

World Vision



# DEC and WVUK Disaster Response Project (DRP)

END OF PROJECT EVALUATION FINAL REPORT



FEBRUARY 2010

This independent external evaluation was prepared by Impact Consulting, Inc. for World Vision Jerusalem West Bank Gaza

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Evaluation Team would like to express their appreciation to all those interviewees who took the time to answer the Evaluation Team questions, respond to questionnaires and participant in evaluation group meetings.

Special thanks are due for the full and generous assistance received from the World Vision Jerusalem West Bank Gaza team during the evaluation. Not only did the Evaluation Team receive full and detailed answers to their many questions, but also received their assistance in facilitating site visits to the project areas.

Special thanks must go to the Agricultural Cooperative of Strawberry, Vegetable and Flower in Beit Lahia and the Iman Society in Rafah for their support in hosting the evaluation beneficiary assessments. The Evaluation Team would like to give particular thanks to representatives of local committee who facilitated the field work of the evaluation process.

The Evaluation Team is grateful to everyone for all their assistance and are indebted to all for the time, information, commitment and support they have provided. This evaluation would not have been possible without their participation.

## Cover Photographs

Captions clockwise from top left:

*Photo # 1:* Workers employed to rehabilitate greenhouses in the area of Beit Lahia through the DRP Cash-for-Work activities.

# THE DEC DISASTER RESPONSE PROJECT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2008 the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) launched the most intense bout of violence and destruction hitherto experienced by the population of the Gaza Strip. The Palestinian Ministry of Health figures reflected that 1,440 Palestinians were killed and 5,450 Palestinians were injured during the war including an estimated 430 children and 110 women<sup>1</sup>. Injuries were often serious and aggravated by the delay in receiving medical care; half of all injured persons have suffered life long impairment which will require physical rehabilitation to prevent complications and permanent disability.



Tens of thousands lost their homes and livelihoods in the bombardment and the subsequent ground force invasion. This military operation, combined with an 18-month near total blockade of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip by the IDF created what is arguably the greatest humanitarian emergency faced by Palestinians in Gaza since 1967. The closures had crippled the private sector, leading to unprecedented rates of poverty (80%), unemployment (46%)<sup>2</sup> and hardship amongst Gaza's 1,700,000 residents.

## OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

**Evaluation Purpose:** The overall objective of the evaluation was to determine the impact and cost effectiveness of the DEC funded Gaza project and to identify lessons that can be used in planning and implementation of the Extended Response Program (ERP) as well as other projects in the Gaza Strip. Specifically, the end project evaluation aimed to: (i) assess the extent to which outcomes and goals have been achieved; (ii) assess the intended and unintended, positive and negative consequences of project activities; (iii) determine whether funds were used as stated in project designs; (iv) measure if the project fulfilled agreed humanitarian principles and standards; (v) assess if the project was implemented with accountability to beneficiaries; and (vi) evaluate if appropriate learning reviews/lessons learned exercises were carried out to inform project implementation.

**Evaluation Context:** WV JWG responded to the devastation caused by the 23-day military operation by planning and implementing a £185,421 DEC funded Disaster Response Project between the periods January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 - September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009. The project goal is "to improve the food security of families affected by the recent Gaza crisis". The project supported communities affected by the conflict through focusing on assisting the most vulnerable families in North and South Gaza with access to basic food supplies and livelihood opportunities.

WV JWG commissioned an end of project evaluation of the project to Impact Consulting, Inc. - an independent consulting firm. The Evaluation undertook the task from January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010 to February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

**Evaluation Methodology and Timeline:** The evaluation methodology comprised 3 phases: i) an inception/desk phase to review relevant documents, make necessary logistical arrangements and develop evaluation tools; ii) a field phase to collect qualitative and quantitative data through observations, interviews, group discussions with various stakeholders and a number of beneficiary surveys; and (iii) a synthesis phase bringing together the results of the field and desk phases.

The evaluation utilized a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods; however the broad methodology employed was qualitative so as to ensure that the voices of those involved and affected dominate. The evaluation held 12 focus group meetings, 5 key informant interviews that targeted a total of 116 (female 22) beneficiaries, members of local committees and representatives of implementing partners. Also, the evaluation conducted 3 surveys that targeted 160 beneficiaries and 2 direct observation site visits to selected project locations. The number of discussion activities and participants' selection were informed by the requirements

<sup>1</sup> United Nations *Flash Appeal – Gaza 2009*. January 2009. Pg 5

<sup>2</sup> [www.undp.ps/en/newsroom/publications/pdf/other/dtemp.pdf](http://www.undp.ps/en/newsroom/publications/pdf/other/dtemp.pdf)

presented in the assignment ToR (see ANNEX 1), the implemented interventions and most importantly the project resources and time available for the Evaluation. The adopted evaluation methodology and lists of evaluation activities and participants are presented in ANNEX 3 and ANNEX 5 respectively.

*Evaluation Team:* The Team comprised two senior evaluation experts, Ms. Reham Al Wehaidy and Mr. Rami Wihaidi, spanning a diverse range of experience and specialization across the project various components as well as cross-cutting themes of evaluating humanitarian actions. A professional crew of two (2) experienced facilitators and six (6) field researchers supported the evaluation technical team in implementing the field work including visiting project locations, interviewing staff and conducting participatory exercises with partners, beneficiaries and communities.

## THE STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

The report is organized into 2 main parts; PART 1 comprises the report body and PART 2 is for the report annexes. Part 1 is divided into 9 sections other than the Executive Summary. SECTION 1 provides an overall profile of the Gaza emergency response. SECTION 2 discusses the scope of the review and the evaluation methodology. The relevance and the appropriateness of the project are discussed in SECTION 3. SECTION 4 assesses the effectiveness of the project in carrying out planned activities and achieving intended results. The efficiency to carry out activities and achieve outputs and outcomes is presented in SECTION 5. SECTION 6 assesses the project impact. SECTION 7 examines the project accountability in terms of provision of information, beneficiary consultation and involvement and the establishment of a complaints mechanism. The Project compliance with a number of international quality standards is discussed in SECTION 8. SECTION 9 draws together the conclusions that emerged from the evaluation and highlights the lessons learned and recommendations for development.

PART 2 of the report comprises a number of annexes that provide supporting information about the entire evaluation process, including an illustrated CD of the evaluation tools and data analysis.

## SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

While there was room for improvement, mainly under the emergency food distribution component, the evaluation found that the DEC funded Disaster Response Project was highly relevant and appropriate, efficient, effective, accountable to beneficiaries and accountable to quality standards of the Red Cross, Sphere and People in Aid.

*Relevance & Appropriateness:* The extensive working experience in the Gaza Strip and close relationships with local partners and communities of the targeted areas provided WV JWG with the great advantage of already having a good in-depth knowledge of the communities affected, before carrying out any assessments. This has added considerably to the relevance of the project interventions during the emergency and has positioned WV JWG justly as a high quality professional implementation organization. The project was built on a good understanding of the operating environment and was informed by a number of assessments as well as the organization previous experience working in various relief and development interventions. Implemented activities were appropriate for the context, the culture and the targeted communities. Furthermore, the activities took into account a number of cross-cutting issues such as children, disabilities and to a lesser extent gender. The relevance and appropriateness of the project are discussed in SECTION 3 of the report.

*Effectiveness:* Overall, WV JWG intervention exhibited good management practices and the evaluation concludes that the project management and organization were sound and effective. The submitted proposal was translated into a plan and included logical framework that guided the implementation process. Activities design was based on rapid needs assessments that involved community participation and field visits to affected areas. This has enabled WV JWG to achieve the project objective of providing the affected communities with access to basic foods and livelihood opportunities. However, the evaluation believes that the objectives were better achieved with the livelihood component that was directly implemented by WV JWG compared to the food distribution component that was implemented by the Holy Family Church. Although the evaluation appreciates the complications of the first couple of months of response where the whole international community was caught off-guard, it is believed that WV JWG could have played a more active role in the food distribution component. This would have ensured adherence to quality standards and would have enhanced the quality and accuracy of beneficiaries targeting process. Nonetheless, it is important to note that both intervention areas came right after the war when the entire Gaza population was at risk, vulnerable

and in need for support. In terms of coordination with other players, the evaluation found that coordination was constrained more by the nature and dissemination of coordination mechanism, than by lack of interest on WV JWG's part. Meetings with staff members revealed genuine efforts to share their knowledge and experiences with other organizations, such as CARE International, in an attempt to collaborate and hence affect the response mechanism of other players. Please refer to SECTION 4 for further discussion on the effectiveness of the project.

**Efficiency:** The project was professional delivery, completed on time and within budget. The implementation of the project livelihoods activities were guided by implementation schedules, logical framework and M&E mechanisms and tools that were found efficient and presented an evident case of good practice. WV JWG long-term familiarity with the Gaza context was clearly reflected in the careful consideration of issues of sustainability in the design and selection of the livelihoods interventions in terms of type, location and beneficiaries targeting. The evaluation believes that WV JWG used the resources entrusted to them in a responsible way and that the project has illustrated several examples of good cost efficiency practices. The efficiency of the project is discussed in SECTION 5 of the report.

**Impact:** The positive impact of the project interventions was considerable. The food distribution component targeted 3,187 people (425 households) in Al-Twam, Al-Amoody, Al-Shaym'a (North Gaza) and Tall Al-Dahab and Al-Shouka (South Gaza). The receipt of short-term emergency food helped the affected people meet the basic survival needs. It was also said to have lifted people's spirits and to have helped communities to recover faster. The various activities of the livelihoods component supported 772 people with opportunities either by having their greenhouse, lands rehabilitated or hired in the project as a skilled or unskilled labours. Please refer to SECTION 6 for further discussion.

**Accountability:** The DEC funded DRP was found to be accountable to beneficiaries. Information was made public to beneficiaries either directly or through the vast network of local partners utilizing a number of formats that suited the disseminated information and the targeted audience. WV JWG succeeded in utilizing and mobilizing local structures (local committees) which facilitated reaching the most affected areas, targeting the right beneficiaries and involving beneficiaries throughout the project cycle. The evaluation found that beneficiaries' complaints were addressed and handled properly throughout the implementation process. Both WV JWG field staff and representatives of partner local committees have utilized a variety of methods for complaints handling. The evaluation believes that the adopted good practice in handling beneficiaries' complaints would have been further valued if supported by a formal documentation process and a simple guiding complaints handling Standard Operating Procedure. The accountability of the project is discussed in SECTION 7 of the report.

**Quality Standards:** The evaluation found the project Livelihood component is in compliance with all codes of the 3 quality standards, Red Cross, Sphere and People in Aid, with the exception of one code in the People in Aid standard that had to do with staff development and training. The evaluation believes that the implementation period of this component was relatively short and the project was under staffed which did not allow for proper training and development. It was not possible to assess the compliance of the food distribution due to lack of information and reports on the activity. Please refer to SECTION 8 for further discussion.

**Learning Reviews and Lessons Learned Exercises:** During the month of July 2009, WV undertook "Lessons Learned Exercise" for the entire Gaza Crisis - Category II, Level II Response. Through this exercise WV allowed the various people involved in the response to reflect on their experiences as well as identify and share the different lessons they've learned. It is important to note that the project budget had a budget item dedicated to this activity early at the design phase. The evaluation believes that the internal lesson learning offered WV the opportunity to improve its own processes and was identified as a good example of best practice. However the evaluation could not make strong linkages and judgments relevant to the project under review as the exercise was done for the entire WV emergency response in Gaza.

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE RESPONSE

### Strengths and Areas of Good Practice

- **Programming Driven by Needs Assessments:** The project design and activities were based on various needs assessment tools that helped ensure the appropriateness of subsequent interventions in relation to the types and levels of need, took into account local cultural norms and began the process of involving beneficiaries in

the design and implementation early on the project. Furthermore, the needs assessment helped in targeting the right beneficiaries.

- *Established Connection between Relief & Early Recovery:* The interventions in the relief phase combined with the lessons learned exercise and the conducted needs assessment have informed the design of subsequent projects targeting the early recovery. The evaluation found a clear understanding of the connection between relief and early recovery which was evident in the selection of the implemented project activities. For example, the design of the Livelihood component provided unemployed workers with jobs through a CFW scheme, a relief activity, to work in the rehabilitation of land and greenhouses and fishing boats, a recovery activity. These activities had a long term effect on the agriculture and fishery sectors and showed a sense for transition to recovery.
- *Focus Approach on Transition to Development:* WV JWG has integrated the activities of the project into their regular programs implemented in the Gaza Strip which allowed for more sustainable and continuing effects among the targeted communities. Furthermore, the project showed a genuine focus on the transition to development, which tends to be usually neglected in most emergency responses. This focus was particularly evident in the livelihoods activities within the agriculture sector. Through these activities WV JWG initiated basic infrastructure recovery in Beit Lahia and Rafah which paved the way for much anticipated development efforts and interventions.
- *Preparedness & Emergency Experience:* WV JWG has an established experience working in the Gaza Strip on various relief and development interventions since 1975, with more focus on emergency and relief responses since the start of the second intifada in 2000. The field office had preparedness plans in place and functioning relations with local committees within targeted areas which ensured smooth implementation and quality interventions appreciated by the beneficiaries.
- *Efficient Project Management Tools:* The project utilized a well structured logical framework and a monitoring plan for setting project objective, defining inputs and outputs which enabled proper measurement of performance against identified targets. Furthermore, the monitoring process was conducted using different tools and techniques such as field visits and monitoring forms.
- *Proper Management of Subcontractors:* WV JWG had a proper established approach towards selecting and managing its subcontractors which entailed careful monitoring of their performance, progress towards meeting their obligations in a timely manner and following best practice in their standard contract conditions. For example, seeds purchased from one supplier were found not to comply with required standard and therefore were returned and replaced with better quality seeds.
- *Noted Coordination Efforts:* WV JWG has successfully coordinated with other relevant players in the emergency response such as UNRWA, WFP, CARE International and other local organizations. For example, the coordination with CARE International has helped in avoiding duplication of beneficiaries among the projects of the two organizations.
- *Signs of Cost Efficiency Practices:* WV JWG used the resources entrusted to them in a responsible way. The project illustrated several examples of good cost efficiency practices:
  - Building on pre-existing programs which enabled the use of existing capital assets and benefiting from investment, resources and established community relationships;
  - Budget re-alignment to hire additional labor for the rehabilitation of land through weeding and plating.
- *Excellent Visibility Practices:* The evaluation found clear evidence of adherence to the organization Visibility across all activities implemented under the Livelihood component. This included the use of banners, T-shirts, Caps, Logo Stickers and Staff Vests. Furthermore, the reviewed project photos showed a great respect to the dignity of the beneficiaries and were intended to highlight and document the project progress and accomplishments.
- *Intended & Unintended Positive Impact:* The positive impacts of the project were considerable; the project has over achieved all of its set targets with the exception of the Greenhouse rehabilitation due to external factors (unavailability of plastic raw material). Moreover, several unintended positive impacts were noted by the beneficiaries such as the reduction of domestic household problems and better family relations attributed to improved economic conditions.
- *Clear Adherence to Quality Standards:* It was evident that WV JWG was well aware of the various quality standards in the emergency response such as Red Cross, Sphere and People in Aid that was reflected in the project implementation and staff performance.

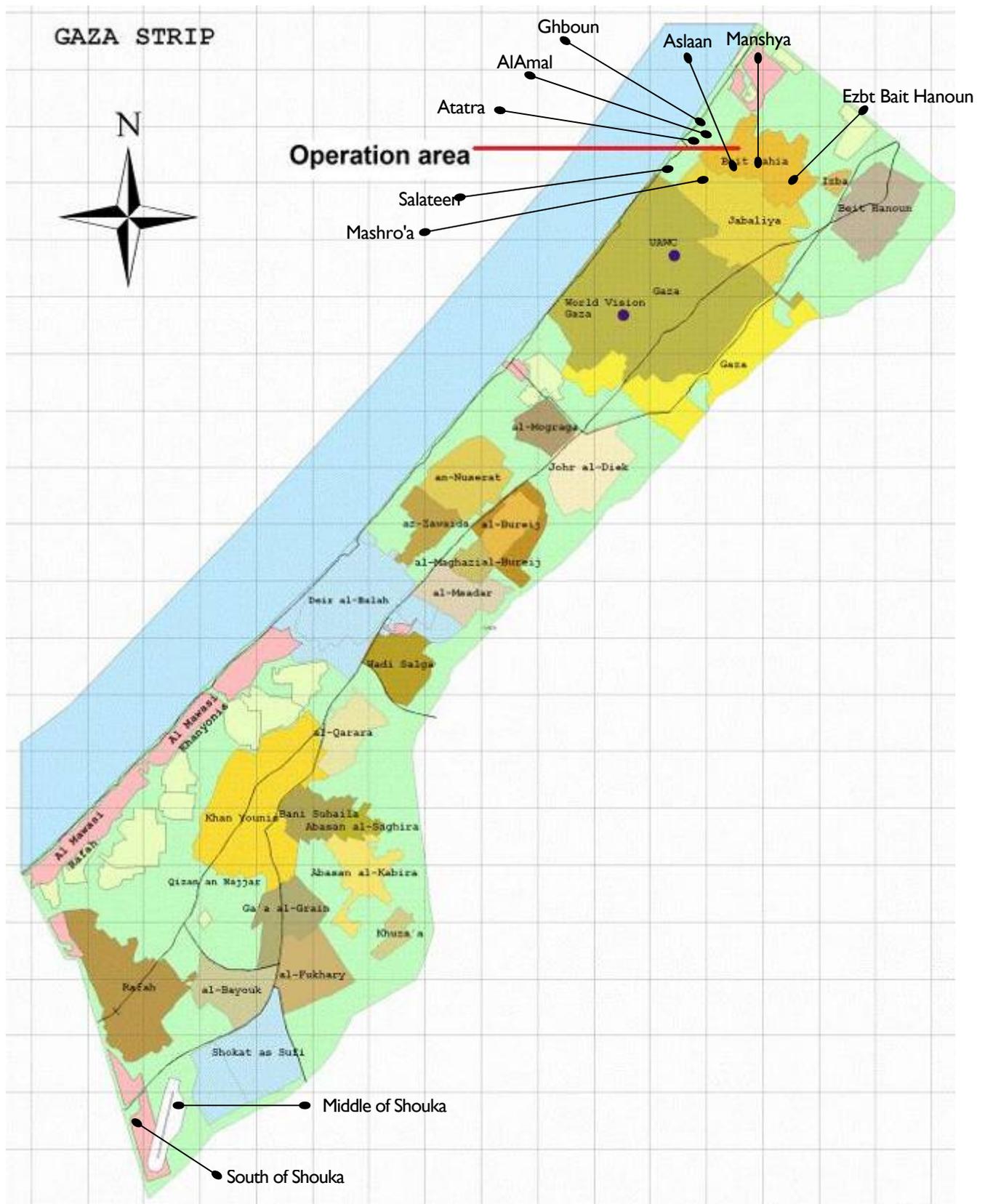
## Weakness and Problem Areas

- *Understaffed Response:* The emergency needs and responding project activities and interventions were massive and implemented over a short period of time. This has created work pressure on the team to meet deadlines and achieve set outcomes yet maintain a quality performance.
- *Lack of a Formally Established Complaints Mechanism:* Absence of a formal documented complaints mechanism, the main component of the HAP accountability benchmarks and cross cutting principles for beneficiaries accountability in all the three evaluated quality standards. The evaluation believes that the adopted good practice in handling beneficiaries' complaints would have been further valued if supported by a formal documentation process and a simple guiding complaints handling SoP.
- *Improper Management of Food Distribution:* The evaluation believes that the food distribution was the weakest link in the project. The evaluation found no evidence of monitoring practices during the food distribution and most important post distribution monitoring. WV JWG should have played a more active role in the distribution of food. Such involvement would have ensured adherence to quality standards and would have enhanced the quality and accuracy of beneficiaries targeting process.
- *Personnel Share of the Project Budget:* The project budget dedicated a larger share for personnel to off-shore project staff and in-country expatriates (67.3% of the personnel allocated budget). Given the already imposed access constraints on Gaza prior to the War coupled with additional constraints after the war, the evaluation believes that the budget structure should reflect a higher reliance on local staff for project implementation.
- *Weak Gender Focus in Livelihood:* Female beneficiaries make 4.4% of total livelihood beneficiaries. The CFW activity employed 18 female workers out of 442 total beneficiaries. Although the evaluation understands the cultural and economic norms in the rural households and that the implemented livelihoods activities focused on agriculture and fishing that are more male dominant field of work, it is still believed that additional female workers may have been employed in the planting process. WV JWG is highly encouraged to include activities that accommodate more evident female participation in its future interventions. Especially that unemployment is one of the greatest problems facing the population in the Gaza Strip that equally affects men and women.

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

- WV JWG is encouraged to launch a comprehensive capacity building and development program targeting local CBOs in areas of crisis management, emergency preparedness and application of international aid standards such Sphere and HAP.
- Expand coverage of assistance to include the remaining parts of the Gaza Strip.
- The evaluation recommends that WV JWG develops policy perspectives on Gender in Disaster and to share and train its staff and local partners on its use. For example, fixing quotas for women as participants and beneficiaries will ensure that gender perspectives are promoted and properly tackled.
- WV JWG is encouraged to manage the implementation of food parcels distribution to ensure adherence to food quality standards.
- WV JWG is recommended to invest in the establishment of a core Emergency Response Team from senior national staff across the West Bank and Gaza. The presence of such a team would have a significant contribution in increasing the organization ability to respond to future emergencies.
- WV JWG should collect monitoring data disaggregated on both gender and vulnerability across project activities.
- WV JWG encouraged to ensure that enough resources are mobilized to meet the expected work load.
- The evaluation recommends additional support to be provided to the fishing sector in areas such as new boat construction.
- Introduce new livelihoods opportunities especially designed for women other than the traditional interventions in sewing and embroidery.
- WV JWG is encouraged to utilize the good practice in M&E of the livelihoods and systemizing it across the entire emergency response.
- Establish and implement, early in the response, complaints handling procedures.

Figure 1: World Vision Areas of Intervention



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION.....	ii
THE STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT .....	iii
SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS.....	iii
STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE RESPONSE.....	iv
Strengths and Areas of Good Practice.....	iv
Weakness and Problem Areas .....	vi
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED .....	vi
<b>GAZA EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROFILE.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 THE IMPACT OF THE GAZA CRISIS.....	1
1.2 THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO THE GAZA EMERGENCY .....	2
1.3 THE RESPONSE OF WORLD VISION .....	3
<b>SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION AND THE METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 THE SCOPE OF THE REVIEW .....	4
2.2 METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION .....	4
Evaluation Logic and Criteria .....	4
Information Sources .....	4
Data Collection and Research Techniques .....	5
Sample Design .....	5
Evaluation Team.....	5
2.3 THE VOICE OF THE PROJECT BENEFICIARIES .....	6
2.4 LIMITATIONS .....	6
<b>RELEVANCE AND APPROPRIATENESS OF THE PROJECT .....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION.....	7
Context Analysis and Needs Assessment.....	7
Cultural Appropriateness.....	7
Clarity of Objectives .....	7
Cross-Cutting Issues (Gender, Children & Disability) .....	8
3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	8
<b>EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROJECT .....</b>	<b>9</b>
4.1 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION.....	9
Management and Organization .....	9
Likely Achievement of Objective.....	9
Interventions Timeliness.....	9
Coordination with Other Players .....	9
4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	10

<b>EFFICIENCY OF THE PROJECT .....</b>	<b>11</b>
5.1 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION .....	11
Implementation Performance and Changes .....	11
Targeting of Beneficiaries and Stakeholders .....	11
Cost Efficiency.....	11
Transition from Relief to Recovery .....	12
5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	12
<b>IMPACT OF THE PROJECT .....</b>	<b>14</b>
6.1 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION .....	14
The Extent of the Impact .....	14
The Depth of the Impact.....	14
Constraints on Impact .....	15
6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	15
<b>ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE PROJECT .....</b>	<b>16</b>
7.1 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION .....	16
Providing Information to Beneficiaries .....	16
Beneficiary Consultation and Involvement.....	16
Establishment of a Complaints Mechanism .....	17
7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	17
<b>QUALITY STANDARDS OF THE PROJECT .....</b>	<b>18</b>
8.1 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION .....	18
RED CROSS CODE OF CONDUCT .....	18
SPHERE MINIMUM STANDARDS .....	20
PEOPLE IN AID .....	21
8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	22
<b>CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>23</b>
9.1 SUMMARY.....	23
9.2 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION .....	23
Relevance and Appropriateness.....	23
Effectiveness .....	23
Efficiency.....	24
Impact .....	24
Accountability .....	24
Quality Standards .....	24
Learning Reviews and Lessons Learned Exercises.....	25
Cross-Cutting Themes.....	25
9.3 RECOMMENDATIONS.....	25

# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

CBO	Community Based Organization
CFW	Cash-for-Work
DRP	Disaster Response Project
ERP	Extended Response Program
F&NFI	Food and Non-Food Items
GS	Gaza Strip
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership Principles
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD/DAC	Organization for economic co-operation and development / Development Assistance Committee
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
SoP	Standard Operating Procedure
Sphere	Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WBG	West Bank and Gaza
WFP	World Food Program
WV JWG	World Vision Jerusalem West Bank Gaza
WV UK	World Vision United Kingdom

# GAZA EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROFILE

## I.1 THE IMPACT OF THE GAZA CRISIS

The impact of the Israeli offensive in January 2009 combined with the 2 years closure of the Gaza Strip resulted in major Palestinian human and material losses, including destruction of private, public and commercial property, assets and infrastructure across the Gaza Strip and significant loss of life and injury. An estimated 1,414 Palestinians were killed, including 313 children and 116 women. A further 5,300 persons were injured, including over 1,600 children and around 800 women.<sup>3</sup> Injuries were often serious and aggravated by the delay in receiving medical care; it is feared that as many as half of all injured persons have suffered lifelong impairment and will require physical rehabilitation to prevent complications and permanent disability.

The slowly building humanitarian crisis as a result of the protracted blockade of the Gaza Strip has developed into an urgent emergency situation of major proportions, particularly for women and children. In that context, the delivery of humanitarian assistance, quick response plans and emergency response projects became a pressing priority to mitigate the worst impacts of the crisis and to assist and protect those in need, including targeted support for particularly vulnerable groups such as children and women.

*Damage to Infrastructure:* The imposed closure on Gaza has restricted the supply of many essential goods including construction material needed for the reconstruction of water and sewage networks leading to increased water losses and sewage leakages. The last war on Gaza, have further aggravated the situation. The Coastal Municipal Water Utility (CMWA) has estimated that over 30 kilometers of water networks, 11 wells operated by the water authorities and more than 6000 roof tanks and 840 household connections were damaged during the war. The above conditions in addition to power supply interruptions have led to shortages in water supply and sewage leakages in different areas of the Gaza Strip. As a result, access to adequate quantities of safe water for both drinking and personal and domestic uses has been severely restricted for many people. OCHA reports that some 10,000 people in Gaza remain without access to the water network.

*Damage to Food Stocks:* A recent report by the United Nations World Food Program (WFP)<sup>4</sup> indicates that the rise in international food prices has exacerbated the poor livelihood conditions of the Palestinian population in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which are caused by a systemic closure and movement restrictions. The combined effects of the increase in food prices and prolonged closure regime in the Gaza Strip have led to increasing food insecurity levels by distorting the functioning of the highly vulnerable and unstable markets, further reducing the poor's and vulnerable access to food. The same report indicates that "the people of the Gaza Strip have stretched to a maximum their coping mechanisms and are becoming more and more destitute as their means of surviving are disappearing. They are getting less credit from stores and are reluctant to use credit when it is available as their livelihoods are suffocated and they have fewer and fewer assets to fall back on to make the repayment. Most people in the Gaza Strip are relying on buying low quality cheap food items (including some unregulated goods from Egypt) to supplement the food aid they receive from the UN and other organizations and are cutting down on fruits and meat."<sup>5</sup>

*Impact on Livelihoods:* Economic and poverty conditions in the Gaza Strip has reached to a level that has not been recorded since 1967. According to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), unemployment in Gaza has reached 47.1% at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2009. Furthermore, poverty has affected 90% of the Gaza population, of whom 65% are living under extreme poverty according to a recent report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)<sup>6</sup>. Gaza's private sector, which is considered to be the main source of employment and the base of livelihood, contributes about 80% of the total employment

<sup>3</sup> Palestinian Centre for Human Rights: [www.pchrgaza.org/files/PressR/English/2008/list.pdf](http://www.pchrgaza.org/files/PressR/English/2008/list.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> World Food Program (WFP) "OPT: The Impact of Closure and High Food Prices on Performance of Imported Stable Foods and Vegetable and Fruits Market", <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db9005ID/MDCS-7ZXH7D?OpenDocument>, 31 December 2009

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian People: Developments in the economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, September 2009

has suffered most during the last war on Gaza. According to a recent study<sup>7</sup> it is estimated that a total of 324 businesses were damaged of which 56% were totally damaged. Furthermore, the study indicates that more than 90% of destroyed factories and businesses are located in east of Gaza city and the Northern part of the Gaza Strip. As of today, about 120,000 Palestinians are either unemployed or barely making living. Agriculture is considered to be the essence of Gaza's Livelihood where fresh food and vegetables are produced. Direct losses to the agricultural sector due to the recent war are estimated by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP)<sup>8</sup> at about 1,700 hectare. Furthermore, the UNDP report further adds that the destruction of vegetation cover and compacting of soil by strikes and tank movements degraded the land, making it difficult to re-vegetate and vulnerable to becoming barren desert. About 5,200 farmers in Gaza – out of about 10,000 - were directly affected by the offensive.

*Impact on Vulnerability (Women, Children & Elderly):* Women, children and the elderly being the most vulnerable groups of the population have been badly impacted by the war. More than 80% of Palestinian children suffer from behavioral problems<sup>9</sup> including increasing level of violence, sleeping problems, with feelings of fear and anxiety, changes in attachment to family and community, various emotional and cognitive problems such as inability to concentrate and decreasing hope in the future. The growing poverty in Gaza and the rising levels of unemployment are pushing children to work. UNICEF reports that hunger and need drive families to allow their children to abandon schools and work. Both Women and children are still suffering from lack of health and medical services. Despite the efforts of many international and local NGO's, the Israeli closure of Gaza is preventing the entrance of essential medical supplies and tools.

## 1.2 THE HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE TO THE GAZA EMERGENCY

In the aftermath of the Israeli War on Gaza, more than 188 NGO and UN agency developed the Gaza Flash Appeal which was included in the overall appeal for 2009. In January 2009, the Flash Appeal set an initial requirement of USD 462 million that was raised later in February to USD 854.6 million as indicated in the OCHA midyear review of CAP 2009. In addition, another USD 122 million was provided outside the appeal including in-kind and bi-lateral contributions. In their response to the humanitarian crises in the Gaza Strip, the appeal NGOs organized their operations over the following sectors/clusters: Agriculture, CFW and Cash Assistance, Early Recovery, Education, Food Security and Nutrition, Health, Protection, Shelter and non-food items, Water/Sanitation and Hygiene. By mid June 2009, about 53% of Gaza assistance requirements were funded and the following summarizes achievements to that date:

- 50,000 persons were sheltered in UNRWA emergency shelters during the Gaza bombings and provided with plastic sheeting, tarpaulins and shelter kits;
- 1,365,000 received food assistance from the WFP, UNRWA, Action Contre la Faim (ACF), ACTED, and Swedish Cooperative Centre (SCC) and World Vision (WV);
- Access to health was maintained for 125,000 marginalized people in addition to another 70,000 covered by mobile teams;
- 85,000 m<sup>3</sup> of water were distributed for domestic use and drinking;
- 500,000 beneficiaries received NFIs (hygiene kits, baby kits, water kits, household tanks);
- 1,016 families were assisted with agricultural input packages; 790 donums of land and 145 donums of greenhouses were repaired;
- Approximately 88,000 non-refugee children were reached through education response since the school year started in addition to 200,000 refugee children returning to school;
- The UNDP and UNRWA have provided 4,400 families whose shelters have been demolished or have suffered major damages with cash assistance to support rental and other essential living expenses until reconstruction and rehabilitation can take place and an additional 1,700 families were expected to be added;
- UNDP and UNRWA have provided cash assistance to 17,000 families to enable them to repair minor damages to their shelters,

Furthermore and in order to enhance coordination among various organizations working in the Gaza Strip, cluster groups were formed for each of the above clusters in addition to the Logistics cluster.

<sup>7</sup> Palestinian Federation of Industry and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, "The need for a post-war development strategy in the Gaza Strip: Overview and analysis of industrial damage and its grave consequences", March 2009

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Development Program (UNDP), "Damage Assessment in Gaza's Agricultural Sector", October 2009

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Yousef Musa, Union of Work Health Committees, Gaza, February 2009.

### 1.3 THE RESPONSE OF WORLD VISION

Starting in February 2009 (less than a month after the cessation of fire), WV JWG started food distribution mainly in Gaza city through the Holy Family Church. About 425 households benefitted from the distributed short-term emergency food parcels.

WV JWG livelihood interventions started in March 2009 targeting farmers, fishers and unemployed workers. The interventions aimed at hiring skilled and unskilled labor to rehabilitate agricultural land, greenhouses and fishing boats and nets. Table (1) below summarizes project achievement of targets.

**Table 1: Project Achievements Per Intervention Component**

OUTPUT LEVEL INDICATOR	TARGET	ACHIEVEMENT / COMMENT
<b>COMPONENT 1: Distribution of emergency food parcels in North and South Gaza</b>		
# of households that receive a food parcel to provide them with basic goods for 30 days.	425	<u>Target has been ACHIEVED</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>425 households (3,187 people*) in Al-Twam, Al-Amoody, Al-Shaym'a (North Gaza) and Tall Al-Dahab and Al-Shouka (South Gaza) received short-term emergency food.</li> </ul>
<b>COMPONENT 2: Increased livelihood opportunities for 600 people</b>		
# of households with livelihood opportunity	600	<u>Target has been OVERACHIEVED</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>772 households have been reached</li> </ul>
# of working days for unemployed workers & farmers engaged in the early recovery intervention	7,375	<u>Target has been OVERACHIEVED</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A total 8,639 days were achieved. Due to unavailability of plastic raw material in the market, a budget re-allocation was made to hire additional labor.</li> </ul>
# of greenhouses repaired/rehabilitated	70	<u>Target has been UNDERACHIEVED</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only 32 greenhouses were repaired/rehabilitated Plastic raw material needed for the rehabilitation of greenhouses was not available on the market resulting in the inability to meet targets for this activity.</li> </ul>
# acres of farmland rehabilitated	100	<u>Target has been OVERACHIEVED</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A total of 494 acres were rehabilitated.</li> </ul>
# fishing boats rehabilitated	8	<u>Target has been OVERACHIEVED</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A total of 24 fishing boats were rehabilitated.</li> </ul>
# fishing nets rehabilitated	12	<u>Target has been OVERACHIEVED</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A total of 27 fishing nets were repaired.</li> </ul>

\* Calculated based on 7.5 people per Household

## SECTION TWO

# SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION AND THE METHODOLOGY

This is the end project evaluation of the DEC Disaster Response Project (DRP) in the Gaza Strip in response to the 23-day Israeli military operation. Realizing that funding for activities in the Gaza Strip is likely to increase as a result of the ongoing humanitarian crisis and abiding with the organization quality standards and evaluation policies, WV JWG decided to undertake this evaluation to reflect on its operation that was marked by multi-sectoral interventions during a short timeframe.

## 2.1 THE SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

During the period January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009 - September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2009, WVUK implemented a DEC funded Disaster Response Project which formed a part of the wider WV Gaza Category II relief response. The project supported communities affected by the conflict through focusing on assisting the most vulnerable families in North and South Gaza with access to basic food supplies and livelihood opportunities. WVUK received £185,421 (representing 93%) of its allocated share of the DEC appeal launched in January 2009 for funds to support member agencies response programs in the Gaza Strip.

WV JWG commissioned an independent external end of project evaluation of the project to Impact Consulting, Inc. - an independent consulting firm. The evaluation undertook the task from January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010 to February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and involved the assessment and review of the nine month project.

## 2.2 METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

### Evaluation Logic and Criteria

The evaluation based its methodology on a series of questions formulated as part of the ToR proposed by WV JWG for the evaluation of the DEC DRP project (see ANNEX I). The evaluation methodology adopted the following criteria:

*Relevance & Appropriateness:* In the context of needs identification basis, cultural appropriate of the interventions and their consistency with the overall emergency program objectives, the adopted approaches responsiveness to the local context and beneficiaries' needs and priorities.

*Effectiveness:* The extent to which outcomes and goals were achieved; interventions timeliness, the ability to carry out activities as originally planned as well as coordination with other humanitarian players.

*Impact:* In the context of the wider consequences of the project activities, intended and unintended, positive and negative at both the macro (sector) and micro (household) levels.

*Efficiency:* How the input resources have been allocated and used to implement activities and achieve results. Implementation performances efficiency with respect to design, organization and management, implementation changes, monitoring and reporting as well as cost-efficiency.

*Accountability:* Compliance with beneficiaries' accountability frameworks in emergencies. Beneficiaries accountability against: i) providing information publicly; ii) beneficiary consultation and involvement; and iii) establishment of complaints mechanism.

*Quality Standards:* Compliance with international humanitarian principles and standards, namely: Red Cross Code of Conduct, Sphere Minimum Standards and People in Aid.

### Information Sources

The Evaluation Team used two major sources of information during the data gathering process: 1) Primary sources, based on key informant interviews, focus group meetings, beneficiary survey and direct observation field visits. 2) Secondary sources, based on a large collection of documentation provided by WV JWG as well as a number of reports and literature on the impact of the last war on the Gaza Strip.

## Data Collection and Research Techniques

In order to access primary sources - which were by far the most important component of data collection of the evaluation process – Impact Consulting, Inc. used several data gathering techniques (see ANNEX 6: Evaluation Tools) that were designed based on the aforementioned evaluation criteria:

- a. Document Review:* The Evaluation Team referred to secondary documentation including the proposal, interim and final narrative and financial reports and WV JWG's internal assessment and monitoring reports. Various research documents were also consulted to inform the background and analysis of the context (see ANNEX 4: List of consulted documents).
- b. Interviews:* Semi-structured interviews based on interview checklists of open-ended questions were used in interviews with WV JWG personnel, members of local committees, representatives of implementing partner organizations, and local suppliers. A total of 5 key informant interviews targeting 9 People were held throughout the data collection process.
- c. Beneficiary Surveys:* Three household surveys, targeting 160 Beneficiaries out of a population of 772 were conducted for the various livelihoods activities of the project between the periods February 1-2, 2010. The surveys were conducted in Beit Lahia and Rafah in cooperation with WV JWG partner CBO's who facilitated contacts with beneficiaries.
- d. Beneficiary Participatory Evaluation Discussions:* Impact Consulting, Inc. conducted 12 focus group meetings with project beneficiaries of both the food distribution and livelihoods activities (all had a facilitator and a raptor) in Beit Lahia, Gaza and Rafah. Respectively the activities targeted 107 (22 female) and were guided by open-ended questions.
- e. Direct Observation and Field visits:* Two field visits and visual verification of the project activities took place in Beit Lahia and Rafah which enabled a direct appraisal of the quality of the interventions.



## Sample Design

Sample design and random selection were based on the following factors:

- Statistically sound sampling for surveys based on +7% error with 95% confidence (see ANNEX 3: Sample calculation).
- Gender, geographical Spread and activities location.
- Timeliness of the activities during the emergency response
- Practicality in terms of access to stakeholders and feasibility within the evaluation timeframe.

## Evaluation Team

The Team comprised two senior projects evaluation experts, Ms. Reham Al Wehaidy and Mr. Rami Wihaidi spanning a diverse range of experience and specialization across the project various components as well as the cross-cutting themes of evaluating humanitarian actions. The technical team was supported by a professional crew of experienced facilitators (2), field researchers (6) in implementing the field work associated with the

evaluation process including visiting project locations and sites, interviewing staff and conducting participatory exercises with partners, beneficiaries and communities.

## 2.3 THE VOICE OF THE PROJECT BENEFICIARIES

As clearly reflected in the adopted evaluation methodology, a strong focus on the active participation and involvement of the response beneficiaries, partners and participants was the underlining theme of the entire evaluation process. In that context, a variety of tool and methods were used to capture their views and obtain their feedback. This approach proved to be most effective to elicit feedback on the project and entailed the dedication of a significant proportion of the evaluation time in conducting field work.

## 2.4 LIMITATIONS

In spite of a number of constraints faced in the evaluation process, overall it proceeded smoothly. The following are the major encountered limitations:

- The evaluation comes a long time after the completion of activities as the food distribution was done a year ago and the Cash-for-Work last activity was completed in September 2009. Due to this, it was hard to reach beneficiaries resulting in the large number of “no show” in the CFW beneficiaries.
- Lists of beneficiaries for the food distribution component were provided on hard copies 10 days after the official start of the assignment which required additional effort to sort them out. Furthermore, the provided lists did not include any contact information which made it very difficult for the Evaluation Team to reach the beneficiaries.
- Lack of documentation associated with the food distribution component. Moreover none of the WV staff members involved in the implementation of this component were available during the evaluation period which pressured the evaluation process.

# RELEVANCE AND APPROPRIATENESS OF THE PROJECT

This section discusses the two complementary criteria relevance and appropriateness through examining the needs identification basis, the cultural appropriateness of the interventions and their consistency to the overall emergency program objectives as well as the extent to which the adopted approaches were responsive to the local context and beneficiaries needs and priorities.

## 3.1 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

### Context Analysis and Needs Assessment

Documents review revealed a strong understanding of the emergency context, with focus on food security and livelihoods aspects. The context and needs analysis section of the project proposal reflected a solid understanding of the operating environment and was supported with detailed facts and figures. The project design has been informed by two types of assessments: i) an initial situation analysis conducted in January 2009 which was supplemented by data exchanged through INGO network meetings with UN and other INGOs operating in Gaza; ii) a formal rapid assessment conducted in mid February 2009 that targeted 269 households in 14 neighborhoods and camps in two of the five governorates of the Gaza Strip. Discussions with beneficiaries and key informants confirmed that the WV JWG assessments have involved community participation and field visits to affected areas. This participatory approach used to a large extent in the design and planning of the project was well received and has encouraged self-reliance and ownership.

The evaluation found WV JWG response was in accordance with the results of the assessments they had carried out. The project activities directly addressed two of the identified priority recommendations of the rapid assessment, namely: i) Limited and well-targeted food aid; and ii) Livelihoods recovery and alternative livelihoods projects. To this end, the evaluation believes that WV JWG showed a good practice which enabled an effective response to the December 2008/January 2009 humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip that was based on a proper understanding of community vulnerabilities and needs. Furthermore, it has contributed to strengthen its capabilities and resources for the purposes of project design of ongoing and expansion areas of its operations.

### Cultural Appropriateness

The evaluation found that both the implemented interventions and the adopted approach for implementation were culturally appropriate. The evaluation believes that cultural appropriateness came as a natural practice due to WV JWG prior experience in various relief and development intervention and long history working in the Gaza Strip. For example, the composition of the distributed emergency food parcels served different preferred dietary needs and demands of the beneficiaries which contributed to a diet system that is both rich and diversified. Furthermore, the content of the food parcels included dried and canned items which was found most appropriate by the evaluation as they were easier and faster to use by the household and were not affected by the ongoing power outage. Another example from the livelihoods component of the project, WV JWG engaged with the local committees that are set up by community leaders and elders and worked closely with them in both targeted areas to help coordinate the project activities, assist with confirmation of beneficiary lists and ongoing monitoring. The adopted approach by WV JWG has facilitated implementation, encouraged participation and ensured acceptance by the target community.

### Clarity of Objectives

The set object for the project was “*to improve the food security of families affected by the recent Gaza crisis*” which made it apparent what the project sought or is seeking to achieve. The evaluation believes that the project objective statement made the actual intent of the project clear and avoided a common failing where strategies and/or activities are used to describe project objectives.

Moreover, WV JWG used a logical framework as a mean of clearly stating the project objective and the underlying assumptions. The evaluation believes that the adopted logical framework was an extremely useful

tool that provided a clear setting for inputs, outcomes, and impact and hence enabled proper measuring against targets.

### Cross-Cutting Issues (Gender, Children & Disability)

Documents review showed that the initial findings of the February rapid needs assessment have allowed WV JWG to disaggregate beneficiaries by gender, age and ability. Children were identified as one of the most vulnerable groups, due to the intense trauma of the war. The review of the provided list of beneficiaries for the food distribution component illustrated that around 32% of the beneficiaries were females which indicates that the design and implementation of the food distribution activities emphasized aspects of gender.

The livelihoods activities succeeded in targeting families with children as the surveys indicated that 73.7% of the families do have children of which 58% have more than 3 children. Furthermore, the surveys indicated that 14.4% of the targeting families have disabilities which illustrate the project commitment and focus on reaching households with cases of special needs. Female project beneficiaries make about 4.4% of all beneficiaries. Although the evaluation understands that the livelihoods activities focused on agriculture and fishing which are more male dominant field of work, however the percentage of female participation was found very low and requires further attention in WV JWG future activities. Especially that unemployment is one of the greatest problems facing the population in Gaza, which equally affects both men and women. The evaluation found among the good practices with respect to gender is the inclusion of four women (28.5%) as part of the local committee members. This practice has facilitated women participation and involvement in the project and WV JWG is encouraged to future develop and enhance the use of such practices.

## 3.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- WV JWG is encouraged to launch a comprehensive capacity building and development program targeting local CBOs. This program would leverage WV JWG investment in these CBOs during and before the current crisis. Capacity building needs include among others, crisis management, emergency preparedness and application of international aid standards such Sphere and HAP.
- Expand coverage of assistance to include the remaining parts of the Gaza Strip.
- Given the accumulated debt among beneficiaries, WV JWG is highly encouraged to study the magnitude of such debts and to determine the type of debtors in order to develop an intervention that would help beneficiaries get out of debt and support them to start an income generating activity.
- The evaluation recommends that WV JWG develops policy perspectives on Gender in Disaster and to share and train its staff and local partners on its use. For example, fixing quotas for women as participants and beneficiaries will ensure that gender perspectives are promoted and properly tackled.

## SECTION FOUR

# EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROJECT

This section deals with the program Effectiveness in terms of its management structures and how it facilitated the achievement of the overall goal and the attainment of its objectives. The evaluation also deals with the timeliness of the intervention and how the implementation at this time helped reduce people suffering and supported their basic livelihood needs.

## 4.1 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

### Management and Organization

Overall, WV JWG intervention exhibited good management practices and projects management and organization were sound. Submitted proposals were translated into a Program Plan, as requested by the DEC, which included a logical framework like matrix that guided the implementation process. Activities design was based on rapid needs assessments that involved community participation and field visits to affected areas.

The evaluation believes that the proper needs assessment conducted prior to the start of the project has provided WV JWG with accurate information that guided the implementation process and resulted in the achievement of objectives.

The evaluation found that the food distribution was tasked completely to the Holy Family Church in Gaza with no or very minimal follow-up on the part of the WV JWG. Very little information was found available at the WV JWG regarding the beneficiaries, the selection criteria and distribution mechanism.

### Likely Achievement of Objective

In spite of the challenging operating context, WV JWG has accomplished the DRP overall objective that “*families affected by the recent Gaza crisis are provided with access to basic food and supported with livelihood opportunities*”.

Recipients of the food parcels indicated that overall the food parcel was with enough quantities despite some reservations on the quality of the distributed food. The food parcel contained pasta and rice that had bad qualities, a food parcel beneficiary reported.

As for beneficiaries of the livelihood program, more than 81% of all surveyed beneficiaries reported that the program has helped them in purchasing food for their families. Furthermore, about 17.4% reported that there were able to provide health care to their families while another 18% reported that they were able to pay for their children education expenses.

The evaluation believes that the objectives were better achieved with the livelihood program that was directly implemented by WV JWG. As for the food distribution, it is believed that WV JWG should have played a more active role in the distribution to ensure adherence to quality standards and targeting the right beneficiaries.

### Interventions Timeliness

The distribution of food parcels came at a time when people were most in need right after the war. The distribution started in February 2009 benefitting 425 households. The livelihood program implementation started in May 2009. Although this may seem a bit late, however the evaluation believes that the implemented activities responded perfectly to both the agricultural and fishing seasons.

### Coordination with Other Players

WV JWG has been an active player in coordination mechanisms with other organizations. As one of the long-established INGOs in Palestine, WV JWG has good formal and informal links with the other experienced players. Meetings with the WV JWG Gaza field staff and local committees revealed that there was continuous coordination with CARE International to agree on agricultural intervention areas so as not to targeted beneficiaries benefitting from one of the organizations. The evaluation found this to be highly effective in reaching the most needy and to widen the geographic scope of assistance. Furthermore, the food distribution

was coordinated with the WFP in order not to target their beneficiaries and reach those that are not eligible under WFP program. The evaluation believes that coordination is constrained more by the nature and dissemination of coordination mechanism, than by lack of interest on WV's part.

## 4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- WV JWG is encouraged to manage the implementation of food parcels distribution to ensure adherence to food quality standards.
- WV JWG is recommended to invest in the establishment of a core Emergency Response Team from senior national staff across the West Bank and Gaza. The presence of such a team would have a significant contribution in increasing the organization ability to respond to future emergencies. Moreover, this team would be able to utilize and benefit from advisory support provided by various WV emergency teams across the world.

# EFFICIENCY OF THE PROJECT

This section discusses the project efficiency through examining how the input resources have been allocated and used to implement activities and achieve results. Furthermore, this section evaluates the efficiency of the project implementation performances with respect to design, organization and management, implementation changes, monitoring and reporting as well as cost-efficiency.

## 5.1 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

### Implementation Performance and Changes

Given the short duration of the project and the challenging environment, implementation was found timely, within budget and in accordance with implementation schedules. Overall, the project exhibited good management practices and activities management and organization were sound. Generally logistical and access constraints to various inputs were among the day-to-day challenges facing the implementation process. With the exception of one significant change, namely budget re-allocation to hire additional labor due to the unavailability of plastic raw material used for the rehabilitation of greenhouses, minor changes were introduced throughout the course of implementation. However, neither the project log-frame nor the relevant indicators were updated to reflect this modification, i.e. set target for indicator “# of greenhouses repaired/rehabilitated” was maintained at 70 making it the only under-achieved indicator of the project.

For the livelihoods component, monitoring, evaluation and reporting have been found efficient. The evaluation found that follow-up and site monitoring visits were the most used tools for M&E practices. Field monitoring forms and reports were in place and regularly used by the project team. The project had clearly defined plans with outputs and outcomes. Input and output data was available, sufficient and well organized. Overall, the adopted monitoring system was sufficient and contributed to achieving the intended results. An interesting rotational practice among the field coordinators, where they used to work in different targeted areas was found most useful in building their capacity, supporting the transfer of know-how as well as enhancing the efficiency of performance. Group discussion with beneficiaries revealed a general appreciation of the level of on-site supervision as well as the quality and frequent monitoring visits was expressed.

### Targeting of Beneficiaries and Stakeholders

Review of the profiles of the assisted communities confirmed that all targeted locations were among the hardest-hit ones and thought to be excessively vulnerable due to specific targeting by the IDF during the 22 day war. The North Gaza and Rafah governorates were disproportionately affected by the war and saw the majority of the damage. The evaluation believes that the project activities supported the most marginalized and severely affected areas and communities and was successful in reaching areas including Beit Lahia area and nearby localities in the North and Shokah village and Shaborah camp in Rafah.

For the livelihoods activities, the evaluation believes that the selection of stakeholders and beneficiaries was an integral part for the success of the project. The decision to work out the selection process in close coordination with local committees in the targeted locations of the North Gaza and Rafah was a sound choice as they played the key role in putting forward beneficiary lists on the basis of preset selection criteria. The criteria used in the selection processes were found to be most relevant to addressing the identified needs and were in line with international standards and donor's policies for emergencies. It was clear from the beneficiary surveys and discussions in focus group meetings that beneficiaries' selection was based on criteria that were communicated to both local committees and project beneficiaries as well.

### Cost Efficiency

The evaluation did attempt to compare unit costs between the WV JWG and other agencies engaged in similar activities but found that this was not possible. The same items, such as food items included in the distributed food parcels or seed or plastic raw material had different prices when supplied by different organizations. Even

when the items were the same, delivery through different channels had different costs. For example, the items included in food parcels distributed by Save the Children were purchased locally & hence endured no logistical or transportation costs as it was the case with the food parcels distributed by WV. Given the difficulty of comparing unit costs, the evaluation relied on the cost implications of the more general practice observed.

WV JWG used the resources entrusted to them in a responsible way. In implementing the project, WV JWG used a combination of approaches, reliance on its own staff and/or funding partners. The evaluation found that the extensive use and reliance on the organization staff coupled by close coordination with partners to be very cost efficient in implementing the livelihoods interventions and contributed to its success.

The implemented interventions under this project are located in areas where WV JWG have been involved in the past which allowed the project to build on pre-existing programs, the use of existing capital assets and benefited from investment, existing resources and relationships. The evaluation believes that this has contributed to the cost-efficiency of the project. Furthermore, the evaluation found the decision of WV JWG to use alternative interventions at time when they could not procure material locally to be cost efficient. The lack of plastic raw material on the local market for the repair of the Greenhouses led to re-aligning the remaining amounts of this budget item to another intervention area, namely hiring additional labor for the rehabilitation of land through weeding and planting.

Financial systems seem to have performed relatively well, but this should be confirmed by an audit. WV JWG financial procedures, as understood by the evaluators, seem to be more appropriate for development rather than emergency response projects. The hiring of a procurement specialist for the DRP project allowed for an improved management of the procurement orders and for documents to be dealt with in a very efficient manner, Furthermore, the hiring of the procurement specialist allowed for the separation of logistics from procurement which further improved the efficiency of the project operations.

### Transition from Relief to Recovery

The interventions in the relief phase combined with the lessons learned exercise and the conducted needs assessment have informed the design of subsequent projects targeting the early recovery. The evaluation found a clear understanding of the connection between relief and early recovery which was evident in the selection of the implemented project activities. For example, the design of the Livelihood component provided unemployed workers with jobs through a CFW scheme, a relief activity, to work in the rehabilitation of land and greenhouses and fishing boats, a recovery activity. These activities had a long term effect on the agriculture and fishery sectors and showed a sense for transition to recovery.

The greenhouses repair activities have provided farmers with a means to farm their lands and provided them with income that they used to improve their livelihood. The improvement was found to have a long term effect where farmers can use these repaired greenhouses after the end of the activity to provide them with a steady stream of income throughout the year. About 64% of farmers said they used the generated income to buy food while another 25% used it to pay off debt. Others indicated that they used part of the income to provide healthcare and education to their families. A small percentage of farmers indicated that they have invested some of the income in a small project. The repair of fishing boats and nets has provided them with the tools to use to go back to the sea and provide for their families. It was found that 100% of the fishermen used the new income mainly to provide food and 57% used part of the income to pay off debt. Another 28% of fishermen used the new income for health care and education.

Although the CFW activities did not have an evident transition to recovery aspect, however 55% of beneficiaries indicated that they used part of the income to pay off debt. This had a positive effect on the beneficiaries' capital assets. They were able to maintain these assets as a result instead of selling them to pay off debt.

In general, the evaluation can firmly say that the Livelihood project had a clear transition to recovery feature and a long term effect on the lives of the beneficiaries.

## 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- As unemployed and disabled beneficiaries have been accumulating debt, WV JWG is highly encouraged in the recovery phase to study the magnitude of such debts and to determine the type of debtors in order to develop an intervention that would help beneficiaries get out of debt and support them to start an income generating activity.

- WV JWG should collect monitoring data disaggregated on both gender and vulnerability across project activities.
- While some practices were found, WV JWG is encouraged to formalize special internal mechanisms for the rapid and effective management of emergency response.
- WV JWG is encouraged to implement a post distribution monitoring process
- WV JWG encouraged to review the mobilized human resources for any future interventions and ensure enough resources are mobilized to meet the expected work load.

# IMPACT OF THE PROJECT

This section discusses the Impact of the project in the context of the wider consequences of the implemented activities, intended and unintended, positive and negative at both the macro (sector) and micro (household) levels. Furthermore, it investigates the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the set objectives of the project as well as the results and incurred differences at the beneficiaries' level.

## 6.1 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

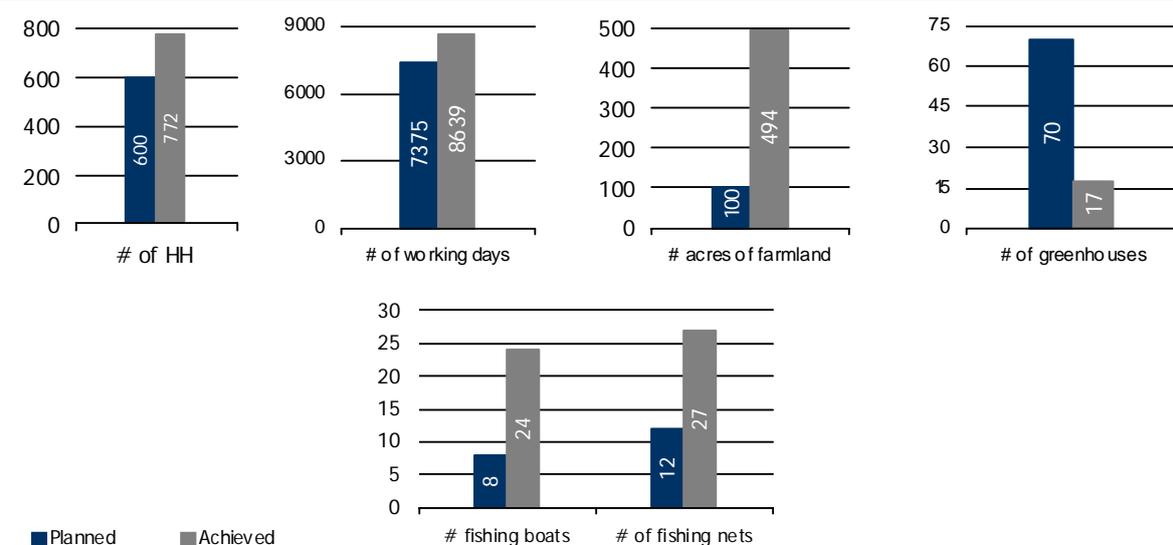
### The Extent of the Impact

The positive impact of the project interventions was considerable. WV JWG worked throughout the most hit and affected areas in the North and South of the Gaza Strip and implemented a broad a range of activities with impressive outputs as reported by interviewed beneficiaries. Through direct observation site visits and documents review, the evaluation saw a number of green houses that were either repaired or rehabilitated with materials provided by the project livelihoods activities and crops grown from seed provided by the project.

Indeed, as the evaluation team visited various locations, specifically in Beit Lahia, we were left with the impression that there was no one who had not benefited from the project assistance in some way! The following are amongst the reported achievements of the project.

- Distribution of 3,187 people (425 households) with short-term emergency food parcels in North and South of the Gaza Strip.
- 772 people were reached and supported with livelihood opportunities either by direct farming rehabilitation activities or through the CFW activities. Specifically: A total of 8,639 working days for unemployed workers and farmers were achieved; a total of 494 acres of farmland were rehabilitated; a total of 24 fishing boats were rehabilitated and fishing 27 nets were repaired; as well as 32 greenhouses were repaired/rehabilitated

**Figure 2: Achievements vs. Planned of the Project Livelihoods Component**



### The Depth of the Impact

Equally important as the physical signs of the project interventions was the reported impact of the project activities on increased livelihoods opportunities among targeted communities. The value of the work undertaken by the WV JWG was confirmed in interviews with beneficiaries, who were clearly grateful for the assistance they had received. The impact of some project activities – particularly with respect to the

rehabilitation of farming and physical infrastructure of lands – went far beyond the immediate saving of lives and livelihoods. For example, the repair/rehabilitation of greenhouses which took into consideration the essential needs of the beneficiaries will serve this community for at least the coming two years. Agricultural support activities such as seed distribution, weeding, etc. increased short-term and long-term food security. Furthermore, the project involved training beneficiaries in areas such as health, agriculture and sanitation. Fishermen who are struggling to re-establish their lives and are the least to be targeted by various interventions showed commitment to survival and moving ahead which was found to be attributed to the assistance provided by the project among others. To this end, the project helped strengthen local partners and increased solidarity among beneficiaries. However, the evaluation believes that more attention could have been given to improve the status and roles of women in the communities through various activities.

Consultation with indirect beneficiaries revealed several unintended positive impacts such as the reduction of domestic household problems and better family relations attributed to improved economic conditions.

Although the evaluation was not able to form a conclusive judgment on the impact of the emergency food distribution component due to several issues discussed across this document and under the limitations section, however, the reported distribution took place during the month of February and early March 2009. This reflects a rapid response to the emergency situation which has contributed to relieving the suffering of the affected communities.

### Constraints on Impact

The project has operated in a complex political context and an unpredictable socio-economic environment. Despite numerous constraints and difficulties, the WV JWG did a very significant and impressive amount of work. The impact of the implemented activities will live long beyond the life of the project. Furthermore, WV JWG and its partner has adapted to these challenges through creative solutions. Primary among these were:

- *Logistical and Access Constraints* - Logistical and access constraints to basic needs including fuel and the availability of some input materials necessary for implementing the project activities such as food items, planting seeds, plastic for greenhouses repair/rehabilitation, etc. This has caused some delays in the project implementation; has affected the ability of WV JWG to meet the set target for “# of greenhouses repaired/rehabilitated” as only 32 out of the planned 70 were achieved; and has increased the cost of doing business mainly due higher transportations costs. It is important to note that WV JWG responded to this challenge by utilizing the services of a centralized logistical and procurement cluster in its Jerusalem for the purchase of food items from the West Bank and collaborated with UN agencies to facilitate transportation and delivery to the Gaza Strip. Also, a second round of CFW was included that utilized the reallocated funds under the greenhouses activity.
- *Increased Political Sensitivity and Chronic Uncertainty* - The project implementation period was marked by an increased political instability, sudden and unexpected changes in the surrounding environment as well as the general decrease in the public’s perceptions of safety and security. Coupled with deteriorating social and economic conditions, the project suffered from unexpected delays in the implementation schedules, frequent planning and revisiting of actions &/or budget realignments to cope with the situation.

## 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- WV JWG is among the first organizations to target the fishing sector where a great need for support is believed to exist. Therefore, the evaluation recommends additional support to be provided to the fishing sector in areas such as new boat construction.
- Introduce new livelihoods opportunities especially designed for women other than the traditional interventions in sewing and embroidery. These interventions may be integrated with other ongoing programs of WV being implemented in the Gaza Strip. Examples of such opportunities include food processing and agriculture.
- WV JWG should include qualitative indicators defined around “beneficiary satisfaction” to complement the existing quantitative indicators, which may not always provide a complete picture on the impact of the intervention.
- WV JWG is encouraged to utilize the good practice in M&E of the livelihoods and systemizing it across the entire emergency response. This system should be guided by a simple standard operating procedure.

# ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE PROJECT

This section discusses the Accountability of the project against relevant international standards and frameworks of beneficiaries’ accountability in emergency actions. For the purpose of this evaluation, ‘accountability’ is defined “providing beneficiaries with the opportunity to understand and influence the key decisions which are made during the emergency action”. In practical terms, accountability to beneficiaries was measured against the following three (3) components:

1. Providing information publicly;
2. Beneficiary Consultation and Involvement;
3. Establishment of a complaints mechanism

### Benchmark International Standards

*The HAP Principles and frameworks of Accountability*

“We acknowledge that our fundamental accountability must be to those we seek to assist.” - Sphere Humanitarian Charter

“The disaster affected population actively participates in the assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the assistance program” - Sphere Common Standard 1

“We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources.” - Red Cross Code Principle 9

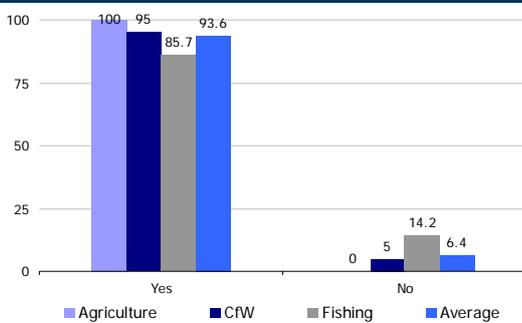
## 7.1 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

### Providing Information to Beneficiaries

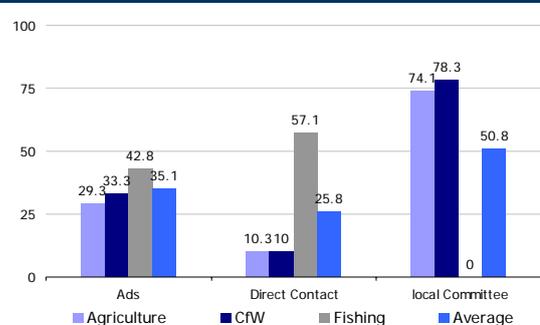
The vast majority (93.6%) of the surveyed beneficiaries reported receiving information on the Livelihood interventions of the project. Information was made publicly available in a number of formats, including: advertisement on partners notice boards, supermarkets, flyers, targeted verbal communication by members of local committees, meetings, awareness workshops as well as field visits. Of those that reported receiving information, the majority (90.1%) said that the information was communicated verbally. On average among the three conducted surveys 35% of surveyed beneficiaries reported receiving information on the Livelihoods intervention through advertisement on partners’ notice boards, 25.8% through direct communication and 50.8% through verbal communication by members of local committees. The diversified formats were found most effective both for the type of information being disseminated and the preference of the beneficiaries. Information was given about the project, planned and implemented activities, implementation locations, time-schedules, selection criteria, enquires and feedback on their needs and expectations as well as how to register.

The efforts of WV JWG team in this area were recognized and commended by interviewed partners and all the beneficiaries whether those surveyed or interviewed. The evaluation believes that this active communication and information sharing with various stakeholders have contributed to an enhanced level of understanding of roles, responsibilities, rights as well as proper dissemination the project messages.

**Figure 3: Information provision to beneficiaries**



**Figure 4: Responsible party for information provision**

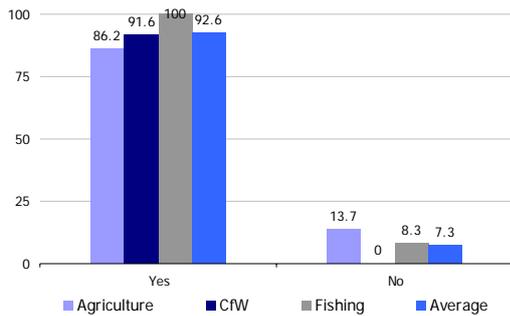


### Beneficiary Consultation and Involvement

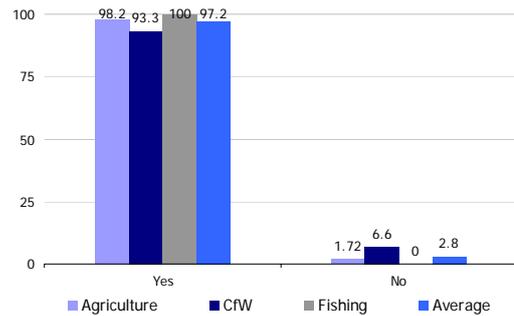
On average the vast majority (92.6%) of the surveyed livelihoods beneficiaries indicated that the implemented livelihoods activities were according to the needs they specified during the needs assessment. Furthermore, around 97.2% of the surveyed beneficiaries indicated that they were consulted as to the type of job they would

like to perform or the service they would to receive. Evaluation discussions in focus group meetings revealed a mixed experience regarding the level of beneficiaries' involvement in the project cycle. While some beneficiaries expressed that they had a very minimal level of involvement in the project cycle beyond the initial site visits which were part of the rapid needs assessment. The majority of beneficiaries' illustrated that a priority was given to their involvement and feedback in decision making as much as possible through local committee members. Overall, a notable and active role for the local committee members appeared to have been the most used mechanism for consulting with beneficiaries and soliciting their feedback. This practice has facilitated the involvement of women and their participation in the decision making process. The evaluation believes that more effort could have been invested in involving the beneficiaries in the entire project cycle and the decision making process. This involvement would have further contributed to a greater sense of ownership, proactive involvement as well as a greater buy-in into the entire process.

**Figure 5: Implemented activities vs. beneficiaries needs**



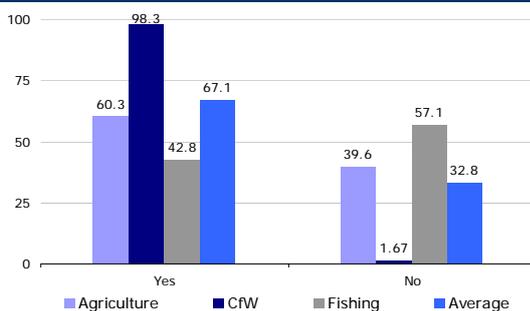
**Figure 6: Beneficiaries consultation**



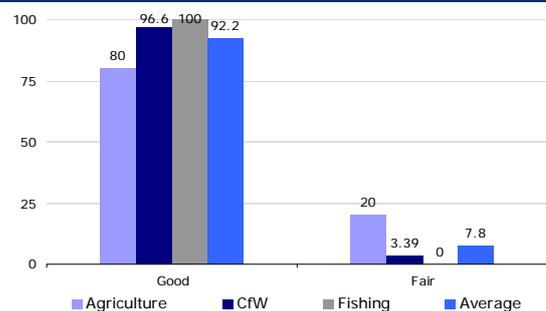
## Establishment of a Complaints Mechanism

The evaluation found no evidence of a documented and formally established complaints handling procedure. This finding was also supported by the feedback from most of the held discussion meetings with the beneficiaries. About 32% of surveyed beneficiaries confirmed that there was no written complaint mechanism provided by WV JWG. The complaints were delivered verbally according to 55% of the surveyed beneficiaries or through open discussions during various meetings according to 32%. It was also indicated that complaints were received by both WV (77%) and local committee members (49%). Despite of this, the vast majority of the surveyed beneficiary thought that the adopted verbal mechanism was good enough to handle their complaints. The drawback of such mechanism is lack of proper documentation and thus may negatively affect the transparency and accountability of the implemented project. The evaluation believes that the adopted good practice in handling beneficiaries' complaints would have been further valued if supported by a formal documentation process and a simple guiding complaints handling SoP.

**Figure 7: Availability of formal complaint mechanism**



**Figure 8: Evaluation of adopted complaint mechanism**



## 7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement a training program for WV Gaza and local partners' staff on accountability and the implementation of relevant standards, mainly HAP and Sphere Standards so they fully understand the context and their responsibilities to the systems.
- Establish and implement, early in the response, complaints handling procedures that are effective, accessible, safe and flexible for intended beneficiaries and affected communities to be guided by a simple standard operating procedure.

## SECTION EIGHT

# QUALITY STANDARDS OF THE PROJECT

This section discusses the project compliance with international humanitarian principles and standards, namely: Red Cross Code of Conduct, Sphere Minimum Standards and People in Aid.

## 8.1 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

### Red Cross Code of Conduct

PRINCIPLES	Food Distribution	Livelihoods	EVALUATION COMMENTS
The Humanitarian imperative comes first.	●	●	<p><b>Food:</b> The evaluation found no evidence of an adopted criteria for food distribution, however, the ultimate goal of the distribution was to reduce the suffering of vulnerable families in the Gaza Strip.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> Beneficiaries were satisfied to the criteria used in the selection process. A proper needs assessment was conducted.</p>
Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone.	●	●	<p><b>Food:</b> Review of the beneficiaries list revealed that attention was given to selecting beneficiaries irrespective of race, religion, gender or political affiliation.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> Need was the drive for the selection of beneficiaries. Average family size of beneficiaries is 7.8 person, much higher than the Gaza Average of 6.5. In addition, 70% of CFW and Agriculture beneficiaries did not have a job 3 years prior to the program.</p>
Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint.	●	●	<p><b>Food:</b> Review of the beneficiaries list revealed that all beneficiaries were not selected based on religious believes or political affiliation. They came from different religious and economic backgrounds.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> The major drive behind the selection of beneficiaries was need. Political or religious believes were not part of the selection criteria.</p>
We shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy.	●	●	Both food distribution and livelihood assistance were given unconditional according to the beneficiaries interviewed and surveyed. More than 97% of beneficiaries were satisfied with the assistance provided.
We shall respect culture and custom.	●	●	<p><b>Food:</b> The food provided in the assistance was appropriate. They indicated that the food came at a time of food shortage in the stores but they recommend the distribution of coupons in future projects which would allow them to pick what they need from stores.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> Farmers indicated that workers employed in the CFW program were originally farmers or children of farmers and so they are aware of the agricultural practices and farmers needs.</p>

PRINCIPLES	Food Distribution	Livelihoods	EVALUATION COMMENTS
We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities.	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> Distribution of food parcels was handled completely by the Holy Family Church without any local support and therefore no local capacities were built at the WV Gaza Office.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> WV employed a mix of operational support including those of WV Gaza Office as well as the local committees that come from the affected areas. The evaluation finds a great deal of knowledge and capacity at both WV and the local committees that can support similar future activities.</p>
Ways shall be found to involve program beneficiaries in the management of relief aid.	●	●	<p><b>Food:</b> The evaluation found some evidence beneficiaries involvement through consultation with local committees on the contents of the parcels. Furthermore, all interviewed beneficiaries agreed that the provided assistance was in line with their immediate needs after the war.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> Program beneficiaries were involved at more than one level. The use of local human resources such as the established local committees, the needs assessment conducted prior to program implementation, knowledge of beneficiaries regarding the selection criteria (more than 85% of surveyed beneficiaries were informed about the selection Criteria)</p>
Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs.	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> The nature of this activity was mainly food distribution at time of great need after the war. The evaluation understands the nature of this intervention which is to reduce the suffering of the beneficiaries at the time of crises. Therefore, the activity did not take into account any measures to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> The provided assistance to both farmers and fishermen has a sustainable and lasting effect into the future. Farmers' greenhouses can be used for a long time after the end of the project and fishermen nets and repaired boats can be used for fishing. These activities reduced beneficiaries' vulnerabilities to disasters and helped them meet basic needs.</p>
We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources.	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> Interviewed beneficiaries of food parcels indicated that there were no mechanisms in place for complaints. The evaluation ability to assess this intervention was hindered by the unavailability of the WV staff involved in implementing this component or the Head of the Holy Family Church.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> There was a great deal of satisfaction from the beneficiaries regarding the complaints mechanisms where more than 70% of beneficiaries indicated that a mechanism was in place through both WV field staff and the local committees.</p>
In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognize disaster victims as dignified human beings, not hopeless objects.	●	●	<p><b>Food:</b> Although no publicity was associated with this activity, however the beneficiaries felt dignified as the distributed food spared them the need to ask for help.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> The evaluation found WV to be sensitive to human dignity. No evidence was found for the exploitation of beneficiaries through advertising or public information. The evaluation found WV to be sensitive to the dignity of the beneficiaries and no information was disseminated or made public regarding their identity. Furthermore, the evaluation found that WV paid special consideration to beneficiaries with disabilities in the family. More than 10% of beneficiaries were found to have some sort of disability where the activity helped them to reduce the suffering of the disable.</p>

## SPHERE MINIMUM STANDARDS

PRINCIPLES	Food Distribution	Livelihoods	EVALUATION COMMENTS
<p><b>Participation:</b> The disaster-affected population actively participates in the assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the assistance program.</p>	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> The evaluation did not find any evidence of beneficiaries' participation throughout the process.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> Beneficiaries involvement was evident in the assessment and implementation phases. A proper needs assessment was conducted initially. In addition, than 97% of the surveyed beneficiaries reported that they have been consulted to the type of service and place work they wish to receive. Furthermore, the consultation was done by both WV and the Local Committees. About 72% reported that they were consulted by WV, while another 48% reported they were consulted by the Local Committee</p>
<p><b>Initial Assessment:</b> Assessments provide an understanding of disaster situation &amp; a clear analysis of threats to life, dignity, health &amp; livelihoods to determine, in consultation with relevant authorities, whether an external response is required &amp;, if so, the nature of the response.</p>	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> The evaluation did not find any evidence of beneficiaries assessment conducted.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> The evaluation review of the project document revealed that a proper needs assessment was conducted prior to the start of the project.</p>
<p><b>Response:</b> A humanitarian response is required in situations where the relevant authorities are unable and/or unwilling to respond to the protection and assistance needs of the population on the territory over which they have control, and when assessment and analysis indicate that these needs are unmet.</p>	●	●	<p><b>Food:</b> All beneficiaries of the Food distribution component indicated that the parcels came at a time when the markets were not functioning and very few things were available in stores. Furthermore, the distribution of food came at a time when the de-facto government in Gaza was unable to function due to the war and its aftermath.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> The needs assessment conducted prior to the execution of the Livelihood component indicated a need for such intervention mainly in the Northern areas of the Gaza Strip. Furthermore, the Livelihood activities were carried out a short time after the war side by side with other donor organizations as the local authorities in Gaza did not have the human or financial resources to deliver assistance to affected communities.</p>
<p><b>Targeting:</b> Humanitarian assistance or services are provided equitably &amp; impartially, based on the vulnerability needs of individuals or groups affected by disaster.</p>	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> The evaluation did not find any evidence of selection criteria nor needs assessment to inform the targeting process. However, the beneficiaries list reveled that attention was given to selecting beneficiaries irrespective of race, religion, gender or political affiliation.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> The formation of local committees in affected areas has helped WV identify affected communities and population. In addition, the conducted needs assessment was found to be vital in the targeting process</p>
<p><b>Monitoring:</b> The effectiveness of the program in responding to problems is identified and changes in the broader context are continually monitored, with a view to improving the program, or to phasing it out as required.</p>	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> No evidence of proper monitoring was found. The implementation was handled completely by the Holy Family Church with no evidence of monitoring and limited reporting on progress by WV.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> The evaluation found evidence from WV documents and the surveyed beneficiaries of continued monitoring and adjustment made by WV. It was found that due to shortages of plastic sheets required for the repair of the Greenhouses, an adjustment was made to invest part of the Livelihood budget for the weeding activity and thus for employing additional workers.</p>

PRINCIPLES	Food Distribution	Livelihoods	EVALUATION COMMENTS
<p><b>Evaluation:</b> There is a systematic and impartial examination of humanitarian action, intended to draw lessons to improve practice and policy and to enhance accountability.</p>	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> The evaluation did not find any evidence neither at the Holy Family Church nor at WV of any evaluations done for the distribution of food with the exception of the evaluation conducted for all DEC activities in the Gaza Strip including those of WV.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> A proper assessment was carried out and lessons learned were drawn.</p>
<p><b>Aid Worker Competencies and Responsibilities:</b> Aid workers possess appropriate qualifications, attitudes and experience to plan and effectively implement appropriate programs.</p>	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> WV staff were not involved in this component</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> There was a great evidence of the WV staff competency in the execution of the livelihood activities. Farmers indicated that WV staff were there with them throughout the implementation. “They used to come very early in the morning to monitor the installation of plastic sheets to greenhouses which usually starts at dawn” one farmer said.</p>
<p><b>Supervision, Management and Support of Personnel:</b> Aid workers receive supervision and support to ensure effective implementation of the humanitarian assistance program.</p>	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> The evaluation was not able to assess this principle as none of the staff members associated in implementing this component were available.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> The evaluation found the WV Gaza operation to be understaffed especially in terms of administrative support adding additional burden on technical staff</p>

## PEOPLE IN AID

PRINCIPLES	Food Distribution	Livelihoods	EVALUATION COMMENTS
<p><b>Human Resources Strategy:</b> Human resources are an integral part of our strategic and operational plans</p>	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> The evaluation could not find proper integration of WV operations in Gaza and those that carried out the food distribution at the Holy Family Church.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> The evaluation found the WV Gaza operation to be understaffed especially in terms of administrative support adding additional burden on technical staff.</p>
<p><b>Staff Policies and Practices:</b> Our human resources policies aim to be effective, fair and transparent</p>	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> As no WV staff have worked on this component, the evaluation find this code Not Applicable</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> Based on feedback from staff, policies and practices related to staff employment are set out and staff are familiarized with them. Performance appraisals take place on regular basis and rewards and benefits for each role are clearly identified and applied in a fair and consistent manner.</p>
<p><b>Managing People:</b> Good support, management and leadership of our staff is key to our effectiveness</p>	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> As no WV staff have worked on this component, the evaluation find this code Not Applicable</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> The feedback the evaluation received from the field indicated that WV staff exemplified leadership and provided excellent management and support to the implementation of activities. Farmers said that “the project has dealt very well with the problem of the absence of some supplies and taught us some alternative methods”.</p>

PRINCIPLES	Food Distribution	Livelihoods	EVALUATION COMMENTS
<p><b>Consultation and Communication:</b> Dialogue with staff on matters likely to affect their employment enhances the quality and effectiveness of our policies and practices</p>	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> The only WV staff involved in this component is those in charge of procurement of the food items. Review of WV JWG own lessons learned indicate that procurement was understaffed leading to increased burden on staff. In one case WV JWG purchased relief items before the grant with the donor was signed. WV JWG had to go back to the donor and ask for an amendment of the project period so as to have the items eligible. Had the amendment not been approved, a disallowed cost may have occurred. This according to WV JWG had happened due to the “overwhelming pressure on the one individual tasked to handle Logistics/Security/HEA”.</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> WV JWG provided great support for their staff in both Gaza and Jerusalem. A hotline was established to provide staff with necessary psychosocial support which proved to be needed at time of crises. Furthermore, and despite the remaining shortage of staff, some measures were taken to mitigate for this through the hiring of additional 3 staff members for the North Gaza operation.</p>
<p><b>Learning, Training and Development:</b> Learning, training and staff development are promoted throughout the organization</p>	○	○	<p><b>Food:</b> As no WV staff have worked on this component, the evaluation find this code Not Applicable</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> The period during which this component was implemented was relatively short and the project was under staffed which did not allow for proper training and development.</p>
<p><b>Health, Safety and Security:</b> The security, good health and safety of our staff are a prime responsibility of our organization</p>	○	●	<p><b>Food:</b> As no WV staff have worked on this component, the evaluation find this code Not Applicable</p> <p><b>Livelihoods:</b> The evaluation found proper insurance is provided to staff for both health and injury. In addition, well marked cars and vests are provided for easier identification as WV staff.</p>

## 8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Provide training on quality standards for both WV JWG staff and local partners.
- WV JWG is encouraged to have more active involvement of the Gaza field staff in future lessons learned exercises.
- Increase investment in building the capacity of the regional offices with more focus on the Gaza field office in issues such as management and reporting.

## SECTION NINE

# CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 9.1 SUMMARY

The project goal is “*to improve the food security of families affected by the recent Gaza crisis*”. While there was room for improvement, mainly under the food distribution component, the evaluation found that the DEC funded Disaster Response Project was highly relevant and appropriate, efficient, effective, accountable to beneficiaries and accountable to quality standards of the Red Cross, Sphere and People in Aid.

Between its activities, WV JWG achieved a good and effective coverage of those affected by the crisis and showed a significant impact on relieving suffering of the affected communities, mainly in the most hit areas of the North and South of Gaza Strip. The 3,187 people (425 households) reached through the distribution of emergency food parcels and the 772 people supported with different livelihood opportunities in this emergency response project in a short timeframe is a significant accomplishment that WV JWG should be proud of and at the same time can learn much from.

## 9.2 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

### Relevance and Appropriateness

In responding to the crisis the project implemented two (2) types of interventions, namely: relief activities that included food distribution and early recovery activities that helped communities recover their livelihoods which largely focused on agriculture. The evaluation found that the interventions undertaken by WV JWB were highly relevant, mainly those of the livelihoods component. Overall, the implemented activities have positioned WV JWG justly as a high quality professional implementation organization. The implemented interventions were appropriate for the context, the culture and the targeted communities.

The evaluation believes that WV JWG has thoroughly assessed the needs which ensured that subsequent project activities were appropriate to the identified needs types and levels. Furthermore, the detailed assessment carried out by WV JWG has helped tailor the project to take into account local cultural norms and begin the process of consulting and involving beneficiaries in the design of the project. It is also important to acknowledge that, due to WV JWG prior involvement in the area and close relationships with local partners (e.g. Agricultural Cooperative of Strawberry, Vegetable and Flower), WV JWG had the great advantage of already having a good in-depth “baseline” knowledge of the communities affected, before carrying out any assessments. The implemented activities were built on a good understanding of the operating environment and informed by a number of assessments and WV JWG previous experience working in various relief and development interventions. The evaluation found no examples of assistance that was culturally inappropriate. This was most probably due to the awareness of the cultural context by the WV JWG that had been working for many years in the Gaza Strip at large and the North Gaza and Rafah areas in specific. To this end, staff experience, their knowledge of the local context and commitment has resulted in the design and implementation of activities that were highly relevant, appropriate with the overall objective of the emergency and respecting local culture.

### Effectiveness

The WV JWG intervention was found to have exhibited good management practices. Good planning was evident through the preparation of an extensive Program Implementation Plan including a logical framework matrix that guided the implementation process. Rapid needs assessments were conducted which guided planning and implementation throughout the performance period. This has enabled WV JWG to achieve the project objectives of providing the affected communities with access to basic foods and livelihood opportunities. However, the evaluation believes that the objectives were better achieved with the livelihood component that was directly implemented by WV JWG compared to the food distribution component that was implemented by

the Holy Family Church. The evaluation acknowledges that the whole international community was caught off-guard by the last war on Gaza and hence appreciates the complications of the first couple of months of response representing the implementation period of the food distribution component of the project. Nonetheless, the evaluation believed that WV JWG could have played a more active role in the distribution component. Such involvement would have ensured adherence to quality standards and would have enhanced the quality and accuracy of beneficiaries targeting process.

## Efficiency

The project was supported by implementation schedules and logical framework which have guided the implementation process and enabled professional delivery, completion on time and within budget. Furthermore, the project has maintained a very good level of flexibility that enabled continuing to work in such a challenging environment and adapting activities to address emergent community needs. Reporting practices were found satisfactory. The adopted mechanisms for M&E under the livelihoods component have enabled rapid and efficient management of the activities. These mechanisms and tools were found more efficient and presented an evident case of good practice. The evaluation believes that WV JWG was generally familiar with the longer-term context in the Gaza Strip and took this into account in its program which was clearly reflected in the careful consideration of issues of sustainability in the design and selection of the livelihoods interventions in terms of type, location and beneficiaries targeting.

## Impact

Overall, the evaluation found that the project had a strong and positive impact on the beneficiary communities. Feedback from the surveys, workshops with beneficiaries and local partners supported this assertion. While many agencies contributed to the humanitarian operation that took place in the Gaza Strip during and after the last war, WV JWG and its local partners and local committee's members played a particularly important role in livelihood recovery and farming rehabilitation. Through the DEC funded DRP, WV JWG has had a significant impact on reducing the immediate family vulnerability of 3,187 people (425 households) in North and South Gaza through the distribution of short-term emergency food parcels sufficient for 30 days. Most importantly, the project has helped create and/or increase livelihood opportunities for 772 people either by having their greenhouse, lands rehabilitated or hired in the project as skilled or unskilled labours. The evaluation believes that the project has played an important role in relieving suffering among the displaced and in helping communities and individuals to rebuild their lives in the areas of the North and South of Gaza.

## Accountability

The evaluation found that information was made public mostly through verbal communication. Although this may seem a shortcoming, however working in an emergency situation like the one that prevailed in Gaza after the war did not freely allow for the distribution of written information. Nonetheless and as the situation allowed, WV JWG managed to provide such information in the form of flyers and ads on notice boards.

WV JWG succeeded in utilizing its vast network of local structures in the targeted areas of intervention. Selection of beneficiaries and geographic location was done in close cooperation with representatives from local committees which insured reaching the most affected areas and targeting the right beneficiaries. Furthermore, this approach has facilitated the involvement and the consultation process with the beneficiaries.

Beneficiaries' complaints were found to be addressed and handled properly throughout the implementation process utilizing a variety of methods and by both the WV JWG field staff and representatives of partner local committees. The evaluation believes that the adopted good practice in handling beneficiaries' complaints would have been further valued if supported by a formal documentation process and a simple guiding complaints handling SoP.

## Quality Standards

The evaluation assessed the performance of the project against the codes of three (3) quality standards, Red Cross, Sphere and People in Aid. With the exception of one code in the People in Aid standard that had to do with staff development and training, the livelihood component was found to be in compliance with the principles of all three (3) quality standards. It was not possible to fully assess the compliance of the food distribution component due to lack of information and comprehensive reporting on the activity. Moreover none of the WV staff involved in implementing this component nor the Head of the Holy Family Church "Father

Manawel” were available during the evaluation period which further hindered the ability of the evaluation team to assess the food distribution component. Overall, the evaluation concludes that WV JWG has promoted the codes of the above mentioned three (3) quality standards and has measured its work against them with greater focus on the Sphere standards.

### Learning Reviews and Lessons Learned Exercises

Documents review revealed that WV undertook an internal review process through carrying out a “Lessons Learning Event” for the entire World Vision Gaza Crisis - Category II, Level II Response. WV distributed an anonymous questionnaire addressing the various aspects of the response to different involved WV office levels, held a number of conference calls to facilitate discussions and feedback and produced and shared a consolidated document of the results. The questionnaire focused on two (2) key questions “What would you do again?” and “What would you not do again?”. Through this exercise WV allowed the different people involved in the response to reflect on their experiences as well as identify and share the various lessons they’ve learned. It is important to note that the project budget had a budget item dedicated to this activity early at the design phase. Furthermore, this exercise has clearly helped WV in establishing a clear connection between the ERP and the DRP phases and had further informed the transition towards recovery and even development. For example a number of specific and broader lessons related to the National Office preparedness and staff capacity, advocacy work, communications readiness and programming in restricted context were drawn from the lessons learnt exercise. The evaluation believes that the internal lesson learning offered WV the opportunity to improve its own processes and is identified as good example of good practice.

### Cross-Cutting Themes

Guided by WVI LEAP evaluation standards, three main cross-cutting themes were considered by the evaluation namely gender, children and disability. Documents review showed that the initial findings of the February rapid needs assessment have allowed WV JWG to disaggregate beneficiaries by gender, age and ability. Children were identified as one of the most vulnerable groups, due to the intense trauma of the war. To this end the livelihoods activities succeeded in targeting families with children as the surveys indicated that 73.7% of the families do have children of which 58% have more than three (3) children. Furthermore, the surveys indicated that 14.4% of the targeting families have disabilities which illustrate the project commitment and focus on reaching households with cases of special needs.

Female project beneficiaries make about 4.4% of all beneficiaries targeted by the livelihoods activities. Although the evaluation understands the cultural and economic norms in the rural households and that the implemented livelihoods activities focused on agriculture and fishing that are male dominant field of work, it is still believed that additional female workers may have been employed in the planting process. The evaluation believes that WV JWG is highly encouraged to include activities that accommodate more evident female participation in its future interventions. Especially that unemployment is one of the greatest problems facing the population in Gaza, which equally affects both men and women. It is important to highlight one of the good practices with respect to gender that was identified by the evaluation, namely: the inclusion of four women (28.5%) as part of the local committee members. This practice has facilitated women participation and involvement in the project and WV JWG is encouraged to future develop and enhance the use of such practices.

## 9.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- WV JWG is encouraged to launch a comprehensive capacity building and development program targeting local CBOs. This program would leverage WV JWG investment in these CBOS during and before the current crisis. Capacity building needs include among others, crisis management, emergency preparedness and application of international aid standards such Sphere and HAP.
- Expand coverage of assistance to include the remaining parts of the Gaza Strip.
- The evaluation recommends that WV JWG develops policy perspectives on Gender in Disaster and to share and train its staff and local partners on its use. For example, fixing quotas for women as participants and beneficiaries will ensure that gender perspectives are promoted and properly tackled.
- WV JWG is encouraged to manage the implementation of food parcels distribution to ensure adherence to food quality standards.

- WV JWG is recommended to invest in the establishment of a core Emergency Response Team from senior national staff across the West Bank and Gaza. The presence of such a team would have a significant contribution in increasing the organization ability to respond to future emergencies. Moreover, this team would be able to utilize and benefit from advisory support provided by various WV emergency teams across the world.
- As unemployed and disabled beneficiaries have been accumulating debt, WV JWG is highly encouraged in the recovery phase to study the magnitude of such debts and to determine the type of debtors in order to develop an intervention that would help beneficiaries get out of debt and support them to start an income generating activity.
- WV JWG should collect monitoring data disaggregated on both gender and vulnerability across project activities.
- While some practices were found, WV JWG is encouraged to formalize special internal mechanisms for the rapid and effective management of emergency response.
- WV JWG is encouraged to implement a post distribution monitoring process
- WV JWG encouraged to review the mobilized human resources for any future interventions and ensure enough resources are mobilized to meet the expected work load
- WV JWG is among the first organizations to target the fishing sector where a great need for support is believed to exist. Therefore, the evaluation recommends additional support to be provided to the fishing sector in areas such as new boat construction.
- Introduce new livelihoods opportunities especially designed for women other than the traditional interventions in sewing and embroidery. These interventions may be integrated with other ongoing programs of WV being implemented in Gaza Strip. Examples of such opportunities include food processing and agriculture.
- WV JWG should include qualitative indicators defined around “beneficiary satisfaction” to complement the existing quantitative indicators, which may not always provide a complete picture on the impact of the intervention.
- WV JWG is encouraged to utilize the good practice in M&E of the livelihoods and systemizing it across the entire emergency response. This system should be guided by a simple standard operating procedure.
- Implement a training program for WV Gaza and local partners’ staff on accountability and the implementation of relevant standards, mainly HAP and Sphere Standards so they fully understand the context and their responsibilities to the systems.
- Establish and implement, early in the response, complaints handling procedures that are effective, accessible, safe and flexible for intended beneficiaries and affected communities to be guided by a simple Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).
- Provide training on quality standards for both WV JWG staff and local partners.
- WV JWG is encouraged to have more active involvement of the Gaza field staff in future lessons learned exercises.
- Increase investment in building the capacity of the regional offices with more focus on the Gaza field office, mainly in issues such as management and reporting.

# LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

## LIST OF TABLES

**Table 1:** Project Achievements Per Intervention Component

## LIST OF FIGURES

**Figure 1:** World Vision Areas of Intervention

**Figure 2:** Achievements vs. Planned of the Project Livelihoods Component

**Figure 3:** Information provision to beneficiaries

**Figure 4:** Responsible party for information provision

**Figure 5:** Implemented activities vs. beneficiaries needs

**Figure 6:** Beneficiaries consultation

**Figure 7:** Availability of formal complaint mechanism

**Figure 8:** Evaluation of adopted complaint mechanism



**Impact Consulting, Inc.**

Mushtaha Tower No. 6 – 2nd Floor

Ansar Square, Gaza, Palestine

BOX 1001

Telfax: +970 (or 972) 8-282-7777

[www.impact.ps](http://www.impact.ps)

[consult@impact.ps](mailto:consult@impact.ps)