



**World Food
Programme**

**Executive Board
Second Regular Session**

Rome, 9–13 November 2015

EVALUATION REPORTS

Agenda item 6

For consideration

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Distribution: GENERAL
WFP/EB.2/2015/6-B
25 September 2015
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SYNTHESIS REPORT OF THE EVALUATIONS OF WFP'S EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Executive Board documents are available on WFP's Website (<http://executiveboard.wfp.org>).

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 focal point indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Natural and human-induced disasters cause enormous suffering and damage worldwide, and are a leading cause of hunger and food insecurity. WFP plays a central role in the international humanitarian assistance system. WFP's emergency preparedness and response activities amounted to USD 3.65 billion – or 86 percent of WFP's programme expenditures – in 2014, directly assisting 70 percent of its total beneficiaries. WFP also leads or co-leads three global clusters: logistics, food security and emergency telecommunications. Both the scale of needs and the complexity of emergencies have increased, stretching the capacities of donors and humanitarian organizations.

Alongside recent measures to improve global emergency response, WFP introduced a series of strategic changes and a major organizational redesign that had implications for its emergency preparedness and response. The Office of Evaluation commissioned a series of evaluations that examined several related elements of WFP's involvement in the global humanitarian reforms and its internal Emergency Preparedness and Response strengthening programme. This report synthesizes the findings, conclusions and recommendations from four strategic evaluations related to emergency preparedness and response, supported by cross-analysis of selected operation evaluations to identify recurring issues and make recommendations for future actions.¹

WFP's emergency preparedness and response activities were found to be highly relevant and contributed to positive results at the country level. Investments in clusters were found to be worthwhile. Reform efforts focusing on Level 3 emergencies improved WFP's response to these emergencies. Improved advance financing was critical in enabling WFP to respond early and scale up quickly. Some improvements were observed in information management, and WFP developed a more coherent, cross-organizational approach to emergency preparedness and response. Some progress was made in national capacity development and preparedness.

Areas requiring further attention included human resources, which remained a major concern despite some improvements. Relationships with and capacities of partners were also found to require more investment. Inconsistencies occurred in national capacity development and preparedness initiatives. WFP did not have adequate capacity for rapid implementation of cash and voucher programmes in emergencies. The focus on Level 3 emergencies had unforeseen negative consequences for lower-level emergencies. Global system demands were seen as

¹ Annexes are available on the Office of Evaluation website under the Strategic Evaluations area of work: <http://www.wfp.org/evaluation>

excessive, limiting country and regional offices' ownership of global reform processes. WFP's expressed commitment to cross-cutting issues, including gender and accountability to affected populations, was found to have little influence on operations, and there were gaps in monitoring, analysis and knowledge management.

Building on the component evaluations and reported progress in several areas, this report offers four strategy recommendations covering human resources, knowledge management, investment in preparedness and involvement in the global humanitarian reform process. Addressing them requires inter-departmental coordination by WFP's Executive Management Group.

DRAFT DECISION*

The Board takes note of “Synthesis Report of the Evaluations of WFP's Emergency Preparedness and Response” (WFP/EB.2/2015/6-B) and the management response in WFP/EB.2/2015/6-B/Add.1, and encourages further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

INTRODUCTION

Context

1. In 2005, a range of measures was introduced to improve global emergency response, including the cluster approach and pooled funds. In 2010, three large-scale emergencies (the Haiti earthquake, Pakistan floods and Sahel drought) stretched the system's response capability. In 2011, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) adopted the Transformative Agenda to strengthen leadership, coordination and accountability in major humanitarian emergencies.
2. WFP plays a lead role in the international humanitarian assistance system. WFP's emergency preparedness and response (EPR) activities amounted to USD 3.65 billion – 86 percent – of WFP's programme expenditures in 2014, directly assisting 70 percent of its beneficiaries. WFP also leads or co-leads three global clusters: logistics, food security and emergency telecommunications. In 2008, WFP initiated a series of strategic changes – including the shift from food aid to food assistance – which were consolidated in a major organizational redesign in 2012/13. Within this framework, EPR is central to WFP's Strategic Objective 1 – Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies – and Strategic Objective 2 – Support or restore food security and nutrition and establish or rebuild livelihoods in fragile settings and following emergencies. The Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme (PREP) launched in 2011 aimed to enhance WFP's capability to respond to large-scale emergencies.
3. In the meantime, both the scale of needs and the complexity of emergencies have increased, further stretching the capacities of donors and humanitarian organizations. In 2014, the humanitarian system, which includes an increasing number of non-traditional humanitarian actors,² responded to five system-wide Level 3 (L3) crises and WFP declared its Cameroon and Ebola responses as additional L3 crises. Four of the L3 emergencies were protracted armed conflicts, which accounted for over 70 percent of the record-setting USD 16.4 billion common appeal for 2015.³ WFP's own operational requirements for 2015 were projected to be USD 7.4 billion.⁴ Access in countries such as Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic is severely limited and humanitarian workers are increasingly exposed to risks.⁵ The appointment of the new United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator in June 2015, and the first World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 will likely create new momentum to reform the global humanitarian system – a process in which WFP will have a prominent role.

² Non-traditional actors include the private sector, diaspora communities and governments of countries that did not provide substantial humanitarian funding in the past. For example, humanitarian assistance from governments in the Middle East has increased by 120 percent since 2013; assistance from all government and European Union donors has increased by 24 percent. Development Initiatives. 2015. *Global Humanitarian Assistance Report*. See: <http://www.globalhumanitarianassistance.org>

³ Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. 2015. *Global Humanitarian Overview*. Geneva.

⁴ According to “Key Extracts of the Draft Management Plan (2015–2017)” of August 2015 WFP anticipates USD 4.4 billion in revenue for 2015, similar to actual funding levels in 2013 and 2014.

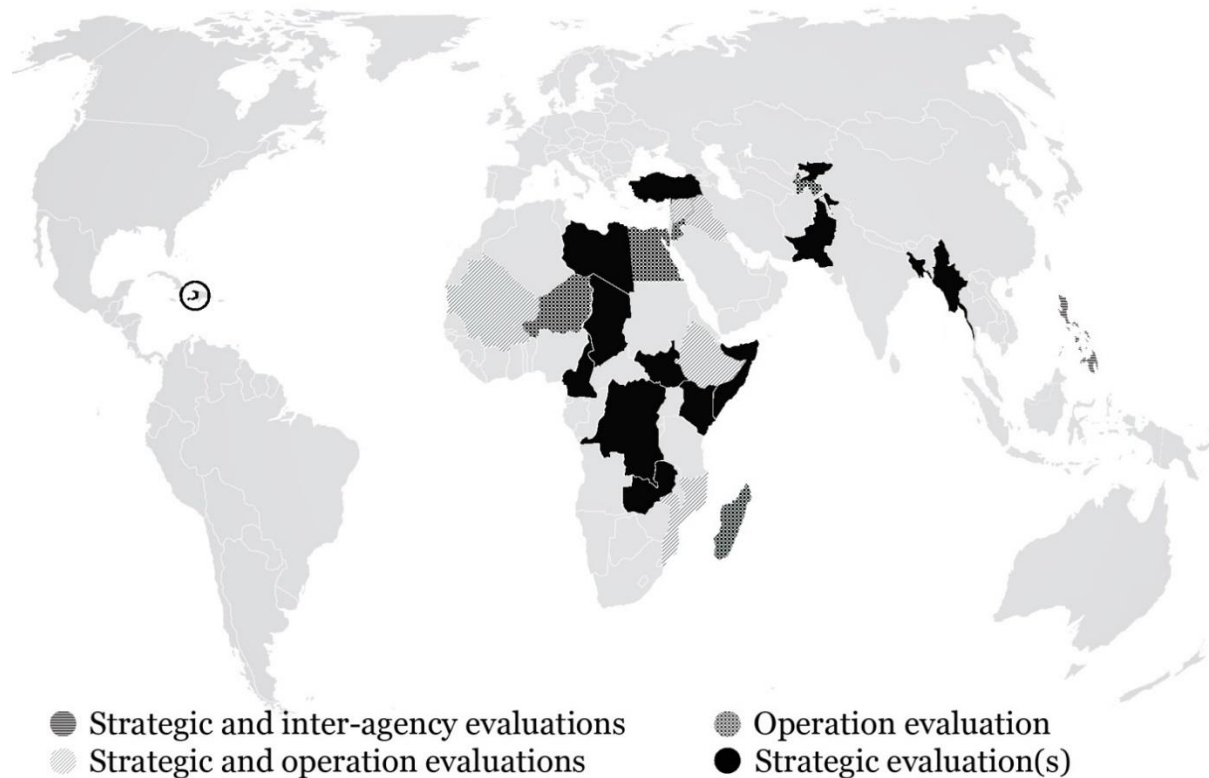
⁵ In 2013, a record 474 aid workers were attacked. Of these, 155 were killed, 178 were injured and 141 were kidnapped. Source: Humanitarian Outcomes. 2015. The Aid Worker Security Database. Major attacks on aid workers: Summary statistics (2003–2013).

<https://aidworkersecurity.org/incidents/report/summary>

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND METHODS

4. WFP's Office of Evaluation commissioned a series of evaluations to contribute to organizational effectiveness and strategic direction in EPR. While the series did not assess the totality of WFP's EPR activities, it addressed four important dimensions:
 - the global logistics cluster (2012);
 - the global food security cluster (2014);
 - WFP's use of pooled funds for humanitarian preparedness and response (2015); and
 - Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme (2015).
5. This report synthesizes the findings, conclusions and recommendations from these strategic evaluations to identify recurring issues and make recommendations for future direction. Findings from the systematic review of the constituent strategic evaluation reports were cross-referenced against a further seven WFP evaluations of individual operations with strong EPR components, and the inter-agency evaluation of the Typhoon Haiyan humanitarian response. The operation evaluations covered natural disasters and complex emergencies, in response and recovery phases, that together accounted for almost one quarter of WFP's EPR expenditures in 2014.⁶
6. The geographic coverage of the strategic evaluation country cases and country-level evaluations is shown in Figure 1. Field visits during some of the strategic evaluations were constrained by insecurity and efforts to reduce burdening ongoing operations.

Figure 1: Geographic coverage of evaluations covered in this report



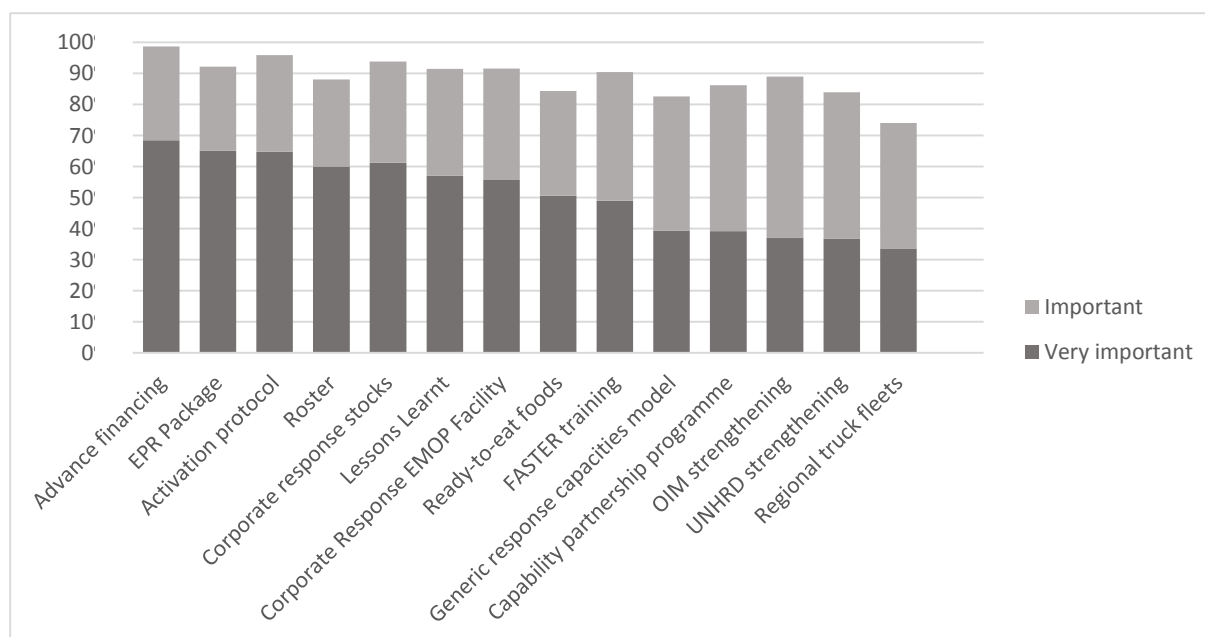
⁶ A list of evaluations and further details are available in the annexes on the website.

7. Findings were included when corroborated by at least one other strategic evaluation and/or the majority of operation evaluations. Progress in response to the original strategic evaluation recommendations was reviewed on the basis of self-reporting by units, validated where possible by document analysis.⁷ Preliminary recommendations were discussed with stakeholders in June 2015.

FINDINGS

8. **Finding 1:** WFP's EPR strengthening and coordination activities were highly relevant and contributed to positive results at the country level, despite inconsistent resourcing.
9. WFP strengthened its position in the evolving humanitarian system by taking on responsibilities commensurate to its size and experience. EPR investments were of central importance to WFP and each area evaluated was relevant, making a positive contribution to emergency response.
10. PREP was timely, highly relevant and closely aligned with the Transformative Agenda. Survey responses found that it made important achievements in the areas of personnel, finance and financial risk management, accountability, food and non-food stocks, and external partners (Figure 2). PREP activities contributed to increasing the speed and coverage of WFP's emergency response, and enhanced the consistency of its processes and approaches. Details relating to other PREP activities – including less successful ones – are included below.

Figure 2: Relevance of PREP activities (%)



EMOP: emergency operation; FASTER: Functional and Support Training for Emergency Response; OIM: Operational Information Management; UNHRD: United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot

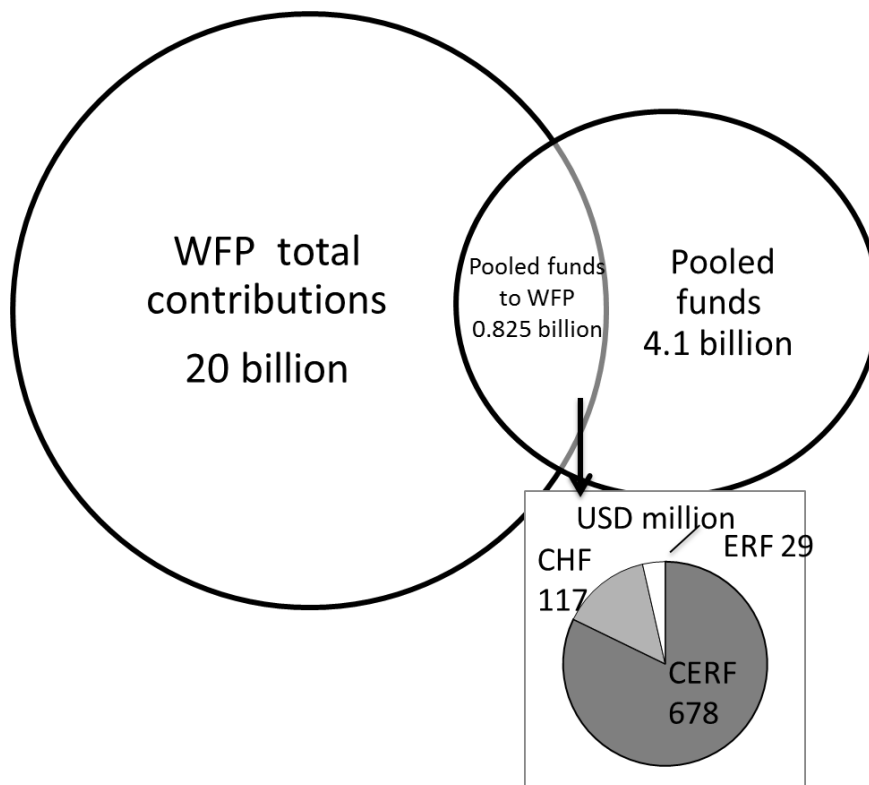
Source: PREP evaluation responses to survey; "don't know" answers not included.

11. WFP also capitalized on the attributes of pooled funds to address specific funding requirements. Pooled funds, which account for approximately 4 percent of WFP's donor contributions (Figure 3), made an important strategic contribution to its response through

⁷ See annexes on the website.

their relative timeliness, predictability and additionality. Through their peer-review mechanisms,⁸ pooled funds also reduced overlaps, facilitated discussions on cost efficiency and in some cases contributed to filling response gaps.

Figure 3: Pooled fund contributions to WFP (2009–2013) (USD)



CERF: Central Emergency Response Fund; CHF: Common Humanitarian Fund;
ERF: Emergency Response Fund

Source: Pooled funds evaluation. Totals may not add up because of rounding.

12. All four strategic evaluations concluded that coordination mechanisms provide important benefits. Logistics cluster activities were found to be highly relevant and broadly effective. They resulted in, among other things, increased capacity to raise funds, more timely operations, cost savings and improved coverage. Cluster participants also benefited from stronger contingency planning capacities, enhanced logistics knowledge and improved relationships with national and local authorities. Food security coordination mechanisms made consistently positive contributions by facilitating networking, building trust among participants, reducing duplications (which increases the coverage of assistance), enhancing reporting and, in some cases, setting and disseminating standards.
13. A common challenge for the strategic activities examined was inconsistent resourcing. For example, 96 percent of PREP funding was raised from extra-budgetary sources. At the end of the three-and-a-half year initiative there were concerns about the sustainability of several important ongoing and uncompleted PREP activities – whether and how they were to be completed and mainstreamed.

⁸ WFP pooled fund applications are peer reviewed and screened by various coordination structures, including clusters, humanitarian country teams and Humanitarian Coordinators.

14. Similarly, funding for coordination was inconsistent and unpredictable.⁹ The global logistics cluster benefited from WFP's established Global Support Cell and special account, which enhanced the timeliness of the initial response. Food security coordination, by contrast, lacked a dedicated funding mechanism. While most respondents saw investments in food security coordination as worthwhile, resources for coordination at the country level were uneven, and affected the effectiveness of clusters. The pooled funds evaluation confirmed these findings and noted that WFP does not consistently allocate sufficient resources for cluster leadership at the country level. The possibility of using pooled funds was found to have limited comparative advantage in financing clusters and played a supplementary role at best.
15. **Finding 2:** Despite improvements, human resources was still a major concern.
16. The strategic evaluations confirmed that experienced and pragmatic staff are one of WFP's core assets. For example, WFP's cadre of experienced logistics staff was a critical enabling factor in the logistics cluster effectiveness. Similarly, dynamic leadership and staff skills were critical to PREP's success.
17. Several PREP initiatives addressed human resources challenges. For example, the emergency response roster moderately improved the speed of deployment and increased the pool of staff for potential deployment, especially among national staff. However, plans for creating a leadership roster and standing capacity to bridge systemic staffing gaps, and for taking recommended staff health and wellness measures, were not implemented.
18. Staff training was found by all four strategic evaluations to be of high quality, but it was not always well targeted, sufficiently inclusive or linked to deployments. The PREP evaluation found widespread perceptions of insufficient leadership in EPR-related personnel issues, and strong concerns about the sustainability of PREP initiatives on personnel.
19. Global clusters led or co-led by WFP deploy their own staff from support teams as surge capacity to country teams; this has increased the availability of qualified staff for country-level coordination tasks. However, global clusters did not have sufficient capacity to address all important staffing gaps and their focus on deployments and country-level support hindered their ability to perform other core tasks at the global level.
20. Despite these efforts, human resources remains a major concern. The broad range of WFP management and staff consulted for the PREP evaluation identified the need to improve staff capacity, deployment and well-being as the highest EPR priority for the future. Continuing areas of concern include: high turnover rates of qualified staff; inadequate capacity to fill senior and expert roles; difficult living and working conditions in emergencies; gaps in the availability of qualified staff for specific technical profiles; and an inability to always deploy staff quickly in emergencies. These have a negative impact on the management and implementation of emergency operations.
21. **Finding 3:** Investments in clusters were worthwhile; however WFP needed to further improve relations with – and capacities of – non-governmental partners.
22. All strategic evaluations found that despite the importance of non-governmental cooperating partners for WFP's strategic and operational success, the quality of relationships varied widely and was heavily dependent on the attitudes of Country Directors. Common problems such as delays in signing agreements, insufficient consultation and gaps in partner capacities were critical bottlenecks for WFP's response. Despite this, PREP activities aimed

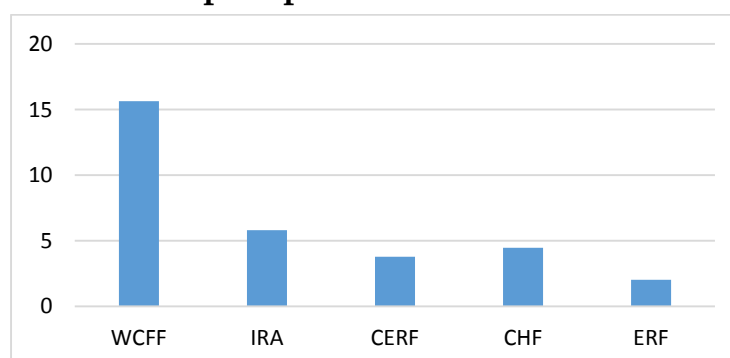
⁹ The funding requirements of global clusters correspond to 0.06 percent of the sectoral costs of food security and 0.16 percent of logistics costs.

- at improving relationships with – and the capacities of – cooperating partners were not proportionate to the importance of this issue.
23. Clusters were found to have built trust and improved relationships with partners, as well as providing much-appreciated common services. In Bangladesh and Mali for example, lead agencies strongly supported the food security cluster and aligned their activities with cluster deliberations. Nevertheless, there was scope for improvement in ensuring that clusters systematically involve participants as equal partners.
 24. Operation evaluations confirmed the variability in approaches to partners. In Ethiopia, WFP and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) coordinated and shared knowledge effectively, allowing more regions to be targeted without overlap. However, NGOs in Jordan, Lebanon and the Philippines reported that relationships with WFP and other United Nations entities were purely contractual and not true partnerships.
 25. The pooled funds evaluation found that these funds did not lead to a significant change in WFP's relationships with partners. There was scope to improve the timeliness of pooled funds disbursement to cooperating partners, while observing similar problems with other funding sources. Similar delays were also noted in the Mozambique and Tajikistan operation evaluations.
 26. Non-governmental partners' lack of capacity limited WFP's ability to implement projects in several countries. For example, the cash-based transfer programme in Iraq was delayed for over a month owing in large part to the lack of partner capacity. In Madagascar, NGO partners could not provide consistent coverage in areas of need. The PREP evaluation reported that in South Sudan, the lack of capable partners necessitated that WFP implement its programme directly, amid concerns that the speed and scale of response by the humanitarian system as a whole was not adequate to fulfil needs.
 27. **Finding 4:** National capacity development and preparedness initiatives made progress, but were not adequate and lacked consistency.
 28. WFP made progress in developing the capacities of government agencies, particularly in countries enduring frequent natural shocks. PREP contributed to cultivating a corporate capacity-development approach with the roll-out of a framework for national disaster management agencies, which proved most useful in country offices with less experience in capacity development. The logistics clusters helped develop the capacities of national disaster management agencies in Haiti, Mozambique, Pakistan and several Pacific Island countries to improve warehousing and contingency planning. The food security cluster seconded coordination staff to national institutions in Kenya and engaged national staff in coordination teams, enabling long-term benefits.
 29. Overall, however, the evaluations found that national capacity development and preparedness did not receive sufficient emphasis. Only 11 percent of PREP's funding was allocated to strengthening the capacities of national authorities. Capacity development and national preparedness were not regular components of the reviewed food security coordination mechanisms, and the global logistics cluster was found to be more focused on operational response than preparedness. Pooled funds supported life-saving goals and common services but were found to have little comparative advantage in financing preparedness and resilience-building activities.
 30. The evaluations also found that WFP's engagement in capacity development was not sufficiently coherent or strategic. Both cluster evaluations indicated that this related to the clusters' unclear role in preparedness and capacity development, despite the availability of some inter-agency guidance, and a lack of appropriate transition and exit strategies. For

example, the logistics cluster was found to lack a strategy for building the preparedness capacity of national and local authorities. The food security cluster did implement highly lauded preparedness activities in one country, but this was an exception. Operation evaluations found improved national capacity for contingency planning and food management in Ethiopia, Mozambique and Tajikistan, but there were no multi-year capacity development plans in place to ensure sustainability.

31. **Finding 5:** WFP did not have adequate capacity for rapid implementation of cash and voucher programmes in emergencies.
32. During the last five years, WFP underwent a major shift in its core modality with cash and voucher programming, rising from 1 percent of beneficiaries in 2009 to 10 percent – over USD 500 million – in 2013.
33. However, the PREP evaluation found significant room for improvement in supporting cash and voucher programming in emergencies. This finding was validated by country-level evaluations. The PREP evaluation noted constraints in human resources, the lengthy process of finalizing contracts with partners and a lack of rapid market assessments. Evaluations in Ethiopia, Mali and Tajikistan corroborated these findings. The evaluation of the Syrian regional response indicated that the decision to use vouchers instead of cash was not supported by sufficient analysis.
34. **Finding 6:** Improved advance financing was crucial for enabling WFP to respond early and scale up quickly.
35. WFP introduced two advance financing mechanisms: the Immediate Response Account (IRA) in 1991 and the Working Capital Financing Facility in 2004, which enabled it to respond and scale up quickly. PREP further enhanced these mechanisms. The PREP and logistics cluster evaluations confirmed that advance financing mechanisms were central to timely initial response and scale-up. The pooled funds evaluation noted that internal advances were flexibly applied to support all aspects of WFP's operations and that many country offices relied on this financing in the initial phases of emergencies. On average, advance financing provided more than three times as much as pooled fund grants per relevant operation (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Average total value of pooled fund grants and internal advances per operation (2009–2013) (USD million)



WCF: Working Capital Financing Facility

Source: Pooled funds evaluation

36. Under PREP, advance financing ceilings were nearly doubled between 2012 and 2014, which significantly improved fund availability. Delegations of authority to draw on the IRA were also increased significantly. Greater flexibility in allowing predicted funding – in addition to pledged donations – to be accepted as collateral increased the speed at which field offices were able to access funds.
37. WFP’s advance financing capacity was also increased by pooled funds. Often used as collateral for or repayment of internal advance financing, the CERF enabled rapid start and scale-up of WFP operations and facilitated directed multilateral contributions.
38. **Finding 7:** The focus on L3 emergencies improved WFP’s response to corporate emergencies, but had unintended negative consequences for lower-level emergencies.¹⁰
39. The PREP evaluation found positive effects on WFP’s response to large-scale, sudden-onset emergencies. Transparency improved as a result of enhanced management of operational information and the establishment of strategic and operational task forces – although the division of responsibilities between these was unclear. The cluster evaluations found that in L3 emergencies, coordination capacities were stronger at the national and sub-national hub levels, with more dedicated cluster coordinators and information managers. The pooled funds evaluation noted that contributions from the CERF became more predictable in L3 emergencies.
40. The increased focus on L3s, however, meant that less attention, staff and funding were available for the chronic, underfunded and lower-level emergencies that constitute the majority of WFP’s emergency responses.¹¹ Redeployments to L3s left staffing gaps in L2 emergencies in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, Somalia and Yemen, among others. PREP evaluation respondents were also concerned about negative effects on ability to raise internal and external resources for non-L3 emergencies.
41. The pooled funds evaluation found inconsistencies in WFP’s definition of an under-funded crisis, ranging from situations where funding was uneven or slow to “forgotten” crises in which donors provided minimal support. This hinders the effective use of the CERF under-funded grant window and suggests that more systematic direction is needed.
42. **Finding 8:** Global system demands were seen as excessive, limiting the commitment of country offices and regional bureaux to reform processes.
43. PREP, described by WFP as its primary vehicle for implementing the Transformative Agenda, was found to have fostered a more coherent, cross-organizational approach to EPR. The associated strategies and information processes satisfied demands from Headquarters, donors and international humanitarian partners, but they required significant resources and their relevance to operations was questioned at the country level.
44. The evaluations found that system-wide processes at the country level such as strategy formulation and response planning by clusters and humanitarian country teams generated coherence, trust and ownership, but were highly resource-intensive. According to the food security cluster evaluation, global system information and process requirements crowded out other activities more directly relevant to operations, such as coordinated needs assessments,

¹⁰ WFP’s Emergency Response Activation Protocol (2012) defined WFP’s emergency classification as: L1 – manageable with country-level emergency response capabilities; L2 – requires augmentation of country-level response capacity with regional capacity; and L3 – requires mobilization of WFP’s global response capabilities (“corporate level”) in addition to regional and country capacities.

¹¹ In 2014, 54 percent of WFP’s emergency funding related to non-L3 emergencies, despite the record seven L3 emergencies, with direct costs totaling USD 1.94 billion. See: <http://fts.unocha.org/>

management of coverage gaps, and joint monitoring and learning. The pooled funds evaluation confirmed that such funds increased WFP's engagement in coordinated planning, but that this rarely resulted in innovative or integrated programmes. The Syrian regional response evaluation found that the inter-agency L3 protocols were largely appropriate for that response after being adapted to the context.

45. Buy-in of country and regional offices to system-wide and internal WFP reform processes was limited or inconsistent. For example, the pooled funds evaluation found that WFP's corporate commitment to humanitarian reforms was not always reflected at the field level. The commitment and capacity of field offices to support food security coordination varied widely.
46. The cluster evaluations emphasized the need for greater stakeholder inclusion in clusters to deliver effectively, reduce duplication and improve coverage. However, these evaluations reported a lack of participation by local and non-traditional actors – and in the case of logistics, international NGOs as well. In the pooled funds evaluation, WFP country offices reported that the costs of their participation in coordination structures were substantial. Logistics cluster members reported that their participation was only worth the cost when meetings were well facilitated, promoted the sharing of important operational information and addressed logistics bottlenecks.
47. **Finding 9:** WFP's formal commitment to cross-cutting issues had little influence on operations.
48. Despite their prominence in the Transformative Agenda and WFP's clear commitment, the cross-cutting issues of gender, protection and accountability to affected populations were found to have been addressed only formally and to a limited degree. The IASC gender marker, pooled fund guidelines and a growing number of gender focal points in clusters increased the formal integration of gender considerations, but these had little influence on operations. For example, pooled funds helped to consolidate the use of the IASC gender marker, but this had little influence on WFP programmes. Food security coordination mechanisms paid limited attention to cross-cutting issues, including gender. PREP had some activities concerning gender, but none on accountability to affected populations. The initiative also paid insufficient attention to the quality and appropriateness of assistance. Operation evaluations found that while gender-disaggregated data was collected in some countries such as the Syrian Arab Republic and Tajikistan, there was limited further analysis or integration into programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and risk analysis.
49. **Finding 10:** There were improvements in operational information management, but gaps remained in monitoring, analysis and knowledge management.
50. Both the food security cluster and the logistics cluster evaluations found that the clusters played a positive role in information management. The PREP evaluation noted that investments in operational information management resulted in more timely, consistent and user-friendly products for WFP management and external audiences. However, the information products were not useful in field-level decision-making. There were also concerns about the perceived high level of investment in information for high-level management compared with other operational priorities.
51. The PREP evaluation also found inconsistent links between operational information and situation monitoring data, needs assessment data and vulnerability analysis. Similarly, many country evaluations found that shortcomings in WFP's monitoring and analysis undermined evidence-based decision-making despite investments in this area, for example in the Syrian regional and Haiyan responses.

52. Food security coordination mechanisms occasionally provided valuable services by coordinating needs assessments and analysis. However, there was no evidence that coordination mechanisms strengthened members' monitoring efforts, and only a few systematic attempts were made by the logistics cluster to facilitate shared learning. In both logistics cluster operations and projects supported by pooled funds, WFP faced challenges in providing required activity-based reporting. In addition, inconsistencies in monitoring and data consolidation were found.
53. These findings point to broader challenges with regard to knowledge management and learning at WFP. They were specifically noted in the PREP evaluation, which found that PREP's efforts to institutionalize lessons learned exercises for L3 emergencies were limited by the absence of an effective WFP-wide knowledge management system.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

54. Emergency preparedness and response is at the core of WFP's mandate and operations, and WFP is a central player in the global humanitarian system. The series of strategic evaluations on EPR confirms that WFP has made important and relevant investments in this area, which have enabled a more effective and predictable response – especially to large-scale, sudden-onset emergencies – and have helped to implement system-wide reforms.
55. However, WFP's ability to effectively implement EPR-related reforms continues to be constrained. Field-level managers and staff often lack the capacity to implement all elements of “corporate priorities” and require better guidance to establish priorities. WFP's focus on immediate response inhibits adoption of the longer-term view needed to better balance investments in preparedness, response and capacity development. In addition, many of WFP's change-management processes do not involve sufficient consultation or participation of field-based staff and partners.
56. All strategic evaluations recommended that WFP continue to further implement ongoing reforms. Since the evaluations, WFP has reported progress in implementing many of the 25 recommendations made in the 4 strategic evaluations.¹² Highlights include:
- a new trust fund for EPR enhancement planned to be set up in 2016;
 - financing approved for roll-out of a new leadership programme not specific to emergencies and the Wellness Programme Fund established;
 - the long-term training module “Learning Journey” being rolled-out, with improved training and a roster for food security cluster coordinators implemented;
 - corporate partnership strategy finalized, a concept note on fast-track field-level agreements with non-government partners written and a training module on partnerships developed;
 - additional financing for national capacity development approved;
 - a comprehensive programme with national disaster management authorities in Latin America and the Caribbean implemented by the Panama regional bureau;

¹² Recommendations made in the strategic evaluations and progress reported to the evaluation team since these evaluations are available in the full evaluation report.

- financing approved for a cash-based transfer platform and a tender launched to pre-select suppliers, along with increased capacity development support for cash-based transfer programming, development of new templates to facilitate faster contracting and roll-out of cash-based transfer training;
- IRA further increased, and grant and loan components clarified;
- L3 tools such as the Corporate Emergency Operation Facility applied to lower-level emergencies, such as in Nepal;
- protection and gender policies developed, gender standby capacity created and a checklist on integrating accountability to affected populations into the programme cycle created by the global food security cluster;
- training in operational information management and performance reporting for over 250 staff implemented and food security data included in Operational Information Management Unit reports; and
- funding for enhanced monitoring and reporting approved, and corporate responsibility for knowledge management assigned.

57. Effort and investment in EPR will need to be sustained over the coming years. Humanitarian needs have reached record levels and may continue to rise, requiring WFP to continuously adapt its response capabilities. At the same time, work on crucial recommendations from strategic evaluations is still needed. In anticipation of the World Humanitarian Summit, the global humanitarian system is reviewing its reform efforts. This process offers WFP an opportunity to shape the global agenda.

Recommendations

58. While the recommendations made in the component strategic evaluations remain valid, this synthesis suggests additional, strategic recommendations to ensure continued investment in and prioritization of EPR in all WFP's corporate strategies, policies and change initiatives. The implementation of these recommendations will require support and inter-departmental coordination by WFP's Executive Management Group (EMG).

59. **Recommendation 1:** Executive management should ensure that more resources and stronger leadership are directed towards human resources management specifically for EPR, placing EPR centrally within the implementation of WFP's People Strategy. The Human Resources Division (HRM) should assume responsibility for developing a holistic, multi-functional approach that includes recruitment, career development, capacity, deployment, health and well-being, with special consideration for national staff and women. Staff capacity development should include options beyond formal training, and should provide incentives for person-to-person approaches such as mentoring and on-the-job training (EMG, HRM).

60. **Recommendation 2:** WFP's new corporate knowledge management initiative should address EPR challenges faced by field staff, with an emphasis on:

- informal information-sharing and learning; and
- more systematic use of information and data for EPR operational decision-making (EMG, Innovation and Change Management Division [INC], Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division [OSE]).

61. **Recommendation 3:** More WFP staff and financial resources should be directed towards emergency preparedness and EPR capacity enhancement of non-government partners and national authorities for improved response efficiency. WFP should also advocate for increased donor funding for development. These measures should focus on:

- making WFP's approach to EPR capacity enhancement of partners and national authorities more consistent and sustainable; and
- enhancing data and information for preparedness through partner mapping, capacity assessment and analysis of markets, structures and potential service providers for cash-based transfer programmes (EMG, OSE).

62. **Recommendation 4:** Taking greater advantage of its involvement in global humanitarian reform processes such as the World Humanitarian Summit and discussions on humanitarian financing, WFP should emphasize:

- giving more balanced consideration to all types of emergency operation, including chronic, lower-level and under-funded or "forgotten" crises;
- reducing demands on field staff associated with global processes and focusing limited resources on improving the quality of emergency response, including better communication with and accountability to affected populations and more emphasis on gender and protection; and
- disseminating WFP's positive experiences with advance financing among other agencies and partners, supporting partners in setting up similar mechanisms, and advocating to increase advance financing (EMG, Deputy Executive Director, Office of the Executive Director, OSE).

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CHF	Common Humanitarian Fund
EMG	Executive Management Group
EPR	Emergency Preparedness and Response
ERF	Emergency Response Fund
HRM	Human Resources Division
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IRA	Immediate Response Account
L1, L2, L3	Level 1, 2 and 3 emergencies
NGO	non-governmental organization
OSE	Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division
PREP	Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme