

INMEDIATE RESPONSE EMERGENCY OPERATION

IR – EMOP 200072

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INMEDIATE RESPONSE EMERGENCY OPERATION

GUATEMALA IR-EMOP 200072

Food Assistance to Populations Affected by Undernutrition and critical Food Shortage
PROJECT DOCUMENT

PART 1: INFORMATION NOTE

NATURE OF EMERGENCY:

The number of children affected by severe acute undernutrition has increased over the past months. In the province of Izabal, the prevalence of children with acute undernutrition stands at 6.3% (EFSA, July 2009)¹. This is significantly higher than the national average of 1.8% (ENSMI 2002)², and if extrapolated to the total population of children under 5 years of age in four municipalities with very high and high food insecurity according to SESAN (National Food Security and Nutrition Secretariat), it is estimated that about 2,000 children could suffer from acute (severe and moderate) undernutrition and need immediate attention.

According to Government data, an estimated number of 410,000 families in 230 municipalities (21 provinces) in Guatemala are affected by the food crisis. Reportedly 25 children – many under six months of age – have died by severe acute undernutrition, but information is still being compiled at the Ministry of Health. Following a declaration of a “State of National Calamity” on September 9th the Guatemalan Government appealed for international assistance. The appeal includes seven provinces known as the dry corridor, as well as 15 provinces located outside the dry corridor. This IR-EMOP will focus on the province of Izabal, justified by its high prevalence of acute undernutrition high numbers of populations living in food insecurity. A ‘Flash Appeal’; is under consideration to mobilize resources to extend the coverage of provinces affected by the crises.

Location:

This operation will focus on the most food insecure municipalities of Izabal: (El Estor, Morales, Puerto Barrios and Los Amates), based on the results of a recently conducted EFSA study.

Causes:

Food reserves in the household finished earlier than usual, as a consequence of the Tropical Depression No 16 (DT 16). The EFSA study (2009) reveals that half (56%) the households lost all their agricultural production and 16% lost half of it. Also, Izabal, known for its ‘platano’ production, 80% of this production was lost, as well as corn, black beans and rice production by 50% of the households. Similarly affected were households, who dedicated to fishing (11%). Of those 51% of households had lost everything due to the DT 16.

Agricultural production after DT 16 was reduced in Izabal. Some 70% of the crops was not recovered after the DT 16 and only 80 percent returned to their agricultural practices. Of those the

¹ Evaluación de Seguimiento de la Situación de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional en las Zonas Afectadas por la Depresión Tropical No. 16 y Disminución de Remesas – Guatemala, Guatemala, Julio de 2009, here referred as EFSA 2009

² Data is adjusted to new growth standards

land cultivated was less than before the DT 16. Main reasons for a reduction in cultivation were lack of capital to buy seed (12%); lack of functional water systems (15%) and pests (14%).

Households in Izabal had less income in 2009, because the demand for daily labour that are usually absorbed in the big agricultural areas of Peten, was not as high in 2009 due to the agricultural damage caused by DT 16. At the same time, previous crop losses in the grain-surplus provinces of Izabal (Peten and Alta Verapaz) have reduced staple foods in the market and kept prices for corn and black beans at the same high levels of 2008.

The dependency of households on food to be bought in markets (80%) as their first source of food increased by 9% after DT 16 and reflects an increase in vulnerability to access food. This high dependency on local markets along with the high prices for staple food has pushed many families into food insecurity. High food prices were the main problem to access food for 56% of families in Izabal that were affected by the DT 16. (EFSA, 2009).

The DT 16, 6.3 contributed to the nutritional deterioration of children under the age of 5 and food insecurity. The high prevalence of severe acute undernutrition in Izabal happens in an environment, in which 32% of the population lives in food insecurity, divided in severe food insecurity (5.3%) and moderate (26.3%). Those households depend on a poor diet, which consists of corn, sugar and sometimes black beans or oil; depend on an unstable source of income; have no food reserves at home the house and spend more than 80% of their income on food. The remaining income is insufficient to cover basic health needs. Some 60% of the children were sick prior to the survey but only 1/3 went to a health center due to lack of money (EFSA, 2009).

The food security and nutrition situation, especially for children is already alarming in Guatemala. With 49.3% chronic undernutrition, among children 5 years and under (ENSMI), Guatemala represents the highest rate in Latin America and the fourth highest in the world. Similarly, the study on primary school children, conducted in 2009, revealed, that 46% of school children are too small for their age or suffer from chronic undernutrition. The findings were more pronounced for rural areas (50% shortness) than for urban areas (28% shortness).

The food basket increased by Q15.00 – three times higher compared to the minimum salary, which only increased by Q5.00 during 2007-09). Or differently, in April 2009, the minimum salary in the agricultural sector covered only 80% of the cost of the national food basket.

At a national level disposability of staple food (black beans and corn) is reduced. (In 1996 corn and black bean production covered only 80% and 30% respectively of the national consumption. At household level, some 42% of the rural population have less than 1.4 hectare of land for their cultivation – too little to sustain adequate food consumption.

Effects:

According to the EFSA carried out in July 2009, 6.3 % of children under five suffer from acute undernutrition in its moderate and severe forms. This data was obtained through mid arm circumference measurements. It is estimated that about 1,500 children with moderate acute undernutrition and approximately 500 children with severe acute undernutrition could be suffering from this problem and needing immediate attention to prevent further deterioration of their nutritional and health status and death in El Estor, Morales, Puerto Barrios and Los Amates. In addition food assistance is required to support families vulnerable to food insecurity and to prevent moderate cases of acute undernutrition to deteriorate to severe cases.

³ RUTF: Ready to Use Therapeutic Feeding

Total numbers affected and in need of emergency food aid: 10,000 people

- i) WFP will assist 1,500 families (7,500 people) living in very high and high food insecurity for a total 90 days with full ration (2.8kg per day per family) in four municipalities of Izabal
- ii) WFP will assist some 1,500 children 6-36 months and 500 pregnant and lactating women (moderate acute undernourished children) with a fortified-blended-food for 90 days in four municipalities of Izabal to prevent a decline of their nutritional status.
- iii) WFP will assist some 500 children with non complicated severe acute undernutrition using RUTF³

WFP IR EMOP:

Justification for an immediate response, expected impact: This is a life-saving response to prevent further deterioration of nutritional status and food insecurity of the affected population.

Duration of the Project: 3 months

Numbers of beneficiaries and location: 10,000 beneficiaries in the municipalities of El Estor, Morales, Puerto Barrios and Los Amates in the province of Izabal.

Food basket composition and ration levels:

Commodity	Cost US\$/MT	Total MT	Ration (g/Family/Day)
MAIZE	\$430,00	270	2.000
CSB	\$630,00	67,5	500
BEANS	\$1.450,00	27	200
VEGOIL	\$1.830,00	13,5	100
Sub Total		378	2.800
CSB-	\$870,00	18	100
VITACEREAL			
SUGAR	\$750,00	4	30
RUTF	\$4.000,00	7	370
Total		407	

Total food aid requirements : 407 MT

Mode of implementation:

WFP in close cooperation with the Government will provide 380mt of food assistance to 1,500 families living in food insecurity. Each family identified as being food insecure will receive a food basket of 90 days at a full ration of 2.8kg/day and family, consisting of corn, oil, black beans and CSB. WFP will work with its Government Partners (MAGA, SESAN and CONRED), as well as NGOs, such as Plan International and Action against Hunger, who have staff and expertise on the ground.

Fortified Blended Food (Vitaceral) will be provided to 2,000 pregnant and lactating women and children between 6-36 months of age, identified as being moderate acute undernourished. Through the Food and Nutritional Security Programme (PROSAN), MoH will be responsible for nutritional surveillance, which will be carried out by MoH staff, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and

health volunteers.

In addition, in families assisted through GFD where a child with severe acute undernutrition (without other health complications) is detected will also receive RUTF according to Ministry of health Guidelines. The estimate is that 500 children with severe acute undernutrition will be treated with RUTF. Families assisted through GFD where a child with moderate acute undernutrition is detected will also receive a fortified blended food, oil and sugar to contribute to recuperation according to Ministry of health guidelines. The estimate is that 1,500 children with moderate acute undernutrition will be assisted this way.

A total of 7,000 kg RUTF or known as “Plumpy Nut” is needed for treatment of 500 children with severe acute undernutrition. This ambulant treatment, under the guidance by MoH receives the support from UN agencies (UNICEF, WFP and PAHO) and will be implemented by MoH and NGOs working in the area.

PART 2: EMOP BUDGET (attached)

Total EMOP budget US\$479,026 is attached.

PART 3: EMOP APPROVAL

- 1) IRA funding is available to cover EMOP budget

Chief, ODP: [Name & Signature], Date: --/--/----

- 2) EMOP is approved

Country Director, Guatemala: Willem Van Milink, Date: --/--/--