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STRATEGIC EVALUATION

WFP's Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme: A Strategic Evaluation (2011-2014)

Evaluation Report – Volume I

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Evaluation Management

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Executive summary

1. This evaluation assessed the contribution of the Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme (PREP) to improving WFP's capability to respond effectively and efficiently to large-scale emergencies. The evaluation is part of a series of strategic evaluations on WFP's emergency preparedness and response.

2. Touching almost all the geographic and operational areas of WFP's work, the programme was implemented over three and a half years of highly complex internal and global conditions: WFP was restructuring and decentralizing its operations and functions to support the shift from food aid to food assistance; the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's Transformative Agenda was launched to improve the global humanitarian system; and an unprecedented number of complex and long-duration Level 3 emergency responses were activated.

3. The evaluation found that PREP was timely and highly relevant, and contributed to important achievements across its priority outcome areas:

- *Personnel*: moderate improvements in the timely deployment of qualified surge capacity to Level 3 emergencies through a corporate emergency response roster and inter-divisional emergency training.

- *Finance and financial risk management*: improvements in the volume of and timely access to advance financing, which are essential for WFP's rapid response and early scale-up.

- *Accountability*: improvements in the timeliness, consistency and user-friendliness of information; formal assignment of roles and responsibilities in Level 3 emergencies; and systematic use of strategic and operational task forces and lesson-learning from Level 3 emergencies.

- *Stocks*: support to the pre-positioning of ready-to-eat foods, and modest investments in WFP's logistics capacity.

- *External partners*: a stronger framework for WFP's work with national authorities and better civil–military coordination.

4. However, following PREP's conclusion in December 2014, WFP continues to face critical gaps in its emergency preparedness and response capacity, especially regarding personnel, cooperating partners and cash and voucher programming, but also in other important areas:

- Several programme activities were not completed, including leadership training and deployment, staff health and well-being measures, and review of corporate response stocks.

- Other activities such as the emergency response roster and the emergency preparedness and response package need refinement and/or lack ownership and uptake in WFP.

- Important areas such as relationships with cooperating partners, cash and voucher programming, protection, and accountability to affected populations were either not covered by the programme or not yet sufficiently addressed by other initiatives.

5.   The programme could have achieved more through better prioritization; enhanced communication with the field to strengthen ownership and application of frameworks, tools and guidance; and a more comprehensive approach that addresses phases beyond immediate response and emergency scenarios beyond sudden-onset natural disasters.

6.   Continued strengthening of emergency preparedness and response is needed to secure and build on the programme's investments and achievements, and to maintain WFP's global leadership position in emergency preparedness and response. The evaluation makes four main recommendations: i) reinforce emergency preparedness and response as a corporate priority; ii) focus on staff capacity, relationships with cooperating partners, and cash and vouchers programming as priorities; iii) clarify and enable the Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division's role in strengthening corporate emergency preparedness and response; and iv) refine and complete several major ongoing PREP activities.

Introduction

Context

7.   Emergency preparedness and response (EPR) is WFP's core operating area. Responding to emergencies and protracted crises accounted for at least 78 percent of WFP's total direct expenses over the last four years.[1] In 2010, following three large-scale and highly visible emergencies that stretched WFP's response capabilities – the Haiti earthquake, the Pakistan floods and the Sahel drought – a global WFP management meeting called for action to address the challenges. The Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme (PREP) was launched in mid-2011, initially for three years, but later extended until December 2014.

8.   PREP was implemented during a period of significant change in WFP and across the global humanitarian system. WFP was making the strategic shift from food aid to food assistance, with implications for its approach, organization and operations that led to the launch of an organization-wide restructuring and decentralization process in mid-2012. The global humanitarian system in which WFP plays a leading role was also improving humanitarian leadership, coordination and accountability through the Transformative Agenda, launched in December 2011.

PREP Overview

9.   PREP aimed to ensure WFP's ability to respond effectively and efficiently to large-scale emergencies with up to 6 million beneficiaries in three Level 3 emergencies within one year.[2]

10.   PREP's more than 70 activities were designed to strengthen five priority outcome areas: i) personnel; ii) finance and financial risk management; iii) accountability; iv) food and non-food stocks; and v) external partners. PREP implemented some activities directly and supported other divisions with responsibilities for EPR, by facilitating inter-divisional cooperation, mobilizing funding, providing analysis or developing guidance and promoting its use, and engaging in inter-agency processes to

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[1] WFP.2014. *Annual Performance Report for 2013* (WFP/EB.A/2014/4).
[2] The Generic Response Capabilities Model is built on a scenario of 2+1 corporate emergencies, with two occurring simultaneously and a third later in the same year.

ensure compatibility between WFP's tools and approaches and the Transformative Agenda.

11. WFP's Director of Emergencies, reporting to the Deputy Executive Director/Chief Operating Officer, was responsible for PREP's implementation, supported by a secretariat of up to eight staff and eight consultants and several inter-divisional working groups. An outreach network created in mid-2012 facilitated communication with the field. In total, 210 staff members and consultants worked on PREP activities for an average of about ten months each, under the Director of Emergencies or in other units with PREP funding.

12. PREP received USD 41 million – 43 percent of its total requested budget of USD 95 million. Of funding received, 94 percent was from extra-budgetary sources.[3] Table 1 shows allocations by outcome area.

TABLE 1: PREP FUNDING		
Outcome area	**Total received *(USD)***	**%**
Personnel	4 994 686	12
Finance/financial risk management	361 457	1
Accountability	16 310 462	40
Stocks – food and non-food	4 198 736	10
External partners – without cluster funding	9 364 626	23
External partners – cluster funding	5 777 398	14
TOTAL	**41 007 365**	**100**

Source: PREP, November 2014.

Evaluation Features

13. The evaluation was part of the Office of Evaluation's strategic evaluation series on EPR. Its purpose was to assess PREP's contribution to improving WFP's EPR capability and to provide lessons and recommendations for further strengthening of EPR. The evaluation assessed the relevance/appropriateness, effectiveness, sustained contribution, and supporting and constraining factors of PREP.

14. Data collection and analysis between August and December 2014 included case studies of recent Level 3 emergency responses,[4] staff surveys,[5] 244 internal/external interviews, and document/data review. Gender issues were systematically considered and data were disaggregated by gender wherever possible.

15. As PREP's broad engagement precluded analysis of each activity, the evaluation selected core activities in each outcome area according to their importance and degree of completion, and assessed the effects of these activities on recent emergency responses. The relevance and expected benefits of activities that were ongoing during the evaluation and PREP's overall contributions to its outcome areas were also assessed.

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[3] PREP's main donors are Australia, Canada, Finland, Luxembourg, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom along with the Forward Purchase Facility. Table 1 does not include an associated United Kingdom grant of USD 14.5 million approved in 2014 for additional preparedness activities.
[4] Iraq and Cameroon in 2014; South Sudan, the Syrian crisis and the Philippines in 2013–2014.
[5] The survey had a 40 percent response rate and a total of 368 respondents.

Evaluation Findings

Relevance

16.   PREP's design was assessed as highly relevant to both addressing WFP's internal challenges and implementing the Transformative Agenda, as confirmed by staff perceptions (Figure 1)

Figure 1: Relevance of PREP activities according to staff survey responses[6]
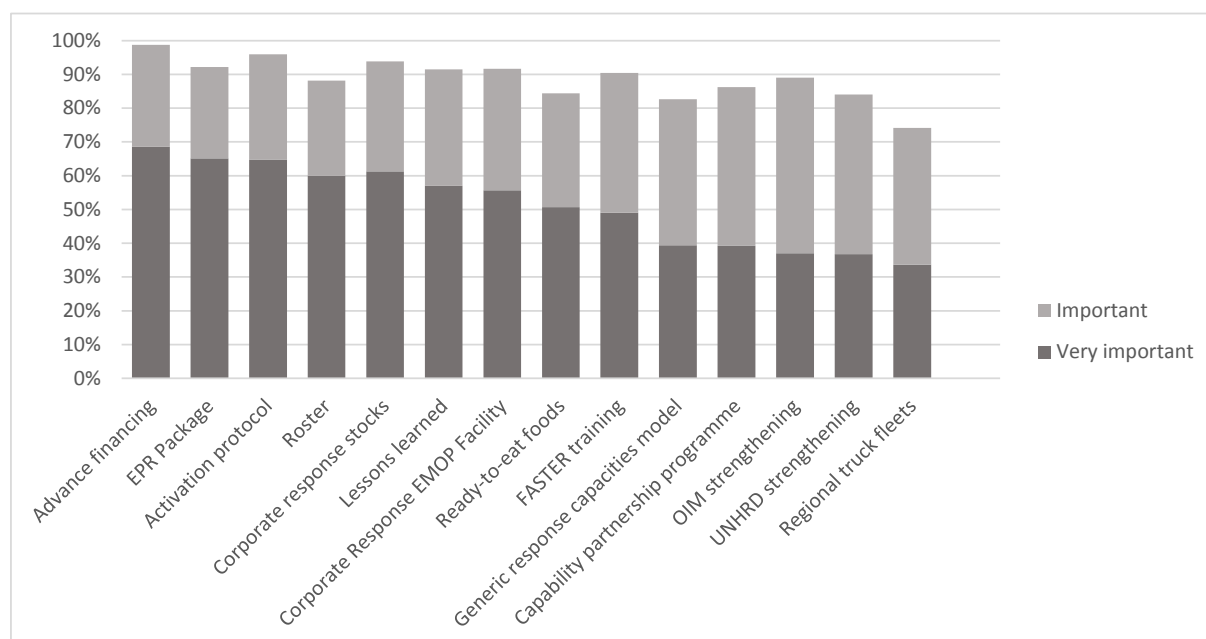
* EPR: emergency preparedness and response; EMOP: emergency operation; FASTER: Functional and Support Training for Emergency Response; OIM: Operational Information Management Unit; UNHRD: United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot

17.   However, PREP focused predominantly on large-scale, sudden-onset natural disasters. Evaluation interviews and case studies indicated insufficient attention to requirements in complex and protracted or lower-level emergencies, or to the phases prior to declaration of a corporate emergency.

Outcome Area Results

Personnel

18.   Personnel issues were correctly identified as major constraints to WFP's response capacity. PREP facilitated inter-divisional development of an EPR training and deployment strategy, and supported creation and use of several components including an emergency response roster for deploying surge capacity to Level 3 emergencies, and an inter-functional, simulation-based training called Functional and Support Training for Emergency Response (FASTER).

19.   These tools contributed to moderate improvements in the timely deployment of surge staff to Level 3 emergencies. Since becoming operational in early summer 2014, the emergency response roster had supplied 75 deployments to four Level 3

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[6] "Don't know" responses are not included.

emergencies by October 2014, accounting for between 12 and 32 percent of deployments (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Shares of the emergency response roster in recent WFP deployments to Level 3 emergencies
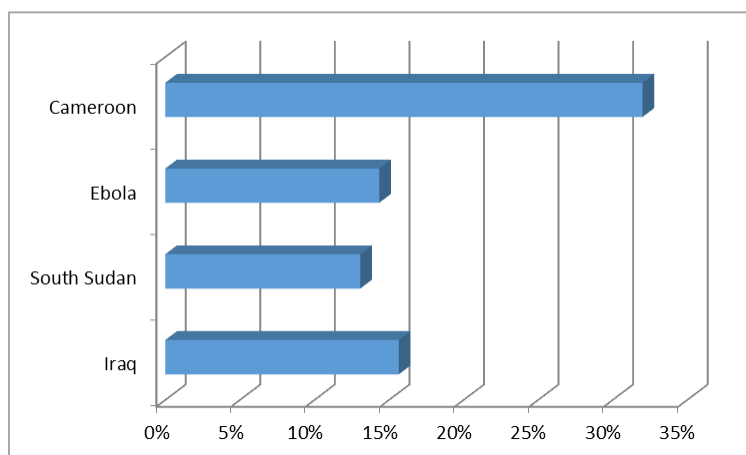
Sources: WFP deployment and roster records.

20.   With 29 percent of its 343 members being national officers, the roster addresses the priority aim of increasing opportunities for national staff. Women accounted for 23 percent of both roster members and roster deployments, compared with 42 percent of WFP's overall international recruits and professional officers.[1] More than 90 percent of survey respondents reported major or some improvement from the roster. However, it has not provided sufficient capacity in all technical areas to meet the Generic Response Capability Model targets,[7] and feedback on deployees' qualifications and suitability varied.

21.   FASTER was universally lauded for its content and delivery method, and received very high satisfaction ratings from participants. By October 2014, 73 staff members had been trained, 42 percent of whom were women and 56 percent country office staff. At the time of the evaluation, FASTER-trained deployments were still too few to affect emergency response.[8] As the emergency response roster became operational, its members were targeted by FASTER. With current costs of more than USD 13,000 per trainee, a substantial and sustained investment would be needed to train sufficient personnel to affect emergency response practice, especially considering the dynamic membership of the roster, with no guaranteed deployment. Another United Nations agency – which uses a similar WFP-developed training – targets training towards those standing response teams most likely to be deployed.

22.   Interviewees saw PREP's support to the deployment of more administrative staff to emergencies as critical in addressing issues with housing, facilities and staff well-being, despite reports of some deployed administrative staff lacking necessary emergency experience. Respondents in Iraq, the Philippines and South Sudan reported continuing problems with living and working conditions, and activities for addressing staff health in emergencies were not funded or completed at the time of the evaluation.

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[7] The model is a WFP tool for planning emergency readiness. It details a response scenario, outlines targets and identifies the capabilities required to meet the scenario parameters and targets.
[8] South Sudan and Iraq each had three people deployed who had been trained by FASTER, and Cameroon had two.

23.   Despite PREP's achievements, staff throughout WFP reported that staff capacity, deployment and well-being remain crucial concerns and the highest priority for further strengthening of EPR. Critical elements of the EPR training and deployment strategy, including establishment of corporate emergency response teams, a leadership roster and leadership training, have not yet been implemented. Interviews and analysis of deployment records identified important challenges in sustaining staff in protracted emergencies, filling the posts left empty by deployed staff, covering all the technical areas needed, and ensuring sufficient staff qualifications and capacities for working in emergency settings.

24.   Resolving structural human resource issues was beyond the scope of PREP, and the evaluation found widespread perceptions of insufficient leadership on EPR-related personnel issues.

Finance and financial risk management

25.   In cooperation with other units, PREP made important contributions to improving the volume of and timely access to advance financing. Advance financing ceilings were increased from USD 557 million in 2012 to USD 920 million in 2014, significantly improving fund availability for rapid response and early scale-up. The ability to use historical funding trends and the Immediate Response Account (IRA) as collateral has made access to the Working Capital Financing Facility more flexible, helping to prevent pipeline breaks, as in South Sudan. Increased levels of delegated authority for drawing on the IRA have helped increase the speed of WFP's initial response, as in Iraq and South Sudan.

26.   WFP could further improve its use of advance financing. The IRA often lacks liquidity as loans are not consistently repaid; this delayed the response in South Sudan, for example. The Corporate Response Emergency Operation (EMOP) Facility – which includes simplified financing templates and processes, and was identified as potentially important by 92 percent of survey respondents and many informants – has yet to be finalized.

Accountability

27.   In line with wider corporate efforts to strengthen internal and global accountability, including to donors, PREP sought to make WFP's approach to EPR more systematic, transparent and learning-oriented.

Systematic approach

28.   The 2012 revised protocol for activating an emergency response introduced the systematic use of operational and strategic task forces. This improved the involvement in corporate emergency decision-making of senior management from all divisions, and introduced a consistent, formal process for assigning key roles and responsibilities in Level 3 responses. Respondents reported areas where further improvements were needed, including in coherence between the two task forces, and internal transparency in decisions, especially relating to roles and responsibilities.

29.   PREP supported the roll-out and refinement of the EPR Package, a mandatory tool to guide country offices in assessing risk and implementing preparedness actions and response procedures. Survey and interview respondents reported that the package was valuable and had the potential to increase the consistency of preparedness planning across WFP; a similar package has been adopted at the inter-agency level.

However, use of the package did not always lead to the required preparedness actions or sufficient follow-up when thresholds were passed, as in Cameroon, Iraq and South Sudan. Interviewees reported that this was because of management's inadequate ownership and accountability, cumbersome processes, and insufficient staff and financial resources for implementing follow-up actions. A financial instrument designed to support preparedness activities, the Immediate Response Account for Preparedness (IR-PREP), has not been used frequently, reportedly because its requirements are too restrictive.[9]

Transparency

30. PREP has made a positive contribution to transparency. It helped strengthen WFP's Operations Centre (OPSCEN), which has provided new report templates, surge capacity for information management, and training. As a result, more timely, consistent and user-friendly information is available to strategic decision-makers and external audiences. Level 3 country offices and other WFP divisions have benefited from deployments of OPSCEN staff and training, and corporate information requests have become more streamlined, reducing the burden on operational staff.

31. However, many interviewees expressed concern about the larger investments in information flows and accountability targeting executive management and donors compared with other EPR priorities. Most country office respondents questioned the relevance of information products to their own operational decision-making, and reported that information and reporting requests were still sometimes excessive. Factors contributing to this overload included parallel channels for operational, public and donor reporting; and inadequate coordination between OPSCEN and the situational monitoring, needs assessments and vulnerability analyses produced by other divisions.

Learning

32. PREP introduced the systematic use of lessons-learned exercises for corporate emergencies. For 89 percent of survey respondents this was an improvement, but informants criticized the lack of follow-up on the exercises, which was hampered by the absence of a corporate knowledge management system.

Food and non-food stocks

33. In cooperation with other units, PREP contributed to increasing the availability and timely deployment of food and non-food stocks. Pre-positioning of ready-to-eat foods through WFP's Forward Purchase Facility enabled rapid dispatch, as at the outset of responses in Cameroon, Serbia, South Sudan and Ukraine. PREP's financial support to the pre-positioning of two truck fleets in Africa provided timely surge capacity, supplying trucks when needed in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan and reducing lead times from one month to one week. PREP financial support also enabled faster deployments of logistics equipment in Southeast Asia.

34. However, timely availability of appropriate food and non-food stocks remains a major challenge. Several recent Level 3 emergencies have faced critical food shortages, delays, concerns about food quality and appropriateness, and lack of support

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[9] With a total annual ceiling of USD 2 million, IR-PREP can fund proposals of up to USD 300,000 for activities of three months maximum.

equipment. At the time of the evaluation, the updated emergency procurement procedures supported by PREP had not yet been finalized.

35. The use of cash and vouchers (C&V) in emergencies is significant and growing.[10] PREP limited its work in this area, recognizing that C&V programming was led by other WFP units. However, the evaluation found significant room for improving staff capacity and support processes such as rapid market assessments, pre-identification of potential partners and concluding partner agreements.[11]

External partners

36. External partnerships and partners' capacities were frequently cited as critical bottlenecks to WFP's emergency response. PREP made positive contributions in this area, particularly with national authorities and military entities, but its activities were not proportionate to the importance of the issue, especially concerning WFP's relationships with cooperating non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

37. Informants reported the main weaknesses in relationships with and capacities of cooperating NGOs, and in the capacity and efficiency of the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD). However, PREP did not include any activities for strengthening the capacities of cooperating NGOs. Although WFP recently adopted a corporate partnership strategy, joint efforts by PREP and other units to improve the processing of field-level agreements were still ongoing at the time of the evaluation. PREP contributed to UNHRD's capacity by funding the development of a well-used training centre in Subang and by pre-positioning logistics equipment, but activities for providing broader support to UNHRD were not completed.

38. In cooperation with other units, PREP's Capabilities Partnership Programme developed a framework for capacity development of national authorities, contributed to training modules, and supported several country-level capacity development projects. Interviewees reported these as useful, especially in regions with less experience of capacity development of national authorities.

39. PREP contributed to improved civil–military coordination by helping to establish a network of focal points and temporarily funding some of these posts. Better civil–military coordination was reported in Asia and the Pacific, and West Africa. However, the relevance of the civil–military coordination guidance developed by PREP was perceived as being low, and the training module was not developed.

PREP's Overall Contribution

40. Perceptions of PREP's overall effectiveness diverged strongly among WFP staff; while the evaluation noted progress in many important areas, it also raised strong concerns about the sustainability of many PREP activities and achievements.

41. *Institutional focus.* The number and magnitude of the emergencies facing WFP during PREP's implementation helped ensure a focus on emergencies. Most survey respondents and interviewees recognized PREP's positive contribution to awareness and prioritization of EPR, for example through regular Board briefings and communications within WFP about the Transformative Agenda.

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[10] See WFP. 2015. *Wfp's 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Evaluation 2008-2014.* (WFP/EB.1/2015/5-A). The number of emergency projects using cash or vouchers increased from fewer than ten in 2009 to more than 30 in 2013, when WFP's C&V expenditure totalled USD 507 million spent in 52 countries.
[11] These findings are consistent with the evaluation of WFP's C&V policy.

42.   *Speed and coverage.* PREP helped increase the speed and coverage of WFP's emergency responses. Changes in advance financing enabled earlier scale-up of responses and helped avoid pipeline breaks. The roster helped fill deployment gaps and speed up deployments to recent Level 3 responses. The pre-positioning of ready-to-eat foods enabled the rapid delivery of assistance in Cameroon and South Sudan. However, overall improvement of response speed and coverage was limited by constraints in staff deployment capacity, food shortages and delays in deliveries, and delays in emergency C&V programming.

43.   *Consistency.* According to more than 90 percent of survey respondents, PREP helped WFP develop a more consistent and systematic approach to EPR, reducing the reliance on personalities. However 18 percent of Directors disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

44.   *Coherence and accountability.* Changes to operational information management introduced by PREP have enhanced the transparency and external accountability of WFP's operations. The systematic use of strategic and operational task forces has strengthened the coherence and accountability of managerial decisions for Level 3 emergency responses. However, there are concerns regarding the communication of decisions and the insufficient coordination and consistency of decisions between strategic and operational task forces.

45.   *Cross-cutting considerations.* PREP included activities for integrating gender considerations into EPR. However, it did not directly address accountability to affected populations, and its contribution to strengthening partnerships with cooperating partners was limited, although they are WFP's main interface with beneficiaries. PREP also paid insufficient attention to the quality or appropriateness of the assistance delivered.

46.   *Effects on Level 1 and Level 2 responses.* PREP increased WFP's focus on Level 3 responses, which was widely reported to have had negative effects on Level 1 and Level 2 responses. For example, staff were deployed to Level 3 responses from other important emergencies such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia. Internal and external support was reportedly more difficult to attract in the absence of a Level 3 declaration. However, Level 1 and Level 2 responses benefited from PREP activities through, for example, advance financing and increased spending authorities.

47.   *Mainstreaming.* The evaluation found that improvements in advance financing, OPSCEN and some protocols and guidance are likely to be sustained beyond PREP, either because they have been completed and require little additional investment, or because they have strong management buy-in. However, many respondents expressed strong concerns about the mainstreaming and sustainability of other important PREP activities. WFP's 2015 Management Plan included few references to PREP activities, and the evaluation found that ownership levels varied among WFP divisions. Changes in the PREP team and transfer of responsibility for EPR to WFP's Operations Department were reported as possible disruptions to the continuity of critical activities.

Supporting and Constraining Factors

48.   PREP's clear mandate to address WFP's EPR challenges helped create a positive enabling environment and bring key donors on board.

49.   However, the large number of Level 3 emergencies during PREP's implementation created competition for attention and funding between responding to

emergencies and making the systemic improvements sought by PREP. Introduction of WFP's Fit for Purpose initiative after PREP was designed meant that the programme had to adapt to emerging priorities and organizational restructuring, arguably reducing the share of leadership attention available to PREP.

50.   Many stakeholders considered PREP's dynamic and skilled staff and leadership critical to its success. Its cross-functional approach and ability to provide analysis and develop concepts enabled progress in several areas.

51.   However, many respondents saw PREP as overly complex and insufficiently clear on what it aimed to achieve and how. Although PREP addressed well-recognized priority issues, many respondents were critical of its top-down, Headquarters-centred implementation. Stronger communication to all levels of WFP could have helped increase attention to needs in the field, improve guidance and tool design and increase uptake. PREP's subnational office survey and workshops aimed to address these gaps, but had resulted in little follow-up at the time of the evaluation.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

52.   PREP was launched at an important moment as WFP sought to strengthen its capacity to respond to increasingly complex, global humanitarian challenges. PREP aimed to improve WFP's capabilities in five highly relevant areas: personnel, finance and financial risk management, accountability, food and non-food stocks, and external partners.

53.   Over three and a half years, PREP channelled approximately USD 41 million towards its activities, most of which was from extra-budgetary sources. During this same period (2011-2014) WFP's direct expenses for emergency operations were approximately USD 6.9 billion.[12] The evaluation team concluded that as a result of the investment, PREP contributed to important achievements in all of its outcome areas.

54.   PREP's accomplishments were achieved while WFP and its Division of Emergencies were challenged by an unprecedented number of long-duration and complex Level 3 emergencies, which exceeded the scenario of three corporate emergencies a year on which PREP was based. PREP was challenged by its wide scope, high ambitions and implementation approach, which – combined with a funding level of less than 50 percent – limited its overall success.

55.   Since conclusion of PREP in December 2014, WFP continues to face critical gaps in EPR, especially regarding personnel, cooperating partners and C&V programming, but also in other important areas. Several of PREP's main activities either were not completed, or need refinement and stronger ownership and uptake across WFP. PREP did not adequately address issues such as cooperating partners, C&V programming, protection and accountability to affected populations, and was too focused on the early phases of sudden-onset disasters rather than the full range of possible emergency scenarios.

56.   PREP's implementation approach did not build sustainable commitment in all areas. Many respondents saw PREP as focusing too much on generating frameworks, tools and guidance, without investing enough in communicating and supporting the uptake and application of these. Some tools and guidance were therefore not fully

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[12] WFP. 2014. *WFP's Annual Performance Report for 2013* Annex IX-A (WFP/EB.A/2014/4); 2014 estimates: WFP's on line contributions data system.

adopted, and commitment to EPR was inconsistent across WFP. PREP's reliance on extra-budgetary funding brought in needed resources but did not establish a sustained base of core resources for addressing continuing needs for EPR strengthening.

57. As EPR is WFP's main operational area, all relevant units will need to continue their attention to EPR strengthening, to ensure that PREP investments and achievements are not lost. Next steps in this work should build on PREP's efforts to leverage knowledge and learning and its cross-functional approach, while increasing the emphasis on consultations with field staff and partners on the design, adjustment and roll-out of activities and the full integration of EPR into the programmes of all relevant WFP divisions.

Recommendations

58. The evaluation makes four recommendations taking into account WFP's ongoing realignment under the Fit for Purpose initiative, the global humanitarian reform agenda and WFP's position as a global leader in EPR.

Recommendation 1: Reinforce EPR strengthening as a corporate priority	Addressed to*	Suggested timeframe
a) Do not extend PREP as a programme, but mainstream identified responsibilities for EPR strengthening in all relevant WFP functional areas.	EMG (OSE)	Immediate/continuous
b) Adopt an integrated agenda for EPR strengthening, giving due consideration to all levels of emergency, including those associated with complex and protracted emergencies.	EMG (OSE)	Immediate/continuous
c) Integrate EPR strengthening as a priority in all organizational change initiatives.	EMG (INC, OSE)	Immediate/continuous
d) Establish a regular, internal funding mechanism and sufficient dedicated capacity for work on strengthening EPR.	EMG	End of 2015
Recommendation 2: Focus on three priorities for future EPR strengthening: staff capacity; relationships with cooperating partners; and C&V programming.	**Addressed to**	**Suggested timeframe**
2.1 Staff capacity for emergency response		
a) Provide leadership, and further develop and implement a strategy to provide adequate staff capacity for emergency response.	HRM	Immediate/continuous
b) Make EPR a central element in implementation of the People Strategy and the leadership development programme, following revision of job profiles for leadership roles.	HRM	Immediate/continuous
c) Improve coverage and targeting of FASTER; and roll out the "Getting Ready for Emergencies" e-learning.	OSE (HRM)	Immediate/continuous
d) Continue to develop the emergency response roster, improve identification and vetting of candidates, and improve links among the emergency response, regional and functional rosters and the overall human resources system.	HRM (OSE)	Immediate/continuous
e) Establish corporate emergency response teams with adequate resources for set up and maintenance.	EMG (OSE, HRM)	End of 2015

f)	Improve the transition from surge capacity to longer-term recruitments, especially in protracted crises.	HRM (OSE)	End of 2015
g)	Strengthen career development for emergency responders.	HRM	Mid-2016
h)	Implement identified priorities for staff health and well-being.	RMW	End of 2015; continuous thereafter
2.2 Relationships with cooperating partners			
a)	Strengthen mechanisms for lesson-learning between WFP and its EPR cooperating partners at the global, regional and country levels, and support and monitor implementation of follow-up actions.	OSE (PGC, regional bureaux, country offices)	Immediate/continuous
b)	Develop systematic ways of responding to feedback from affected populations on the quality and appropriateness of WFP's assistance delivered through cooperating partners.	OSZ	Mid-2016
c)	Complete the development of expedited field-level agreements to reduce the time needed to establish partnerships in emergencies.	PGC (OSE)	Mid-2015
2.3 Preparedness for C&V programming			
a)	Complete and support EPR activities for C&V programming, including by strengthening capacity to conduct rapid market analysis and identify partners in advance of emergencies.	OSZ (OSE)	Mid-2016
b)	Complete integration of C&V issues into EPR training and the EPR Package.	OSE OSZ	End of 2015
c)	Address delays in concluding agreements, for example through checklists of issues to be addressed at the country level prior to agreement drafting; completion of pre-approved agreement templates; and expansion of the capacity of the Legal Office to deploy staff to emergencies.	LEG OSZ	End of 2015
Recommendation 3: Clarify and enable OSE's role in supporting corporate EPR strengthening.		**Addressed to**	**Suggested timeframe**
a)	Focus OSE's role on: • maintaining/refining core EPR tools and guidance; • providing field support at the request of regional bureaux or country offices; • consulting WFP field staff and partners on priorities in and tools for EPR; • managing EPR-related information and knowledge; • facilitating engagement of appropriate divisions in EPR; • advocating for, mobilizing resources for and communicating issues related to EPR; and • engaging with relevant inter-agency processes, particularly the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and ensuring alignment between WFP's EPR guidance and tools and those developed at the inter-agency level.	OSE OSE, DED	Immediate/continuous

Recommendation 4: Fully capture the investments made in PREP by refining and completing the following major PREP activities	Addressed to	Suggested timeframe
a) Prepare a final end-of-programme report on PREP's planned activities, with full accounting of expenditure, status of activities at the end of December 2014, and priorities for continuation and further development.	OSE	Mid-2015
b) **EPR Package:** 　i. Ensure that the strategic task force (STF) systematically considers situations approaching or surpassing risk thresholds. 　ii. Strengthen mechanisms to ensure that Country Directors assume responsibility and are held accountable for completing the package's risk assessment and checklists and implementing follow-up actions. 　iii. Simplify and improve flexibility of the EPR Package. Create a more user-friendly dashboard indicating when risk thresholds are passed. Ensure continued alignment with related tools at the inter-agency level.	STF Regional Directors OSE	Immediate/continuous End of 2015 End of 2015
c) **Activation protocol:** Ensure that the planned revision of the activation protocol includes simplification of the protocol and review of the terms of reference for strategic and operational task forces; and addresses issues raised in the evaluation about transparency, roles and responsibilities and complementarity between the strategic and operational task forces.	OSE EMG	End of 2015
d) **EPR knowledge management:** Encourage further lesson-learning processes at the country, regional or functional level and collate findings. Enhance systematic follow-up on lessons learned exercises and report on progress to the Executive Management Group (EMG). Continue to strengthen links with other review and knowledge management processes.	OSE EMG	Immediate/continuous
e) **Advance financing:** 　i. Clarify the role of the Immediate Response Account as a risk fund that can be used to make grants and provide collateral for advances, and advocate for this role with donors. 　ii. Increase awareness of IR-PREP for preparedness activities, and consider increasing its funding ceiling and timeframe.	RMB PGG OSE	Immediate/continuous End of 2015
f) **Corporate Response EMOP Facility:** Refine the facility, and finalize it for EMG approval and roll-out. Enable activation of elements of the facility prior to declaration of a Level 3 emergency.	OSE, EMG (OSZ, RMB)	End of 2015
g) **Operational information management:** 　i. Further rationalize and streamline information requests, seeking opportunities to reduce the frequency of reporting. 　ii. Merge various information and reporting channels.	OSE EMG	End of 2015 End of 2015

h) **Food and non-food stocks:**		
i. Complete the supply chain strategy for food and non-food stocks.	OSC (OSE)	End of 2015
ii. Strengthen mechanisms for ensuring the quality and appropriateness of WFP's response modalities by strengthening analyses and their links to decisions.	OSZ (OSE)	Immediate/continuous
i) **Augmentation of national readiness and response:** Support country offices and regional bureaux in capacity-building efforts for national authorities, for example by providing funding for project development, and strengthening mechanisms for exchanging good practices and lessons learned.	OSE	Immediate/continuous

* Responsibilities in parentheses indicate the unit(s) playing supporting or facilitating role.

1. Introduction

1.   This is a report of an independent evaluation of the World Food Programme's (WFP) Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme (PREP). The evaluation was conducted in 2014, and is based on desk research, interviews with key internal and external stakeholders, including through missions to WFP headquarters, several regional bureaux and the Cameroon country office, as well as a survey with key WFP staff.[13] This introduction will first explain what PREP was and how it came about before providing further information on the evaluation's approach, methods and implementation.

1.1.   Context

2.   Responding to emergencies is WFP's core business. Short- and medium-term response to emergencies and protracted crises have accounted for at least 78 per cent of WFP's overall direct expenses over the last four years.[14] Being well prepared for emergencies and able to deliver food assistance to people in crisis situations is what WFP is best known for and its reputation depends on the ability to deliver quickly, at scale and with appropriate relief items under very challenging conditions.

3.   PREP was an institutional strengthening initiative created in 2011 to address significant challenges faced by WFP in conducting its core business and concerns that it was losing the necessary level of preparedness and its "edge as a leader in delivering humanitarian assistance".[15] This concern originated in the experiences with three large-scale and highly visible emergencies in 2010: the earthquake in Haiti, the floods in Pakistan and the drought and famine in the Sahel.

4.   These emergencies followed a period of relatively few large-scale emergencies, in which WFP had started a shift from delivering food aid to offering a broader set of food assistance interventions. The scale and rapid succession of the three emergencies challenged the ability of WFP – and of the wider humanitarian system – to offer an effective response. Among others, WFP was concerned about and criticised on various grounds: for responding too slowly, not being able to cover a sufficient number of people in need, not coordinating enough with partners and lacking transparency and accountability.[16] For an organisation of WFP's size, mandate and centrality to the humanitarian system, these were serious concerns. Failure to address them could translate into significant loss of lives and livelihoods of those affected by emergencies and intense human suffering. It also posed a significant reputational risk to WFP at a time when the frequency and intensity of emergencies was expected to increase due to climate change, volatile food prices and growing urbanisation and while WFP was expanding its inter-agency obligations as leader of two humanitarian clusters and co-leader of a third.[17]

5.   The momentum for taking action to address these concerns grew during WFP's 2010 Global Management Meeting in Madrid. The Madrid discussions and resulting action plan,[18] as well as priority issues identified from WFP's internal lessons learnt

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[13] See Annex 1 for the summary terms of reference for the evaluation.
[14] Source: WFP. 2014. *Annual Performance Report for 2013.* (WFP/EB.A/2014/4).
[15] PREP brochure, WFP. December 2012
[16] Grunewald, F. et al. 2010. *Inter-agency real-time evaluation in Haiti: 3 months after the earthquake*, Groupe URD & the Global Public Policy Institute; IASC. 2010. *Response to the Humanitarian Crisis in Haiti: Achievements, Challenges and Lessons to be Learned*; Polastro, R. et al. 2011. *Inter-Agency Real Time Evaluation of the Humanitarian Response to the Pakistan's 2010 Flood crisis*. Reportedly, concerns were also reflected in 'red cover' audits for some emergency responses in this period.
[17] PREP brochure, WFP. December 2012. Related concerns were therefore flagged in the corporate risk register.
[18] See Annex 2 for the items of the Madrid Action Plan relating to EPR.

reviews from the 2010 emergencies formed the initial basis for PREP. The design of PREP was also strongly influenced by the "Transformative Agenda", launched in December 2011 as part of the inter-agency humanitarian reform process emphasising leadership, accountability and coordination. Additional opportunities presented by the external environment – including new technologies, e.g. for remote sensing, data gathering and forecasting, new programming options and new partnership opportunities – also helped shape PREP's design.

6.   PREP was launched in 2011 to help address these challenges. During its implementation, however, WFP, including the PREP team, were called to respond to an unusually high number of level 3 (L3) emergencies – seven over the course of 2014 – that consumed a large amount of the organisation's capacities and resources.

1.2.   PREP Overview

7.   **Objectives:** PREP's overall goal was to "sustainably enhance WFP's capability to respond effectively and efficiently to largescale [*sic*] emergencies"[19] with up to six million beneficiaries across 3 corporate emergencies.[20] To achieve this, PREP developed activities that, according to its draft logical framework,[21] were intended to strengthen WFP's corporate response capacities, strengthen the accountability and coherence of WFP's response management and strengthen partnerships. In line with the challenges raised by the 2010 emergencies and the priorities of the Transformative Agenda, PREP focused on the initial phase of the response to large-scale, predominantly sudden-onset emergencies with high visibility and reputational risk.[22]

8.   **Logic model:** The logic model (Figure 1) shows how PREP activities were intended to achieve a set of direct objectives in each of the outcome areas. Taken together, changes in these outcome areas were intended to contribute to the ultimate goal of PREP, namely to sustainably enhance WFP's capability to respond effectively (in terms of speed, coverage, accountability and consistency) to 2+1 corporate emergencies. The logic model was developed by the evaluation team based on existing programme documentation, including the logical framework,[23] as well as discussions with relevant stakeholders. Over the course of the evaluation, the logic model was successively simplified.

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[19] PREP Overview (6 October 2011)

[20] PREP's planning tools like the Generic Response Capabilities Model build on a scenario of "2+1" corporate emergencies, with two corporate emergencies occurring simultaneously, and a third later in the same year.

[21] PREP. 2012. *Logical Framework*. December 2012 (draft)

[22] See chapter 2.1 on relevance for the bias this introduces.

[23] The logical framework was not used here directly because it only contains a sample of activities and PREP's activity portfolio has since evolved. The evaluation team also felt that the outcome areas defined through the evaluation provide a more intuitive, easy to understand description of PREP's objectives.

Figure 1: PREP logic model
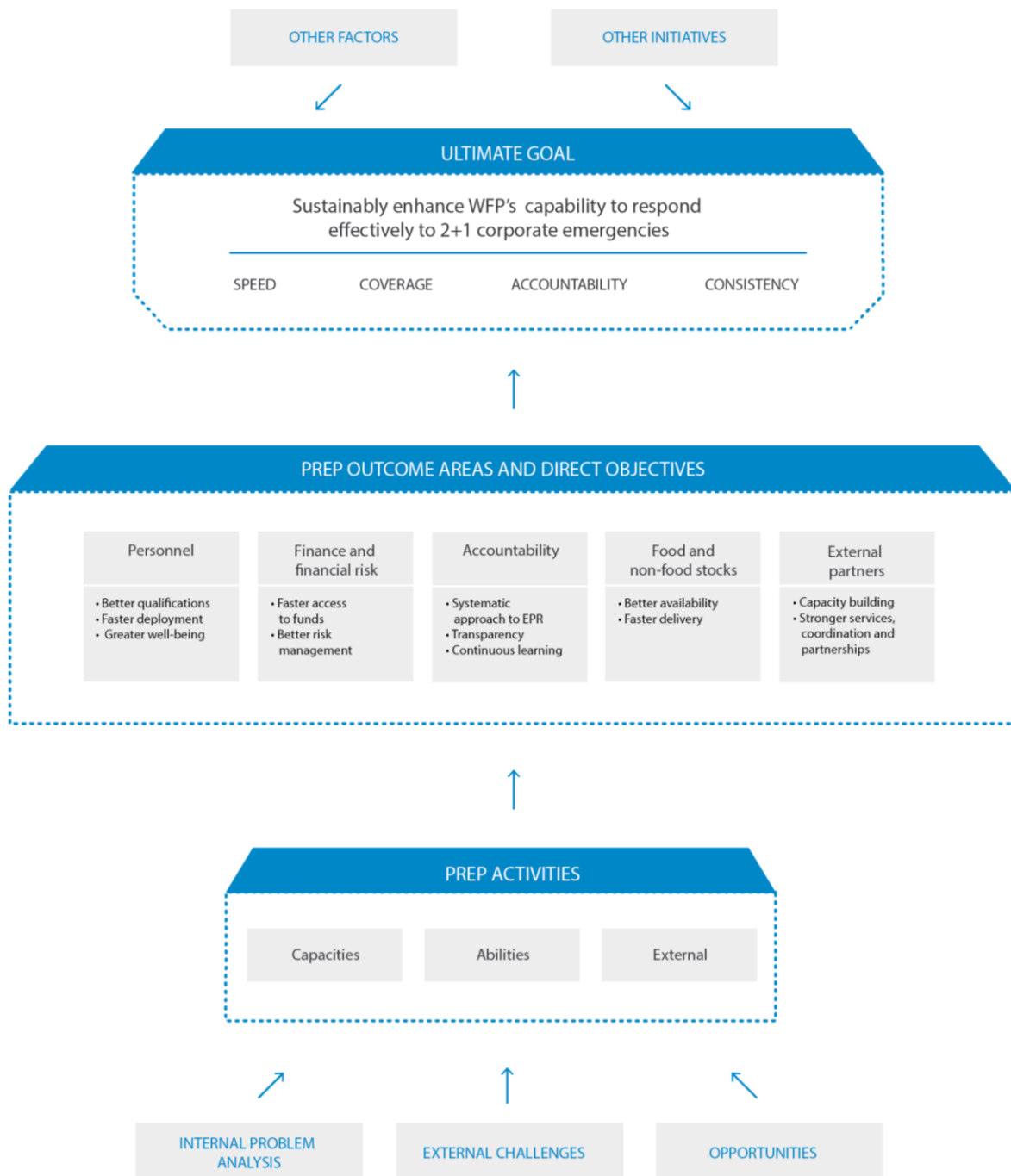
9.   **PREP's activities**: PREP's activity portfolio evolved significantly over time. While the 2012 draft logframe lists a selection of 26 activities, the 2013 activity portfolio includes 65, the 2014 portfolio 70 and a funding analysis of late 2014 71 activities.[24] Incorporating lessons from on-going emergency responses and/or inputs

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[24] See Annex 3 for the May 2014 activity portfolio.

from other functional areas, several activities were added, changed or dropped over time.

10.   Table 1 provides the complete list of activities of the latest portfolio. Based on discussions with the PREP team, the activities were grouped by the evaluation team into five outcome areas. In many cases, PREP built on or continued activities that were already on-going or that had been considered under previous institutional strengthening initiatives.[25]

Table 1: PREP outcome areas and activities[26]

| Outcome area	Activities
Personnel	Corporate Emergency Response Team (1.3) Emergency Response Roster (1.4) Emergency Leadership Roster (1.5) Emergency Leadership Training Programme (1.6) Emergency Middle Management Training (1.7) Getting Ready for Emergencies e-learning (1.8) Emergency Response Orientations (1.9) Functional and Support Training for Emergency Response (FASTER) (1.10) Functional Area Technical Emergency Training (1.11) Generic Emergency Preparedness and Response Training Module (1.12) Coaching and Mentoring Programme (1.13) Administrative/Engineering Response Capacity Support (1.15) Staff Health Protection in Emergencies Programme (1.16) Global Travel Service (1.17) Emergency Preparedness and Response Training and Deployment Strategy (2.5)
Finance and financial risk management	Advance Financing Project (1.2) Value for Money (2.8) Strengthening Emergency Preparedness and Response in PRROs (2.18) Corporate Response Emergency Operation (EMOP) Facility (CREF) (2.21) Early Warning Resource Management Project (2.32)
Accountability (systematic approach, transparency and learning)	Emergency Preparedness and Response Framework and EPR Policy (2.1) Normative Guidance Project (2.2) Generic Response Capability Model (GRCM) (2.3) Emergency Response Activation Protocol (2.9) Business Continuity Management Programme (2.10) Crisis Management (Critical Incident) (2.11) Emergency Preparedness and Response Package (2.12) Controls Enhancement Project (2.13) Functional Response Protocols (2.14) Generic Response Organogram (2.15) Recovery Planning (2.19) Emergency Programming (2.22) Gender in Emergencies (2.23) Sub-National Office Capacity Building and Support Programme (2.24) Business Continuity Planning (2.25) Capability Enhancement and Integration Plan for Programme Criticality (2.26) Corporate Response Exercise (2.27) Corporate Concept of Operations Project (2.31) Corporate Response Benchmarking and Key Performance Indicator Project (2.33)

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[25] For example, almost all elements considered by the 2006 "Enhancing WFP's Capacities to Respond to Emergencies" initiative were also included under PREP.
[26] Numbers in parentheses refer to PREP's numbering system.

Outcome area	Activities
	Operational Information Management (1.21) Mobile Devices for Information Capture/Projection (1.22) Spatial Data Infrastructure Improvement Project (1.23) Remote Sensing Project (1.24) Integrated Context Analysis (1.25) Operational Information Management Directive (2.16) Operations Support Project (Operations Centre-OPSCEN) (2.28) OPWeb (2.29) E-Pen USB Tool (2.30) Emergency Preparedness and Response Knowledge Management (2.4)
Food and non-food stocks	Forward Purchase Facility Enhancement (1.1) Corporate Response Stocks (1.18) Boat Project (1.19) Strategic Truck Fleet (1.20) Ready-to-Eat Strategy (2.7) Goods and Services Supply Chain Enhancement (2.34) Asset Management and Tracking System (2.35) Logistics Relief Item Tracking Application (3.5) EPR Greening (2.36) Logistics Humanitarian Staging Areas Project (3.6) Humanitarian Basecamps (3.8) Light Vehicle Support and Management (3.9)
External partners	Civil-Military Coordination Training Package (1.14) WFP Civil-Military Coordination Operational Guidance (2.17) National Disaster Management Agency Framework (2.6) Transformative Agenda Guidance (2.20) National Readiness and Response Augmentation (3.1) Other Humanitarian Actors (3.2) Development and Implementation of the Transformative Agenda (3.3) WFP Led/Co-Led Clusters (3.4) United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) Capacity Building (3.7)

11. **PREP's Structure, approach and staffing:** PREP was under the overall responsibility of WFP's Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer. The Director of Emergencies was tasked with coordination and oversight of the day-to-day implementation of activities. A PREP Internal Coordination Structure was created with different teams leading activities or facilitating coordination on the different thematic areas. This structure included a relatively small PREP secretariat and a large network of consultants, WFP staff between missions working on PREP activities and staff paid by PREP funds to work on PREP activities based in other units. In total, the staff list prepared by the PREP team, covering staff and consultants working on PREP activities and/or funded by PREP, includes 210 individuals, working an average of just under 10 months on PREP. This corresponds to roughly 50 full-time employees over PREP's lifetime of 3½ years. Figure 2 shows that while there was no information available on the activity areas of a large number of staff ("not specified"), the largest number among those for whom this information was available supported activities relating to accountability (including information management and learning), followed by core staff of the PREP team.

Figure 2: Number of total person months per outcome area[27]
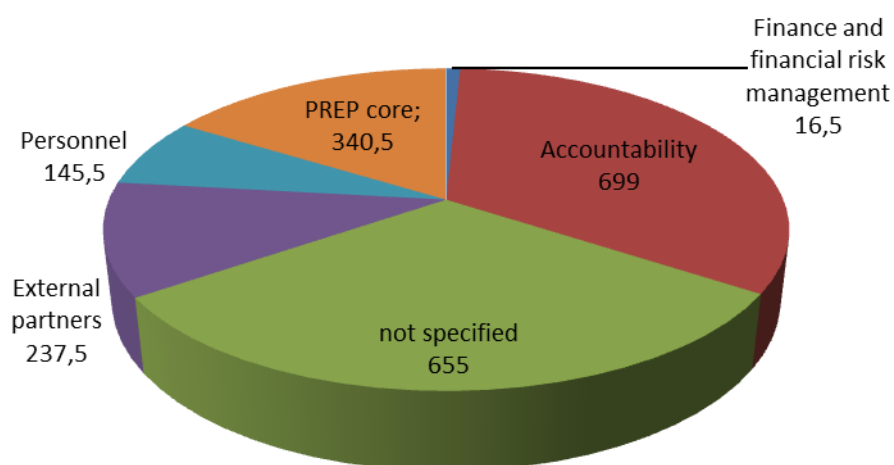
12.   PREP provided different types and levels of support across its activities. In a number of areas, PREP provided ideas, analysis and advocacy. It also provided support in mobilising resources and direct inputs. In many areas, PREP facilitated the development of guidance and processes, and helped promote their adoption by WFP management. In doing so, PREP largely relied on a "functional area approach" for strengthening emergency preparedness and response, i.e. it created working groups involving relevant WFP divisions or units and/or supported other functional areas in their emergency preparedness and response work. Nine working groups were initially identified. Of these, the most active were training and deployment; information management; knowledge management; clusters; civil-military coordination; and corporate response stocks. Inputs from different divisions were often also sought in less formal ways. In addition, an Outreach Network was created in July 2012 to facilitate communication with the field. It includes deputy regional directors, regional emergency preparedness and response officers and representatives of two country offices per region. PREP also played an active role in relevant inter-agency fora to help shape global debates, introduce the Transformative Agenda to WFP and ensure compatibility of WFP tools and approaches with those developed for interagency use.

13.   **Funding:** Most funds for PREP activities were raised from extra-budgetary sources and a small share (6 per cent) was provided through corporate funding. According to a financial overview provided by the PREP team in the fall of 2014, PREP received USD 41 million – 43 per cent of its total requested budget of USD 95 million.[28] Table 2 provides an overview of funding requested and received per outcome area.

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[27] Source: PREP staff list, provided by the PREP team to the evaluation team in November 2014.

[28] PREP's main donors are Australia, Canada Forward Purchase Facility, Finland, Luxemburg, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Table 2 does not include an associated United Kingdom grant of USD 14.5 million approved in 2014 for additional preparedness activities.

Table 2: PREP funding

Outcome area	Total requested (USD)	Total received (USD)	% of total received
Personnel	7 375 355	4 994 686	12
Finance/financial risk management	1 016 492	361 457	1
Accountability	14 194 734	16 310 462	40
Stocks – food and non-food	21 284 260	4 198 736	10
External partners – without cluster funding	26 214 786	9 364 626	23
External partners – cluster funding	25 027 278	5 777 398	14
Total	**95 112 905**	**41 007 365**	**100**

Source: PREP, November 2014.

1.3. Evaluation features

14.   **Purpose:** The evaluation serves an accountability purpose by assessing what PREP has achieved to date. As PREP concluded at the end of 2014, WFP's management and Executive Board expressed a strong interest in identifying lessons and recommendations for current and future EPR strengthening. In addition, PREP is part of a strategic evaluation series on EPR, which taken together will inform activities in this core area of WFP's operations.[29]

15.   **Stakeholders:** The primary audience for the evaluation is WFP management at the headquarters, regional bureau and country office levels, and in particular the incoming Director of Emergencies and his team, as well as WFP's senior management. Evaluation findings should inform WFP's future planning and priorities for EPR strengthening. Donors to PREP and WFP's EPR more generally, many of whom are represented on WFP's Executive Board, will also be able to use the evaluation to inform their oversight of WFP as well as priorities for financial investment. Other members of the international humanitarian community, as well as national actors and affected populations might also find the findings informative.

16.   **Approach and focus:** PREP covered or related to a very broad range of issues and activities. Given the time and resources available and PREP's scale and scope, the evaluation could not carry out an exhaustive analysis of all activities individually. Instead, the focus was placed on assessing progress towards meeting objectives in "outcome areas" and to analyse selected core activities in each outcome area. The outcome areas, related objectives and focus activities were defined in consultation with the PREP team during the inception phase of the evaluation. Focus activities were selected based on their perceived importance (based on available PREP documents and inception phase interviews), if they had been completed or nearing completion, and to ensure activities from each outcome area where covered. Based on emerging

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[29] The strategic evaluation series on EPR also includes a joint FAO/WFP evaluation of the global food security cluster and an evaluation of WFP's use of pooled funds.

findings, the evaluation team simplified and merged several outcome areas for the purposes of analysis and reporting

17. Table 3 provides an overview of the final set of outcome areas, their objectives and the related activities on which the evaluation focused.

Table 3: PREP outcome areas, objectives and focus areas for the evaluation

Outcome area	Objectives	Focus areas for the evaluation
Personnel	Better qualifications Faster deployment Greater well-being	Emergency Response Roster Functional and Support Training for Emergency Response (FASTER) Emergency Leadership Roster Staff Health Protection in Emergencies Programme
Finance and financial risk management	Faster access to funds at onset of emergency Better financial risk management	Advance Financing Project Early Earning Resource Management Project Corporate Response EMOP facility (CREF)
Accountability	More systematic approach to EPR Greater transparency of roles, responsibilities and operations More focussed on learning	EPR Framework Normative Guidance Project Generic Response Capability Model (GRCM) Emergency Response Activation Protocol EPR Package Generic Response Organogram Corporate Response Exercise Operational Information Management Operations Support Project (OPSCEN) Integrated Context Analysis EPR Knowledge Management
Food and non-food stocks	Better availability Faster delivery	Forward Purchase Facility Enhancement (prepositioning of ready-to-eat foods) Corporate Response Stocks Review and Enhancement Boat Project Strategic Truck Fleet
External partners	Stronger common services, coordination and partnerships Stronger and more coherent capacity building	WFP Civil-Military Coordination Operational Guidance National Readiness and Response Augmentation (incl. Capabilities Partnership Programme, CAPRO) UNHRD Capacity Building

18.   **Guiding questions:** The evaluation focused on four main questions based on the Terms of Reference for the evaluation:[30]

- How relevant is PREP to the EPR challenges faced by WFP?
- To what extent has PREP achieved, or is expected to achieve, its direct objectives?
- Have PREP activities contributed on a sustainable basis to WFP's overall capacity to respond more effectively to 2+1 corporate emergencies?
- What factors have supported or constrained PREP's effectiveness?

19.   **Methods:** The evaluation used a mixed method approach, with an emphasis on qualitative methods, including document research and both in-person and phone interviews with key internal and external informants.[31] In total, 244 individuals were consulted during the inception and evaluation phases of the evaluation (170 male and 74 female). Several case studies of recent L3 emergency responses (Syria, Philippines, South Sudan, Cameroon and Iraq) were used as the basis to analyse the practical effect of PREP's activities. The case studies were carried out through remote interviews with key staff, as well as in-person evaluation missions to the regional bureaux in Bangkok, Nairobi and Cairo and the Cameroon country office. Quantitative analysis included deployment, coverage and financial data (where available), and a survey of WFP staff at all levels (headquarters, regional bureaux, country and sub-country offices) and categories (directors, international professionals, national officers, general service staff and short-term/consultants) within the relevant functional areas. A total of 929 staff were invited to respond to the survey, of which 368 responded (39.6 per cent response rate), including 129 female staff members.[32] Survey responses and data on roster membership and deployments were disaggregated by sex and the team analysed documents and data records for gender relevant evidence relating and interview guidelines included questions relating to gender.

20.   **Limitations and mitigation measures:** The evaluation encountered several specific limitations and sought to mitigate them. Table 4 provides an overview of the limitations and mitigation measures.

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[30] See Annex 4 for the full evaluation matrix.
[31] See Annex 5 for a more detailed overview of methods.
[32] See Annex 6 for a breakdown of interviewees and survey respondents and Annex 6 for a complete list of individuals consulted for the evaluation.

Table 4: Limitations and mitigation measures

Limitation	Mitigation measure
Due to PREP's scale, an assessment of all activities was not possible within the time and resources available.	The evaluation team selected focus activities for the analysis, prioritising activities that were perceived as particularly important and covering all outcome areas. In addition, the evaluation assessed overall achievements and constraints in the different outcome areas.
The evaluation was conducted between spring and autumn 2014 when many of PREP's activities were still under implementation or incomplete.	Focus activities chosen were completed or far advanced in their implementation. The evaluation team also assessed the perceived relevance of activities and asked interviewees about the expected benefits of certain activities that were pending finalisation. To guard against a positive bias due to this focus selection, the evaluation also assessed overall achievements and constraints in the outcome areas.
PREP was a complex programme and many stakeholders were not fully aware of the programme's full range of objectives and activities.	The evaluation team employed a theory-based approach, using a logic model making direct objectives for different outcome areas explicit. The evaluation also assessed progress and constraints in the different outcome areas, with which WFP staff members at all levels are familiar, and sought to trace changes back to PREP activities.
Only one country visit for the emergency response case studies was possible due to concerns about imposing an undue burden on on-going L3 responses and for security reasons.	The team conducted telephone interviews and data and document reviews and implemented visits to or phone interviews with regional bureaux involved in the country cases, interviews with headquarters units involved in PREP activities and a global survey of WFP staff.
It was not possible to conduct a comprehensive comparison of the situation before and after PREP because data was not available for relevant indicators, and also because it would not be credible to attribute organisational changes solely or mainly to PREP in light of other crucial factors such as security, geographical and infrastructure conditions, government positions and donor funding.	The evaluation team attributed changes to PREP based on plausibility and used a mixed methods approach allowing for the triangulation of different data sources.

21.   **Team and quality assurance:** The evaluation was carried out in 2014 by an independent, four-person team from the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi). To ensure the quality of results, the evaluation team applied the WFP Office of Evaluation Quality Assurance System, conducted inception phase interviews and validation workshops with key stakeholders in Rome, verified findings through debriefings at the end of regional bureau and country visits, held early discussions of emerging findings with the PREP team and collected feedback on the draft report from key stakeholders, including through a series of workshops in Rome.

2. Evaluation findings

22.   Following the evaluation's main guiding questions, this chapter presents findings on PREP's relevance, the achievements and remaining limitations in the different outcome areas, PREP's aggregate effects and the factors that have contributed to PREP's successes and failures.

2.1. Relevance

Summary assessment: PREP design was assessed as highly relevant to the EPR challenges faced by WFP. Activities addressed issues that were identified through the Madrid global meeting, lessons learnt exercises, evaluations and audits or that relate to the Transformative Agenda. However, PREP focused mainly on large-scale, sudden-onset disasters, and did not adequately address the specific requirements of complex and protracted or lower-level emergencies or of the phases prior to the declaration of a corporate emergency. Some critical areas for EPR were not sufficiently taken up by PREP.

23.   PREP was created as a way to address the challenges revealed by WFP's response to the 2010 corporate emergencies articulated in an action plan derived from the 2010 WFP Madrid global meeting of WFP leaders from headquarters, regional bureaux and country offices.[33] PREP took this action plan as its starting point. Subsequently, PREP's core team conducted a systematic ranking of the 639 lessons learnt from the 2010 emergencies, from which 45 high priority issues or lessons were identified. These strongly influenced the activities initiated under PREP, and were subsequently reinforced by a synthesis of lessons from WFP's emergency responses between 1998 and 2013.[34] According to PREP's draft logical framework, [35] the activities were intended to strengthen WFP's corporate response capacities, the accountability and coherence of WFP's response management and partnerships. PREP did, however, not present a systematic problem analysis on which these objectives are based and additional goals and objectives are implicit in PREP documents.

24.   Table 5 shows how PREP activities relate to the issues identified in the Madrid meeting and action plan, lessons learnt, the Transformative Agenda and both internal and external evaluation findings. The majority of activities directly relate to issues identified through one or several of these processes. The remainder reflect other important corporate priorities (for example boat and truck fleet and gender) or were identified by PREP management as a necessary basis for other activities (for example normative guidance project, Generic Response Capability Model, performance indicators).

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[33] The ten elements of the Madrid Action Plan that are listed under "Emergency Preparedness and Response" are included in Annex 1.
[34] These are included in a presentation on lessons learnt by the PREP team.
[35] PREP. 2012. *Logical Framework,* December 2012 (draft).

**Table 5: Comparison PREP activities with issues raised**

Outcome area	PREP Activities	Madrid Meeting / Action Plan	WFP Lessons Learnt, evaluations, audits	External Evaluations / Transformative Agenda
Personnel	Corporate Emergency Response Team (1.3)	■	■	■
	Emergency Response Roster (1.4)	■	■	■
	Emergency Leadership Roster (1.5)	■	■	■
	Emergency Leadership Training Programme (1.6)	■	■	■
	Emergency Middle Management Training (1.7)	■	■	■
	Getting Ready for Emergencies e-leaning (1.8)	■	■	■
	Emergency Response Orientations (1.9)			
	Functional and Support Training for Emergency Response (FASTER) (1.10)	■	■	■
	Functional Area Technical Emergency Training (1.11)	■	■	■
	Generic Emergency Preparedness and Response Training Module (1.12)	■	■	■
	Coaching and Mentoring Programme (1.13)	■	■	■
	Administrative/Engineering Response Capacity Support (1.15)		■	
	Staff Health Protection in Emergencies Programme (1.16)	■	■	■
	Global Travel Service (1.17)			
	Emergency Preparedness and Response Training and Deployment Strategy (2.5)	■	■	■
Finance and financial risk management	Advance Financing Project (1.2)	■	■	
	Value for Money (2.8)	■		■
	Strengthening Emergency Preparedness and Response in PRROs (2.18)		■	
	Corporate Response EMOP Facility (CREF) (2.21)	■	■	
	Early Warning Resource Management Project (2.32)		■	
Accountability (systematic approach, transparency and learning)	Emergency Preparedness and Response Framework and EPR Policy (2.1)	■	■	
	Normative Guidance Project (2.2)			
	Generic Response Capability Model (GRCM) (2.3)			
	Emergency Response Activation Protocol (2.9)	■	■	■
	Business Continuity Management Programme (2.10)	■	■	■
	Crisis Management (Critical Incident) (2.11)	■	■	■
	Emergency Preparedness and Response Package (2.12)		■	■
	Controls Enhancement Project (2.13)		■	
	Functional Response Protocols (2.14)		■	
	Generic Response Organogram (2.15)		■	
	Recovery Planning (2.19)	■	■	■
	Emergency Programming (2.22)		■	■
	Gender in Emergencies (2.23)			

Outcome area	PREP Activities	Madrid Meeting / Action Plan	WFP Lessons Learnt, evaluations, audits	External Evaluations / Transformative Agenda
Accountability (systematic approach, transparency and learning)	Sub-National Office Capacity Building and Support Programme (2.24)		▓	▓
	Business Continuity Planning (2.25)		▓	▓
	Capability Enhancement and Integration Plan for Programme Criticality (2.26)		▓	
	Corporate Response Exercise (2.27)		▓	▓
	Corporate Concept of Operations Project (2.31)		▓	
	Corporate Response Benchmarking and Key Performance Indicator Project (2.33)			
	Operational Information Management (1.21)		▓	▓
	Mobile Devices for Information Capture/Projection (1.22)		▓	
	Spatial Data Infrastructure Improvement Project (1.23)		▓	
	Remote Sensing Project (1.24)		▓	
	Integrated Context Analysis (1.25)		▓	▓
	Operational Information Management Directive (2.16)		▓	▓
	Operations Support Project (Operations Centre-OpsCen) (2.28)		▓	▓
	OPWeb (2.29)		▓	▓
	E-Pen USB Tool (2.30)		▓	
	Emergency Preparedness and Response Knowledge Management (2.4)		▓	▓
Food and non-food stocks	Forward Purchase Facility Enhancement (1.1)		▓	
	Corporate Response Stocks (1.18)		▓	▓
	Boat Project (1.19)			
	Strategic Truck Fleet (1.20)			
	Ready-to-Eat Strategy (2.7)		▓	
	Goods and Services Supply Chain Enhancement (2.34)		▓	
	Asset Management and Tracking System (2.35)		▓	
	Logistics Relief Item Tracking Application (3.5)		▓	▓
	EPR Greening (2.36)			
	Logistics Humanitarian Staging Areas Project (3.6)	▓	▓	
	Humanitarian Basecamps (3.8)	▓	▓	
	Light Vehicle Support and Management (3.9)		▓	
External partners	Civil-Military Coordination Training Package (1.14)		▓	▓
	WFP Civil-Military Coordination Operational Guidance (2.17)		▓	▓
	National Disaster Management Agency Framework (2.6)		▓	▓
	Transformative Agenda Guidance (2.20)			▓
	National Readiness and Response Augmentation (3.1)		▓	▓
	Other Humanitarian Actors (3.2)		▓	▓

Outcome area	PREP Activities	Madrid Meeting / Action Plan	WFP Lessons Learnt, evaluations, audits	External Evaluations / Transformative Agenda
	Development and Implementation of the IASC Transformative Agenda (3.3)			▓
	WFP Led/Co-Led Clusters (3.4)	▓		▓
	UNHRD Capacity Building (3.7)		▓	
Activities not addressed by PREP				
Programme improvement (cash and vouchers, needs assessments, targeting)		▓	▓
Partnerships and capacity building with implementing partners		▓	▓
Accountability to affected populations (except gender activities)		▓	▓

25.   The survey findings confirm the high degree of relevance of PREP's activities as all focus activities included in the survey receive relatively high ratings regarding their importance. Within this overall positive assessment, advance financing, the EPR package and the activation protocol are seen as the most relevant activities (see Figure 3)

Figure 3: **Relevance of PREP activities according to staff survey responses[36]**
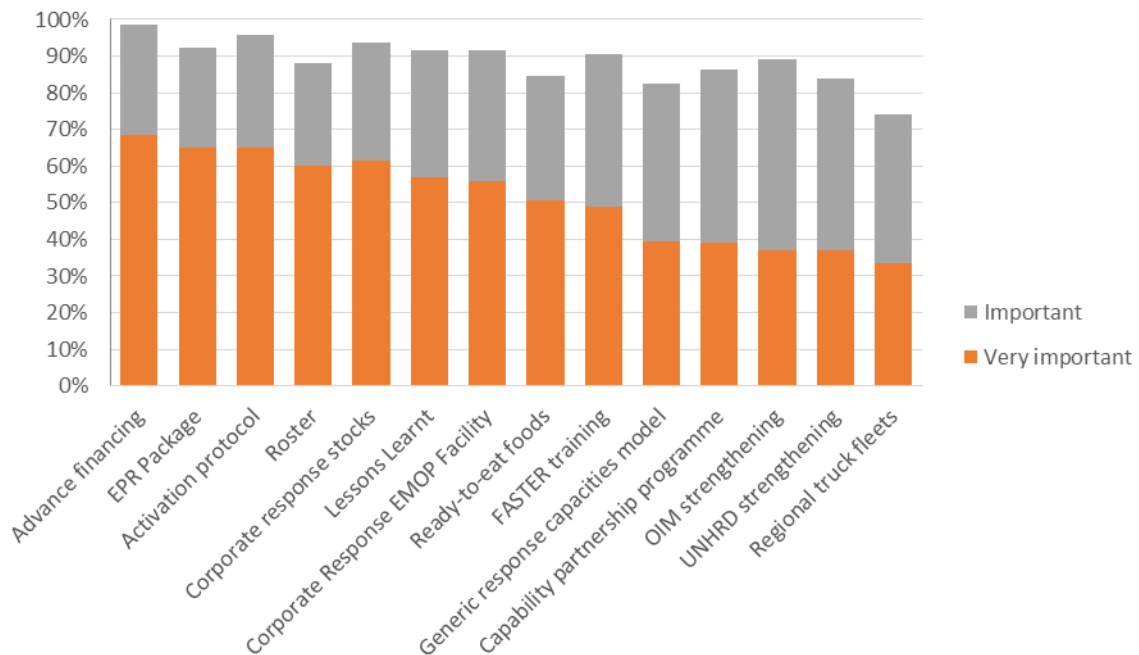
26.   However, the lessons that informed the design of PREP were by and large drawn from the 2010 emergencies, which were all natural disasters, and except for the Sahel food crisis, were sudden-onset. As a result, PREP focused on strengthening WFP's EPR capacities in the first three months of large-scale, sudden-onset emergencies. However, many of the L3 emergencies since 2010 have been protracted, complex emergencies – a response scenario WFP had faced in the past and that was raised

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[36] This graph includes all responses where an activity was rated "very important" or "important". The difference from response and 100% were ratings of "somewhat important" or "not important". "Don't know" responses were not included.

during the Madrid global meeting. Furthermore, while some PREP activities were also applicable and relevant to L1 and L2 emergencies, the main focus of the initiative was L3 emergencies. The specific needs of L1 and L2 emergencies, which constitute the majority of emergency responses, were not a focus of the initiative. In addition, some critical areas such as cash and voucher programming, cross-cutting issues such as accountability to affected populations and relationships with cooperating partners were not sufficiently taken up by PREP according to interviews, case studies and document review.

2.2. Outcome area results

27. This section presents an overview of achievements and remaining challenges in each of PREP's outcome areas: personnel, finance and financial risk management, accountability, food and non-food stocks and external partners. The analysis focuses on the core activities within each that were the subject of the evaluation.

a. Personnel

Summary assessment: Personnel issues were correctly identified as major constraints to WFP's response capacity. PREP facilitated the inter-divisional design of a comprehensive EPR training and deployment strategy and supported the implementation of several important components of the strategy, particularly the establishment of an emergency response roster for surge deployments to L3 emergencies and the development and implementation of and inter-functional, simulation-based training called Functional and Support Training for Emergency Response (FASTER). Some moderate improvements in the timely deployment of surge capacity were seen in recent L3 responses as a result.

Despite PREP's achievements, staff throughout WFP reported in interviews and survey responses that staff capacity, deployment and well-being remain crucial concerns and the highest priority for further strengthening of EPR. Critical elements of the EPR training and deployment strategy, including establishment of corporate emergency response teams, a leadership roster and leadership training, have not yet been implemented and the design of the emergency response roster needs improvement. Interviews and analysis of deployment records identified important challenges in sustaining staff in protracted emergencies, filling the posts left empty by deployed staff, covering all the technical areas needed, and ensuring sufficient staff qualifications and capacities for working in emergency settings.

Resolving structural human resource issues was beyond the scope of PREP, and the evaluation found widespread perceptions of insufficient leadership on EPR-related personnel issues.

Table 6: Personnel: Core PREP activities and their current status

| Core PREP activities	PREP support and current status
Strategy	
EPR Training and Deployment Working Group and Strategy	• Active inter-divisional EPR Training and Deployment Working Group facilitated by PREP since February 2011. Working Group activities include: – Development of a comprehensive training and deployment strategy, shared with management in March 2012. – Active contributions to the design of different trainings.

Core PREP activities	PREP support and current status
Roster and deployment mechanisms	

Emergency Response Roster	• Development of roster concept based on targets per functional area supported by PREP and funding for roster management through Human Resourced provided.
	  – Following a deadline of March 2012 for the implementation of a functional roster by the Global Management Meeting, changes to StaffNet implemented in 2012 by HR to enable a roster function.
	  – First call for corporate roster applications launched in January 2014, a second call for short-term staff and consultants launched in April 2014. 341 staff members included in the roster, deployments to South Sudan, Iraq, Cameroon, CAR and for the Ebola response.
	  – Total funding of USD 735,716 requested, 508,093 received.

Corporate Emergency Response Teams	• Concept for Corporate Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) developed and promoted by PREP.
	  – First concept presented end of 2011.
	  – Various options for CERTs proposed to WFP's Executive Management Group in 2012/13, but no decision taken by the fall of 2014.
	  – No funding provided.

Global Travel Service	• Business proposals for travel services developed and partial funding provided by PREP.
	  – Full business proposal for a global travel service submitted in 2012, but not approved.
	  – Revised proposal for a travel service centre submitted May 2014, but not yet implemented.
	  – Total funding USD 853,218 requested, 299,600 received.

Trainings	

FASTER training	• PREP provided funding, conceptual guidance, added components and facilitated inputs from relevant divisions to the development and implementation of a simulation-based training, developed by the Logistics Development Unit and modelled on a pre-existing logistics training.
	  – FASTER training piloted in May 2013.
	  – Full trainings held in April, July and November 2014, each involving around 23 participants and 15-20 facilitators.
	  – Total funding of USD 1.56 million requested, 1.98 million received.

Getting Ready for Emergencies e-learning	• Update of the existing Getting Ready for Emergencies facilitated by PREP.
	  – Analysis of existing training conducted by PREP.
	  – Update relying on story boards provided by different divisions facilitated.
	  – Revision completed in early 2014, but no decision taken on whether or for what groups the e-learning is mandatory.
	  – Total funding of USD 178,617 requested, 169,483 received.

Leadership roster and training	• Work on a leadership roster started in 2012. A call for applications to the roster was launched in early 2014 and received a minimal response. • Emergency leadership training was put on hold in order to integrate it into a WFP corporate level leadership development programme, but this was not yet implemented at the time of the evaluation. – No funding requested or received for the leadership roster; USD 1.25 million requested, none received for the leadership training.

Core PREP activities	PREP support and current status
Staff health and well-being	
Staff health	• PREP provided funding for assessing options for addressing staff health and well-being issues. – Staff health protection advisor recruited for 7 months in 2014. – Phase 1 of the analysis of gaps and potential solutions concluded, phase 2 still outstanding in the fall of 2014. – Total funding of USD 778,409 requested, 742,124 received.
Administrative/Enginee ring Response Capability Support	• PREP provided advocacy and financial support for strengthening the involvement of the administration division in emergency response. – Administration involved in strategic discussions on L3 responses. – Capacity to provide administrative surge deployments and field engineering in emergencies enhanced. – Total funding of USD 525,170 requested and received.

28.   Activities focusing on staff capacities, deployment and well-being are universally seen by interviewees and reported in evaluations and lessons learnt exercises as central to strengthening WFP's capabilities for emergency preparedness and response. PREP's activities relating to staff capacity and deployment were guided and supported by an active inter-divisional working group with regular meetings, a comprehensive strategy for staff training and deployment and active inputs into the design and implementation of trainings. **PREP activities contributed to a moderate improvement in the availability of qualified staff for rapid deployments**, as evidenced by the following data and observations:

- **Increased pool of potential deployees**: The process used for creating the emergency response roster (or roster) opened the pool of potential candidates for deployment beyond those known and recruited through personal networks. At a time when multiple concurrent L3 response severely stretched WFP's capacities and a range of experienced emergency responders were reaching or nearing retirement age, the roster provided a valuable additional source of potential candidates for deployments, even though it has not become the primary source for deployments to recent L3 responses. By the fall of 2014, the roster had deployed 73 of its 343 members on a total of 75 deployments to L3 emergencies (in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Iraq and the Ebola crisis in West Africa). In most cases, roster members accounted for around 15 per cent of all deployments (including longer surge deployment and shorter missions), in Cameroon, which saw a much smaller total number of deployees and similar absolute number of deployees drawn from the roster, emergency response roster members accounted for 32 per cent (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Shares of the emergency response roster in recent WFP deployments to L3 emergencies[37]
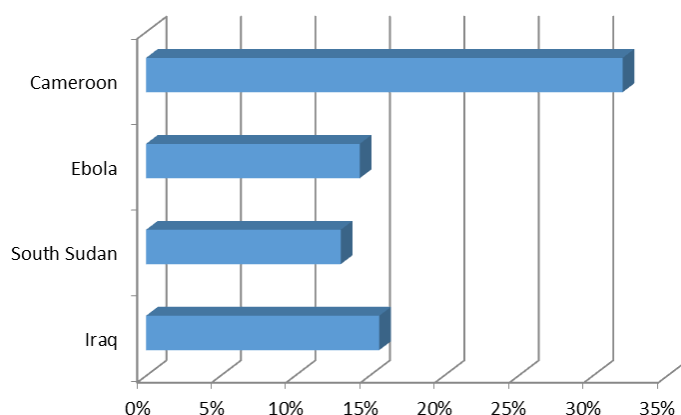

Sources: WFP deployment and roster records.

- While the overall pool of potential deployees has increased, the roster has not made progress in increasing the number of female staff deployed to emergencies. Only 23 per cent of roster members and roster deployments were women as compared to 42 per cent of WFP's overall international recruits and professional officers.[38] Several female interviewees, especially those with children, indicated that the rapid deployment modalities of the roster were not attractive to them. Interviewees also highlighted that female staff tend to be under-represented in some of the functional areas that are most strongly represented on the roster, such as information technology (IT) (10 per cent of IT roster members are female), programme (17 per cent female) and logistics (25 per cent female).

- **Certain deployment gaps filled**: Survey responses confirm that the emergency response roster has made some contribution to deployments, with between 31 per cent and 67 per cent of respondents noting that it had brought a "big improvement". However, a relatively large number of respondents also only see "some improvement" (between 11 per cent and 37 per cent) and some staff members see "no improvement" (0 per cent to 8 per cent) or even a "negative effect" (0 per cent to 6 per cent). Benefits are seen most clearly by those groups that indicated in interviews that the roster was an important potential career-enhancement tool, namely national staff and consultants (see Figure 5).

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[37] Only emergency response case studies of this evaluation for which the emergency response roster was already operational during their main surge phase are included here.
[38] As reported in WFP. 2014. *Annual Performance Report for 2013*. (WFP/EB.A/2014/4).

Figure 5: Survey responses on roster effects by staff type
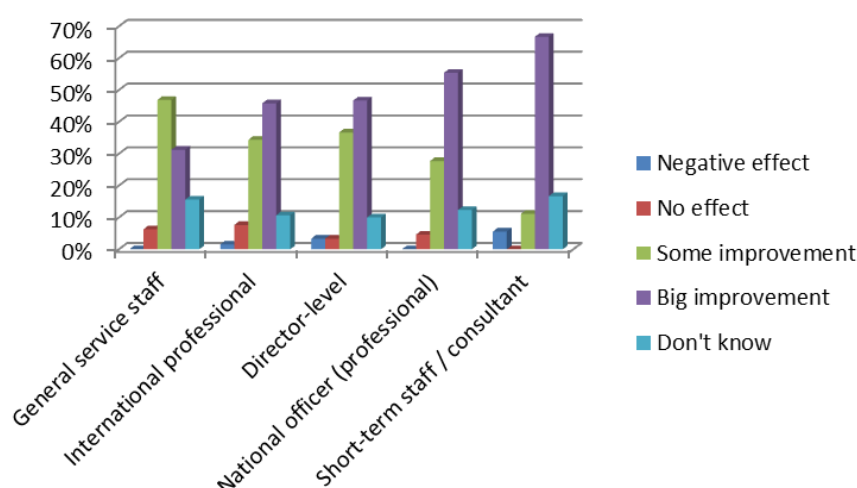
- Improved national staff development: Another achievement of the emergency response roster is that it includes many national staff members, whose professional development was identified as a priority during the 2011 Montreux global meeting. At the time of the evaluation 29 per cent of roster members were general service staff and 29 per cent national officers (26% NO-A and B, 3% NO-C, see Table 7).[39]

Table 7: Emergency response roster composition by staff grade

| Staff grade	% share of roster membership
General service (G3 – G7)	29
National officers (NO-A, NO-B)	26
National officers (NO-C)	3
Professional service (P2 – P3)	14
Professional service (P4 – P5)	4
Directors	0
Short-term professionals	24
Sum	100

- **Increased speed of deployments**: According to interviewees, particularly those related to the South Sudan and Iraq responses, deployments were often faster when drawn from the emergency response roster as compared to recruitments through personal networks (except for those functional areas that

[39] Since ERR members are given priority for the participation in FASTER, this is most likely also reflected in a higher proportion of national staff included in training. However, the participant data for FASTER available to the evaluation team did not include information on staff grades. A quantitative analysis was therefore not possible.

have standing capacities or well working functional rosters, such as logistics and emergency telecommunications and some regional bureaux). This is due to the fact that the release of emergency response roster members is pre-authorised by supervisors and roster members must be ready to deploy within 72 hours. However, several cases have also been reported in which staff have sought to delay or reject their deployment or in which supervisors objected despite having authorised release earlier on. The deployment of national staff from the roster was frequently delayed by visa procedures if they did not possess a United Nations (UN) laissez-passer. The roster cell is currently working to pre-obtain laissez-passers for all emergency response roster members.

- **Mixed feedback on deployee qualifications**: The feedback on the qualifications of roster members has been mixed. In several cases, the roster was not able to provide suitable profiles for leadership or specific technical areas (for example nutrition experts in South Sudan or nutrition and market analysis experts in Iraq), while some of those deployed were seen as not yet fully able to meet the requirements of the response. At the same time, many of the roster members deployed for example to Iraq and Cameroon were commended for their capabilities and contributions and emergency response roster members were described as critical for the Ebola response. A comparison between functional area coverage in the roster and the needs estimated in the Generic Response Capability Model[40] for 3 corporate responses within the same year found that the targets for most functional areas had not been reached, except for procurement (see figure 6).

Figure 6: Emergency response roster membership compared to GRCM targets
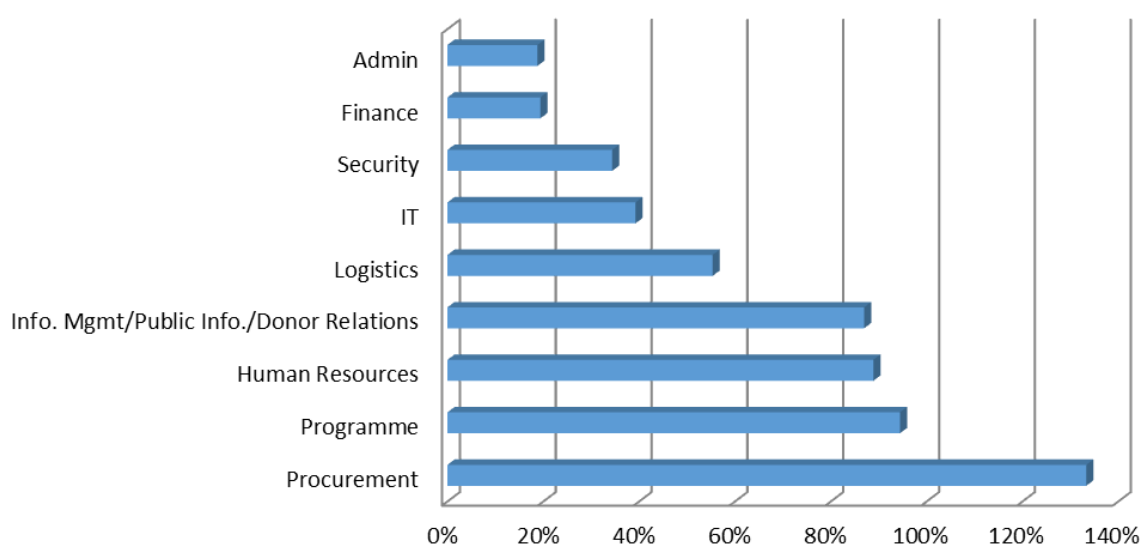
- **High quality staff training**: FASTER was universally lauded for its content and delivery method. This is also reflected in the positive feedback provided by

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[40] The model is a WFP tool for planning emergency readiness. It details a response scenario, outlines targets and identifies the capabilities required to meet the scenario parameters and targets.

participants and facilitators who scored their overall satisfaction with both FASTER II and FASTER III at 3.7 out of 4,[41] as well as the fact that another UN organisation commissioned the development of a similar training from the same team. Since the creation of the emergency response roster, roster members have increasingly been prioritised for participating in the FASTER training. 83 per cent of those participating in FASTER III, for example, were emergency response roster members (whereas only 26 per cent and 7 per cent respectively of FASTER II and I participants – trainings that were conducted before the emergency response roster became operational – later became members of the roster).

- By October 2014, however, the overall number of people trained through FASTER was small with a total of 73 participants in FASTER 1, 2 and 3. Of these, 42 per cent were women. 56 per cent of participants were from country offices, 22 per cent from headquarters and 14 per cent from regional bureaux. In the emergency response case studies conducted for this evaluation, only a very small number of deployees (3 in each South Sudan and Iraq and 2 in Cameroon at the time of writing the evaluation report) had received FASTER training. With current costs of more than USD 13,000 per trainee, a substantial and sustained investment would be needed to train sufficient personnel to affect emergency response practice, especially considering the dynamic membership of the roster, with no guaranteed deployment. Another United Nations agency – which uses a similar WFP-developed training – targets training towards standing response teams that involve smaller numbers of staff and are highly likely to be deployed. The revised Getting Ready for Emergencies e-learning, at the same time, which has the potential to reach a large number of staff at low cost, has not yet been made mandatory and the training has therefore been little used to date.

29. Despite the achievements described above, **staff qualifications, deployment, health and welfare remain the number one priority concern throughout WFP**. The majority of interviewees expressed this as their main priority for future EPR strengthening efforts. Issues relating to staff are also the most frequently mentioned issue in the survey, where more than 43 per cent of respondents mention staff-related issues in an open-ended question regarding their preferences for future action. More specifically, the following main bottlenecks were emphasised by those consulted for the evaluation:

- **Continued gaps in the availability of qualified staff**: The availability of qualified staff for rapid deployment at the outset of an emergency, as well as mechanisms for sustaining adequate staff levels in protracted emergencies was reported as a central challenge for recent L3 responses, including Ebola, Iraq, South Sudan, Cameroon/Central African Republic and Syria. Interviewees for the case studies, as well as recent lessons learnt and evaluation exercises[42] highlight that this was particularly acute for more senior and expert positions in programmatic areas such as nutrition, cash and vouchers and market experts as well as administration and finance.

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[41] Draft report on FASTER 3

[42] See e.g. WFP. 2015. *An Evaluation of WFP's Regional Response to Syrian Crisis, 2011-2014.* WFP. 2013. *South Sudan Corporate Response February 2012 – December 2012, Lessons Learned Exercise, Lessons from WFP Personnel and Partners.* WFP. 2014. *Syria Lessons Learning Exercise: Draft Report.*

- **Lack of standing capacity**: The training and deployment strategy included the development of CERTs. Following the approach used in other humanitarian organisations, CERTs are either headquarters- or regionally-based teams dedicated to emergency response and available for immediate or even advance deployments. If CERTs had been available in WFP, some of the backfilling issues inherent in deploying regular staff from a roster would have been avoided, and longer deployments might have been possible. Well-designed concepts and options papers were developed under PREP,[43] however they were not approved by management, primarily because new positions would have had to be created, either for the CERT team members or the staff members replacing their original function, at a time when staff positions at headquarters were being reduced as part of the restructuring.

- **Absence of leadership training and roster**: PREP planned to create a leadership roster and leadership training to respond to one of the priority issues raised at the Madrid meeting and in the Transformative Agenda. An effective leadership training and deployment mechanism could have addressed some of the critical shortcomings of the emergency response roster in terms of its lack of leadership profiles. However, the training was put on hold because the Human Resources Division planned to implement a comprehensive leadership development programme that would integrate leadership in emergencies into the overall leadership development package. This leadership training was still under development at the time of the evaluation. A call for applications for the leadership roster was issued in the first half of 2014, but only 16 applications were received, only a small share of which were deemed suitable for emergency leadership positions. The leadership roster therefore did not become operational. Several experienced emergency responders in leadership positions stated that they had few incentives for applying to a roster since they were being deployed regardless and wanted to maintain some influence over deployment decisions.

- **Limited progress in staff health and well-being**: Staff health and well-being in emergency situations were seen by many of those interviewed and responding to the survey as highly relevant. However, PREP's contribution to this area has had only very limited impact at the time of the evaluation. A staff health protection advisor funded by PREP conducted first aid training and vaccinated staff during FASTER training and developed useful information and guidance materials. The main activity in the area of health was a 2-phased project to identify gaps and potential solutions for staff health and well-being. However, only the first phase of the research project was completed and no follow-up actions were implemented. PREP supported the enhancement of WFP's administrative capacity in emergencies, which was seen as a critical step by the majority of interviewees to help address housing, facilities and other staff well-being issues. Key informants with long-term experience reported that a greater number of administrative staff were available for deployments, but sometimes lacked the necessary emergency experience. Respondents in the Philippines, South Sudan and Iraq reported that living and working conditions were still very problematic.

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[43] E.g. PREP (2012), Corporate Emergency Response Team: Options paper for consideration by the EMG.

- **Emergency response roster design problems**: Several design issues of the emergency response roster still need to be addressed. The current roster does not include enough experienced and advanced technical profiles. The majority of experienced emergency responders interviewed had not applied for the roster because they lacked incentives to do so: they were called on to deploy regardless, through personal networks or regional rosters, and the roster would limit their ability to discuss and decide on potential deployments. Experienced emergency responders (as opposed to national staff and short-term employees) also did not see roster membership as important for career advancement. Many interviewees responsible for staffing decisions for emergencies voiced concerned about the qualifications of roster members, linked to what they called the "voluntary" nature of the roster. Staff members apply to the roster and are selected according to a set of technical and personal criteria. However, interviewees believe that personal characteristics can only reliably be assessed by supervisors or colleagues who have worked directly with the individual. Currently, supervisors must approve a candidate's application, but this has not been used as a mechanism by which to rate the candidate's suitability. Several staffing coordinators therefore indicated that they do not trust that current roster selection procedures sufficiently ensure staff quality and qualifications. Certain candidates proposed from the emergency response roster for deployments have been rejected and others have required additional supervision and guidance to fulfil their responsibilities.

- **Backfilling problems**: The current deployment system imposes a very significant burden on country offices, regional bureaux and headquarters, which release staff for deployment but are then left without adequate staff to complete their own work plans. In 2014, for example, a total of eight staff from the Somalia country office, five of six of WFP's UNHRD network coordinators and area office heads in the Democratic Republic of Congo were deployed through the roster. WFP's broader human resources management system does not offer an effective solution to this issue. Units which release staff for deployment are required to make a backfilling plan, but bringing in new staff to fill behind someone deployed to an emergency is challenging because suitable staff can be difficult to find and travel costs must typically be covered by the budget of the releasing unit.

- **Gaps in staffing for protracted emergencies**: Staffing issues for protracted emergencies have not been addressed, as PREP focused on the first 3 months of an emergency response. The responses in Syria and South Sudan in particular suffered from staffing issues in terms of an insufficient number of staff especially for leadership and certain technical positions, as well as a high rate of turn-over due to repeated short- to medium-term deployments. Instruments like the emergency response roster were designed to cover the first and second waves of deployments, but roster members are still drawn on several months or even years into the response as improved systems for longer-term recruitment and deployment are lacking. This creates problems regarding the very high turn-over rate of staff, the high costs of deployments as compared to longer-term arrangements and the overstretch of existing deployment mechanisms.

30.   While PREP has thus enabled moderate improvement in the availability of qualified staff for rapid deployments, it was beyond the scope of PREP to resolve wider, structural human resource issues. The evaluation found widespread perceptions of insufficient leadership on EPR-related personnel issues. For example, prior to PREP, no comprehensive strategy for recruiting, training and deploying emergency responders existed in WFP. PREP activities like the creation of a corporate emergency response roster were significantly delayed due to the lack of capacity of the Human Resources Division for implementation. Moreover, as PREP comes to an end, there is no staffing or funding in place to continue some key human resources activities started by PREP, such as the management of the roster.

b. Finance and financial risk management

Summary Assessment: PREP supported the on-going improvement of WFP's finance and financial risk management approach in emergencies. In cooperation with other units, PREP made important contributions to improving the volume of and timely access to advance financing. PREP facilitated the development of several studies on the risk involved in the use of WFP advance financing mechanisms and played a central role in facilitating discussions internally and with donors that contributed to improvements in the structure, ceilings and processes for the use of advance financing. These changes have been critical to enabling the early scale-up of operations, preventing pipeline breaks and reducing procurement lead times in recent L3 emergencies. While the Corporate Response EMOP Facility (CREF) that includes simplified financing templates and processes that can be activated together with an L3 response, had not yet been finalised or approved, it could provide a useful complement to the achievements made to date.

Table 8: Finance and financial risk management: Core PREP activities and their current status

Core PREP activities	PREP support and current status
Advance Financing Project	• Facilitated two Boston Consulting Group studies and promoted changes in financial risk management based on their findings. Studies included: – The GRCM in July 2012, and; – A review of WFP's Working Capital Facility (WCF) in April 2014. • Based on the results of these studies, PREP helped to promote changes in: – Increases in delegations of authority for the Immediate Response Account (IRA); – Increases in funding ceilings for the WCF; – Increases in the ceiling for the Forward Purchase Facility; and – Clearer separation between various forms of advance financing. • USD 395,748 received (no data on amount requested).
Corporate Response EMOP Facility (CREF)	• Worked with relevant functional areas to develop a package of tools to be activated during an L3 emergency, including: – Template for Corporate Response Emergency Operation (EMOP) and Special Operation (SO) documents, including a narrative and budget, delegations of authority and HR and procurement waivers; – Early release of the Corporate Response EMOP budget;

Core PREP activities	PREP support and current status
	– Rapid approval for WCF advance financing up to USD 150 million; – Initiation of the Functional Response Protocols, and; – Use of the generic organogram, deployments from the emergency response roster and use of ready-to-eat foods prepositioned through the Forward Purchase Facility. • Concept approved in December 2013. Early release and advanced finance components not yet approved. Package not yet released. • Total of USD 361,457 requested, 620,745 received.

31. According to key informants, PREP, in cooperation with other units, made important contributions to **improving the volume and timely access to advance financing**:

- **Increased availability of advance financing:** Between June 2012 and June 2014, the ceilings of the Working Capital Facility and the Forward Purchase Facility, now a separate Global Commodity Management Facility, increased by a combined total of 60 per cent, from USD 557 million in June 2012 to USD 920 million in June 2014. Interviewees involved in managing recent L3 responses unanimously agreed that higher levels of available advance financing are essential for WFP's ability to respond and scale up quickly. The survey findings confirm this assessment, as almost 80 per cent of WFP staff surveyed felt the changes to advance financing made an improvement or large improvement in WFP's emergency response capacity. This impression is the strongest at the headquarters and regional bureaux levels, where over 60 per cent of respondents found it having made a large contribution, and a further 20 to 30 per cent (depending on respondent group) saw some improvement.

- **Faster access to advance financing**: With the support of PREP, the processes for gaining access to advance financing also changed, creating greater flexibility and increasing speed. Previously, emergency operations needed donor pledges as collateral to access the facility. Now, general forecasts of contributions based on historical trends as well as contributions from the Immediate Response Account, may also be accepted as collateral. This means that emergency operations can now access advance financing even without firm donor pledges. Especially where donors are slow to react to a crisis, this can speed up the response considerably. In the initial months of the recent crisis in South Sudan, for example, WFP was able to restart programming faster than most other humanitarian organisations and avoid looming pipeline breaks through access to the Working Capital Facility despite uncertainty regarding donor pledges.

- **Increased delegations of authority**: The increased delegations of authority for drawing on the Immediate Response Account through Immediate Response EMOPs were also important for allowing a fast response at the outset of emergencies. In December 2013, the delegations of authority for the Immediate Response Account were increased from USD 250,000 to 500,000 for Country Directors; from 500,000 to 1 million for Regional Directors, and; from 1 million to 1.5 million for the Emergency Director. The delegations were used for example in two Immediate Response EMOPs to refugee flows from South Sudan to Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia at the outset of the crisis in December

2013 / January 2014 and for initiating WFP's response to the displacement crisis in Iraq in both January and June 2014, enabling fast reaction to changing circumstances.

- **Potentially simplified processes**: The CREF was designed to further speed up access to financial and other resources at the outset of an emergency by providing pre-filled draft project and budget templates for Corporate Response EMOPs and SOs that facilitate document preparation and streamline the procedure for authorising early release budgets that can be used even before any emergency or special operations are authorised. At the time of the evaluation, the CREF had not yet been adopted and Corporate Response EMOPs and SO templates not yet used in an L3 emergency. However, WFP emergency responders reported in interviews that these tools had the potential to make financial authorisation processes easier and faster, even if the need for experienced staff to review draft narratives and budgets remains. 92 per cent of survey respondents expressing an opinion felt the CREF will be important or very important to improving WFP's emergency response capacity.

32. While most WFP staff are not familiar with the processes that led to the changes in WFP's advance financing and management of financial risks, those who were centrally involved in the process reported in interviews that PREP, and particularly the Director of Emergencies, played an important role in it. The studies commissioned by PREP on historical trends for financial requirements, average donor contributions and project repayment provided the evidence-base that WFP's risk in the use of advance financing was relatively low. This analysis, combined with the Director of Emergencies' advocacy, helped to persuade WFP senior management and the Executive Board to distinguish between different risks, disaggregate various components of advance financing and increase the ceilings.

33. While the changes in advance financing have been overwhelmingly positive, **WFP could further optimise** its use of advance finance:

- **The Immediate Response Account often lacks liquidity**. Contributions from the IRA are designed as loans that should be repaid, so that the IRA can be used as a revolving fund. However, country offices using Immediate Response EMOPs have not been consistently repaying these loans, thereby reducing the availability of funds for other emergencies. In March / April of 2014, for example, no IRA funds were available for the South Sudan EMOP, which led to delays before obtaining funding through the Working Capital Facility. To avoid this, the IRA could be reconceptualised as a partial grant facility, with allocated funds written off over the year and replenished with annual donor contributions; or the loan and revolving nature of the IRA could be more strictly communicated and enforced.

- The **CREF** had not yet been officially released and its central components were awaiting finalisation and approval at the time of the evaluation.

c. Accountability: Systematic approach, transparency and learning

Summary assessment: As part of an effort to strengthen accountability within the organisation and to donors and the wider humanitarian community, PREP sought to make WFP's approach to EPR more systematic, more transparent and more learning-oriented. Overall, PREP's contribution to accountability has been positive, but moderate.

Systematic approach: The revised activation protocols introduced more systematic decision-making processes through strategic and operational task forces. The EPR Package was refined and rolled out under PREP. Survey and interview respondents reported that the package was valuable and had the potential to increase the consistency of preparedness planning across WFP. However, it did not always lead to sufficient follow-up action in the cases analysed.

Transparency: The changes in WFP's approach to operational information management have provided more timely, consistent and user-friendly operational information to WFP management and external audiences. However, investment in this process was relatively high compared to other operational priorities, and most country- and field-level staff reported that the improvements in reporting had limited operational relevance for them.

Learning: PREP itself was designed to address many of the issues identified through internal and external reviews. PREP also made progress in instituting a more systematic approach to lessons learnt exercises. In the absence of an effective corporate approach to knowledge management, however, PREP had limited success in creating an effective system of acting on lessons, shown by limited follow-up on lessons learnt exercises and only partial use of the lessons learnt database.

Table 9: Accountability: Core PREP activities and their current status

Core PREP activities	PREP support and current status
Systematic approach	
EPR Framework and Policy	• Sought to update the 2003 EPR Framework (guidance and procedures for managing the initial phases of a response) in line with new developments. Process was put on hold until completion of the EPR Policy. – EPR Policy scoping and inception phases have been completed. – Initial discussions were planned for mid-March 2015. Presentation of the Policy to the WFP board was scheduled for November 2015[44]. – USD 196,559 were requested, no contributions were reported.
EPR Package	• Refined and supported the roll-out of the EPR Package to regional bureaux and country offices, a mandatory corporate tool that replaced contingency planning in guiding country offices in their preparedness activities, including through conducting risk analysis, providing guidance on minimum preparedness actions and defining thresholds for emergency response actions. – Roll-out workshops were concluded in 2014. – Total funding initially requested USD 1,847,523, received USD 3,013,290.

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[44] After completion of the evaluation, the development of the policy had been further postponed..

Core PREP activities	PREP support and current status
Emergency Response Activation Protocol	• Facilitated the updating of the activation protocol in 2012, including the criteria for declaring an L3 emergency and determining managerial roles and responsibilities. – A new revision was scheduled for 2014, and is now planned for 2015. – Strategic and Operational Task Forces (STF / OTF) designated as regular fora for strategic and operational discussions. – No funding requested or received.
Corporate Response Exercise	• Developed a Corporate Response Exercise to stress test WFP's corporate emergency procedures and tools. – Three corporate response exercises have taken place in Rome (June 2012) as a table-top exercise and in Amman (2012) and Panama (May 2013) as simulations. – USD 2,660,356 requested, USD 809,245 received.
Generic Response Capability Model (GRCM)	• Facilitated development of the GRCM model through an in-kind contribution by the Boston Consulting Group in 2012. – The GRCM defines the minimal level of finance, personnel and stocks need to respond effectively to a "2+1" corporate emergencies scenario. – USD 749,000 requested, 700,000 received (in-kind).
Generic Response Organogram	• Based on staffing requirements from the GRCM, developed a pre-defined organisational structure to guide decisions on staffing arrangements at the national and sub-national levels during the first 30 days of an L3 emergency. In an associated process, generic terms of reference were developed for different kinds of positions and related profiles were created on WINGS. – Last updated in August 2014. – No funding requested or received.
Normative guidance project	• Completed a review of existing WFP guidance in 2011 to identify where updates and gap-filling were required. – Helped inform the development of subsequent guidance by PREP. – USD 566,608 requested, 330,698 received.
Transparency	
Information management	• Facilitated an active inter-divisional working group on Operational Information Management (OIM) and helped establish OIM as a separate function in WFP • Provided funding and guidance in revamping the Operations Centre (OPSCEN). – The OPSCEN is responsible for gathering and disseminating operational information and reporting on emergencies; developed standard reporting templates used by all WFP offices, and; provides surge IM support staff during emergencies. – USD 2,432,415 requested, 2,588,738 received. • Other activities relating to information management (not under OIM) such as improved data capture, spatial data and remote sensing and integrated context analysis have not yet been completed.
Learning	
EPR Knowledge Management	• Sought to develop a more standardised approach to EPR knowledge management, relying on an active working group on knowledge management: – A lessons learnt tool-kit. – A process of conducting lessons learnt exercises for L3 emergencies, including the Sahel crisis (in 2012), in South Sudan (in 2013), the

Core PREP activities	PREP support and current status
	typhoon Haiyan response in the Philippines (in 2014 - pending release at time of evaluation) and for the Syria regional response (pending completion at time of evaluation). – A synthesis report of lessons learnt, evaluations and audits of WFP's corporate emergencies over the last 15 years (pending release). – A database to catalogue and rank lessons to prioritise issues for follow-up. The database includes the lessons learnt from the 2010 emergencies. Subsequent lessons learnt reports are available, but their lessons have not been included and ranked in the database. – USD 635,596 requested, USD 767,860 received.

Systematic approach

34.   PREP activities have had a moderate, positive effect on institutionalising a more systematic approach to EPR in WFP. **Despite progress, key elements remain unclear or do not lead to the desired actions in practice**:

- **The clarity of roles and responsibilities remains an important concern despite adaptations of the activation protocol**: The revised activation protocol led to an explicit assignment of leadership roles and responsibilities for corporate emergency responses through formal decisions of the Strategic Task Force (STF). While the activation protocol includes flexibility for assigning roles and responsibilities depending on the context, it also states that the regional directors will normally be appointed as corporate response director. For all recent L3 emergencies except Haiyan, however, the Deputy Executive Director was appointed as the corporate response director and regional directors as emergency coordinators. Across all recent emergencies, managers emphasised that emergency coordinators need to be based in-country and that corporate response directors need to be able to dedicate sufficient time to the emergency response, which was not the case in the evaluation case studies except the Haiyan response. In reality, individuals other than those formally designated have therefore at times de facto filled the roles of emergency coordinator and emergency response director. In the case of Iraq, the division of roles and responsibilities between the emergency coordinator and country director were also not clear.

- In addition, the related decision-making processes were not clear to some key managers responsible for L3 response implementation, for example in the Central African Republic, the Ebola response, Iraq, and South Sudan. The Strategic Task Force is the formal decision making body but does not make its notes for the record that document how and why key decisions are taken, available for the reference of other managers who are responsible for implementation at the field.

- **The EPR Package was reported to be useful, but did not lead to sufficient follow-up action in the cases analysed**: The EPR Package was designed before the start of PREP on the basis of an evaluation of WFP's contingency planning practice and further refined and rolled out under PREP. Staff involved in applying the package saw it as very relevant and of high quality, providing clear guidance on how and when to analyse risks, implement minimum preparedness actions and move to response actions. A similar

package has also been adopted at inter-agency level. Completing the EPR Package and uploading results onto a central database are mandatory. However, EPR officers and managers reported in interviews that this has not led to sufficient follow-up action. In Cameroon, for example, the passing of pre-defined thresholds regarding the influx of refugees did not lead to an implementation of related emergency response actions due to a lack of staff and funding. In South Sudan, the EPR Package was completed, but did not result in the implementation of related preparedness actions such as the provision of food and water reserves in WFP offices. In Iraq, preparedness actions such as the pre-existing information on suppliers, distributors or national logistics capacity were missing.

- Various reasons were mentioned for the lack of follow-up on the EPR Package. The package is broadly perceived as a "checklist" or "audit" and lacks management buy-in at country and regional levels. In most of the cases assessed, country directors delegated the time-intensive completion of the EPR Package to national officers who lack the necessary authority to encourage the heads of relevant functional areas to implement preparedness actions. Some country offices reported that they lacked staff and financial resources for follow-up actions. An existing financial instrument that can be used for this purpose, the Immediate Response Preparedness (IR-PREP), has so far not been frequently used because its requirements are seen as too restrictive. Finally, the definition of thresholds for the initiation of emergency response actions and the actual triggering of such actions, which is the responsibility of country directors, have been described as overly complicated and unrealistic.

35. PREP-related activities contributed to **improved decision-making processes for L3 emergencies and more systematic planning for necessary EPR capacities**.

- **Increased involvement and coherence of senior management decision-making**: The activation protocol has formally introduced regular use of the Strategic Task Force [45] and Operational Task Force, which has led to a more systematic approach to strategic decision-making for L3s and a more systematic inclusion of relevant functional areas in operational discussions. This has created an explicit and on-going top-level management role in decision-making processes. Interviews with managers indicated that the systematic use of the Strategic Task Force has created a unity-of-purpose within management and has improved the level and type of support and guidance provided. Some managers indicated that the activation of an L3 has become faster as a result and indeed, WFP often declares an L3 before the inter-agency system does so. However, the L3 activations for both Syria and Iraq are widely seen as having come too late. A number of respondents also expressed concerns that its current terms of reference do not consider emerging and potential crises and related early action systematically enough. Many also felt there remains a lack of coherence between the Strategic Task Force and Operational Task Force, with the Strategic Task Force at times focusing too heavily on operational issues, and the Operational Task Force focusing too much on information sharing. Efforts to strengthen the coherence between the Strategic and

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[45] The Strategic Task Force includes the Executive Director and Chief of Staff, the Deputy Executive Director, the Assistant Executive Directors, the Director of Emergencies, as well as the Corporate Response Director, relevant Regional Directors and the Director of Communications.

Operational Task Forces, and improve the latter's focus on solutions to operational challenges, have recently begun.

- **More systematic planning for necessary response capacities**: PREP facilitated processes to more systematically define the capacities necessary to support multiple L3 emergencies. While few field-level WFP staff members know about these exercises, they have provided useful benchmarks of response capacities likely to be needed. The Generic Response Capabilities Model (GRCM), for example, informed discussions about the structure and ceilings of advance financing, the target number of staff in each functional area to be included in the Emergency Response Roster and the volume and type of food and non-food items that should be pre-positioned. WFP staff also reported that the related generic response organogram is a useful tool for planning staffing requirements at the WFP Country Office and sub-office level. However, the volume of stocks, equipment and staffing indicated in the GRCM were reported to be either unrealistically high or simply beyond the capacity of the organisation to fulfil. Discussions with the Boston Consulting Group about updating the GCRM and developing a similar model for L1 and L2 emergencies are underway. However, other exercises like the generic organogram and the corporate response stock review are generating similar information and could be used for consulting with country and regional managers, rather than investing in another complex model.

Transparency

36. PREP made a **positive contribution to transparency and accountability by supporting more timely, consistent and user-friendly operational information** for WFP management, donors and other external audiences, including the inter-agency system. PREP achieved this by supporting the establishment of OIM as a functional area and by facilitating investment in and supporting the (re)establishment of an Operations Centre (OPSCEN) with re-designed report templates, a staff capacity that can be deployed to emergencies and information management training for other staff members. While not all OPSCEN activities were covered by the evaluation, interviews reported that it has contributed to making information more available to strategic decision-makers and external audiences. Country offices and other functional areas have benefited from OPSCEN staff deployments and trainings, and information requests have, to a certain extent, become more streamlined, limiting the burden on operational staff in emergency operations.

- **Improved availability of information for strategic decision-makers and external audiences**: Reports submitted using pre-defined templates and at clearly defined times were broadly seen as keeping the Operational and Strategic Task Forces better informed about emergencies and WFP's response to them. The daily brief to the Executive Director, for example, is reportedly regularly used during Strategic Task Force meetings.

- **More streamlined information requests and compilation of reports**: The majority of those interviewed reported that the OPSCEN had led to a more streamlined and manageable flow of requests for information from management, although others felt there has been no improvement. The majority of interviewees found that the ready-made reporting templates facilitated the reporting process, particularly for junior and new staff not familiar with the reporting process. However, other respondents were

concerned that the rigid reporting structure did not allow for the inclusion of additional, valuable information, for example information on accountability to affected populations. OIM activities were also seen as effective in fulfilling external, inter-agency and donor demands.

- **Information management support and capacity building**: The OPSCEN deployed a number of reporting officers to country offices and WFP led / co-led clusters during recent L3 emergencies, and this type of contribution was widely appreciated. While initial OIM deployees reportedly did not have sufficient prior experience in corporate emergencies, deployments to later emergencies received more positive feedback. In addition, OIM has been included as a function in the Emergency Response Roster and the information management training offered by OIM is being used by other units and functional areas to increase their reporting capacity.

37. Some limitations of OIM were also reported.

- **High level of investment in upward information**: Many interviewees raised concerns regarding the high level of investment in upward information flows and accountability as compared to other EPR priorities.

- **Limited operational relevance for country and field staff**: Similarly, interview and survey respondents reported that operational information products were not particularly relevant to decision-making at country and field level or had a substantial effect on operations. While between 55 to 65 per cent of survey respondents at the headquarters and regional bureaux levels felt OIM activities had led to some improvement in terms of streamlining reports and providing information to managements and external audiences, approval rates are much lower at the country office and sub-office levels, where only between 30 to 40 per cent felt they had contributed to some improvement.

- **Overly demanding reporting requirements**: In spite of the improvements in information management, there are still three separate reporting channels – for operational information, public information and donor relations. Several respondents reported these reporting channels should be merged since they are seen to lead to an unnecessary redundancy in reporting. A number of respondents felt the demands placed on country offices from such frequent reporting still creates too high of a burden on staff.

- **Weak links to monitoring data, needs and vulnerability analysis**: Some respondents felt that there was a lack of a consistent link between the operational information generated by and for OPSCEN, and situational monitoring data, needs assessment data and vulnerability analysis produced by other divisions, including through Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM), despite the inclusion of VAM in the OIM Working Group. This limited the perceived utility and relevance of the OPSCEN information and reporting for field-level decision-making.

Learning

38. PREP contributed to **institutionalising a more systematic and consistent approach to lesson learning** by analysing and making efforts to address priority lessons from 2010 emergencies, instituting a systematic approach to gathering lessons learnt, and collaborating with other learning processes both within WFP and at the inter-agency level.

- **Addressing lessons from the 2010 emergencies**: PREP activities were designed in large part through a systematic analysis and prioritisation of WFP's 2010 lessons learnt exercises and other reviews. This was later expanded to synthesize lessons learnt, evaluations and audits of WFP's emergency responses over the last 15 years. While the synthesis informed the design of PREP activities, the report was still pending formal release at the time of the evaluation.

- **Systematic gathering of lessons learnt**: PREP also developed a methodology for conducting lessons learnt exercises, which has been made mandatory in the activation protocol for L3 emergency responses. 89 percent of survey respondents saw the institutionalization of lessons learnt exercises as an improvement. Lessons learnt exercises have been conducted for most of the recent L3 emergencies. Once finalized, reports are posted on the WFP intranet. In several cases, PREP extracted context specific lessons from the lessons learnt database and disseminated them to country offices facing related challenges.

- **Collaboration with other learning processes**: The PREP team instituted an active inter-divisional Knowledge Management Working Group and promoted closer collaboration with evaluation and audit processes, including for example though joint missions to Syria and South Sudan. PREP also supported the development and roll-out of the Transformative Agenda lessons learnt exercise.

39. Despite such progress, PREP was **not successful in creating an effective system of acting on lessons** that would ensure that lessons identified in WFP's L3 emergency responses are addressed systematically and in a timely manner. This is related to the broader issue that an effective, corporate knowledge management system is lacking.

- **Limited follow-up on lessons learnt exercises**: There has not been a consistent process of facilitating follow-up on lessons learnt exercises. Lessons learnt exercises have also taken a considerable amount of time to be completed and made available, due to lengthy data gathering, review and approval processes. In one case, the Haiyan response, the report was not finalised, because the involved OME staff members were reassigned to other priorities. There was also no follow-up with the country or regional office on the lessons learnt exercise from the South Sudan response in 2012 to facilitate action on key findings. The context specific lessons developed by the PREP team and disseminated to country offices have so far been limited and done on an ad-hoc basis. Complementing PREP's lessons learnt exercises, functional areas at headquarters and regional level have in several cases conducted their own lessons learnt and use these to guide improvements.

- **Limited updating and use of the lessons learnt database:** While PREP invested significant effort into creating a lessons learnt database, few respondents outside the PREP team reported an awareness of or having used the database. While all lessons learnt exercises have been put on OPWeb, only the lessons learnt from the 2010 emergencies have been prioritised according to the criteria developed by PREP and added to the database. There is no effective method for tracking actions taken to address lessons.

d. Food and non-food stocks

Summary assessment: Effective prepositioning or supply arrangements for food and non-food items allows aid agencies to reduce lead-times and ensure the right stocks are available at the outset of an emergency. PREP coordinated with different functional areas to include high-energy biscuits (HEBs) and ready-to-use supplementary foods (RUSFs)[46] within the forward purchase facility. PREP mobilised funding to preposition RUSFs in the UNHRD network and to procure logistics equipment in South East Asia, including boats, logistics hubs and other equipment. PREP also provided funding to establish regional truck fleets in West and East Africa. This has contributed to the timely delivery of these items in several recent L3 emergencies and has led to improved management and more efficient use of some stocks.

However, while PREP limited its work on cash and vouchers due to another on-going WFP initiative in this area, the evaluation found significant room for improvement in supporting cash and voucher programming in emergencies. The development of more appropriate non-food corporate response stocks and emergency procurement procedures have not been completed and the availability of ready-to-eat foods requires further improvement. Creation of a comprehensive supply chain strategy for both food and non-food items remains an issue of critical importance for WFP's emergency response.

Table 10: Food and non-food stocks: Core PREP activities and their current status

Core PREP activities	PREP support and current status
Prepositioning of HEBs and RUSFs through the Forward Purchase Facility	• Working with relevant divisions and planning figures from the GRCM, developed a concept to pre-position roughly 2,000 MT of ready-to-use supplementary foods through the forward purchase facility. – Concepts approved in October 2011. – Coordinated a stock management review led to the inclusion of high-energy biscuits within the forward purchase facility in May 2012. – No funding requested or received.
Strategic truck fleets	• Provided funding for an existing concept to transfer underutilised trucks from country offices to create regional logistics intervention fleets for surge deployment needs. – One fleet was established in Kampala, Uganda in mid-2011 (21 trucks); in Accra, Ghana in late 2013 (27 trucks). A third fleet planned for Port-au-Prince, Haiti, has not yet been established and is currently on hold. – USD 6,924,562 requested, USD 998,310 received.
Boats and other logistics equipment	• Secured funding for the pre-positioning of 19 boats, 2 mobile logistics hubs, mobile storage units, generators and other support equipment for use in regional emergencies. – The items are positioned in the UNHRD Subang as well as country offices in Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines. – USD 428,000 requested, USD 599,456 received.

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[46] RUSFs include Plumpy Sup, Plumpy Doz and CSB++.

Core PREP activities	PREP support and current status
Corporate Response Stocks	• Helped coordinate a review of existing corporate non-food items in 2011 and a gap analysis of administrative and engineering requirements in February 2012, including by facilitating an inter-divisional working group on the issue. • Coordinated a stock management review leading to the creation of a corporate response stock category for non-food items in the UNHRD network in May 2012. • Beginning in March 2013, facilitated a Board of Directors meeting to update the items, volumes and supply strategy for corporate response stock based on GRCM planning figures, led by UNHRD. PREP later seconded a staff member to UNHRD and provided further funding to finalise the review. • The corporate response stocks review was presented to the Board of Directors in late 2014 and is pending approval. Discussions on the supply strategy are still on-going and no stocks have yet been procured. • USD 11,293,978 requested, USD 454,387 received.
Goods and Services Supply Chain Enhancement	• Provided financial support to the Procurement Division to develop a goods and services supply strategy, tools and instruments for procurement, including during emergencies, developed in 2014. • PREP support assisted in finalising an updated procurement manual and expedited procurement procedures during emergencies, expected in early to mid-2015. • USD 823,900 requested, USD 826,273 received.

40.   PREP, in cooperation with other units, has made important **contributions to increasing the availability and timely deployment of certain food and non-food stocks**, especially by including ready-to-eat foods on the forward purchase facility and pre-positioning them. In addition, changes to the management of ready-to-eat foods have reduced spoilage.

- **Several cases of rapid deployment of ready-to-eat foods**: Prepositioned HEBs and RUSFs were rapidly dispatched for several of WFP's L3 emergency responses. HEBs were quickly sent at the outset of the South Sudan crisis for refugee flows to Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia, and assisted the response inside South Sudan. HEBs and RUSFs were also quickly dispatched at the outset of the L3 declaration in Cameroon, though the limited availability of RUSFs required stocks to be dispatched directly from the supplier. Prepositioned HEB stocks were similarly quickly delivered in response to the crisis in the Ukraine and flooding in Serbia.

- **Reduced lead-times through the forward purchase facility**: The forward purchase facility can significantly reduce food delivery lead-times. WFP reported in 2013 that food purchased through the forward purchase facility reduced lead times by two and a half months on average.[47] Staff members interviewed for this evaluation confirmed that including ready-to-eat foods on the forward purchase facility also reduced their delivery lead times. Reflecting the perceived benefits, roughly 75 per cent of WFP staff surveyed found the inclusion of ready-to-eat foods within the facility important or very important to WFP's EPR capacity.

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[47] WFP. 2014. *Financial Framework Review, Restructuring of the Working Capital Financing Facility*, 14 May 2014.

- **Better ready-to-eat stock management in the UNHRD network**: Transfer of HEBs to the forward purchase facility has allowed better supply management of these stocks in the UNHRD network. Placing HEBs (as well as RUSFs) under the authority of Resource Management rather than Logistics has allowed stock levels to be determined based on forecasted demand and funding availability. As a result, a more appropriate stock of HEBs and RUSFs has been consolidated in the UNHRD Dubai hub. Previous stock levels of prepositioned HEBs in UNHRD hubs in Brindisi, Dubai and Subang often exceeded demand and led to regular spoilage according to interviews with WFP and UNHRD staff as well as UNHRD documents.[48]

- **Faster surge fleet deployments in East and West Africa**: Trucks from the regional fleets in Kampala and Accra have provided a timely surge truck capacity for L3 emergencies, including in South Sudan, the Central African Republic and Cameroon. This stand-by capacity has reduced lead-times to an average of one week. Previously, when surge truck capacity had to be leased directly by country offices, the process could take between one and two months. While the age of a number of trucks in the fleets has led to mechanical failures, the relevant key informant has indicated in interviews that these trucks will likely be replaced with new ones from a recently signed agreement with Russia for 200 new trucks over the next two years. The regional truck fleet in Haiti has been put on hold, with concerns of the appropriateness of the location for allowing rapid deployment.

- **Faster deployments of select logistics equipment in Southeast Asia**: The logistics hubs were rapidly deployed to the Haiyan response and were highly appreciated by the teams deployed, though they made up only a minor part of WFP's logistical operations. The boats procured through PREP have been deployed to several non-L3 flood-related emergencies in Thailand in 2013 and Indonesia in 2014.

41. Despite the achievements listed above, **the availability of timely and appropriate food and non-food items remains a critical challenge for WFP** and include aspects that were beyond the scope of PREP. This position is based on the following evidence:

- **Challenges in emergency cash and voucher programming**: The importance of cash and voucher programming has been growing rapidly for WFP.[49] PREP has recently begun working with WFP's Cash for Change initiative to incorporate cash and voucher programming options in the EPR Package and FASTER training. At the same time, the Cash for Change initiative has been developing a corporate approach to cash and voucher programming, as well as trainings and tools aimed to address these bottlenecks. Most of these activities are still under development or in the initial phases of being rolled out to the field. Interviews and document analysis found that WFP is lagging behind other organisations in this critical area of humanitarian programming. A recent evaluation of WFP's cash and voucher policy for example, also found implementation delays, especially in emergency contexts.[50] Tools and staff

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[48] In particular, see: UNHRD. 2011. *Management of WFP HEBs*, 19 July 2011.
[49] See WFP. 2015. *Wfp's 2008 Cash and Voucher Policy Evaluation 2008-2014.* (WFP/EB.1/2015/5-A). The number of emergency projects using cash or vouchers increased from fewer than ten in 2009 to more than 30 in 2013, when WFP's C&V expenditure totalled USD 507 million spent in 52 countries.
[50] WFP/EB.1/2015/5-A

capacity to implement rapid market assessments, delays in identifying partners and delays in finalising contractual documents in particular were mentioned as constraints for WFP.

- **Critical food shortages and delays** occurred in several recent L3 emergencies. Only 40 MT of HEBs were available for dispatch at the outset of the Haiyan response, representing less than half the 100 MT initially called forward. Even though these stocks were called forward early, they were only approved and prepared for dispatch after the L3 had been declared. Sufficient stocks only arrived from the UNHRD network in the third week of December, when HEBs from WFP country offices in the region had already arrived. WFP's response in Iraq also suffered from several delays, including a month long pipeline break between 13 March and 13 April (before the activation of an L3 response). Following the rapid increase of internally displaced people in late June / early July 2014, both the Syria and Iraq responses faced supply delays due to the limited capacity of the Turkish suppliers being used for both responses. HEBs and RUSFs were not appropriate to address the gap, and additional procurement staff needed to be deployed to identify alternative suppliers, while the subsequent immediate response rations were developed with commercially available ready-to-eat foods.

- These shortcomings indicate that corporate prepositioning of HEBs and RUSFs are not always appropriate or adequately address quality concerns, and are only one tool within a broader framework of supply solutions and assistance options during emergencies. PREP activities did not address issues related to monitoring and assessing the appropriateness and quality of WFP's assistance

- **Gaps in support equipment**: Emergency responders in several cases lacked important components of support equipment, including adequate accommodation and basic equipment such as food and water mentioned above under staff health and well-being. These shortages are in part due to the fact that the corporate response stocks review suffered considerable delays, and has led to no changes in the type and volume of stocks available in the UNHRD network. These delays were the result of differences as to which division should lead the process and limited resources allocated to the review by UNHRD, who was eventually designated lead. PREP provided support staff and additional funding to support the final stages of the corporate response stocks review only in 2014. The updated emergency procurement procedures that PREP supported have also not been finalised, though they are expected to be completed in 2015.

e. External partners

> *Summary assessment:* WFP's ability to respond effectively depends on strong partnership with governments, cooperating partners and the wider humanitarian community. PREP's focus, priorities and investment in strengthening partners themselves, as well as WFP's relationships with partners, however, did not match the relative importance of this issue. The few planned PREP activities in the critical area of strengthening cooperating partner capacity were not implemented, activities to build the capacity of national disaster management authorities (NDMAs) and strengthen civil-military coordination were only partially implemented. While they were not sufficient, PREP's activities relating to NDMA capacity-building, inter-agency and civil-military coordination and strengthening UNHRD were steps in the right direction.

Table 11: External Partners: Core PREP activities and their current status

Core PREP activities	PREP support and current status
Other Humanitarian Actors	• Facilitated efforts to develop a fast-track procedure for concluding Field Level Agreements in cooperation with the Policy Coordination and Advocacy Unit, still under development at the time of the evaluation. • Further efforts to support partnership strengthening, coordination and capacity development of external partners, including a comprehensive strategy, were not implemented. No funding requested or received.

National Readiness and Response Augmentation (e.g. Capabilities Partnership Programme, CAPRO)	• Developed frameworks and monitoring indicators, promoted the exchange of best practices and mobilised funding for national readiness and response augmentation:
	  – National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) framework to harmonise WFP's capacity building approach in six areas where WFP has a mandate and recognised expertise.
	  – Emergency preparedness capacity index to measure the progress of EPR capacity building of national partners, including NDMAs.
	  – Database of information on NDMAs that could be used during emergencies.
	  – Fund-raising support for the design or implementation of CAPRO-related activities, including in Zambia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Indonesia and the Philippines.
	  – Support to the development and field-testing of adaptable NDMA training modules with relevant functional areas.
	  – USD 9,630,000 requested, USD 4,678,339 received.

Civil-Military Coordination	• Provided guidance and funding for civil-military coordination activities:
	  – Facilitated a WFP civil-military coordination working group and development of WFP specific guidance on civil-military coordination, completed in 2012.
	  – A planned field handbook, dissemination workshops and online training were not implemented.
	  – Provided funding for civil-military focal points in the Bangkok Regional Bureau (beginning in 2013), and

Civil-Military Coordination	covering the Nairobi and Johannesburg regions (2013 to 2014). – USD 1,809,777 requested, USD 1,004,384 received.
Transformative Agenda Guidance	• Participated in the inter-agency development of the Transformative Agenda. • Facilitated the development of two Executive Director circulars issued in 2013 addressing the role of Country Directors in the Humanitarian Country Team and WFP leadership in clusters. • No funding reported as requested or received.
UNHRD capacity expansion	• Provided funding to create a training centre at the UNHRD Subang, created in 2013. • A planned strategy for UNHRD resource mobilisation and international supply centre in UNHRD Subang, not implemented. • USD 14,231,000 requested, USD 2,488,054 received.

42. **External partnerships and partner capacity continue to be regularly cited as one of the most critical bottlenecks to WFP's emergency response** in lessons learnt, evaluations, L3 situation reports and interviews with WFP staff and external partners. More specifically, constraints regarding cooperating partners, UNHRD capacity and the Transformative Agenda guidance were highlighted.

- **Lack of cooperating partner capacity**: Several of the case studies conducted for the evaluation, as well as WFP lessons learnt and evaluations, demonstrate that the limited range of available partners and/or their limited capacity, as well as gaps in WFP's ability to support partners and conclude field level agreements in a timely manner can severely constrain WFP's ability to deliver. The cash and voucher programme in Iraq, for example, was delayed for over a month due in large part to the lack of partner implementation capacity. The lack of capable partners in South Sudan meant that WFP had to switch to direct implementation amid an overall concern that the speed and scale of delivery by the humanitarian system was not adequate compared to needs. At the same time, NGOs felt that the UN was not supporting them sufficiently to re-establish their presence or scale up.[51] In the Philippines, several partners raised concerns that they had to provide too much co-funding, assume too much risk and receive too little recognition for their work and this delayed, for example, the implementation of cash and voucher programmes. Despite the urgency of these concerns, no activities addressing the capacities of cooperating partners were implemented under PREP and efforts to develop simpler and faster processes for concluding field-level agreements are still on-going.

- **Limited UNHRD capacity and process efficiency**: While PREP cannot assume responsibility for UNHRD, and this evaluation only addresses specific aspects of UNHRD operations and procedures that received support from PREP, many interviewees consulted for this evaluation emphasise that a lack of UNHRD capacity and problems with its processes and procedures create delays and inefficiencies. During the Haiyan response, for example, items coming from the UNHRD hub were not always properly prioritised and the package labelling was often unclear and required additional time to identify items. More generally, interviewees reported that UNHRD lacked the procurement capacity

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[51] These concerns were also voiced in the Operational Peer Review for the 2013/14 South Sudan response.

to effectively manage the replenishment of stocks under its management. PREP made a small contribution to strengthening UNHRD by supporting the creation of a training centre in the UNHRD Subang. WFP and partners report that they are regularly using this centre for trainings, workshops and other activities. However, broader PREP efforts to mobilise resources for UNHRD and help enhance its processes were not implemented. Interviewees have attributed this to the semi-independent position of UNHRD within WFP, which has resulted in a lack of willingness of WFP management to provide funding and UNHRD's hesitance to allow WFP to determine their internal processes. Ultimately, PREP only managed to secure a small share (17 per cent) of the funding originally requested for UNHRD capacity building.

- **Limited relevance of Transformative Agenda guidance:** The majority of WFP staff consulted for this evaluation was not aware of the Transformative Agenda circulars. Many of those who were aware of them did not feel they provided greater clarity on WFP's roles and responsibilities. That said, there are some cases in which the Transformative Agenda guidance has strengthened WFP's role in inter-agency fora. Several key respondents felt that the circulars have, in certain cases, helped increase support from country and regional directors for the cluster system. For the Ebola response, for example, they reportedly helped convince the emergency coordinator to support activation of the food security cluster.

43.   Despite these constraints, **PREP made moderate contributions regarding relationships to and capacity building for external partners**, especially with regards to NDMA strengthening and civil-military coordination.

- **Valuable framework and several capacity building projects with NDMAs**: PREP has provided support to several country office projects and NDMA training modules, and the framework and emergency preparedness capacity index developed by it in cooperation with other divisions have been particularly useful in regions with less experience in working with and developing the capacity of NDMA partners. In the East African region, for example, the framework and index are being used to guide project development, design inputs for simulations and measure the progress of activities. Those regions with longstanding relationships and capacity building activities with NDMAs, however, did not see the framework as contributing to the course or content of their activities. CAPRO also contributed to the development of indicators for WFP's corporate strategic results framework and management results framework for monitoring and evaluating capacity building activities. Efforts to develop a knowledge management mechanism to promote good practice and lessons learnt are still on-going. This is in part due to lack of funding for CAPRO activities (funded at less than 50 per cent), which meant that many fewer pilot projects and other initiatives could be implemented than planned.

- **Cases of improved civil-military coordination**: By facilitating the creation of a network of civil-military coordination focal points in country offices and regional bureaux and by providing funding for some of these posts, PREP is seen to have contributed to better civil-military coordination in the Asia and Pacific and West African regions. This had tangible positive effects on the response to typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, where the logistics support by different military actors was critical in the early phases of the response. The

efforts of the focal point in Dakar in building relationships with regional military entities have also been praised. However, the funding provided for the two focal point positions was only sufficient for one year; many EPR or logistics officers assigned as civil-military focal points do not have the time or capacity to invest in these additional activities; the guidance on civil-military coordination developed under PREP was not widely disseminated or seen as distinct from existing inter-agency guidance; and the training module on civil-military coordination for WFP staff has not been developed.

f. PREP's overall contribution

Summary Assessment: While perceptions of PREP's overall effectiveness diverged strongly among WFP staff, the evaluation noted progress in many important areas. Speed and coverage, for example, have benefitted from improvements in advance financing and, to a lesser degree, the emergency response roster. Transparency, as well as the coherence and accountability of senior management decisions on L3s have improved due to enhanced operational information management and the systematic use of strategic and operational task forces, even though roles and responsibilities are still not sufficiently clear.

However, issues of consistency and quality, including the integration of cross-cutting issues such as accountability to affected populations in WFP's interventions, have largely not been addressed. While many of PREP's specific achievements are widely recognised, the overall perceptions of PREP vary widely within the organisation.

PREP contributed to an increased institutional focus on the early phases of L3 responses. L2 and L1 responses have benefitted from some PREP-related changes, such as improved advance financing. On the whole, however, they have been negatively affected by the focus of WFP on L3 emergencies as many of their staff members are deployed to L3s and they find it more difficult to attract attention and support.

Regarding the sustainability of PREP's achievements and activities, evidence indicates insufficient continuity in staff, financial support and commitment across all functional areas to ensure the completion or revision of many critical PREP initiatives.

44. Interviews of WFP staff about the overall effectiveness of PREP ranged from very positive to very critical. Survey responses are more consistent, with most respondents perceiving either "big improvements" or "some improvements" brought about by PREP and only a small share of respondents seeing either no effects (between 0 and 27 respondents) or negative effects (maximum of 4 respondents). The responses show some differences between the key activities (see Figure 7). Changes in the area of advance financing are seen most positively, whereas the effects of regional truck fleets and the GRCM are seen more sceptically.

Figure 7: Survey responses on the effects of key PREP activities
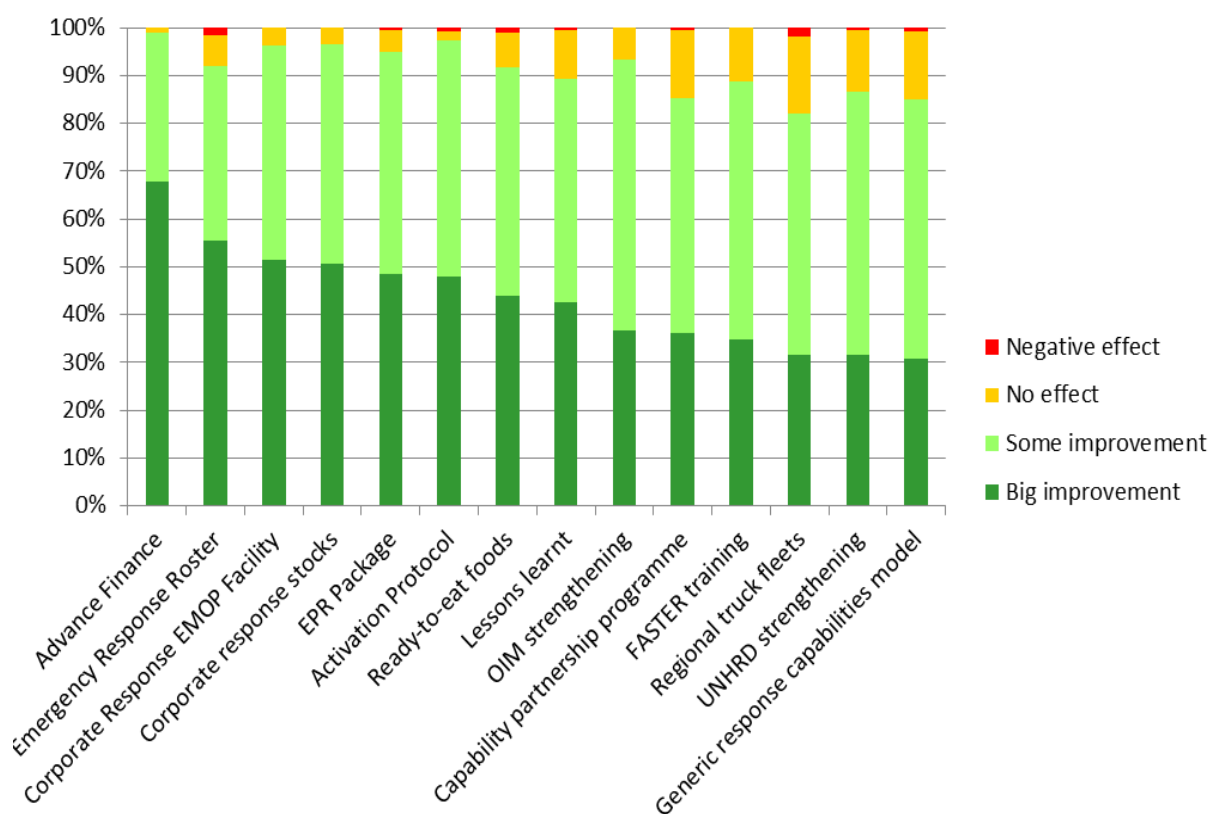
45.   Although most interviewees recognised at least some achievements of PREP, they often came to different conclusions about the initiative as a whole. The evaluation team's interpretation is that these differences stem from: varying levels of understanding of PREP's activities and effects; different reactions to PREP's process and style; different levels of visibility of PREP activities throughout the organisation; and differences in judgment on whether or not the achievements are proportionate to the level of effort and money invested.

46.   *Institutional focus on EPR:* The awareness of the importance of EPR among WFP staff members is high. This is mainly related to the large number and the scale, complexity and duration of L3 emergencies especially in 2013 and 14. It is likely that PREP has also contributed to this process, especially at WFP's headquarters, by making the involvement of executive management and different functional areas (e.g. administration and procurement) in decision-making processes and EPR strengthening activities more systematic. PREP included many activities aiming to better institutionalise WFP's EPR and make it less dependent on experienced and committed individuals. While PREP has encountered resistance against this intended change, it is likely that it has contributed to more stakeholders in WFP recognising the need for such a shift, especially at a moment when an important group of experienced emergency responders have reached or are nearing retirement age.

47.   *Speed and Coverage:* The case studies suggested that PREP contributed to increasing speed and improving coverage. Most importantly, changes in the ceilings, procedures and delegations of authority for advance financing have enabled an earlier scale-up of responses and have helped to avoid some pipeline breaks. While all recent

L3 responses have benefited from enhanced advance financing, it has been particularly important for the rapid scale up of the response and the avoidance of pipeline breaks in South Sudan and Iraq. In addition, the emergency response roster helped to fill some deployment gaps and speed up deployments to L3 responses that happened since its activation in Cameroon, South Sudan, Iraq, and the Ebola response in West Africa. Finally, the prepositioning of ready-to-eat foods enabled the rapid delivery of aid in South Sudan and Cameroon. However, delays were observed in emergency cash and voucher programming, and delivery of ready-to-eat food stocks for example in the Philippines. These types of stocks were also largely irrelevant to the responses in Iraq and Syria. Issues regarding the quality of WFP's food assistance were not addressed by PREP.

48. *Consistency:* Changes introduced through the OPSCEN have led to more consistent information management and reporting. However, the information management structures require significant and on-going investment and almost all interviewees involved in operational emergency response at country and field level stated that they do not use the resulting information products for operational decisions. Interviewees also highlighted gaps in the links between early warning, vulnerability analysis, needs assessments, pipeline management and funding allocations.

49. The EPR package provides clear guidance on when and how to assess risks and implement related minimum preparedness or response actions. In the limited number of cases examined for this evaluation, these have not, however, led to more consistency in implementing follow-up actions. The activation protocol has created a consistent mechanism for taking strategic decisions regarding L3 responses, including an explicit designation of roles and responsibilities. In practice, however, several WFP staff in management positions reported in evaluation interviews having disagreed with decisions and that roles and responsibilities in some cases remained unclear. By creating a framework for capacity building activities with national actors, these activities have been given a clearer institutional anchoring within WFP. However, the perceived value and application of the NDMA framework and capacity building indicators varied across regions. Beyond that, PREP did not target improving the consistency and quality of WFP's food assistance interventions and the evaluation found no significant effect on these aspects.

50. *Coherence and accountability:* The changes to operational information management enhanced the transparency and external accountability of WFP's operations. The more systematic use of the Strategic Task Force has strengthened the coherence of senior management decision-making and provides a clearer basis for determining accountability for managerial decisions for L3 emergency responses. However, the lack of understanding of decisions taken by the Strategic Task Force by the majority of interviewees and the fact that the notes for record of the Strategic Task Force meetings are not circulated among those who have to implement decisions have limited its accountability. Many respondents also stated that there remains a lack of coordination of decision-making between the Strategic and Operational Task Forces.

51. *Cross-cutting considerations:* The evaluation assessed the extent to which PREP activities addressed the integration of quality considerations such as gender, protection and accountability to affected populations into WFP's emergency response. PREP included some activities to better integrate gender considerations during emergencies, including strengthening gender in WFP reporting, trainings and responses and supporting advocacy and policy development. Beyond that, cross-

cutting issues were largely absent from PREP activities– even though accountability for affected populations is an important component of the Transformative Agenda and protection and gender are both important focus areas for WFP. As stated by interviewees, PREP's activities related to accountability were focused mainly on upward accountability to senior management, donors and the wider humanitarian community. WFP's main interface with beneficiaries is through its cooperating partners, but improved partnerships or capacity building of its cooperating partners were not taken up by PREP. The sex-disaggregated analysis of survey responses, interview results and data records did not reveal any significant differences between male and female respondents.

52. *Effects on L1 and L2 responses:* PREP activities have contributed to a concentration on the early phases of the response to L3 emergencies whereas most current L3 emergencies are complex and protracted and have different priorities, for example relating to human resources and supply-chain management. Some PREP-related mechanisms have clear negative effects on L1 and L2 emergency responses. The pulling of WFP staff through the emergency response roster and other deployments for L3 emergencies in the absence of an effective, broader human resource strategy for emergencies has in several cases placed a strain on the ability of country and regional offices to respond to other important emergencies, for example the operations in Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which continue to represent a core part of WFP's emergency response. More generally, interviewees expressed concerns that PREP contributed to the current focus on L3s that has distracted attention from L1 and L2 protracted crises like the Democratic Republic of Congo, Yemen and Somalia. Interviewees stated that they found it more difficult to gain management attention and support in the absence of an L3 declaration and were concerned about negative effects on their ability to raise internal and external resources for these types of emergencies. At the same time, however, responses to L1 and L2 emergencies also benefit from the increased availability of advance financing and enhanced delegations of authority. While PREP's focus was on the early phases of L3 responses, several activities, including the roll-out of the EPR Package, the activation protocol and in some cases the use of the Emergency Response Roster, are also relevant for non-L3 operations.

53. *Mainstreaming:* With PREP concluding at the end of the 2014, the evaluation sought to assess the long-term sustainability of achievements and completion of outstanding activities. Positively, there are certain activities that have been completed and, according to key informants for the issue area, are likely continue. This is particularly the case for activities that do not require further funding outlays, including changes to advance financing and financial risk management, creation of the Supply Chain Division to better coordinate and implement supply chain strategies for food items, as well as a number of protocols and guidance documents. There also seems to be some institutional commitment to carry through changes like the OPSCEN, even though this will require on-going financial support.

54.   Overall, however, stakeholders expressed concerns about the sustainability of key PREP activities that still need to be completed or undergo further refinements. Activities seen as highly relevant for WPF's EPR such as the leadership roster, CREF and the EPR policy and framework have not been completed, and would require management support and resources to be finalised. Interviews suggested that changes in the PREP team and the Operations Services Department could disrupt the continuity and institutional knowledge needed to carry these activities forward. The 2015 management plan includes very limited reference to financial support that would likely be required to complete or refine activities, including the ability to maintain the network of PREP consultants that were central to several of these initiatives. Lastly, several functional areas will need to be fully committed to supporting and eventually taking over these efforts, however, ownership is mixed, particularly for issues related to the qualifications, deployment and well-being of staff emergency response deployments and elements of the CREF.

2.3.   Supporting and constraining factors

Summary assessment: PREP capitalised on initial WFP momentum and donor support but faced important external constraints over the course of its three and a half year implementation: WFP, the Emergency Preparedness Division and the PREP team itself had to deal with an increasing number of L3 responses while working on the PREP agenda. Delays in the implementation of certain activities for external reasons had negative effects on others. In 2012, new organisational change priorities drew a lot of management attention and related restructuring constrained the ability to implement PREP. Internal factors of PREP's success, in turn, were its charismatic and persistent leadership, its dynamic staff well-versed in developing concepts, writing proposals and acquiring funds and its cross-functional approach. PREP's success was, however, limited by internal weaknesses: its broad and unclear nature, as well as its overly headquarters-centred and top-down approach which limited buy-in and implementation.

Factors external to PREP

55.   The two main **external factors enabling PREP's achievements** were overall WFP support in its early stages and donor support throughout the programme.

- **Clear mandate**: The Madrid global meeting 2010 and the resulting shared action plan provided PREP with a credible and legitimate basis for action. PREP's ability to build on this momentum and the 2011 global meeting in Montreux and to present itself as a reaction to collective recommendations of senior WFP managers from all levels created a positive environment for the initiative within WFP.

- **Donor support**: PREP's secretariat (led by the Director of Emergencies) played a strong fund raising and advocacy role, building on the overall sense that WFP needed to address the lessons of 2010, which helped bring key donors on board. Table 10 below shows that there was a funding gap across all activity areas. However, a financial analysis undertaken by the evaluation team shows that in fact a small number of activities suffered from severe underfunding and account for most of the funding gap. Most other activities, however, were comparatively well funded. Beyond providing financial resources, donors played an important guiding role for PREP, requesting, for example, a logical

framework and critically accompanying the process through quarterly updates and discussions. Some donors, however, reported in interviews their dissatisfaction with the expansion of PREP into such a large number of diverse activities over time and with the slow process of implementation.

Table 12: Underfunded PREP activities

Activities	% funding received	Funding gap
Corporate Response Stocks review and enhancement	4%	-USD 10,839,611
Strategic truck fleet	14%	-USD 5,926,252
Leadership training	0%	-USD 1,246,368
National Readiness and Response Augmentation	49%	-USD 4,951,261
UNHRD capacity building	17%	-USD 11,742,946
Cluster funding	23%	-USD 19,249,880
Share of total funding gap[52]		**91%**

Source: PREP, November 2014.

56. PREP faced three main **external constraining factors**: A dramatic increase in concurrent L3 responses, negative effects resulting from the interdependence of activities and new organisational change priorities introduced in 2012.

- **Increased number, scale and duration of L3 emergencies**: Throughout PREP's implementation, WFP was confronted with an unprecedented number of L3 emergencies. WFP has declared an L3 in response to nine different emergencies, and for most of 2014 it was responding to five concurrent L3 emergencies. These consumed much of the time of the PREP team and WFP as a whole: The Horn of Africa drought between 2011 and 2012, the Syrian crisis and the armed conflict in 2012 in South Sudan starting in 2012 and intensifying in 2013/14, typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, civil unrest in the Central African Republic in 2013 and the movement of Central African Republic refugees into Cameroon, as well as the crisis in Iraq and the outbreak of the Ebola virus in West Africa in 2014. Since PREP staff were also in charge of other activities like writing lessons learnt reports or organising trainings, as well as being deployed as surge staff to these emergencies, the implementation of key activities had to slow down. Moreover, consultative processes like working group meetings or general advocacy on PREP aims had to reduce given the urgent daily tasks to be prioritised in other functional areas.

- **Interdependence of activities**: In several cases, PREP activities were designed as a package. Delays or the failure to implement some elements due to funding constraints or political decisions therefore often had a strong, negative effect on related activities as well. Since the development of the roster, for instance, was delayed, it was not possible to target the first couple of FASTER trainings on roster members. As a result, only a small share of FASTER I and II participants are on the roster. Similarly, the backfilling problems of the

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[52] The total funding gap across all activities experiencing a gap was USD 59,073,315. However, there were also several activities receiving more funding than originally requested. This surplus funding amounts to a total of USD 9,352,167.

roster would not have been as acute if Corporate Emergency Response Teams had been created at the same time, which would have reduced the need to deploy roster members from existing positions within WFP country offices.

- **New organisational change priorities**: Beginning in 2012, PREP faced a new set of executive priorities and organisational restructuring, the Fit for Purpose initiative. While the two initiatives pursued similar overall goals, this meant that PREP had to adapt to emerging priorities and organisational restructuring, arguably reducing the share of leadership attention available to PREP. Thus, for example, no meeting of the Executive Management Group was focused on PREP. In early 2014, a global change management team was created to deal with Fit for Purpose work streams, but did not interact with PREP. WFP's 2015 Management Plan also reflects this priority as it explicitly refers to and sets funds aside for Fit for Purpose, but does not include any reference to PREP. In addition, Fit for Purpose was accompanied by a restructuring effort that sought to decentralise decision-making. This delayed many PREP activities as involved divisions were awaiting the results of the reorganisation.

Internal factors

57. PREP had several key internal strengths that enabled it to leverage some of the supporting external factors to make progress on a very large number of issues and activities.

- **Strong leadership**: The persistent and charismatic leadership of the Director of Emergencies, according to respondents, was critical to PREP's level of success. It was instrumental in acquiring extra-budgetary and internal WFP (i.e. SRAC) funds for PREP activities, ensuring support from the Executive Board, creating a holistic view of and systematic approach to EPR strengthening and creating the space for critical discussions at the division head and senior management levels that allowed for certain activities to go forward.

- **Concept development:** The success of a number of PREP activities stemmed from its efforts to analyse trends and dynamics in order to arrive at concepts that provided long-term institutional solutions to challenges. The evidence base this provided helped inform discussions and concept approval with both internal and external stakeholders. In this area, PREP benefited from a dynamic and skilled staff that could facilitate this kind of concept and proposal development and capitalised on opportunities for resource mobilisation and concept approval. In many cases, PREP seconded or financed additional staff capacities in other functional areas or at different levels (e.g. in regional bureaux). Figure 8 shows that the number of people working on PREP activities steadily increased until the third quarter of 2014.

Figure 8: Staff members and consultants funded by PREP by quarter[53]
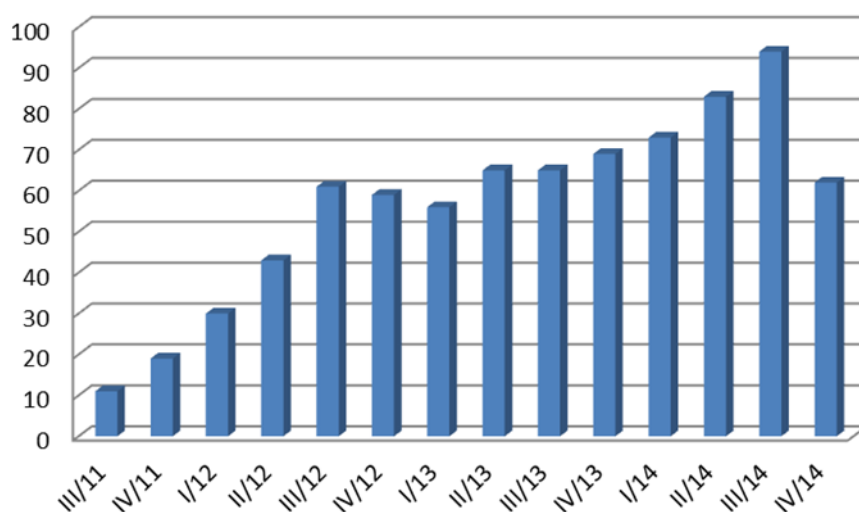
- **Inter-functional area collaboration**: The inter-functional area approach through the establishment of working groups in several cases was successful in facilitating the identification of priority activities, fostered collective concept development and increased the buy-in of relevant functional areas. Most interviewees considered the working groups for example, those on staff training and deployment and knowledge management very effective and successful in generating concepts and strategies and coordinating efforts across functional areas.

58. Other characteristics of PREP, however, were **internal constraints** for the programme's success:

- **Ambitious scope, unclear focus**: PREP was a very broad initiative that remained unclear to most interview respondents. PREP began with a short list of priority issues from the Madrid Action Plan and expanded to include 45 key recommendations from the 2010 lessons learnt exercises, and recommendations from the contingency planning evaluation, resulting in a final portfolio of some 70 activities, many of which included several sub-activities. The very broad nature of the initiative also made it difficult to focus effort and attention on priority issues. This contributed to many PREP activities being left incomplete at the end of the programme, even though PREP was extended by six months. The lack of understanding of how PREP was trying to build on and support initiatives being carried out by other units, and the way PREP's support was communicated both internally and to donors when these initiatives were successful, also led to a sense that PREP was claiming credit for activities primarily implemented by others.

- **Poor conceptualisation and unclear problem analysis**: PREP did not manage to conceptualise its large and diverse list of activities in a simple, consistent and intuitive way and did not clearly and fully articulate what problems it set out to address and how. PREP's logical framework was developed only one and a half years after the formal launch of the initiative. It

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[53] Source: Staffing data provided by the PREP team (November 2014).

documented some objectives, but not others that are implicit in various PREP documents – for example the desire for more consistency and greater standardisation of WFP's practice to enable a less personality-driven approach, or the attempted shift from a responsive to a risk management model. In addition, the terms and concepts used to explain and present PREP were not consistently applied and often relied on overly abstract language that hindered understanding of the programme's activities, objectives and focus. PREP activities were renamed and reorganised periodically. While this allowed the initiative to remain dynamic, interview respondents reported difficulties in understanding PREP's focus and objectives, the range of activities and linkages between them, and the status of implementation.

- **Headquarters-driven, top-down approach**: Another key constraint is PREP's top-down, headquarters-centred approach. PREP's initial design was based on the priorities expressed by country and regional directors, as well as an analysis of lessons learnt in field-based responses. Subsequently, however, field-based staff was only marginally involved in the development of many (but not all) PREP activities and communication. In addition, the Outreach Network was not a fully effective means for communicating and disseminating PREP products as consultations with and participation in the network was inconsistent, many members perceived the format and style as not truly consultative and many network members were not actively disseminating PREP information and tools further.

- This approach limited PREP's effectiveness in various ways. First, many interviewees felt that a stronger involvement of WFP country offices and regional bureaux could have helped PREP prioritise activities better and focus on completing the development and roll-out of a smaller number of activities. Second, stronger field consultation might have helped avoid design flaws in certain PREP activities. They might have flagged, for example, that many of WFP's emergency responders lacked incentives for joining the roster, which would have enabled PREP to address this problem upfront. Third, the lack of field integration means that the knowledge of, buy-in into and uptake of some PREP activities is limited. Certain useful products such as the E-Pen, for example, were little known among field staff and therefore not widely used; country-level buy-in to the EPR Package was limited.

- PREP concentrated its consultations and involvement at headquarters level. Here, the aim was to involve relevant divisions through thematic working groups, as well as informal engagement. In some cases, this was successful (see above). In other areas, however, divisions or functional areas had relatively limited buy-in or even resistance to PREP's coordination efforts. Some also felt that the time and effort for PREP-related meetings, consultations and inputs was excessive, especially since so many processes were developed in parallel, not all of them in a well-coordinated way.

59.   Overall, PREP capitalised very well on the recognition by WFP management and donors of the need for improvement following the 2010 emergency response experiences. However, PREP's overall approach was based on the assumption that creating blueprints, giving instructions and providing funding will lead to effective organizational change. It also led PREP to not pay sufficient attention to one of WFP's core strengths: it's skilful, flexible, committed and hands-on staff. If PREP had put

greater emphasis on consultation, ownership and empowerment it would have been more effective, and its efforts more effectively mainstreamed.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

3.1. Conclusions

60.   In the wake of a series of highly criticised emergency responses and in parallel to a UN system-wide effort at reform, PREP was initiated in 2011 to help WFP maintain its edge as a leader in delivering humanitarian assistance. Bringing about change in an organisation the size of WFP is a formidable challenge. PREP approached this challenge in a very ambitious way. It set out to improve WFP's capabilities in five highly relevant areas: personnel, finance and financial risk management, accountability, food and non-food stocks, and external partners.

61.   Over 3½ years, PREP channelled a total investment of USD 41 million (rising to USD 56 million when including 14.5 million investment by DFID for preparedness in high risk countries). During this same period (2011-2014) WFP's direct expenses for emergency operations were approximately 6.9 billion[54].

62.   The evaluation team concluded that as a result of the investment, PREP contributed to **important achievements** in all outcome areas. These were enabled by PREP's clear mandate and strong donor support, its strong leadership, capable staff and ability to facilitate collaboration between functional areas and to provide relevant analyses and concepts. Most of WFP's other functional areas were actively involved.

- Personnel: moderate improvements in the timely deployment of qualified surge capacity to Level 3 emergencies through a corporate emergency response roster and inter-divisional emergency training.

- Finance and financial risk management: improvements in the volume of and timely access to advance financing, which is essential for WFP's rapid response and early scale-up.

- Accountability: information more timely, consistent and user-friendly; formal assignment of roles and responsibilities in Level 3 emergencies; and systematic use of strategic and operational task forces and lesson-learning from Level 3 emergencies.

- Stocks: support to the pre-positioning of ready-to-eat foods, and modest investments in WFP's logistics capacity.

- External partners: stronger framework for WFP's work with national authorities and better civil–military coordination.

63.   PREP's accomplishments were achieved while WFP and its Division of Emergencies were challenged by an unprecedented number of long-duration and complex Level 3 emergencies, which exceeded the scenario of three corporate emergencies a year on which PREP was based. PREP was challenged by its wide scope, high ambitions and implementation approach, which – combined with a funding level of less than 50 per cent – **limited its overall success**.

64.   Since PREP's conclusion in December 2014, WFP continues to face critical gaps in EPR, especially regarding personnel, cooperating partners and cash and voucher programming, but also in other important areas. Several of PREP's main activities

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[54] WFP. 2014. *Annual Performance Report 2013*. Annex IX A (WFP/EB.A/2014/4); 2014 estimates: WFP's on line contributions data system.

either were not completed, or need refinement and stronger ownership and uptake across WFP. PREP did not adequately address issues such as cooperating partners, cash and voucher programming, protection and accountability to affected populations, and was too focused on the early phases of sudden-onset disasters rather than the full range of possible emergency scenarios.

65.   PREP's implementation approach did not build sustainable commitment in all areas. Many respondents saw PREP as focusing too much on generating frameworks, tools and guidance, without investing enough in communicating and supporting the uptake and application of these. Some tools and guidance were therefore not fully adopted, and commitment to EPR was inconsistent across WFP. PREP's reliance on extra-budgetary funding brought in needed resources but did not establish a sustained base of core resources for addressing continuing needs for EPR strengthening.

66.   As EPR is WFP's main operational area, all relevant units will need to continue their attention to EPR strengthening, to ensure that PREP investments and achievements are not lost. Next steps in this work should build on PREP's efforts to leverage knowledge and learning and its cross-functional approach, while increasing the emphasis on consultations with field staff and partners on the design, adjustment and roll-out of activities and the full integration of EPR into the programmes of all relevant WFP divisions.

3.2. Recommendations

67.   The evaluation makes four recommendations taking into account WFP's on-going realignment under the Fit for Purpose initiative, the global humanitarian reform agenda and WFP's position as a global leader in EPR.

Recommendation 1: Reinforce EPR strengthening as a corporate priority	Addressed to[55]	Suggested timeframe
a) Do not extend PREP as a programme, but mainstream identified responsibilities for EPR strengthening in all relevant WFP functional areas.	EMG (OSE)	Immediate/ continuous
b) Adopt an integrated agenda for EPR strengthening, giving due consideration to all levels of emergency, including those associated with complex and protracted emergencies.	EMG (OSE)	Immediate/ continuous
c) Integrate EPR strengthening as a priority in all organizational change initiatives.	EMG (INC, OSE)	Immediate/ continuous
d) Establish a regular, internal funding mechanism and sufficient dedicated capacity for work on strengthening EPR.	EMG	End of 2015

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[55] Responsibilities in parentheses indicate the unit(s) playing supporting or facilitating role. Full names of units are given in the acronym list in Annex 1.

Recommendation 2: Focus on three priorities for future EPR strengthening: staff capacity; relationships with cooperating partners; and C&V programming.	Addressed to	Suggested timeframe
2.1 Staff capacity for emergency response		
a) Provide leadership, and further develop and implement a strategy to provide adequate staff capacity for emergency response.	HRM	Immediate/ continuous
b) Make EPR a central element in implementation of the People Strategy and the leadership development programme, following revision of job profiles for leadership roles.	HRM	Immediate/ continuous
c) Improve coverage and targeting of FASTER; and roll out the "Getting Ready for Emergencies" e-learning.	OSE (HRM)	Immediate/ continuous
d) Continue to develop the emergency response roster, improve identification and vetting of candidates, and improve links among the emergency response, regional and functional rosters and the overall human resources system.	HRM (OSE)	Immediate/ continuous
e) Establish corporate emergency response teams with adequate resources for set up and maintenance.	EMG (OSE, HRM)	End of 2015
f) Improve the transition from surge capacity to longer-term recruitments, especially in protracted crises.	HRM (OSE)	End of 2015
g) Strengthen career development for emergency responders.	HRM	Mid-2016
h) Implement identified priorities for staff health and well-being.	RMW	End of 2015; continuous thereafter
2.2 Relationships with cooperating partners		
a) Strengthen mechanisms for lesson-learning between WFP and its EPR cooperating partners at the global, regional and country levels, and support and monitor implementation of follow-up actions.	OSE (PGC, regional bureaux, country offices)	Immediate/c ontinuous
b) Develop systematic ways of responding to feedback from affected populations on the quality and appropriateness of WFP's assistance delivered through cooperating partners.	OSZ	Mid-2016
c) Complete the development of expedited field-level agreements to reduce the time needed to establish partnerships in emergencies.	PGC (OSE)	Mid-2015
2.3 Preparedness for C&V programming		
a) Complete and support EPR activities for C&V programming, including by strengthening capacity to conduct rapid market analysis and identify partners in advance of emergencies.	OSZ (OSE)	Mid-2016
b) Complete integration of C&V issues into EPR training and the EPR Package.	OSE OSZ	End of 2015
c) Address delays in concluding agreements, for example through checklists of issues to be addressed at the country level prior to agreement drafting; completion of preapproved	LEG OSZ	End of 2015

Recommendation 2: Focus on three priorities for future EPR strengthening: staff capacity; relationships with cooperating partners; and C&V programming.	Addressed to	Suggested timeframe
agreement templates; and expansion of the capacity of the Legal Office to deploy staff to emergencies.		

Recommendation 3: Clarify and enable OSE's role in supporting corporate EPR strengthening.	Addressed to	Suggested timeframe
a) Focus OSE's role on: • maintaining/refining core EPR tools and guidance; • providing field support at the request of regional bureaux or country offices; • consulting WFP field staff and partners on priorities in and tools for EPR; • managing EPR-related information and knowledge; • facilitating engagement of appropriate divisions in EPR; • advocating for, mobilizing resources for and communicating issues related to EPR; and • engaging with relevant inter-agency processes, particularly the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, and ensuring alignment between WFP's EPR guidance and tools and those developed at the inter-agency level.	OSE OSE, DED	Immediate/ continuous

Recommendation 4: Fully capture the investments made in PREP by refining and completing the following major PREP activities	Addressed to	Suggested timeframe
a) Prepare a final end-of-programme report on PREP's planned activities, with full accounting of expenditure, status of activities at the end of December 2014, and priorities for continuation and further development.	OSE	Mid-2015
b) **EPR Package**: i. Ensure that the strategic task force (STF) systematically considers situations approaching or surpassing risk thresholds. ii. Strengthen mechanisms to ensure that country directors assume responsibility and are held accountable for completing the package's risk assessment and checklists and implementing follow-up actions. iii. Simplify and improve flexibility of the EPR Package. Create a more user-friendly dashboard indicating when risk thresholds are passed. Ensure continued alignment with related tools at the inter-agency level.	STF Regional directors OSE	Immediate/ continuous End of 2015 End of 2015
c) **Activation protocol:** Ensure that the planned revision of the activation protocol includes simplification of the protocol and review of the terms of reference for strategic and operational task forces; and addresses issues raised in the	OSE EMG	End of 2015

Recommendation 4: Fully capture the investments made in PREP by refining and completing the following major PREP activities	Addressed to	Suggested timeframe
evaluation about transparency, roles and responsibilities and complementarity between the strategic and operational task forces.		
d) **EPR knowledge management:** Encourage further lesson-learning processes at the country, regional or functional level and collate findings. Enhance systematic follow-up on lessons learned exercises and report on progress to the Executive Management Group (EMG). Continue to strengthen links with other review and knowledge management processes.	OSE EMG	Immediate/ continuous
e) **Advance financing:** i. Clarify the role of the Immediate Response Account as a risk fund that can be used to make grants and provide collateral for advances, and advocate for this role with donors. ii. Increase awareness of IR-PREP for preparedness activities, and consider increasing its funding ceiling and timeframe.	RMB PGG OSE	Immediate/ continuous End of 2015
f) **Corporate Response EMOP Facility:** Refine the facility, and finalize it for EMG approval and roll-out. Enable activation of elements of the facility prior to declaration of a Level 3 emergency.	OSE, EMG (OSZ, RMB)	End of 2015
g) **Operational information management:** i. Further rationalize and streamline information requests, seeking opportunities to reduce the frequency of reporting. ii. Merge various information and reporting channels.	OSE EMG	End of 2015 End of 2015
h) **Food and non-food stocks:** i. Complete the supply chain strategy for food and non-food stocks. ii. Strengthen mechanisms for ensuring the quality and appropriateness of WFP's response modalities by strengthening analyses and their links to decisions.	OSC (OSE) OSZ (OSE)	End of 2015 Immediate/ continuous
i) **Augmentation of national readiness and response:** Support country offices and regional bureaux in capacity-building efforts for national authorities, for example by providing funding for project development, and strengthening mechanisms for exchanging good practices and lessons learned.	OSE	Immediate/ continuous

Acronyms

CAPRO	Capabilities Partnership Programme
CERT	Corporate Emergency Response Team
CREF	Corporate Response Emergency Operation Facility
EMG	Executive Management Group
EMOP	Emergency Operation
EPR	Emergency Preparedness and Response
FASTER	Functional and Support Training for Emergency Response
G	General Service Staff
GRCM	Generic Capabilities Response Model
HEB	High Energy Biscuit
HRM	Human Resources Division (WFP)
INC	Innovation and Change Management (WFP)
IRA	Immediate Response Account
IRG	Internal Reference Group
IR-PREP	Immediate Response
IT	Information Technology
L1	Level 1 emergency
L2	Level 2 emergency
L3	Level 3 emergency
LEG	Legal Office (WFP)
NDMA	National Disaster Management Authority
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NO	National Officer
OIM	Operational Information Management
OPSCEN	Operations Centre
OSE	Emergency Preparedness and Support Response (WFP)
OSZ	Policy and Programme (WFP)
OTF	Operational Task Force
P	Professional Staff
PGV	Partnership and Advocacy Coordination (WFP)
PREP	Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme
RMB	Budget and Programming (WFP)
RMP	Performance Management and Monitoring (WFP)
RMW	Staff Wellness (WFP)
RUSF	Ready-to-Use Supplementary Foods
SER	Summary Evaluation Report
SO	Special Operation
SRAC	Strategic Resource Allocation Committee
STF	Strategic Task Force
UN	United Nations
UNHRD	United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot
USD	United States Dollars
WCF	Working Capital Facility
WFP	World Food Programme of the United Nations

Office of Evaluation
www.wfp.org/evaluation

WFP
World Food Programme
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