



World Food Programme

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برنامج الأغذية العالمي

Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme (PREP)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE STRENGTHENING (EPRS)

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INTRODUCTION

1. Emergency Preparedness and Response Strengthening (EPRS) is about improving the Organization's ability to prepare for, and respond to, emergencies. As a lead humanitarian agency committed to learning, WFP constantly strives to improve its performance when delivering its core business: emergency assistance. A series of sudden on-set, highly complex emergencies¹ in the late 1990s/early 2000 confronted WFP with the need to professionalize its approach to emergency preparedness and response and learn from these experiences. This triggered a number of major investment programmes aimed at strengthening internal EPR capacities.
2. Investments in EPRS since 2000 have been significant: some US \$167m were directed to programmes such as the five-year 'Strengthening Emergency Response Capacity' (SERC), which identified key areas where WFP emergency response could be reinforced, and proposed concrete measures that included improved VAM & GIS systems for preparedness, and systematic contingency planning. WFP's capacity to assess humanitarian needs during emergencies was boosted thanks to the 'Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity' (SENAC) programme that ran from 2005 to 2008. Other more targeted programmes focused on specific EPR areas including Cluster telecommunications, logistics, and Avian Flu Preparedness. The Contingency Planning Working Group (CPWG) and the Rapid Response Working Group (RRWG) established in the mid-2000s continued this capacity building. Since then, a major component of the EPRS approach has been institutionalized through the establishment of a formal Trust Fund designed for EPR strengthening activities, that is managed by the Emergency Preparedness Division (ODE).

THE NEED FOR A COMMON APPROACH TO EPR STRENGTHENING

3. WFP's engagement in periodic large-scale EPR investment programmes, such as those mentioned above, have resulted in a more professional and systematic approach to emergency preparedness and response. However, these investments could have been better capitalized if they had been clearly linked to various corporate learning facilities. In addition, the process of systematic learning, informing regular funding allocations for EPRS, has not been regular, pointing to the need for a common approach to EPRS.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

4. Recently, with the launching of the Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme (PREP), WFP has firmly recognized EPRS as a corporate priority. This organization-wide programme aims to ensure that WFP has the capability to mount a more efficient and effective emergency response, and assist up to 6 million beneficiaries at any one time. The programme spans more than 60 activities and was launched in response to recommendations made at the 2010 WFP Madrid Global Meeting, and during the Lessons Learned of the 2010 corporate emergencies (Haiti, the Sahel and Pakistan).

¹ Including the Balkans Crisis in 1999 and the East Timor emergency

5. PREP has launched a systematic EPRS effort that treats ‘preparedness’ and ‘response’ as integrated concepts. This is based upon continual organizational learning and a dynamic knowledge management system that informs and improves the way we prepare for, and respond to, emergencies. The end result is a more sustained and timely investment in EPR, coupled with a greater accountability, better compliance, and higher quality emergency programmes.

EPR STRENGTHENING IN WFP

6. PREP is not the only programme focusing on EPRS. Efforts to strengthen EPR are being made throughout the organization and can be found in one form or another in most of WFP’s initiatives. The role of PREP is to review these activities in an attempt to determine their contribution to corporate EPRS objectives.
7. The intense learning that emerged from the 2010 corporate emergencies firmly established PREP as the corporate framework to embed a corporate ‘spirit of enquiry’ through a consistent approach to EPR knowledge management. The systematic implementation of Lessons Learned exercises for all large-scale emergencies, and the application of ‘lessons’ to improve WFP’s EPR systems, processes, tools and policies are integral to ensuring EPRS on a continuous and dynamic basis. EPR learning consists of institutionalizing this informal learning process combined with more formal organisational learning, e.g. evaluations and audits. Further valuable learning is expected to come from the strategic evaluations of EPR planned for 2014.
8. EPRS has been indicated as a priority in the 2013 Management Plan. In alignment with MRD 5: Operational Efficiency, trust funds will support emergency preparedness and response, early warning and analysis, crisis management and applied technology for EPR.

THE WAY FORWARD

9. There is a clear rationale for WFP to maintain its focus on EPR Strengthening: Currently, PREP provides the platform for multiple mitigation measures to minimise the risk of failure on one or more large-scale emergency responses, as identified in the Corporate Risk Register (CRR). This corporate risk management will have to continue beyond PREP, through EPRS activities. Moreover, in the context of a competitive humanitarian forum and shrinking donor resources, it is imperative for WFP to maintain its edge as a leader in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. EPR Strengthening will ensure that WFP delivers as effectively as possible and can be fully accountable to its donors and beneficiaries. Finally, the increasingly complex and changing operational environment demands greater flexibility and innovation, if the organization is to respond adequately to beneficiaries needs.
10. While PREP will continue to ensure implementation of a number of EPRS activities in WFP until 2014, there is a need to ensure continuity beyond the PREP life-span if WFP is to capitalize on previous investments made.
11. The Emergencies Preparedness Division (ODE) will ensure that the organizational approach to EPRS will be firmly embedded in the new EPR Policy (to be issued in 2014), through the exploitation of a systematic and dynamic EPR knowledge management system.