

OPERATION EVALUATION

Rwanda PRRO 200744: Food and Nutrition
Assistance to Refugees and Returnees

A mid-term evaluation of WFP's Operation
(2015 – 2016)

[June, 2016]

Management Response



World Food Programme

Management response cleared by:

Country Director: Jean-Pierre de Margerie, 29.6.2016

Detailed responses to evaluation recommendations

Evaluation Recommendations	Management Accepted, partially accepted or not accepted and COMMENT on the Recommendation, providing clear reasoning for partially accepted and not accepted	Management - Action to be taken			
		Action	Responsible CO unit	Timeframe	Further funding required (Y or N)
Recommendation 1: Review cash transfer mechanisms and contractual arrangements prior to further expanding cash-based transfers. <i>The ET recommends that the CO, with support from the Regional Bureau investigate the potential use of other transfer mechanisms and financial service providers. The 2014 Feasibility Study found that the multi-wallet would provide a channel for multiple agencies to provide cash payments to the same beneficiaries, and this may be appropriate given UNHCR interest. In addition, the ET recommends that the CO review contractual arrangements with partners with a view to ensuring that WFP or a designate has overall oversight and there are clear management responsibilities spanning across all actors in the cash transfer system, with clearly defined roles and accountabilities for all parties. Monthly partner distribution reporting should be specified and monitored, and contracts should stipulate time-bound contingency plans and responsibilities of each actor.</i>	Accepted	The CO has already concluded the review of the transfer mechanism and the process of replacing mVISA with Equity Bank multiple wallet cash cards is underway, planned to be completed in the three cash camps by the end of September 2016. Consequently, the partnerships and contractual as well as oversight and monitoring arrangements will be reviewed in line with the new transfer mechanism.	CO CBT WG	September 2016	N

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<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>Conduct a detailed cost-benefit analysis of the various transfer modalities to inform decision-making in accordance with new WFP guidance.</p> <p><i>A complete ex-post cost-efficiency analysis should be done by WFP Rwanda, to include an estimate of all costs, to satisfy immediate needs such as donors' requests. A more elaborate cost-effectiveness assessment should also be done when possible and certainly during the planning of the next project, as outlined in the WFP Cash and Voucher manual and business process model. It will be beneficial to do this in conjunction with regional and HQ C&V staff. WFP should be aware that some of the differential benefits of CBT versus in-kind assistance may be difficult to quantify until further evidence is available, making it complex to reduce the comparison to simple formulas. Robust measurement of the comparative benefits of modalities should be done with adequately large and random quantitative samples, and qualitative research. The benefits measured should include those anticipated in WFP's Cash and Voucher policy, e.g., those related to "creat[ing] conditions for pathways out of poverty." While the emphasis here is on comparing CBT and in-kind modalities, this type of analysis could be used to assist decision-making about other activities.</i></p>	Accepted	The CO, with technical support from regional and/or HQ experts and in line with the corporate guidance, will produce an ex-post cost-efficiency analysis before the end of the year. CO will explore possibilities to include measurement of cost-efficiency in terms of food security indicators, protection and gender and impact on local economy. It is however important to note that the measured benefits will only be those relevant to the PRRO and the refugee context in Rwanda and will not be able to address wider approaches to "creating pathways out of poverty".	CO CBT WG	December 2016	N

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<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p>Nutrition: continue implementing all nutrition activities but ensure focus on reducing stunting and anaemia rates in all camps once GAM rates reach acceptable levels.</p> <p><i>In most of the Congolese camps, where GAM rates are now within acceptable levels, the focus should shift to reducing stunting and anaemia prevalence rates, both of which are still at levels classified as being of public health concern. Although the current B-SFP is appropriate for this, and should be continued, providing a full package of additional, complementary activities will be needed to bring down rates down. The package should include interventions to improve access to sufficient nutrients (either through purchase, production or product), promote infant and young child feeding (IYCF) practices and hygiene, and provide nutrition counselling and support. The CO will also need to ensure that all activities are taken to scale, involving all families with young children can access the full range of interventions. WFP should therefore seek complementary partnerships so that activities can be taken to scale. The NEC programme is a good starting point for this, and camps with high stunting and anaemia rates should be prioritized, including Mahama.</i></p>	Accepted	<p>Resources allowing, WFP will continue implementing all nutrition activities as recommended and ensure that evidence-based adjustments are made as required.</p> <p>WFP in collaboration with its partners conducted a Standardised Expanded Nutrition Survey (SENS) in all the six refugee camps in May 2016. The SENS results show GAM in poor category for two of the six camps and in acceptable category for the other camps. Stunting levels are now under 30 percent in all Congolese camps and under 40 percent in Mahama. Anaemia for under-five children is under 40 percent in all camps. Thirty-seven percent of children achieved Minimum Acceptable Diet (MAD) across all camps (while 61 percent consumed minimum diet diversity only 17 percent met minimum meal frequency which brought down the value of this indicator).</p> <p>WFP has already started the advocacy for nutrition-sensitive programming at the</p>	Programme	<p>Camp specific action plans to be developed by July 2016.</p> <p>Budget revision to extend the PRRO 200744 for 2017 will be approved by December 2016.</p>	Y

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		<p>leadership level by presenting the SENS results to the Minister of Health and the Heads of Agencies in June. As part of SENS results dissemination process, camp specific recommendations will be prepared and an action plan developed in coordination with health and nutrition partners from each camp. In order to effectively address stunting and anaemia, WFP will build partnerships and work with UNHCR to ensure implementation of the action plans.</p> <p>May 2016 SENS results will advise WFP's activities for 2017. SENS will continue to be conducted on an annual basis with the next survey planned for May 2017.</p>			
<p>Recommendation 4:</p> <p>Strengthen gender capacities and related monitoring and evaluation procedures by addressing previously-identified issues.</p> <p><i>The CO should accelerate capacity-building efforts and ensure a focus on learning about and addressing gender issues raised in the JAM 2014, project document, and this MTE. During the current PRRO and planning for a future project, WFP should work with</i></p>	Accepted	<p>Following the launch of the corporate Gender Policy 2015-2020 and development of a regional gender strategy, the CO in collaboration with RBN is pursuing a Gender Baseline Framework which will inform the design of WFP Rwanda Gender Country Action Plan. To support the implementation of</p>	Programme	December 2016	N

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<i>partners to address gender issues identified as affecting the lives of girls and women (e.g., early marriage, transactional sex) and their engagement in WFP programmes. This should include applying the WFP Gender Policy recommendation for a monitoring system to ascertain whether women are empowered by cash transfers. The balanced role of men as well as women should receive greater emphasis, and positive examples of shared household decision-making could be shared with others. Other key considerations include recognizing the central role of women in self-reliance efforts, and understanding the potential incentives that women recognize and weight in making decisions about family planning.</i>		<p>the action plan, the CO has established a cross-functional Gender Results Network (GRN) led by a senior international staff.</p> <p>The CO participates in the UNHCR-led Gender Technical Working Group, including the on-going Comprehensive Gender Needs Assessment to be carried in all camps. The findings and outcomes of the assessment will inform all assistance to refugees.</p> <p>The CO will review monitoring tools to make sure they are aligned with the Corporate Gender Policy, Regional Gender Strategy and Country Action Plan for an enhanced gender analysis based on previous and planned surveys.</p>			
Recommendation 5:	Partially accepted	While WFP is currently supporting the GoR in developing a new school feeding policy, it is still not clear how realistic it would be for the Government to include	Programme	Budget revision by December	Y

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<p>Evolve the school feeding programme through linkages with government school feeding programmes and other partners; encourage community self-help education support.</p> <p><i>Even though all components of PRRO 200744 have merit, if the project faces reduced funding, the ET would give school feeding, in its current form, lowest priority. There is potential to promote the Rwandan government's adoption of the schools in their HGSF programme, in keeping with the WFP global education policy. While there is popular support for ECD, which some refugees felt was a higher priority than secondary school feeding, rather than try to re-establish funding to ECD other alternatives appear to be more feasible. Other partners (especially UNICEF) could play a role, and the existing self-help ECD initiatives in several camps show the potential of parents contributing modestly to the food and costs of school feeding. WFP and partners could provide support to reinforce any self-help efforts, especially during any possible transition out of fully funding school feeding.</i></p>		<p>schools in refugee settings in its national school feeding model. The Government model currently sees parents as having the core responsibility of school feeding for primary school children. School feeding reviews tend to find that the parents' capacity for providing school feeding is a key limitation, which is likely to be further exacerbated in refugee settings where the population is potentially more vulnerable. Therefore, it is not likely that advocating for the Government to include schools in refugee settings in its school feeding program will yield any positive results.</p> <p>In line with the evaluation recommendations, WFP in partnership with UNHCR is planning to retarget school feeding for 2017 through a budget revision focusing its limited resources on supporting primary schools and ECD</p>		2016, implementation early 2017	

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<p>Recommendation 6:</p> <p>Design a long-term strategy with partners to enhance support for self-reliance in refugee households.</p> <p><i>The CO should consider a livelihoods, market and sustainability study with special consideration for agricultural aspects such as gardening and small livestock. This can help identify current promising practices and niches, and be done in conjunction with a review of the new UNHCR/WFP refugee self-reliance policy. These core partners along with others (may include pertinent government or United Nations agencies, NGOs, and private sector) should jointly create a 10-year flexible strategy and discuss a joint budget and funding plan, as well as a strongly synergistic implementation plan. A long-term joint strategy should be rooted in a consideration of different future scenarios and reviewed periodically to adapt it to an evolving context. When looking at specific livelihood activities (such as those now included in the PRRO), profitability and sustainability are important, but the psychosocial benefits of work should also be prioritized. Access to land for agriculture activities is possible on some scale and should be expanded in Nyabiheke and elsewhere, either on a rental or purchase basis. The VSLAs supported by partner NGOs could be important actors to carry forward this strategy.</i></p>	Accepted	<p>As stated in the report, upon finalization of the corporate joint UNHCR-WFP refugee self-reliance policy (at WFP-HQ level), the CO will consider a livelihoods study with special consideration on agriculture. WFP will partner with UNHCR under the umbrella of the UNHCR long-term strategy for refugee livelihoods and self-reliance building on the enabling environment in Rwanda. Working through market-based interventions especially setting up a robust, multi-sectoral platform for cash-based transfers supported by market assessment data will WFP's priority in a short and medium term.</p> <p>WFP will be reviewing its strategic role in Rwanda in the coming years, in line with the EDPRS2 and the UNDAF coming to an end in mid-2018. The</p>	Management / Programme	<p>Short term: 2016-2017</p> <p>Long-term: 2017-2018</p>	Y

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		review and the related consultations will allow WFP focus and build partnerships			
<p>Recommendation 7:</p> <p>Enhance participation of affected populations through more systematic communications, institution-building and accountability.</p> <p><i>In accordance with core humanitarian principles, the CO should continue the positive engagement and strong overall camp-level coordination with refugee camp committees and other formal institutions such as food and cash distribution committees, and informal groupings including women's and youth groups. These principles are doubly important in the context that refugee camps are semi-permanent communities, which should have their own defined measure of normal community life: institutions' capacities should be strengthened to take leadership roles in promoting self-reliance, formulating community development plans, and other topics. WFP/UNHCR should help create a process for camp committees to play a central role in identifying, planning and implementing initiatives to improve their lives; this could include the Community-Based Participatory Planning approach used in other WFP Rwanda programmes and be linked to food-for-assets to build community infrastructural assets such as tree-planting and other environmental improvements. Other suggested</i></p>	Accepted	Food distribution preparatory meetings are organized in all refugee camps to inform refugees of their entitlements and plan monthly distribution cycle's activities jointly with refugee representatives, distribution partners, UNHCR, MIDIMAR and WFP. After food distribution another meeting is organized with the same group to review the distribution and draw lessons for the next cycle. During the general food distribution a complaint and feedback desk is put in place, managed by the distribution partner, to address refugees' problems. The CO will work with UNHCR and the distribution partner to improve and systematize the documentation of complaints and monitoring of findings.	Programme	By 31 December 2017	Y

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measures include review of accountability mechanisms to include regular updating to camp committees, and having workshops and cross-visits between refugee camps when focusing on challenging aspects such as GBV or self-reliance.		<p>WFP Rwanda will continue to actively participate in UNHCR's annual Age Gender Diversity Monitoring (AGDM) with all implementing partners through focus group discussions in each camp.</p> <p>The current tools used in the Food Security Outcome Monitoring (FSOM) carried out twice a year in each camp and the monthly Beneficiary Contact Monitoring will be reviewed to better address livelihoods and gender aspects.</p> <p>In Kiziba camp, a Joint Village Monitoring exercise is conducted throughout all the villages in the camp. During this exercise all implementing partners meet with refugees under the leadership of UNHCR to discuss about the assistance and services they receive. It has been seen as a good initiative and WFP will advocate it is replicated to other camps. Furthermore, community-</p>			

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		based planning and consultation approaches will be increasingly applied, whenever feasible.			
Recommendation 8: Use indicators that capture a long-term vision of household self-reliance and community capacity-building. <i>To channel efforts in the new directions discussed here, new indicators should be monitored, in some cases temporarily as needed to measure progress toward evolving project goals. Candidates include: profitability and jobs created by mobile banking merchants; sales/income from livelihood activities (livestock, gardening, etc.); livelihood opportunities or vocational training for young women; refugees served as a proportion of the total population; and use of VSLA savings for small business. Indicators related to community institutions include active participation by women in community institutions, and the formulation and implementation of a development plan by the camp committee.</i>	Accepted	The CO will review the currently used monitoring tools to ensure they capture a long-term vision of household self-reliance and community capacity-building. This will be addressed through three channels: 1) additional analysis of the already collected data through Food Security Outcome Monitoring; 2) add new indicators into existing survey plans where required; and 3) partner with UNHCR in the framework of their long-term refugee livelihoods strategy and its monitoring and evaluation methodology.	Programme/M&E	Additional analysis and adding key indicators into existing surveys: by December 2016. UNHCR partnership: 2017 onwards	Y

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Recommendation 9: Promote wider learning agenda around cash transfers and their value in livelihoods and personal empowerment. <i>While other recommendations have focused on management and cost-effectiveness of the current cash transfer mechanism, WFP Rwanda should follow up on and explore. CBT is relatively new in Rwanda overall, and WFP can play a role in sharing its experience to the benefit of the country, particularly with UNHCR, which is interested in adopting the same mechanism. Livelihood and economic dimensions of CBT should be monitored and discussed among partners, particularly in conjunction with the anticipated line of action on self-reliance. Some aspects of CBT which are more ambiguous and difficult to measure, such as dignity and empowerment, should be further explored, in conjunction with an anticipated process of strengthening gender capacities and M&E.</i>	Accepted	<p>The CO will start implementation of the new corporate CBT M&E package by 1st July 2016. Further, the CO commits to strengthening WFP's role in direct monitoring, as opposed to third party monitoring through an NGO, and building M&E partnerships with UNHCR and MIDIMAR and other actors/partners through the new CBT platform.</p> <p>The CO will continue disseminating the results of the LEWIE study to the GoR and key partners and look for resources to continue and extend LEWIE.</p> <p>The CO will conduct a follow-up gender and protection assessment by mid-2017.</p>	CO CBT WG (chaired by DCD)	CBT M&E package: 1 st July 2016. Gender and protection assessment: mid-2017.	
Recommendation 10: Strengthen advocacy approach for issues outside the direct control of WFP.	Partially accepted	The CO believes it strongly advocated, to the best of its capacity, on the issue of support to the unregistered refugees; it's generally acknowledged that WFP's	Management	31 December 2016	N

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<i>Some of the issues affecting the programme and highlighted in the report are clearly challenging for WFP to address on its own, particularly those under the mandate of MIDIMAR and other government institutions. A key issue was the support for unregistered refugees and recent experiences could provide lessons as to how to build an agenda to address such problems. Another key issue is the firewood problem, which affects refugees and local populations, and is intertwined with national land management and environmental concerns. WFP should encourage discussion of such issues with government and other partners, showing respect for mandated institutions but also proactively stimulating a search for creative solutions. Other issues (gender-related ones included) may require broader discussion with other stakeholders beyond the traditional ones, in order to gain perspective and leverage support and resources to benefit refugees.</i>		<p>contribution led to such support materializing in April, 2016.</p> <p>This said, the CO will continue to build on its evidence-based advocacy approach through the refugee coordination meeting (RCM). The RCM, chaired by MIDIMAR and with heads of agencies in attendance, has already established itself as a good platform for advocacy work. WFP remains one of the most active and vocal participant on this platform.</p> <p>To address the firewood problem, UNHCR and MIDIMAR have started providing fuel-efficient cooking stoves. In this respect, the CO will advocate for creative, evidence-based solutions to the firewood problem through the RCM.</p> <p>The CO will continue building on nutrition advocacy and continue assuming strong leadership in this area.</p>			

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		Key findings from SENS have already been presented to the RCM, which advocates for improvements in nutrition responses. Another platform for evidence-based advocacy work is the health and nutrition working group co-chaired by WFP.			