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SUMMARY OF EVALUATION RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE— COUNTRY PROGRAMME— MALI (1998–2002)

This document should be read in conjunction with the document
“Summary Report of the Mid-term Evaluation of Country
Programme—Mali (1998–2002)” (WFP/EB.3/2001/6/6).

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RECOMMENDATIONS (MARCH 2001)	INITIAL MANAGEMENT RESPONSE (APRIL 2001)	ACTION OFFICE/UNIT	ACTION TAKEN (SEPTEMBER 2001)
<p>1. WFP should ensure that the Mali Country Programme (CP) is allocated appropriate funding to prepare for and implement development activities.</p>	<p>It is recognized and experience has shown that for certain country operations, the level of direct support costs (DSC) is not always sufficient to support activities under operational budgets, particularly where labour and non-food items are substantial components. To help address this problem, it was decided in May 2001 that all country offices, irrespective of programme size, would be assured an annual minimum of US\$2 million in programme resources. In addition, a corporate pool of funds will be provided to and managed by the Operations Department to respond to country office needs on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>OEDB (Headquarters)</p>	<p>Headquarters continues to review programme DSC allocation modalities for the development programme with the aim of ensuring that the DSC available throughout the life of project and Country Programme activities will be sufficient.</p>
<p>2. The Operations Department should determine a suitable formula for assessing the number and profile of staff required (both national and international) to manage the Mali CP effectively, which is not linked to the amount of food moved.</p>	<p>OEDB led joint OEDB/ODO/ODP/country office missions in April 2001 to some 15 country offices to look into issues of cost containment and project budgeting. Recommendations agreed to by Executive staff included the need to prepare guidelines on project budgeting and to assess annually what country office support requirements are and how they can be met within WFP's Resourcing and Long-term Financing (RLTF) policy.</p>	<p>ODO (Headquarters)</p>	<p>In August 2001, the Office of the Director of Operations (ODO) issued the previously mentioned guidelines to support country offices in the preparation of their operational budgets. In addition, during late 2001, OD will review the annual support cost needs (in the context of development operations) of each country office and, in so doing, will ensure consistency with WFP's RLTF policy.</p>
<p>3. Training for the programme staff responsible for monitoring is an urgent necessity. The country office should arrange for such training to be given to all implementing partners as part of the preparation for the future Country Strategy Outline (CSO) and CP.</p>	<p>Two Programme Officers participated in a Food Aid and Development (FAAD) workshop in Ouagadougou in April 2001.</p> <p>A logical framework workshop for the formulation of the CSO was held in May 2001, with the participation of WFP, the Government and partners.</p> <p>A Programme Officer and a counterpart official will attend a workshop on participatory methods, to be held in Niamey in May 2001.</p>	<p>West Africa Regional Bureau</p> <p>Country office, Government</p> <p>West Africa Regional Bureau</p>	<p>In June 2001, the Head of Operations and WFP project coordinator participated in the Regional Emergency Food Needs Assessment Training.</p>



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	<p><u>At the institutional framework level:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Carry out a review of programming documents, in order to adapt them to the new political context (decentralization, multi-sectoral character of the Country Programme, existence of new ministerial departments, etc.). <p><u>At the level of partnership and coordination:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revitalize the coordination and monitoring structures. ➤ Present requests through a commune-level plan of action (decentralized approach). ➤ Include a progressive and rational phase-out process in the communal approach, from the start of the partnership. 		
<p>8. It is advisable for the Ministry for Rural Development to convene the first meeting of the coordination committee and to organize a workshop to inform government partners of WFP's new approach.</p>	<p>All the ministerial structures that have some involvement with WFP have participated in the CSO preparation workshop and are now well informed about the new WFP approach.</p> <p>Two meetings of the coordination committee have taken place.</p>	<p>Country office, Government</p>	<p>All ministries participated in the workshop for the preparation of the CSO. In addition, WFP's country office organized a round table to discuss the Country Programme with all governmental counterparts in July 2001. Further inter-ministerial meetings are planned.</p>
<p>9. WFP's development role in Mali should be more clearly articulated, and an exit strategy for each CP activity should be formulated. It is also necessary to clearly establish long-term goals and immediate objectives, and to identify activities that will allow for the attainment of those objectives.</p>	<p>At the beginning of May 2001, during the CSO preparation workshop (which laid the foundations for the future Mali Country Programme), WFP's mission was defined, based on a consensus between the participants (WFP, the Government, partners, beneficiary representatives).</p> <p>The question of the withdrawal of WFP from different activities was extensively discussed, which led to a better understanding of the issues. (See the report.)</p>	<p>Country office, Government</p>	<p>The development role of WFP in Mali is clearly outlined in the CSO and will be defined in more detail during the formulation of the next Country Programme.</p>

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<p>10. The partnerships established between WFP and its various non-governmental stakeholders are indispensable and should be maintained. However, the number of partners should be reduced for the sake of efficiency. Criteria for selecting suitable partners to implement the CP activities should be established taking into account: i) their financial and technical capabilities; and ii) the compatibility of their objectives and approaches with those of WFP.</p>	<p>A review of the implementing partners will be undertaken, according to the criteria indicated. In some vulnerable zones the number of potential partners is low, however, and this limits choice. The limited choice of partners could compromise WFP's ability to intervene in these regions. The selection of partners should therefore also take into account possible alternatives, in order to avoid the risk of WFP's support being slowed down or stopped. WFP support without implementing partners would have a very limited impact.</p>	<p>Country office, Government, partners</p>	<p>A questionnaire to evaluate WFP's implementing partners in education activities is being tested.</p> <p>Existing and potential partners are being assessed for the health/nutrition activity that is being planned.</p> <p>An assessment of food-for-work (FFW)/food-for-training (FFT) partners is envisaged for the next CP.</p>
<p>11. Implementing partner staff must be thoroughly informed about WFP policies and guidelines, as well as financial and administrative practices.</p>	<p>This was done during the CSO workshop in May 2001.</p>	<p>Country office, Government</p>	<p>The Mali country office uses the opportunity of regular coordination meetings with donors and partners in the framework of the National Action Plan (education, rural development, food security, health) to increase awareness of WFP's mandate and policies.</p>
<p>12. Future formulation of the goals and objectives of the CSO and CP must be based on a more thorough participatory approach.</p>	<p>The CSO preparation workshop was undertaken with the participation of different ministries, United Nations agencies, bilateral donors, local and international NGOs, representatives of beneficiaries and WFP staff.</p>	<p>Country office</p>	<p>The formulation of the CSO was based on a participatory logical framework approach. In addition, individual CP activities such as the health/nutrition activity are being designed with the active participation of potential implementing partners and government counterparts.</p>
<p>13. Country office staff and their main partners in Mali should be trained in the preparation of a logical framework before developing the next CSO, CP and component activities.</p>	<p>See 3.</p>	<p>Country office</p>	<p>See 3.</p>





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<p>14. The country office should organize meetings with its other United Nations partners to create a better understanding of WFP's development objectives and activities.</p>	<p>United Nations system partners were involved in the preparation of the activity summaries for the different sectors addressed by the Country Programme. The CSO preparation workshop was an opportunity to inform them about the activities and the future direction of the Mali Country Programme. WFP is also involved in the United Nations system's Common Country Assessment (CCA). The meetings foreseen for the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) will also be used to inform partners about WFP's programme and activities, as will the sectoral meetings of the technical and financial partners.</p>	<p>Country office</p>	<p>Meetings within the United Nations system for the preparation of the CCA/UNDAF continue on a regular basis and are a good opportunity to clarify WFP's policies, mandate and intervention strategies. Another opportunity is provided within the existing strategic framework for poverty alleviation, set up by the Government with the support of the World Bank, which is composed of 11 thematic working groups, in some of which WFP is represented.</p>
<p>15. The potential complementarities between the CP components should be identified during the development of the next CSO and CP.</p>	<p>Certain synergies between the different elements of the Country Programme already exist— for example, construction of school classrooms and latrines in certain schools or communal health centres, with food-for-work support. The strengthening of these synergies will be sought, but much will depend on the partners' own programmes, the compatibility of those programmes with this synergy objective and the means at their disposal.</p>	<p>Country office, Government, partners</p>	<p>The synergies between the different CP components have been identified in the CSO and will be focused on during the preparation/formulation of the new CP.</p>
<p>16. Complementary inputs for the creation of assets under FFW should be systematically planned in order to ensure their success and sustainability.</p>	<p>These complementary inputs will be taken into consideration during the elaboration of the next workplans for the food-for-work activity.</p>	<p>Country office, Ministry of Rural Development</p>	<p>In Mali, FFW and FFT activities complement the ongoing projects of implementing partners who have their own financial and technical means. Therefore, complementarity is ensured in the sense that FFW and FFT support and encourage ongoing initiatives.</p>
<p>17. The number of implementing partners should be reduced.</p>	<p>See 10.</p>	<p>Country office</p>	<p>This will be taken into consideration when formulating the activities of the new Country Programme. It is difficult to reduce the number immediately; in addition, the low number of reliable partners in some regions needs to be kept in mind. See also recommendation 10.</p>

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18. Emphasis should be placed on training parents and students associations (PSAs) and management committees in order to increase their involvement in the management of school feeding.	The training of parents associations and of management committees has been foreseen and budgeted for. However, it has not proven possible until now to obtain the necessary funds to undertake this training.	Country office, WFP Headquarters	Only a small portion of the necessary funds has been received so far. Priority will be given to supporting implementing partners to ensure the basic functioning of the activity. A training of trainers course to strengthen the capacity of implementing partners in the education sector is planned for the end of 2001, depending on availability of funds.
19. Food should be delivered to the schools before the start of each term.	This is a basic principle and to implement it, certain measures have been taken regarding the availability of resources, information on the number of students at the end of each term (needed to plan the distributions for the following term), and renewal of contracted transport services.	Country office, regional sub-offices, partners	Only in exceptional cases are resources not available at the project sites on time. For the new school year, food will be pre-positioned at every regional warehouse by the end of September, ready to be dispatched to the designated schools.
20. It is advisable to set up a more effective system for monitoring logistics down to the school level.	The selection process for transport operators is being reorganized and WFP sub-offices are becoming more actively involved in the monitoring of deliveries.	Country office, regional sub-offices, partners	The country office logistics team is becoming more involved in the management of secondary transport; first steps towards this (harmonization of procedures, deadlines, selection of service providers) have already been taken.
21. In the context of an exit strategy and where reliable partners are present, WFP should encourage PSAs to undertake income-generating activities.	It is intended to organize meetings at the regional level between WFP, government authorities and partners to see how these synergies can be achieved.	Country office, Government, partners	WFP staff and government counterparts are organizing meetings with partners to determine how to improve the links between different activities.
22. The health component (CHC) should be halted and an alternative project in this sector be considered that is more grounded in current reality.	A study on the introduction and promotion of a weaning food has been made by a food technologist. Tests in connection with a possible future activity will be undertaken.	Country office, Ministry of Health	The study carried out by a food technologist for the new health/nutrition activity has been approved by the Government. A workshop to review the proposal is scheduled for October 2001, to be followed by activity planning. The pilot project QAP MLI 5942 is currently being phased out and should be completed by December 2001.
23. The PSAs and the management committees should be supported through training and awareness-raising activities, and income-generating activities should be promoted to sustain the school feeding activities.	Training of parents associations is foreseen. Unfortunately, Headquarters has not yet been able to make available the financial means envisaged in the project document.	WFP Headquarters, Country office	Limited funds received to date—see recommendation 18.



RECOMMENDATIONS (MARCH 2001)	INITIAL MANAGEMENT RESPONSE (APRIL 2001)	ACTION OFFICE/UNIT	ACTION TAKEN (SEPTEMBER 2001)
24. The sanitation activity should be initiated in an area where conditions are more suitable.	At present, there is an environmental health sub-activity within the health activity. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the mission undertaken by the regional environmental adviser concluded that, in its current form, this sub-activity (food-for-work support to cleaning crews) would not satisfy the criteria of sustainability and the creation of durable assets.	Country office, Government	Quick Action Project MLI 5942 will be phased out by the end of 2001. If sanitation is to be pursued during the next CP, it will be done through FFW activities.
25. In the context of the recommendations of the technical review mission, the country office should assess the feasibility of producing and distributing a supplementary food product in northern Mali.	See 22.	Country office, Ministry of Health	See recommendation 22.

