verify the information generated by WFP and its partners. It is expected that not all the informants requested will be available because of crisis pressures.

The review team is not staffed or resourced to comment on WFP's operational practices in Bangladesh except in the most general sense where they affect programme outcomes.

The evaluation is being carried out under pressure of time generated by Canberra deadlines and is likely to be seen as a DFAT-generated and owned exercise. It may

therefore lack the depth that a more collaborative evaluation (with other donors or with WFP itself) might have produced.

Evaluation questions

The key evaluation questions and the means to answer them will be:

Question	Means of investigation
<p>How did the partnership with WFP for supporting <i>Food Security and Nutrition in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh Program</i> (the Program) and more generally in Cox's Bazar advance DFAT's policy interests in Bangladesh?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could DFAT have achieved the same policy benefits from a more hands-off approach? 	<p>DFAT published policies for Bangladesh AQC and PPA review IDS for future partnership Interviews with AHC staff</p>
<p>Did EFSN meet its objectives for all target groups?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were parts of the programme more successful in one or more upazillas and why? • How did WFP manage the shortfall in its original funding targets to maximize benefits? • Are the benefits from EFSN recognised by GoB and NGO agencies working in the area? • Did nutrition and education interventions in the official camps have similar outcomes to interventions in the community? 	<p>Review of WFP implementation guidelines and reporting Interviews with DFAT, WFP and implementing agency staff Interviews with other contributing donors Interviews with GoB staff Group discussions with beneficiaries</p>
<p>How did the intervention demonstrate value for money?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was contributing to the EFSN programme an efficient intervention for DFAT? • What evidence of value for money did DFAT ask for and receive? • Were the elements of the programme implemented in accordance with the original plans? 	<p>Review of WFP reporting Interviews with DFAT and WFP staff</p>
<p>Did the programme target women appropriately?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the programme adopt appropriate strategies to identify potential outcomes for women? • Was the programme implemented so as to maximise outcomes for women? • Did the food voucher system in the official camps contribute to women's ability to make decisions for their household? 	<p>Review of programme policy documents and reporting Interviews with WFP and implementing agency staff</p>
<p>Were monitoring, evaluation and learning adequate for the scale of the intervention?</p>	<p>Review of logframe and WFP reporting</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the M&E capture the outcomes and a range of changes, quantitative and qualitative, for beneficiaries? • Were regular monitoring and evaluation and the base and end line studies a proportionate effort for the intervention? • Was M&E used to communicate and reflect on results with partners? 	Interviews with WFP and implementing agency staff
<p>How well did WFP manage the programme?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did WFP respond to changing circumstances? • Did WFP deploy the range of skills and numbers of personnel necessary to meet program objectives? • How well did WFP identify, create and maintain implementing partnerships? 	<p>Review of WFP reporting</p> <p>Interviews with DFAT and WFP staff</p> <p>Interviews with implementing partners</p>
<p>How did WFP perform as a DFAT partner?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did WFP's communication with its donors meet DFAT requirements? • To what extent did the program consider DFAT's cross-cutting priorities? 	<p>Review of DFAT cross cutting policies and WFP reporting</p> <p>Interviews with DFAT staff</p>

Confidentiality

No respondents will be identified by name in any evaluation reporting. It will be made clear at the start of all interviews that the information provided will be combined with other data to ensure that individual views will not be identified.

Gender specialist responsibilities

The gender specialist will contribute across the range of evaluation questions, but will be specifically responsible for collecting data and forming judgements on the set of questions above related to women. She will also contribute to analysis of the M&E systems and of WFP's partnerships, and provide advice on WFP's wider effectiveness in matters of social inclusion.

Timing and use

Interviews will be carried out in Dhaka 7-9 January and in Cox's Bazar 10-11 and 14-17 January. If possible a feedback session will be arranged for DFAT and WFP at the end of the in-country mission to ensure that the main lines of evidence are accepted and that recommendations if any are feasible. A draft report will be provided to DFAT by end February.

To maximise usefulness of the report for DFAT and WFP, recommendations will focus on actions that WFP and DFAT can take together in the framework of their new partnership.

Annex 2

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Background reports and evaluations

- WFP, Sustainability Assessment of the Impacts of the Food Security for the Ultra Poor (FSUP) Project implemented by WFP in North-West Bangladesh, 2016
- WFP, Bangladesh School Feeding Impact Evaluation, 2011
- WFP, The Contribution of Food Assistance to Durable Solutions in Protracted Refugee Situations; its impact and role in Bangladesh: A Mixed Method Impact Evaluation, 2012
- WFP and UNHCR, Joint Assessment Mission, Myanmar Refugees in Cox's Bazar District, Bangladesh, 2013

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- Action Against Hunger, Rapid Market Assessment, 2017
- Adnan S and Huda K, Formative Evaluation Report, WFP and AusAID, 2013
- Helen Keller International, Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition (EFSN) Programme in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, Baseline Report, 2016
- Helen Keller International, Enhancing Food Security and Nutrition (EFSN) Programme in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, Midline Report, 2017
- Himel F, Analysis Of Income Generating Opportunities For Beneficiaries Under WFP's Enhancing Food Security And Nutrition Programme (EFS), WFP, 2015
- Jahan F and others, Analysis of Poverty and Food Insecurity Dynamics in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, and their Implications for Women and Adolescent Girls, WFP, 2015
- Oxfam, Rapid Protection, Food Security and Market Assessment, 2017
- Rouf A and others, Livelihoods in the Teknaf-Ukhia Peninsula, Baseline Assessment, WFP 2017
- WFP, EFSN Program Design, 2014

Program reports

- DFAT, Annual Quality Checks 2016-2018
- WFP, Standard project reports, 2015 and 2016
- WFP, EFSN Annual Narrative Report, 2016
- WFP, EFSN lessons learned workshop, 2017

Program operational documents

- Registration Guideline
- Roles and Responsibilities Guideline
- SOP for Cash Transfer
- BCC Guideline
- Communications matrix and activities plan