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**Executive Board  
Second Regular Session**

**Rome, 10–13 November 2014**

# **EVALUATION REPORTS**

**Agenda item 6**

*For consideration*



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## **MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT – THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO 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 the management response to the recommendations of the evaluation of WFP's portfolio in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in 2009–2013. 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's operations.
2. A lack of resources impeded implementation of planned activities. The evaluation findings recognize that decision-making was influenced by financial constraints, which also limited the country office's engagement with partners and the Government and its ability to seek creative solutions to challenges.
3. Management is pleased to note that despite these resourcing constraints, the evaluation found the portfolio to be broadly relevant and aligned with the needs of women and men, and with government policies and priorities.
4. Management welcomes the findings and recommendations as opportunities for enhancing WFP's activities in the DRC, particularly by strengthening capacity in preparedness and broadening engagement with partners in core areas. Several of these activities are already under way and the evaluation findings will guide further actions.
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><b>Recommendation 1: By November 2014, the country office should develop a preparedness plan for emergency interventions</b>, which can be adapted to different scenarios and which focuses on improving the rapid response capacity for emergencies and population movements – displacements and returns – in the east.</p>	<p>Country office Regional bureau</p> <p>Country office</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>With support from the regional bureau, the country office will develop emergency preparedness plans by June 2015; current resourcing and staff rotation cycles make the November 2014 deadline unfeasible.</p> <p>Activities to support a preparedness plan include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ a national coordination meeting between the food security cluster (FSC) and the rapid response to population movements mechanism;</li> <li>➤ application of the FSC guidelines revised in June 2014;</li> <li>➤ launch of a special operation in February 2014 to enhance FSC coordination in North Kivu and Katanga and to reinforce assessment capacity – this operation is underfunded;</li> <li>➤ prioritization of resources through a budget revision to reduce the scope of work, followed by continuous review of projected needs;</li> <li>➤ establishment of standby partnership agreements with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for rapid response and distributions when needed; and</li> <li>➤ creation of an in-country contingency stock of food/cash for quick responses to new emergencies.</li> </ul>	<p>June 2015</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2015</p> <p>June 2015</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2: Greater use should be made of alternative food assistance modalities.</b> The country office should develop a strategy and three-year implementation plan for 2014/15–2017 geared towards the balanced use of transfer modalities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of food assistance. This would entail establishment of a steering committee for formulating the strategy, clear definition of internal roles and responsibilities and enhanced partnerships.</p>	<p>Country office Cash for Change Service (OSZIC)</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The country office will apply the business model being developed by the Cash for Change Service, which defines responsibilities and roles in cash and voucher (C&amp;V) schemes. A steering committee will be functioning by 31 December 2014.</p> <p>The country office conducts monthly C&amp;V management meetings.</p>	<p>December 2014</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

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		Since early 2014, the country office has carried out multisectoral assessments of the potential for C&V transfers. These include market assessments in May–June in Katanga, and market monitoring in North Kivu and Equateur.	Ongoing
<p><b>Recommendation 3: The capacities of the country office and area offices should be enhanced to facilitate the achievement of WFP’s Strategic Objectives in DRC:</b></p> <p>➤ <b>Recommendation 3a): WFP Headquarters, the regional bureau and the country office should collaborate better to fill gaps in human resources</b> by assigning experienced and senior staff to key positions for increasing WFP’s performance and positioning, particularly in emergency coordination, nutrition, C&amp;V and school feeding.</p> <p>➤ <b>Recommendation 3b): The country office should improve communications with donors</b> regarding its plans, operations and operational involvement as it moves from a food aid to a food assistance strategy in DRC. WFP should develop and implement a strategy for fundraising from humanitarian and long-term funding sources.</p>	<p>Country office Regional bureau Human Resources Division (HRM)</p> <p>Country office</p> <p>Country office, supported by Centre of Excellence (Brasilia)</p>	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>It is currently unfeasible to assign senior staff as recommended because funding constraints have forced considerable staff cuts at the country office while WFP faces challenges in mobilizing sufficient experienced staff to respond to multiple Level 3 emergencies, particularly in French-speaking hardship duty stations.</p> <p>To address capacity gaps, WFP will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ recruit a junior professional officer to be outposted to Goma; and</li> <li>➤ identify a United Nations Volunteer to be posted in the Ministry of Education.</li> </ul> <p>The country office’s increased engagement with donors includes sharing of a recent prioritization concept note with donors, the Government and the humanitarian community; monthly meetings with donors in Kinshasa; and individual meetings and field visits. The country office has achieved 70 percent of required resources for 2014.</p> <p>A donor relations officer has been recruited to elaborate a fundraising strategy.</p> <p>Longer-term programmes are being discussed with donors and the Government as part of the formulation of operations planned to start in 2016.</p>	<p>December 2015</p> <p>Selection ongoing December 2014</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>Ongoing</p>





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<p><b>Recommendation 4: The country office should begin the transition to a country programme</b> to help WFP move away from a purely humanitarian approach towards one that is more development-oriented, focusing on activities and objectives that would benefit from long-term programmes and tools. This process will provide the basis for aligning country programme activities with the next United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), 2018–2022:</p> <p>➤ <b>Recommendation 4a): The country office should formulate a development project for nutrition interventions that supports the integrated management of acute malnutrition</b> – through the National Strategy for the Management of Acute Malnutrition and mother-and-child health and nutrition, HIV and tuberculosis programmes – in 2014–2017. Given the structural causes of malnutrition in DRC, it is recommended that the treatment of moderate acute malnutrition (MAM) follow a development approach with a strong community-based component that also addresses chronic malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies.</p>	<p>Country office Policy, Programme and Innovation Division (OSZ) Regional bureau, Centre for Excellence (Brasilia)</p>	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>In September 2014, the country office started consultations and review of the country strategy to inform the formulation of one or more projects for 2016–2017.</p> <p>The country office will formulate a development project for nutrition for 2016–2017 if donors indicate their support by November 2015. The entry point would be prevention of chronic malnutrition, with strong links to the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative. Essential components would include capacity development for government and community workers on integrated treatment and prevention of MAM through the health system, and piloting of lipid-based nutrient supplementation for preventing stunting, with related behaviour change communication on feeding of infants and young children, with other SUN actors.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>End of 2015</p>

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<p>➤ <b>Recommendation 4b): The country office should review the school feeding programme, increasing the focus on a decentralized/regional development approach.</b> The evaluation team recommends that school feeding be anchored on a multi-stakeholder platform where different objectives can coexist: school health involving the Ministry of Public Health and the World Health Organization (WHO); school gardens involving the Ministry of Agriculture and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); educational outcomes involving the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the Ministry of Education; nutrition outcomes involving the Ministry of Health, UNICEF and WFP; social safety nets involving WFP, the World Bank and the Ministry of Social Affairs; and gender/protection issues involving the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNICEF and WFP. This will require: i) WFP’s advocacy and persuasion; ii) a medium-term approach that will need development funding; and iii) investigation of the feasibility of different models in different regions. Building on a theory of change, or similar framework, an in-depth evaluation and strategic assessment of the programme are desirable for identifying and analysing programme variables, including costing in different provinces to ensure sustainability of activities.</p>		<p>The country office will review the school feeding strategy with the regional bureau and the Centre for Excellence during formulation of new programmes for 2016. Support missions will be held by December 2014, and a concept note prepared by April 2015.</p>	<p>April 2015</p>





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<p><b>Recommendation 5: The country office should improve the quality and use of performance monitoring while lowering the cost</b> by: i) using ActivityInfo to derive a more accurate, real-time picture of how activities are being implemented throughout the country; ii) increasing activity monitoring at the outcome level, particularly for the management of acute malnutrition; and iii) establishing a system for registering, managing and monitoring the implementation of recommendations to ensure full use of recommendations from WFP missions and evaluations.</p>	Country office	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>Rather than implementing ActivityInfo, the country office will roll out WFP’s Country Office Monitoring and Evaluation Tool (COMET).</p> <p>The country office is already strengthening monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E) through WFP’s new nutrition and HIV monitoring system and has created a database on all activities undertaken with partners, with monthly performance indicators. Mechanisms for quality assurance of field-level data and for feedback will be enhanced.</p> <p>The revised protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) logframe in line with the Strategic Results Framework includes nutrition indicators on treatment coverage, MAM prevention coverage, participation in food distributions, and minimum acceptable diets. The country office will report on the outcomes of nutrition surveys by the end of 2014.</p> <p>The regional bureau provides technical assistance on coverage surveys of government capacity development. Annual surveys will collect outcome data, focusing on coverage and participation. WFP staff will be trained in improved data collection and analysis.</p> <p>The country office will require the regional bureau’s support to improve the use of data and analysis generated by missions.</p> <p>Throughout 2015, cooperating partners will be trained in nutrition M&amp;E. The country office’s costed M&amp;E plan complies with new standard operating procedures for M&amp;E.</p>	<p>July 2014</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>December 2014</p> <p>December 2014</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>December 2014</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6: The country office should strengthen inter-agency logistics management, including by differentiating more clearly between WFP service provision and logistics cluster activities</b> to improve understanding of respective roles and responsibilities. It would also be more appropriate to base the logistics cluster coordinator in Goma, which would strengthen links to the field, enhance coordination and harmonize ways of working among provincial clusters.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The logistics cluster is using its regular monthly meetings in Kinshasa and the provinces to inform partners about its activities and service provision. A short presentation includes clear explanations of roles and responsibilities within the cluster.</p> <p>Basing of the logistics cluster coordinator in Goma will require approval of the head of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the DRC Humanitarian Coordinator. Discussions have started with the final decision due by December 2014.</p>	<p>December 2014</p> <p>December 2014</p>



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<p><b>Recommendation 7: The country office should develop a clear, ambitious strategy for local purchases to improve the effectiveness and timeliness of food deliveries and support local production.</b> The strategy should be linked to improving rapid response efforts by using WFP’s purchasing power to support the agriculture sector in achieving food security. Links to Purchase for Progress (P4P) should be reinforced.</p>	<p>Country office P4P Unit Regional bureau</p>	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>While agreeing that a more ambitious local purchase strategy is needed, management does not believe that local purchases should necessarily be linked to enhanced effectiveness and timeliness of food deliveries. The specific challenges in the DRC affect WFP’s ability to enter procurement agreements with local producers by making it difficult to predict how much WFP can buy in a given year and where.</p> <p>P4P in the DRC foresees WFP as a buyer of last resort rather than the main purchaser of smallholders’ production. The country office will expand its P4P-related procurement, but activities will not be linked to recovery or development until they have gained sufficient scale.</p> <p>To enhance local purchases, the country office will collaborate with the regional bureau on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ mapping local food suppliers that are interested in P4P, and the foods available at different locations (procurement);</li> <li>➤ assessing suppliers’ capacity and the tonnages that each can provide of different foods (procurement); and</li> <li>➤ contracting millers in areas where there is potential for purchasing maize from P4P farmers (logistics/procurement/P4P).</li> </ul> <p>Where local purchases cannot enhance efficiency and effectiveness, the country office will continue to purchase food through regional and international procurement and the Forward Purchase Facility.</p>	<p>December 2015</p>





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<p><b>Recommendation 8: Cross-cutting issues and measures – on gender and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), “do no harm” and protection, safe access to firewood and alternative energy, the environment, and respect of humanitarian principles – should be better integrated throughout the project cycle, in line with WFP policies.</b></p>	<p>Country office Regional bureau</p>	<p>Agreed. Country office activities to address cross-cutting issues include the gender focal point’s gender marker training for all WFP programme staff, conducted via teleconference in early 2014. The markers will be applied to cooperating partners’ project proposals by the end of 2014.</p>	<p>December 2014</p>
		<p>In line with the revised project logframe for the new Strategic Results Framework, the country office is collecting data on cross-cutting indicators – protection, partnership, gender – and gender-disaggregated data.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
		<p>Data from the field will inform the design of all country office documents, to facilitate mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues such as gender and protection and achievement of the 2A gender marker for project proposals and implementation.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
		<p>Protection issues are incorporated in M&amp;E tools such as distribution and post-distribution monitoring.</p>	<p>Completed</p>
		<p>Two sub-office staff members received training on Safe Access to Firewood and alternative Energy (SAFE) organized by The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves in June 2014; national and provincial SAFE working groups have been set up; and a SAFE pilot project in North Kivu will be extended to areas with returnees by the end of 2014.</p>	<p>December 2014</p>
		<p>Protection advisers deployed to the DRC have helped to integrate protection into programmes. Tools include checklists for monitoring protection issues, which are being mainstreamed in cluster operations in North Kivu. All WFP activities in the east are expected to have been reviewed using protection checklists by December 2014.</p>	<p>December 2014</p>
		<p>All field-level agreements include a clause on “do no harm”. Complaint mechanisms are in place at most distribution sites.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

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## ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

C&V	cash and vouchers
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FSC	food security cluster
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MAM	moderate acute malnutrition
P4P	Purchase for Progress
SAFE	Safe Access to Firewood and alternative Energy
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund