

World Food Programme

PREP - WFP's Emergency Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme

Context

Climate change, volatile food and fuel prices, growing urbanization and new socio-political dynamics mean the humanitarian landscape is changing fast. WFP must face these new challenges with renewed action at a time when it has expanding inter-agency obligations as leader of two humanitarian clusters and co-leader of a third. It is imperative that WFP maintains its edge as a leader in delivering humanitarian assistance. Emergency preparedness and response strengthening through PREP will ensure that WFP delivers as effectively and accountably as possible to both its beneficiaries and donors.

The three-year PREP initiative provides the means to meet the challenges and to support WFP's transition from a "food aid" to a "food assistance" agency. It allows the organization to home-in on the priority areas which need strengthening and to institutionalise Emergency Preparedness and Response at the heart of all WFP's work.

Led by WFP's Director of Emergencies, PREP turns strategy into action. It focuses on making WFP's trusted reputation for delivering help to the people it serves even stronger. PREP will ensure that, corporately, WFP develops a New Response Model - that the right people with the right skills are in the right place at the right time, having the right stocks and systems to support them.

Approach

A flexible and dynamic programme, PREP is founded on the principle of preparedness as risk management. It delivers sustainable, value for money solutions, capturing and managing knowledge to make WFP better able to respond to emergencies. It is firmly rooted in listening to past lessons learned.

Elements of WFP's New Response Model

The New Response Model has three key objectives:

- Strengthening WFP's capacities to deliver a timely and appropriate response for up to six million people in two concurrent corporate emergencies;
- Strengthening the accountability and coherence of WFP's response management;
- Strengthening partnerships with national authorities, the international humanitarian community and external supporters to build a more efficient response.



PREP enables WFP to meet increasing humanitarian challenges.

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Strengthening WFP's corporate response – success stories

Having stocks and equipment in place faster

WFP staff can often see an emergency coming: it is PREP's job to give them the means to respond as effectively and efficiently as possible. A key tool is the Forward Purchase Facility (FPF), under which working capital is released to buy food in advance.

For five Country Offices in the Horn of Africa this has meant cutting the lead time in half for getting help to the people who need it. Since the FPF was first used in July 2011, more than 500,000 metric tons of food, including essential specialized nutritional products for malnourished mothers and children, have been bought for the region, for over \$200 million. WFP now has a rolling inventory of 200,000 metric tons of food corporately available.

The valuable lessons learned in the Horn have been successfully applied in the Sahel emergency. PREP is working to ensure faster delivery of an increased range of Ready-to-Eat nutritional products.

Operational Information Management – tailored to user needs

PREP works on the basis that good and easy to find information is crucial to the best emergency preparedness and response. It supports an Information Management Team, which is improving the clarity and accessibility of WFP's systems. Central to this is the Emergency Preparedness and Response Web, EPweb - a "one stop shop" for all the latest information and maps. The team has also recently re-launched HEWSweb – the Humanitarian Early Warning System site – making it more comprehensive and easier to use. WFP manages HEWSweb on behalf of the humanitarian community.

The needs of staff in the field are also listened to. After the emergency in Libya, a new tool – the EPen – was created for new, challenging operations. It is an easily updated "office on a pen drive" which brings together in one place all the forms, templates and guidance which emergency responders need.

The EPen has been successfully used to set up a new WFP operation in Lebanon and to scale up others in South Sudan and the Sahel. A Pre-Deployment Tool Kit has now been developed for staff being sent to emergencies.

Having the right staff with the right skills and support, ready to go

After listening to the most commonly-raised issue in WFP's robust Lessons Learned exercises, PREP is putting in place Corporate Response Rosters and Emergency Training Programmes. Non-food corporate response stocks have also been enhanced under PREP to give responders the supplies they need and regional logistics services have been increased.

Harnessing developments in technology for humanitarian work

PREP is a strong advocate of strengthening WFP's remote sensing data acquisition and analysis capabilities. Having the best imagery and information possible in both sudden and slow onset emergencies improves situational awareness and decision-making when planning the response.

PREP supports the Geographic Information Systems and Mapping Team in the Division of Emergencies in crisis support mapping. The Team's tailored, user-friendly maps are widely shared in the humanitarian community to help WFP and other agencies to visualize where help is needed most.

A groundbreaking technique, which combines analyses of frequent historical shocks with factors such as deforestation and desertification, has also been developed.

Overlaying household food security and livelihoods information helps WFP know where, when and how to target its assistance programmes. Analyzing vegetation cover over a historical time frame also gives advance warning that a crisis is coming – a key element in PREP's strengthening of WFP's emergency preparedness and response. The Sahel, the Horn of Africa, Mozambique and Afghanistan are some of the regions and countries where this technique has been applied to predict the impact of the crisis.



PREP is investing in strategies and stocks for Ready-to-Eat Meals

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Strengthening accountability and coherence in WFP's response management – success stories

New strategies and frameworks

To make emergency preparedness and response central to WFP's work, PREP has put new strategies and frameworks in place. The Ready-to-Eat Strategy and the Emergency Preparedness and Response Policy are just two of the solid, streamlined instruments being developed under PREP to guide corporate response management.

Sustained Knowledge Management systems and tools are being built to ensure that the emergency preparedness and response 'learning loop' is closed and that WFP continues to learn and improve from each emergency experience.

Changing the way WFP prepares and responds

A new Emergency Preparedness and Response Package (EPRP) has been developed, which guides WFP Country Offices in gradually stepping up their readiness and response. Implementation of the EPRP – which integrates contingency and business continuity planning and risk management - is compulsory.

Staff in South Sudan relied on the EPRP when they faced the risk of a major refugee influx. Food was first pre-positioned and then response was stepped up with the creation of a new transport corridor from Ethiopia. In Syria, WFP staff used each step of the EPRP to guide their preparedness and response. Under the first level of Minimum Preparedness Actions, a support office was set up in Amman. Corridors were then established through Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon as Emergency Readiness Actions to circumvent border closures. A fuel depot was also opened in Damascus. Using the EPRP's Standard Operating Procedures and Risk Profile, 10 armoured vehicles were obtained to increase staff safety.

Ensuring the PREP investment thrives

The New Response Model which PREP will produce is a significant legacy which must be sustained and institutionalized by WFP. Accordingly, from the outset, PREP has given the highest priority to analyzing longer term financial implications and to developing sustainable funding. Each activity is subject to specialist budgetary analysis to ensure that the best return possible on the PREP investment is reaped.

It is expected that half of PREP's activities will be completed and blended into WFP's regular work at no additional cost. But, some others, such as standby air capacity and emergency training, present challenges to be mainstreamed into WFP's regular budget for which funding solutions are being explored.

What happens when PREP is concluded has been considered and planned for since the outset of the initiative. The exit-strategy calls for systematic learning from future responses, which will then shape core funding allocations to capture innovation and enhance WFP's capability in a timely manner. WFP's investment in strengthening emergency preparedness and response will become continual and central to the way the organization operates.



PREP ensures WFP's response is timely and appropriate



PREP reinforces essential stocks and supplies

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Strengthening Partnerships – success stories

Building national capabilities (CAPRO)

In line with the key objective of strengthening national disaster preparedness and response systems, PREP is supporting WFP's pilot Capabilities Partnership Programme, CAPRO, as it continues into 2014. CAPRO works with governments to train staff in key ministries and departments, building carefully and concretely, on systems which are already in place.

PREP's investment in CAPRO has allowed WFP to respond to increasing requests from governments for technical assistance and training support. In the Philippines, WFP is working closely with the government's Department of Social Welfare and Development. In four disaster-prone areas of the main island of Luzon, stakeholders and resources have been brought together to mitigate emergencies through better preparedness and response. Logistics support, tailored preparedness and response training and community-based projects complement each other in a "bottom up" approach.

WFP Implementing the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Transformative Agenda

As PREP is looking to build the response capacity of governments and WFP's ability to augment this in an efficient and coordinated manner, PREP will continue to be WFP's primary vehicle for implementing the Transformative Agenda. All PREP activities are aligned with, and contribute to, the Transformative Agenda. WFP developed the concept for an inter-agency rapid response mechanism and is working closely with other agencies to test it and to fashion other coordination systems. WFP will be at the forefront of implementing the Transformative Agenda in partnership with other leading UN agencies to ensure the best emergency response in the critical first 72 hours of a disaster.

Reinforcing the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depots network

PREP has successfully advocated for US\$ 7.7million of advance financing capital to create a stock of 2700 metric tonnes of ready to use supplementary foods for the global UNHRD network, ready for a rapid emergency response. Through PREP, both an international procurement supply and service centre and a training facility have been established in the UNHRD in Malaysia. The UNHRDs in Dubai and Ghana have received essential equipment such as motorboats and mobile storage units.

PREP also works to provide essential supplies of equipment. In Uganda, a regional standby truck fleet has been established, with vehicles already deployed to augment local capacity. PREP has facilitated the setting up of a standby rotary air reserve cell for immediate emergency deployment from Entebbe.

Working with external partners

PREP is pressing forward with WFP's commitment to working with external partners, who give humanitarians access to information and skills which they could not otherwise afford. One recent partnership is between WFP's Early Warning, Analysis and Support Team and the UK-based European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF). In its first ever collaboration with a humanitarian agency, ECMWF has given WFP free access to its data and technology, which usually incurs a \$250,000 subscription fee. A pilot forecasting project during the rainy season in a crisis-hit region of South Sudan has now been successfully expanded. WFP and other humanitarian agencies were able to plan operations, including air drops, distributions and construction work, around the weather. Time, money and lives were saved.

Other current partners include the World Bank, the Dartmouth Flood Observatory, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre and the ITHACA institute at the Polytechnic of Turin.

The especially vibrant partnership with ITHACA produced geo-spatial maps during the floods in Pakistan which showed areas where the waters were receding quicker than others. Costly helicopters could then be diverted ahead of time as land access to other areas could be pre-planned.

After Haiti's earthquake, ITHACA maps based on very high-resolution satellite imagery also allowed WFP emergency responders to plan easily accessible food distribution sites for hundreds of thousands of people. WFP and ITHACA are currently developing an Extreme Rainfall Detection System, which would provide near real time flood alerts based on satellite data.



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