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

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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.

Director, RMP*:	Mr C. Kaye	tel.: 066513-2197
Senior Programme Adviser, OD**:	Mr P. Rodrigues	tel.: 066513-2361
Performance Management Officer, RMP:	Ms M. Hassinen-Agoya	tel.: 066513-3752

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

* Performance and Accountability Management Division

** Operations Department

BACKGROUND

1. This document presents the management response to the recommendations of the impact evaluation of WFP's school feeding programme in the Gambia.
2. The Secretariat appreciates the recommendations, which support programme design and inform the school feeding policy in the Gambia. The country office will collaborate with its governmental, non-governmental and United Nations partners and with civil society and communities to implement the recommendations. Through its leading role in the Education Sector Donor Coordination Group, WFP will support the Government in implementing and managing the programme. The country strategy process will define the framework for a long-term school feeding system managed with local support and resources.
3. Actions to implement the evaluation recommendations are presented in the matrix.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE IMPACT EVALUATION OF SCHOOL FEEDING IN THE GAMBIA

Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
For the Government, WFP Country Office and Schools/Communities			
<p>Recommendation 1: Develop, disseminate and implement a policy on children's contributions and the appropriateness and consequences of school staff eating the school meal.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education has instructed all schools to ensure that children are entitled to school meals and that the food should not be used or consumed by school staff.</p> <p>The ministry is also finalizing a policy and funding plan that takes into account all fees and parental contributions to ensure that schools have no need to seek daily contributions to purchase inputs.</p> <p>The country office will work with the Children's Contribution Task Force and other education sector donors to help the ministry to ensure that the neediest children are not prevented from attending school and receiving assistance from the programme.</p>	December 2011
<p>Recommendation 2: Develop a formal school feeding policy and strategy leading to eventual hand-over of the School Feeding Programme (SFP) to the Government, with specific dates, tasks and objectives.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>This impact evaluation and WFP leadership of the Education Sector Donor Coordination Group will provide stimulus for the Government to review its national education policies with a view to determining the optimum action plan for future school feeding programmes.</p> <p>A technical support mission from Headquarters in July 2011 will assist in this process and participate in the joint review by the Education Sector Donor Coordination Group, providing support to the development of a formal school feeding policy in line with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the WFP country strategy in 2012. Capacity development and hand-over objectives will be at the heart of a new joint policy initiative.</p>	<p>July 2012</p> <p>August 2012</p>



MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE IMPACT EVALUATION OF SCHOOL FEEDING IN THE GAMBIA

Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Recommendation 3: Provide technical assistance and fund other appropriate activities to develop the Government's capacity to manage and implement the SFP.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>WFP shares a commitment to building the Government's capacity to manage the education sector more effectively.</p> <p>The country office will continue to seek partnerships to deliver capacity-development initiatives for the Government at all levels. In particular, it will lead a capacity needs assessment for the sector and will work with partners to develop and implement a capacity-development project with a performance-measurement matrix that includes interim benchmarks and performance indicators.</p>	July 2012
<p>Recommendation 4: Explore ways of transferring more authority to certain education units within the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>A hand-over strategy and plan of action and a capacity needs assessment at the central, regional and school levels (see recommendations 2 and 3) will be completed to support the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education.</p>	December 2012
<p>Recommendation 5: Identify strategies for more precise targeting of the most vulnerable and most food-insecure. In addition to tighter geographic targeting based on food-insecurity indicators, consider other targeting options.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The current project targets schools rather than individuals, but other targeting options will be considered in the light of the policies and strategies decided with the Government; the country office's recently enhanced capacities in food security and vulnerability analysis and mapping will help to guide this process. Targeting will be among the options reviewed with the Government and the Education Sector Donor Coordination Group in designing the future school meals programme.</p>	June 2012
<p>Recommendation 6: Advocate with the National Nutrition Agency, UNICEF and other agencies addressing the underlying causes of malnutrition, to collect data on school-age children's anthropometric status, including vitamin A deficiency and anaemia prevalence; continue implementing strategies to address vitamin A and other micronutrient deficiencies for school-age children; and review the ration composition for school feeding.</p>	Country office	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The country office will continue its advocacy for improved understanding and more effective solutions to address the underlying causes of malnutrition. The Education Sector Donor Coordination Group will encourage the Government to collect data from schools for use in monitoring and reporting mechanisms.</p> <p>A review of rations during preparation of the next phase of the school feeding programme will include an initial assessment of micronutrient deficiencies and anaemia in school-aged children.</p>	<p>December 2011</p> <p>June 2012</p>



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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
Recommendation 7: The WFP country office should cooperate with and support the Early Childhood Development Unit in the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education in conducting a baseline study of Early Childhood Development Centres (ECDCs).	Country office	Agreed. The country office will collaborate with and encourage partners in the Education Sector Donor Coordination Group who are supporting the Government in the development of ECDCs.	February 2012
For the West African Examinations Council – The Gambia and the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education			
Recommendation 8: Report national assessment test results at the school rather than at the student level, and report school-level results to communities.	Country office	The World Bank is planning a system of school report cards that will make the results of national tests available to parents, communities and education authorities with a view to improving the quality of schools and the performance of staff. As the lead in the Education Sector Donor Coordination Group, WFP will support this initiative in collaboration with the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education and the West African Examinations Council.	December 2011
Recommendation 9: Test teachers on knowledge appropriate for grade-level content and on the teaching skills needed to teach primary grade subjects.	Country office	The Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education has identified the quality of education as a major priority. Under the sector-wide approach, some donors are providing funding and technical support to improve teacher training and performance and to establish bi-annual monitoring systems. Reports on progress will be part of the joint review by the Education Sector Donor Coordination Group, which is jointly led by WFP.	December 2011