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## **EVALUATION REPORTS**

### **Agenda item 6**

*For consideration*



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## **SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION OF CENTRAL AMERICA PRRO 10212.0**

**Targeted Food Assistance for People Affected  
by Shocks and for the Recovery of Livelihoods**

## NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

**This document is submitted to the Executive Board for consideration.**

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report synthesizes the findings of an independent evaluation of WFP's assistance to people affected by shocks and support for the recovery of livelihoods in Central America that was commissioned by the Office of Evaluation in late 2004 and fielded in April 2005. Regional Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation 10212.0, approved by the Board in October 2002 for three years at a cost to WFP of US\$57 million, was designed to assist 690,000 beneficiaries in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, aiming to prevent acute and chronic malnutrition among food-insecure families, particularly women and children, and to rebuild livelihoods eroded by natural disasters. As of June 2005, the operation was funded at 31 percent.

The evaluation team found that WFP delivered relevant assistance to the most affected communities in spite of difficult access; it was often the only international agency present. According to the standard project reports, nutritional indicators (weight for age) reflected falls in malnutrition of 25 percent among infants under 24 months and children under 5, but these should not be attributed only to WFP. In spite of the results achieved by WFP and its partners, overall rates of malnutrition and stunting remain high and require continued attention in the coming years.

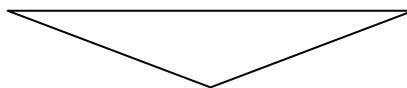
Honduras and Nicaragua, which have school feeding as part of the operation, have reduced drop-out rates; the available resources for food for work, however, were insufficient to achieve sustainable outcomes. The mission noted that assistance was spread over a large number of beneficiaries in many municipalities, which diluted impact and complicated monitoring. This could be a result of the design of WFP's corporate reporting tool, which focuses on output indicators rather than outcomes; on the other hand, important outcomes such as increased community involvement, capacity for monitoring and response at the community level, and women's participation in food aid management committees are not reflected in the standard project reports.

The low implementation rate – 26 percent – is a result of the low level of contributions and of low operational capacity among cooperating partners, on whom WFP relies for food-for-work or food-for-training activities and monitoring and reporting of results. It is essential to strengthen their capacity, but the low level of funding prevents it and also hampers monitoring at the country office and regional bureau levels.

The matrix at the end of this document summarizes the mission's recommendations and WFP's response to them. The main recommendations are (i) to increase the number of personnel for monitoring at the local and regional levels and for building capacity among cooperating partners, (ii) to update the vulnerability analysis and mapping study and focus assistance on smaller areas to increase impact and incorporate activities into national or local development plans to ensure relevance and continuity, and (iii) to work on the basis of agreements between WFP, central and local government and non-governmental organizations that set out clear delivery roles for community organizations and municipalities.



## DRAFT DECISION\*



The Board takes note of the information and recommendations set out in “Summary Report of the Evaluation of Central America PRRO 10212.0” (WFP/EB.2/2006/6-A) and encourages further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

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\* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.



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## PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

1. At the end of 2004, WFP decided to carry out an independent mid-term evaluation of Central America Regional Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (PRRO) 10212.0 to assess results with a view to reporting to the Board and to inform the design of the next phase of the PRRO.
2. The evaluation was carried out between April and August 2005 by an independent evaluation team of four<sup>1</sup> supported by WFP offices in the region and local counterparts and partners. During the field work, 77 of 331 municipalities assisted under the PRRO were visited; there were 1,000 semi-structured interviews with beneficiaries, government counterparts, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations partners and WFP staff, and a review of documents and direct observation of activities.

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## OVERVIEW OF PRRO 10212.0

3. Vulnerability in Central America is a result of structural economic causes, civil wars and natural disasters. The years 2003–2005 were not characterized by crises on the scale of previous years, but chronic vulnerability has had a cumulative and multi-dimensional effect that has eroded livelihoods in a context of significant demographic pressure—family sizes in the affected areas customarily exceed five children per couple – and lack of access to productive resources such as land or long-term employment.
4. In 2003, WFP launched a three-year regional PRRO at a cost of US\$57 million to end in February 2006, assisting 690,000 beneficiaries – 2.5 percent of the population of the region. WFP signed operational agreements with governments between February and July 2003; at the time of the evaluation mission, the PRRO was entering the twentieth month of implementation with an average distribution rate of 27 percent. The PRRO consists of two components:
  - **Relief:** (i) to provide minimum food requirements in response to floods, droughts and other shocks that threaten the immediate food security of poor families, and (ii) to contribute to the nutritional recuperation of children, women and families suffering from recurring shocks.
  - **Recovery:** (i) to enable families to preserve and create assets to mitigate the effects of shocks, ensuring that a minimum of 50 percent of these assets are controlled by women, (ii) to prevent nutritional decline among children and women, and (iii) to strengthen government and local capacity to plan and respond to recurring shocks.

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<sup>1</sup> The Evaluation team consisted of four independent consultants: an economist (team leader), a nutritionist, a vulnerability assessment expert and an agricultural economist.



## MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

### PRRO Design

5. The PRRO was designed to help to reduce the impact of natural disasters in a context of chronic malnutrition and structural poverty. It aims to improve food security and increase people's resilience to changes in sub-regional conditions. Lessons and recommendations from the mid-term evaluation of the 1999–2003 PRRO to link implementation more closely to local partners were taken into account.
6. There is a high degree of complementarity between the regional PRRO and the four country programmes (CPs); overlap of beneficiaries between programme categories has been avoided. At the level of activities, however, methods and objectives are similar: elements such as the extent to which local authorities are involved are the main difference; the PRRO did not appear to aim to move from recovery to development activities. The purpose of the regional PRRO was an integrated response to problems in the region but regional planning and monitoring has been limited, resulting in varying approaches to implementation in the four country offices.

### Implementation

7. At mid-term in the PRRO, the four countries had distributed on average only 27 percent of the planned tonnage as a result of a dramatic shortfall in donations – 31 percent of funding targets had been met – and slow implementation by cooperating partners. Despite the regional design of the PRRO, implementation has been different in the four countries, which makes it difficult to measure progress towards the regional objectives.
8. In view of low funding and low implementation capacity among partners, the country offices have made considerable efforts to reach optimal levels of distribution and maintain continuity and balance between relief and recovery. In Honduras and Nicaragua, it was decided to include school feeding as a recovery activity, which absorbed most of the resources. Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua tried to strengthen links with the Ministry of Agriculture, especially in conjunction with projects of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), to extend the results achieved in creating productive assets and make them more sustainable. In Nicaragua, there is a direct link to the Ministry of Agriculture thanks to the implementing unit for the PRRO.
9. Country offices made significant efforts to find new partners when public revenue and political contingencies reduced counterparts' ability to deliver. In Honduras and El Salvador, it was decided to try to implement the PRRO with the regional development commissions, municipalities and groups of municipalities to compensate for slow implementation by WFP's ministerial partners; this was done through short-term tripartite agreements that clearly reflected the rights and responsibilities of all parties.
10. The evaluation mission found that these measures could improve efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, but that they could pose problems of neutrality in a charged political environment. Working in consultation with municipalities and civil society could in the long term outweigh the effects of ministry budget cuts and could improve needs assessment in that the information available at the municipal level may be more precise than that available through ministries.



11. WFP's decision to establish sub-offices has improved monitoring and capacity-building by partners and communities; the advantages have outweighed the costs despite low levels of funding. The effectiveness of the PRRO has been diminished by an increase in the number of distribution sites and beneficiaries – reflecting a desire to respond to all needs in all places and the use of beneficiary numbers as the main indicator – instead of maximizing its impact on smaller population groups.
12. Logistics were timely and efficient, except for local food procurement in Guatemala, where there were delays in reaching beneficiaries as a result of fragmentation of the grain market and cancellation of public tenders. The internal transport funds allocated initially to Guatemala were insufficient; they were eventually used to cover the additional costs of NGO operations in El Salvador, where shortage of funds obliged beneficiaries to finance local transport from municipalities to their communities, which reduced the economic value of the assistance.

### Targeting and Monitoring

13. The activities carried out under the PRRO are in line with the objectives. There has been a consistent effort to be gender-sensitive and there is a high level of involvement among women. In all four countries, women account for 50 percent of leadership positions in management committees and food distributions.
14. Targeting has improved over time, largely because of the needs to update the vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) system as foreseen in the original PRRO document and to review the targeting strategy. Some implementation constraints remained, however, for example in Guatemala where nutritional assistance to moderately and severely malnourished children under 5 is given through family rations with the result that assistance does not go only to malnourished children; this affects overall resource availability for the target group. The mission recommends a review of this approach to ensure that more vulnerable children are reached with the same resources. Avoiding duplication of assistance given through the different components has led to implementation of the activities in different geographical areas: the mission believes that the effects of duplication are small, given the few resources actually distributed, and that concentration of activities would increase their impact on the beneficiaries.
15. The PRRO was started at a time when WFP was moving towards results-based management (RBM), including measurement of outcomes. The database has therefore been designed to be flexible enough to collect the necessary information, include indicators and estimate impacts. WFP's food monitors enjoy excellent access and demonstrate sound understanding of the communities and of the objectives of the PRRO.
16. Analysis of the impact of the resource shortfall is not possible because country offices monitor and report on actual resources distributed in terms of the distribution plans, which are based on the food available in-country. The report to donors on needs and shortfalls does not explain the impact of the shortfall either. Requests for food from sub-offices are adjusted according to the resources that the pipeline can guarantee, which reduces the “needs-driven” dimension.



## Outcomes

17. WFP designed the logical framework with government counterparts in each country; a baseline study was carried out in late 2003 and 2004. The PRRO was designed to contribute directly to Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 1 and 2 and indirectly to MDGs 4 and 5.
18. There is not enough secondary data available on poverty, food security and nutritional status at the household level. WFP has not been able to collect and analyse information on outcomes systematically because of insufficient resources, which makes it difficult to measure the effect of food aid on the beneficiaries.
19. **Relief.** According to WFP's baseline studies, the four countries suffered from serious nutritional deficiencies, with rates of stunting and underweight of over 10 percent. In Honduras and Nicaragua, where it was possible to analyse the evolution of the nutritional situation of beneficiaries,<sup>2</sup> the evaluation confirmed significant positive change: the weight-for-age indicator showed a 25 percent improvement among children under 24 months and those under 5, but this improvement is probably not attributable to WFP's operation alone. It was not possible to determine the impact of normal seasonal change on the basis of the information available. The monitoring of beneficiaries' nutritional status has weaknesses that limit analysis: lack of micronutrients is the main cause of anaemia in the region, but it is not monitored. The frequency of consumption of a broader variety of food is not taken into account in monitoring because it is assumed that such food are available, which is not the case in periods of food scarcity.
20. There is a high degree of consistency between the activities of WFP and those of the national health services in the region, but the shortfalls in resources and slow implementation have reduced the impact of the PRRO.
21. The population has accepted the food basket, partly as a result of capacity-building at the beneficiary level with regard to the characteristics, value, preparation and use of the food. Corn-soy blend (CSB) in particular has been fully accepted and used, even though it does not form part of the normal diet of children and rural families.
22. In Guatemala, there is high incidence of malnutrition and stunted growth among children, the irreversible consequences of poverty and inadequate nutrition and inadequate focus on the first years of life, when the statistics indicate that acute malnutrition is more prevalent. There is consistency between the PRRO and the health services provided to communities; but because children receive family rations, food assistance has become a complement for whole families. Family size is often larger than the standard, leading to internal redistribution in the lean season when access to basic food is a problem.
23. In Nicaragua, children under 24 months and pregnant and lactating women are targeted. There has been progress in monitoring and the promotion of growth and development, but some risks can be detected that could be reduced by increasing the age limit by up to three years and increasing the food ration for malnourished children. The indicators used by the health services are for underweight children under 24 months, which means that acute malnutrition is not detected. At the community level there is good coordination with the implementing agencies.
24. The most important outcomes in the relief component of the PRRO have been those derived from general food distributions to vulnerable groups suffering from the

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<sup>2</sup> Using a WFP baseline study carried out in 2003 and the 2004 standard project report (SPR).



consequences of crisis or disaster: assistance under the PRRO has helped to save lives, even though coverage was limited, for example in Honduras, where 180 soup kitchens were supported.

25. **Recovery.** In Honduras and Nicaragua, school feeding has been given priority with the aim of stabilizing school enrolment and attendance;<sup>3</sup> this has been highly appreciated. In Guatemala and El Salvador, priority has been given to food for work (FFW), with emphasis on social and community infrastructure. In Nicaragua, the FFW component has not been implemented extensively at times of resource constraints so as not to affect the relief component of the PRRO.
26. In the relief and recovery components, CSB has played a fundamental role: it provides a high concentration of nutrients and facilitates participatory education work. Beneficiaries preparing the food have learnt many recipes, which has helped to diversify eating habits.
27. FFW receives a great deal of interest and support from the communities. The outcomes achieved in asset creation have been limited in overall terms because the rations received were few and irregular. The rations for FFW have been small, except in Guatemala – and even there some communities were not well covered. FFW allows communities to address structural problems in order to respond more effectively to natural hazards, for example by increasing yields, protecting land from erosion or building roads in remote areas. Sustainability is not guaranteed, however, except in areas where there is a long-term programme implemented by one of the partners.
28. WFP works to implement FFW activities in cooperation with implementing partners; but there is a risk that community groups will not understand the strategic dimension of the PRRO. Food was distributed to workers without explanation of their rights and obligations, so it appeared to be an unexpected temporary subsidy. Another problem is lack of continuity and capacity among personnel in the counterpart organizations.
29. Lack of balance between the partners' contributions limits the effectiveness of asset-creation activities. The value of beneficiaries' inputs should be higher than the cost of technical assistance and food aid, or should at least constitute a significant part of the total value; in practice, however, the reverse has occurred and in some cases FFW was carried out on privately owned lands because only landowners could afford counterpart funding such as transport between municipality and community. The mission recommends that assistance be provided more consistently and be linked to technical support from agencies and public entities, and that assumptions about contributions from beneficiaries should be realistic and transparent.
30. On the other hand, WFP has not reported some important outcomes. Its activities are usually part of long-term programmes such as social investment funds whose objectives extend beyond those of the food aid component, which acts as leverage for greater impact. It is evident that food contributions produce a spirit of initiative in communities and have a positive impact on the work of other institutions. The PRRO has an under-reported multiplier effect on other sectors of rural development, particularly social capital and market access, which has been improved through renovation of small-scale infrastructure.
31. School feeding gives the PRRO a focus on vulnerable groups and contributes to human capital in terms of attendance at school and social capital in terms of parents' associations. The cost of rations is significantly higher in areas such as the Atlantic coast of Nicaragua,

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<sup>3</sup> See paragraphs 72–73 of the PRRO document.



but this is justified by the results captured during monitoring and by parents' appreciation. In Nicaragua, for example, retention rates in schools rose to 96 percent in 2003 and 98 percent in 2004; in Honduras, school dropouts fell from 8 percent to 4.9 percent during the PRRO and repetitions fell from 9.7 percent to 6.7 percent. Some children, however, do not receive food when they leave home in the morning and school meals are often late, which may affect their ability to concentrate.

32. In spite of overall good results and high levels of community interest, other organizations have given little support to school feeding, particularly in terms of water and sanitation, which reduces the impact of the activity.
33. The PRRO document expresses WFP's intention to build the capacity of governments to assess vulnerability and monitor food insecurity, in coordination with municipal authorities, through the country offices, particularly through VAM training modules. The outcomes at the national level are difficult to detect, however, and there has been no funding allocation for capacity-building. At the community level, WFP has contributed significantly to the development or strengthening of community organizations such as parents' associations in schools, which sometimes emerge as the most representative and permanent in the community; in some cases they are also involved in disaster preparation, which has an impact in the community beyond their initial purpose. In all four countries, women account for 50 percent of leadership positions in management committees and food distributions.<sup>4</sup>

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

34. The evaluation recommendations and the corresponding management responses are given in the attached matrix.

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<sup>4</sup> 2004 SPR and observations by the evaluation team.



**ANNEX: MANAGEMENT RESPONSE ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE  
SUMMARY REPORT OF THE EVALUATION—RESPONSE MATRIX**

Recommendations (December 2005)	Action to be completed by	Management response and action taken as of March 2006
<b>Strategic planning and monitoring</b>		
<p>1. In order to achieve the regional objectives stated in the project document and to facilitate the regional management and reporting on the regional objectives, it may be necessary to streamline the basic principles of implementation (such as targeting, selection of activities and partnerships), as much as individual country contexts allow.</p>	Regional bureau	<p>Agreed – to the extent possible. The PRRO intervention strategy was chosen because it responds to regional phenomena that affect food security in similar ways in a region where household coping strategies are the same in different countries. The regional bureau would favour an increased regional role in targeting, selection of activities and partnerships. Difficulty remains in streamlining implementation because country contexts differ, as recognized in the wording of the recommendation. The aim is to strengthen government and national capacity to plan for and respond to recurring shocks, which requires a joint approach with national organizations.</p>
<p>2. Strengthen the monitoring systems and staff numbers of the PRRO at regional bureau level to follow progress towards the regional objectives, facilitate cross fertilization of experience between country offices, identify needs for possible adjustment in programming or for specific Country Office support.</p>	Regional bureau	<p>Agreed – to the extent possible. Management prioritizes monitoring as a source of information on progress in implementation and for decision-making. The regional PRRO is scheduled to end this year; current resources are slightly over half of the requirements. Development of systems and addition of staff are limited by resource levels, but if an expansion is formulated attention will be given to this recommendation. In this context, systematic information sharing between country offices would be built in.</p>
<p>3. Review and strengthen the monitoring systems and staff numbers at the CO level (particularly food aid monitors) to facilitate reporting against the Strategic Plan using available baseline information and update it if necessary. In particular, monitoring of outcome indicators should be strengthened, for example through a system of sentinel sites. Indicators to show the important results achieved in social organization should be included.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed – to the extent possible. The comment above also relates to this recommendation. The Common Monitoring and Evaluation Approach (CMEA) will help to improve monitoring, the monitoring of outcome indicators and the reporting of results against baseline data. There is also a need to report on project-specific indicators, which sometimes differ from corporate indicators, but which are useful for measuring progress towards project objectives.</p> <p>An expanded monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E) system with additional food monitors is in place in Guatemala, providing improved quantitative and qualitative outcome-level information. Community-level social organizations are being monitored and lessons learned reported.</p> <p>The M&amp;E system is under review in Honduras. In El Salvador, outcome indicators and information-gathering mechanisms have been reviewed. Implementation of new mechanisms is a priority this year.</p>



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Recommendations (December 2005)	Action to be completed by	Management response and action taken as of March 2006
<p>4. Separate monitoring of results from the distribution plan to avoid that important information about impact of shortfalls on beneficiaries gets lost. Donors should be informed on how a lack of resources affects the beneficiaries. Contributions from communities and counterparts should also be reported on.</p>	<p>Country office/OD</p>	<p>Partially agree. Special attention will be given to assessing the impact on beneficiaries of reduced food assistance resulting from resourcing shortfalls. Donors are regularly informed of the impact of shortfalls on beneficiaries in the monthly reports on needs and shortfalls.</p> <p>Guatemala has reported that the nutritional status of food beneficiaries declines in the absence of food assistance; their food security is affected under the recovery component. In Honduras and El Salvador, results monitoring is already separate from monitoring distribution.</p>
<p>5. Carry out new comprehensive VAM study in preparation for the next PRRO to help orient targeting, and update it regularly. If timing allows for it, update the study with findings and external sources such as census, population projections, agricultural data, nutritional surveillance, etc. Continue to strengthen VAM at the national, local and communal levels. Increase the capacity of national counterparts in management of VAM. In the exit strategy a key issue will be the ownership of VAM processes, which will require a particular capacity-building effort.</p>	<p>Country office</p>	<p>Agreed—to the extent possible and on the basis of available resources. Special attention will be given to improving VAM study preparation if an expansion is formulated; various VAM studies are ongoing. Attention will be given to the ownership of processes and to capacity-building when establishing an exit strategy.</p> <p>A comprehensive VAM study is scheduled in Guatemala; additional food-security information from new areas following hurricane Stan will also allow greater coverage. Studies will continue to be used as secondary sources of information, for example the 2005 <i>Encuesta Nacional Sobre Condiciones de Vida</i> (ENCOVI) pilot survey, the 2003 agricultural and livestock census, the 2005 agricultural and livestock survey, the national census on employment and incomes, the Mesoamerica Famine Early-Warning System (MFEWS) surveys and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) field surveys. In El Salvador and Nicaragua, VAM updates are ongoing; information on food security and the nutritional situation is complemented by information from other sources.</p>
<p><b>Nutrition</b></p>		
<p>6. Continue to improve the capacity to analyze nutritional indicators in the Country Offices, which will strengthen targeting and contribute to the regional analysis.</p>	<p>Country office</p>	<p>Agreed. Country offices will be encouraged to take advantage of training opportunities as they arise, including training in nutrition by United Nations agencies and NGOs, particularly in capacity-building for analysing nutritional indicators.</p> <p>WFP provides the Government of Guatemala with capacity-building in nutritional surveillance and survey methodology; WFP, other United Nations agencies and the Government participate in thematic discussion groups. A country office staff member attended advanced training in nutrition to strengthen local capacity. In El Salvador, the capacity already exists. Counterparts have been trained to analyse nutritional indicators and use the processing system of the Epidemiology Network for Latin America and the Caribbean (EPiNET).</p>



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<p>7. Increase the food aid period for children of up to three years of age, due to the biological vulnerability which leads to other health conditions which are not favourable to long-term food security.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed, taking into consideration national policies. The regional project on capacity-building for integrated micronutrient programmes focuses on the 6-36 months age group; it will contribute to provide advocacy support for governments on the need to address micronutrient deficiency through food fortification programmes.</p> <p>Food assistance is provided for children under 5 in Guatemala, in line with the project document and the Memorandum of Understanding with the Government. The recommendation will be considered in the formulation of new activities; it has been implemented through community health centres in El Salvador.</p>
<p>8. New indicators should be created which allow the verification of the effect of food aid on deficiencies in micronutrients, especially iron. CSB contains this nutrient, making it relevant for the region. The changes in rates of anaemia could be detected through micronutrient surveys already carried out in the four countries. The data would be very useful at the beginning and end of the PRRO.</p>	Country office	<p>Partially disagree. Indicators are developed in consultation with stakeholders, governments, country offices, the regional bureau and the nutrition unit: this arrangement will help to identify the best indicators to track micronutrient deficiency. This is an important area for further intervention.</p> <p>The country office in Nicaragua is evaluating nutritional indicators related to the impact of food aid on micronutrient deficiencies. Sentinel sites could be monitored through the <i>Sistema Integrado de Vigilancia de Intervenciones en Nutrición</i> (SIVIN). Indicators on the prevalence of anaemia in children under 5 and pregnant and lactating women have been incorporated in El Salvador.</p>
<p>9. Indicators of diet should be reviewed during the hunger season. There should not just be a recording of the total number of food items, but also a weighted index on how often the different items are consumed.</p>	Country office	<p>Partially agree.</p> <p>Dietary diversification and consumption rates are being used in El Salvador. In Guatemala, it is reported that PRRO beneficiaries normally consume fewer food items with animal protein in the West Highlands and the North Eastern areas; only maize is consumed throughout the year. The lean season is from July to September in the North Eastern areas and May to December in the West Highlands; efforts are being made to avoid shortfalls during these critical periods. The Nicaraguan Ministry of Health is not usually able to measure dietary diversification, so it is difficult for WFP to follow this recommendation unless it assumes all the related costs. In Honduras, household dietary diversity will be considered.</p>



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10. When the family ration is distributed, it should be adjusted to the real number of rural family members.	Country office	<p>Partially agree, in the light of implementation difficulties. In all countries, regions and ethnic groups there is high variability in the number of family members and the average number for each group and sub-group. Using family size as a beneficiary targeting criterion would allow a greater number of large families to become food-assistance beneficiaries.</p> <p>The indigenous population would benefit, in that they have larger families. Discrimination between family rations on the basis of actual family size would be unmanageable.</p> <p>Families in some areas of Guatemala have more than seven members; there may be up to ten in the West Highlands. Improved beneficiary targeting criteria will take family size into account. In Honduras, family size is taken into account when assessing results; the ration has been increased to cover six family members in rural areas, however.</p>
<b>FFW</b>		
11. To ensure effectiveness and sustainability of the assets created under FFW, the contribution of non-food inputs and of other partners must be better ensured. Agreements for the design and implementation of activities should be quadripartite including WFP, government, NGO and municipality or community organization. The agreements made should specify contributions, and it should be closely monitored.	Country office	<p>Agreed, to the extent possible; already implemented in some countries.</p> <p>This recommendation had been implemented by counterparts in Guatemala. An awareness-raising campaign stressed that food assistance acted as a complementary resource in creating assets; some communities have provided non-food items. All rural-infrastructure activities included the provision of cooperating partners' funds. Recent monitoring shows that food has a greater incentive value and that work is carried out faster when non-food items are provided. The same is true of El Salvador and Honduras, where all new agreements include provision for contributions from partners; in El Salvador, municipal participation has proved more difficult because institutional capacity is lower.</p>
<b>Implementation Issues</b>		
12. Beneficiaries should not have to pay for the last link of the logistics chain, as this lowers the value of the assistance.	Country office/Regional bureau/Operations Department (OD)	<p>Partially agree. Partners often disagree, because organizing transport for the last leg of the logistics chain is perceived as a contribution by beneficiaries.</p> <p>Any payment requirements could act as a disincentive to the poorest beneficiaries. WFP budgeting provides for distribution costs to be included up to distribution of food to beneficiaries, but there are variations between distribution to beneficiaries and distribution to cooperating partners, who sometimes provide such services, with Governments and NGOs, at no cost to WFP and its donors.</p>



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		<p>This issue has been discussed with counterparts in Guatemala, who argued that the contribution prevented dependence on food assistance. WFP argues that a cost equivalent to US\$0.25 would still exclude the poorest people, but transport provided by NGOs and local authorities has contributed to solving the issue. In Honduras, beneficiary contributions are minimal but they foster ownership of activities and empower beneficiaries; transport for this leg is provided by the Government or NGOs.</p>
<p>13. For maximum impact, the synergy should be increased between the two components (recovery and relief) of the operation, as well as with other agencies and municipalities. Each community should benefit from the maximum range of WFP activities. Because the food input per beneficiary is relatively small, there is no risk of “over distributing” even with more activities in the same community. This will also improve the visibility of WFP in the field.</p>	Country office	<p>Partially agree, on the basis of geographical concentration efforts, but such concentration cannot be applied to the municipality level because it would create great imbalances between neighbouring communities and possible conflict.</p> <p>Some recovery activities in Guatemala, mostly related to infrastructure rehabilitation, have been concentrated and combined with relief activities. Increased impact from the food assistance is therefore expected through improved integration and provision of complementary non-food items. Results are expected to be more visible and sustainable. Such synergies can be encouraged in Honduras provided that targeting and monitoring can be strengthened: there is a risk of overlaps such as giving a school meal to two children of a family involved in FFW.</p>
<p>14. To improve the low implementation rates, the country offices should consider assessing their current cooperating partners, and if necessary change them. More attention should be given to build the capacity of the partners.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed – to the extent possible.</p> <p>Cooperating partners are being assessed in Honduras. The number of partners has increased in Guatemala; the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Health and the Social Investment Fund are involved, along with the NGOs World Vision, Action against Hunger, <i>Asociación de Desarrollo Local</i> (ADL), municipalities and the FAO Special Programme on Food Security. WFP and implementing partners have organized training to address capacity-building. Selection of counterparts in El Salvador has been improved; current cooperating partners are being trained to ensure their capability.</p>



## ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

ADL	<i>Asociación de Desarrollo Local</i>
CSB	corn-soya blend
CMEA	Common Monitoring and Evaluation Approach
CP	country programme
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ENCOVI	<i>Encuesta Nacional Sobre Condiciones de Vida</i>
EPiNET	Epidemiology Network for Latin America and the Caribbean
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFW	food for work
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MFEWS	Mesoamerica Famine Early-Warning System
NGO	non-governmental organization
OD	Operations Department
ODTP	Food Procurement Service
OEDE	Office of Evaluation
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
RBM	results-based management
SIVIN	<i>Sistema Integrado de Vigilancia de Intervenciones en Nutrición</i>
SPR	standard project report
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
VAM	vulnerability analysis and mapping