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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT – HAITI COUNTRY PORTFOLIO



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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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BACKGROUND

1. This document presents the management response to the recommendations of the Country Portfolio Evaluation of WFP's Assistance to Haiti (2005–2010).
2. The operating environment in Haiti during the evaluation period was volatile and complex: WFP had to overcome numerous challenges and adapt programmes significantly, particularly after the earthquake in January 2010. This was achieved with support from Headquarters and the regional bureau through an approach focusing on recovery and development, with the flexibility to respond to emergencies. The positioning of the existing programme and WFP's relationship with the Government enabled the major scaling up of assistance after the earthquake.
3. The Secretariat welcomes the evaluation and the recommendations. In the circumstances, WFP's main strength was its ability to respond effectively to emergencies. The Secretariat recognizes the work of the country office to integrate food and nutritional security into national agendas and to increase understanding among humanitarian actors of the importance of food-based safety nets in responding to shocks and sustaining development.
4. The Secretariat is committed to improving efficiency and effectiveness in order to attain its strategic objectives in Haiti. WFP will continue to work with the Government and other partners through sustainable food and nutritional security approaches and enhancement of national programmes and local capacities to respond to shocks and consolidate socio-economic achievements.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT — HAITI COUNTRY PORTFOLIO

Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 1: The country office should improve its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to increase the consistency and reliability of data and to measure the impact of its operations. For an M&E system to be sustainable and scalable, a uniform coordinated system should be developed, but with responsibility for management of data decentralized to the sub-offices and programme divisions. This decentralization should be combined with supportive supervision and on-the-job training to ensure systematic collection of reliable quality data. There should also be a clear feedback loop for reporting to cooperating partners, donors and the Government that reinforces participation and partnership. A regular reporting function will also help WFP to make adjustments to mid-course programme design and improve future programming efforts.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The M&E team has been augmented with the new head of vulnerability analysis and mapping. Work and communications plans for WFP staff and cooperating partners will be established.</p> <p>Additional capacities in the M&E unit will support information flow, data collection and analysis – including outcome indicators – results-based management and database development. The M&E system will be finalized, and WFP and partner staff will be trained accordingly.</p>	<p>January 2012</p> <p>March 2012</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: The country office should ensure that logistics cluster activities continue to be funded and staff retained, to ensure the continuation of invaluable emergency preparedness and response activities. Logistics cluster activities are funded under special operation 200108, which is scheduled to end in December 2011; logistics capacity should be maintained under the PRRO 10844.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Donor funding is being sought to extend the special operation to enable the logistics cluster to continue its work. The evaluation commended the logistics cluster for coordinating the work of partners and donors. The focus on capacity development for preparedness and response will be maintained.</p>	December 2012
<p>Recommendation 3: At the corporate level, WFP should conduct an in-depth review of its management and operational systems to identify the causes of the systemic procurement and processing problems that arise when operations shift from general food distribution programmes to more targeted food-aid and cash transfer programmes. The complex monitoring and processing system for field-level agreements, and strong centralized payment processing structures under WINGS II, prevent WFP from achieving its objectives.</p> <p>The evaluation identified that beyond a certain threshold WFP encounters difficulties in making operational and financial systems function smoothly and in maintaining the capacity and efficiency required to continue to deliver the volumes of food aid and cash planned in the project documents. This issue is considered beyond the reach of the Haiti country office and is therefore best addressed at corporate level.</p>	Cash for Change Service/ Treasury and Financial Risk Management Service	<p>Partly agreed.</p> <p>The Secretariat acknowledges the constraints experienced in shifting from general food distribution to conditional cash transfers. WFP delivered food to 4 million people a month after the earthquake; in April 2010, general food distributions were phased out in favour of food for work and cash for work, which reduced the beneficiary caseload.</p> <p>Haiti was one of the first operations in which conditional cash transfers were used at scale soon after an emergency. WFP recognizes that the slow rate of implementation partly reflected the need to develop business processes for cash-based transfers, and it launched the two-year Cash-for-Change initiative in November 2010 to address capacity gaps and improve decision-making and developing business processes.</p>	December 2012



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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 4: The country office should improve its planning process in order to develop more realistic targets that can be better aligned with the realities of implementation. WFP should develop targets that take into account demographic data such as malnutrition levels and patients receiving anti-retroviral therapy along with past portfolio performance. Justifying the targets set forth in programme documents would help to explain any deviation from these targets and would improve programme planning, potentially increasing WFP's ability to mobilize funding.</p>	Country office	<p>Partly agreed.</p> <p>WFP acknowledges the need to align targeting with actual implementation, particularly in the complex operating environment in Haiti.</p> <p>WFP will continue to monitor risks and potential shocks to food security and the implications for markets, and adjust planning and targeting as required. The country office will increase its use of assessments and monitoring data in formulating M&E targets and will consult stakeholders in time to enable realistic resource projections.</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>December 2011</p>
<p>Recommendation 5: The country office should explore the potential for integration across activities and with other partners, such as through a model school programme, to multiply impact and ensure that its efforts are achieving maximum results.</p> <p>The school feeding, nutrition, HIV/tuberculosis and cash-for-work/food-for-work activities should be reviewed to see how synergies could be achieved in future operations. It is recommended that a formal review of the scope, content and potential for integration within and across activities be conducted, with support from the regional bureau and Headquarters. WFP should also explore synergies and new avenues of collaboration with other United Nations agencies and partners.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>In line with the United Nations Integrated Strategic Framework and the Government's five-year plan, WFP will re-assess its objectives with a view to achieving post-earthquake stability and reconstruction. Under the 2012 United Nations Development Assistance Framework, WFP will work with: i) the World Bank, the Canadian International Development Agency, the Brazilian Cooperation Agency, the national School Meals Programme of the Ministry of Education (PNCS), the Ministry of Agriculture and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to establish a national school meals programme; ii) the World Bank, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund, World Health Organization, Partners in Health, the Ministry of Public Health and United States Agency for International Development to develop a model to enable household development monitors to address underlying causes of malnutrition; iii) UNICEF, the World Bank and PNCS to develop fuel-efficient preparation of school meals, establish school gardens, provide training in nutrition and agricultural techniques, and improve water and sanitary facilities in schools; and iv) Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Fund for Agricultural Development, International Organization for Migration, United Nations Development Programme, International Labour Organization, United Nations Environment Programme, communities, local authorities, the Ministry of Agriculture and NGOs to reduce disaster risk and improve livelihoods through watershed management.</p>	June 2012





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Recommendation 6: Country office staff's awareness of the true costs of the various components of operations should be enhanced. Staff at all levels are aware of project funding and budget issues, but should also be involved in a permanent drive to save costs in the day-to-day running of operations.	Country office	Agreed. Training in WINGS II reporting of budget plans has enhanced the standard monthly reports to Headquarters. The reports will be shared with staff at all levels to increase awareness of the need for – and to encourage participation in – cost containment.	Implemented
Recommendation 7: The country office should take advantage of more ambitious and longer-term capacity development projects in emergency preparedness. Given the likelihood of recurring natural disasters in Haiti, it is important that the Government, through its emergency response agency, set up a dedicated network of warehouses where food reserves and equipment can be stored over longer periods. Such a project would align with the capacity development policy of WFP, lead the way towards a hand-over strategy for WFP and enhance Haiti's resilience to emergencies.	Country office	Agreed. Setting up a durable emergency response capacity has been a WFP objective since the food price crisis in 2008; the Government adopted it as a priority in 2009. In view of the scale of the 2010 disaster and of access limitations, WFP, the Government and others have increased emergency preparedness and response capacities for food and non-food logistics. In 2011, a capacity development strategy for emergency logistics was put in place in which WFP focuses on storage of humanitarian supplies, road transport and information and communications technology. In view of the constraints and the Government's limited ability to provide funding, a realistic approach is necessary. In consultation with the Government, humanitarian organizations and donors, a special operation to establish permanent warehouses will be initiated once approval and funding have been obtained.	Ongoing December 2011
Recommendation 8: The country office should develop strategic partnerships with cooperating partners for rapid deployment in emergency and recovery operations. To reduce the contracting burden of managing so many cooperating partners and field-level agreements, the country office should explore tiered partnerships with selected partners across sectors. This would allow working with partners that provide supplementary services – such as nutritional training and capacity development – and contracting more quickly to move resources after an emergency; and would alleviate the management burden of working with many small partners.	Country office	Agreed. Thirty-five field-level agreements with partners are in place for pre-positioning food for 500,000 people for four weeks. WFP will enhance the expertise of local partners and consolidate partnerships for rapid deployment with a view to replacing international NGOs as strategic partners. The Haitian civil protection organization and the Ministry of Agriculture have been involved in emergency and recovery operations; their coordination capacity will be reinforced to support the trucking and warehousing initiative.	Implemented June 2012