

Ex post evaluation – Yemen



Sector: Basic nutrition (CRS code: 12240)
Project: Basic nutrition / Mother and child health I (BMZ no. 2013 65 253*), Basic nutrition / Mother and child health II (BMZ no. 2013 67 259*)
Implementing agency: World Food Programme (WFP)



Ex post evaluation report: 2017

		Project I (planned)	Project I (actual)	Project II (planned)	Project II (actual)
Investment costs (total)	USD million	33.97**	32.35	13.61**	3.39
Counterpart contribution	USD million	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Funding	USD million	33.97	32.35	13.61	3.39
of which BMZ budget funds	USD million	33.97***	32.35*****	13.61****	3.39*****

*) Programme in the 2017 random sample, **) The budgeted costs for the Emergency Operation (EMOP) 200451 and Development Operation (DEV) 200432 were USD 251.01 million; information regarding the actual final costs is not available. ***) EUR 25 million, ****) According to exchange rate corrections, EUR 10 million was equivalent to USD 13.61 million *****) Residual funds transferred to Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) 200636.

Summary: The programmes co-financed components of WFP's emergency relief project "Emergency food and nutrition support to feed insecure and conflict-affected people" (EMOP 200451). Under programme I, the co-financed components included the seasonal urgent relief system (distribution of basic foodstuffs) and the distribution of preventive rations of nutritional supplements and curative special rations. Programme II was earmarked for the seasonal urgent relief system (distribution of basic foodstuffs and cash transfers). Programme I also co-funded the girls' education programme "Food Assistance to Promote Girls' Education" DEV 200432, which distributed food rations to school girls and their families. Flour and oil were subsequently handed out on the proviso that girls attended school on a regular basis. Following completion of the two WFP programmes in June 2014, the residual funds were transferred to WFP's follow-up programme "Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation" PRRO 200636.

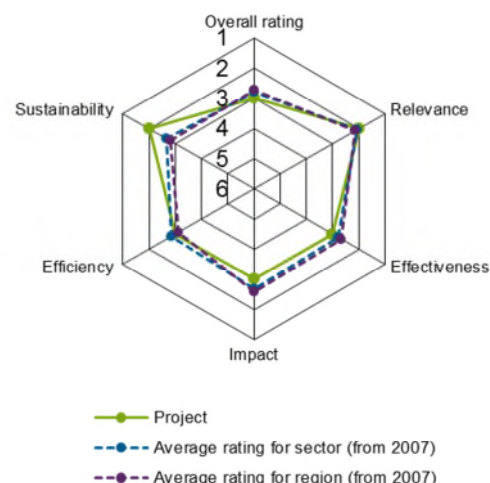
Objectives: The programmes' developmental goal was to contribute to alleviating the worst effects of the food crisis (impact). The programme's objective was to contribute to improvements of the target group's nutritional situation over the short term (outcome).

Target group: Pregnant and breastfeeding women, babies and toddlers (aged 6-23 months) and children under the age of 5 in the governorates affected by food shortages. Girls' education programme: Girls in primary and secondary school.

Overall rating: 3 (both projects)

Rationale: As both programmes were characterised by the provision of urgent relief, they had limited sustainability requirements (Emergency procedure for natural catastrophes, crises and conflicts in accordance with TC 47 of the FC-TC Guidelines). The programmes had a high relevance in the humanitarian emergency situation. WFP possessed sufficient flexibility to apply the most urgently needed measures. While the effects of the nutritional components of programme I failed to meet expectations in terms of prevention and treatment of malnutrition, it is plausible that both programmes' contribution to the distribution of basic foodstuffs and to the seasonal urgent relief system and programme I's contribution to the girls' education programme helped to stabilise the nutritional situation.

Highlights: By co-financing the girls' education programme, the urgent relief programme was also tied to the German development cooperation's focus on education in Yemen. The use of WFP's forward purchase facility to procure food made it possible to respond quickly during the humanitarian crisis.



Rating according to DAC criteria

Overall rating: 3 (both projects)

General conditions and classification of the projects

Programme I co-financed the following components of WFP's Emergency Operation EMOP 200451: (1) Urgent relief system: Distribution of individual food packages to households seriously affected by insecurity of food supply, and (2) Nutritional component: Allocation of special complete rations to moderately malnourished under 5s and pregnant and breastfeeding women. The nutritional component included both preventive measures for babies and toddlers under the age of 2, as well as curative measures for under 5s and pregnant and breastfeeding women with moderate acute malnutrition. Programme I also co-financed the girls' education programme Development Project DEV 200432. As part of this programme, food rations were distributed to girls in primary and secondary school, provided that they attended at least 80% of school periods since the start of the school year in the preceding period under review.

The follow-up programme II exclusively supported the component urgent relief system of the EMOP 200451, which, alongside the distribution of food, also included cash transfers for purchasing food.

Both programmes primarily promoted the distribution of food rations (in both projects via the urgent relief components of EMOP and the urgent food relief in the follow-up programme PRRO 200636 (Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation), which was the recipient of the residual funds. Programme I also promoted food distribution via the girls' education programme).

To factor in the emergency character, the five DAC criteria were expanded on the basis of the assessment framework used in the joint evaluation by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Federal Foreign Office (AA) "German Humanitarian Aid Abroad" (2011). The criterion of relevance was expanded to include appropriateness, the criterion of effectiveness was widened to include an assessment of coverage, and the criterion of sustainability was assessed in terms of suitability for continuation in longer-term measures oriented towards development.

Yemen is characterized by chronic poverty and under-development, population growth rates are high, and the country's economic situation has continued to deteriorate over recent years. The agricultural sector is no longer able to sustain the population, meaning that 90% of food now has to be imported. In 2012, 45% of the population did not have a secure supply of food; in 2014, this figure was 41% before rising as high as 54% in December 2016. In the Food Security Index, Yemen ranked 83 out of 105 countries in 2012 and 100 out of 113 countries in 2016. Yemen is an exceptionally fragile country, which was impacted by the escalation of a domestic conflict into full civil war over the course of the programme period. In March 2015, a Saudi Arabian-led military alliance joined pro-government troops in an attempt to take down the rebels. The situation has yet to be resolved. The FC measures focused on improving the population's nutritional situation in 2014 and were not geared towards dealing with the conflict or promoting peace. The "do-no-harm" principle was taken into account when distributing food and the weak state structures were involved in the project's implementation wherever possible.

Relevance

Securing a sufficient supply of food for the Yemeni population has been a problem for many years. This can be traced back to limited space for agriculture (which still manages to take up a large part of the **scarce** water supply), low levels of rainfall and **diminishing** water resources **in combination with** high population growth. Following the escalation of the tense security situation in 2011, food prices rose sharply and the supply chain suffered from disruptions. This in turn led to a stark increase in the number of Yemenis living in extreme poverty and suffering from hunger. In response to the country's humanitarian crisis, the Yemeni government prioritised the expansion of humanitarian aid for at-risk population groups as part of its transitional programme for stabilisation and development. Furthermore, it developed a national strategy for food supply security, which included a plan of action for reducing the insecurity of food supply and malnutrition among children. In light of the ongoing problems of widespread hunger and acute undernutrition, nutritional support as emergency measure was deemed appropriate over the entire term of the FC co-financing package.

The selection of WFP as the direct implementing agency was plausible as it is the leading **humanitarian organisation** working in Yemen **with** experience in providing nutritional support and existing structures **in place**. It was also involved in the programme's direct predecessor, which was also co-financed through the Financial Cooperation. **There was also a close coordination** with the other donors, including USAID, Japan, Canada and the EU. By liaising with the Ministry of Planning, the programme could also be tied into the national strategy for tackling the food crisis. Seasonal food packages were distributed to beneficiaries of the Social Welfare Fund (SWF1) in 13 governorates while preventive and curative rations of nutritional supplements were provided to beneficiaries in 10 governorates. As the recipients were selected on the basis of poverty data instead of data concerning food insecurity, there was a risk that the programmes failed to reach those most in need.

The FC funds in programme I were earmarked for the girls' education programme and certain components, target groups and activities under the EMOP. Support for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and cash transfers were ruled out. Nevertheless, there was still enough flexibility to respond to changes, including regarding the regions selected. Programme II was restricted to the seasonal urgent relief system under the EMOP.²

The earmarking of some of the FC funds was based on corresponding shortfalls for WFP operations and the German Federal Government's political priorities related to its commitment to mother and child health care, which it made at the G8 Summit in Huntsville, Canada, in 2010. Yemen has one of the world's highest prevalence of malnutrition among children. Data collected for the WFP Country Food Security Survey 2012 (CFSS) reveals that women suffering from malnutrition have a higher risk of giving birth to underweight children. The co-financing of the girls' education programme under programme I addressed this core problem. The financing of preventive measures through comprehensive nutritional supplements for children also aimed to prevent malnutrition at an early stage.

WFP used local structures like the SWF and decentralised healthcare facilities and schools to implement the programme. The implementation concept was therefore suitable for addressing the core problem at short notice, taking the underlying framework conditions and risks into account.

Relevance rating: 2 (both projects)

Effectiveness

For the evaluation, the two programmes' project objective was adapted according to the requirements for humanitarian emergency relief: To make a short-term contribution to improving the target group's nutritional situation.

EMOP 200451 was set up to be implemented over 12 months until December 2013; the girls' education programme was planned for 24 months until June 2015. In reality, both programmes ended in June 2014 and the activities were continued under the follow-up programme PRRO 200636. The programmes' residual funds and the leftover food were transferred to this WFP programme in accordance with WFP project cycles. The majority of these funds and food was used for urgent food relief up to December 2014.

The target group addressed by the EMOP programme co-financed by both programmes covered some 4.3 million people. The target group of the two-year girls' education programme covered up to 100,000 girls in governorates that were particularly affected by an insecure food supply and gender inequality.

Programme I: The size of the target groups of the food component remained below planned figures and could not be reached for babies and toddlers under 2 in particular, as well as pregnant and breastfeeding mothers. A total of 144,685 people in need were reached (planned: 264,850 people). The results show that primarily the preventive nutritional measures failed to meet their targets. This can be partly attributed to a lack of understanding among parents regarding the importance of enriched food supplements. Over-

¹ The SWF was set up in 1996 to support poor households with cash transfers during times of crisis. In response to the food crisis that has afflicted the country since 2008, the number of SWF beneficiaries was expanded with the goal of supporting all households living below the poverty line with the most urgently needed funds. The World Bank and the EU in particular supported the SWF reform process to improve the coverage, selection mechanisms and impact of SWF programmes. On account of the precarious status of the Yemeni budget, the SWF has been unable to pay out any funds since 2014.⁴ Data is only available for the year 2014 as a whole and not for the specific financing period of the FC measures.

all, the achievement of food component targets also suffered from the generally poor use of healthcare facilities by the target group and delays to stock replenishments resulting from a lack of acceptance by the Ministry of Public Health. In an attempt to still increase the coverage of the food component, additional partnerships were formed with NGOs. The fact that healthcare facilities are rarely used was identified as early as the programme conception phase, which is why plans included the use of mobile clinics. As these were not actually introduced on an extensive scale, this aspect of the programme is to be assessed as negative. The urgent relief system's ability to reach households in need of extra support is seen as more successful. When the first round of food packages was distributed in May and June 2014, the programme was able to reach a total of 2.8 million people in need. The girls' education programme reached 100,000 girls as planned, rising as high as 700,000 people when we count the members of their households despite the delays. In order to reach the target group size, additional schools had to be added to the programme as fewer girls were registered at each school than expected. Just 73% of the target group was reached at secondary schools.

Programme II: Programme II was mainly implemented in the second half of 2014. It co-financed the activities under the urgent relief system until early 2015.³ As cash transfers could only be implemented in regions with effective markets, money could only be sent to just under 400,000 people in need. The advanced structure-building measures (food-for-assets) included in the original plans were only implemented to a limited extent.

Both programmes: It is worth noting that WFP's support was originally intended to supplement the state's activities with the SWF. However, from the first half of 2014 onwards, it was the only source of support. The proportion of households with an acceptable food consumption score – WFP's indicator for the security of food supply – was 41.7% at the end of the programme in 2014 and therefore 3.9 percentage points above the starting level in April 2013 but 2.3 points below the level in July 2013. These fluctuations reveal the difficulties in assessing the target achievement of short-term urgent relief measures in a volatile environment. It is also important to consider the proportion of households with a low food consumption score, which fell sharply by 12.2 percentage points. Consequently, it can be concluded that the measures made a short-term contribution to improving the food situation.

In 2014, WFP conducted its first analysis of data from the joint food data system that had been set up in selected governorates and covered 71% of the healthcare facilities supported by WFP. The data reveal that, at 56.2%, the recovery rate was far below the international standard of 75%, even though the rate had improved by 17.8 percentage points since the launch of the programme. Likewise, the failure rate of 42.3% was much higher than the standard of 15%. The food components' contribution to preventing and treating moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) therefore remained far below expectations. According to WFP, one possible explanation for this outcome is that the population's awareness of the importance of preventing and treating moderate acute malnutrition was far lower than its awareness of severe acute malnutrition. Programmes for treating severe acute malnutrition at health stations (which implemented programmes for treating and preventing both moderate and severe acute malnutrition) were much more successful. Poor participation rates resulting from quality deficits can be ruled out.

No negative secondary effects, such as market price distortions caused by the distribution of additional rations, have been assumed as the majority of special rations were procured internationally.

The attainment of the project objectives defined during the project appraisal (PA) can be summarised as follows for both programmes:

Indicator	Status and target value PA	End of project ⁴
(1) Treatment success, measured by recovery rate (MAM)	Target value: > 75%	56.2%
(2) Treatment success, measured by failure rate (MAM)	Target value: < 15%	42.3%

⁴ Data is only available for the year 2014 as a whole and not for the specific financing period of the FC measures.

(3) Proportion of households with an acceptable food consumption score.	Status as of April 2013: 37.8%	41.7%
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Based on the information available, the two programmes' target achievement remained below expectations. A limited yet positive contribution is plausible, particularly when considering the deterioration of the situation in the second half of 2014. During the programmes' implementation period, WFP continuously adapted its output to the changing requirements and options available, for example, by introducing the pilot food-for-assets components, re-prioritising regions, and distributing urgent food relief at short notice when the security situation severely deteriorated at the end of 2014. The effectiveness is therefore assessed as satisfactory.

Effectiveness rating: 3 (both projects)

Efficiency

The programmes' cost structure is assessed as satisfactory overall based on the ever-deteriorating situation. There were and still are no alternative organisations that could logistically deal with similar volumes of funds in terms of covering acute food requirements in far-reaching crises. WFP took 7% of the German contribution to cover its administrative costs. Overall, around 86% of the German contribution could be used for food and cash support, including the associated transport and provision costs. The remaining funds were used for administrative costs, WFP's project-related costs in the country, and miscellaneous costs. From the target group's perspective, the cost efficiency of the various forms of transfer depends heavily on the situation in the local markets. An analysis carried out by WFP in 2012 showed that the distribution of food packages can be more cost-efficient than cash transfers if prices on the accessible markets are very high⁵. Due to the volatile exchange rates, very high prices on the markets and poor access to markets, the tool of cash transfers was used only to a limited extent.

The reduction of procurement times is critical to the success of effective crisis response. To prevent gaps in supply, WFP used its internal forward purchase facility, which was refinanced by the committed donor contributions. The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development issued special approval for this instrument to be used for the FC measures. This enabled the first goods to be delivered as early as February 2014 because WFP was able to start the tendering process in advance. Furthermore, WFP set up emergency reserves using its own global goods management system. However, there were delays to the procurement and provision of special food packages for the food component under programme I, which was a factor behind its limited effectiveness.

Synergies could be established thanks to cooperation with the Yemeni SWF and use of existing selection mechanisms and distribution structures. It is important to highlight the positive effect of training sessions provided for teachers in the fields of moderate acute malnutrition treatment and nutritional management.

Based on the knowledge available both at the time and at present, the measures applied were the only option available. Due to the volatile security situation, some of the programmes' activities designed to increase efficiency could not be implemented.

Efficiency rating: 3 (both projects)

Impact

The FC programmes were geared primarily towards a short-term improvement of the nutritional situation. The urgent food relief measures were expected to contribute to alleviating the worst effects of the food crisis (impact).

For both programmes, the reduction of the prevalence of acute undernutrition among children under 5 in the target group was defined as an indicator for measuring the impacts. The last comprehensive collection and analysis of data was performed as part of the WFP Comprehensive Food Security Survey 2014 (CFSS 2014). Measurements took place in February and March 2014. However, the FC funds were not

⁵ The WFP analysis was named in WFP's financing proposal for EMOP 200451 without providing an explicit source.

available to the WFP programmes until the start of 2014. They were implemented throughout the year 2014. A comparison cannot be carried out with a project-related baseline as only one comparative figure from 2011 is available. However, plausibility assessments can be carried out. The impacts of the two FC programmes cannot be separated due to the data situation.

On a national scale, the prevalence of acute undernutrition ("wasting") among children under 5 has remained almost unchanged since 2011 at 13% and fell by just 0.3 percentage points by 2014. While the prevalence decreased by 2.7 percentage points in urban areas, it increased by 0.6 percentage points in rural regions. There were distinct regional differences. A positive effect from 2011 onwards was determined in 8 of the 13 governorates that received seasonal food packages. Most of these governorates are located in temperate highlands. The situation was found to have deteriorated mainly in governorates on the central plateau, which received very little humanitarian support due to the ongoing conflict.

On a nationwide scale, the prevalence of people with chronic undernutrition and underweight has fallen by 4 to 6 percentage points since 2011. However, the figures for chronic undernutrition (41.3%) and undernutrition (31.5%) remained very high as a whole.

Particularly when considering the nationwide deterioration of the situation (including the months after data was collected), it is plausible that the provision of food contributed to the short-term alleviation of the worst effects of the food crisis at the time at the individual level of recipients in the target regions. It is also plausible that this measure helped to improve the humanitarian situation. The impact is therefore rated as satisfactory.

Impact rating: 3 (both projects)

Sustainability

Because the two programmes were characterised by the provision of urgent relief (Emergency procedure for natural catastrophes, crises and conflicts in accordance with TC 47 in the FC-TC Guidelines), they had limited sustainability requirements.

Programme I was designed to also co-finance special initiatives with the aim of improving WFP programmes in future and reinforcing sustainability. Among other things, plans included examining options for producing special foods in Yemen, which could have later led to local production, as well as looking at options for improving monitoring through mobile and remote data transmission systems. Due to the worsening of the security situation, however, these activities could not be carried out. The girls' education programme also included training measures for government staff and employees from partner organisations to help increase capacities. At the end of 2014, the activities under the girls' education programme were generally re-prioritised in favour of urgent food relief. Nevertheless, the programme helped to establish good relationships between schools and girls, meaning that a certain degree of sustainability can be expected in relation to school attendance in future.

Under **programme II**, the planned cash transfers (some of which could be implemented) had the potential to enable the beneficiaries to improve their nutritional situation over the long term. This equally applies to the resilience-promoting food-for-assets component. However, the cash-for-food measures were only implemented to a limited extent and the food-for-assets component was not co-financed by the FC programmes. The distribution of food was supplemented by information campaigns in order to encourage the target group to participate in local programmes related to social affairs, health and education.

Both programmes aimed to involve state structures as far as possible, which enabled the issue of nutrition to be embedded further into state work. Better integrability of the measures was hardly possible due to factors such as the security situation and the fact that scarce resources were prioritised for distributing urgent food relief.

Sustainability therefore was in line with the expectations for urgent relief measures.

Sustainability rating: 2 (both projects)

Notes on the methods used to evaluate project success (project rating)

Projects (and programmes) are evaluated on a six-point scale, the criteria being **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency** and **overarching developmental impact**. The ratings are also used to arrive at a **final assessment** of a project's overall developmental efficacy. The scale is as follows:

Level 1	Very good result that clearly exceeds expectations
Level 2	Good result, fully in line with expectations and without any significant shortcomings
Level 3	Satisfactory result – project falls short of expectations but the positive results dominate
Level 4	Unsatisfactory result – significantly below expectations, with negative results dominating despite discernible positive results
Level 5	Clearly inadequate result – despite some positive partial results, the negative results clearly dominate
Level 6	The project has no impact or the situation has actually deteriorated

Rating levels 1-3 denote a positive assessment or successful project while rating levels 4-6 denote a negative assessment.

Sustainability is evaluated according to the following four-point scale:

Sustainability level 1 (very good sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to continue undiminished or even increase.

Sustainability level 2 (good sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline only minimally but remain positive overall. (This is what can normally be expected).

Sustainability level 3 (satisfactory sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project (positive to date) is very likely to decline significantly but remain positive overall. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability of a project is considered inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation but is very likely to evolve positively so that the project will ultimately achieve positive developmental efficacy.

Sustainability level 4 (inadequate sustainability): The developmental efficacy of the project is inadequate up to the time of the ex post evaluation and is very unlikely to improve. This rating is also assigned if the sustainability that has been positively evaluated to date is very likely to deteriorate severely and no longer meet the level 3 criteria.

The **overall rating** on the six-point scale is compiled from a weighting of all five individual criteria as appropriate to the project in question. Rating levels 1-3 of the overall rating denote a "successful" project while rating levels 4-6 denote an "unsuccessful" project. It should be noted that a project can generally be considered developmentally "successful" only if the achievement of the project objective ("effectiveness"), the impact on the overall objective ("overarching developmental impact") and the sustainability are rated at least "satisfactory" (level 3).