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**Executive Board  
Annual Session**

**Rome, 4–8 June 2012**

## **EVALUATION REPORTS**

**Agenda item 7**

*For consideration*



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## **MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT ZIMBABWE 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 Zimbabwe: an evaluation of WFP's portfolio (2006–2010)
2. During the period covered by the evaluation, Zimbabwe's macro-economic situation underwent significant changes, which demanded considerable dexterity by WFP to adjust and ensure the appropriateness of programme response.
3. Management notes that the findings of the evaluation were broadly positive. The report confirms management's commitment to ensuring alignment with the Government and partners and the soundness of its choices of activity. WFP has made considerable efforts to support and respond to the food and nutritional challenges in Zimbabwe throughout the period. This required significant working in partnership with Government entities along with non-governmental and United Nations organizations.
4. To improve the agility of its response, WFP needs to refine its organizational processes and leverage institutional and outside knowledge more effectively. It needs to continue to strengthen partnerships with a view to optimizing programme design and targeting. WFP is committed to working with the Government Food Deficit Mitigation Strategy Framework in support of seasonal targeted assistance, and to supporting health and nutrition and social safety-net activities.
5. The Secretariat's responses to the recommendations are presented in the attached matrix.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT ZIMBABWE COUNTRY PORTFOLIO			
Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<b>Strategic Recommendations</b>			
<p><b>Recommendation 1: The country office should continue to leverage its experience, expertise, credibility and strategic position for the development and implementation of a national social protection framework.</b> The country office recognizes that the Government of Zimbabwe needs a comprehensive and operational national social protection framework that responds to current needs and capabilities, and includes operational guidelines and a process to raise awareness at the provincial and district levels. Implementing a social protection framework will require various levels of coordinated dialogue with all stakeholders, including members of the United Nations country team and sectoral ministries.</p>	Country office in consultation with Headquarters Humanitarian Policy & Transitions Service (PSH)	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Action 1: WFP has already opened dialogue with the Government on the need for a comprehensive national social protection framework. Productive safety nets will feature prominently in WFP's country strategy 2012–2015, and in the new protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) starting in January 2013.</p> <p>Action 2: The country office participated in Government-led preparations of frameworks for cash transfers and productive community works, in collaboration with the World Bank.</p> <p>Action 3: WFP will continue to engage in dialogue with the Ministry of Labour and Social Services, the World Bank and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to configure a national social protection framework.</p>	<p>November 2012</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2: The country office should incorporate in the next country strategy document (CSD) a plan for a transition from humanitarian assistance to development, while maintaining the capacity to scale up if the political or economic situation significantly deteriorates.</b> There have been several positive economic and political developments since 2009, but there is a chance that Zimbabwe could become unstable again. The country office must maintain the flexibility and capacity to scale up vulnerable group feeding (VGF) if a crisis does occur. The CSD process should assess opportunities for synergy between activities such as food for assets (FFA) and cash for assets (CFA) so that WFP resources build on those of other organizations. The CSD process should assess and develop the capacity of the Government and other stakeholders for planning, coordinating and implementing activities as part of a hand-over strategy.</p>	Country office in consultation with Regional Bureau for Southern Africa (ODJ) and Headquarters Programme Division (ODX)	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP has initiated the country strategy process, and will adopt the recommended approach of transitioning to development while maintaining a rapid response capacity that could be activated if necessary. In striking a balance between direct support and the strengthening of national safety-net systems, WFP will focus on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>community works and sustainable support for the most vulnerable;</li> <li>disaster risk reduction (DRR), VGF and the early warning system;</li> <li>prevention and treatment of undernutrition among children in the first 1,000 days (from conception to 2 years of age), and a comprehensive programme for HIV and AIDS treatment;</li> <li>market-based innovations and approaches based on global Purchase for Progress (P4P) lessons learned; and</li> <li>support for implementation of the Food and Nutrition Council (FNC) policy and the social protection framework.</li> </ol>	Ongoing, up to November 2012



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<p><b>Recommendation 3: The country office should expand its operational relationships on nutrition support for (PLHIV) and FFA/CFA beneficiaries with UNICEF, FAO and other United Nations agencies, donors and cooperating partners, including joint planning of activities.</b> The success of the nutrition support for PLHIV and FFA/CFA activities requires synergy between WFP and partners. It can be accomplished only if the country office works closely with its partners and leverages its reputation and the goodwill it has generated.</p>	<p>Country office in consultation with ODJ programme units</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Action 1: To support the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative and build on the success of providing clinical care for nutrition rehabilitation, mother-and-child health and nutrition (MCHN) will be provided to tackle high stunting rates. WFP and partners will draw on lessons learned to improve the MCHN and will work on social protection at the policy level. This process will also facilitate the identification of technical support required to implement national surveys on micronutrients, which will contribute to decisions on food fortification.</p> <p>Should the nutritional status of the vulnerable population reach a satisfactory level, the current HIV and tuberculosis care and treatment package will be discontinued. However, WFP will continue working with clinical staff and NGOs to explore how to integrate nutrition supplementation with health care. WFP may encourage the Government and the private sector to use e-vouchers in the treatment programme.</p> <p>Action 2: WFP and FAO have collaborated on the technical and logistical aspects of DRR, thanks to which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (ZimVAC) can enhance its current methods and analyses for conducting livelihood assessments based on household economies;</li> <li>ii) joint technical and logistical support for crop and livestock assessments can be extended to the Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanization and Irrigation Development;</li> <li>iii) institutional support can be given to the FNC to facilitate analysis of the food and nutrition security situation;</li> <li>iv) the food and nutrition security policy can be developed and put into effect; and,</li> <li>v) joint food security monitoring systems can be reinforced by merging the Agriculture Food Security Monitoring System of the FAO Famine Early Warning Systems Network with WFP's community and household surveillance. In the area of risk reduction and disaster mitigation, joint activities will focus on the promotion of drought-tolerant crops and post-harvest loss management.</li> </ul>	<p>February 2012 and ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>



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		Action 3: The linkages will feature strongly in the country strategy that will lay a foundation for the new PRRO starting from January 2013.	November 2012
<p><b>Recommendation 4: The country office should consider increasing the share of market-based instruments in its portfolio.</b> The country office should explore scaling up e-voucher, cash-transfer and other market-based interventions in line with the Purchase for Progress principles. Scaling up market-based instruments could create synergies through increased donor and government support for smallholder agricultural productivity and capacity development of agro-dealers. Expanding the use of cash and e-voucher instruments would provide greater flexibility to beneficiaries and increase programme effectiveness.</p>	<p>Country office in consultation with ODJ, ODX, Headquarters Food Security Analysis Service (ODXF) and P4P Coordination Unit</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Action 1: In 2012, the seasonal targeted assistance programme was expanded to include cash; that activity now accounts for 15 percent of beneficiary numbers in the cash-for-cereal intervention. The seasonal targeted assistance uses a combination of food and cash transfers in 13 out of the 40 districts. Nearly 147,000 beneficiaries receive cash to buy cereals; they also receive pulses and oil to ensure dietary diversity.</p> <p>Action 2: In 2011 e-voucher activities were scaled up in Mutare. Consultations were finalized with partners in the potential location of Gweru. While local authorities prefer general food distribution, WFP anticipates reaching an agreement by mid-2012.</p> <p>Action 3: For the third consecutive year, WFP will carry out an assessment after the April/May harvest. WFP's local purchases rose from 2 percent of total food distributed in 2010 to 7.1 percent in 2011 – versus a traditionally outsourced function of procurement.</p> <p>Action 4: The local purchase and other market support initiatives are similar to P4P, because they: i) connect low-income farmers to markets by creating substantial stable demand; ii) align with donors and government officials on the supply side to help smallholders raise their agriculture productivity; and iii) use WFP's field presence to ensure more accurate and timely market information is available. They will feature in the country strategy and in the new PRRO as per Recommendation 3 under Action 3.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>December 2012</p> <p>September 2012</p> <p>November 2012</p>



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<b>Operational Recommendations</b>			
<p><b>Recommendation 5: The country office should continue to support the ZIMVAC annual rural assessments, but should advocate with partners for significant changes to the method and process.</b> Several issues related to capacity, method, procedure and structure limit the usefulness of the assessments for WFP targeting and beneficiary selection below the district level. The country office should continue to support the development of a food and nutrition security policy – including by strengthening the Food and Nutrition Council – and with partners should advocate for a comprehensive and independent review of the methods and process.</p>	Country office in consultation with ODJ	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Action 1: An independent review of the relevant methods and process, jointly commissioned by FAO, UNICEF and WFP, is to be carried out by external experts.</p> <p>Action 2: Together with UNICEF and FAO, WFP has supported the FNC and the finalization of the food and nutrition security policy. For the first time in ten years, the Government has allocated funds from the national budget for this purpose.</p>	<p>Completed in June 2012</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6: The country office should continue to provide food assistance to malnourished chronically ill people, but the activity should be reviewed before it is expanded.</b> Anthropometric equipment and training should be put in place; an in-depth study should be conducted of client compliance and nutritional well-being above and below the targeting criteria of BMI 18.5; using nutritional status as the main enrolment and exit criterion should be reviewed; a more robust and replicable indicator of household vulnerability should be developed; and an improved discharge process based on improved nutritional status should be devised that includes complementary livelihood activities.</p>	Country office in consultation with ODJ, ODX technical units and PS technical services	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Action 1: In February 2012, the country office held a robust lessons-learned review with stakeholders. The review sought to clarify the challenges and requirements relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) stakeholder coordination;</li> <li>ii) the need for anthropometric equipment in clinics to improve data collection;</li> <li>iii) the training of Ministry of Health and clinical personnel; and,</li> <li>iv) enhancing the capacity of partners to engage in a broad range of programmes, including livelihood activities.</li> </ul> <p>Action 2: The Ministry of Health will renew its anthropometric measurement equipment, to be funded by the local Swiss Embassy and procured by WFP.</p> <p>Action 3: Technical experts at Headquarters and in the regional bureau will provide support for finalizing the country strategy and the new PRRO.</p>	<p>Completed and ongoing</p> <p>Completed.</p> <p>November 2012</p>



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<p><b>Recommendation 7: The country office should increase efforts to synchronize the registration of beneficiaries of WFP and others' programmes to ensure proper coverage and maximization of synergies.</b> The country office should increase efforts to combine humanitarian with development assistance. The discussions with the United Kingdom's Department for International Development Protracted Relief Programme, for example, could result in the harmonization of efforts on the FFA, CFA and livelihood interventions for households with members exiting the nutrition support for anti-retroviral treatment (ART) clients programme.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Action 1: WFP will continue to engage in dialogue with stakeholders operating in the country – FAO, the Programme for Recovery in Zimbabwe (PRIZE), UNICEF and the Child Protection Fund Project Management Unit in the Ministry of Labour and Social Services and DFID's PRP – as it identifies complementary opportunities within the framework of the Child Protection Fund. The process of dialogue has led to the establishment of a UNICEF-funded national information management system to support targeting.</p> <p>Working in tandem with UNICEF and the PRP, WFP will assess how well the national management information system is being used for targeting purposes.</p>	<p>November 2012</p> <p>December 2012</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 8: The country office should streamline the negotiation and completion of field-level agreements to facilitate decision-making and accelerate commencement by cooperating partners.</b> A streamlined process and longer-term agreements would benefit all stakeholders, by avoiding distracting discussions.</p>	Country office in consultation with ODJ	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>A review of the field-level agreement (FLA) process was carried out in 2011 with a view to facilitating related negotiation and decision-making processes. Guidelines were prepared and shared with partners. Sub-office staff have been trained to monitor FLA compliance and provide feedback. A verification team with members of programme, logistics and finance units has been established to monitor and support compliance with agreed terms.</p>	Completed in March 2012





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## ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CFA	cash for assets
CSD	country strategy document
DRR	disaster risk reduction
FFA	food for assets
FLA	field-level agreement
FNC	Food and Nutrition Council
MCHN	mother-and-child health and nutrition
NGO	non-governmental organization
ODJ	Regional Bureau Johannesburg (Southern Africa)
ODX	Programme Division
ODXF	Food Security Analysis Service
P4P	Purchase for Progress
PLHIV	people living with HIV
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
PS	Policy, Planning and Strategy Division
PSH	Humanitarian Policy and Transitions Service
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VGf	vulnerable group feeding