

EU FOOD FACILITY FINAL EVALUATION

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**The opinions expressed in this document represent the views of the authors, which
are not necessarily shared by the European Commission or by the authorities of the
countries concerned.**

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Acronyms

Acronyms	Meaning
ACP	Africa Caribbean and Pacific countries
AFSI	L'Aquila Food Security Initiative
BS	Budget Support
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program
CAP	Common Agriculture Policy
CFP	Calls for Proposals
CFS	Committee for World Food Security
CNA	Country Needs Assessment
CRIS	Common RELEX Information System
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
DEVCO	Directorate General for Development and Cooperation
EEAS	European External Action Service
EC	European Community
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
EDF	European Development Fund
EP	European Parliament
EQs	Evaluation Questions
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
EU FF	European Union Food Facility
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FFTF	Food Facility Task Force
FPC	Food Price Crisis
FS	Food Security
FSS	Food Security Situation
FSTP	Food Security Thematic Programme
GAFFSP	Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme
GBS	General Budget Support
GIEWS	Global Information and Early Warning System
GPAFSN	Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition

Acronyms	Meaning
HLPE	High Level Panel of Experts
HPIC	Heavily Indebted Poor Country
HLTF	High Level Task Force
HQ	Headquarters
IFAD	International Food and Agriculture Development Agency
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IO	International Organisation
ISFP	Initiative on Soaring Food Prices
LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MS	Member State
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIP	National Indicative Programme
NSA	Non-State Actor
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development / Development Assistance Committee (DAC)
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
RD	Rural Development
RG	Reference Group
RO	Regional Organisation
ROM	Results-Oriented Monitoring
SACO	Safège COWI Consortium
SBS	Sector Budget Support
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNHLTF	United Nations High Level Task Force
WB	World Bank

1. Executive summary

Purpose of the evaluation

The current evaluation assesses the European Union Food Facility (Regulation 1337/2008) as an instrument and the European Commission's cooperation activities under this instrument over the period 2008 to 2011. The geographical scope includes all 49 countries where Food Facility funded activities were undertaken¹. The objective of the evaluation was to ascertain whether the objectives have been met, to enable the formulation of conclusions based on objective, credible, reliable and valid findings and to formulate recommendations with a view to improving relevant future development cooperation operations.

Background to the evaluation

The volatility of food prices and agricultural inputs in 2007 and 2008 put numerous developing countries and their populations in a dramatic situation and put the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at risk. Moreover, the rising prices have resulted in riots, unrest and instability in several countries, jeopardising the achievements of years of political development and peacekeeping investments. This Food Price Crisis (FPC) demanded short-medium term action from the international community, in order to mitigate its effects on the poor in developing countries.

The FAO launched its Initiative on Soaring Food Prices (ISFP) in December 2007, in response to the urgent needs of the most vulnerable people faced with skyrocketing prices and difficult choices. In April 2008, the Chief Executives Board (CEB) of the United Nations established a High-Level Task Force (UNHETF) on the Global Food Crisis, under the leadership of the UN Secretary-General. The UNHETF proposed a unified response to the FPC and a global strategy and action plan, the so-called Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA).

The FAO High-Level Conference on World Food Security in June 2008 called on the international community to increase its assistance to developing countries. This call was echoed by the G8+ Summit in Japan the following month, where the President of the European Commission announced the Commission's intention to propose a quick response 'Facility' of 1 bn EUR to diminish the effects of the ongoing FPC.

The first EU intervention decisions made in 2008 to mitigate the Food Price Crisis originated from existing EC instruments: the EDF-B envelope (185.9 million EUR), FSTP (50 million EUR) and ECHO (210 million EUR). However, the amount made available or reallocated through these existing instruments was insufficient to address the financial requirements for responding to the FPC. On 16 December 2008, the European Parliament and the Council adopted the Regulation, establishing a "facility for rapid response to soaring food prices in developing countries" (this was to become the European Union Food Facility - EU FF). Operating over a 3-year period from 2009-2011, the fund was intended to bridge the gap between emergency aid and medium to long-term development aid. Its primary objectives were to: i) encourage food producers to increase supply in targeted countries and regions; ii) support activities to respond rapidly and directly to mitigate the negative effects of volatile food prices on local populations in line with global food security objectives, including UN standards for nutritional requirements; and iii) strengthen the productive capacities and governance of the agricultural sector so as to enhance the sustainability of interventions.

The 1 bn EUR EU FF was planned and designed with a view to complementing existing EU policies and strategies in the field of Food Security over a three-year period. Fifty-seven percent of the total budget was channelled through UN agencies and the World Bank, while the remainder was disbursed through budget support, non-state actors, member states agencies and regional organisations.

Methodology of the evaluation

The evaluation approach is based on a reconstruction of the intervention logic and is structured around ten evaluation questions, with corresponding judgment criteria and indicators. These evaluation questions are linked to the five DAC evaluation criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability),

¹ The EU FF regulation 1337/2008 laid down the requirement to carry out appropriate external evaluation of the activities carried out under the regulation. An external final evaluation was launched in May 2011.

coherence, EC added value and to a number of other key issues. Answers to individual evaluation questions were found, and overall conclusions reached, through an approach consisting of; i) an overall inventory and typology of the interventions financed under the EU FF; ii) the collection of information from all 232 interventions financed during the desk study phase; iii) field visits to 12 of the beneficiary countries; iv) the analysis of surveys completed by the EU Delegations; v) a consultation of all available project documents; vi) studies of 231 ROM reports; and vii) interviews with stakeholders from the EC HQ and FAO, UNHCT, EU delegations, and viii) project level interviews and focus groups.²

Main Findings³ related to the EU FF as an instrument

The EC, through its decision to support the coordinated international response to the FPC, has brought food security and rural development at the forefront of its own development cooperation agenda and of the international development agenda. In addition, the EC has gained significant visibility through the implementation of the EU FF, thus strengthening its leading role in the international response.

The creation of the EU FF was the sole means at the disposal of the Commission to rapidly commit a substantial volume of funds to the agricultural and food security sectors in countries affected by the FPC. By creating a “specific instrument” in response to the FPC, agricultural development and food security were brought to the forefront of the EC's development cooperation and the international development agenda⁴. This achievement would not have been accomplished by simply increasing funding through existing instruments, which have a far more limited visibility.

The EU FF enabled the rapid increase in the overall volume of funds directed through EU cooperation to the agricultural and rural sector as part of a coordinated international response to the food price crisis. Although the EU re-deployed other instruments in response to the crisis, these were not sufficiently flexible enough or lacked the sufficient funding to allow the necessary response to the crisis. So, the creation of a specific instrument was necessary.

The instrument provided a rapid response to the crisis and allowed the EU to conduct a dialogue in global fora and with partner countries. The announcement that the EU would contribute 1 bn EUR towards the L'Aquila commitments, whereby countries would seek to mobilise 22 bn USD (14.3 bn EUR), strengthened these commitments, afforded a high visibility to the EU and made it a leader in the accomplishment of this initiative.

At the instrument level, substantial resources were attributed with a reduced administrative burden for important interventions.

The EU FF is fully coherent with the Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security and supports the pillars of Food Security⁵ in countries affected by the FPC, however, support is concentrated on triggering a supply response from the small-holder farming sector.

² The Inception Phase reported on the intervention logic of the Commission and developed evaluation questions together with their associated indicators and justification criteria. The inception report presented the methodology proposed to conduct the evaluation of the 232 projects of the EU FF. During the Desk Phase the team analysed the projects of the EU FF according to the methodology proposed in the Inception Report. The EU FF projects were evaluated using the Country Assessments, Action Fiches, Project documents, ROM and Progress reports as the primary sources of information. Two questionnaires were prepared by the review team to be sent to the EU Delegations (EUD) during the desk phase. The process took longer than planned and the results were not available in time for the desk phase but were included during the synthesis phase. To complement the answers to the EQs, 15 Hypotheses were defined for testing during the field visits in order to complement the information obtained during the desk analysis. Twelve countries were selected according to a set of criteria defined in the Inception Report. Following the field visit in these countries, the replies to hypotheses were synthesised for the 12 countries visited and approved by the RG. During the synthesis the results from the desk phase and the field visits were combined together with the results of surveys completed by the EU Delegations in the beneficiary countries and further final reports completed by UN organisations to reach the final findings, conclusions and recommendations.

³ Findings presented in the executive summary are the main and most important findings of the evaluation. Further findings of a more operational nature and of lesser relevance to the instrument are given in the text of the report.

⁴ The share of ODA devoted to agriculture reached a level of 19 percent in 1980, but fell to 3.8 percent in 2006. However it seems that this trend is slightly reversing.

⁵ Concept of Food Security: Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. The four pillars of food security are availability, access, utilization and stability. The nutritional dimension is integral to the concept of food security (Source: FAO World Summit on Food Security, 16-18.11.2009)

The EU FF instrument enjoyed a high flexibility for intervention, which translated into interventions across a wide range of activities. The main share of interventions financed under the EU FF sought to increase the availability of food through an intensification of production by small-holders. The other pillars of Food Security (access to quality food/nutrition) were also tackled by some of the interventions but to a lesser extent.

There is a broad consistency and coherence between EU FF interventions, EC instruments and other donors' interventions. Coordination was also satisfactory. In fact, the EU FF is fully in line with the Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security and the Paris Declaration.

The EU FF was programmed as a short to medium-term instrument and its activities were concentrated in short-term support.

The EU FF was programmed as a short to medium-term instrument in order to act as a bridge between emergency and long-term development, even though by 2008 it was expected that food prices would remain volatile in the mid-term. Due to the short time period available, the interventions concentrated on promoting resilience and reducing the effects of the FPC on the most affected groups. However, the underlying causes (both natural and man-made) of food insecurity in target countries remain out of the scope of the EU FF. Although there are no plans for continuing the EU FF with another instrument at this stage, a number of projects financed under the EU FF have benefitted or will benefit from further financing under long-term instruments (FSTP, EDF).

The selection of countries benefitting from the EU FF was based on a set of criteria defined in the appendix to the regulation, however, not all targeted countries were the "most affected" by the FPC and the large number of beneficiary countries resulted in a dispersion of efforts.

The choice of partner countries benefitting from the EU FF was made according to a set of criteria laid down in the appendix to the regulation. Initially, the proposal was to work in 35 countries but this was increased to a final 50 countries in the regulation adopted by European Parliament. All countries chosen met the set criteria: many countries were strongly hit by the FPC, whilst other countries with advanced food security measures already in place, found these were jeopardised by the FPC. In these countries, the support provided under the EU FF helped national policy-makers to continue the implementation of their national measures, despite the FPC (e.g. Jamaica, Malawi).

The establishment of the EU FF within a timeframe of only 10 months and the management of the implementation process demonstrated the high efficiency of all participating institutions.

To establish the EU FF within a timeframe of only 10 months involved enormous preparatory work and inter-institutional coordination, thus the achievement of the creation of the Facility in this short time frame can be considered a considerable success.

The EC HQ and EUDs demonstrated a very efficient management of the EU FF. Less than 2% of the EU FF funds were used for EC administrative support. The recruitment of additional contractual agents under the EU FF permitted an adequate follow-up and coordination of interventions.

The use of UN organisations, many of them with a presence in the target countries and with well-established direct relations to the Ministry of Agriculture, facilitated the identification of interventions.

The initial programming of interventions was carried out on the basis of a Country Needs Assessments (CNAs) performed by UN organisations. These CNAs revealed the extent of the crisis and proposed responses in each country. However, CNAs were somewhat limited by their lack of involvement with other key stakeholders and by not considering Non-State Actors (NSAs) and Budget Support (BS) as possible channels of support.

Interventions financed under the EU FF were effective in both mitigating the effects of the FPC on the direct beneficiaries of the interventions and in promoting resilience within these populations.

The support provided corresponded to the needs of the beneficiaries. The FPC has caused or aggravated the food insecurity in target countries. Although the support provided under the EU FF arrived some months after the peak in global food prices, it did arrive in time to deal with the effects of this crisis and tackle food insecurity. Nevertheless, it reached a limited proportion of the vulnerable population at the target country

level. This leads to the question: to what extent was fragmentation between a large number of countries and implementing partners justified or would it have been more effective to concentrate efforts in fewer countries through a better sectoral and geographical division of labour with other partners?

The EU FF was completed in 2012 when all the interventions financed were closed administratively speaking. Although food prices remain high and the overall food security situation in many countries has not improved, no new interventions can be financed. Whilst resilience has been achieved with direct beneficiaries of EU FF interventions and in countries with a favourable context, there could still be a need for financing other interventions on an ad-hoc basis where needed (in addition to emergency support which can be provided by ECHO).

Main findings related to interventions financed under the EU FF

Interventions financed under the EU FF were in line with the capacities and strategies of the targeted countries and regions, and corresponded to the needs of the targeted beneficiaries. Most interventions promoted a supply response from the small-holder farming sector.

The interventions financed focused on triggering a supply response from the small-holder farming sector, and were thus important for poverty reduction. However, this strategy did not encourage a positive supply response beyond direct beneficiaries. There was a predominance of interventions related to agricultural and local development, but only a few interventions were in favour of the urban population or focused on tackling nutrition (food consumption).

The delays in starting activities at the field level were frequent, however, in most cases these had been recovered by the end of the project. Efficiency of implementation varied greatly according to country, project and implementation channel.

The quality of management of interventions through implementing partners and the coordination of activities with national governments and EUDs was generally good. About 60% of the interventions financed were upgrades of existing projects, thus enabling a quicker start-up of activities at the field level. Thus, about 75% of all projects were implemented without significant delays. However, because of the pace of planning many projects (notably 50% of those from IOs) had to be amended in the course of their implementation. Projects tended to be overambitious in their design given the time available. However, in most cases delays had been recovered by the end of the project and foreseen activities implemented, which is important efficiency-wise.

The efficiency of interventions varied greatly according to interventions, countries and implementing partners. The dispersion of support to about 49⁶ countries and more than 232 interventions has multiplied the costs related to staff (national and international), vehicles and operational costs. A concentration of support in fewer countries and larger interventions (possibly under budget support) would increase efficiency. Partner management costs were limited to 7% of project costs, although this masks the fact that some of the International Organisations projects subcontracted large share of the work – therefore inducing an additional level of management costs.

The implementation of projects under multi-country contribution agreements facilitated the approval of interventions on the one hand, but made monitoring interventions more complex. As multi-country contribution agreements were centrally managed, the role of the EU Delegations remained limited. Even if projects started officially with the signature of the Financial Agreements, implementation at the field level often showed some delays.

The interventions financed with regional organisations complemented ongoing support provided by the EU through other financial sources (e.g. Intra-ACP cooperation). The support provided was intended to mitigate the effects of the FPC at the regional level and speed up the resilience of the target region.

⁶ Comoros was initially foreseen as a beneficiary country but finally did not receive support from the instrument.

The blend of partners and implementing modalities were generally good. Comparative advantages of partners could have been better factored in project attribution for some specific countries or contexts.

UN organisations showed a considerably higher absorption capacity than national and international NSAs. So, without attributing a considerable share of funds to UN organisations, the administrative burden on the EU would have considerably increased and the response of the EU FF would not have been as quick as it has been.

The final choice of channels for intervention – International Organisations, NSAs, BS and Regional Organisations – was reflected in the needs and the specific situation of each country and complied with the specific objectives of the regulation.

Ownership of the projects was generally good with close linkages to governments at the national, regional or local levels.

Although governments were not generally involved in the management of the projects, except for Budgetary Support, project ownership by governments (at all levels) was generally good. All interventions were in line (or at least did not contrast with) national policies for the agricultural and food security sectors. International Organisations had a permanent dialogue with national Ministries of Agriculture, thus ensuring national ownership of projects. Projects implemented by NSAs were usually closely coordinated with local and regional government structures.

Interventions corresponded to needs of direct beneficiaries and the level of effectiveness was good, however, the sustainability of many of the achievements remains fragile.

The specific objectives corresponded well to the needs generated by the FPC and were generally in line with the needs assessments undertaken by UN organisations and other stakeholders. Relatively few interventions contributed to support measures such as safety net measures aiming at addressing basic food needs, and nutrition while most contributed to boosting agricultural production.

Interventions demonstrated a good level of effectiveness at the direct beneficiaries' level and directly targeted communities and regions, resulting in real increases in production and resilience to future shocks:

- Production capacity and sector governance (at a local level) were increased through targeted actions. Direct beneficiaries reported often very important increases in production thanks to the improved access to agricultural inputs and technical support. If increases in production/yields were not achieved and/or reported this was due to climatic problems or simply due to the fact that the agricultural seasons were not yet completed at the time of the evaluators' visits.
- Strengthened (or new) farmers' organisations were better able to manage the use of shared facilities, gain access to markets and claim their rights with local authorities.
- Investments in infrastructure and capacity-building increased the production capacity of farmers and made them less vulnerable to future shocks.

However, at the time of the final evaluation of the EU FF, it was too early for a final assessment of the projects' achievements. Many projects had only recently completed their activities (training, infrastructure, etc) and aggregated data on project achievements (increase in production, increase in yields, reduction of losses, etc) were not all available. Interventions financed under the EU FF did not significantly influence food prices which remained high due to many other factors.

The sustainability of achievements is variable and will depend on whether national governments, the EU or other donors will continue to support beneficiaries in order to consolidate the achievements made. The 2-year time span of many of the medium-term projects was too short to guarantee lasting results. Cash/food for work schemes did not require sustainability, and even though the immediate crisis is over, much remains to be done to achieve lasting food security.

Conclusions⁷ related to the EU FF as an instrument

The Commission's political decision to create a new financing instrument as articulated in the Regulation 1337/2008 **was pertinent**, although the implementation period foreseen for the instrument was very short. The instrument provided financial support in the **period between emergency and long-term assistance**, but more support will be needed in the future, especially as the volatility of the FPC continues. The experience gained by the EC in the design and implementation of the EU FF can provide an important contribution to future actions.

The EU FF instrument had a **high flexibility** for intervention and was intended to benefit a high number of partner countries, however the **dispersion of interventions** in 49 countries, 232 interventions **reduced impact** at country level (effects and impact were limited to direct beneficiaries).

Interventions financed under the EU FF were in **line with the capacities and strategies** of the targeted countries and regions and **corresponded to the needs** of the beneficiaries targeted. However interventions were often over-ambitious in what concerns time-frame, number of beneficiaries and regional coverage, as well as the number of activities and services provided.

The **selection of implementing partners and modalities was adequate** and reflected the confines set by the EU FF Regulation, local realities and the need to provide the support quickly. The implementation of projects under the multi-country contribution agreements makes project management complex and reduces the role of EU Delegations.

EU FF interventions demonstrated a **good effectiveness** at the level of direct beneficiaries and targeted communities and regions. Project reports indicate that production capacity (at local level) and sector governance were increased through targeted actions in 50% of the projects. Strengthened (or new) farmers organisations are better able to manage the use of shared facilities, gain access to markets and claim their rights with local authorities. However, as the many key activities of interventions were completed only recently impact and **sustainability of interventions will only be seen in the future**.

EU FF interventions were **effective in mitigating the effects of the FPC**, but activities were implemented at least one year after the peak in global food prices and only reached a limited share of the vulnerable population in target countries. In most cases there is no **strategy to replicate experiences** (of EU FF interventions) in other parts of the partner countries (with other external funding or national funding).

The **EU was very efficient in contracting and disbursing** available funds thanks to the **good cooperation** with UN organisations and the use of fast-track procedures for the approval of interventions. However, the start up of the implementation of the interventions at the field level frequently suffered from delays and/or needed amendments due to "over-ambitious" targets, complex procurement procedures and insufficient project preparation. There is **consistency and coherence** between EU FF interventions, other EC instruments and other donors' interventions. Also, the EC has played an important role in the international response to the FPC. **Coordination at central and field level was adequate to good**.

The EC HQ and EU Delegations demonstrated a very efficient management of the EU FF with an attribution of less than 2% of total funds to administrative expenditures (including studies).

The lack of standardised reporting on **financial and economic data of projects** and/or specific components of projects (ex-post and ex-ante) makes it impossible to define the global "value for money" in the context of this evaluation. Access to unit costs of different types of activities, implemented through different types of partners, (ex-ante and ex-post) would help to define the possibilities for **replication of interventions** on a large scale.

There was little evidence of the major effects of the EU FF on food prices or food security beyond direct beneficiaries. **Positive effects have been limited to direct beneficiaries**. The EU FF demonstrates clearly that an increase of production by small-holders is possible by **using appropriate technological packages** and technical

⁷ The conclusions presented in the executive summary are the main and most important conclusions of the evaluation. Further conclusions of a more operational nature and less specific to the instrument are given in the main text of the report.

assistance, but more information concerning the financial replication of this support at a large scale will be needed.

The **sustainability of most activities is not assured**. It is variable and will depend on whether the national Government, the EU or other donors will continue to support beneficiaries in order to consolidate achievements. **Transversal issues** have been taken adequately in consideration, whilst **room for improvement** exists, especially in order **not to create extra workload for women**, particularly in the context of mitigating and pre-empting FPC.

Recommendations⁸

As the EU FF instrument has already come to its end, the following recommendations were formulated, with reference to; (1) the design of future specific instruments for similar situations and; (2) EU support for countries affected by the food price crisis.

The EU should consider **converting the EU FF into a permanent “Stand-by” instrument**, in order to respond rapidly to upcoming and sudden Food Price Crisis, and mitigate impacts on food insecurity situations. In the case of permanent, recurrent, or cyclical food insecurity situations, the instrument could mainly be used for mitigating the effects that have “deepened” existing food insecurity situations. **Food Security should remain on the top of the long term programmed cooperation** of the EU in line with the Agenda for Change.

The design of future specific instruments should be **more focused**, so expected results can be achieved in the initially foreseen time-frame and resources. In this respect and as advocated in the “Agenda for Change”, the EU should concentrate its support to the most affected countries and strategic beneficiaries to ensure resources are allocated where maximum impact can be achieved. In addition, the EU should ensure complementarity through **sectoral division of labour** with EU Member States and UN organisations.

Prior to the creation of any instrument, it is recommended to carry out a problem analysis and **adopt a single primary objective** tackling specific issues and clearly defined beneficiaries.

At country and interventions level, the EU should be involved in Country Needs Assessments and facilitate civil society participation. If needs assessments and design of interventions are outsourced to UN Organisations, and/or top up existing operations, it is recommendable to **follow EU methodological instruments**, and clearly define the expected results to be achieved with the EC's contribution in the timeframe foreseen.

In addition, efforts should concentrate on supporting **interventions clearly linked to the objective** of the instrument when selecting individual interventions at country level.

When selecting partners and aid modalities, the EU should pay specific attention to the **comparative advantages** provided by different implementation channels. At the **design stage**, and in light of tight timeframes, specific attention should be given to ensuring sustainability through systematic inclusion of **built-in exit or handing out strategies**. Because of the very nature of food security, attention to horizontal aspects which might negatively affect the **workload of women** and put **pressure on the environment** should also receive specific attention at the design stage.

At a more strategic level, the EC (under its programmed cooperation) should **continue to play an active role in policy dialogue** at the country level and help the governments of partner countries realise the importance and multi-sector dimension of food security. Underlying causes negatively affecting food security should be established and adequately tackled by Governments in their national policies.

Finally, EU interventions should endeavour to systematise **lessons learnt** and **share experiences** with implementing partners (on the basis of an agreed system). Specific attention should be given to questions of the **replicability** of interventions and to the cost-benefit analysis of the interventions (**ex-post review**).

⁸ Recommendations presented in the executive summary are the main and most important recommendations of the evaluation. Further recommendations of a more operational nature and less specific to the instrument are given in the text of the report.

LESSONS LEARNT

At the strategic level

The EC has shown that it is possible to rapidly establish an **effective instrument** in response to an unforeseen need. The lessons learnt show that **delays in implementations can be avoided or reduced** if; (1) the implementing partners are already present in the project region and an established relationship with target groups and governments already exists; (2) project design is simple and does not include too many different levels of actors; and (3) all the interventions are simply to top up existing projects.

A **single primary objective** and log-frame for the instrument would lead to greater clarity on the proposed intervention logic and facilitate the monitoring of the progress of achievements.

Budget support measures are a suitable instrument if a country has already "qualified" for BS interventions from international donors (especially the EU) and if a government has its own adequate response to a crisis. The assistance provided under the EU FF, in the form of budgetary support, was in addition to the support provided by the EU through other instruments and partner countries. As such, it is thus impossible to isolate the impact achieved thanks to this additional support. However, as **BS interventions support the implementation of national policies**, there is a rather high probability that these interventions will be sustainable after the end of the EU FF's support.

Focusing assistance on marginalised farmers with sufficient production potential increases food security at a community level, but does not necessarily improve food availability in urban areas and/or influence price development. The question of **replicability of interventions** at national level and at what cost should be considered at the moment of project approval.

Policy issues need to be specifically included in major programmes funded with **international organisations**. Without a strong policy element there is a greater chance of crises being repeated in the future.

It is particularly important to carefully address **sustainability issues** in one-off instruments such as the EU FF, as there is no guarantee that programmes or funds will be available for follow-up projects.

An instrument that is designed to respond to a single challenge (the food price crisis) must take into account in its programming the **many other external factors that affect food prices and availability**. In this case, the EU FF had to work against a background of **climate change, global fuel price and financial crises** and many other regional and national crises such as **droughts, floods and earthquakes**.

At the operational level

The establishment of global contracts makes it difficult for EUDs to follow up the EU FF interventions at a national level. While designed as a short term instrument, **the EU FF supported in the short term many activities which would have required medium to longer-term support in order to ensure sustainability**. The severe time constraints on these projects (including all the NGO projects) did not allow for as much impact as could have been achieved with a longer implementation period.

On the one hand, the use of **UN Agencies enabled a high absorption capacity** of funds and relatively quick service delivery at field level. On the other, the rather **lengthy procedures** needed to initiate WB projects and the difficulties associated with setting up a regional programme make these two modalities less suitable for programmes designed to produce a rapid response to a crisis (with the exception of the topping up of existing programmes).

Fast track procedures allow for a quick approval of interventions. However, in order to achieve a quick implementation at field level, fast track procedures for implementation (at the implementing partner level) should also be applied.

Under the EU FF, many actions, which would have needed a medium to long-term implementation period to reach their full impact, instead reduced their implementation period so as to make them eligible for EU FF funding.

Input distribution interventions enjoy a better impact when **combined with strengthening extension services** to farmers and improved market access.

Seed production systems give results in the **medium to long term only**. To achieve good results, better cooperation between research institutions, extension services, seed producing farmers, traders and consuming farmers is necessary and seeds have to be tested under farm conditions.

2. Methodology

2.1 Evaluation process and its phases

A team of 6 experts, plus an Evaluation Contract Manager responsible for quality control, carried out the evaluation. From the Commission's side, a Reference Group composed of EC officials from different services of the Commission was established.

Based on the methodology developed by the EC's Joint Evaluation Unit, the Final Evaluation of the EU Food Facility followed 5 phase methodological approach including:

- a inception/desk Phase ;
- a Field Phase;
- a Synthesis Phase bringing together the results of the field and desk phases, and finally
- a Feedback and Dissemination Phase.

The inception/desk phase included the constitution of a Reference Group within the EC. A Launch Note, presenting the composition of the evaluation team, a methodology and a work plan was drafted by the Consultants and approved.

The products of the Desk Phase included the Inception and the Desk Reports. For the Inception Report, the Evaluation Team produced an overall evaluation methodology, an Intervention Logic⁹ and a preliminary set of Evaluation Questions and Judgement Criteria which were validated by the Reference Group. For the Desk Phase, a very detailed analysis of the projects implemented during the period under study was undertaken, based on existing documentation and a few key interviews; the main output of this phase was a Desk Report, which included the proposed methodology for the field phase (including a sample of relevant projects).

During the Field Phase, the evaluators visited 12 countries and carried out a broad range of interviews and on-site visits in both urban and rural settings. Following the site visits, the Evaluation Team provided 12 country reports¹⁰.

During the synthesis Phase, the Evaluation Team brought together and integrated all the elements from the Desk and Field Phases, and drafted the Report and its Annex. Following discussions with the Reference Group on the content of the Main Report and subsequent revisions to the Synthesis Report, the evaluation methodology foresees a seminar in Brussels to present the conclusions and results of the evaluation. The comments from this seminar form the basis for the final revision of the Final report.

The Feedback and Dissemination Phase is carried out by the Commission and covers the Commission's response to the Evaluation through the generation of a Quality Grid; an Assessment and finally a *"fiche contradictoire"*.

2.2 The Intervention Logic and Evaluation Questions

The Final Report provides answers to ten evaluation questions (EQs) developed for this mandate on the basis of the **Intervention Logic** designed for the EU Food Facility. The detailed methodology required to answer the EQs (including Judgement Criteria and indicators) was proposed at the earliest stage of the process (Inception Report) and was subsequently agreed on by the Reference Group. As the evaluation progressed and information became more available, the exact wording of

⁹ See Annex 3.

¹⁰ See Annex 6.

the EQs were slightly modified, as were the Judgement Criteria (JCs) and Indicators; each of these adjustments were approved by the EC. For ease of reference, the complete set of EQs, JCs and Indicators are presented in Annex 4.

The set of evaluation questions were drafted on the basis of the diagram of intervention logic presented and were approved by the RG in October 2011.

- EQ 1 and EQ2 tackle **relevance**, according to DAC criteria.
- EQ 3 covers **coherence** and **coordination**, at policy level, between the EU FF and the other geographic and thematic instruments dealing with rural development, food aid and food security (EDF, DCI, ECHO). **Complementarity** with Member States' and UN Organisations' interventions in the field of food security at country level was also analysed.
- EQ 4-8 relate to the efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability (DAC criteria).
- EQ 9 deals with cross-cutting issues.
- EQ 10 focuses on the **added value** of the EU FF.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS	
EQ 1: Relevance	To what extent has the EU Food Facility contributed towards strengthening a timely international community response to the food prices crisis in targeted developing countries?
EQ 2: Relevance	Did the EU Food Facility interventions contribute to covering the needs of the selected countries/regions in line with their capacities and strategies?
EQ 3: Complementarity, Coherence, Coordination	To what extent were interventions under the EU Food Facility coherent, coordinated and complementary with other EC instruments and with other donors' interventions?
EQ 4: Efficiency	Did the blend of implementation modalities and eligible partners lead to an appropriate and cost effective delivery of the EU Food Facility results?
EQ 5: Effectiveness	To what extent have interventions financed under the EU Food Facility encouraged a positive supply response by the agricultural sector?
EQ6: Effectiveness	To what extent have interventions financed under EU Food Facility mitigated the effects of the food prices crisis in targeted countries?
EQ7: Effectiveness	To what extent have interventions financed under the EU Food Facility strengthened production capacities and governance of the agricultural sector to sustain interventions?
EQ 8: Impact/sustainability	To what extent has the EU Food Facility contributed to improving the food security situation of beneficiary countries beyond its period of implementation?
EQ 9: Cross cutting issues	To what extent have gender equality, environmental sustainability, HIV/AIDS and good governance cross-cutting issues been taken into consideration in the EU Food Facility design and implementation?
EQ 10: Added value	Given the context and amount mobilized, to what extent have the design and implementation of the EU Food Facility had comparative advantages relative to 1) other EC instruments, 2) EU Member States' own response?

2.3 Data and Information Collection

2.3.1 Literature review

The process of information collection started during the Inception Phase of the evaluation. It was deepened during the Desk Phase with the review of DEVCO policy documents, reports from implementing partners (NGOs, IOs, ROs, MS Agencies) and the European Commission's EU FF documents, including Communications to the EUDs, Financial Decisions, Notes between the Commission and the Council and the European Parliament, EC Instructions Notes, EU FF Results-Oriented Monitoring (ROM) synthesis reports (2009 and 2011) and the various studies and reports produced during the EU FF implementation.

During the Desk Phase analysis, the team gathered data from the EU Food Facility Task Force, as well as through interviews of former and actual staff in charge of the Facility at EC HQs. Considering that 229 of the 232 EU FF projects were analysed during the Desk Phase (of the 123 projects run by NGOs, 11 by MS' agencies, 64 by IOs and 24 projects implemented by ROs at country level, together with 10 Budget Support projects), a large amount of data has been collected, collated and analysed. The information is available in numerous documents including Country Needs Assessments, Action Fiches, Progress reports, studies financed under the EU FF support measures, ROM reports, Instruction notes and information collected from interviews with EC, ECHO, IFAD, WFP, FAO, HLTF and WB staff.

Other documents from the websites of international organisations, fora and networks (UNHLTF, CFS, FAO, WFP, World Bank) were also reviewed (mid-term evaluation reports and impact assessments), together with the FAO policy guide¹¹ referring to the soaring food price initiative, HLTF progress reports, institutional responses by the UN to the food price crisis, IFPRI's "Global Food Crisis monitoring and assessing impact" and the WB food price background note. Key information in the documents was utilised to fill the Desk Grid analysis. Due to the broad scope of the evaluation, no overall check list was made. Issues that are regularly mentioned were taken into consideration. Issues that are specific to a situation were cross-checked during the field missions and retained if confirmed. More than a thousand documents have been analysed during the Desk Phase in order to identify some primary findings and results. The analysis of UN final reports provided at a later stage complemented the analysis of the projects already considered in the desk analysis and/or field evaluation.

2.3.2 CRIS

The Common RELEX Information System (CRIS) represented a very useful source of information for the identification of the European Commission's programmes and projects, providing online information about the technical, financial and accounting progress. In the case of the EU Food Facility evaluation, the Food Facility Team in Brussels had already developed a 'master scoreboard' and a 'state of play'. The scoreboard provided an overview of technical, financial and operational aspects of the EU Food Facility projects while the 'state of play' provides information concerning the Financial Decisions and financial repartition between the different implementing channels. The revised scoreboard and the state of play were two major sources of information for the evaluators. Therefore, particular attention and time was dedicated to verify, complete and update the information included in those two documents using information extracted from CRIS and provided by the EU FF team at EC Headquarters.

¹¹ FAO's Initiative on Soaring Food Prices: Guide for Policy and Programmatic Actions at Country Level to Address High Food Prices http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/ISFP/reviseISFP_guide_web.pdf.

2.3.3 Contacts and meetings

Interviews: In Brussels, interviews were organised with EC staff (various units and reference groups) as well as other key persons working in other organisations.

The main purpose of the interviews at HQ level was to gather first-hand information on the following:

- Relevance of the creation of a new instrument to provide part of the response to the Food Price Crisis;
- Challenges faced during the preparation and implementation of the EU FF, at HQ and field level; and
- Coherence and complementarity between the EU Food Facility instrument and other EC instruments related to food security (DCI-FSTP, EDF A and B envelope, and DG ECHO interventions).

The team leader held meetings with FAO, IFAD and WFP in Rome and conducted an interview with the WB representative in Brussels, in order to discuss progress in implementation, and his appreciation of the EU Food Facility interventions.

During the evaluation, the team had several meetings with the RG to monitor regular progress and provide some guidance for further steps. Through the Evaluation Manager, the team made contact with the EU Delegations that are implementing interventions under the EU FF in order to prepare the field visits.

2.3.4 Countries and project analysis

Elaboration and completion of the Analytical Grid: an in-depth analysis disaggregated by geographical area, aid modality and implementation channels was made using an analytical grid. The grid refers to the 10 Evaluation Questions, the judgement criteria and their related indicators. The information needed to answer the different judgement criteria and indicators were mainly found in the following documentation:

- Project Action fiches,
- Project interim reports,
- ROM reports,
- FAO Stat website (for production and input data),
- GIEWS¹² website for food price trends,
- Country needs assessments,
- EU Food Facility Regulation,
- Various EU instruments used to respond to the global Food Crisis, in particular DCI – Food, EDF-B envelope and ECHO.

To achieve the identification of the primary findings and results, the analysis was based on a subdivision per project per implementing channel (IO, RO, NGO, MS Agencies and BS) and per country. In order to systematise the information gathered from such a broad range of sources, the Team Leader developed a grid completed by the team members as they went through the documentation available. This grid is structured as a matrix. Each column corresponds to a specific project, by a specific delivery channel in a specific country or region. Horizontally, the EQs, associated JCs and Indicators are listed. For each indicator, the team mentioned a numerical value (or range) if any, and a qualitative comment if necessary.

¹² FAO Global Information and Early Warning System.

Preliminary findings were set to formulate hypotheses, which in turn were cross-checked during the field visits. In this regard, a first set of Hypotheses were prepared and sent to the RG in early November 2011, and tested during a first field mission in Liberia in the same month through complementary data collection, through interviews with key stakeholders and focus groups and visits to specific projects were organised, followed by analysis of the whole.

The results of the Desk Analysis were then translated into tables comprising the main results and the associated hypotheses for each EQ and Judgement Criteria. In total, 99 % of projects were analysed, including the regional components (AU-IBAR, COMESA and ECOWAS) at country level where information was available. Some of the regional interventions were somewhat different from other activities financed under the EU FF, and therefore several JCs and indicators were not fully applicable.

Two projects were not analysed, the World Bank project in Yemen, interrupted for security reason and the Regional Project Acting for Life project in Mali, for which no information was available but for which information was collected during the field mission.

2.3.5 Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM):

More than 70% (in budgetary terms) of the entire EU Food Facility interventions have been monitored by the ROM system. The final report of the ROM of the EU FF was released in October 2011. A total of 249 ROM missions were conducted on the EU FF projects over the period of implementation, including 45 projects monitored twice (re-monitoring). They covered EU FF activities from the start of the project (the 20 November 2009) until the 20 August 2011 (21 months). The ROM-response results concerning any change of performance (in the best grades, A and B)¹³ for the NGOs (NSAs) and Member States agencies (MS), derived from the Calls for Proposals (CfP), were compared with the International (IO) and Regional Organisations (RO).

2.3.6 Testing desk phase Hypotheses in the field (12 countries)

The field missions covered the 12 countries selected according to a set of criteria in the Inception Report, and sought to test the 15 hypotheses to complement information from the desk analysis. The evaluation of the FF in Liberia had been conducted as a test of the Hypotheses and the standard methodology for evaluation. The FF evaluation in the other 11 countries had been conducted according to the methodology prepared for the field evaluation based on Hypotheses. A Country Note has been prepared for each of the countries visited, presenting the method used to collect data, the replies to the Hypotheses and their contributions to the EQs. To this end, during field visits, key stakeholders were interviewed, and focus group discussions and visits to specific projects were organised. The 11 Country Notes are presented in Annex 6 together with the report from Liberia. Constraints and limitations were mentioned in the 12 Country Notes, specifically related to the limitation of travel for visiting some projects in insecure areas. However the methodology of Hypotheses enabled the team to collect information from various sources to complete the replies to the Hypotheses.

2.3.7 Survey completed by EU Delegations

Two **survey questionnaires**, aimed at the EU Delegations located in countries benefiting from the EU Food Facility, were prepared by the evaluation team. Those questionnaires were intended to capture

¹³ A and B grades correspond to project performance:

- **very well (A):** The situation is considered highly satisfactory, largely above average and potentially a reference for good practice. Recommendations focus on the need to adopt these good practices in other operations.
- **well (B):** The situation is considered satisfactory, but there is room for improvements. Recommendations are useful, but not vital for the operation.

the EUD perceptions on a number of topics such as policy dialogue, co-ordination, alignment, harmonisation, changes in sector performance and outcomes, and the usefulness of various aid modalities and channels. The **first questionnaire** was related to general issues concerning human resources, design, coherence, coordination and complementarities, choice of implementing channels, alignment, changes in sector performance and outcomes and policy dialogue, while the **second questionnaire** was more specifically designed for the EU Food Facility component implemented through budget support.

Both questionnaires were supposed to be sent as soon as possible to the 49¹⁴ Delegations of countries benefitting from the EU Food Facility projects. However, when the survey questionnaires were sent to the EU Food Facility Evaluation Reference Group (RG) for approval, it was decided to further exploit the questionnaire by preparing a more comprehensive set of questions, in order to get a more complete overview of the whole EU Food Facility process. Therefore, two more thorough and in-depth questionnaires were prepared by the EU FF team - one concerning the NGO EU Food Facility projects and one on EU FF projects implemented through International and Regional Organisations. The replies to questionnaires have been analysed by the team according to specific grids of analysis.

2.3.8 UN Final Reports analysis

Upon reception by the EUFF team, 36 UN Agencies Final Project Reports have been provided to the evaluation team. Received after the field phase, they were analysed through a specific grid and mainly confirmed or refined information on the related projects analysed during the Desk Phase and gathered during Field Phases.

2.3.9 Limitations and constraints

The evaluation of the EU-Food Facility faced several limitations related to:

Evaluation questions adhered to the EC Evaluation Unit's Methodology for issues addressing thematic evaluations: While questions, criteria and indicators constitute logical entities, their application in practice was not always straight forward. In many cases the information related to the indicators was either not available or not relevant to the action (the case for using regional organisations or budget support for instance). There were many reasons for this, mostly related to the large scope of the Food Facility in terms of implementing partners and activities, and insufficiently developed data collection, monitoring and evaluation systems at project level.

The erratic availability, and reliability of data referred to indicators, due to lack of baseline data and SMART indicators at the project level for measuring the results of the interventions, were limitations to the evaluation exercise.

Monitoring information was often collected in an initial phase of the projects: some monitoring visits were taking place in 2009 and the first half of 2010 at the very beginning of the EU FF interventions. Thus it was still premature to give information on effectiveness and impact. The ROM results should therefore be regarded in light of these limitations.

The evaluation and Field Visits took place when all Food Facility activities were nearly or just finalised, therefore not all final reports were available at the time of preparing the Country Concept Notes. Final reports arrived progressively during the last months only. As format and presentation of reports varies considerably it is impossible to aggregate data.

¹⁴ Out of the 50 countries initially foreseen, only 49 finally benefited from the EU FF. The Comoros did not receive funds.

3. Main findings and Analysis

The following chapter presents the evaluation findings per DAC criteria. It builds on the Answers to the EQs presented in Annex 5 to the report. For each criteria, and where relevant, the assessment is presented first at the level of the EU FF as an ad-hoc instrument specifically designed to respond to the Food Price Crisis; in a second step the assessment then looks at the Food Facility's achievement through each of its objectives

3.1 Relevance (Based on EQ1¹⁵ and EQ2¹⁶)

3.1.1 On relevance of the EU FF as an Instrument

Finding 1 : Relevance, EQ1

The Commission's decision to create a new financing instrument as articulated in the Regulation 1337/2008 was highly pertinent. It was the sole means at the disposal of the Commission to rapidly commit a substantial volume of funds to the agricultural and food security sectors in countries affected by the FPC. By creating a "specific instrument" in response to the FPC agriculture development and food security were brought to the forefront of the EC development cooperation and of the international development agenda¹⁷. This achievement would not have been reached by increasing funding through existing instruments.

The combined effect of the high food prices crisis of 2007-2008 and the global financial crisis of 2009 strongly affected Global Food and Nutrition Security. The FAO High Level Conference on World Food Security called on the international community to increase assistance for developing countries, especially in the G8+ Summit in Japan (July 2008) and then supported the UNHLCF on the CFA. At the same summit the president of the Commission announced the intention of the Commission to propose a quick response Facility by providing 1 billion EUR to mitigate the effects of the FPC. The reallocation of existing financial instruments¹⁸ were insufficient to increase quickly assistance to developing countries and to target directly needs created by the FPC, as – with exception of ECHO - funding available under the 10th EDF is a programmed cooperation based on Regional Strategy Papers and is the result of a long preparation and negotiation process between beneficiary countries and regions, and the EU. Similarly, the Food Security Thematic Programme is a programmed cooperation. Despite the reallocations of the funds available under these instruments and through other instrument such as the FLEX and subsequently V FLEX, the overall volume of funds that could have been made available in the short and medium term would have been limited.

This provides evidence that without the EU FF instrument, it would have been impossible to channel significant additional funds to the food security and agricultural sectors and to activities suitable for

¹⁵ EQ1: To what extent has the EU FF contributed towards strengthening the timely international community response to the FPC in developing countries?

¹⁶ EQ2: did the EU FF interventions contribute to covering the needs of selected countries/regions in line with their capacities and strategies?

¹⁷ The share of ODA devoted to agriculture reached a level of 19 percent in 1980, but fell to 3.8 percent in 2006. However it seems that this trend is slightly reversing.

¹⁸ During the reference period (2008-2012), the EU supported the food security of developing countries in a direct or indirect way through various instruments. The 10th EDF (22.7 bn EUR for the 6-years period 2008-2013¹⁸) is a programmed cooperation based on Country Strategy Papers - CSPs) and National Indicative Programmes (NIPs). Analysis of documentation (CSPs, NIPs) showed evidence that EU funding directed **explicitly** to agricultural production and rural development remained important, but has decreased over the last decade, as EU cooperation is now more often focused on Poverty Reduction, Social Sectors and Governance (food security and rural development form only part of the multiple areas to be tackled under these focal sectors). The Food Security Thematic Programme (2007-2013). During the first phase of the FSTP (2007-2010) approximately 876 mn EUR were committed; the budget for the period 2011-2013 was 750 mn EUR.

mitigating the FPC. It is even more significant for countries where RD/FS is currently not a focus sector of EU cooperation.

Finding 2 : *Relevance, EQ1*

The EU FF is fully coherent with the Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security and supports the pillars of Food security¹⁹ in countries affected by the FPC, however, support is concentrated in triggering a supply response by the small-holding farming sector. The EU FF contributed to a coordinated international response; EU FF support concentrates more in the short-medium term support, whilst WB support concentrates in medium-long-term support.

Through its Food Facility, the EU contributed to a short to medium term response, whilst the WB established trust fund for the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) to tackle medium to long-term investments.

WB Response

Multi Donor Trust for implementation of Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP)

GAFSP was established in April 2010 at the request of the G-20 as a mechanism for providing more and better public and private investment in agriculture and related sectors to improve the income and food security of poor and vulnerable people in low income countries. Status of overall funding: 1.2 billion USD (of which 917 mn USD to the Public Sector Window, 268 mn USD to the Private Sector Window, and 40 mn USD remains unassigned). Financing received to date: 752.4 mn USD (of which 702.4 mn USD to the Public Sector Window, and 50 mn USD to the Private Sector Window). Allocations: 658 mn USD were allocated for recipient-executed grants in 18 countries: Bangladesh, Burundi, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Haiti, the Gambia, Kyrgyz Republic, Liberia, Malawi, Mongolia, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Tanzania, and Togo

In 2008, the World Bank focused its annual research report on agriculture, highlighting an important shift in the Bank's international focus. In May of that year, the World Bank established the **Global Food Crisis Response Program (GFRP)** to provide immediate support to countries significantly impacted by rising food prices. The GFRP used the World Development Report as a framework to implement projects up to an initial 1.2 billion USD, so as to ensure a timely response. In April 2009, the World Bank increased the Fund to 2 billion USD. When food prices continued to rise through to the

summer of 2011, the Board of the Fund expended the process to June 2012. The focus of the funds are targeted towards: feeding children and other vulnerable groups, providing nutritional supplements to pregnant women, lactating mothers, infants and small children, meeting additional expenses of food imports, and buying seeds for the new season..

Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF): Beyond the GFRP, the WB has made funding available through externally-funded trust funds. It has received contributions of 50 mn AUD from the Australian government, 80 mn EUR from the government of Spain, 7.6 billion Korean Won from the Republic of Korea, 30 mn CAD from the government of Canada, and 0.15 mn USD from the International Finance Corporation (IFC)". The funds are used for implementing the **Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP)**, which finances medium to long-term investments needed to: raise agricultural productivity; link farmers to markets; reduce risk and vulnerability; improve non-farm rural livelihoods; and scale up the provision of technical assistance and capacity development.

The FAO is participating in the implementation of both the EU FF as well as the GAFSP. In fact, the FAO has assisted more than 15 countries this year in putting together sustainable investment plans for submission to the GAFSP and other L'Aquila Food Security Initiative funding mechanisms.

¹⁹ Concept of Food Security: Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. The four pillars of food security are availability, access, utilization and stability. The nutritional dimension is integral to the concept of food security (Source: FAO World Summit on Food Security, 16-18.11.2009).

WB is administering as well the Trust Fund for financing the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), which receives contributions from the EC, UK, France, Ireland and USAID.

All this gives evidence of efforts made for achieving a coordinated support at macro level.

Finding 3 : Relevance, EQ1

The EU FF was programmed as a short-term instrument and its activities were concentrated in the short-term support.

The EU FF was designed as a short-term instrument, with a life-time of 3 years only and without possibility of refinancing. This was justified if the FPC could have been seen as an isolated event, thus that there was only a need for achieving resilience of countries and populations affected by the FPC. However, already in 2008, the FAO expected that the food prices would remain volatile in the medium term²⁰.

Thus support provided to target beneficiaries was short-term only (up to a maximum of 2,5 years), which is considered a period too short for achieving full resilience and sustainability of results. The initially foreseen period of implementation for the EU FF seems too limited for achieving the ambitious objectives, especially the objectives of encouraging a positive supply response and for preparing countries better to withstand future shocks. A supply response of the agricultural sector, and especially the food crop sub-sector, depends on many factors which cannot be easily/quickly influenced within a period of two years.

As a bridging instrument, the EU FF had some limitations as new projects are not always put in place, or will be put in place in the short term to take over from the FF, particularly in countries where FS/RD is not an EU focus sector. National programmes from the 50 billion USD pledged at the L'Aquila summit are not yet in place in many countries to take over the EU FF activities in the rural development and agriculture sector. Similarly, the EU Financing under the 11th (2014-2020) EDF will start in 2014 only (the programming process has just started), meaning that there is a gap of about 2 years between the end of the projects financed under the EU FF and possible new financing under programmed cooperation. There are however good examples of take over after EU FF interventions – e.g. the FAO Pakistan and FAO Guatemala projects provided an exact bridge with an incoming FSTP programme showing a good example of LRRD (rehabilitation with EU FF followed by medium-term action with FSTP).

It can be argued that other instruments (especially the WB GAFSPF) would provide medium- to long-term financing. However, even funds available under GAFSPF are limited and there is no evidence for a link between support provided under the EU FF and GAFSPF financings.

However, according to discussions with EC staff, although there exists no plan for continuing the EU FF by another instrument, a number of projects financed under the EU FF have recently benefitted or will benefit in the future from further financing under long-term instruments (FSTP, EDF).

Finding 4: Relevance, EQ1,EQ2

The selection of countries benefitting from the EU FF was based on a set of criteria defined in an appendix to the regulation. Funds made available under the EU FF were dispersed in a large

²⁰ FAO, Agricultural Outlook 2008-2017.

number of countries and projects. Although the definition of beneficiary countries of the EU FF was generally well justified, a concentration of support to the most affected countries would have increased the potential for effectiveness and impact.

The EP committee²¹ proposed that the resources be concentrated on a maximum of 35 high-priority target countries. However, the Commission's proposal did not contain a specific number, and the Parliament did not follow this recommendation. 50 target countries were selected according to multiple criteria presented in the annex of the EU FF Regulation such as poverty levels and the real needs of populations; food price developments and potential social and economic impact; agricultural production capacity; resilience to external shocks; resilience capacity of the country to macroeconomic effects of food price developments.

There is evidence that the food insecurity afflicting many in the world was often caused by factors other than the international FPC (e.g. climatic conditions, internal conflicts and slow post-conflict recovery). Thus, in many countries where nutritional deficits of the population were pre-existing before the FPC, the increase in prices for food items in the markets only worsened the situation. In 2008, much analysis was done that pointed to the fact that higher food prices had a worsening effect on food security. However, the available documentation does not permit a good understanding of the extent to which existing food insecurity situation is an effect of the FPC or has been worsened through it.

Indeed, analysis of countries eligible for EU interventions shows that there were countries included which, whilst being food-insecure, were not significantly hit by the FPC (an example is Laos, which is food insecure in part of its territory, but where food insecure persons are mainly on subsistence living and only have limited contacts with the market economy) and some others that were hit by the FPC were not selected as they were considered to have enough resources to face the FPC. Angola and Chad for example have not been included as they are oil producers.

All the countries chosen met the criteria set in the regulation, even though several of the countries targeted faced problems of "food security" mainly due to other reasons than the soaring food prices²². In some countries there were advanced measures of fighting the food security under implementation, but they were jeopardised by the FPC. In these countries the support provided under the EU FF helped national policy makers to continue the implementation of the national measures despite the FPC (e.g. Jamaica).

In summary, an intervention under the EU FF was justified in all beneficiary countries.

However, in the design of the instrument, and subsequent selection of beneficiary countries, it seems that only a reduced attention was given to the fact that the selection of a large number of beneficiary countries may reduce effectiveness. Although a considerable amount, 1 bn EUR is not sufficient enough "for making a difference" (encouraging a positive supply response and mitigating the effects of the FPC) for 49 countries²³ which were allocated an average financing under the Facility of only about 20 mn EUR per country.

Finding 5 : Relevance, EQ1, EQ2

The specific objectives of the EU FF Regulation are fully in line with the UNHLP Comprehensive

²¹ COD/2008/0149: 07/10/2008 - EP: decision of the committee responsible.

²² Target countries had also be identified in coordination with other donors, building on relevant needs-assessments made available by specialist and international organisations, such as those of the UN system, including the World Bank.

²³ Comoros, although initially eligible, finally did not receive financing.

Framework for Action and respond well to the needs related to the FPC, however, the existence of three specific objectives with a great number of activities promoted dispersion of efforts.

Specific Objective 1: to encourage a positive supply response from the agricultural sector in target countries and regions.

- The objectives pursued by EC interventions under the EU FF instrument are relevant as a promotion of the agricultural production in target countries and will contribute to stabilising the food prices in national markets;
- Analysis of documentation (project proposals, needs assessments) and field visits give evidence that the lack of quality agricultural inputs (seed, fertiliser, small equipment) were for many small scale farmers a limiting factor for increasing their production, increasing food security at family level and obtaining a marketable surplus.
- The implementation of programmes for agricultural research and seed production are of crucial importance. Crop varieties adapted to specific climatic situations (for example resistance to drought or early maturing), and of high yielding potential can make an important contribution to food security.
- However, it also has to be taken into consideration that price increases in local markets are often less related to the lack of production in the country than to the unsatisfactory functioning of markets and the high costs of transport. However, it is evident that the FF, as a medium-term instrument, could at best address market failures through small infrastructural works (roads, storage), while many issues related to market failures require long-term involvement.

Specific Objective 2: to support activities to respond rapidly and directly to mitigate the negative effects of volatile food prices on local populations in line with global food security objectives, including UN standards for nutritional requirements.

The objective of mitigating the effects of the FPC for the population of FPC-affected countries unable to develop or to develop without external support its own strategies for reducing the effects of the FPC on family food security is fully relevant:

- Availability of food in the national markets in most of these countries is not a problem. However, the income of the population does not permit many families to buy sufficient foodstuff (both in terms of quantity and quality) to cover their basic food needs. The price increase related to the FPC reduces the quantity and quality of food that can be bought with the disposable family income.
- Needs assessment reports and observations during field visits showed that the population most affected by the FPC is the urban poor and landless people, such as rural hired workers, who have no coping mechanism as they are not food producers themselves. Their cash income remained stable, whilst food prices increased, obliging them to reduce food intake or quality of food. It was relevant for EU FF to address them, for example the beneficiary group selected for cash-for-work programmes under the PAMP project in Tajikistan.
- FPC also affected the rural population not fully self-sufficient in food production, or affected by frequent losses in production and persons/families with no production capacity. Within these populations the most affected are children, pregnant women, children/women-headed households or persons/families without manpower for production.

Specific Objective 3: to strengthen the productive capacities and the governance of the agricultural sector to enhance the sustainability of interventions.

Based on the analysis of documents available and the field visits undertaken, there is evidence that projects financed under the EU FF corresponded to the needs of the main beneficiaries, through contributing to improved production and/or income generating activities. There are multiple factors affecting the productive capacities and the governance of the agricultural sector.

- Analysis of CFP project applications and needs assessments confirms that there is a lack of organisation of farmers, and lack of access to information, financing, irrigation, storage facilities and rural roads, which are all factors hampering agricultural production and marketing. These factors limit the functioning of markets and prevent the agricultural sector from responding to the increase of prices through increasing production areas or intensification of agricultural production.
- Furthermore, there is evidence that limited national budgets and weak national extension services are factors which limit the implementation of good agricultural policies in many developing countries.

3.1.2 Relevance of interventions financed under the EU FF (interventions)

Finding 6: Relevance, EQ2

The use of UN Organisations, many of them with a presence in the target countries and with well-established direct relations to the Ministry of Agriculture facilitated the identification of interventions. Interventions financed under the EU FF were selected on the basis of UN Need Assessments and discussion between EU HQ and EU Delegations. Interventions were generally in line with national policies and strategies and in some instances helped to bolster them²⁴ and relevant as they corresponded to the needs of the target countries and the population affected by the FPC²⁵.

The country need assessments (undertaken in 2008 by UN organisations) were usually comprehensive in terms of assessments of the needs resulting from the FCP and resulted from the dialogue with the different stakeholders (UN, Government and EU Delegations), however civil society seems not to have played a major role in the elaboration of the assessments. The presence of the National Offices of FAO and of other UN Organisations in the partner countries facilitated the process and assured that national policies have been adequately taken into consideration.

Thus, in summary, UN Assessments were relevant for presenting an overview of national policy needs and partner interventions. They were a key input for decision-making. However, the projects/interventions proposed in these need assessments were not always financed under the Facility; EU and partners' then-ongoing activities in a given country, as well as compatibility of the intervention with the EU financial regulation framework, were also considered.

The decision on what to finance was also based on discussions with EU Delegations, which sometimes had different opinions from the UN assessments and saw different opportunities, also because the EU has other tools at its disposal than the UN, such as budget support. As a result several cases could be traced where interventions financed were not fully in line with the conclusions of the UN needs assessments.

²⁴ Annex 5 EQ2, JC 2.1, Ind. 2.1.1

²⁵ Annex 5 EQ2, JC 2.1, Ind. 2.1.2

Finding 7 : *Relevance, EQ2*

Interventions financed under the EU FF are generally relevant; the majority of interventions were focused on triggering a positive supply response from the small-holder and increasing resilience and preparedness for future shocks.

**Economic and social support activities Food Facility, EC
WFP II, Nepal
Financing: 9 mn EUR,
Implemented by : WFP**

The project supported 285.000 beneficiaries and the institutions related to the agricultural sector. Activities consisted in the timely provision of appropriate quantity and quality of food through a food or cash for assets modality; rehabilitation of critical infrastructure and community assets (micro-irrigation and water management schemes, access roads/bridges/trails) that restore and improve agricultural capacity, market access, and livelihood opportunities through food/cash for assets schemes; and institutional strengthening at national and district level

Analysis of the portfolio of interventions financed under the EU FF shows that the instrument addressed the medium to long-term needs better than it did for the immediate needs of the poor, and its efforts aimed at increasing food availability rather than improved economic access; urban populations and the landless were less prioritised under the EU FF. In fact, the large majority of interventions intended to strengthen the supply response from the small-holder by providing agricultural inputs and technical advice to strengthen the productive capacities and governance of the agricultural sector.

Although objective 2 of the EU FF makes specific reference to “addressing the basic food needs of the most vulnerable populations, including children”, this aspect was not sufficiently emphasized at the moment of selection of the projects to be financed under the EU FF. However the concentration of EU FF interventions on the rural sector on SO1 and SO3 has to be seen in the overall context of support provided by the EU in response to the FPC (Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP), ECHO, V-FLEX²⁶, FLEX and programmed cooperation in support to research, innovation and information distribution in matters relating to food security and support to regional initiatives).

As a result, only a limited number of projects directly tackled safety net measures and nutrition (these were especially projects implemented by UNICEF and some by the WFP). Such projects were highly relevant for the target beneficiaries and in some cases life-saving (UNICEF nutrition programmes, and UNRWA support to Palestine).

Finding 8: *Relevance, EQ1, EQ2*

Interventions financed as Sectoral Budget Support or General Budget Support represented a good response for all those countries which had their own satisfactory response to the FPC and which already qualified for receiving Budget Support.

²⁶ The European Commission 500 mn EUR Vulnerability FLEX comes in addition to the 1 bn EUR Food Facility and the EDF allocation of 200 mn EUR under the EDF in 2008 to help developing countries cope with higher food prices. With these targeted mechanisms, the EU was the first to act in line with the G20 summit in London in April 2009, working for a sustainable and balanced recovery.

Many governments embraced greater levels of overall subsidies of various types, imported grain at very high prices or imposed severe export restrictions, installed price controls and subsidized food distribution schemes, established or reinforced public procurement mechanisms at fixed prices, or organised subsidised fertiliser distribution schemes for small farmers. In many countries the FPC obliged governments to reduce import taxes and to increase social expenditures in order to mitigate the effects on the most vulnerable parts of the population.²⁷ These measures often had a negative impact on the national budget. Support provided through the EU FF under Budget Support permitted maintaining high expenditures for the social and rural sector.

EU FF Budget Support Allocations		
SBS	Tajikistan	7.750.000
SBS	Rwanda	15.600.000
GBS	DRC	26.000.000
GBS	Malawi	15.900.000
GBS	Haiti	5.800.000
GBS	Ghana	15.000.000
SBS	Bolivia	7.750.000
GBS	Tanzania	20.000.000
SBS	Mozambique	5.200.000
GBS	Togo	8.200.000
TOTAL		127.200.000

Examples of interventions under the EU FF which support national policies include:

EU FF budget support allocation complementing other budget support in Mozambique. Financing: 5,2 mn EUR
The European Commission has contributed to the implementation of national Sector Policy Programme PROAGRI and is the largest contributor by having provided 30% of all donor contributions since the start of the Programme (more than half of the budget of MINAG is covered by external aid). PROAGRI is aligned with the direct budget support provided by the G19 donors and is complementary to the general budget support from the EU (Poverty Reduction Budget Support- III, Millennium Development Goals- Programme). The Programme is financed under the Food Facility Instrument. This financing is on top of the approximately 15 mn EUR that the EU makes available annually to the agricultural sector via MINAG as part of PROAGRI.

Preserving social expenditures and avoiding budget reduction in poverty reduction and agricultural sector in Tanzania. Financing: 20 mn EUR
The Food Facility GBS provided additional Funds to the already existing GBS (300 mn EUR). The Tanzania Agriculture and Food Security Investment Plan (TAFSIP), under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), seeks to achieve at least a minimum of 6% growth in the agricultural sector. The key objective is to support small holder farmers, pastoralists and agro-pastoralists and fishing households, adoption of improved agricultural practices for which the government needed to allocate a minimum of 10% of its budget. The investment plan brings together all stakeholders in the agricultural sector, both on the mainland and in Zanzibar, to a common agenda of comprehensively transforming the sector to create wealth, reduce poverty and achieve food and nutrition security. In the current budget of 2011/12, the Government has allocated 6.8% of its budget on agriculture out of a total budget of 7.8billion USD. According to the survey undertaken with the EU Delegation the additional general budget support has contributed to mitigate effects of the food crisis and food insecurity in Tanzania, by providing additional resources to address the volatile food prices. This meant improved food security for the poorest layer of the population through the implementation of the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty for Tanzania (MKUKUTA).

²⁷ FAO, Country responses to the food security crisis, 2009: "Nature and preliminary implications of the policies pursued" Based on information obtained from 81 countries, the two most widely applied market and trade policy measures are reduction of tariffs or custom fees, as reported by 43 countries, and selling grain from public stocks or from imports, as reported by 35 countries. Reducing tariffs is among the easiest measures to implement. Countries with reserve stocks have been able to respond more quickly and cheaply than those with limited or no reserves. Some 23 countries suspended or reduced VAT and other taxes, while 25 countries restricted or banned exports. Price controls were reported in 21 countries, with 10 of these in Africa. A number of countries have applied two, three or even four different market and trade measures to bring down domestic prices."

Finding 9 :

Relevance, EQ2

The Food Facility has tackled important aspects related to food insecurity, but EUFF design could not address a range of underlying factors that triggered food price crisis.

Interventions financed under the EU FF provided a direct response to the FPC, triggering supply response, mitigating effects on the vulnerable population and addressing important factors that promoted food security in developing countries. However, many underlying factors helped to cause the food price crisis through reducing food production (Global energy costs increase, inequitable land distribution, substitution of food crops with monocultures for production of bio-diesel, land-grabbing for different purposes, unfavourable commercial policies, market access, market speculations, increase in transport costs etc.), and these cannot be addressed in the short-term run and by an instrument like the EU FF.²⁸ A combination of investments in agricultural and rural development would be needed, both through public and private sector spending combined with a policy response addressing the underlying causes of high food prices, including the impact of climate change on food production. The EU is already contributing in tackling underlying factors through other instruments, including regional cooperation and Intra-ACP cooperation.

²⁸ See, Manzoor, Ahmad: ICTSD, Issue Paper No.38, Improving the International Governance of Food Security and Trade.

3.2 Effectiveness (based on EQ 5²⁹, EQ6³⁰, EQ7³¹)

3.2.1 Effectiveness of the EU FF as an Instrument

Finding 10 : Effectiveness EQ1, EQ5

The EU FF allowed for the rapid increase of the overall volume of funds directed through EU cooperation to the agricultural and rural sector as part of a coordinated international response to the food price crisis. The use of UN Organisations served a quick starting up of the instrument.

The EU FF contributed 1 billion EUR to the alleviation of the 2008 FPC, accounting for 60 % of the total grants funds in support of the full range of interventions under the GFRP, and was also one of the fastest to disburse (with the exception of projects implemented by ROs and World Bank³²).

The strategy used was to use those implementation channels that could bring effective results to the ground. Thus 57 % of the total budget was disbursed through international organisations, the remainder through ROs, CSOs, Member states agencies, and Budget Support. The use of international and regional Organisations was based on their specific experience in certain sectors and on their high absorption capacity. It would have been impossible to implement interventions with the same volume of Euros through NGOs in the time frame foreseen. BS has supported government which had an own satisfactory response for addressing the FPC and which were already benefitting from EU Budget Support.

By implementing 57% of the total budget through International Organisations (based in major part on UN-Need Assessments) it was assured that interventions were fully in line with the policies and strategies of the implementing UN Organisations. This ensured a more coherent international response.

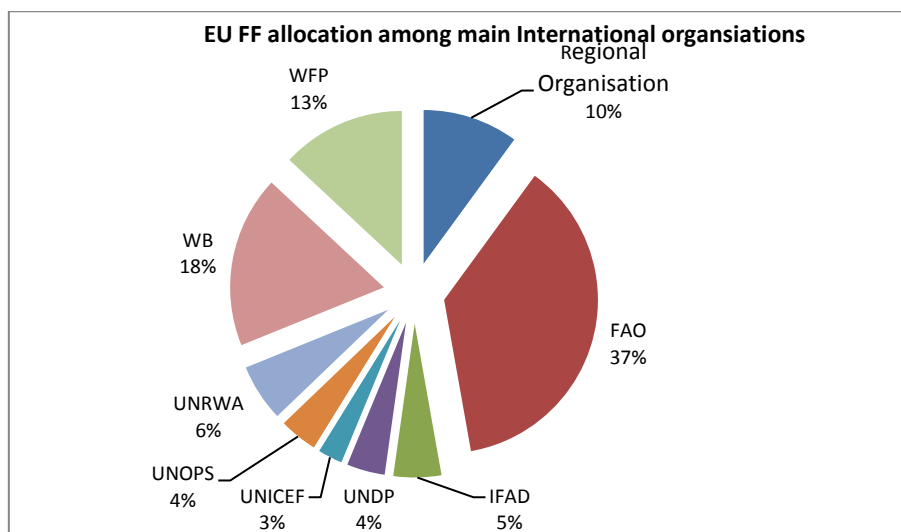
²⁹ EQ 5: To what extent have interventions financed under EU Food Facility encouraged a positive supply response?

³⁰ EQ6: To what extent have interventions financed under EU Food Facility mitigated the effects of the food price crisis in targeted countries?

³¹ EQ7: To what extent have interventions financed under EU Food Facility strengthened production capacities and governance of the agricultural sector to sustain interventions?

³² The Bank created an agricultural trust fund, pledging 1,5 bn USD of its own resources. The Global Agricultural and Food Security Program (GAFSP), one of several World Bank led instruments for investments in agriculture and food security, already had pledges from 6 donors including Australia, Canada, South Korea, Spain and United States. There are also many private investors (e.g. the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation).

Graph 1: EU FF allocations among international organisations



Finding 11 : Effectiveness EQ1, EQ5, EQ6

The EU FF further outlined the importance of supporting food security sector and the agricultural sector in poverty alleviation.

EU FF implementation of the FAO Initiative on Soaring Food Prices

The European Union contributed approximately 241 mn EUR (314 mn USD) to the FAO ISFP through the EU Food Facility. Other donors to the ISFP include: Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Bank. The total funding envelope stands at around 345 mn EUR (449 mn USD).

The instrument provided a rapid response to the crisis and allowed the EU to conduct the dialogue in global fora and with partner countries. The announcement that the EU would contribute 1 billion EUR towards the L'Aquila commitments, whereby countries would seek to mobilise 22 billion USD (14.3 billion EUR), strengthened these commitments, afforded a high visibility to the EU and made it a leader in the accomplishment of this initiative. The creation of the EU FF instrument created much more visibility than would have been given to the attribution of EC funds to a Trust Fund.

The EU FF strengthened the capacity of UN Organisations to implement projects corresponding to the compromises undertaken.

3.2.2 Triggering a positive supply response from the smallholder sector

Finding 12 : Effectiveness EQ1, EQ5, EQ6

The EU FF reached a significant portion of FPC affected persons. However, it was too thinly spread to address the resilience of the remaining population and to encourage a positive supply response from the agricultural sector in target countries and regions.

It is understood that the EU FF never intended to induce major effects on food security situations at national or regional levels, as financing needs to achieve this are far beyond the Facility's allocations.

EU FF interventions reached with intensive support a limited part of the vulnerable population.

In the case of Bangladesh 3 NGO interventions helped about 150,000 persons (30,000 families) and FAO about 82,000 families (410,000 persons); however according to the FAO's definition 40,000,000 people are undernourished in Bangladesh.

As for Haiti, the FAO intervention aided 300,000 vulnerable families in 5 communities, but only about 10,000 may have benefitted intensively; the AFD intervention assisted the 2,350 families using the existing irrigation schemes and about 310 persons in the Central Plateau. The total number of people undernourished in Haiti is about 5.5 million, half of them living in urban areas.

While not aiming at achieving impacts at national level, the regulation preamble states in its paragraph 14 :*"The Measures adopted with this financing facility should help developing countries to boost agricultural productivity in the next seasons, to respond rapidly to the immediate needs of the countries and their population and to take initial steps needed to prevent as far as possible further food insecurity situations and also contribute to mitigating the effects of the volatile food prices globally, to the benefits of the poorest people, of small-holders farmers, and also European consumers and farmers"*.

Most of the EU FF interventions tackled vulnerable small-holders in the rural areas with a certain capacity to providing a supply response. 145 out of 232 interventions Food Facility interventions (62%) had activities aiming at improving agricultural production and/or access to inputs. Thus they permitted an improved food security for the beneficiaries and their families. It is impossible to give an exact indication concerning the population or the percentage of "FPC affected persons" which has benefitted from economic and social support activities, but estimates made on the basis of the project applications and data gathered by the EC, are around **60 million persons having directly benefitted from interventions under the EU FF** (estimates rise to 93 million people benefiting directly or indirectly, excluding Budget Support and Regional projects)³³.

However the level of support achieved is very variable and the sustainability of achievements remains fragile. Further support for resilience of the remaining population will be needed³⁴. It is impossible to indicate the full number of beneficiaries of the EU FF interventions for the following reasons:

**Enhancing Livestock Production to support Vulnerable Populations affected by Volatile Food Prices in Kenya
Financing: 5.46 mn EUR**

The project beneficiaries were identified as rural, livestock-dependent households. Active selection was used to ensure that the most vulnerable members of communities, often women, were targeted. In total, the project reached 2.765.600 beneficiaries, which is significantly higher than the initial target of 1.080.000 individuals. The reason for this discrepancy is the inclusion of 1.2 million indirect beneficiaries of a radio-based dairy training programme.

With regard to improved access to agricultural inputs, the Project enabled the following:

- 64,285 households received Rift Valley Fever (RVF) vaccinations for their livestock. As vaccination targeted RVF hotspots, there was no specific targeting of vulnerable human communities. The estimated number of animals per household was 14. As a result, more than 950 000 animals were vaccinated against RVF in November and December 2009 to reduce the risk of an outbreak during El Niño-related flooding.
- 35,804 households received PPR (La Peste des Petits Ruminants) and CCPP (Contagious Caprine Pleuro Pneumonia) vaccinations for their livestock, representing respectively a total of 186,325 and 352,733 animals vaccinated against the two diseases. As with RVF vaccination, there was no specific targeting for vulnerable households, as the aim of the vaccination campaign was to cover at least 80% of the local livestock population.
- 4,017 animals were immunised against East Coast Fever within the smallholder dairy sector, at an average of two animals per household.

ii) There exists no clear definition of "FPC affected persons". Thus, it is impossible to indicate the percentage of FPC affected populations per country which have benefitted from the EU FF's activities.

iii) Projects tend to benefit target populations with different levels of intensity (e.g. one project was working with 1 000 seed farmers but potential beneficiaries will be 100,000 farmers which

³³ DG DEVCO, C1.

³⁴ FAO, The State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2010: 925 million people were facing food security problems in 2010.

will have access to improved seed). Often economic and social support activities are provided by the same intervention to the same or different target groups. (Calculations made on the basis of available ROM reports indicate that the investment per direct beneficiary varies between 7 USD and 866 USD, which provides evidence of different levels of support)

iv) Definition between “direct” and “indirect” beneficiaries is not standardised

v) Many projects indicate as “beneficiaries” those who have benefitted from counselling or indirectly from the strengthening of their institutions. Beneficiaries of interventions under budget support are the whole population of the respective country.

vi) General Budget Support and Sector Budget Support (representing around 13% of the total facility allocations) reached a much larger number of beneficiaries but the exact figures are not available. In addition, in some instances (e.g. Tajikistan) Budget support was not targeting directly agricultural productivity or the governance of the agriculture sector, but were rather oriented towards relieving households’ budgets in order to ensure greater economic capacity to access foodstuff from markets.

Finding 13 : *Effectiveness EQ5*

Access to agricultural inputs for target populations or countries was significantly improved thanks to EU FF interventions.

EC-FAO Farmer Input Support Response Initiative (FISRI) to Rising Prices of Agricultural Commodities in Zambia
Financing: 7,5 mn EUR

Electronic vouchers as a means of providing quality agricultural inputs to farmers on time and at minimum transaction costs were supplied to 7,950 Lead farmers for purchasing seeds, fertilisers, tools and Conservation Agriculture (CA) equipment.

Feedback from officials of the Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives, farmers, Agro dealers etc. was positive and initial results in the fields under CA visited during the ROM mission clearly showed increased yields as compared to traditional methods. Conservation Agriculture Programme (CAP), Conservation Agriculture for Production and Productivity (CASPP), Conservation Farming Unit (CFU), Zambian National Farmers' Union (ZNFU) indicate that the technology is accepted by the farming community and initial results indicate that crop increases have been realised. During the dry spell (February 2011) it was clearly demonstrated that the agricultural production under CA, mainly vegetables, were resistant to water scarcity. It is estimated that approximately 200,000 households (HH) are now practicing CA.

Analysis of the portfolio of interventions financed under the EU FF shows that interventions were mainly oriented towards “boosting production”. About 50 of 148 interventions analysed indicated the distribution of agricultural inputs (including seed production and distribution of improved seeds) as a key activity³⁵.

Further to the provision of funding for the distribution of fertiliser and seed, specific efforts were made to strengthen the national and regional production seed industry by promoting the production of high- yielding seed, which at the same time was adapted to soil and climatic conditions of target countries. This was

done through interventions implemented by International Organisations, Regional Organisations Non-Governmental Organisations. Seed and seedling production was reported to be successful, but the full effects and impacts will only be seen in the future, after improved seeds have been used by an important share of producers under normal farm-conditions.

³⁵ Annex 5, EQ6, JC 6.1, Ind 6.1.2, point 4: 34 % (the majority) of the interventions were related to improve input access.

Thanks to improved access to agricultural inputs, small scale irrigation facilities and intensified extension services, about 50% of the interventions in beneficiary countries reported a 25% increase of areas under production by their direct beneficiaries. Similarly, almost 50% of direct beneficiaries reported an increase of more than 25% in productivity of their crops³⁶.

These data coincide with observations made by the evaluation team during field visits to 12 selected countries. However, in several of the visited projects the crops were not by then harvested so it was impossible to quantify the increase of production.

**EC-FAO Supporting rural poor communities in Mozambique
against the effect of soaring food prices
Financing: 7 mn EUR**

25 000 farmers benefitted from subsidized agricultural inputs (seeds and fertiliser) during two consecutive agricultural seasons, leading to an expected 50% increased production of maize and rice.

Beneficiaries include 1036 small-scale seed out growers (79.5% women) who received support and produced 23 thousand tons of certified seeds (maize, rice, soya bean, wheat and sunflower). In addition, 1.3 tonnes of basic seed were produced by the Mozambican National Research Institute, which will be further used for multiplication into certified seeds. Furthermore, 5 regional seed quality laboratories were rehabilitated, equipped and their staff trained, enabling better quality control.

**EC-FAO addressing the negative impact of rising food prices on food insecure and vulnerable households in Pakistan
Financing: 15 mn EUR**

Pakistan is listed among the 40 countries where the food prices crisis has exacerbated structural constraints. About 17 million people have joined the food insecure category (60 million) during the current food crisis, bringing the total to about half of the population of Pakistan.

Approximately 17,000 tonnes of crop inputs (quality, high yielding and locally appropriate seed varieties and quality fertilisers) were distributed to more than 94,000 vulnerable farming households in highly food vulnerable areas during four cropping seasons in food-deficient areas of NWFP, Sindh, Baluchistan and Punjab. In addition, households were provided with seed for a secondary crop (lentils, vegetable seed or fodder seed) and 150 secondary irrigation channels were renovated.

The input distribution and irrigation channel renovation allowed farmers to greatly increase their crop yields – both by increasing productivity on already irrigated land and by bringing land back into cultivation where previously water was not available for irrigation. The seed and fertiliser distribution enabled farmers to build up their working capital so that in future they are better able to purchase fresh inputs as necessary to maintain increased productivity. Seed can be multiplied for a further 3-4 seasons before it needs replacing with new stocks. Irrigation canals should be maintained in future under the control of the water users associations.

³⁶ Please note that these data are only indicative (Ind 5.3.1, and 5.3.2), as data were not available for all projects, and information was collected from reports, elaborated at different moments of implementation of projects. However, the information was confirmed after the desk phase, notably through UN reports and field visits.

Finding 14 : *Effectiveness, EQ5*

Food production, food availability and income of direct beneficiaries have increased or will increase soon, however effects are still incipient (due to the only recent completion of the interventions).

Improving the productive output and supply mechanism of the livestock sector (Pakistan)
Financing: 1.96 mn EUR
Implemented by: Plan International

Pakistan is the fourth largest milk producing country in the world. The northern regions of Punjab are much less developed, mostly left aside by the milk industry. The poverty rate in those regions is over 60%, especially in Vehari district. The district's rural regions are mostly inhabited by subsistence and semi-subsistence farmers and rural landless and poor people. The livestock sector is considered to have a huge capacity to absorb unskilled labour and prevent migration to overpopulated urban centres. Within the overall purpose of promoting modern animal husbandry and improving commercial dairy practices among rural subsistence/semi-subsistence livestock farmers, one of the expected results was "Improved household nutritional intake" which the project aimed to achieve by "increasing the nutritional status of children and reducing household discrimination in allocation of resources"

3000 poor farming families, increased their income from milk sales and now have a better access (as well as the rest of the population) to higher quality milk with less spoilage and higher fat content. The increased income from milk sales also allowed families to purchase a greater diversity of other food products in local markets.

A triggering of a positive supply response has been achieved at local level only, as boosting production at national level cannot be achieved in the timeframe of 24-30 months³⁷. The interventions financed under the EU FF are pertinent for the beneficiary countries and beneficiaries are effective; as further to improving food security at family and local level, they permitted to gain experiences which could be used for future interventions (some of the activities promoted need only little investment and may be replicable by the population without further external support). As projects have been completed only recently full effects and impact will be seen in the future only.

Interviews undertaken with beneficiaries during field visits and analysis of reports provided by implementing Organisations confirm that the food production and food availability with the direct beneficiaries of EU FF support have improved (with exception of areas affected by drought or other kinds of natural disasters).

Example related to the importance of consumer habits

In Kenya, EU FF NGO and WB projects successfully re-introduced the sorghum, which has a high protein content and which is more drought tolerant than maize. The main problem of this "orphan crop" was that local population could not re-introduce their habit to cook it, even though this has been lost for only 3 generations.

Thanks to the intensification of production and introduction of new crops (for example horticulture in Bangladesh) beneficiaries have access to more and more diversified food. In many of the agricultural projects, implementing partners introduced diversification of production and production for the market (for example, small animal rearing in Tanzania, fish-ponds in Haiti, vegetable production in both projects in Haiti, medium scale plantain production in Haiti, and several projects in Tanzania). This diversification helped or will help to create a small cash income for families who lived in the past on subsistence and to improve family nutrition.

However the habits of the consumers and the taste of the agricultural products are an important factor affecting the supply response of small-scale farmers.

³⁷ The EU FF permits an implementation only up to November 2011; as FA agreements have been signed from May 2009 onward only; most interventions had an implementation period of 2 years or even less.

EC-FAO mitigating the negative effects of high food prices on local rural population in Nepal
Financing: 8.0 mn EUR

The FPC in Nepal was exacerbated by the drought of 2008- 2009 which led to a reduction in agricultural production and food stocks. At the same time, the country was just recovering from a decade of armed conflict and civil unrest that led to economic instability and general insecurity. The people most vulnerable to soaring food prices were the 31% of the population already living below the poverty line. The majority were spread out in several rural districts that were chronically food-insecure and contained pockets of extreme food insecurity and vulnerability. Around 41% of the poor did not have access to the minimum daily caloric intake requirement, and spent more than 73% of household expenditures on foodstuffs.

FAO distributed quality inputs, including certified rice seeds, to over 100 000 Nepalese farmers and trained them in rice intensification, a method for increasing the productivity of rice by changing the management of plants, soil, water and nutrients. Based on a post harvest survey, farmers boosted their production from 311 kg to 484 kg of food stock – an increase of 55%, and the proportion of farmers able to maintain seed stock from one year to the next has increased from 10% to 65%. Total crop production was boosted by more than 40,000 tons.

3.2.3 Mitigation of effects of the Food Price Crisis on vulnerable population

Finding 15 : Effectiveness, EQ7

Interventions financed under EU FF contributed in mitigating some of the effects of the FPC, but that support arrived late (at least one year after the peak in global food prices)

The EU FF has had a positive effect in mitigating the effects of the FPC in the target countries. In particular, it has increased the supply of food in food-insecure regions - both by direct supply of grain and by increasing agricultural production - and has increased the ability of beneficiaries to purchase food. It has not, however, had a large effect on national food prices as the increases in production were insufficient at national level to significantly influence prices.

EU FF interventions have mainly reached vulnerable populations in the rural areas which were particularly food-insecure, for whom the FPC had exacerbated even further their vulnerability³⁸

Examples related to support provided to children with less than 6 years, breast-feeding and pregnant women

Senegal (WFP): 200,000 persons (30,000 pregnant/breast feeding women and their children) who received agricultural inputs, capacity-building and food vouchers.

Guatemala (WFP): 4,000 farm families who improved their production capacities and quality of maize. 100,000 children from 6-36 months and 50,000 pregnant and breast feeding women received additional food rations; 8,000 subsistence farmers got food rations for participating in training activities.

Niger (UNICEF): 117,000 children with severe and/or acute malnutrition who received treatment; 1.320.000 children who benefitted indirectly thanks to consciousness-raising and awareness-building of mothers in the prevention of malnutrition.

Mali (UNICEF): 63,215 children with severe and acute malnutrition have been taken care of during the period April 2009 – June 2011.

Analysis of the portfolio of interventions gives evidence that support was focused on production of food and access to food, but while the focus on nutrition is rather limited more than one third of the projects had nutrition activities³⁹. Only a limited number of projects directly tackled safety net measures (38) and nutrition (11)⁴⁰ and the support arrived only one year after the peak in global food prices.⁴¹

Several interventions financed under the EU FF, gave a specific attention improving the food security situation of vulnerable targeted persons/children through safety nets

³⁸ Annex 5, EQ6, JC 6.1.

³⁹ Annex 5: only 37 % of the EU FF projects had nutrition related activities.

⁴⁰ Annex 4, EQ6, JC 6.2.

⁴¹ EU FF interventions were approved from May 2009 onward and implementation started when the food prices were down again (in 2009 they returned almost to the level of 2007) and started then to increase slowly to 2010 reaching a new peak in 2011.

activities. However, the overall number of countries and beneficiaries under the EU FF was limited compared to existing needs.

There is evidence from project documentation and final reports that the EU FF has lent important support to improve the food security situation and the nutritional status of vulnerable persons, especially children (particularly in projects financed through UNICEF and WFP). Some components of these interventions targeted women and children (through food vouchers), whilst others were directed at improving food production (thus corresponding more to SO1). Several interventions specifically targeted children up to 6 years of age, pregnant and breast feeding women, in order to diminish the negative effects of the FPC⁴².

However, the FPC had hit severely the landless rural poor and the urban poor, who are not producers and have to buy their food at markets and persons without the capacity to work. Landless rural poor (and sometimes urban poor) were included in the FF through safety nets (e.g. PNSP in Ethiopia) and food for work (e.g. Sierra Leone, Pakistan).

The budget support intervention in Tajikistan was clearly linked to the objective of assuring the punctual payment of the social pensions, by reducing the deficit of the national pension fund.

**Budget Support Component for the Pension Funds under Global Food Facility Programme (Tajikistan);
Financing: 7.65 mn EUR**

Tajikistan is the poorest country in Central Asia, with 57% of the population living below the poverty line of 2 USD /day and 17% in "absolute poverty". Compared to other Central Asian countries, Tajikistan has the highest number of female-headed households, partly due to labour migration. Food prices had more than doubled in 2008 as compared to the same period in 2006 and 2007. Tajikistan is a low-income food deficit country (LIFDC) and imports nearly 50 percent of its cereal needs (with wheat as the main staple). Subsequently, food prices dropped but then rose again to new peaks in 2011. At the same time the financial crisis has resulted in a marked decrease in the number of available jobs in Russia so that the traditional safety net of remittances has been cut. A sector budget support programme of 7.65 mn EUR formed part of the Human Development Support Programme (HDSP) which overall objective is to contribute to *"the improvement of health and social protection status of the population, especially the poor and most vulnerable groups"*. The SBS programme was severely delayed by protracted negotiations between the EU and the Government of Tajikistan. However, the funds were eventually transferred and disbursed through the pension system in the summer of 2010. The pensions target the poorest in Tajik society – in both urban and rural areas. While it is not possible to measure the impact of the small per capita increase in social pension it can be assumed that it allows greater access to the basic needs including food. In fact, the Government of Tajikistan raised social pensions by more than the agreed amount using national budget to make up the additional amount and is likely to continue to raise the pension amounts due to political pressure and demonstrated need. The EU contribution lasted only a short time but with commitment from the government the impact becomes sustainable.

3.2.4 Resilience and improved preparedness for future shocks

Finding 16 : Effectiveness, EQ6

Projects financed under the EU FF have been successful in promoting production and improving food stocks at local level, thus playing a positive role in stabilising food price in rural areas. Rural road, irrigation infrastructure, as well as storage facilities helped to increase production, reduce post harvest losses and connect farmers to markets. In addition, strengthening small-scale farming systems and intensifying production reduced emigration of local agricultural labour force to urban areas. Thus, the EU FF interventions have improved resilience and preparedness for future shocks.

⁴² Annex 4, EQ6, JC6.2.

Improving road and irrigation infrastructure and storage facilities
in HAITI

Financing: 9.6 M EUR

The EU FF-FAO project targeted the sustainable management of natural resources and water storage/management; the intensification and diversification of agricultural production, and the construction of small infrastructures and strengthening of local and decentralised capacities.

Further to other activities realised under the project included:

- 120 water basin of 50m³ each were constructed,
- 732 cisterns of 15m³ each were constructed,
- 3176 silos were constructed and distributed, and
- 12,5 km of rural road were rehabilitated in order to facilitate access to a regional market.

These infrastructures help to improve and diversify production, helping to reduce post harvest losses and facilitate access to markets.

Observations made during field visits suggest that projects “promoting agricultural production” indirectly mitigated the effects of the FPC by improving food stocks at local level, thus playing a positive role in stabilising food prices in rural areas. For example, via an EU FF NGO project in Burkina Faso, short term credit was provided to farmers by local banks after storing part of their production at the community or village levels.

In addition, strengthening small-scale farming systems and intensifying production reduced emigration of the local agricultural labour force to urban areas; for example, in Togo where migration to neighbouring countries was reduced as a result of better profitability of farming following the joint EU FF FAO project support to the most vulnerable households. Farmers reported (in Honduras⁴³ and Haiti) that thanks to the presence of the interventions financed under the EU FF young people have opted to work in their fields and have not emigrated to the urban areas. However, it was impossible to quantify this phenomenon as projects do not normally collecting these kinds of indicators.

Food Crops Wholesale Market in Mbyea and Rukwa region in Tanzania

Financing: 2.39.500 mn EUR

The EU FF project is implemented by the local NGO MVIWATA (National Network of Farmers). MVIWATA identified timely transfer of agricultural produces from production areas as a crucial challenge to the national food security. During national food crisis there is normally a huge variability in food availability at local level with some remote areas in surplus and failing to sell the surplus to deficit areas. MVIWATA came up with the idea to promote better access to markets for small-scale farmers’ products, especially food crops. MVIWATA had already had experience with the construction and organization of markets through projects financed by the French AFD. The overall objective was to secure sustainable access to locally produced food crops for urban and rural populations at less volatile but attractive producer prices. This objective was achieved by constructing two new markets and rehabilitating existing markets through improved infrastructures and enhancing capacity-building of the Market Boards that run the markets. The project was not limited to the construction of the markets (infrastructures) but also created and trained marketed boards, which took over the management of the marketing facilities. Market intelligence strategies to proactively identify food crop production opportunities in relation with estimated quantities and price trends were developed and relationships with local authorities, entrepreneurs and financial institutions were strengthened.

Although the majority of interventions financed under the EU FF were related to the promotion and diversification of agricultural production and to increased productivity, in some countries (e.g. Ethiopia, Niger, Malawi) the national mechanism for crisis management was assisted as well, this helping to mitigate social effects and to increase preparedness for future crises.

Finding 17 :

Relevance, EQ7

Both production capacity and sector governance (at a local level) were increased through targeted actions in 50% of the projects⁴⁴. Strengthened (or new) farmers’ organisations are better able to manage the use of shared facilities and small infrastructure, to access to markets and to claim their rights with local authorities. The shortness of the projects does, however, put into question the sustainability of these gains.

⁴³ Mentioned in 2010 to one of the evaluators by farmers groups benefitting from EU FF interventions

⁴⁴ Annex 4, EQ 7.

A large majority of the EU FF projects aimed at improving production infrastructures (148 interventions), with 121 interventions aimed at seed production, laboratories and storage. A smaller number targeted improved road infrastructures (32) and harvesting infrastructures (34)⁴⁵.

121 interventions covered access to markets while improving governance with participatory planning was covered by 117 projects; 30% of the projects supported access to information on markets⁴⁶.

Institutional capacity building of farmers' organisations was included in almost all production-orientated projects and should result in sustainable increases in productivity although the short duration of many of the actions has limited the effectiveness of this work. Training activities improved profitability and absorption capacity at local level through boosting farmer Organisations and value chains. About 2/3 of all interventions pretended to strengthen farmers associations or cooperatives in order to improve production and marketing.

<p>EUFF-WFP Small Holder Commercialization Programme (SCP) Sierra Leone: DC I-FOOD/2009/209-732 Financing: 5.4 mn EUR</p>
<p>The EU FF-WFP project supported the Government of Sierra Leone Small Holder Commercialization Programme (SCP) that is under the mandate of the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS). Component 5 of the SCP deals with "social protection and productive safety nets" for which WFP is a lead agency. The main focus of Component 5 as set forth by MAFFS includes Inland Valley Swamp (IVS) rehabilitation, tree crop rehabilitation, feeder roads rehabilitation and construction of Agricultural Business Centres (ABCs).</p> <p>The external evaluation commissioned by WFP (August 2011), concluded that the Food Facility had enabled WFP to undertake substantial Food-for-Work (FFW) and Food-for-Training (FFT) activities of ABCs in Sierra Leone and has contributed to the achievement of the Government of Sierra Leone's SCP. The contribution is more evident in the area of productive and social safety nets in selected rural areas. The project has complemented other interventions by FAO, IFAD and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security (MAFFS).</p> <p>With regard to improving the food security of beneficiary families and improving national governance of food security matters, the Project contributed in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8,463mt food and nutritional components distributed under Food for Work (6,795mt cereals, 1,357mt pulses, 311mt oil), • 644,134 EUR Cash for Work distributed, • 3,588ha rehabilitated irrigated land, • 188 post-harvest storage units constructed, • 888km roads constructed, • 43,199 trainees in various subjects.

Thus there is still no information available which shows to what extent the existence of the infrastructures or the capacity-building have permitted the target population and the agricultural sector in general to better respond to future food price crisis and to improve family and national food security situation. This question can be answered only in 2012 and 2013 through the ROM monitoring of projects financed under the EU FF (ex-post).⁴⁷

3.3 Efficiency

This section will develop to what extent funding, human resources, regulatory, administrative, time and other resources contributed to, or hindered the achievement results, based on information gathered towards answering to EQ4: "Did the blend of implementation modalities and eligible partners lead to a cost effective delivery of the EU Food Facility results?"

⁴⁵ Annex 4, EQ 7, JC 7.1.

⁴⁶ Annex 4, EQ 7, JC 7.2.

⁴⁷ See recommendation.

Finding 18 : *Efficiency, EQ4*

The EU FF was designed, approved and implemented extremely rapidly, which showed a high efficiency of all stakeholders

As mentioned before, during the G8+ Summit in Japan (July 2008) the President of the Commission announced the intention of the Commission to propose a quick response Facility by providing 1 billion EUR to mitigate the effects of the FPC.

The design phase for the EU FF was fast and the EU FF was established with Regulation 1337/2008 in December 2008. The very nature of measures provided for under the EU FF called for the establishment of efficient, flexible, transparent and rapid decision-making procedures for their financing, with strong cooperation between all actors concerned.

Milestones in the creation and implementation of EU FF

- 7 July 2008: Commission President commitment in the G8+ Summit
- 16 December 2008: Approval of Regulation 1337/2008 by the EU Parliament and the Council
- 23 March 2009: Approval of 1st batch (313,9 mn EUR)
- 22 April 2009: Approval of 2nd batch (393,8 mn EUR)
- 9 and 22 December 2009: Approval of 3rd batch (129,7 mn EUR)
- 22 April 2010: Approval of 4th batch (145,3 mn EUR)
- 1 June 2011: Approval of overall plan modification

In light of its "rapid intervention" nature, the implementation period of the EU Food Facility was deliberately very short. All activities had to be implemented and paid for by the end of 2011. Therefore, it was of the greatest importance that activities started swiftly and that, where possible, contracting and disbursement be accelerated.

In order to bring about this "rapidity", the Parliament, Council and Commission stated in early December 2008 that "the decision-making procedure for the adoption of the implementation measures must be as simple and as fast as possible for the period up to 30 April 2009"⁴⁸. As a result, three financing decisions were adopted in 2009; a fourth decision was approved in March 2010, and a decision concerning modification of the overall plan and the flexibility of allocations was adopted on the 1st of June 2011.

Finding 19 : *Efficiency , EQ4*

EC HQ and EU Delegations demonstrated a very efficient management of the EU FF

The management of Contribution Agreements with international and regional organisations was centralised in AIDCO's F3 Unit. However, EU Delegations had to be associated with the operational implementation to provide clearance for the "*conforme aux faits*" needed for the subsequent payments, and to ensure systematic daily monitoring dialogue and follow-up of the actions in their respective countries. Overall the EU Delegations maintained a leading coordination role in the implementation of the EU FF.

Within DG DEVCO, a dedicated task force had been active since the 1st of September 2008 to validate the actions and at the same time carry out the formulation. The Food Facility Task Force (FFTF) at Headquarters comprised 10 staff (5 officials, and 5 contractual staff including 2 support staff). In parallel, the Task Force was also in charge of preparing the agreements with relevant partners for the

first phase of implementation, which contained the detailed description of each action and the budget for each. At that stage the scenario was that the programming would be phased, taking into account priority rank of the country and the state of preparation of the actions themselves. The Task Force had also managed the administrative credits foreseen in the Regulation and these funds have been used for monitoring and evaluation of activities as well as other actions to ensure its successful implementation. It was understood that actions would be discussed with geographical Directorates and EU Delegations, for which the actions were also of benefit.

In line with the EU FF Regulation, out of the 1 billion EUR for the EU Food Facility, a maximum of 1.73% (17.3 mn EUR) have been used as administrative credits (ROM, studies, workshops, TA, staff to the Delegations, etc.). This corresponds to less than 2% administration costs foreseen, which shows a very efficient management of the EU FF.

The recruitment of additional contractual agents under the EU FF permitted an adequate follow-up and coordination of interventions. Projects implemented through NSAs were directly followed up by EUDs. In the case of centrally managed interventions (under global contribution agreements with UN organisations and co-financing with EU Member States) the distance between EUDs, EC HQs in Brussels and HQs of partners' institutions made procedures more complex and cumbersome.

3.3.1 Appropriateness and efficiency of the choice of partners

Finding 20 : Efficiency, EQ4

The blend of partners was generally positive and complementary, however, the comparative advantages of each partner have not been sufficiently considered during project attribution in a specific country or context, due to the short design phase of the EU FF and the need to start project implementation quickly.

The strategy for selecting Implementing channels was to adhere to the limitations set by the Regulation and by Parliament; while choosing those channels that would bring effective results on the ground.

64 projects were implemented by International Organisations for a total of 572.4 mn EUR, and 4 regional contracts (2 AU-IBAR, 1 COMESA and 1 IFAD/ECOWAS) amounting to 64 mn EUR.

Grant contracts with NGOs and Member States agencies: An amount of 200 mn EUR was earmarked for the Call for Proposals launched in May 2009 for 35 selected countries. The Call generated more high quality proposals than could be funded from the initial budgetary allocation. Subsequently, supplementary allocations of a total value of 18.8 mn EUR were made in order to finance additional proposals. The Call resulted in 123 grant contracts and 11 Delegation Agreements with MS Agencies (AFD, GTZ and BTC/CTB). AIDCO proceeded to full devolvement of these contracts (financial and operational management) to the respective EUDs. Furthermore, partnerships with local and international NGOs under the EU Food Facility were not solely limited to direct contracts funded under Call for Proposals 2009. More than 300 local and international NGOs were used as implementing partners by International Organisations, with over 53 mn EUR allocated under the EU Food Facility projects until 2010.

Budget support measures: 10 budget support measures were implemented for a total of 127.2 mn EUR, managed by the EU Delegations and AIDCO Geographical Directorates.

The use of **UN organisations offered** advantages, mostly related (1) to their capacity to reach more beneficiaries through governmental agencies at national level, (2) their presence with own offices in many of the partner countries and resulting from this their privileged relation with national

Governments and regional organisations, (3) the existence of a “standard” administration and contribution agreements which permit the rapid signing of agreements; (4) their high absorption capacity and (5) their accomplishment with formal EC requirements. This made them the ideal partner organisations for assuring a rapid start up of interventions (batch 1 and 2). On the other hand International agencies operate with their distinctive set of rules and procedures (compared to the EU), which can be perceived as a constraint.

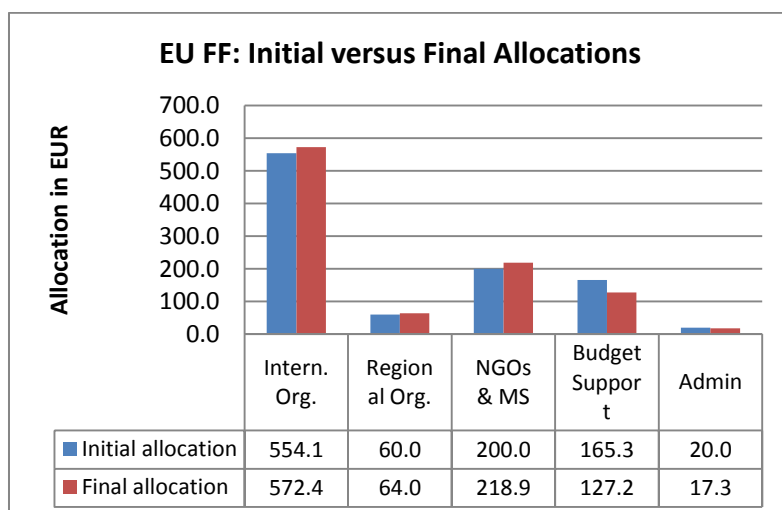
UN and WB bodies acted as channels for 81 interventions in 45 countries and for 60 % of the funds provided under the EU FF. To prepare and implement a significant number of interventions in a very short timeframe is obviously challenging in terms of efficiency for the implementing agency. With the EU FF, UN bodies agreed to work outside their normal formats or types of activity (especially concerning the period of implementation), as the UN was highly interested in this type of cooperation.

BS and CfP came in the process at a later stage when CNAs were already approved (batch 3 and 4). NGOs made enormous efforts in project preparation, but many projects proposed were too ambitious for the time foreseen for implementation (as NGOs had identified the projects in order to present them for financing with other financial instruments). Although the awarding of grants following a Call for Proposals is lengthier, projects have implementation approaches which are often closer to beneficiaries (especially if they are already working in the country). By providing a very close and “tailor-made “ support very often good results can be achieved, but the replication of the support (at country or regional level) is often reduced.

BS interventions were only implemented in those countries which had good own policies for replying to the FPC and which were already receiving BS under other instruments. BS interventions demonstrated all the advantages (low transaction costs and full national ownership) and disadvantages (funds disbursed cannot be directly related to needs created by the FPC) related to budget support. Furthermore, they were disbursed when the FPC was almost over.

Support to ROs was mainly provided complementarily to other interventions (mainly Intra ACP) under implementation.

Graph 2: Comparison between indicative and final EU Food Facility allocations (mn EUR)



3.3.2 Efficiency in the design of project proposals and implementation

Finding 21 : Efficiency , EQ4

The enormous time pressure in implementation affected the design of the projects, many projects were overambitious and needed contractual amendments during the implementation period.

There is evidence from interviews with the EU HQ in Brussels and with implementing partners, that the need for implementing a high number of interventions in a very limited timeframe created an enormous pressure on both (1) the staff involved in decision-making processes at EC HQ and EUD level, as well as on (2) NGOs and IOs which had to formulate projects and prepare related proposals and other documents. As a result, the application of participatory approaches in project preparation became reduced, which made important work on consultation necessary once the field phase started.

The FF has allowed a wide diversity of FS projects. Thus, existing projects of partners have been scaled up or already elaborated project proposals have been adapted to the specific objectives of the EU FF. As a result many projects tried to tackle too many problems and had an overambitious design; as a result they developed problems at the start of the implementation phase: more than 50% of RO and IO projects had to be amended for no cost time extension and adaptation of objectives/results. BS and NGO projects did not suffer from this difficulty. NGOs faced fewer difficulties as they had had more time to prepare their project proposals following the CfP. However, in order to be selected they often indicated overambitious targets as well.

The implementation period for most interventions was very short for achieving the objectives and assuring the sustainability of results. Although the fast track procedures permitted a quick approval and official start of interventions, implementation at field level was often delayed. This was especially true in all cases where the implementing partner was not already present in the project region and had to undergo installation procedures and recruitment of project staff. On the other hand, projects implemented through partners already working in the region and with their own permanent staff (for example farmers' organisations in Tanzania) could start implementation immediately.

EUDs have not taken the main role in the definition of aid modalities, as this was mainly achieved at EC HQs⁴⁹. The EUD participated more in the definition of the action⁵⁰, EU FF information process for NGOs orientation in donor group meetings and in Call for Proposals evaluation. FF Budget Support in support of the GBS has permitted the EUD to assist governments quickly. However, in around 50 % of the IOs projects the need for speed led to deficiencies in EUD consultation in the design process requiring an addendum.

Finding 22 : Efficiency EQ4

Efficiency of implementation varied greatly according to country, project and implementation channel.

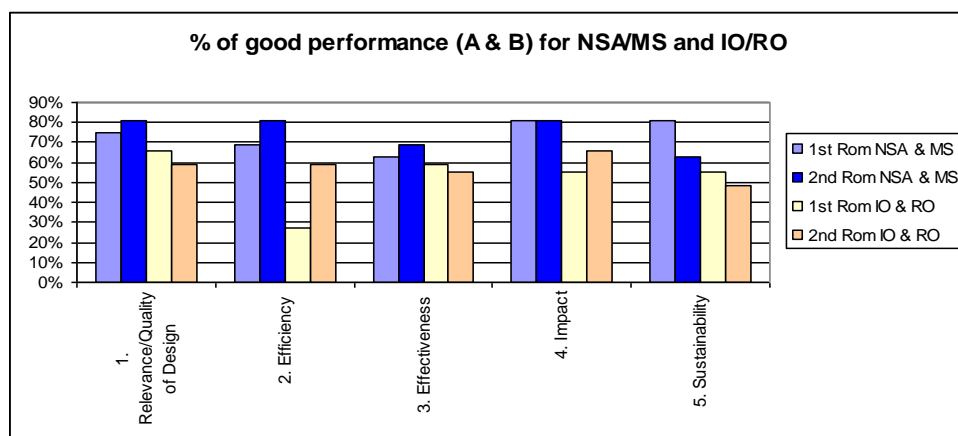
More than 70% (in budgetary terms) of the entire EU Food Facility interventions were monitored by the ROM system. The final report of the ROM of the EU FF was released in October 2011. A total of

⁴⁹ E General Survey to EUD: The EUD was consulted and has taken a main role in the definition of aid modality: 16 cases; The EUD was consulted but has not taken a main role in the definition of aid modality: 21 cases;

⁵⁰ E General Survey to EUD: The EUD was consulted and has taken a main role in the definition of the action: 24 cases; The EUD was consulted but has not taken a main role in the definition of the action: 19 cases

249 ROM missions were conducted on the EU FF projects over the period of implementation, including 45 projects monitored twice (re-monitoring). The ROM-response results concerning any change of performance (in the best grades, A and B)⁵¹ for the NGOs (NSAs) and Member States agencies (MS), derived from the Calls for Proposals (CfP), were compared with the International (IO) and Regional Organisations (RO).

Graph 3: Performance in EU FF interventions monitored twice

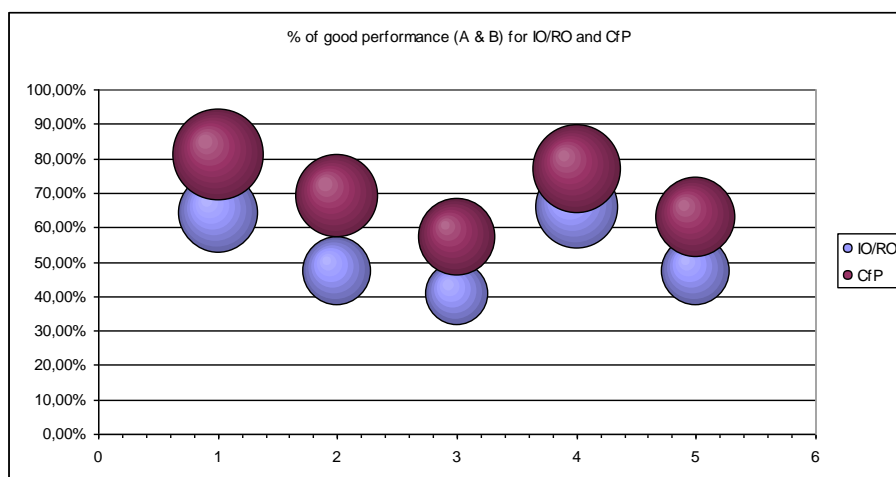


For projects monitored twice, the Graph 3 shows improvements in term of relevance/quality of design for the NGOs/MS projects, but a slight decrease for the IO/ROs. The relevance/quality lower rating for IO/ROs could be attributed to the need for adjustments in the project design that would have already been addressed at an earlier stage during the Call for Proposal procedure for NGOs/MS. The efficiency improved significantly, both for NGOs/MS and IO/ROs. The 'Effectiveness' criterion shows improvement for NGOs/MS but a slight decrease for IO/ROs, which could be partially explained by the more complex/heavier structure of IO/ROs, and their being slower to adapt. The impact remained stable for NGOs/MS, and improved overtime for IO/ROs. For all projects, the decrease in the 'Sustainability' criterion could be explained by factors such as the lack of exit-strategies and the short projects' lifetime.

⁵¹ A and B grades correspond to project performance:

- **very well (A):** The situation is considered highly satisfactory, largely above average and potentially a reference for good practice. Recommendations focus on the need to adopt these good practices in other operations.
- **well (B):** The situation is considered satisfactory, but there is room for improvements. Recommendations are useful, but not vital for the operation.

Graph 4: percentage of Good performance (RP% score A & B)



Graph 4 also outlines a better overall performance for the NGOs/MS in comparison with the IO/RO projects for all DAC criteria⁵².

This could be explained by the difference in contract award procedures: for NGOs/MS, the projects went through a Call for Proposals, a slower procedure providing therefore more time for better identification and formulation of project activities. Implementation of projects through IOs (under global contribution agreements) was hampered by heavy procurement procedures applied by centrally-managed Project Implementation Units (related to recruitment of staff and procurement of equipment and materials). In several cases, procurement of inputs necessary for project implementation took more than 15 months, leaving a very limited period for their use during project implementation.

Results of monitoring missions have however important limitations and can be seen as indicative only:

- Many missions have taken place in an early phase of the projects so that effectiveness, impact and sustainability were only “expected”;
- Efficiency of projects of IOs and ROs is necessarily lower in the start-up phase due to more complex procedures and a heavier administrative apparatus.

ROM mention as factors limiting efficiency of interventions (especially the bigger interventions):

- Centralized decision-taking processes
- Tender procedures, especially for bigger projects, which make international tender necessary. In several monitoring reports it was mentioned that seeds and fertiliser arrived late due to heavy tender procedures (in the case of IOs and ROs). These tender procedures are concentrated in the HQ of the institutions.
- Limitation of the “delegation of Authority” of implementing units was too limited so that specific authorisations from HQ (of FAO) had to be taken;

The per-capita costs per direct intervention are so highly variable.

- FAO cost per direct beneficiary varies from 4 – 833 EUR, in the case of WFP from 6- 29 EUR, in the case of UNICEF from 3- 111 EUR.

⁵² ROM Final Report FF, chap 3.3.3.

- Even within the same countries are considerable differences: for example Niger 2-211 EUR, Afghanistan 53-100 EUR.

Different costs per capita are related to the different levels of services and support provided, however, it is impossible in this evaluation to make interventions “comparable” as implementing agencies in their majority offer a package of support.

Finding 23 : *Efficiency , EQ4*

The administrative costs of implementing partners’ amount to around 7%, but other “hidden” costs apply in interventions carried out by International Organisations.

Most projects (NGO, IOs and MS) had an overhead cost of 7%. This was the maximum allowed. However, an analysis of project documents suggests that the real costs related to administration and operation are higher.

Projects implemented by Regional Organisations subcontracted a major part of the implementation to national organisations and therefore the creation of an additional layer of administration was necessary. However, IOs also used to subcontract many of its project activities. For example the Kenya FAO project report mentions 32 sub-contracted implementing partners – government agencies and NGOs. The FAO project report in Zimbabwe mentions 16 implementing partners, and the problems it faced in coping with the twice-delayed end date⁵³.

The use of UN organisations for interventions, which can be implemented by NSAs increased costs, as often sub-contracting of activities at field level to NSAs or other UN organisations became necessary, alternatively field operations were implemented by staff paid and equipped according to UN standards.

In addition, projects which concentrated on infrastructure (e.g. with a high component for seeds, fertiliser and cement) tended to have a low human resource percentage whereas others, which were more focused on training had a much higher human resource component.

Furthermore, it is very difficult to come to specific conclusions concerning the efficiency of the execution of interventions financed under global contribution agreements as they are managed by the HQ (both EC and the implementing UN organization) and cover several interventions in different countries at the same time. Thus, access to details of expenditures at field level is limited. However, there exists some proxy indicators (high staff costs both for international and national staff involved in project implementation, high investments in logistics etc, sub-contracting of other organisations and further institutions for implementation of part of the activities etc) suggesting a limited cost effectiveness of these operations.⁵⁴ By analysing project implementation documents, it was observed that sub-contracting of services from the implementing partners (especially International Organisations) to other partners (UNOPS, national public institutions, NGOs etc) increased the complexity of overall implementation and administrative costs. Financial reporting is done in global

⁵³ Annex 5 desk analysis, JC 1.2.

⁵⁴ Analysis of a small sample of interventions implemented by FAO, showed that the incidence of human resources and travel corresponded to between 3,25% and almost 24% of the total directly eligible costs. There was evidence for a direct relation between a relatively small value of the intervention and a high incidence of human resources and travel related costs. With WFP, the incidence varied between 9,87 and 32,89%, whilst with UNICEF it varied between 11,4% and 14,21%. Additionally, in most cases local operating costs are also financed through global contribution agreements. The same sample of interventions showed the incidence of local operating costs compared with total directly eligible costs of FAO (1,05% - 8,74%); UNICEF (0,76% - 3,21%); WFP (0%- 10,22%). However, the analysis is somewhat complex as some implementing agencies are subcontracting, thus so far UNICEF has subcontracted about 56,1% of eligible funds in Liberia and 44% in Mali; FAO indicates as “others” between 0,6% and 23,8% of sample interventions analysed.

figures by the implementing institutions, without giving details related to the contracts signed with sub-contractors/service providers at field level.

This has to be counter balanced by the very efficient management of the EU FF by EC headquarters. By contracting International Organisations for the delivery of services to the field, the EC has also shifted part of its overhead costs onto partner's organisations.

3.4 Impact

This section will present EUFF impact of developing countries affected by the soaring food price crisis, based on information gathered for EQ8 “To what extent has the EU Food Facility contributed to improving the food security situation of beneficiary countries beyond its period of implementation.”

3.4.1 Of the EU-FF as an Instrument

Finding 24 : Impact, EQ8

The EC, through its decision to support the coordinated international response to the FPC, has brought food security and rural development at the forefront of its own development cooperation agenda and of the international development agenda. In addition, the EC has gained significant visibility through the implementation of the EU FF, thus strengthening its leading role in the international response.

While the EU deployed other instruments in response to the crisis, these were not sufficiently flexible or had sufficient funding to allow the necessary response to the crisis so the creation of a specific instrument was necessary. The EU FF instrument provided a rapid response to the crisis and allowed the EU to conduct a dialogue in global fora and with partner countries. The announcement that the EU would contribute 1 billion EUR towards the L’Aquila commitments, whereby countries would seek to mobilise 22 billion USD (14.3 billion EUR), strengthened these commitments, afforded a high visibility to the EU, made it a leader in the accomplishment of this initiative and strengthened its cooperation with the UN Organisations including WB.

By creating a “specific instrument” in response to the FPC agriculture development and food security were brought to the forefront of the EC development cooperation and the international development agenda⁵⁵. This achievement would not have been reached by increasing funding through existing instruments. Furthermore, EU cooperation has gained much more visibility.

3.4.2 Improvement of the food security situation of beneficiary countries

Finding 25 : Impact, EQ8

The food security situation remains difficult in several developing countries that have benefitted from EUFF, however interventions under EUFF have contributed to reduce negative impact of food insecurity on direct beneficiaries.

Statistics published by GIEWS show that there is to date no evidence of any significant increase of staple food production in the developing world, on average, over 2007-2011, that could be causally linked to the internationally concerted response (including the EU FF) to the world food prices increase. However, regional differences were observed (which seem to depend to a large extent on weather conditions). In fact, in March 2012 according to GIEWS the following countries which were beneficiaries of EU FF are considered as still food insecure and requiring food assistance: Burkina Faso, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Zimbabwe, Eritrea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Burundi, Central Africa Republic, Congo, Ivory Coast, DRC, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Senegal, Somalia, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Haiti.

⁵⁵ The share of ODA devoted to agriculture reached a level of 19 percent in 1980, but fell to 3.8 percent in 2006. However it seems that this trend is slightly reversing.

Several developing countries have shown a better food security situation in 2010 than in 2008. However, this benefit was mainly related to exceptionally good harvests, and has been lost again in 2011. For example, whilst East Africa showed an increase in production in 2010, in 2011 several countries sustained serious losses in the production of staple foods due to drought.

There have been a series of external factors (climatic factors, earthquakes, conflicts, financial crisis etc) that have affected developing countries since 2008. Additional increase in food prices is related to the high fuel costs that are putting upward pressure on food prices in many African countries. However the support provided mitigated at beneficiary level the effects of the FPC and other adverse factors. It contributed to an improved resilience and response capacities of the small-holder farming sector.⁵⁶

Although the majority of interventions financed under the EU FF are related to the promotion and diversification of agricultural production and to increased productivity, in some countries (e.g. Ethiopia, Niger, Malawi, national mechanism for management of crisis were assisted as well), this helped to mitigate social effects and to increase preparedness for future crises.

Finding 26 :

Impact, EQ8

EUFF triggered local supply response, permitted resilience of direct beneficiaries who will be better prepared for future shocks.

There is some evidence that interventions financed under the EU FF were effective and that production increased with direct beneficiaries and that they will be better prepared for future shocks. Better storage facilities, access to small scale irrigation, access to information and markets, diversification of production, access to improved varieties of seeds all contribute to reduce vulnerability in the case of future shocks.

There is evidence from field visits and study of documentation that interventions under EU FF have improved a diversification of production and introduced varieties of crops which are better adapted to the climatic situation of target countries; reducing the vulnerability of producers to the volatility of food prices.

However, analysis of project documentation and results of field visits suggest that interventions did not tackle the urban poor or landless farmers, besides some short-term Food for Work activities, which permitted improved access only for a very limited period. Thus this population will continue to remain highly vulnerable to the volatility of prices.

Finding 27 :

Impact EQ8

EU FF allowed important lessons to be drawn at the general and country levels and successful interventions may be replicated by donors or national governments.

⁵⁶ Capacity of farmers to increase production depends on their capacity to increase their production area and/or to increase productivity (through the use of fertilizers, improved seeds, pesticides, irrigation, and mechanization). The lack of access to land, credit, technological packages and inputs (in particular seeds and fertilizers) and reluctance to take risks; severely constrain farmers' capacity to enhance their productivity and production, which are also highly dependent on climatic conditions. Under the EU FF, attempts were made to tackle some of these factors hampering supply response to the FPC. However, the available time period was too short, and the interventions too dispersed for achieving significant results at country or regional level. External factors, like the drought in Kenya and Somalia and the earthquake in Haiti, and unsatisfactory security situations also negatively affected the supply response.

Interventions financed in the context of the EU FF were too small in investment per country to allow a significant impact in the form of improved food security at national or regional level to be achieved. This relates mainly to the relatively small investment per beneficiary country compared with its overall investment needs, and the complexity of factors that has led to the FPC (and which cannot be tackled in the short term and without serious internationally concerted policy decisions in the affected countries). However, important lessons have been learnt and many activities undertaken under the EU FF would be replicable at regional or national level with adequate funding.

Finding 28 : Impact , EQ8

EU FF have strengthened existing safety-nets and permitted social service provision to the most vulnerable groups of the population; however, these services cannot be sustainable without external support.

Relief interventions providing support to children suffering from acute and severe malnutrition and support to safety-nets are not fully sustainable, but may contribute to the improvement to the food security situation of beneficiaries and their families. In fact, the support provided to children suffering from malnutrition is accompanied by consciousness-raising and training of mothers in order to improve nutrition (with the means available). Most support to safety-nets is accompanied by training on nutrition or a component for small-scale production.

Finding 29 : Impact/Sustainability , EQ8

Analysis of UN final reports, ROM monitoring reports and observations made during field visits give clear evidence that some EU FF interventions provided a bridge between emergency and longer-term interventions.

The FAO Pakistan project provided an exact bridge with an incoming FSTP programme showing a perfect example of continuum between rehabilitation with EU FF - medium term action with FSTP. The UNICEF Mali EU FF intervention was a logical continuation of an ECHO funded programme, an FAO project in Lesotho provided a bridge from an ECHO project, continuing the action with a longer-term perspective and orientation. Also, FAO projects in Kenya and Guatemala are good examples of ECHO interventions scaled up through the EUFF. The WB in Kenya provides subsidies via voucher system for buying fertilizers and is a bridge for rural development as it strengthens the resilience of local markets. Few of the NGO projects studied provided a bridge between emergency interventions and development actions implemented by other EC instruments (ROM reports). In most cases NGO projects meet both needs in a package of short and medium - term actions within the programme and act in areas where large-scale relief efforts are not under way. Some exceptions occur like French Red Cross organization that continued ECHO projects in Togo and Mauritania. The majority of the BS interventions are related to top up funding allowing the beneficiary government to implement its policies related to the agricultural sector and/or to maintain the macroeconomic stability of the country. In almost all cases donors have already provided BS before the FPC and will do it in future as well. Thus the provision of additional funds under the EU FF can be interpreted as a "filling of a financial gap".

It was impossible however to identify the share of interventions which will be followed up by longer-term interventions, especially as the Programming for the 11th EDF has not been completed yet and many of the NSAs were still presenting their proposals to donor community. However, other NGOs – which are permanently based in the partner countries – will continue support to target groups under their normal work plans.

Concerning the Regional Organizations, there is no evidence that interventions implemented by Regional Organisations are bridging emergency and long- term intervention. The impression is that support provided through ROs is permitting ROs to implement their own long term working plan and priorities (which is not negative, but not related directly to the Food Price Crisis).

3.5 Sustainability

This section will tackle whether the results are being, or likely to be, maintained over time, based on EQ 8: “To what extent has the EU Food Facility contributed to improving the food security situation of beneficiary countries beyond its period of implementation?”

3.5.1 Sustainability of the production activities

Finding 30 : Sustainability EQ1

Sustainability of the production activities is expected to be reasonable although the short time frame did not allow the new and strengthened organisations to become fully self-sustaining. Monitoring reports, field visits and analysis of final reports suggest that there are still some difficulties related to sustainability of EU FF results.

There is evidence⁵⁷ from interviews with implementing partners and beneficiaries at field level and from documentation (ROM and final reports), that the short implementation period has negatively affected the sustainability of the interventions. This is especially the case with all those interventions that are implemented by partners not previously present in the project areas. In fact, several of the projects visited during the country visits have, with difficulty, succeeded in completing infrastructure and softer activities (in some instance, they have not even succeeded in completing all activities), and had insufficient time for tutoring the beneficiaries in the use and management of the infrastructures (in order to derive the best benefits from these).

Thus, the lasting benefit of the medium and longer-term actions will vary greatly. In many cases infrastructure (irrigation, farm machinery, storage etc) will last at least five years and given proper maintenance will last much longer. The value of the farm inputs (mainly seed and fertilisers) was essentially short-term but with longer-term benefits through the greater ability of small-scale farmers to repurchase the inputs in the future and the increased value of improved seed for at least 3 generations of multiplication. However, the ability of food-insecure farmers to save cash and farm outputs from one season to the next is always dependent on their immediate needs.

Discussions with some implementing partners (with either them or their national partners having a permanent presence in the beneficiary country) suggest that their interventions will have a better sustainability (if they succeed in finding some funding). They will continue to follow-up activities and support beneficiaries even after the completion of interventions. However, most of these kind of intervention financed under the EU FF, have been more “identified” as part of a global development/working programme of the implementing partner for a region or community than as a direct response to the FPC.

Interventions related to the basic nutrition of highly vulnerable people (severely under-nourished) cannot be self-sustainable and beneficiary countries and eventually other stakeholders will have to continue support through other means to achieve any lasting impact.

Many projects which aim to increase the capacity of local communities over the long term were too short to achieve full sustainability. These projects would benefit from follow-up programmes but unless rural development is a focal area of the EU delegation or other donors can be found it is difficult for them to secure funding and many of the positive effects of the EU FF may be lost.

⁵⁷ Annex 5, EQ8, JC 8.3, Ind 8.3.1: only 50 % of projects show evidence of sustainability and exit strategies.

3.5.2 National Appropriation

Finding 31 : Sustainability EQ1

Support implemented through beneficiary governments or in coordination with beneficiary governments are more likely to be sustainable

There is evidence⁵⁸ that interventions which benefited from a close coordination with national institutions or were in some cases even co-implemented through national institutions had better perspectives of sustainability. Beneficiary governments will make efforts to support sustainability of activities with their own national budget or through additional external financing. National participating institutions confirmed that they are willing to provide follow-up to interventions and further support their beneficiary populations. However, financial and personnel restrictions within national institutions after the ending of the EU FF interventions may well negatively affect the continuity and intensity of support.

Project documentation and interviews during field visits indicated that all interventions financed in the form of budget support by the national governments benefited from a high appropriation of the same. Support provided under Budget Support is spent by the beneficiary government in the same year of disbursement. Thus, sustainability of the interventions financed by national governments applies only during the respective calendar year. Considering that Budget Support is supporting national policies, however, there is a high probability that implementation of these policies will be supported in future with external donor support or internal financing by the Governments concerned.

⁵⁸ Annex 5, EQ8, JC 8.4, Ind 8.4.1: up to 80% of the EUFF interventions have contributed to improvement of the FS policies and strategies.

3.6 The 3 Cs

The coordination and complementarities of the EU FF intervention with other donors' interventions; and the coherence with the relevant Commission interventions and the partner governments' priorities and activities in the field of food security will be analysed based on EQ3: "to what extent where interventions under the EU FF coherent, coordinated and complementary with other EC instruments and with other donors' intervention?".⁵⁹

Finding 32 : Relevance, EQ3

The EU FF is fully coherent with the Declaration of the World Summit for Food Security and supports, in countries affected by the FPC, the four pillars of EU food security policy: availability of food (at national and regional levels); access to food (by households); food use and nutritional adequacy (at the individual level); and crisis prevention, preparedness and management.

The design of the EU FF was based on the Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security and tackled all aspects of food security through its interventions.

Internally coherence is given as well and the Desk Phase analysis found that EU FF interventions were coherent and complementary with interventions implemented under existing EC instruments (the EDF-B envelope, FSTP and ECHO) in response to the FPC and vice versa. Although both interventions (EU FF and the standard EC instruments) were quite similar in terms of objective, channel of implementation and partners, there were no signs of duplication of action. In some cases, activities implemented through the existing instrument complemented the activities undertaken through the EU FF by targeting urban populations. For example, the FSTP 2008 programming was mainly related to food security interventions (6 out of 14), 7 social transfers of which 3 through budget support and 1 food distribution (school lunches). Two interventions specifically targeted urban areas. Field visits confirmed the coherence and complementarities found between EU FF and other EU instruments, although not always between NGOs and IOs.

The EU HQs and EUD staff facilitated the coherence, coordination and complementarity of the FF projects at country and regional level. However the CfP managed at HQ level led to some incoherency in the EU FS/RD programming, because they had focused in geographical areas that were not prioritised by the EUD⁶⁰.

3.6.1 Complementarity

Finding 33: 3C, EQ3

Coherence and complementarity amongst interventions financed by EU under different financing instruments were good.

EU FF is complementary to Programmed Cooperation financed under NIPs and RIPs , Intra-ACP cooperation, V-Flex and Flex , support provided under ECHO and especially to the Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP), which had an allocated budget of 925 mn EUR for 2007-2010⁶¹

⁵⁹ EQ3: to what extent were interventions under the EUFF coherent, coordinated and complementary with other EC instruments and with other donors' intervention?

⁶⁰ Annex 6 Country Note Kenya of Field Evaluation.

⁶¹ to be used for the following priorities: Priority 1: supporting research, innovation and information distribution in matters relating to food security, with a special focus on supporting the enhancement of capacities and scientific and technological cooperation; Priority 2: linking information and decision making in order to enhance response strategies; Priority 3: using the potential of continental and regional approaches (support to regional initiatives in Asia and Latin America, as well as

There is evidence that interventions under the EU FF complemented other interventions financed in the form of programmed budget support to the same countries (scaling-up). Thus, it was fully complementary to Budget Support provided under other financing instruments. Budget support interventions were always coordinated with all the other donors providing support to the beneficiary governments through budget support.

Many of the interventions financed under the EU FF are scale-up interventions of IOs, ROs or NGOs and as such they are complementary to the original financing. An example is the intervention implemented through the AFD in Haiti, which is complementary to more than 10 years of intervention financed under bilateral cooperation of France and implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture of Haiti.

Externally it is complementary to support provided by other international donors and especially WB, UN Organisations and EU Member States.

3.6.2 Coordination

Finding 34 : 3C, EC3

EU FF support has been provided in a coordinated way with the UN agencies and is based on national governments priorities; coordination between stakeholders at country level varies from country to country.

There is evidence (from project documents and field visits) that national policies and beneficiary governments' priorities have been taken into consideration in project design, as intended through UN countries needs assessments. However **not all beneficiary countries have a well-defined food security policy** (sometimes agriculture and food security are part of Poverty Reduction Plans) so that even inter-institutional coordination is sometimes difficult. In some countries, coordination of activities is more difficult than in others, especially if different national agencies work in the sector.

The utilization of the UN system for elaborating the need assessments has permitted the delivery of a rather coordinated response to the FPC, fully in line with the CFA and the declarations made in the FAO High Level Conference on World Food Security.

At country level, the coordination of EU FF interventions with other donor actions and national programmes varied widely between countries and was not in all cases optimal. Interventions financed under EU FF were tackled in sector working groups (related to GBS, SBS, agriculture, food security) together with other aspects related to the sector. In all countries where this kind of working group exists, EUD staff was actively participating. Development partners were informed of interventions financed under EU FF in the context of these working groups, and coordination organised by the EUDs and/or beneficiary governments. The appointment of additional staff for following-up interventions financed under the EU FF facilitated follow-up and implementation.

continental/regional priorities set out in a new partnership with the African Union); Priority 4: responding to food insecurity in exceptional transition situations as well as in fragile and bankrupt states, Priority 5: promoting innovative approaches; Priority 6: encouraging the advancement of the food security programme, and its harmonization and alignment with development partners, civil society and donors.

No evidence could be traced for coordination amongst the projects implemented by Regional Organisations and those implemented by International Organisations, and NGOs. Coordination of interventions implemented by different UN organisations in the same country was not optimal.

Interventions implemented through ROs were not widely known in all beneficiary countries. Projects implemented by ROs were not always known or only superficially known by EUDs in beneficiary countries (if the EUD was not in charge of managing the project).

3.7 Added Value

EU FF added value criteria analysis is based on EQ10: “given the context and amount mobilized, to what extent has the design and implementation of the EU FF had comparative advantages to other 1) EC instruments 2) EU Member States own response?”

3.7.1 EC added value⁶²

Finding 35 : Relevance, EQ10

There was a considerable added value of the EU FF compared with other forms of interventions (under existing budget lines) and/or EU Member States.

There is evidence that the financing of the EU response to the FPC through a single instrument permitted a single response to be offered (as EU). The EU may have attracted more visibility in international fora thereby, and position itself at a level similar to other “big players” at the international level. By creating the Food Facility Instrument, the EU took over an important role in coordination and policy making. By coordinating with and implementing through EU member states and International Organisations, the EU achieved better coordinated results and improved the EU's visibility.

There is also evidence that the discussion about the EU FF (in international fora and specialized media), and the financing of the EU FF as an instrument, contributed to this awareness-raising process (of the problems related to the FPC and the need to find a response) both in EU Member states and in beneficiary countries. At country level, a similar volume of interventions financed and implemented by a single EU Member State would have had less visibility. In this respect, the EU FF has contributed to the development and adoption of the Agenda for Change.

In countries where no food security policy framework existed, the EU FF (through policy dialogue of the EUD and the IOs) had the potential to help the Government realize the importance and multi-sectoral dimension of food security and to better appreciate the major role a Government needs to play to address the issues at stake. However, there is no evidence that thanks to the EU FF, the EC or the UN organisations fully exploited their potential at strategic level. In fact, even interventions implemented through UN organisations are most often designed as local or regional interventions (like NSA projects) without tackling sufficiently the strategic aspects (for example in Haiti).

The strategic partnership between the EU and UN Organisations in coordination and channelling of support through the United Nations presented the following advantages: (1) It permitted an extremely timely response and delivery of support in cases where this would otherwise have been difficult or impossible, (2) Cooperation with the UN System added value to the work of the Commission through the legitimacy of the United Nations and its relationship of trust with governments, (3) The UN has a world-wide operating capacity (the UN has a presence on the ground in nearly 170 countries).

⁶² EQ10: given the context and amount mobilized, to what extent has the design and implementation of the EU FF had comparative advantages to other 1) EC instruments 2) EU Member States own response?

3.7.2 Instrument added value

Finding 36 : Added value EQ10

The main comparative advantage of the EU FF was related to the important amount of funds that could be attributed with reduced administrative burden to interventions considered important by EU HQ and EUDs; by using fast track project approvals, disbursements could be made considerably faster than would have been possible using normal administrative processes.

The EU FF instrument permitted channelling additional funds to the agricultural and food security sector without going through a complex and time-consuming programming process. Similarly, it permitted additional staff (contractual agents) to be attached to the EUDs in order to follow up the interventions. All this would not have been possible without the creation of this additional instrument.

The large volume of funds provided by EU in response to the FPC, and especially the support provided under Budget Support, permitted the EU to undertake in parallel an important advocacy and awareness-building campaign in developing and industrialized countries⁶³.

3.8 Cross-cutting issues.

EU FF cross-cutting issues analysis is based on EQ 9: "To what extent (i) gender equality, (ii) environmental sustainability (iii) HIV/AIDs and (iv) good governance, cross-cutting issues have been reflected in the programming documents as well as in implementation modalities"

Finding 37 : Added value , EQ10

There is evidence from project documents and observation during field visits that gender equality, environmental sustainability and good governance were incorporated systematically in all project documents, and were taken into consideration during the implementation process. HIV/AIDs was included in some of the project proposals and considered in some of the interventions, based on the incidence of infection in the respective target country.

There is evidence that attention was given to environmental issues at local level (protection of hill lakes, fencing, soil conservation measures, planting of trees, etc.), but measures implemented in relation to environmental protection (at medium and macro level) have remained limited.

Projects have generally not undertaken environmental assessment related to the possible impact of increased agricultural production area and intensification of production (abandonment of crop rotation, access to roads development, etc.), increase in use of fertiliser and pesticides (uncontrolled after the end of the project), etc. Some implementing partners, promoted the use of organic fertiliser and pesticides in order to avoid problems of environmental and personal safety, and the high cost of pesticides and mineral fertiliser. The environment has not been considered enough in its full potential of win-win projects to address the FPC on some basic issues, such as high energy

⁶³ Covering issues like: the permanent increase in demand for food and especially meat, and related to this, competition between humans and animals for food crops; environmental challenges related to animal production; bio-diesel and substitution of agricultural land; national agro-policies which give preference to production for export than to production for food security; globalization and reduction of trade barriers versus agricultural production in countries which show a low level of competitiveness etc.

cost/climate change/food dependent economy. This also is a consequence of the very tight planning and implementation time of interventions.

Gender⁶⁴ was taken into consideration. Women⁶⁵ and children were the main beneficiaries of the interventions focusing directly on food security/nutrition. However, systematic assessments are lacking on the impact of projects financed under the EU FF on the daily workload of women (who are mainly involved in vegetable planting, harvesting and marketing as well as in other activities such as the production of compost).

Example related to improving food security of landless people.
Public Employment for Sustainable Agriculture and Water Management
(PAMP)(Tajikistan)
Financing : M €7.42
Implemented by : WB/ IDA

Food prices in the country more than doubled in 2008 compared with the same time in 2006 and 2007. Tajikistan is a low income food deficit country (LIFDC) and imports nearly 50 percent of its cereal needs (wheat is the main staple). Subsequently, food prices dropped but then rose again to new peaks in 2011. At the same time, the financial crisis has resulted in a marked decrease in the number of available jobs in Russia so that the traditional safety net of remittances has been cut. The main component of the PAMP project was "public works and mechanical cleaning of canals and drains". The project supported a cash-for-work programme employing the poorest and landless populations in rural areas of Khatlon province. It was expected that in the short term the poorest households would have significantly improved their food security, due to their participation in public works and the associated salaries. In the medium term and because of improved irrigation and drainage, an increase is anticipated in agricultural yields.

Only a limited number of projects directly tackled HIV/AIDS issues⁶⁶ (about 13%), but this also depends on the incidence of HIV/AIDS in the beneficiary countries.

However during country visits, some projects were identified as directly benefitting persons affected by HIV/AIDS. A positive example is the project "Green Health" in Malawi (NGO) which focuses on

vegetable gardening in order to improve nutrition for about 5000 persons affected by HIV/Aids and their care givers.

Aspects of governance have been covered⁶⁷ as a cross-cutting issue in almost all interventions through working groups and steering committees. In the case of interventions under a project-approach, mainly strengthening farmers' associations and cooperatives, as well as institutional strengthening was undertaken. Implementing partners tried to use participatory approaches. However, due to short implementation periods it was not always possible to have a participatory approach to decision-making. Budget Support interventions cannot be directly related to cross-cutting issues, however indirectly they have contributed to improved governance.

⁶⁴ Annex 5, 85 % of EUFF projects have considered Gender in the implementation and 80 % in the implementation.

⁶⁵ ROM Final Report FF.

⁶⁶ Annex 5, 87 % of EUFF projects have not considered HIV/Aids in implementation.

⁶⁷ Annex 5 87 % of EUFF projects have considered Governance in the design and 88 % in the implementation.

4. Conclusions

This section is composed of two parts:

- Mega-level conclusions that have the highest relevance for the overall strategic management of the EU FF (and thus represent the key learning opportunities), and
- Operational Conclusions that refer specifically to the Evaluation Questions.

The conclusions in this chapter are based on the findings in chapter 3 and the Evaluation Questions presented in Annex 5. The conclusions of the evaluation are presented in such a way as to facilitate an overall synthesis of these answers and to draw lessons for present and future EU programming, design and implementation strategies and programmes.

4.1 Strategic Approach and Design: Conclusions on the instrument

Conclusion I.

The Commission's political decision to create a new financing instrument as articulated in the Regulation 1337/2008 was pertinent.

The Commission has been able to create and implement in a minimum of time a new financing instrument (as articulated in the Regulation 1337/2008), which was internally coherent and complementary to other already existing development instruments. In that sense the Instrument has been highly RELEVANT.

The 1 billion EUR Food Facility is the largest additional global grant contribution to stimulate agricultural development and promote food security since the G8 leaders pledged their support in this respect in Toyako in July 2008. Thus, the Food Facility has both contributed to the EU international credibility, and enhanced its influence in the discussions on the framing of global governance for food security. Moreover, the specific manner in which the Facility is being implemented, by involving a range of UN agencies but also other actors, and by building on national needs and plans, has made a positive contribution to aid effectiveness

However, adverse external factors, the continuous volatility of food price, and the short implementation period originally foreseen for the EU FF, make that resilience is only on the way to being achieved with direct beneficiaries of interventions financed under EU FF.

This conclusion is associated with the recommendation: 1

Conclusion II.

The EU FF instrument had a high flexibility for intervention and was intended to benefit a high number of partner countries, however the dispersion of interventions in 49 countries, 232 interventions reduced impact at country level (effects and impact were limited to direct beneficiaries).

This conclusion is associated with recommendation: 2.

Conclusion III.

EU FF was in line with the capacities and strategies of the targeted countries and regions and corresponded to (some of) the needs of the beneficiaries targeted; however interventions were often over-ambitious in what concerns time-frame, number of beneficiaries and regional coverage, as well as the number of activities and services provided.

This conclusion is associated with recommendation: 2, 3, 4.

4.2 Aid Effectiveness

Conclusion IV.

EU FF interventions demonstrated a good effectiveness at the level of direct beneficiaries and directly targeted communities and regions. Project reports indicate that production capacity (at local level) and sector governance were increased through targeted actions in 50% of the projects. Strengthened (or new) farmers organisations are better able to manage the use of shared facilities, gain access to markets and claim their rights with local authorities. However, as the many key activities of interventions were completed only recently impact and sustainability of interventions will only be seen in the future.

This conclusion is associated with recommendation: 1, 2.

Conclusion V.

EU FF interventions were effective in mitigating the effects of the FPC, but activities were implemented at least one year after the peak in global food prices and only reached a limited share of the vulnerable population in target countries. In most cases there is no strategy to multiply experiences (of EU FF interventions) in other parts of the partner countries (with other external funding or national funding).

This conclusion is associated with recommendation: 1, 2.

Conclusion VI.

The lack of provision of reliable and standardised reporting on financial and economic data of projects and/or specific components of projects (ex-post and ex-ante) makes it impossible to define the global “value for money” in the context of this evaluation. Access to unit costs of different types of activities, implemented through different types of partners, (ex-ante and ex-post) would help to define the possibilities for replication of interventions on a large scale.

This conclusion is associated with recommendation: 5.

4.3 Implementation Modalities

Conclusion VII.

The EU FF efficiency in contracting and disbursing funds was high thanks to the cooperation with UN Organisations and the use of fast-track procedures for approval of interventions; interventions at field level suffered frequent delays however and/or needed amendments due to “over-ambitious” targets, complex procurement procedures and insufficient project preparation.

This conclusion is associated with recommendation: 3, 4, 5.

Conclusion VIII.

The selection of implementing partners was adequate and reflected confines set by the EU FF Regulation, local realities and the need to provide the support quickly. The implementation of projects under the multi-country contribution agreements makes management complex and reduces the role of EU Delegations.

This conclusion is associated with a recommendation 7

Conclusion IX.

There is a broad consistency and coherence between EU FF interventions, other EC instruments and other donors’ interventions. The EC has played an important role in the international response to the FPC. Coordination at central and field level was adequate to good, but coordination between projects implemented through different stakeholders should be improved.

This conclusion is associated with recommendation: 7

Conclusion X.

The EC HQ and EU Delegations demonstrated a very efficient management of the EU FF with an attribution of less than 2% of total funds for administrative expenditures (including studies).

This conclusion is associated with recommendation 7

4.4 Effect and Sustainability

Conclusion XI.

There was little evidence of the major effects of the EU FF on food prices or food security beyond direct beneficiaries. Positive effects have been limited to direct beneficiaries. The EU FF demonstrates clearly that an increase of production by small-holders is possible by using appropriate technological packages and technical assistance, but more information concerning the financial replication of this support at a large scale will be needed.

This conclusion is associated with recommendation: 7, 9.

Conclusion XII.

Sustainability of most activities is not assured. It is variable and will depend on whether the national Government, EU or other donors will continue to support beneficiaries in order to consolidate achievements.

This conclusion is associated with recommendation: 2, 7.

Conclusion XIII.

Cross-cutting issues (Gender, environmental sustainability, good governance, and HIV/AIDs) have been adequately taken into consideration while the potential exists for improvement, particularly in the context of mitigating and pre-empting Food Price Crises.

This conclusion is not associated with a recommendation

4.5 Detailed Operational Conclusions

On the original design

4.5.1 Related to EQ 1: General assessment of the relevance of the instrument

Conclusion 1. The Commission's political decision to create a new financing instrument as articulated in the Regulation 1337/2008 was pertinent (EQ1)

The instrument has permitted a wide range of interventions to be implemented, and a substantial increase in the volume of funds channelled to the agricultural and food security sectors in most countries affected by the FPC. Principally, the EU FF concentrated in triggering locally a medium term supply response from small-holders through activities supported for a 2 year period.

This new instrument was the sole means of delivering EC aid to countries most affected by the FPC outside of the ECHO mandate and after realigning existing instruments. It enabled additional support to be delivered outside normal planned cooperation (J.C.1.1, JC 1.2).

The timeframe for approval of the EU Food Facility Regulation was extremely short compared with the EU standard. It would not have been possible to give such a quick and diversified response by using the then-existing instruments.

Conclusion 2. The EU FF instrument had a high flexibility for intervention, which was translated into interventions in a wide range of activities (EQ2)

The decision to make 49 countries eligible for support under the EU FF was partly justified considering the existing needs (related to food security), but available funding was not sufficient for making a difference in 49 countries (=20 mn EUR for 2 years per country). A concentration on the most affected countries by the FPC might have avoided the otherwise inevitable dilution of efforts.

The instrument has three "primary objectives"⁶⁸. This led to some confusion in targeting. Many projects partially contributed to at least 2 of the objectives, thus leading to dilution of effects.

There was no log-frame for the instrument. While this may not be a requirement for the instrument a log-frame would have improved the clarity of the intervention logic.

Conclusion 3. The EU FF has been programmed as a short-term instrument, in order to bridge the gap between emergency and long-term development even though by 2008 it was known that food prices would remain volatile in the mid-term and so sustainability could not be assured (EQ2)

Already in 2008 international organisations indicated that the market for food crops would remain volatile in the coming years. This has proven to be true, as, after a strong decrease of food prices in

⁶⁸ Article 2 clause 1.

the second half of 2008, there was an upward trend in 2009, with a peak reached in 2011. Indeed, the index of food prices is higher in 2012 than it was in 2008.

Thus, the decision to develop a short-term instrument was appropriate only if, at the same time, preparations would have started for preparing a long-term instrument dealing in an adequate way with the crisis and its causes. No strong evidence was found that this has happened in countries where FS/RD is not a focal sector.

In countries where FS/RD is an EU focus sector, a bridging process has occurred with the ongoing and new EU programming in the FS/RD sector, and also with other donors and implementing organisations, for example IFAD and WB ongoing programmes.

4.5.2 Related to EQ 2: Relevance of the instrument from the beneficiary countries' point of view

Conclusion 4. Interventions financed under the EU FF were in line with the capacities and strategies of the targeted countries and regions, and corresponded to (some of) the needs of the beneficiaries targeted (EQ2)

All interventions financed in favour of single countries or regions were pertinent and corresponded to the needs felt by those countries, regions and beneficiaries. However, it is difficult to indicate to what extent "limited resources" have been used for "poor but not the most affected groups of the population", and to what extent interventions have tackled urgent existing needs not directly related to the FPC.

The interventions financed, focused on triggering a supply response from the small-holder sector, and were thus important from the "poverty reduction" point of view, however, small-holders in many countries occupy marginal lands and therefore a positive supply response at national level can be achieved only with large-scale investments.

There is a link between the activities that have been financed and national and regional strategies. Partner countries' institutions were either directly involved in the implementation of actions, or at least, actions are coordinated with them. (JC2.1). Of the 49 countries with EU Food Facility interventions, 30 countries were subject to an inter-agency needs assessment and response proposal produced by the High Level Task Force on the Global Food Crisis composed of FAO, IFAD, WFP and the WB. Seventeen countries were assessed by FAO, though two countries were not assessed at all (Cuba, Eritrea). The responses proposed focused mainly on availability/production of food, at the expense of access and utilisation (183 projects aimed at improving production as against 38 safety net projects). However, no evidence was found that the private sector or EU Member States participated or were considered in these joint assessments, and not all of the interventions financed can be related to them. Interventions under BS and activities foreseen by NSAs were not foreseen in CNAs.

The FPC was seen primarily as an economic crisis. The solutions that were applied were primarily the traditional food security interventions. The programming showed a lack of innovation in its response to the economic challenges. For example, work on financial tools (e.g. credit), market development and value chains were largely absent.

There was a predominance of interventions related to agricultural and local development, but only few interventions in favour of the urban population or tackling nutrition (food utilization). (JC.2.2.).

Although nutrition was rarely addressed directly, many projects encouraged crop and livestock diversification. This included both new and neglected older crops. This led to a greater diversity of food availability.

4.5.3 On Coherence, Complementarity and Coordination

Related to EQ 3: 3 Cs

Conclusion 5. There is a broad consistency and coherence between EU FF interventions, other EC instruments and other donors' interventions and coordination was satisfactory. There is some evidence that the EU FF has succeeded in filling the financial gap between emergency and long-term interventions (EQ3). However, long-term interventions are not yet secured.

There is coherence and consistency between EU interventions financed under the EU Thematic Food Security Programme and interventions financed under EDF-B Envelope, V-FLEX and ECHO. The Regulation 1337/2008 has 3 specific objectives and mentioned multiple activities: Thus, there are multiple interventions, each operating with a limited number of beneficiaries, tackling in most cases all 3 specific objectives through multiple activities.

The decision to finance interventions proposed by UN Organisations presented an opportunity to harmonise the approach and to present a coherent international response to the FPC.

There is some evidence, that the EU FF has, in some instances, bridged the gap between emergency and long-term development, even though the period of implementation of the EU FF (2009-2011) does not coincide with the Programming Cycle of the EU. In fact, programming for the period 2014-2020 is only now starting, so there is a possible gap of at least 2 years between the end of the EU FF interventions and possible new interventions financed under EC Programmed Development Cooperation. Sustainable Agriculture forms part of the EU Agenda for Change, but there is no evidence at this stage that a major share of cooperation will be directed towards it. (J.C.3.1.). There is not yet sufficient evidence that other international development actors will contribute to prolonging EU FF efforts.

The quality of coordination of activities varied from country to country. There was no specific coordination mechanisms related to the response to the FPC. However, in some countries the government led donor coordination/working groups related to the agricultural sector or to food security, which assured a stronger dialogue.

Some of the EUDs organised their own coordination mechanisms covering projects implemented under the EU FF in their country (e.g. Burkina Faso, Liberia, and Zambia).

Coordination of NGO projects with those of ROs and IOs was weakest – both during programming and implementation. In the case of interventions implemented through ROs they were often not known by all stakeholders involved in other EU FF activities. (JC.3.2. and JC3.3.).

4.5.4 On efficiency of the interventions

Related to EQ4: relevance of the modalities for efficient delivery of expected outputs

Conclusion 6. The EU was very efficient in contracting and disbursing the available funds thanks to

fast-track procedures, although projects showed less efficiency during implementation (EQ4).

EC showed an excellent capacity to contract and disburse a considerable volume of funds, thanks to the use of fast-track procedures. However, in order to meet the tight deadlines for submitting the proposals, the identification and formulation of the Food Facility projects were rushed. More than two thirds of the interventions were scale-up of existing proposals for long-term rural development and therefore not clearly specifically targeted to achieve FPC impact. (J.C.4.1.).

In order to get their proposals accepted, project design tended to be over-ambitious, aiming to achieve multiple objectives in a short time frame. The shortened process of programming and contracting left some rough edges in project design including very weak indicators and baseline data, which then had to be corrected during implementation when possible. This resulted in more than half of the projects implemented by IOs (60%) and ROs (75%) not being in line with programming, and with almost all of the projects, except for the BS interventions, having their log frame revised and needing amendments (average of two amendments per contract). Implementation by NGOs was generally in line with programming (only 21% not in line); with some exceptions, delays were incurred due to the difficulties encountered in the recruitment of personnel and procurement.

The decision to use UN Organisations for the implementation of the majority of activities under the EU FF was correct. The absorption capacities of NGOs (which normally present significantly smaller projects than UN Organisations) would probably have been insufficient to consume the funds made available under the EU FF in the time period foreseen; additionally the administrative work for the EU HQ and Delegations related to the follow up of large numbers of NGO projects would have been considerably higher. Most of the countries eligible for EU FF interventions were not eligible for budget support or did not present an adequate response to the FPC.

Conclusion 7. The FF gave an opportunity to the EU to specify the overall intervention strategy of the EC towards partner countries' governments, UN organisations, NSAs and EU MS thereby selecting the most appropriate channel and instrument (project approach or BS). It is not clear that this opportunity has not been fully exploited (EQ4)

Evidence collected from analysis of the interventions financed, together with discussions held during field visits suggest that the absorption capacity of potential implementing partners was a key factor in the choice of intervention strategy. This restricted the flexibility of the EU to use innovative approaches in the implementation of the FF. For example in Pakistan, it would have been very difficult to find an alternative to FAO and WFP to disburse the 40 mn EUR that was spent on their programmes. Both FAO and WFP have quite standardised project designs although they are of course tailored to national needs. This has to be seen in the context of the enormous pressure on both the EC and partners to formulate and present project proposals geared to deliver a quick response. (JC 4.1.).

The blend of partners was generally good. However, the comparative advantage of each partner was not fully considered during project attribution. Thus, UN organisations could have been used more at a strategic level at country level (e.g. improving policy development in Pakistan), while NGOs were more appropriate implementing partners in the field. The use of UN organisations for interventions, which could have been implemented by NGOs, increased costs. Indeed, UN organisations often sub-contracted activities at the field level to NSAs, NGOs or other UN

organisations due to the tight schedule. Field staffs paid and equipped according to UN standards were more expensive than NGO staff. (JC 4.2.).

It is often assumed that NGOs are not able or willing to work closely with government agencies. However, the work of NGOs on seed improvement in Burkina Faso and Togo showed that NGOs can coordinate well with government programmes.

Conclusion 8. EC HQ and EU Delegations demonstrated a very efficient management of the EU FF.(EQ4)

Out of the 1 billion EUR for the EU Food Facility, a maximum of 1.73 % (17.3 mn EUR) has been set aside for administrative support measures (ROM, studies, workshops, TA, staff to the Delegations, etc.). This corresponds to less than the foreseen 2% of administration costs, showing a very efficient management of the EU FF. Where effected, the recruitment of additional contractual agents under the EU FF permitted an adequate follow-up and coordination of interventions; such agents could have been used more widely.

Conclusion 9. Implementation of projects under multi-country contribution agreements resulted in complex management structures. (EQ4)

Projects implemented through NSAs were directly followed up by EUD, which permitted a permanent dialogue and an appropriate follow up.

In the case of centrally-managed interventions (under global contribution agreements with UN organisations and co-financing with EU Member States) the distance between EUDs, EC HQs in Brussels and HQs of partners' institutions made management and administrative procedures more complex.

UN and WB bodies acted as channels for 81 interventions in 45 countries and for 60 % of the total funds provided under the EU FF. To prepare and implement in a very short timeframe a significant number of interventions was challenging in terms of efficiency for the implementing agency. There were also a number of factors which affected the efficiency of aid delivery through the UN system: (a) Operational-level issues in Commission-UN cooperation due to different procedures despite existence of Global Contribution Agreements; (b) Difficulties related to UN bodies' *modi operandi*: findings from the desk and field studies show that project implementation problems frequently proved costly in terms of time and resources. With the EU FF, UN bodies agreed to work outside their normal formats or types of activity (especially in terms of implementation period). The UN agencies were highly committed to this mode of cooperation as they were experiencing financial constraints, and the work also gave them an opportunity to demonstrate the added value of their involvement.

Measuring the efficiency of interventions financed under Global Contribution Agreements is also complex, as administrative information is centred at UN HQs and not easily accessible to the EU FF evaluators. However, there are some proxy indicators (high staff costs both for international and national staff involved in project implementation, high investments in logistics etc., sub-contracting

of other organisations and further institutions for implementation of part of the activities etc.) suggesting a limited cost effectiveness of these operations. By analysing project implementation documents, it was observed that sub-contracting of services from the implementing partners (especially by some International Organisations) to other partners (UNOPS, national public institutions, NGOs, etc.) increased the complexity of overall implementation and administrative costs. Financial reporting was done using global figures by the implementing institutions, without giving details related to the contracts signed with sub-contractors/service providers at field level.

BS interventions exhibited advantages (low transaction costs and full national ownership) and disadvantages (funds disbursed cannot be directly related to needs created by the FPC); furthermore, BS funds were usually disbursed when the FPC was almost over, (JC 4.2. and JC 4.3.)

4.5.5 On achievements of expected results

Related to EQ5: Assessment whether through the EU FF instrument a supply response has been achieved

Conclusion 10. EU FF interventions demonstrated a good level of effectiveness at the level of direct beneficiaries and directly targeted communities and regions, but due to the short implementation period the full achievements may only be seen in the future (EQ5)

Due to the shortage of statistical data for the years 2010 and 2011, it is often not possible to measure the increase in use of agricultural inputs at country level; however, there is evidence that EU FF interventions increased use of agricultural inputs and promoted intensification of small-holder agriculture (for example in Zambia).

There has been an incipient positive supply response from many of the interventions funded under the EU FF, despite the implementation period being short; such a supply response was mainly observed at local level and with direct beneficiaries of interventions. However, there was no evidence for a general increase in production related to the EU FF interventions beyond direct beneficiaries.

Without the opportunities offered under the EU FF, the final beneficiaries of those interventions would have received less aid. Also, providing support under the EU FF has in many cases enabled small producers to diversify their production and thus increase their income.

In general, the EU FF projects benefited a small proportion of the total population affected by the FPC. Although they gave good results in terms of increased production for the target farmers, they were too short to allow time for the dissemination of lessons learnt to a wider target group. (JC 5.1-5.3).

Related to EQ6: Assessment whether through the EU FF instrument the effects of the food price crises have been mitigated

Conclusion 11. Interventions financed under the EU FF were effective in mitigating the effects of the FPC, but support arrived late (at least one year after the peak in global food prices) and it only

reached a limited proportion of the vulnerable population at target country level. (EQ6)

Support provided under EU FF was important for the countries and the direct beneficiaries, but only a small proportion of the undernourished and FPC-affected population in target countries could be covered under the EU FF. In some countries this target group has been expanded by the V-Flex programme.

The EU FF was not able to mitigate the effects of the food price crisis (on a large scale) in target countries, and interventions reached a portion of the population affected by the FPC. In fact, most of the projects financed under the EU FF were targeted at production while only a minority introduced safety net measures. Most of the interventions in rural areas targeted poverty reduction and local development rather than focusing on “mitigating the effects of the FPC”. Beneficiaries were poor and often insecure farmers. Landless farmers and urban poor were not sufficiently targeted. (JC 6.1. and JC 6.2)

There were, however, several very successful projects (from the social and health point of view) where undernourished children have been helped under EU FF interventions.

Related to EQ7: Assessment whether through the EU FF instrument production and capacities within the agricultural sector have been strengthened

Conclusion 12. Production capacity and sector governance (at a local level) were increased through targeted actions in 50% of the projects. Strengthened (or new) farmers’ organisations were better able to manage the use of shared facilities, gain access to markets and claim their rights with local authorities. (EQ6)

About half the interventions financed under the EU FF included capacity-building at local level. The results are uncertain due to the short period for implementation. They permitted the implementation of sensitization and capacity-building measures and the construction of much local infrastructure (for irrigation, harvesting, storage, transformation, access to local markets, etc.) but time was limited for the mentoring of beneficiaries in the application of new knowledge and to consolidate results.

Success or lack thereof will thus depend heavily on whether there is a follow-up by national stakeholders (public stakeholders and NGOs in the field) or external donor agencies.

The high potential for strengthening governance of the agricultural sector (at national level) through policy dialogue and especially the intervention of the specialised UN organisations was not fully exploited. (JC 7.1-7.3).

4.5.6 On impact and sustainability of achievements

Related to EQ8: Assessment of contribution through the EU FF instrument to improving the food security situation of beneficiary countries beyond its period of implementation

Conclusion 13. There was evidence of positive effects on the production capacity of direct

beneficiaries by the EU FF. However there is little evidence of major effects of the EU FF food security beyond direct beneficiaries. (EQ8)

Food prices were higher at the end of the FF than at the beginning. Many of the countries supported under the EU FF continue to be food-insecure. As mentioned under Conclusion 2, the average support provided under the EU FF was only about 20 mn EUR for 2 years per country. The volume of investment per target country and the time for implementation were inadequate to create lasting impact on the food security situation of the recipient countries beyond the period of implementation, or for influencing significantly prices for agricultural products. **Most interventions were selected as short-term** but completed only recently. (Related to JC 8.1.). Many other factors that are much stronger than the FF operate on food prices.

Evidence from ROM reports, project final reports, EU delegation surveys and the country visits indicates that the EU FF had a large potential impact on agricultural production and food security for the target groups. Investments in infrastructure (irrigation, water harvesting and conservation, rural roads, markets, storage facilities etc.), has created a basis for improved agricultural development, reduction of post-harvest losses and greater integration in the national and regional markets. For Budget Support actions the indicators were too wide to measure its effects, while for many other actions, at the time of data collection for this report, it was too soon after the FF closure to measure the impact on food security.

Conclusion 14. Sustainability of activities is not assured. It is variable and will depend on whether the national Government, EU or other donors will continue to support beneficiaries in order to consolidate achievements. (EQ8)

The EU FF does not have a successor programme although some programmes are being followed up through existing programmes and within the "Agenda for Change" framework. The time available for implementation was too limited to achieve full sustainability. There is a time-gap of at least 2 years until the implementation of the 11th EDF (2014-2020) will start, and the volume of funding designated for food security and agricultural development sector is not yet defined leaving a hiatus after many of the interventions.

Many projects are designed with the implicit assumption that follow-on funding will be available – even if this is not explicit in the project description. If no follow-on project materialises then this can lead to stress to the beneficiaries and lack of sustainability. Building the achievement of resilience into the design and indicators may enable greater sustainability.

At local level, there will be a lasting effect in all those cases where infrastructure has been constructed and where proper maintenance can be assured (related to JC 8.2.). Exit strategies including the setting up of user committees to oversee the future maintenance of the infrastructure was implemented wherever possible but in some cases could not be fully implemented due to time constraints. Several interventions completed their activities late, leaving limited time for handing over of responsibilities to beneficiaries and local institutions. The situation is better in those cases where activities have been implemented by local institutions permanently present in the area and in the context of their normal working plan (JC 8.3.). It is difficult to find evidence for improvement of the policy/strategy and institutional context related to the EU FF interventions (Zambia being one exception). Once again this is related to the short implementation period, and to the fact that UN organisations have not been sufficiently used for tackling strategic aspects related to food security and agricultural production (JC 8.4.).

4.5.7 On transversal issues

Related to EQ9: on transversal issues

Conclusion 15. Transversal issues have been taken adequately into consideration, yet there is potential for improvement, particularly in the context of mitigating and pre-empting future FPCs (EQ9)

Gender was considered in all projects and given particular importance, though more in quantitative than qualitative terms.

Good governance was covered with FF working groups and BS at country level, steering committees at project level and using a participatory approach at beneficiary level. With BS, no indicator directly related to cross-cutting issues has been used, with the exception of good governance.

Environment was broadly addressed to mitigate the effects of the FPC and improve the resilience to further FPCs and climate change. As environment was considered as a cross-cutting issue, it has not played its full role within the FPC mitigation, as it was addressed only by NGOs as a full component.

HIV/AIDS was rarely mainstreamed in the design or implementation.

4.5.8 On added value of the instrument

Related to EQ10: on added value

Conclusion 16. Considerable added value of the Instrument EU FF was noted, but it has not been fully exploited (EQ10)

The EU FF instrument allowed a more harmonised and coordinated approach than a more diffuse response of EU Member States would have permitted. The instrument enabled the Commission to respond quickly, and in situations where it would otherwise have been difficult, if not impossible, for the Commission to do so (JC 10.1.). Some interviewees and survey respondents felt that the need for speed was unnecessary – ECHO could have been mobilised equally fast for the emergency actions, and the normal instruments and processes could have been used for medium and long-term actions. While there is probably some truth in these arguments, the scale of the EU FF was probably too great to be managed comfortably within ECHO or other EC programmes, which were unable to provide a continuum of financial support.

The EU FF not only injected significant amounts of money into the agricultural sector of partner countries, but also strengthened the actions of the UN system in many countries. This brought added value in all those cases where UN bodies had more specific expertise and experience in the country than the Commission. Furthermore the use of the UN system for implementation of a significant part of the interventions assured a high absorption capacity and permitted a more coordinated international response to the FPC.

5. Recommendations

Under this section recommendations are presented at 2 levels. First the Key recommendations related to the Food Facility as a cooperation instrument are presented, followed by recommendations at an operational level.

5.1 Recommendations on the instrument

This section presents the recommendations at the level of the cooperation instrument.

Recommendation 1:

Consider converting the EU FF into a permanent “Stand-by” instrument, in order to respond rapidly to upcoming and sudden Food Price Crises, and mitigate impacts on food insecurity situations. In the case of permanent, recurrent or cyclical food insecurity situations, the instrument could mainly be used for mitigating the effects that have “deepened” existing food insecurity situations.

Based on Conclusions 1-8, 10-12, 14 and 16

Permanent food insecurity situations and/or cyclical crises are very likely to remain a major development constraint in many regions of the world in the foreseeable future. It seems reasonable to convert the EU FF into a permanent “Stand-by” instrument, enabling an immediate response (without prior programming) to rapidly evolving food insecurity situations caused by the volatility of food prices. This instrument should be able to promote medium term resilience and provide a bridge period between the interventions of ECHO and normally programmed cooperation. The instrument should be used for mitigating the effects of a crisis which have “worsened” existing situations, whilst underlying factors of food insecurity and volatility of food prices should be tackled mainly through programmed cooperation.

This instrument, in line with the “Agenda for Change”, would complement programmed cooperation by temporarily supporting those countries or regions most affected by exogenous shocks. It would aim to limit significantly the impact of crises, and would therefore avoid jeopardising programmed cooperation targeted at improving food security governance, reducing price volatility, raising nutritional standards, and supporting resilience.

Recent EU regional initiatives (SHARE⁶⁹ and AGIR Sahel) are innovative responses combining short and medium-to-long term interventions responding to the recurrent food crises in Sub-Saharan Africa. The Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on “The EU approach to Resilience: Learning from food security crisis⁷⁰” also opens the debate on how best to formulate these initiatives and replicate them to support **resilience building** of the worst affected communities. There are several options for maintaining a “stand by” instrument, some of which are detailed below:

1. On the model of a Trust Fund

- The concept is that a **trust fund would be set up by the EU** in cooperation with other international key players and partner countries to support reactive responses (early recovery) in times of crises. This should aim at and ensure complementarity between emergency interventions, and programmed cooperation, thus providing a link between

⁶⁹ Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience

⁷⁰ COM(2012) 586 final

direct relief and programmed cooperation, reinforcing resilience.

- The creation of a **food security observatory** should be envisaged under this Trust Fund to provide an agreed platform to analyse food insecurity situations, and coordinate responses to them. The observatory could also serve as a common platform for engaging in a structured dialogue with partner country stakeholders groups and regional organisations.
- A steering committee or Board of the Trust Fund would delineate the **scope of eligible actions and nature of eligible implementing partners** (UN family organisations, EIB, Member States Development Agencies, NSA's, Regional organisations, national governments, etc.). Each steering committee meeting could be chaired or co-chaired by the partner government concerned thereby facilitating 'ownership'.
- The Trust Fund services could also include **loans** complementing grants initiated projects.
- The Trust Fund could include a **technical facility** to punctually support the identification and formulation of projects and/or most appropriate partners.
- **Monitoring and evaluation** of both the fund (strategic level) and its activities (operational level) should ensure transparency and accountability.
- Replenishment of the Trust Fund could be decided based on recommendations from the observatory.
- In times of food crisis EU could channel reserve funds (EDF Envelope B, Intra-ACP reserve, etc.) and other thematic programmes to the Trust Fund. Other institutions would also contribute to the Trust Fund.

2. On the model of a Facility

- This option entails that **decisions** are taken to **allocate funds** (from the EDF and/or Commission budget) to the Facility based on country or regional needs;
- The calls for proposals' objectives and geographical scope could be tailored through separate decisions;
- A **steering committee** could be set up including major players such as FAO and other relevant UN Family agencies, WB, Member States Development Agencies and NSA's. The inclusion of major relevant regional organisations can be foreseen;
- Implementation could make use of a **mix of intervention methods** (Budget Support, Calls for Proposals, direct contribution agreements to International and/or regional organisations, etc.)
- A channel should allow, in precisely identified specific circumstances, a "**fast track**" approval for exceptional contributions in the form of Budget Support to eligible countries upon duly justified requests;
- One of the drawbacks of this facility proposal is that it requires funds to be spent within a given programming period.

Whatever form this instrument might take, the corner stone of its success will be its ability to provide a flexible complementary response to existing mechanisms within a very short timeframe (early recovery phase) while maintaining a coordinated and structured response at regional or global level.

Recommendation 1.1:

Food Security should remain on the top of the long term programmed cooperation of the EU in line with the Agenda for Change.

Based on Conclusions 1-8, 10-12, 14 and 16

As acknowledged in the preamble of the EU FF Regulation, and other EU communications, food insecurity has many different causes. These can be either structural or results of exogenous shocks far beyond the reach of individual countries. Hence, as outlined under recommendation N°1, an instrument such as the EU FF is necessary for mitigating the effects of crises such as the FPC. Underlying causes of these crises should be tackled through coherent development policies, and continuous attention through programmed cooperation.

Recommendation 2

Design future specific instruments in a more focused and accurate way, and as a revolving instrument (see recommendation N°1), so expected results can be achieved in the initially foreseen time-frame and resources.

Based on Conclusions 3, 8, 4, and 12

The Final Evaluation of EU FF has demonstrated the intrinsic value of the instrument. However, in the design of future similar instruments improvements should be introduced to further improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

Primarily, the objectives should be formulated in a more realistic manner and based on a better-defined chain of causes and effects. Indeed, there should be a reasonable probability that the expected results can be achieved in the foreseen timeframe and with the available resources. To achieve this it is recommended that:

- A log-frame should be constructed during the preparation of any similar instrument to clarify the proposed intervention logic. Preferably a single overarching objective should be indicated.
- Hypotheses should be formulated, and risk assessments carried out, and presented in the log frame together with contingency plans elaborated at both project and country level.
- Expected results and clear (SMART) Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVIs) must be defined for the instrument; To this end a clear Monitoring Framework should be developed in the early phase of the deployment of the instrument;
- In cases where the EU contributes to global interventions, clear targets for the EU elements of the overall programme should be set and Objectively Verifiable Indicators should be agreed upon and defined.
- Timescale: Future instruments should clearly define the timescale of the eligible actions thus avoiding loose interpretations. Indeed, Article 1 of the EU FF regulation states that the facility will “address primarily the period between emergency aid and medium- to long-term development cooperation.” The definition of “the period between emergency aid and medium-term development cooperation” is loose and open to many different interpretations.

- At the same time the concept of the “green economy”, based on sustainable development with an emphasis on economic growth and production efficiency, is now seen as the best solution to ensure long-term global objectives for food production and food security in the face of the multiple challenges that agriculture is confronted with in the 21st century. This principle should be built into future programmes.

Related to the “focus of support”

Recommendation 3:

In line with the “Agenda for Change”, the EU should concentrate its support to the most affected countries and strategic beneficiaries to ensure resources are allocated where maximum impact can be achieved. In addition, the EU should ensure complementarity through sectoral division of labour with EU Member States and UN organisations.

Based on Conclusion III, VIII, IX, 3 and 5

The EU FF regulation stated that a limited list of high priority countries should be selected. However, under the EU FF 50 beneficiary countries were selected. The EU FF final evaluation showed that the resources available to each country were significant and many beneficiaries were assisted, however these resources were insufficient for achieving significant impact beyond direct beneficiaries and their families. The wide geographical spread diluted the effectiveness of the EUFF. Had the number of countries been significantly reduced then a stronger impact could have been achieved. However, this should not overshadow the issue of absorption capacity of recipient partner countries:

In the design of future similar instruments the following provisions made in the “Agenda for Change” should be fully applied:

- The selection procedure should permit a better targeting and, to include both those currently worst affected by the FPC and price volatility and those who are most vulnerable to becoming affected.
- A sectoral and geographical division of labour should be envisaged between the EC and EU Member States based on their respective comparative advantages.
- In line with the provisions of the “Agenda for Change”, greater concentration of resources must be accompanied by a careful assessment of capacities of absorption of national governments and implementing agencies. This balance must always be carefully addressed in future programmes.

Recommendation 4:

Carry out a problem analysis and adopt a single primary objective tackling specific issues and clearly defined beneficiaries.

Based on Conclusions II, II, V, VI, 2, 4 and 13

The Evaluation of the EU FF found a generally weak focus and thinning of activities because the target groups and beneficiaries were too broadly defined, and the objectives of the instrument were multiple. A single primary objective should be adopted to tackle specific issues and beneficiaries, and to sharpen the focus of the programme.

- Individuals most affected by the FPC and other external shocks are those not able to produce their own food (rural workers, landless persons, families composed of single women with small children, elderly or sick persons without the necessary manpower for production and the urban poor).
- Subsistence farmers, even if food insecure, are less affected by a Food Price Crisis as they are not dependent, or less than others, on supplying their food from markets. Thus, if a specific objective is to mitigate the effects of a FPC, preference should be given to feeding programmes and cash transfers (vouchers) to vulnerable and affected population groups.
- If the objective is to quickly increase production and productivity in developing countries, farmers with a production potential should be targeted first (smallholders, located in regions without agricultural potential and suffering from climatic constraints, cannot draw much benefit from assisted input supply and technical assistance). A sufficient volume of support (seed and fertilizer) should be provided (not only for half a hectare).
- However, if the main objective of EU FF is the improvement of the “food security situation” of partner countries, a distinction has to be made between countries which are chronically food insecure (e.g. Somalia and Ethiopia), and countries which have sufficient agricultural production, and yet part of their population do not have the means necessary to buy food at the market (e.g. Pakistan). At the same time, the commercial policies of the country have to be reviewed to check if they still fit their original purpose.

5.2 Recommendations of an operational nature

Related to design of interventions

Recommendation 5:

The EU should be involved in Country Needs Assessments and facilitate civil society participation. If needs assessments and design of interventions are outsourced to UN Organisations, and/or top up existing operations, it is recommendable to follow EU methodological instruments, and clearly define the expected results to be achieved with the EC's contribution in the timeframe foreseen.

Based on Conclusions I, III, VII, VIII, IX, 4, 6 and 7

The evaluation of the EU FF has shown that Inter-Agency Assessments (IAAs) were undertaken mainly by UN organisations without the major involvement of either the EU Delegations or civil society representations. This is understandable considering the urgency, limited time available and good knowledge of the situation enjoyed by the UN family agencies involved. However, the participation of civil society, and strong coordination with the EU Delegations and with representatives of EU Member States, should be ensured so as to:

- Ensure wider identification of the needs and capacities available.
- Identify other interventions than those normally undertaken by specialised UN organisations.
- Ensure complementarities between EU Delegations, Member States, and International and Regional Organisations and Non-State Actors.
- Favour Joint Identification/Programming missions.

This would permit the EU to effectively voice its opinion on the design of the intervention and especially the quality of the log frame.

The programming exercise of the next Financial Framework (2014-2020) implies considerable efforts of information and data collection, dialogue and planning with stakeholders in partner countries.

Thus, as foreseen in the Agenda for Change, it is recommended to :

- Include in this process a structured assessment of indicators for the food security and food price situation in each country. Availability of this kind of information would be extremely useful in case of either a prolongation of the EU FF or the design of a new and similar instrument.
- Ensure that information gathered during this period is kept up-to-date on a regular basis.

Recommendation 6:

Concentrate on supporting interventions clearly linked to the objectives of the instrument when selecting individual interventions at country level.

Based on Conclusions II, III, XI, and 2

The evaluation of the EU FF showed that projects financed covered a wide typology of interventions, which, although always pertinent, contributed with varying intensity to the multiple objectives of the instrument. In order to avoid the dispersion of efforts, it is recommended to strengthen the focus of interventions by applying the following selection criteria under a similar future instrument:

- Only interventions that can clearly demonstrate a contribution to the specific objective(s) of the instrument should be selected and whether or not they can contribute to the expected results in the timeframe foreseen.
- A single main specific objective should be identified for each intervention financed (implemented by IOs, NGOs, ROs and BS) by the instrument. Other objectives might be sought through the intervention but only at a secondary level.
- Hypotheses have to be formulated, and their probability of coming true has to be assessed. Risks should be identified in the log frame, and contingency plans elaborated at both the project and possibly country level.
- Include in the project proposal a standard financial analysis and ensure implementing partners report the originally established forecasts and established OVIs. The question of sustainability of all activities initiated under an intervention and possibilities for replication of interventions should be indicated.
- The project timing and duration should take into account the seasonality of cropping cycles in the target country. Some FF interventions were able to span four cropping seasons while others only covered one season.

Recommendation 7:

Give specific attention to the comparative advantages provided by different implementation channels.

Based on Conclusions VI, VII, VIII, 8, and 9.

The Final Evaluation of the EU FF has highlighted that the comparative advantages of implementing partners could be exploited even more advantageously. Thus, in the case of a future similar instrument the following considerations should be taken into account:

- Budget Support interventions are recommendable for all the countries which have their own crisis response and where the EU has ongoing Budget Support interventions. Budget Support expenditure can also be foreseen where governments have ongoing safety net measures that require scaling up because of general price increases in the country negatively impacting the capacity of the weakest to cater for their own food needs. If budget support is provided, it is recommended to link disbursements to clear achievable and measurable and sector-related (relevant for food security) indicators (for instance “women trained in nutrition, fertiliser, seed distributed, km feeder roads rehabilitated” etc.).
- Implementation of activities through Regional Organisations is complex and starting up activities is time consuming; thus it is recommendable to limit work under an instrument like EU FF cooperation with regional organisations to cases where national cooperation would be less efficient, and where interventions expand existing ongoing interventions;
- If an instrument like the EU FF has only a very limited lifetime, it is of crucial importance that local stakeholders permanently present in the country and the project zones play an active role in its design and implementation in order to assume ownership.
- UN family organisations should be further considered for their comparative advantage at policy dialogue and strategic level.
- NSAs should also be called on to increase their co-ordination with government programmes where possible. UN organisations should not be set up in competition with NSAs carrying out the same tasks but should complement each other.

As demonstrated in the evaluation of the EU FF, the management of the instrument by the Commission services has been highly efficient. Because of the global framework under which the EU FF was operating, a large proportion of the funds were allocated to UN family organisations which in turn implemented projects through non-state actors; similarly to activities directly managed by the Commission services under the Calls for Proposals. In order to strengthen the efficiency of the use of EU funds, in the framework of a similar instrument, but also for the benefit of other programmes, it is recommended:

- To carry out a cost benefit analysis of the different channels of implementation and their comparative advantages. This analysis should allow Commission services to make informed decisions when selecting implementation partners or channels to efficiently allocate financial resources.

Recommendation 8:

Specific attention to be paid to sustainability in the design phase.

Based on Conclusions II, III, IV, 3, 10, 14 and 15.

EU support provided through an instrument such as the EU FF should not only improve resilience to the current crisis, but also strengthen beneficiaries' capacity to face future shocks. As such, during the design of interventions the probability of sustainable outcomes from its activities should be analysed. A key question should be whether direct beneficiaries of interventions would be able to maintain the results and the impact achieved without any further external support and to what extent the multiplication of results or trickle down effects on other stakeholders could be expected? The design of interventions financed should give a clear response to this aspect and include a phasing out or handing over strategy.

To this end it is recommended to ensure:

- Clear appropriation of the projects by beneficiaries, and support from local authorities.
- Inclusion of a phasing out component in each intervention.

Related to Horizontal Aspects

Recommendation 9:

Give specific attention to horizontal aspects which might negatively affect the workload of women and put pressure on the environment.

Based on Conclusions XIII, 2 and 15.

Environmentally sound agricultural practices can mitigate some effects of a FPC through limiting the need for high-cost inorganic fertilisers and pesticides, diversifying sources of income at farm level and improving crop resilience to climate change. Encouraging biodiversity at the farm level has resulted in improved food security from a diversified income, running costs reduction, employment creation and socio-economic development. Although horizontal aspects were adequately covered during design and implementation of EU FF interventions, there is evidence to suggest that these specific aspects should receive particular attention:

- Intensification or diversification of agricultural production may considerably increase the workload of women, who are already in charge of keeping the fields clean, harvesting and marketing. In addition, the introduction of new activities like bee-keeping or fish-ponds will foster food availability, whilst increasing the workload even further. Specific attention should be given to this aspect.
- Seed and fertiliser distribution will lead in many cases to an increase of production and productivity, but quick-fix solutions imply the risk of an increased agricultural area at the expense of sound sustainable practices such as crop rotation.
- Improving research, development and innovation of agricultural environmentally-sound techniques should be addressed under the new MFF (2014-2020) to boost win-win situations by simultaneously tackling climate change mitigation, food security, pre-empting further FPC, employment creation and socio-economic development.

These aspects have to be assessed during the design of interventions and monitored closely during their implementation.

Related to Policy Dialogue

Recommendation 10:

The EC (under its programmed cooperation) should continue to play an active role in policy dialogue at the country level and help the governments of partner countries realise the importance and multi-sector dimension of food security. Underlying causes negatively affecting food security should be established and adequately tackled by Governments in their national policies.

Based on Conclusions I, III, V, XI, 4 and 10

In order to ensure added value and to assume a major role as a key partner in development, the EC should increase its role in policy dialogue and help the governments of partner countries realise the importance and multi-sector dimension of food security, and thus facilitate strategic decisions related to the development of suitable national food security related policies (agricultural, social, commercial) for reducing vulnerability to external shocks. Recommended measures include:

- An analysis of the problems which influence food security should be conducted, and the means to best overcome the underlying problems; such as the prioritisation of actions and the elaboration of a road map for the implementation of actions. Specific attention should be paid to all aspects related to nutrition as a building strategy for improved food security against a background of volatile food prices and climate change. This should include the diversification of cropping and livestock production.
- Support to beneficiary countries in the design of programmes that will strengthen their capacity to absorb the funds budgeted under the Aquila G8 summit.

Related to Sustainability

Recommendation 11:

Systematise lessons learnt and share experiences with implementing partners (on the basis of an agreed format). Specific attention should be given to questions of the replication of interventions and to the cost-benefit analysis of the interventions (ex-post review).

Based on Conclusion: IV, VI, XI, XII, 3, 5, 10 and 14.

The Final Evaluation of the EU FF was contracted in the last semester of the implementation of the interventions financed under this instrument, and as such many of the interventions were not yet completed or have only been completed recently and therefore the overall impact and especially the sustainability of the actions could not be fully assessed.

Thus, in order to get a full picture of the outcome of the interventions financed in the post project period, a reasonable percentage of interventions financed should be included in an ex-post

monitoring (under existing contracts) or a specific monitoring contract for ex-post monitoring of interventions should be set up in order to measure the medium-long-term impact of interventions and the sustainability of achievements (are beneficiaries able to maintain achievements? Are other stakeholders continuing their support to beneficiaries?). This would enable assessors to draw lessons related to the sustainability of the achievements of the interventions after the withdrawal of the implementing institutions.

Lessons learnt should be recorded and shared amongst implementing partners (on the basis of an agreed format).

6. Lessons Learnt

This section presents the Lessons learnt from the EU FF. they are categorised in 2 sections. The first section deals with lessons learnt at strategic level, while the second presents more operational lessons learnt.

6.1 At the strategic level

L1: The EC has shown that it is possible to rapidly establish an effective instrument in response to an unforeseen need. The lessons learnt show that delays in implementations can be avoided or reduced if; (1) the implementing partners are already present in the project region and an established relationship with target groups and governments already exists; (2) project design is simple and does not include too many different levels of actors; and (3) all the interventions are simply to top up existing projects.

L2: A single primary objective and log-frame for the instrument would lead to greater clarity on the proposed intervention logic and facilitate the monitoring of the progress of achievements.

L3: Budget support measures are a suitable instrument if a country has already "qualified" for BS interventions from international donors (especially the EU) and if a government has its own adequate response to a crisis. The assistance provided under the EU FF, in the form of budgetary support, was in addition to the support provided by the EU through other instruments and partner countries. As such, it is thus impossible to isolate the impact achieved thanks to this additional support. However, as BS interventions support the implementation of national policies, there is a rather high probability that these interventions will be sustainable after the end of the EU FF's support.

L4: Focusing assistance on marginalised farmers with sufficient production potential increases food security at a community level, but does not necessarily improve food availability in urban areas and/or influence price development. The question of replication of interventions at national level and at what cost should be considered at the moment of project approval.

L5: Policy issues need to be specifically included in major programmes funded with international organisations. Without a strong policy element there is a greater chance of crises being repeated in the future.

L6: It is particularly important to carefully address sustainability issues in one-off instruments such as the EU FF, as there is no guarantee that programmes or funds will be available for follow-up projects.

L7: An instrument that is designed to respond to a single challenge (the food price crisis) must take into account in its programming and indicators the many other external factors that affect food prices and availability. In this case, the EU FF had to work against a background of climate change, global fuel price and financial crises and many other regional and national crises such as droughts, floods and earthquakes.

6.2 At the operational level

L8: The establishment of global contracts makes it difficult for EUDs to follow up the EU FF interventions at a national level. The EU FF contained many medium- and longer-term actions. The severe time constraints on these projects (including all the NGO projects) did not allow for as much impact as could have been achieved with a longer implementation period.

L9: ON the one hand, the use of UN Agencies enabled a high absorption capacity of funds and relatively quick service delivery at field level. On the other, the rather lengthy procedures needed to

initiate WB projects and the difficulties associated with setting up a regional programme make these two modalities less suitable for programmes designed to produce a rapid response to a crisis (with the exception of the topping up of existing programmes).

L10: Fast track procedures allow for a quick approval of interventions. However, in order to achieve a quick implementation at field level, fast track procedures for implementation (at the implementing partner level) should also be applied.

L11: Under the EU FF, many actions which would have needed a medium to long-term implementation period to reach their full impact instead reduced their implementation period so as to make them eligible for EU FF funding.

L12: Input distribution interventions enjoy a better impact when combined with strengthening extension services to farmers and improved market access.

L13: Seed production systems give results in the medium to long term only. To achieve good results, better cooperation between research institutions, extension services, seed producing farmers, traders and consuming farmers is necessary and seeds have to be tested under farm conditions.