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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY REPORT OF THE JOINT UNHCR/WFP IMPACT EVALUATION ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF FOOD ASSISTANCE TO DURABLE SOLUTIONS IN PROTRACTED REFUGEE SITUATIONS – RWANDA

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.

Director, RMP*	Mr C. Kaye	tel.: 066513-2197
Senior Programme Adviser, OD**:	Mr P. Rodrigues	tel.: 066513-2361
Programme Adviser, RMP:	Ms K. Oppusunggu	Tel.: 066513-3068

Should you have any questions regarding availability of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact Ms I. Carpitella, Senior Administrative Assistant, Conference Servicing Unit (tel.: 066513-2645).

* Performance and Accountability Management Division

** Operations Department

BACKGROUND

1. The second of four impact evaluations by the Office of Evaluation and the Policy Development and Evaluation Service of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was carried out in Rwanda with a view to enhancing the contribution that food assistance can make to durable solutions for refugees and host populations in protracted refugee situations.
2. The evaluation makes clear the challenges involved in securing durable solutions and provides useful analysis. WFP welcomes the evaluation recommendations, several of which are already being implemented; the medium- and long-term recommendations are being factored into plans with a view to improving outcomes and impacts.
3. The Secretariat's responses to the recommendations are presented in the attached matrix.

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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
Implementation, Management Standards and Programme Approach			
<p>Recommendation 1: WFP should ensure that all refugees are provided with a balanced and diverse ration that includes the necessary micronutrient content and sufficient kilocalories for health and development. In addition to implementing general food distribution (GFD) and blanket and targeted supplementary feeding in line with set standards, WFP, in cooperation with the office of the UNHCR, should identify opportunities for optimizing the use of food-, cash- or voucher-based approaches. Building on WFP's feasibility study, a market assessment followed by a pilot should be conducted, to provide evidence of the effects of a cash/voucher programme on the local economy and markets, and on intra-household food availability.</p>	WFP	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The new approach for protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) 200343 involves safety nets and balanced rations for the most vulnerable people. In the event of resource constraints, ration cuts would affect general food distributions, but the most vulnerable would continue to receive safety-net assistance. WFP has started school feeding in refugee camp schools and in neighbouring schools educating pupils from the camps.</p> <p>Cash and vouchers: A socio-economic study in Gihembe camp will determine a new programme approach using cash and/or vouchers. The decision will be subject to market conditions and the availability of resources. The programme is expected to use a mix of cash and food, and will involve regular monitoring of its impact on refugees and of market conditions.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>December 2012</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: UNHCR should carry out methodologically sound nutrition surveys in each camp on an annual basis – namely the standardized expanded nutrition survey implemented in coordination with the Ministry of Health, WFP and, if required, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). In addition, UNHCR and WFP, in partnership with UNICEF, should ensure adherence to joint UNHCR/WFP guidelines and national protocols for the provision and management of curative nutrition programmes.</p>	UNHCR	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Such nutritional surveys, which are consistent with the Standardized Expanded Nutrition Survey, are now conducted annually. The latest, in April 2012, based on limits set by the World Health Organization (WHO), WFP and UNHCR, found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ global acute malnutrition was within acceptable limits; ➤ stunting was serious at 30 percent to 39 percent; and ➤ anaemia among children was significantly high at more than 40 percent. 	Implemented



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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
		The Ministry of Health protocols for treating severe and acute malnutrition follow international standards, which identify the caseload by measuring children's weight-for-height ratio. WFP and UNHCR have trained cooperating partners Africa Humanitarian Action and the American Refugee Committee and managed health centres in the camps to ensure adherence to international standards.	
<p>Recommendation 3: UNHCR should mobilize funding to increase livelihood options for refugees in the camps, especially women. This should include scaling up income-generating programme savings and loan activities with adequate financial, material and technical support. Women refugees should be targeted to increase the equity of income-earning opportunities.</p>	UNHCR	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>At the country-level where successes have been recorded WFP and UNHCR continue joint advocacy and fundraising with donors.</p> <p>UNHCR will identify stakeholders in the United Nations and embassies in Kigali and will lobby in support of the recommendation. United Nations and non-governmental organization (NGO) involvement will be sought through information campaigns. Fundraising will be time-limited and will include indicators of progress in mobilization.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>June 2013</p>
<p>Recommendation 4: Mechanisms to ensure follow-up to address joint assessment mission (JAM) recommendations should be established by WFP and UNHCR, according to a prioritized action plan.</p>	WFP/UNHCR	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>A joint action plan has been signed and implementation is under way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The action timeline was formulated by UNHCR and WFP in late 2011. ➤ Activities prioritized in view of the limited resources available include: i) the preparation of safety-net interventions; ii) the transfer to WFP of responsibility for food management in the camps; and iii) preparations for rolling out a voucher pilot jointly with UNHCR and the Ministry of Disaster Management and Refugee Affairs. 	Ongoing



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<p>Recommendation 5: UNHCR and WFP should minimize the use of firewood for cooking through the intensified distribution of fuel-efficient or alternative-energy stoves and sufficient quantities of environmentally friendly fuel. Alternatives exist and should be tapped as important strategies to enhance protection for women and girls.</p>	UNHCR/WFP	<p>Agreed. UNHCR is supporting the construction of 4,500 improved mud stoves in Kiziba camp to reduce wood burning and is promoting innovations in environmental protection. If the project is successful and funding is available, it will be replicated in other camps.</p>	October 2012
Longer-Term Strategy and Durable Solutions			
<p>Recommendation 6: UNHCR and WFP should collaborate and coordinate more effectively in pursuing joint programming, funding and advocacy activities to ensure international support for durable solutions. UNHCR and WFP should pursue a joint funding strategy with donors, and seek ways of diversifying the donor base.</p>	UNHCR/WFP	<p>Agreed. WFP and UNHCR will increase their advocacy for additional funding through donor meetings and field visits and implementation of One UN joint interventions such as the joint appeal to Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in May 2012 for the new refugee emergency.</p>	Ongoing
<p>Recommendation 7: WFP should initiate food-for-work/cash-for-work programming to broaden income opportunities for refugees, especially for households headed by women and unemployed youth, and to improve social and economic relations between refugees and host communities.</p>	WFP	<p>Partially agreed. WFP believes that food for work and cash for work for host populations would reduce environmental damage caused by refugee populations and improve refugee/host relations. In view of anticipated resource constraints and limited donor support, life-saving activities must be prioritized, so it is unrealistic for WFP to include the component in the current PRRO. WFP agrees that there should be income-generating schemes in the camps to build resilience and enhance self-reliance among refugees. WFP will advocate for this with UNHCR and other partners.</p>	Not applicable



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<p>Recommendation 8: UNHCR and donors should identify ways of increasing access to educational opportunities, especially for girls, as a major strategy for achieving durable solutions. UNHCR and donors should prioritize funding to enable families to meet the costs of a full secondary school education – grades 10 to 12 – in accordance with the Government of Rwanda’s policy of universal access. Increasing girls’ access to education is a strategy for reducing the gender-based violence (GBV) and discrimination experienced by adolescent girls. The overall strategy should include creating greater access to national vocational and technical training schools and linking training to market needs and livelihood opportunities in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).</p>	UNHCR, with support from WFP and donors	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>UNHCR is unable to influence donors directly, but it will try to establish partnerships to increase educational opportunities for refugee children. Access to vocational and technical skills training will be improved. UNHCR and WFP will seek to enhance the position of girls by designing more appropriate responses with activities that target them.</p> <p>The school feeding component in the new PRRO will provide nutritious mid-morning porridge for children in grades 1–9 from September 2012. Kitchens are being constructed.</p> <p>Under the revised budget, grade 1–9 pupils attending schools outside Nyabiheke and Kigeme camps will receive meals in those schools.</p>	<p>October 2014</p> <p>August–September 2012</p> <p>October–November 2012</p>
<p>Recommendation 9: Over the longer term, UNHCR and WFP should pursue strategies for promoting repatriation or integration within Rwanda. Notwithstanding the complexities of the situation, it is important that the international community engages with the governments of Rwanda and DRC, together with UNHCR and WFP, to pursue strategies for promoting repatriation. Repatriation would require the Government of DRC’s commitment to ensuring that land for cultivation and homesteads is returned to repatriated refugees and their security is assured. Similarly, the international community, with the Government of Rwanda, UNHCR and WFP, should develop strategies for overcoming constraints to local integration, including donor funding to facilitate integration through livelihood support for refugees.</p>	UNHCR, with support of WFP	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The causes of insecurity, ethnic conflict and political instability in the Great Lakes region must be addressed at the appropriate levels. Repatriation can take place only after problems associated with land ownership in DRC have been resolved. Political stability will enable children to return to school.</p> <p>UNHCR and WFP will continue to monitor the regional political and security situation to identify durable solutions for refugees in Rwanda. Repatriation is an unrealistic option in view of current insecurity in the Kivus.</p>	Ongoing



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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 10: Donors supporting the refugee programme should devote a larger proportion of funds to refugee self-reliance and durable solutions. Donors are urged to overcome barriers related to funding restrictions, to support long-term durable solutions in both DRC and Rwanda. Strong, proactive donor support would help to overcome the limitations encountered by UNHCR and WFP in implementing activities aimed at achieving durable solutions and refugee self-reliance.</p>	<p>Donors in collaboration with UNHCR/WFP</p>	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>WFP and UNHCR understand the difficulty of mobilizing funds for improved self-reliance and durable solutions. We agree that a long-term vision among donors could bring about durable solutions. It might be possible to provide additional funding to foster self-reliance and durable solutions.</p> <p>WFP management does not entirely agree with the recommendation, because allocating a larger proportion of funding to refugee self-reliance and durable solutions would decrease the amount available for life-saving support. This is not advisable in view of current refugee flows, especially because the refugee operation has been underfunded for the past five years. Implementation would have to be subject to the availability of funding, on the understanding that the funds were supplementary and not drawn from life-saving support and emergency responses.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>



LIST OF ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
GBV	gender-based violence
GDF	general food distribution
JAM	joint assessment mission
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization