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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 – ETHIOPIA

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 first of four impact evaluations by WFP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was carried out in Ethiopia with a view to enhancing the contribution of food assistance to support durable solutions for refugees and host populations in protracted refugee situations.
2. There are now 154,000 refugees in Ethiopia and the number is likely to increase as more people arrive from Somalia and Eritrea in the context of the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa.
3. WFP and UNHCR are committed to ensuring that the refugees' food security and other needs are adequately addressed. The main responsibilities of UNHCR include support for the Ethiopian Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA), particularly in terms of refugee status and registration, and provision of non-food items and some food to complement WFP rations. The partnership between WFP and UNHCR has secured a reliable relationship with the Government in seeking durable solutions.
4. 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.
5. The Secretariat's responses to the recommendations are presented in the attached matrix.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JOINT UNHCR/WFP IMPACT EVALUATION ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF FOOD ASSISTANCE TO DURABLE SOLUTIONS IN PROTRACTED REFUGEE SITUATIONS—ETHIOPIA

Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
Long-term Recommendations (requiring more than one protracted relief and recovery operation to implement)			
<p>Recommendation 1: WFP and UNHCR should develop a livelihood strategy by promoting policy and programme assistance that enables refugees to engage in legal economic activities, paid employment and private enterprise. As international funding streams for care and maintenance models in camps begin to decline, refugees will need to rely more on their own economic activities in local communities. This strategy would be oriented to local development in which both refugees and the host population would benefit, and programmes would be implemented at scale. Such a strategy could serve as a model for promoting livelihoods at an early stage of refugee camp development, before a protracted situation evolves in which refugees and agencies focus on resettlement as the only durable solution option.</p>	<p>WFP and UNHCR country offices, WFP Programme Division (ODX) and Policy, Planning and Strategy Division (PS)</p>	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>WFP and UNHCR have worked with donors to encourage the Government to change its policy regarding support for livelihoods and are working to support income generation, reforestation and reduction of environmental impacts; the latter includes distribution of fuel-efficient stoves.</p> <p>WFP, UNHCR and partners will conduct rapid environmental and livelihoods assessments with a view to developing a livelihood strategy in consultation with ARRA.</p> <p>UNHCR and the local non-governmental organization (NGO) Partnership for Pastoralists Development Association (PAPDA) are piloting an income-generation programme at Bokolmayo and Melkadida camps.</p>	<p>December 2012</p> <p>March 2012</p> <p>June 2012</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: Donors supporting the refugee programme should devote a larger proportion of resources to local durable solutions through livelihood programming. UNHCR and WFP cannot promote durable livelihood solutions without the support of donors. To accomplish recommendation 1, donors should take a more proactive role in promoting livelihood approaches in protracted refugee camps. This should commence soon after emergency conditions have been stabilized. Donors would have to break some bureaucratic barriers that inhibit agencies or bureaux such as the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration from using resources to support long-term solutions, rather than exclusively for emergency humanitarian programmes, as is their current mandate.</p>	<p>WFP and UNHCR country offices and regional bureaux; Government Donor Relations Division (ERD)</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>With the emergencies in Dollo Ado and Assosa camps and the outcomes of the November 2011 meeting with donors in mind, WFP and UNHCR will work with donors to promote refugee operations and livelihoods.</p>	<p>January 2012</p>



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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
Medium-Term Recommendations (to be undertaken in the next protracted relief and recovery operation)			
<p>Recommendation 3: Scale up the livelihood programmes implemented by NGOs. Livelihood programmes based on economic stimulus packages should be extended to host communities and should include agricultural and pastoral extension services, income-generating activities, vocational training and microfinance. For example, refugee-owned and -operated mills could generate resources that act as a catalyst for livelihood activities. These improvements would allow refugees to provide milling services for other refugee households, and would enable households to retain a greater proportion of their rations. Food processing also has good potential in the camps. Livelihood activities would be tailored to the specific profile of the refugee population and would be initiated from the onset of refugee camp establishment.</p>	<p>WFP and UNHCR country offices and regional bureaux, ODX, PS</p>	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>Experience reveals the limitations of some of the ideas suggested. The March 2008 performance evaluation of WFP-supported income-generation projects, for example, concluded that refugees' mills did not provide reliable services and incomes for the target group and that financial performance was poor.</p> <p>Since then, adjustments have been made and support for milling services will be extended, with additional financial support: WFP will purchase two mills for women's cooperatives in Tongo refugee camp, following the model of Shimelba camp.</p> <p>UNHCR and its partners will profile the skills and vulnerabilities of refugees for livelihood and self-reliance interventions in the camps tailored to the needs of refugees and host communities.</p>	<p>March 2012</p> <p>January 2012</p>
<p>Recommendation 4: Improve collaboration and coordination for joint programming and funding activities, including advocacy efforts. Given the costs involved, joint assessment missions should not be undertaken without agreed follow-up plans. Action plans would include a joint monitoring component to determine whether the actions proposed are actually implemented. Enhanced WFP–UNHCR collaboration would include increased advocacy with the Government of Ethiopia to bring about policy changes that enable refugees to pursue livelihoods more easily. These advocacy efforts should be assisted by donors. Through donor engagement, funding and advocacy can be combined using conditionality to lobby for more economic activities for refugees, and for policy changes such as the Out of Camp policy.</p>	<p>WFP and UNHCR country offices and regional bureaux, PS, Multilateral and NGO Relations Division, Food Security Analysis Service</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP and UNHCR have drafted a joint action plan based on the recommendations of joint assessment missions (JAMs) that will include monitoring and post-distribution monitoring in refugee camps.</p> <p>In September 2011, WFP and UNHCR issued a joint appeal to address the needs of Sudanese refugees: this will be used to encourage donors to provide funding and to help to create livelihood opportunities for refugees and host communities.</p> <p>A JAM by UNHCR, WFP and ARRA will assess the new Somali camps at Kobe, Hileweyn and Bur Amino and the Sudanese camp at Assosa (Tongo), with the support of regional bureaux.</p>	<p>January 2012</p> <p>September 2012</p>



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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 5: Consider alternative food assistance modalities. WFP employs many food assistance modalities in its global programming, and could consider employing food for work (FFW) to support refugee programmes. For example, FFW could support caregivers and cooks in improving the performance and outcomes related to unaccompanied minors; FFW and food for assets could support refugees' participation in environmental mitigation activities, the promotion of a watershed approach around camps and in host communities, or structural rehabilitation activities. Alternative food assistance modalities should be considered for single refugees who are not living with families. Consideration should be given to enabling young men to use a food voucher card to purchase their food from a local restaurant.</p>	<p>WFP and UNHCR country offices</p>	<p>Partially agreed.</p> <p>WFP will transfer cash through NGOs for livelihood interventions under the new protracted relief and recovery operation, replacing FFW and food for assets (FFA).</p> <p>Environmental rehabilitation pilots by partner NGOs in the most stable camps will target refugees and host communities. WFP will start discussions with UNHCR and ARRA when the emergencies in Dollo Ado and Assosa have stabilized.</p> <p>UNHCR cash transfers to partner NGOs support the livelihood, environmental rehabilitation and recovery projects.</p>	<p>December 2012</p>
<p>Recommendation 6: Scale up environmental interventions that involve both refugees and the host population, to address environmental degradation created by the refugee camps and mitigate the negative consequences of climate change. These interventions would be coupled with activities that seek to minimize the use of fuel wood. Donors should support this new approach; an advocacy campaign is essential for engaging Government and donors.</p>	<p>WFP and UNHCR country offices and regional bureaux, PS</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>To minimize the use of firewood, WFP will distribute fuel-efficient stoves in the Tigray refugee camps, using resources secured through the Safe Access to Firewood and Alternative Energy (SAFE) project based in Headquarters.</p> <p>WFP has an agreement with Save the Environment in Ethiopia for reforestation projects in the Jijiga camps.</p> <p>UNHCR will distribute solar lanterns or lamps using ethanol or kerosene at Jijiga and Dollo Ado camps.</p> <p>UNHCR, the Government and NGOs support reforestation and soil and water conservation in all camps, with host community support.</p>	<p>June 2012</p> <p>December 2011</p>



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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 7: Promote greater synergies in the implementation of WFP programme activities. For example, environmental mitigation activities that have been successful in Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transitions to More Sustainable Livelihoods (MERET) and the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) could be promoted in refugee settings to benefit host populations and refugees.</p>	WFP country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP will use MERET best practices in reforestation and income generation projects for communities and refugees. Environmental assessments will support the development of a programme implementation plan.</p>	March 2012
<p>Recommendation 8: Be more strategic and transparent in non-food item (NFI) distributions, given the realities of budget shortfalls. To address weaknesses in the provision of NFIs, UNHCR should ensure that NFIs are readily available for new arrivals and are replenished in protracted refugee camps, based on needs assessments. The timing of NFI distributions must also be appropriate, to reduce refugees' sale of food items to purchase NFIs, and should coincide with seasonal requirements and the timing of food distributions.</p>	UNHCR country office and headquarters	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>UNHCR coordinates the distribution of NFIs with ARRA, in line with UNHCR and Sphere minimum standards; NFIs were provided for the new camps in Dollo Ado. UNHCR will provide contingency stocks for the anticipated influx in southern and western Ethiopia.</p>	December 2012
Short-term Recommendations (to be undertaken immediately)			
<p>Recommendation 9: UNHCR should undertake a revalidation process in the older camps, as soon as possible. Although expensive, revalidation is essential given the inaccuracy of current camp databases for planning household food distribution and generating lists.</p>	UNHCR country office and headquarters	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>UNHCR and ARRA will revalidate at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shimelba and Adi-Harush camps in Tigray; and at - Awbarre and Sheder camps in Jijiga. <p>Continuous registration will continue at Bokolmayo, Melkadida, Kobe, Hileweyn and Bur Amino camps in Dollo Ado.</p>	<p>Jan/Feb 2012</p> <p>March 2012</p> <p>December 2012</p>



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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 10: Increase women's participation. To address the gender imbalance in the management of refugee committees, WFP and UNHCR should ensure increased women's participation in food distribution management and decision-making. This would improve food distribution efficiency, increase women refugees' input into programme prioritization in general and reduce mistrust. A sub-committee should be established specifically to address protection issues, including gender-based violence (GBV) associated with fuel wood and grass collection, the problem of transactional sex related to food insecurity, strategies for preventing GBV and female genital mutilation, and the protection of young girls and boys.</p>	WFP and UNHCR country offices	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP and UNHCR will discuss with ARRA increased representation by women on committees for food distribution and management, peacebuilding, and protection issues such as gender-based violence.</p> <p>UNHCR and its partners provide awareness training for committee members to promote understanding of refugee rights and reduce exploitation.</p>	March 2012
<p>Recommendation 11: Intensify food distribution monitoring. Both WFP and UNHCR need to be present at all food distributions. In cases where under-scooping is a potential concern, WFP should employ other monitoring tools, such as random spot checks, weighing of rations and testing of scoops, to determine whether the proper ration has been distributed to refugee households. WFP should also enhance ARRA's warehouse management practices and consider establishing a stronger presence in the vicinity of the Tigray refugee camps. UNHCR should base officers directly in the Tigray camps, where they currently spend insufficient time. UNHCR and WFP should regularly share monitoring reports to ensure effective inter-agency support and follow-up on reported problems.</p>	WFP and UNHCR country offices	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP and UNHCR have discussed this: where under-scooping was found, UNHCR provided new scoops.</p> <p>WFP has finalized its monitoring and beneficiary contact checklists and its post-distribution monitoring procedures, and will recruit an additional five food aid monitors.</p> <p>ARRA and other partners are being trained in warehousing and storage by the country office logistics unit.</p> <p>UNHCR has assigned a focal point in each camp to monitor food distribution and post-distribution monitoring. In most camps, a registration team attends distributions to replace missing cards and register babies.</p>	<p>November 2011</p> <p>November 2011</p> <p>March 2012</p> <p>January 2012</p>



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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 12: Implement activities to improve child feeding practices. This would link food distribution activities to parental training on appropriate nutrition and child feeding practices, implemented by partner NGOs and monitored or supervised by UNHCR nutrition teams.</p>	UNHCR country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP provides corn-soya blend (CSB++) or CSB+, sugar and oil for the complementary feeding programme; UNHCR coordinates and monitors utilization.</p> <p>UNHCR and nutrition project partners promote optimum feeding practices for infants and young children; utilization of complementary food will be demonstrated to mothers.</p> <p>Information, education and communications materials will be printed and distributed.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>December 2012</p> <p>February 2012</p>
<p>Recommendation 13: Explore alternative milling options. WFP and UNHCR should undertake a new improved feasibility study with the objective of instituting solutions for the milling conundrum.</p>	WFP and UNHCR country offices	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>In the absence of in-kind contributions, WFP seeks to provide alternative staple foods such as rice or wheat flour. It will also explore the possibilities of:</p> <p>i) milling wheat before it is sent to the camps with a view to reducing the costs for refugees; and</p> <p>ii) providing cash or vouchers through the Cash Partnership initiative.</p>	<p>June 2012</p> <p>March 2012</p> <p>December 2012</p>



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

ARRA	Administration for Refugee and Return Affairs
FFW	food for work
GBV	gender-based violence
MERET	Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transitions to More Sustainable Livelihoods
NFI	non-food item
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees