Evidence for Market Based Food Assistance Programming: A Response Analysis “Road Map”

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Evidence for Market-Based Programming: The Response Analysis Question

2004: Levine and Chastre et al. “Missing the Point”

Since ~2005:

• Major efforts to *improve food security analysis*
• Many *new response options* in food security emergencies and chronic vulnerability

Research question:

*Is improved analysis driving response choice?*
Changing Donor Resources

Humanitarian food aid 2001–2012, by source (MT)

Source: WFP-FAIS
Changing Donor Resources

U.S. International Emergency Food Assistance Funding by Program Type, FY2005-2011

- OFDA (Agriculture and Food Security)
- PRM (LRP)
- EFSP (Cash, Vouchers, LRP)
- LRP Project (USDA)
- In-Kind (Title II)
What is Response Analysis?

- “Link between situational analysis and program design” (IPC)
- “The analytical process by which the objectives and modality of program response options are determined, and potentially harmful consequences are minimized” (Study Team definition)

Situating Response Analysis (FAO 2011)
## Factors Shaping Response Choice

### Feasibility analysis
- Situational analysis
  - Needs assessments
  - Causal analysis
  - Projection/forecast
- Feasibility analysis
  - Market assessment
  - Donor resources
  - Organizational capacity
  - Partner agency capacity
  - Government policy
  - Access and security
  - Timeliness
  - Record of past programs
    - M&E records/ Lessons learned
  - Logistics
  - Cost of compliance
  - Influence of large agencies
  - Conditionality/targeting considerations

### Internal context
- Organizational considerations
  - Mandate and mission
  - Objectives in field
  - Capacity and skill set

### Appropriateness considerations
- Internal comparison of response options
- External analysis of gaps in response
- Risk assessment/prevention of unintended consequences
  - Market distortion risks
  - Staff security and safety
  - Recipient community security
  - Risk of theft, diversion, or corruption
  - Reputational/legal risks to agency
  - Do no harm analysis
- Cost effectiveness
- Assessment of recipient preferences
- Evidence of post-distribution dynamics
Response Analysis: The “Road Map”

(Baseline Vulnerability)

**Needs assessment**
- Prevalence (who, how many, how severe?)
- “Gap” (how much, how long?)
- Spatial/temporal dimension (where, when?)

**Causal analysis**
- Underlying causes (why?)
- Trends (direction over time?)

**1st Order Response Options**
1. Assistance to protect consumption? (Food assistance)
2. Assistance to protect nutritional status (Nutrition support)
3. Assistance to protect income/production? (Livelihoods support)
4. Other forms of support? (Water, health)

**2nd Order Options**
- General food distribution
- Market (cash/voucher)
- SFP/TFP; IYCF; micro-nutrient programs
- LH assistance/resilience
- Assets protection
- Other

**3rd Order Options**
- Conditionality
- Targeting
- Fairs or shop-based
- Food/nutrition products
- Food basket/value of transfer

**Cross-Cutting Considerations**
- Procurement (LRP)
- Access/security
- Capacity
- Risk assessment
- Recipient preference
- Lessons learned/M&E
- Logistics
- Gender

Proposal Writing/Detailed Program Design
Factors shaping response choice: Importance and influence of evidence
Response Analysis: Next Steps

So what? Are programs more “evidence-based”

• Lots of different kinds of “evidence”
• Clearly more than just needs assessment
• Response analysis tools are based more on logical analysis than empirical analysis
• A good, empirical data base about “what works best under what conditions?” is still not a reality
• More research needed—by both agencies and donors required—beginning from situational analysis and response choice but looking at implementation/management and especially impact
HPN published our paper on this research

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