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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY REPORT OF THE IMPACT EVALUATION OF SCHOOL FEEDING IN BANGLADESH

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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.

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BACKGROUND

1. The Secretariat appreciates the evaluation recommendations. Actions to implement them are presented in the matrix.
2. The outcomes of providing micronutrient-fortified biscuits for primary schoolchildren indicate a small but important value transfer for the most vulnerable. Coordination with national and international stakeholders will help to promote a package of interventions to complement the school feeding programme and address issues related to health, nutrition, hygiene and education for girls and ethnic minorities.
3. WFP will continue to support the Government in implementing its new school feeding programme. A sustainable hand-over strategy will be developed to support capacity development in programme and project design and implementation.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY REPORT OF THE IMPACT EVALUATION
OF SCHOOL FEEDING IN BANGLADESH**

Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 1: The country office and its partners should continue to develop integrated and complementary programmes that target the poorest households in the school feeding areas, in alignment with WFP's country programme.</p>	<p>Country office</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The 2012–2016 Bangladesh country programme (CP) prioritizes geographic convergence of activities. The three components – nutrition, school feeding and enhancing resilience to natural disasters and climate change – will be implemented in nine districts. School feeding will provide food and cash assistance for ultra-poor households and services for prevention and treatment of undernutrition. Selection of geographic areas will continue as funding becomes available and priorities evolve.</p> <p>The school feeding programme will seek partnerships with stakeholders to create synergies with a view to enhanced impact: this includes preparation of a joint action plan aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) focusing on ultra-poor households in nine of 20 districts and on improved coordination with local stakeholders in support of livelihoods and development.</p>	<p>Ongoing–2012</p> <p>December 2011</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: The country office should use policy dialogue to support a strategy designed by the Government and other education bodies to address the issue of quality in schools.</p>	<p>Country office</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>In line with the Government's commitment to reducing poverty and improving the quality of life for children, WFP and its partners are engaged with education bodies with a view to realizing children's rights to education in Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals. The country office will reinforce its participation in monthly meetings with donors under the Primary Education Development Project-III (PEDP-III) and the Local Consultative Group on Education. Policy dialogue will complement WFP's school feeding. Collaborations will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) joint programming with organizations involved with education such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); opportunities are being identified in nine of the 20 UNDAF focus districts; b) the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), in non-formal education to help provide education materials, trained teachers and administrative support; and c) UNICEF in the framework of early child development to continue joint support for pre-primary schoolchildren in para (village) centres in the poorest areas of Chittagong Hill Tracts. 	<p>October 2011</p> <p>December 2012</p> <p>October 2011</p> <p>October 2011</p>



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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
Recommendation 3: The country office should develop a hand-over strategy for school feeding, in cooperation with the Government.	Country office Hand-Over and Partnership Branch	Agreed. Under the CP component for technical assistance and capacity development, WFP supported the Government in launching the national school feeding programme in September/October 2011 as the first step in a hand-over process. Additional capacity development includes establishing a project liaison unit in the Ministry of Education, training government staff in implementation, procurement, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting of school feeding. A hand-over strategy will be developed with the Government using the toolkit prepared by the Handover and Partnership Branch. Phase-down of WFP-funded school feeding is incorporated in the new CP. Funding to enable the Government to implement school feeding is being sought from a pooled fund for PEDP-III (see also recommendation 2).	Implemented December 2012 Ongoing–2013
Recommendation 4: The country office should adopt a comprehensive approach to school feeding in primary education, with targeted goals for different age groups, including pre-primary, primary and older students in classes 4 and 5.	Country office	Agreed. School feeding under the new CP will include pre-primary and primary schoolchildren, in line with PEDP-III. The targets for the quantitative outcomes of the new CP are based on achievements of the 2009/10 outcome study for enrolment, attendance and education outcomes by age group. A joint Government /World Bank/WFP workshop on school feeding will be held for stakeholders to discuss targeting students in classes 4 and 5. The outcome will help to define the scope of WFP assistance and funding requirements.	January 2012 Implemented. December 2011
Recommendation 5: The country office should support the Government's design of a specific strategy to assist children in the transition to secondary school; it should include a food-for-education component.	Country office	Agreed. WFP will advocate for a strategy for the national school feeding programme and food for education to promote transition to secondary school.	November 2011



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<p>Recommendation 6: The country office should ensure that the micronutrient content of the biscuit meets the WFP objective that 70 percent of the recommended nutrient intake be provided.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The recipe for biscuits in WFP's school feeding was upgraded in 2008 in line with recommendations from a technical mission led by a nutrition expert.</p> <p>The country office will review existing recipes with experts from the regional bureau and Headquarters and prepare an estimate of the cost of biscuits with improved micronutrient content; the findings will be shared with the Government.</p> <p>A joint school feeding workshop will present the rationale for improved micronutrient content and for increased donor support.</p> <p>WFP and the Government will establish an implementation plan, with the understanding that alternative feeding modalities may be adopted by 2013.</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>October 2011</p> <p>November 2011</p> <p>December 2013</p>
<p>Recommendation 7: The country office should work with the Government to give full consideration to expanding the provision of school biscuits to schools outside the current coverage area, including to religious schools (primarily <i>madrasahs</i>) and ethnic-minority schools.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP has agreed to include madrasah schools that follow the Government curriculum; the national school feeding programme will include madrasah schools from the start with blanket coverage. All schools in the selected sub-districts will be assisted; in future, assistance will be extended to madrasah schools on the basis of the success of the national programme in 2011 and 2012.</p> <p>In line with the Government's approach, WFP will eventually cover all NGO schools in a single area, targeting disadvantaged groups and ethnic minorities; 30,000 children in 1,000 schools will initially be assisted on a monthly basis.</p> <p>In partnership with UNICEF, WFP will continue to assist pre-school children of ethnic minorities in the poorest areas of Chittagong Hill Tracts.</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>January 2012 onwards</p> <p>Implemented</p>
<p>Recommendation 8: The country office should expand its monitoring and evaluation system to focus on grade attrition in primary school and the reasons for low primary completion rate.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The logical framework of the new CP will include an indicator for primary school completion; the monitoring and evaluation system will be adjusted to provide additional information from outcome surveys regarding low completion rates, which will be discussed with government counterparts.</p>	June 2012



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CP	country programme
NGO	non-governmental organization
PEDP	Primary Education Development Project
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund