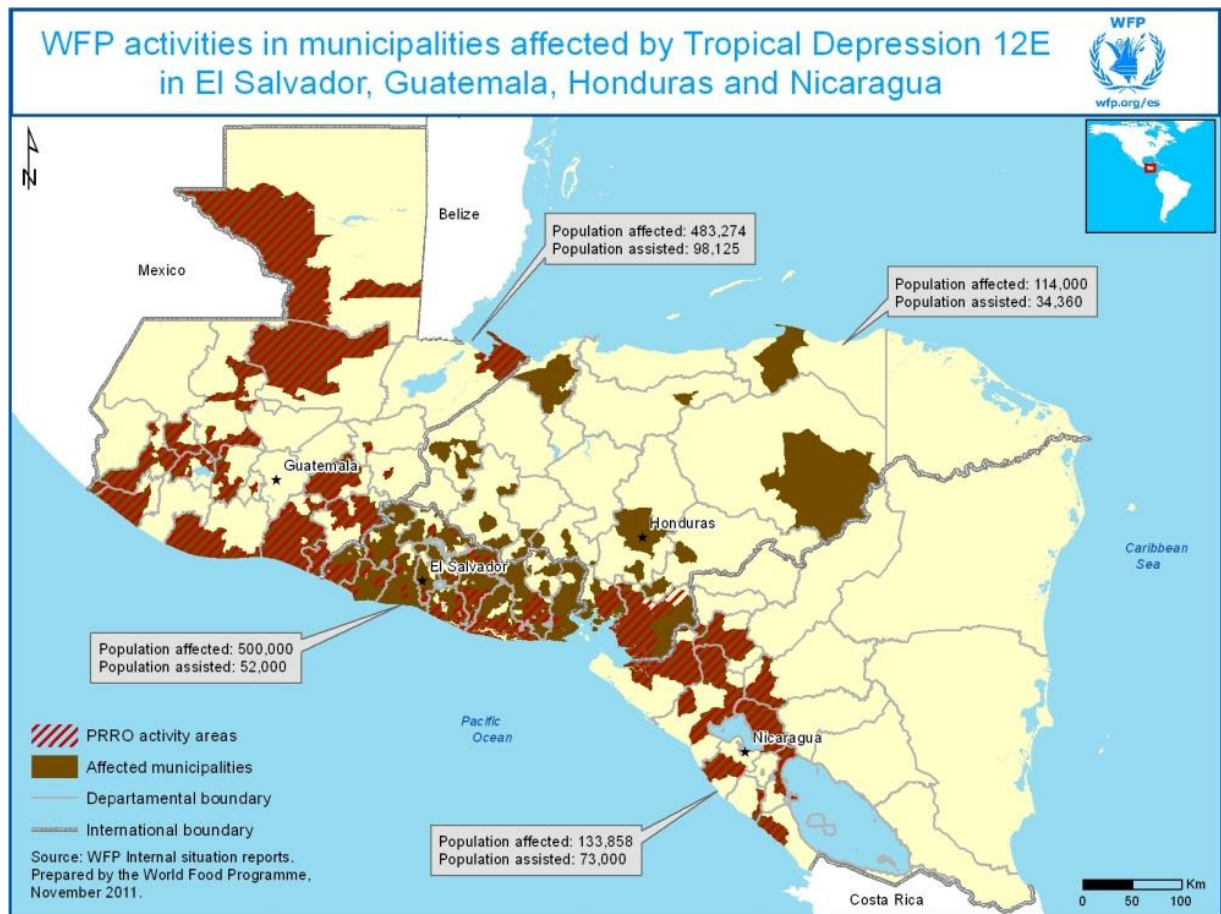


OD_Panama RD Presentation to the EB

EB.2/2011

1. The diversity of the country contexts of Latin America and the Caribbean, challenges WFP to employ the full range of its strategic activities in the region. On the one hand, WFP focuses on capacity development to support governments to ensure that their investments in social protection lead to solid results in increasing food and nutrition security among vulnerable populations. We also have excellent opportunities to facilitate exchanges between countries for south to south cooperation and knowledge sharing. However, our traditional relief and recovery operations are still a critical priority.



2. In mid October, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua were hit by Tropical Depression 12 E and the ensuing atmospheric instability which led to several days of extremely intensive rainfall. Estimates from the four governments

indicate that up to 800,000 people have been affected and at least 90 deaths were reported. WFP, working with national and local authorities, initiated response immediately in the affected zones. Flash appeals in El Salvador and Nicaragua were released and CERF funding has been received for Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua. So far, WFP has provided assistance to approximately 257,500 people in need in the four countries. I take this opportunity to thank the governments of Australia, Spain, Brazil, Italy, Germany and Luxembourg for supporting our preparedness and response.

3. Although the timely and efficient response to the floods in Central America was certainly aided by WFP's preparedness activities, including prepositioning of stocks, under the regional PRRO (200043.), we believe that the best way to address the recurrent disasters that impact the countries of the region, is through an integrated Disaster Cycle Management approach which incorporates emergency preparedness and response as well as Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation. We continue the research to achieve this goal. In the coming months we will be analyzing the gaps in our preparedness capacities and will later present a strategy to strengthen the services that we can provide in this area.
4. In line with this approach, the Regional Bureau is rolling out the new global Emergency Preparedness and Response Package, combining key elements of contingency planning, business continuity, pandemic planning, security risk assessment and risk management. We have been the first region to run a simulation exercise within the new global preparedness framework. This exercise will be replicated in most of our COs.
5. Recently we received support from the Transition Opportunity Fund to develop a regional strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation. We will be working to develop this, starting in the Andean Region, as another critical facet of our Disaster Cycle Management approach.
6. Another area that we are prioritizing with support from the Transition Opportunity Fund, is 'Nutrition.' We are currently working in partnership with the governments of Central America and Dominican Republic to formulate a regional project to help strengthen national capacities to prevent chronic under-

nutrition among children under two and pregnant and lactating women. A key focus of this project will be to promote local production of ready to use foods including low dose lipid-based nutrition supplements and micronutrient powders for utilization in social protection and community health programs. The project will foster multi-sector partnerships in order to combine proven nutrition specific and complementary actions as part of a comprehensive approach that particularly targets indigenous and afro-descendent communities.

7. We continue to strengthen our regional alliances. As we had already announced in the previous Board, we signed an agreement with the Andean Community (CAN) to enhance collaboration in nutrition and disaster risk reduction. Since my arrival in the region, I have participated in the Iberoamerican Summit and co-hosted a meeting with UNDP on food security and migration. In the near future I will meet with ECLAC and attend the SICA Heads of State Summit to discuss early recovery from the floods.
8. The Regional Bureau is systematizing its communication with CO, HQ divisions and external partners, to improve sharing of information and best practices at different levels. We have taken seriously the request from the EB to consider how WFP could globally build on the lessons learned in LAC. We are working to have a more robust information sharing capacity and internally restructuring the Bureau to fit those needs. We are currently writing a report on the work done on safety nets in the region and we're inviting HQ Divisions to come and see innovative projects that showcase the way forward for WFP in middle income countries, in areas such as school meals, HIV and emergency preparedness.
9. The Board will review two new projects from the region, both of which are illustrative of how we operationalize the priorities I have mentioned. Colombia's PRRO 200148 (2012-2013) would provide an "Integrated Approach to Address Food Insecurity among Highly Vulnerable Households Affected by Displacement" and Haiti's DEV 200150 (2012-2014) would provide "Assistance to the National School Feeding Programme." Honduras CP 200240 (2012-2016) has been revised according to the Board's feedback and will be presented for endorsement.