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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EVALUATION OF WFP'S PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME (2011–2014)

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

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DRAFT DECISION^{*}

The Board takes note of "Management Response to the Recommendations of the Evaluation of WFP's Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme (2011–2014)" (WFP/EB.A/2015/7-B/Add.1).

* 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.

BACKGROUND

1. This document presents management's response to the summary evaluation report of the Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme (PREP). PREP was initiated in 2011 to address challenges faced by WFP in preparing for and responding to emergencies. It was implemented during the period of WFP's strategic shift from food aid to food assistance and its restructuring and decentralization process. The final year of PREP saw an unprecedented number of global humanitarian responses, with six complex Level 3 (L3) emergencies putting PREP to the test and stretching WFP's emergency response capacity, exacerbated by six concurrent L2 emergencies.
2. Management is pleased to note the results identified by the evaluation, including a better approach to managing risk in emergencies and enhanced information management, along with improved coherence and accountability through task forces and a corporate emergency response roster for surge deployments. Improvements were also noted in logistics capacities and the pre-positioning of ready-to-eat foods. Many of these results were replicable through systematic lessons-learned exercises.
3. While noting these improvements, the evaluation also identified areas where further work is needed. WFP needs to sustain investments in PREP by mainstreaming emergency preparedness and response (EPR) activities, establishing clearer boundaries between functional areas, and ensuring strong leadership and oversight from the Executive Management Group (EMG). Management also acknowledges the need to expand emergency training and to simplify the EPR package for more flexible use by country offices in varying contexts.
4. The following matrix sets out the planned actions and timelines for implementing the recommendations.

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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 1: Reinforce EPR strengthening as a corporate priority</p> <p>a) Do not extend PREP as a programme, but mainstream identified responsibilities for EPR strengthening in all relevant WFP functional areas.</p> <p>b) Adopt an integrated agenda for EPR strengthening, giving due consideration to all levels of emergency, including those associated with complex and protracted emergencies.</p> <p>c) Integrate EPR strengthening as a priority in all organizational change initiatives.</p> <p>d) Establish a regular, internal funding mechanism and sufficient dedicated capacity for work on strengthening EPR.</p>	<p>EMG and OS</p> <p>EMG and OS</p> <p>EMG</p> <p>EMG</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The recent reorganization of the Operations Services Department (OS) includes the mainstreaming of EPR enhancement and clarifies boundaries between functional areas within OS. EPR enhancement will be guided by an internal operational framework, with an accountability matrix defining roles and responsibilities across WFP.</p> <p>The EMG will ensure that future EPR enhancement efforts give more attention to actions for preventing emergencies from escalating to L3, including by addressing the constraints typically encountered in emergencies and improving the ability to scale down and transition out of an emergency response.</p> <p>EPR enhancement is a priority in WFP's ongoing change initiatives. Over the next decade, WFP's relevance in the fight against hunger will depend on its ability to increase its EPR capacity while expanding its engagement in addressing hunger in the medium to long term. In strengthening EPR, WFP aims to be able to meet the acute food and nutrition needs of the most vulnerable people, support and develop national capacities for EPR and provide common services for the humanitarian system.</p> <p>The 2016 management plan will include budgetary provision for EPR enhancement capacity in the Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division (OSE). A new EPR trust fund provides regular internal funds for EPR enhancement.</p>	<p>November 2015</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>November 2015</p>



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<p>d) Continue to develop the emergency response roster, improve identification and vetting of candidates, and improve links among the emergency response, regional and functional rosters and the overall human resources system.</p> <p>e) Establish corporate emergency response teams with adequate resources for set up and maintenance.</p> <p>f) Improve the transition from surge capacity to longer-term recruitments, especially in protracted crises.</p>	<p>HRM supported by OSE</p> <p>EMG, OSE and HRM</p> <p>HRM</p>	<p>Regional-level simulation-based emergency training will continue. A methodology for measuring the impact of FASTER on staff deployment will be developed, with findings used to refine the FASTER programme. The "Getting Ready for Emergencies" e-learning will be revised annually, with its second revision in June 2015.</p> <p>A call for new candidates for the emergency response roster, scheduled for the end of 2015, will focus on leadership roles such as Emergency Coordinator.</p> <p>The process proposed for establishing corporate emergency response teams will be reviewed to take into account the people strategy and the new approach to human resources in emergencies and to ascertain whether a dedicated team is the best option. Establishment of a pool of emergency leaders at P5 level and above, and an associated capacity development programme is a priority for 2015.</p> <p>The diverse contexts of WFP emergency operations (EMOPs) make a case-by-case approach necessary. Establishment of long-term staff would entail the competitive recruitment of local staff on fixed-term contracts and the reassignment of international staff, requiring – among other needs – forecasts of operational requirements and adequate funding for at least one year, ideally two. Senior management of each emergency response has the authority to determine staff composition; HRM at the field and Headquarters levels provides regional bureaux and country offices with support, technical guidance and inputs in carrying out structure and staffing reviews and identifying and filling skill gaps and job profile requirements. HRM rolled out revised guidelines for structure and staffing reviews and job profiles, with clearer lines of accountability, in early 2015.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>End of 2015</p> <p>End 2015</p> <p>Job profiles completed; support ongoing</p>



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<p>g) Strengthen career development for emergency responders.</p> <p>h) Implement identified priorities for staff health and well-being.</p>	<p>HRM</p> <p>Staff Wellness Division (RMW)</p>	<p>Career paths are being developed for staff in all functions relevant to EPR. Although not identified as a specific career path, the development of EPR capacities is an essential component of career paths for leadership roles.</p> <p>For all WFP emergency response personnel, WFP has allocated funding and established procedures for pre-deployment screening – physical and psycho-social; the pre-deployment vaccination recommended by the World Health Organization; pre-deployment provision of training in and equipment for preventing illness and injury; and intra- and post-deployment follow-up.</p>	<p>End of 2015</p> <p>Completed</p>
<p>2.2 Relationships with cooperating partners</p> <p>a) Strengthen mechanisms for lesson-learning between WFP and its EPR cooperating partners at the global, regional and country levels, and support and monitor implementation of follow-up actions.</p> <p>b) Develop systematic ways of responding to feedback from affected populations on the quality and appropriateness of WFP's assistance delivered through cooperating partners.</p> <p>c) Complete the development of expedited field-level agreements to reduce the time needed to establish partnerships in emergencies.</p>	<p>OSE</p> <p>OSZ</p> <p>Partnership and Advocacy Coordination Division (PGC) and OSE</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Subject to availability of resources, OSE will provide regional bureaux and country offices with guidance and tools to facilitate the sharing of lessons between WFP field offices and EPR partners, led by regional bureaux. At the corporate level, OSE will coordinate emergency lesson learning from global humanitarian partners.</p> <p>Working with partners, several country offices have established complaints and feedback mechanisms that enable affected populations to comment on the quality and appropriateness of WFP's assistance. OSZ supports this work by: i) establishing minimum requirements for the mechanisms; ii) developing guidance for their design and implementation; and iii) monitoring the number of country offices with functioning mechanisms.</p> <p>WFP is improving its procedure for formalizing partnerships to save time and effort when an emergency occurs. The new procedure will likely involve a Headquarters-level "pre-agreement", and a short form to be completed in the field. It will be tested in new L3 emergencies before deciding on roll-out. PGC plans to present an outline of the improved procedure for senior management's approval by mid-2015.</p>	<p>End of 2015</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2015</p>





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<p>2.3 Preparedness for C&V programming</p> <p>a) Complete and support EPR activities for C&V programming, including by strengthening capacity to conduct rapid market analysis and identify partners in advance of emergencies.</p> <p>b) Complete integration of C&V issues into EPR training and the EPR Package.</p> <p>c) Address delays in concluding agreements, for example through checklists of issues to be addressed at the country level prior to agreement drafting; completion of pre-approved agreement templates; and expansion of the capacity of the Legal Office to deploy staff to emergencies.</p>	<p>OSZ and OSE</p> <p>OSE</p> <p>Legal Office (LEG)</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The cash and voucher training initiative to be rolled out to all country offices by the end of 2015 incorporates capacity development in rapid market analysis and assessments, and guidance on assessing partners' capacity.</p> <p>Issues arising from cash and voucher use are already integrated into the EPR package: checklists for minimum preparedness actions, emergency readiness actions, and standard operating procedures have been developed. Cash and voucher issues are also included in FASTER, and will be integrated into the updated "Getting Ready for Emergencies" training.</p> <p>Aspects of programme design and arrangements with partners that have not been foreseen at the country level often emerge at a later stage when legal arrangements are being drafted, requiring re-engagement with partners. To facilitate the timely management of such issues, WFP will develop checklists for different cash and voucher modalities identifying design issues and operating arrangements that must be addressed before the legal agreement is drafted. Resources will be allocated to developing agreement templates and providing legal support at the country level.</p>	<p>End of 2015</p> <p>Completed</p> <p>End of 2015</p>



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Recommendation 3: Clarify and enable OSE's role in supporting corporate EPR strengthening		Agreed.	
a) Focus OSE's role on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintaining/refining core EPR tools and guidance; • providing field support at the request of regional bureaux or country offices; • consulting WFP field staff and partners on priorities in and tools for EPR; • managing EPR-related information and knowledge; • facilitating engagement of appropriate divisions in EPR; • advocating for, mobilizing resources for and communicating issues related to EPR; and • engaging with relevant inter-agency processes, particularly the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and ensuring alignment between WFP's EPR guidance and tools and those developed at the inter-agency level. 	OSE	The reorganization of OS in January 2015 clarified the role of OSE, whose work plans incorporate all of the recommended actions, including increasing support to regional bureaux and country offices. Activities have been prioritized according to their relevance to field offices. The cross-functional approach developed during PREP implementation will be maintained for areas such as knowledge management, operational information management, training and deployment. WFP will advocate for resources for EPR enhancement and WFP's engagement in inter-agency humanitarian fora.	Ongoing



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<p>d) EPR knowledge management: Encourage further lesson-learning processes at the country, regional or functional level and collate findings. Enhance systematic follow-up on lessons learned exercises and report on progress to the Executive Management Group (EMG). Continue to strengthen links with other review and knowledge management processes.</p> <p>e) Advance financing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Clarify the role of the Immediate Response Account as a risk fund that can be used to make grants and provide collateral for advances, and advocate for this role with donors. ii. Increase awareness of Immediate Response Account for Preparedness (IR-PREP) for preparedness activities, and consider increasing its funding ceiling and timeframe. 	<p>OSE</p>	<p>The EPR package and manual will be revised in 2015. Guidance on defining indicators for risk thresholds is being developed as part of a user-friendly dashboard to support decision-making by country offices, and the engagement of partners.</p>	<p>June 2016</p>
<p>f) Corporate Response EMOP Facility: Refine the facility, and finalize it for EMG approval and roll-out. Enable activation of elements of the facility prior to declaration of a Level 3 emergency.</p>	<p>OSE</p>	<p>OSE will work with regional bureaux and country offices to build their capacity to conduct lessons learned exercises. A mechanism for systematically tracking and reporting corporate-level actions is being developed, to promote ownership of lessons learned; regional bureaux and country offices will take ownership of actions at their respective levels. The lessons learned will inform corporate knowledge management initiatives, with a cross-functional working group ensuring links to other corporate review and knowledge management processes.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>



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<p>g) Operational information management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Further rationalize and streamline information requests, seeking opportunities to reduce the frequency of reporting. ii. Merge various information and reporting channels. 	<p>Budget and Programming Division (RMB)</p>	<p>A description of the improved functioning of the Immediate Response Account (IRA), including discussion of its revolving lending and grant-making features, is contained in paragraphs 42–47 of “Report on the Utilization of WFP’s Advance Financing Mechanisms (1 January–31 December 2014)” (WFP/EB.A/2015/6-J/1).</p> <p>Consideration of ceilings for the IR-PREP may be made following discussions on the IRA at the Board’s 2015 Annual Session, in the context of the report noted above and “Strategic Utilization of WFP’s PSA Equalization Account” (WFP/EB.A/2015/6-D). OSE is enhancing its engagement with field offices to increase their ability to use the IR-PREP as part of the expanded EPR package.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>h) Food and non-food stocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Complete the supply chain strategy for food and non-food stocks. ii. Strengthen mechanisms for ensuring the quality and appropriateness of WFP’s response modalities by strengthening analyses and their links to decisions. 	<p>OSE</p>	<p>Following training in information management, and in consultation with regional bureaux and WFP’s communications, donor relations and performance management divisions, requirements for providing information and reports have been rationalized and streamlined, and corporate templates introduced. The 2015 review of the information management compendium, in consultation with stakeholders in the field, should lead to further rationalization of information and reporting channels.</p>	<p>December 2015</p>

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

C&V	cash and voucher
EMG	Executive Management Group
EMOP	emergency operation
EPR	emergency preparedness and response
FASTER	Functional and Support Training for Emergency Response
HRM	Human Resources Division
IRA	Immediate Response Account
IR-PREP	Immediate Response Account for Preparedness
L2	Level 2
L3	Level 3
LEG	Legal Office
OS	Operations Services Department
OSC	Supply Chain Division
OSE	Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division
OSZ	Policy and Programme Division
PGC	Partnership and Advocacy Coordination Division
PREP	Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme
RMB	Budget and Programming Division
RMW	Staff Wellness Division