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Evaluation Reports

For consideration

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Management Response to the Recommendations of the Summary Evaluation Report of WFP's Ebola Crisis Response: Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone

Background

1. This document presents the management response to the recommendations of the evaluation of the WFP Level 3 response to the Ebola virus disease (EVD) crisis in West Africa.
2. Management appreciates the findings and recommendations, which will inform future programming, especially in emergencies similar to the Ebola crisis.
3. Although this emergency response differed from WFP's traditional ways of working, the evaluation team found that WFP was adaptable, timely and efficient in satisfying food security and nutrition needs and providing logistics assistance. In the strategic partnerships it formed, WFP used innovative means – including technologies for mobile monitoring and vulnerability analysis and mapping – to facilitate assistance to affected communities.
4. The following matrix sets out the planned actions and implementation timelines.

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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT OF WFP's EBOLA CRISIS RESPONSE: GUINEA, LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE			
Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 1a: Improving performance</p> <p>In partnerships with other United Nations, Red Cross, international and national non-governmental and national health and disaster management actors, document and communicate WFP best practices in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ providing common services that maximize cost efficiencies in support of an effective global response capability; and ➤ how WFP's Ebola response model/learning could be applied/adapted to future (health) emergency situations. 	Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division (OSE)	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>WFP has collected lessons learned from its collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) on the joint response to the Ebola crisis. It will document these lessons and share them with other partners.</p> <p>The Supply Chain Division (OSC) has documented best practices in procurement and common services (see response to recommendation 3b).</p>	September 2017
<p>Recommendation 1b: Improving performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Engage in the ongoing establishment of a global supply chain network for pandemic preparedness and response. 	OSC	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Preparedness and response capacities for pandemics are being improved, including by establishing a partnership with WHO, the World Bank, NEC, Henry Schein, UPS, the World Economic Forum and other public-and private-sector actors.</p> <p>Progress so far includes identification of the 60 most important items for pandemic response, mapping of commercial suppliers and public stockpiles, development of a dashboard and database of supply routes, and drafting of guidelines for the scale-up of logistics during disease outbreaks. An information platform enabling better management, sharing and reporting of supply chain information by public and private entities during a pandemic is being developed. WFP engages in the Pandemic Supply Chain Initiative through its Global Supply Chain Common Service Platform, with the Logistics Cluster, the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) and the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service as core elements.</p>	Mid-2017

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<p>Recommendation 1c: Improving performance</p> <p>➤ In line with the former corporate Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme, WFP should capture its operational learning from the EVD response to improve support to (health) emergencies and to integrate the learning generated from the innovative procedures, protocols and systems successfully deployed into its emergency preparedness and response tools.</p>	<p>Policy and Programme Division (OSZ), OSE, Gender Office (GEN) and Innovation and Change Management Division (INC)</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP's knowledge management strategy is expected to be approved by the Executive Management Group in early 2017.</p> <p>The strategy aims to strengthen WFP's emergency response and development work, support national governments, capture lessons learned and facilitate dissemination of guidance. It will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) increase efficiency and effectiveness by providing good practices and practical advice, enabling users to learn from past experience and avoid duplication of efforts; b) improve performance by putting lessons learned into practice, drawing on the experience of WFP and its partners; c) improve policy, guidance and tools for emergency preparedness and response by providing users in operational, emergency and development contexts with best practice models for programme design; and d) enhance sharing with governments and partners, allowing WFP to become a trusted source of knowledge and expertise on global efforts to achieve zero hunger, including through the external website WFP.org for expert audiences. <p>WFP will also review its Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme to ensure that gender considerations are integrated into emergency preparedness and response tools and procedures.</p>	<p>Mid-2017</p>

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<p>Recommendation 1d: Improving performance</p> <p>➤ In line with its People Strategy (2014–2017) and Wellness Strategy (2015–2019), WFP should invest further in its emergency preparedness and response (EPR) capacity and in the technical capacity of (middle-/lower-ranking) staff, developing a sustainable long-term strategy for responding efficiently to the surge and scale-down staffing requirements of protracted emergencies (beyond the first wave). It should outline how it intends to fill/respond to needs for a critical number of senior posts; ensure even representation across functional areas/levels; ensure that staff deployed are physically fit, psychologically prepared and equipped with the appropriate illness/injury prevention measures for emergency deployment; institutionalize structured hand-over; and include a comprehensive system to mobilize both national and international staff that is able to attract, retain and borrow required talent in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Office of the Executive Director (OED), Human Resources Division (HR), Staff Wellness Division (RMW) and OSC in coordination with OSE</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The last three rotations of the emergency response roster (ERR) have mainly involved staff at grades P3 and below, particularly the national professional and general service levels. This has significantly reduced WFP's ability to deploy senior staff to Level 3 responses.</p> <p>A proposal for establishing an emergency leadership roster (ELR) will be finalized in early 2017. The senior staff profiles required in emergencies have been identified, and ELR members will match these. The ELR will enable faster response times, and both staff and country offices will be better able to predict deployments.</p> <p>The ERR and the emergency consultancy roster will cover all functional areas.</p> <p>In preparation for deployment to a corporate Level 3 response, staff have to obtain medical and psychological clearance from the Medical and Staff Counselling Units. On their inclusion in the ERR, staff members are encouraged to obtain medical clearance and United Nations <i>laissez passers</i>, to accelerate deployment.</p> <p>Training opportunities are increasingly available. A new e-Learning module on "What to expect when you are deployed" prepares ERR members –especially national staff – who are being deployed for the first time, thereby decreasing the time and support they need once deployed. The training will also cover hand-over of activities and systems and will be available in four languages.</p> <p>Measures and equipment for preventing illness and injury of deployed staff are being developed. For example, staff members deployed from Headquarters receive a first aid kit and equipment for malaria rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) – WFP is the only United Nations agency providing RDTs to staff in malaria-endemic areas. Procedures and funding for pre-positioning and replenishing these kits from the outset of an emergency are expected to be in place in 2017.</p> <p>WFP will also continue to encourage participation in Functional and Support Training for Emergency Response and to improve its emergency rosters.</p>	<p>First quarter of 2017</p>

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		<p>Funding permitting, a comprehensive workforce review will be carried out to inform workforce planning for supply chain capacity, including surge capacity for emergencies. The review will also examine different contractual modalities such as retainer arrangements to facilitate rapid deployment of surge capacity, and e-learning tools for newly contracted service suppliers.</p> <p>In line with its mandate in emergency response, WFP plans to develop a training module for middle management on emergency response during pandemic crises, which will be aligned with WHO standards and will enable WFP to contribute to capacity development of global health emergency workers.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 2: Partnerships</p> <p>➤ In cooperation with relevant United Nations key partners, identify regional and country strategic support for organizational development of national stakeholders responsible for emergency response, and consider such activities within the respective Country Strategic Plans under development in the region.</p>	<p>Country offices and the Regional Bureau, in coordination with OSE and OSZ</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The Regional Bureau's Emergency Response Unit collaborates with United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and governments in the region.</p> <p>A task force on the Integrated Road Map has been put in place to provide country offices with guidance on preparation of their country strategic plans (CSPs).</p> <p>In Guinea, under the United Nations Development Assistance Framework component 4, Ebola and other emergencies, WFP is working with other United Nations agencies to support the Government and other partners in disaster risk reduction and emergency response as one of the pillars of the Post-Ebola Recovery and Resilience Programme that the Government and partners are implementing.</p> <p>During preparation of the CSP, the country office is emphasizing emergency preparedness and response, which is included in the national Social and Economic Development Plan (2016–2020). For alignment purposes, WFP will advocate for including a strategic result on capacity strengthening in the zero hunger strategic review.</p>	<p>End of 2018</p> <p>End of 2017</p>

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		<p>In Liberia, the country office is supporting the Government in carrying out its zero hunger strategic review, which will define the needs for national capacity development, partnerships and interagency collaboration to be included in the new CSP due in February 2018.</p> <p>In Sierra Leone, this recommendation is being addressed in the current protracted relief and recovery operation as part of pillar 3, Develop capabilities of national institutions in disaster risk management. During preparation of the CSP, the country office will work to enhance national capabilities to prepare for and respond to future emergencies, including Ebola outbreaks and localized flooding. Simulations have been conducted with the Office of National Security.</p> <p>In collaboration with the district disaster management committees of the Office of National Security (ONS), the country office is prioritizing the areas that are most vulnerable to extreme weather and natural disasters.</p> <p>The country office has also developed an emergency response plan for floods and, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, a “no regret approach” to EVD response.</p>	<p>In line with the CSP roll-out in the region</p> <p>End of 2017</p>
<p>Recommendation 3a: Supply Chain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ WFP should develop a robust and flexible information management system for non-food items to enable adequate tracking and management of these items from the point of receipt by WFP (for WFP or on behalf of partners) to the point of hand-over to the intended non-WFP recipient. As a first step: ➤ WFP should conduct a feasibility study that defines the tracking and management objective, the system's scope, the required investment and a realistic timeframe for developing and rolling out a system solution. 	OSC	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP will identify an effective and efficient solution for tracking and managing non-food items on behalf of its partners.</p> <p>Standard procedures for tracking non-food items are being developed to enhance efficiency and transparency in inventory management. WFP is currently assessing in-house information technology (IT) solutions that could be adapted to track non-food items from the downstream supply chain to beneficiaries. The assessment is also investigating the possibilities for tracking and tracing the upstream supply chain from the supplier, and includes a feasibility study of the selected system in terms of industry standards, including for health commodities. The feasibility study will be completed by March 2017. The IT solution is expected to provide a monitoring tool such as a dashboard, and a performance management tool such as a balanced scorecard.</p> <p>Work on the IT solution is coordinated with the Pandemic Supply Chain Initiative, including the search for sources of funding for this system, which would benefit the wider humanitarian community.</p>	End of 2017

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<p>Recommendation 3b: Supply Chain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ WFP should streamline its procurement procedures for non-food items (whether for WFP or for third parties) ensuring that existing guidelines clearly outline the process and that guidelines related to international shipments (air or sea) are reviewed, updated and disseminated to relevant staff and partners. 	OSC	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The successful coordination between WFP's Goods and Services Procurement Branch and UNHRD's procurement processes during the Ebola response could be replicated as a standard approach to integrated procurement. The procurement capacity of UNHRD in Dubai – including Global Humanitarian Services, Fast Information Technology and Telecommunications Emergency Support and the Global Vehicle Leasing Programme (GVLP) – should be considered in this process. Regarding procedures for handling non-food items for WFP and/or third parties, the following areas could be explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ strengthening procurement service by pre-selecting pharmaceutical products in coordination with WHO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); ➤ building long-term value by using specific vendors for pharmaceuticals, and a mixture of virtual, physical, regional and local procurement, in coordination with WHO and UNICEF; and ➤ in coordination with WHO and UNICEF, engaging in policy-making with national health ministries to ensure that the WFP supply chain is aligned with the regulations of national drug authorities. <p>New guidelines will be developed for goods and services procurement, shipping, aviation and insurance. Guidelines for transport services will focus on developing a more structured, unified market approach and economies of scale, and improving control by and support to country offices, and value for money.</p> <p>In October 2016, a shipping officer for non-food items joined the regional common logistics services unit to assist with ocean transport of non-food items and to develop new opportunities.</p> <p>The transport logistics manual is being updated.</p>	End of 2017

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		<p>In addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ an expert from UPS is mapping the service provision models of common services units, identifying duplications and recommending synergies to create functional customer services; ➤ different models of service integration are being pilot tested at the Djibouti and Uganda country offices and at Headquarters; ➤ a new model for service provision to third parties will be developed, based on pilot projects and the UPS expert's recommendations, to ensure effective, timely and cost-efficient service provision to third parties; and ➤ this new model will be disseminated throughout WFP and to third parties, via guidance materials, workshops and training. 	
<p>Recommendation 4: WFP's resource management information and results monitoring systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ With the aim of integrating, consolidating and harmonizing data sets at the regional bureau and country office levels, WFP should undertake a review of its data collection and information management systems and practices, with a specific focus on sex- and age-disaggregated data collection and analysis. 	<p>Performance Management and Reporting Branch with the Regional Bureau and country offices</p>	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>The Regional Bureau provides country offices with guidance on the collection of and reporting on sex- and age-disaggregated data. COMET – WFP's corporate tool for storing and reporting on monitoring data – is fully operational in all countries in the region.</p> <p>The Regional Bureau will support country offices in setting up a monitoring system using the mobile data collection application or the Ona application to collect, analyse and report on outcome, process, gender and protection indicators.</p> <p>Country offices recognize that disaggregated data were missing in some areas during the Level 3 reporting period. However, WFP corporate data collection, storage and reporting tools capture disaggregated data by sex and by age group.</p> <p>It is worth noting that the EVD emergency was the first of its kind for WFP, and monitoring this health-related response with partners was challenging. Building on the lessons learned, WFP will anticipate needs and develop mechanisms for collecting data from partners with direct responsibility for serving sensitive target groups.</p>	<p>End of 2017</p>

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<p>Recommendation 5a: Beneficiary-centred approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In line with its Gender Policy, WFP should tailor its guidelines on accountability to beneficiaries of health responses by ensuring implementation of the minimum standards for gender equality and women's empowerment in all interventions and emergencies, including through analysis of sex- and age-disaggregated data. 	OSZ with support from GEN	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP will revise its guidelines on accountability to beneficiaries of health emergencies.</p> <p>WFP will ensure that gender is mainstreamed into its guidance on, and the forthcoming toolkit and best practices for, accountability to affected populations. It will also integrate accountability to affected populations into gender strategies, guidance and action plans.</p>	Mid-2017
<p>Recommendation 5b: Beneficiary-centred approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ WFP should revise its guidance on the establishment and management of complaints and feedback mechanisms, clarifying responsibility/accountability for their implementation throughout WFP and at the country office level; ensuring that guidance is appropriate and applicable to all contexts, including health emergencies; and enhancing awareness among WFP staff and partners, through field-level agreements. 	OSZ	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP will address these issues through a combination of revised guidance, toolkits, best practice compendiums, training and adjustments to field-level agreements.</p> <p>The NGO guidance package will enhance Headquarters' engagement with country offices in the management of partnerships with NGOs.</p>	Mid-2017

Acronyms Used in the Document

CSP	country strategic plan
ELR	emergency leadership roster
ERR	emergency response roster
EVD	Ebola virus disease
GEN	Gender Office
IT	information technology
NGO	non-governmental organization
OSC	Supply Chain Division
OSE	Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division
OSZ	Policy and Programme Division
RDT	rapid diagnostic test
UNHRD	United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization