

WFP-Partner Collaboration in the Current Level 3 Emergencies

Background:

Working closely with National and International Cooperating Partners, WFP is currently responding to five simultaneous Level-3 emergencies; in Syria, South Sudan, C.A.R., Iraq and West Africa. Additionally, WFP continues to respond to four Level-2 emergencies in DRC, Yemen, the Horn of Africa and Mali as well as one Level -1 emergency in Gaza¹.

This volume of large-scale and complex emergencies is testing the humanitarian community's capacity to respond effectively, efficiently and in a timely manner. WFP's main challenges relate to funding shortfalls and deployment capacity. Other actors may experience similar challenges. Rapid turnover of emergency staff in itself poses an obstacle to efficient collaboration.

This forum provides a platform to discuss how WFP and the NGO community are coping with the current volume of emergencies, and how we can jointly maximize our assistance to the people affected by them.

The panel consists of three teams of two panellists, one WFP staff and one cooperating partner, addressing three major emergencies: the complex emergencies in South Sudan and the Syria Region, and the West-Africa Ebola crisis. After the panel discussion the floor will open for questions and comments.

Operational capacity

One common feature in L-3 emergencies is the overwhelming level of needs, the complexity of the problems, and the need for a fast response and scale-up. Humanitarian actors are required to have the systems and resources in place to provide a rapid response. A few years ago, WFP conducted a corporate preparedness planning exercise. The scenario required

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Level 1 Response: Emergency operations within the response capabilities of the relevant WFP Country Office (CO), with routine support from Regional Bureaux (RB).

- **Level 2 Response:** Emergency Response operations requiring regional augmentation of country-level response capability.
- **Level 3 Response:** Emergency Response operations requiring mobilisation of WFP global response capabilities in support of the relevant CO(s) and/or RB, i.e. a Corporate Response

corporate capacity to respond to two simultaneous L3 crises, followed by a third one in the same calendar year. Today, we respond to five.

Most of the current crises are protracted, and will require continued engagement and potential further scale-up. The demand for experienced national and international staff is higher than ever. In C.A.R. for instance, the presence of INGOs has gradually increased since the beginning of the year. However, many NGOs especially those that had no previous presence in CAR, are facing challenges in rapidly starting up, or scaling up, across the country. While investing in national capacity is the preferred longer-term solution, the time and resources to invest in this may not be there during the time of crisis.

WFP should reflect, together with its partners, on how to help NGOs scale up in such emergencies. Innovative solutions may be needed, and this session is an opportunity for creative and innovative approaches to be put forward.

Funding

Both WFP and Cooperating Partners face severe funding constraints in places such as Syria and South Sudan, which hamper our ability to exploit new access opportunities. The funding deficit also limits the extent to which WFP can invest in NGO partners' capacity. The basic principle upon which WFP funds its partners is cost-sharing, whereby WFP refunds the portion of the partner's budget related to the partner's implementation of WFP activities. But increasingly, NGO have other funding needs over and above direct implementation costs. These costs are related to context analysis, security and needs assessments, monitoring and quality programming, in furtherance of common principles such as Do-No-Harm and accountability to affected populations. WFP is ready to explore with Cooperating Partners how we can better advocate jointly vis-à-vis donors in this area.

Risk management

Many of today's L3 are complex, with high levels of insecurity. In Syria, CAR and South Sudan, insecurity has a major impact on our overall delivery potential. While progress has been made in jointly addressing risk issues, for example the working group that emerged from the 2012 Partnership Consultations, more remains to be done. Especially in situations where WFP works with a large number of NGO partners, or where WFP partners work side by side with NGOs engaged in non-WFP related activities. With multiple stakeholders come multiple risk appetites and multiple risk aversion strategies. In high-risk environments there is a clear need to harmonise these aspects.



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WFP being overextended in multiple emergencies is a Corporate Risk recognised in WFP's Strategic Plan. WFP and Cooperating partners benefit from a risk sharing approach. WFP views Cooperating Partners as a critical determinant to achieving its strategic objectives. WFP is committed to identifying common objectives with its principal NGO constituency, where the concept of common risks is understood by all.

The panel discussion will focus on the above issues. Below are some open questions to stimulate the discussion:

- 1. Cooperating Partner capacity; how are partners dealing with the pressure on internal capacity and how could WFP help?**
- 2. Cooperating Partner coordination with WFP: in complex emergencies, how can we improve coordination, both inter-agency (Clusters, HCT) and bilaterally? Do NGOs experience a need for better WFP/CP coordination and if so, how can we improve together?**
- 3. WFP and Cooperating Partner risk sharing: how is this currently conducted in each operation? Is there a joint risk management approach and if not, should there be one and how can we improve this?**
- 4. Fundraising: how can we better raise awareness of the funding gaps and coordinate our fundraising efforts?**