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de Alimentos

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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT – UGANDA COUNTRY PORTFOLIO (2009–2013)



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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 management's response to the recommendations of the evaluation of Uganda's country portfolio (2009–2013) under the framework of the 2009–2014 country strategy – WFP's first country strategy. The evaluation focused on the alignment and strategic positioning of WFP's operations in the country; the drivers of strategic decisions; and the performance and results of WFP operations. It also considered the utility and added value of the country strategy.
2. Management is pleased to note the evaluation finding that the Uganda country strategy set an appropriate strategic direction in the shift from food aid to food assistance. The portfolio was found to be aligned with Uganda's evolving priorities and policies, and responded to the needs of vulnerable communities. The evaluation also noted that nutrition and school feeding interventions were effective.
3. Management also takes note of the challenges in implementing the country strategy and acknowledges the finding that WFP's monitoring and reporting remained mostly input/output-based, with inadequate tracking of outcome-level progress. The evaluation recommends that the forthcoming country strategy be a results-based document to ensure that outcomes are clearly defined and effectively captured and reported on.
4. Management appreciates the findings and generally agrees with the recommendations, welcoming the opportunities identified for enhancing WFP activities in Uganda. The country strategy for 2016–2020 will be developed in tandem with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and national planning processes and will be guided by the evaluation recommendations.
5. The following matrix sets out the planned actions and implementation timelines.

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Recommendations	Action	Management response and action taken	Implementation
<p>Recommendation 1: <i>WFP's positioning</i>. The country office should continue to focus on the three priority areas identified in the country strategy. Within WFP's shift to food assistance, in its developmental programming, WFP Uganda should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) scale up nutrition and social protection interventions in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Government, while engaging in the development of national social protection policy; ii) advance joint programming by developing an action plan for the resilience strategy in Karamoja and – specifically – an integrated approach for agricultural and smallholder-related work with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); and iii) where agriculture and market support (AMS) is implemented, use satellite collection points and farmers' organizations as a pivot for scaling up and exploring integration of WFP's food for assets (FFA) and disaster risk reduction (DRR) interventions with its support to village savings and loan associations (VSLAs) and agricultural development, using a long-term planning perspective. 	Country office	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>WFP Uganda has started internal and external consultations on the country strategy for 2016–2020, which will be finalized in mid-2015. The strategy will focus on the three priority areas.</p> <p>The joint UNICEF/FAO/WFP resilience strategy for Karamoja incorporates nutrition issues, public works, agricultural improvements, and income-generating activities. WFP will strengthen its partnership with FAO, particularly on activities for improving agricultural production.</p> <p>Management notes that the AMS programme targets the productive poor – smallholder farmers – who are not targeted for FFA/DRR activities, which are in different areas. The country office plans to adapt and expand AMS components to more marginal agricultural areas, building on experience from the current special operation on post-harvest loss reduction and household storage.</p>	<p>Mid-2015</p> <p>March 2015</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: <i>Sustainability</i>. The country office should maintain a dual approach of advocacy and service delivery in Karamoja. It should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) continue to support extremely vulnerable households and refugees through food/cash transfers based on vulnerability assessments and verification, while advocating for realistic and sustainable mechanisms for predictable and adequate safety nets; and ii) continue to support school feeding in the next programme cycle, while engaging with the Government and the World Bank on the schoolgarden and nutrition initiative for launch at the end of 2014, and working with authorities, communities and schools to ensure that they take over responsibility for the programme incrementally and effectively, while WFP gradually reduces support in a phased and predictable manner. 	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>In June 2014, WFP developed a transition strategy for extremely vulnerable households and is currently advocating with donors for support to this strategy.</p> <p>WFP will continue to support the school meals programme as requested by the Government's Ministry for Karamoja Affairs. It will also explore options for home-grown school feeding and increasing communities' management of, and contributions to, school meals in the region. Through the national School Meals Task Force, WFP will continue to advocate for and support the development of a national school feeding policy.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p>



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<p>Recommendation 3: <i>Future country strategy document.</i> Headquarters and the country office should make the next country strategy a results-based document. This will require action to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) enable tracking of impacts and changes, with reporting of measurable targets to which WFP contributes directly in the country overview section of Standard Project Reports (SPRs); ii) translate country strategy aims and outcomes into action plans that can be systematically monitored; and iii) revise the corporate SPR system to integrate country strategy outcomes in annual reports, in the longer-term. 	<p>Policy, Programme and Innovation Division (OSZ)/RMP</p>	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>The country strategy will be developed in line with the UNDAF and national planning processes. To ensure that the strategy is results-based, OSZ will work with the Uganda country office to identify outcomes that support the UNDAF, national priorities and international frameworks such as the Zero Hunger Challenge and the emerging Sustainable Development Goals. The strategy will identify measurable targets for tracking impacts and changes over time.</p> <p>The modalities for aligning country strategy outcomes with project outcomes are still being defined. Management agrees that the SPR reporting system should be revised if country strategy outcomes replace project outcomes as the primary results for judging performance.</p> <p>WFP has updated SPR guidance to include linkages between a country strategy and the projects in that country.</p>	<p>June 2015</p> <p>Not applicable</p> <p>Completed</p>



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<p>Recommendation 4: Resilience and disaster risk reduction. Headquarters, the country office and the regional bureau should continue to implement the recommendations of the 2014 FFA evaluation and the recent FFA guidance for the country office, while improving the planning, design, implementation and monitoring of resilience and DRR interventions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) hiring a specialist to work with sub-offices on the planning and design of a coherent multi-year approach to WFP FFA and DRR, and ensuring that activities are implemented together with relevant technical partners; ii) under the 2013 joint resilience strategy for Karamoja, developing joint operational plans with FAO and UNICEF to increase the synergy and impact of WFP interventions; and iii) using multi-year plans to advocate with donors for multi-year funding for the country programme. 	<p>Country office – with support of regional bureau and OSZ</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>As noted under recommendation 1, WFP will finalize the joint resilience strategy by March 2015, and is strengthening its collaboration with FAO and UNICEF.</p> <p>WFP is improving the quality of its FFA/public works activities in collaboration with the World Bank, the Government of Uganda (Office of the Prime Minister, National Agricultural Research Organization, local governments) and cooperating partners. These efforts build on World Bank experience in other countries, WFP's corporate FFA expertise and guidance, and local government expertise in the Karamoja region. WFP will use existing technical capacity in Uganda and Karamoja to improve the design, management and monitoring of FFA activities. Technical reviews, multi-stakeholder training and manuals and guidelines for labour-based public works in Karamoja will be completed by the end of 2014.</p> <p>WFP is recruiting an external programme officer with skills in livelihoods and FFA to manage FFA activities in Karamoja.</p> <p>WFP continues to advocate for multi-year donor funding for the country programme.</p>	<p>March 2015</p> <p>December 2014</p> <p>January 2015</p> <p>Ongoing</p>



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<p>Recommendation 5: <i>General food distributions. Under emergency humanitarian action, the country office should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) urgently resolve the secondary transport problems facing deliveries to refugee settlements, through more efficient management of transporters' contracts and enhanced monitoring of deliveries; ii) complement the current outsourcing of post-distribution monitoring with regular, tracked joint monitoring plans by WFP field staff and contracted partners, so WFP staff can engage with target populations, fostering deeper understanding of the problems faced by communities that WFP assists; and iii) record readmissions to supplementary feeding programmes and investigate their causes, which are likely to be partially addressed by ensuring that full food entitlements are distributed regularly and predictably to target populations. 	Country office	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>WFP monitors the work of its cooperating partners, addressing transport and other issues as they arise. As discussed with the evaluation team, this recommendation applies to specific problems with secondary transport at refugee settlements in one region in late 2013/early 2014 and not to the whole evaluation period or to all general food distribution. In June 2014, WFP increased the transport fleet in this region by adding its own trucks.</p> <p>By January 2015, WFP staff will manage post-distribution monitoring, to improve oversight.</p> <p>The high number of adult readmissions to the community-based supplementary feeding programme is linked to screening criteria in the national guidelines on managing acute malnutrition. WFP and its cooperating partners will continue to advocate for improved national guidelines.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>January 2015</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p>Recommendation 6: <i>Agriculture and market support. To enhance the security of farmers' savings, the country office should support the Government in developing an appropriate regulatory framework and operational procedures for VSLAs, so that they become legally registered bodies with legal statutes.</i></p>	Country office	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>Under its AMS programme, WFP will work with partners to enhance the security of VSLAs. WFP has been advised that rather than developing a regulatory framework for VSLAs, it should work within existing regulations, including linking VSLAs to banks and microfinance institutions. Many other stakeholders are working in this area, and WFP will explore potential partnerships for increasing VSLA activities in its programmes and incorporating them in the next country programme (November 2015).</p>	November 2015
<p>Recommendation 7: <i>Protection and gender. The country office and regional bureau should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) provide field-based staff and cooperating partners with training and practical orientation on WFP's protection policy to ensure that assistance does not put beneficiaries at risk; and ii) develop staff capacity for integrating gender analysis into programme design and implementation, and verification check-lists to ensure that standards are respected. 	Country office with support of regional bureau and the Gender Office (OMG)	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>In March 2015, with support from the regional bureau, the country office will provide its staff with refresher training on protection. Gender analysis will be incorporated into the design of the next country programme, protracted relief and recovery operation and country strategy.</p>	November 2015



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

AMS	agriculture and market support
DRR	disaster risk reduction
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFA	food for assets
OSZ	Policy, Programme and Innovation Division
RMP	Performance Management and Monitoring Division
SPR	Standard Project Report
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VSLA	village savings and loan association