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Operational matters – Projects approved by correspondence
For information

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Revision of Ethiopia protracted relief and recovery operation 200700 and budget increase

	Current	Increase	Revised
Duration	39 months (Apr 2015– Jun 2018)	6-month extension (Jul–Dec 2018)	45 months (April 2015– Dec 2018)
Beneficiaries	638 753	719 500	719 500
(USD)			
Total cost	493 559 949	60 604 684	554 164 633
Transfer	406 517 994	50 595 336	457 113 331
Implementation	10 147 375	1 423 738	11 571 113
Adjusted direct support costs	44 906 434	4 886 733	49 793 167
Subtotal	461 571 803	56 905 807	518 477 611
Indirect support costs (6.5 percent)	31 988 146	3 698 877	35 687 023

Gender and age marker* 2A

* <http://gender.manuals.wfp.org/en/gender-toolkit/gender-in-programming/gender-and-age-marker/>

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Decision

The Board approved by correspondence the revision of Ethiopia protracted relief and recovery operation 200700, "Food assistance for Eritrean, South Sudanese, Sudanese and Somali refugees", to, inter alia, extend its end date by six months, from 1 July to 31 December 2018, and approved a corresponding increase in the operation's budget in the amount of USD 60,604,684.

29 June 2018

Rationale

1. This revision of protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) 200700:
 - revises the original plan for the period from February to June 2018 and extends the PRRO duration by six months, from July to December 2018, in order to align WFP's project cycle in Ethiopia with the implementation of a new country strategic plan due to start in January 2019;
 - decreases the number of beneficiaries receiving a combination of food and cash-based transfers to 155,200;
 - increases the number of beneficiaries receiving food only to 544,300;
 - increases the number of beneficiaries of livelihood diversification activities by 25,000, 50 percent of whom will be refugees and 50 percent members of host communities;
 - increases the overall number of beneficiaries in 2018 by 88,247 – assuming the arrival of 44,500 additional refugees, including 35,000 from South Sudan as projected by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) – 87 percent of whom are women and children; and
 - increases the overall budget of the PRRO by USD 60.6 million.
2. Through PRRO 200700, WFP provides food assistance to approximately 655,000 refugees (of whom 45 percent are men and boys and 55 percent women and girls) hosted in 25 camps in Ethiopia. Assistance is provided through general food distributions, nutrition support to prevent and treat acute malnutrition, school meals for children attending primary school and preschool and support for refugees on arrival and during relocation. WFP also provides financial support to partners involved in livelihood and environmental activities in and around refugee camps.
3. In accordance with the WFP Strategic Plan (2017–2021), the PRRO objectives are to:
 - ensure that refugees have access to adequate nutritious food all year;
 - treat and prevent moderate acute malnutrition in children aged 6–59 months, pregnant and lactating women and girls and other vulnerable refugees with special nutritional needs;
 - stabilize the enrolment of refugee girls and boys in WFP-assisted schools; and
 - improve climate responsive livelihood opportunities for refugees and host communities.

Changes

4. According to a comprehensive household survey conducted in all refugee camps in December 2017, about 65 percent of refugees in camps have acceptable food consumption scores, with figures of 67 percent among households headed by men and 62 percent among those headed by women. The situation, however, is not the same in all camps: only 35 percent of households in camps in Gambella region have acceptable food consumption scores.
5. UNHCR, WFP, the Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) conducted a health and nutrition survey in the seven camps in Gambella region between April and June 2017. According to the results, malnutrition levels remain critical, with the prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) at 23.4 percent and a severe acute malnutrition rate of 6.3 percent; these rates are far higher than the "emergency" thresholds of 15 percent for GAM and 2 percent for severe acute malnutrition. The high prevalence of acute malnutrition can be attributed to many underlying causes including inadequate access to food; poor hygiene practices; limited access to potable water; poor childcare and feeding practices, especially regarding the introduction of appropriate complementary foods; and poor access to and utilization of health and nutrition services. The proportion of households where drinking water is stored in covered or narrow necked containers ranges from 26 to 71 percent. The use of unimproved or public toilet facilities ranges from 4 percent to 68 percent, while the proportion of households owning at least one mosquito net of any type ranges from 18 to 60 percent. The survey team emphasized the need to address the constraints and bottlenecks that hamper proper delivery of health and nutrition services, including for water, sanitation and hygiene, food security, primary health care, shelter, and livelihood support, especially in camps where new refugees continue to arrive. With acute malnutrition levels significantly above emergency thresholds, the need to continue the provision and scale up of holistic services remains a priority.
6. UNHCR, WFP, ARRA and UNICEF also conducted a health and nutrition survey in all refugee camps in Melkadida region in July 2017. The results indicated an improvement in the nutrition situation. GAM incidence (based on weight for height) was 16.9 percent in Burm camp, compared with 27.2 percent in 2016, and 12.7 percent in Hlwy, compared with 23.8 percent in 2016. The same trend was also observed in Kobe camp, where GAM declined from 22.1 percent in 2016 to 15.5 percent in 2017, Melkd camp (from 17.7 percent to 11.6 percent) and Bokol camp (from 21.2 percent to 13.8 percent).¹ Despite the overall improvement in GAM across the five camps, however, rates remain above the emergency threshold in Kobe and Burm camps. The survey team recommended improving the nutrition outreach programme, which includes the identification of malnutrition cases at the community and facility levels.
7. A nutrition survey conducted by WFP, UNHCR, ARRA and Action Against Hunger in five refugee camps in Assosa, Benishangul Region, in October 2017 revealed increases in GAM incidence compared with 2015 in Tongo (from 9.4 percent to 11.4 percent) and Tsore (from 7.0 percent to 7.8 percent) camps. A decrease was recorded in Bambasi camp (from 10.2 percent to 6.5 percent) while the rate in Sherkole remained stable at about 6.2 percent. Overall, the prevalence of GAM in the five camps remained almost the same as in 2015 (8.0 percent in 2017 compared with 8.2 percent in 2015). Continued nutrition support for the refugee population will contribute to decreased GAM in the camps.

¹ Data were collected from all the camps during approximately the same period.

8. A joint nutrition survey conducted by WFP, UNHCR and ARRA in Jijiga in December 2017 found GAM rates that were lower than the emergency threshold of 15 percent in the three refugee camps surveyed. Findings also suggest that GAM has decreased since 2016 in Awabre camp (from 6 percent to 5.4 percent), Kebri Beyah camp (from 8 percent to 4.4 percent) and Sheder camp (from 9 percent to 7.3 percent). The survey team recommended strengthening outreach activities and monitoring at the community and facility levels and improving the quality of measurements.
9. The United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention conducted a study in May 2017 in Gambella and Dollo Ado refugee camps. As one of its objectives, the study team focused on the nutrition screening data of newly arrived refugees, including their mid-upper-arm circumference (MUAC) and weight for height data, and compared them with data from standardized expanded nutrition surveys. The study revealed that 19.7 percent of children aged 6–23 months (both boys and girls) were identified as acutely malnourished on the basis of their weight for height measurements but not by their MUACs, for which the threshold for acute malnutrition is < 13.5 cm. The same applied to 23.6 percent of children aged 24–59 months (both boys and girls) for whom the MUAC threshold for acute malnutrition is < 14.5 cm. In Dollo Ado, 25.5 percent of children aged 6–23 months and 71.1 percent of those aged 24–59 months were detected as acutely malnourished by weight for height but not MUAC, using a threshold of < 13.5cm. Following the analysis, it was recommended that higher MUAC thresholds of 14.0 cm for children aged 6–23 months and 15 cm for children aged 24–59 months be used for screening in the Ethiopia refugee operation.
10. The results of a 2016 joint assessment mission conducted by WFP, UNHCR and ARRA indicated that refugees relied on general food rations for their daily sustenance both by consuming the rations and by selling portion of them to generate income. The assessment team recommended scaling up livelihood and income generation activities to enable refugees to earn additional income. The team also noted, however, that lack of access to agricultural and other income-generating opportunities had contributed to dependency on food assistance among refugees.

Purpose of the PRRO revision and corresponding budget increase

11. Under the PRRO revision, WFP will increase the planned number of beneficiaries of general food distribution from 631,253 to 699,500. The increase is based on the actual number of beneficiaries, which was already about 655,000 in January 2018, and the expected arrival of about 44,500 additional refugees in 2018, including 35,000 from South Sudan, as projected by UNHCR.
12. In 2017, the country office was unable to carry out its planned expansion of the use of cash-based transfers or a combination of cash-based and in-kind food transfers to an additional six refugee camps – Kule, Terkeidi and Jewii in Gambella, and Melkadida, Bokolmayo and Kobe in Dollo Ado. The Government of Ethiopia has expressed political and security concerns regarding the use of cash-based transfers in Gambella region and the Dollo zone. WFP and UNHCR will continue to advocate for a joint assessment of the security situation. In the meantime, the number of beneficiaries to be assisted with food only will increase to 544,300, while the number receiving a combination of in-kind food and cash-based transfers will be reduced to 155,200 in 2018. These numbers will be revised based on the findings of the security assessment and other gender- and protection-sensitive assessments examining the appropriateness of cash-based transfers.
13. The revised budget covers the needs of an increased number of beneficiaries in the blanket supplementary feeding programme, which will rise from 107,313 to 110,500 as a result of the increased number of households in the camps and new births. The number of planned beneficiaries receiving treatment for moderate acute malnutrition will increase from

19,100 to 24,200, reflecting the anticipated increase in coverage resulting from the use of a higher MUAC threshold for acute malnutrition and the increased number of schoolchildren benefiting from the school meals programme, which has been expanded to an additional four large camps in Gambella region while continuing to serve children in Dollo Ado and Shire camps in Tigray.

14. A livelihood assessment, which was commissioned by WFP and conducted by Technical Assistance to Non-Governmental Organizations (TANGO) in October 2017 in refugee camps of the Tigray, Afar and Somali (Jijiga) regions, suggests that lack of access to land for cultivation and livestock and lack of access to markets severely constrain refugees' opportunities to enhance their livelihoods. The survey findings reveal that refugee camps have been established in isolated areas that are distant from large towns or markets, which limits the availability of income earning opportunities. The situation is likely to improve, however, as the Government has committed to guaranteeing refugees access to physical, political, social and economic capital as part of the Comprehensive Refugees Response Framework. In close cooperation with UNHCR and ARRA, WFP therefore plans to scale up its livelihood diversification activities for both refugees and host communities. In 2018, WFP will support an additional 5,000 households in Dollo zone – 2,500 in refugee camps and 2,500 in host communities – through food assistance for assets activities using cash-based transfers and capacity development and augmentation modalities. The households are included in the 100,000 planned beneficiaries (women and men) being supported by a multi-year contribution from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Activities will include the provision of tools, improved seeds and skills to enable refugees to cultivate vegetable gardens, animal fattening, leather processing, cattle fattening, and social and behaviour change communication on nutrition, including infant and young child feeding practices.
15. The food commodities used, daily rations and number of feeding days will remain the same. Refugees will continue to receive cereals, pulses, vegetable oil and iodized salt in general food distributions, ready-to-use supplementary food and SuperCereal Plus as nutrition support, and SuperCereal and sugar through the school meals programme.
16. Given the possibility that funding constraints will disrupt the distribution of food assistance, WFP, UNHCR and ARRA will explore how best to prioritize beneficiaries and activities in order to ensure that the most vulnerable groups continue to receive full rations (including cash-based transfers) in the event of reduced food assistance. Essential services such as nutrition activities and school meals will not be affected by interruptions in food pipelines. In collaboration with UNHCR and ARRA, WFP will use a vulnerability assessment to increase understanding of beneficiaries' dependence on food assistance in the 23 refugee camps in Ethiopia in order to inform any necessary prioritization or targeting exercises.

TABLE 1: BENEFICIARIES BY ACTIVITY										
Activity	Beneficiary category	Current (April 2015–June 2018)			Increase/decrease (July–December 2018)			Revised (April 2015–December 2018)		
		Boys and men	Girls and women	Total	Boys and men	Girls and women	Total	Boys and men	Girls and women	Total
General food distribution	Transitory acute food insecurity	318 637	312 616	631 253	351 760	347 740	699 500	351 760	347 740	699 500
Food only		111 864	109 751	221 615	272 608	271 692	544 300	272 608	271 692	544 300
Cash-based transfers and food		206 773	202 865	409 637	79 152	76 048	155 200	206 773	202 865	409 637*
Targeted supplementary feeding	Moderately malnourished children under 5 and pregnant and lactating women and girls	7 627	11 473	19 100	7 986	16 214	24 200	7 986	16 214	24 200
Children aged 6–59 months		7 627	7 373	15 000	7 986	12 014	20 000	7 986	12 014	20 000
Pregnant and lactating women and girls		0	4 100	4 100	0	4 200	4 200	0	4 200	4 200
Blanket supplementary feeding	Nutrition-insecure	38 515	68 798	107 313	39 659	70 841	110 500	39 659	70 841	110 500
Children aged 6–23 months		19 257	18 618	37 875	19 829	19 171	39 000	19 829	19 171	39 000
Children aged 24–59 months		19 257	18 618	37 875	19 829	19 171	39 000	19 829	19 171	39 000
Pregnant and lactating women and girls		0	31 563	31 563	0	32 500	32 500	0	32 500	32 500
School meals	Schoolchildren	55 250	55 250	110 500	60 000	60 000	120 000	60 000	60 000	120 000
Livelihood diversification activities	Refugees and host communities**	6 000	9 000	15 000	18 250	21 750	40 000	18 250	21 750	40 000
Total (excluding overlaps)		321 637	317 116	638 753	360 885	358 615	719 500	360 885	358 615	719 500

* This is the highest number of beneficiaries planned to be reached with a combination of cash-based transfers and food in 2018.

** These numbers exclude the 50 percent of beneficiaries who are refugees and are already counted in the general distribution numbers. They also exclude overlaps with nutrition and school meal beneficiaries.

TABLE 2: FOOD AND CASH-BASED TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS BY ACTIVITY				
Activity	Food or cash-based transfers	Food (mt) or cash-based transfers (USD)		
		Current	Increase/decrease	Revised total
General food distribution	Food	478 756	79 274	558 030
	Cash-based transfers	23 031 012	-31 635	22 999 377
Targeted supplementary feeding: children aged 6–59 months	Food	4 169	373	4 542
Targeted supplementary feeding: pregnant and lactating women and girls	Food	1 484	187	1 671
Blanket supplementary feeding: children aged 6–23 months	Food	14 351	1 453	15 804
Blanket supplementary feeding: children aged 24–59 months	Food	12 606	1 453	14 059
Blanket supplementary feeding: pregnant and lactating women and girls	Food	3 271	1 483	4 754
School meals	Food	11 490	1 774	13 264
New arrivals	Food	113	39	152
Livelihood diversification	Capacity development and augmentation (USD)	0	2 059 540	2 059 540
Total		526 240	86 036	612 276

Hazard/risk assessment and preparedness planning

17. UNHCR is expecting about 35,000 new refugees to arrive from South Sudan in 2018. This estimate has been factored into this revision. If many more refugees arrive than anticipated, another revision may be needed to cover the additional needs. In addition, as parts of Ethiopia are experiencing the third consecutive year of drought, including in some regions hosting refugees, reduced food supplies in local markets may make the planned use of cash-based transfers unsuitable, in which case WFP would switch to in-kind food assistance.
18. Underfunding of refugee operations in Ethiopia over the last three years has resulted in ration cuts of 20 to 30 percent. With needs remaining high, funding levels will need to be sustained and, where feasible, increased. Further food ration cuts could have negative consequences on food and nutrition security and eventually exacerbate protection concerns, including the risk of sexual and gender-based violence against women and children.

ANNEX I-A

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN			
	Quantity (<i>mt</i>)	Value (<i>USD</i>)	Value (<i>USD</i>)
Food			
Cereals	59 781	13 369 805	
Pulses	6 498	3 016 634	
Oil and fats	4 237	4 524 853	
Mixed and blended food	12 561	8 594 654	
Others	2 959	1 193 773	
Total food	86 036	30 699 719	
External transport		6 022 299	
Landside transport, storage and handling		11 845 413	
Other direct operational costs – food		1 405 003	
Food and related costs¹			49 972 434
Cash-based transfers		-31 635	
Related costs		18 735	
Cash-based transfers and related costs			-12 901
Capacity development and augmentation			2 059 540
Direct operational costs			52 019 073
Direct support costs (see Annex I-B) ²			4 886 733
Total direct project costs			56 905 807
Indirect support costs (6.5 percent) ³			3 698 877
Total WFP costs			60 604 684

¹ This is a notional food basket for budgeting and approval. The contents may vary.

² Indicative figure for information purposes. The direct support cost allotment is reviewed annually.

³ The indirect support cost rate may be amended by the Board during the project.

ANNEX I-B

DIRECT SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS (USD)	
WFP staff and staff-related	
Professional staff	1 414 814
General service staff	319 431
Subtotal	1 734 245
Recurring and other	677 707
Capital equipment	321 375
Security	668 371
Travel and transportation	1 315 035
Assessments, evaluations and monitoring¹	170 000
Total direct support costs	4 886 733

¹ This figure reflects estimated costs when these activities are performed by third parties.

Acronyms used in the document

ARRA Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs

GAM global acute malnutrition

MUAC mid-upper-arm circumference

PRRO protracted relief and recovery operation

UNHCR Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund