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Agenda item 10

*For information**



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PROTRACTED RELIEF AND RECOVERY OPERATIONS APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (1 JANUARY–30 JUNE 2011)— REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO 200147

Assistance to Refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the Likouala Province of the Republic of the Congo

Number of beneficiaries	115,100
Duration of project	22 months (March 2011–December 2012)
WFP food tonnage	25,698 mt
Cost (United States dollars)	
WFP food cost	11,016,892
Total cost to WFP	33,827,940

* In accordance with the Executive Board's decisions on governance, approved at the Annual and Third Regular Sessions, 2000, items for information should not be discussed unless a Board member specifically requests it, well in advance of the meeting, and the Chair accepts the request on the grounds that it is a proper use of the Board's time.

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for information

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.

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ABSTRACT

1. Fighting among ethnic groups in the Equateur Province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) led thousands of refugees to seek asylum in five districts of the Likouala province of the Republic of the Congo beginning in October 2009. Likouala Province is one of the poorest regions, and currently the most food-insecure, of the Congo. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), 115,100 refugees live in host communities on the banks of the Ubangui and Congo rivers, their numbers increasing the population of Likouala Province by 89 percent. At the request of the Government of the Congo, in January 2010 WFP launched emergency operation 200095 “Food Assistance to Congolese Displaced in Likouala Province” which prevented widespread hunger-related malnutrition among women and children despite enormous logistics challenges.
2. In June 2010 UNHCR and the governments of the Congo and the DRC signed an agreement for the gradual and voluntary repatriation of the refugees. According to UNHCR, 80 percent of the refugees expressed the desire to return to their home country if the security situation improved, but by early 2011 only 1,000 had returned to their places of origin. In March 2011 protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) 200147 was approved to support the Government of the Congo and UNHCR with the repatriation of refugees in 2011–2012 and to promote their resilience. Joint assessment mission (JAM) findings indicate that food consumption was inadequate for 75 percent of the DRC refugees in Likouala, while their coping strategies depended mainly on seasonal fishing, casual labour, petty trade and use of degrading, illegal and otherwise negative means of survival.
3. PRRO 200147 aims to protect the nutritional and food security status of DRC refugees in Likouala Province, in particular women and children, through general food distributions and repatriation packages for returnees. As recommended by the JAM, partial rations will be provided for host communities to complement their own food sources.
4. The PRRO addresses WFP Strategic Objective 1 – Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies – and Millennium Development Goal 1 – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. The operation’s success will depend on continued efforts in DRC to ensure reconciliation among ethnic groups and enhance security in return areas. There is a potential risk of a deterioration in the security situation leading up to the national elections in DRC in November 2011, which could lead to new influxes of refugees.