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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT OF THE MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME ETHIOPIA 104300 (2007–2011)

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for consideration.

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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BACKGROUND

1. This document presents the Secretariat's response to the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation of Ethiopia country programme 104300 (2007–2011).
2. The Secretariat takes note of the recommendations for improvement of CP 104300 and for adjustments before the next CP.
3. The matrix presents the Secretariat's responses to the evaluation recommendations and actions to be taken.

**MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SUMMARY EVALUATION REPORT OF THE
MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME ETHIOPIA 104300 (2007–2011)**

Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
1. The way in which beneficiaries are defined in the Children in Local Development – Food for Education (CHILD-FFE) component needs revision. The present definition adversely affects analysis of costs versus benefits, and of nutritional and educational benefits and the impact of school meals on parents' willingness to send their children to school.	Country office Headquarters divisions	The country office follows WFP's definition of beneficiaries. The current definition is useful, but WFP acknowledges that more analysis is needed of the costs and benefits of the assistance.	December 2010
2. Headquarters should commission an external study of the sustainability of WFP's watershed rehabilitation approach in Ethiopia. Evidence exists suggesting WFP efforts in Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transitions to More Sustainable Livelihoods Through Partnership and Land Use Solidarity (MERET-PLUS) and preceding activities have achieved notable, sustained successes; authentication is needed.	Policy, Planning and Strategy Division; Programme Design Service Country office	Agreed. In most areas, MERET-PLUS activities are embedded in Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development programmes and cannot be isolated from complementary activities. WFP is willing to commission a study with other sponsors of the Ministry such as the World Bank to help it to make the case for the sustainability of community-based watershed development. Robust evidence of change would encourage this approach in productive safety nets and large-scale sustainable land management programmes. The country office will support an externally commissioned study by helping to identify experts and obtain the participation of major sponsors such as the World Bank and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ; <i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit</i>).	By December 2010
3. Senior country office and government staff must intensify efforts to resolve long-standing implementation problems related to: i) delivery of food;	Country office	Agreed. The country office will finalize its country strategy and capacity-development strategy in 2010. The capacity-development plan will have benchmarks to assess progress and can be expected to take five to ten years. i) A logistics staff member has been assigned to analyse the logistics problems of government counterparts. Discussions with education authorities started in November 2009; a report and improvement plan are expected before the end of 2009. As an immediate measure, the country office logistics unit is helping to transport food for education (FFE) food. With regard to MERET-PLUS, a national logistics officer has been posted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development National Project Support Unit to streamline actions.	December 2010



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<p>ii) procurement by <i>woreda</i> partners of goods needed by implementation staff; and</p> <p>iii) the processing of quarterly advances by WFP government implementing partners.</p>		<p>ii) Where possible, and pending the change in government procurement practices, WFP may facilitate procurement on behalf of the Government.</p> <p>iii) There is continuous follow up at all levels to process quarterly advances and ensure timely reporting. This remains challenging in view of high counterpart staff turn-over and limited capacities.</p> <p>The United Nations Development Assistance Framework mid-term review in 2009 identified problems related to government procurement and processing of quarterly advances that affected implementation of all United Nations and joint programmes. These result from government procedures and its limited capacity to implement the United Nations Development Group ExCom's Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers. A United Nations action plan is being developed.</p>	December 2009
<p>4. For the next CP period, redesign MERET-PLUS as a "model site" participatory, community-based, watershed rehabilitation and livelihood enhancement programme in all livelihood zones in each of Ethiopia's regions.</p>	Country office	The country office supports this recommendation and has communicated it to the Government for consideration. An expert has been contracted to assess regional MERET-PLUS programme management and coordination and recommend ways of scaling up.	April 2011
<p>5. CHILD-FFE should remain on its present course for the remainder of the 2007–2011 CP. When designing the next CP period consideration should be given to adding a focus on schools in the model watershed sites where MERET-PLUS livelihood zone activities are to be implemented. Demonstrable synergy between CHILD and MERET-PLUS should be a strategic objective.</p>	Country office	A synergy strategy has been developed: 20 schools are identified in areas where MERET-PLUS livelihood activities are implemented. Funds from a private donor will be used.	End of 2011
<p>6. A study is recommended to determine the relative importance of the availability of food-for-education school meals in household decision-making regarding the sending of children of primary school age to school in food-insecure districts in Ethiopia.</p>	Country office	The country office plans a study of micronutrient deficiencies in school-age children and the effect of rising food prices on children's nutritional needs. School feeding in Ethiopia should involve influencing parents' decision to send children to school and factors such as nutritional impact, concentration span and short-term hunger.	December 2010



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Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
7. Results-based management (RBM) data collection and retention in a viable database for CHILD-FFE and MERET-PLUS need improvement to increase its usefulness to management.	Country office	Funds are being identified to develop a database and deploy a national database manager with a view to enhancing RBM for MERET-PLUS in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. RBM data for CHILD-FFE is collected through monitoring and recorded in the country office monitoring database. The country office will consider this recommendation as part of its strategy to develop government capacity.	December 2010
8. The skills of individual WFP field monitors in sub-offices must be upgraded to enable them to monitor and report on both MERET-PLUS and CHILD-FFE activities.	Country office	Further training of field monitors is planned.	December 2010
9. Ongoing training of Bureau and <i>woreda</i> -level agriculture and education field staff must be given higher priority in light of extremely high turnover of staff and their central importance in achieving desired outcome levels.	Country office	Additional training in food and project management for regional and <i>woreda</i> staff implementing MERET-PLUS is planned. A combination of formal and hands-on training in CHILD and food management will be provided.	December 2010
10. There is need for more attention to the issue of food storage and meal preparation at schools.	Country office	The country office logistics unit is mapping delivery and storage points and will compile data on common logistical problems. This will be followed by an action plan and recommendations to regional counterparts.	December 2010
11. The country office and Ethiopian government officials must make improvements as soon as possible in how Bureaux of Education tender for transport of food to schools.	Country office	Process started; see response to recommendation 3 ii).	
12. The Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit should provide more support to the CP including geographical information system maps which are <i>woreda</i> - or site-specific (where possible) and which can be manipulated to show a range of livelihood, geographic, climate and other socio-economic data superimposed over MERET-PLUS and CHILD-FFE sites identified by a global positioning system.	Country office	VAM acquires information at the <i>woreda</i> level that is used with information from other sources to identify MERET-PLUS <i>woredas</i> and overlap with MERET-PLUS and CHILD-FFE sites. Vulnerability risk profiling of <i>woredas</i> is underway.	July 2010
13. In the design of the next phase of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), linking WFP-supported school feeding with post-2011 PSNP activity should be strongly considered.	Country office	Design of the next phase of the PSNP was completed in August 2009; the new five-year PSNP begins in January 2010. In discussion of social protection and the role of school feeding it was agreed that a social protection strategy should be developed as the first step. WFP is a member of the National Social Protection Platform formed in August 2009. It is expected that the provision of education, nutrition, health and water services will be the basis of the social protection programme, in addition to PSNP and non-contributory pensions.	December 2010

