

Emergency Operation (EMOP) Paraguay 200482

EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE TO HOUSEHOLDS AFFECTED BY NATURAL DISASTERS IN EL CHACO OF PARAGUAY	
Number of beneficiaries	50,000
Duration of project	1 September – 31 December 2012
WFP food tonnage	989 mt
Cost (United States dollars)	
WFP food cost	US\$746,460
Total cost to WFP	US\$1,340,709

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In 2012, El Chaco region of Paraguay was hit by a series of extreme climatic events that caused fatalities, population displacement, and devastated the livelihoods of more than 80,000 people.¹ Severe drought significantly slowed agricultural production during the first quarter of the year, followed by heavy rains that flooded most of the country in April. More floods and a polar front in May and June isolated many of the communities in the region, and worsened the living conditions of the affected population. In August, flood waters still covered significant portions of the region.

In April 2012, the Government of Paraguay requested WFP assistance. In response, WFP launched an immediate response emergency operation (IR-EMOP) to assist 40,000 beneficiaries over a three-month period through August 2012. A team from the Latin America regional bureau was deployed to work in close collaboration with the National Emergency Secretariat of Paraguay, which is mandated by the Government to respond to emergencies.

Following on the IR-EMOP, this proposed emergency operation will support 50,000 vulnerable people over a four-month period through general food distribution. The objective of this operation is to save lives and protect livelihoods of those that have been affected by the floods and other natural disasters in the El Chaco region, in line with WFP's Strategic Objective 1 ("save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies"). The project addresses Millennium Development Goal 1.²

WFP is conducting an in-depth emergency food security and nutrition assessment in coordination with Plan International. Based on the findings, expected by late September 2012, WFP may review its response strategy by adding a nutrition component if required.

¹ As reported by the National Emergency Secretariat of Paraguay.

² Millennium Development Goal 1: To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

The Overall Context

1. Paraguay is a lower middle income country with a gross national income (GNI) per capita of US\$2,970 (2011).³ It ranked 107 in the Human Development Index (HDI)⁴ in 2011. Thirty five percent of its population lives below the poverty line, while 20 percent lives under extreme poverty.
2. El Chaco is a semi-arid and remote region in western Paraguay, which is populated by only 2.5 percent of the country's six million people, and covers 60 percent of its territory. Its population is mostly made up of different Guaraní ethnic groups residing in isolated areas with scarce access to land and services. Indigenous communities are located some 700 km from the capital city of Asunción, and can be reached through the only paved road in the region, the Trans-Chaco road. Unpaved roads become impassable during and after rains.
3. In 2012, the El Chaco region of Paraguay was hit by a series of extreme climatic events that devastated livelihoods, and caused fatalities and displacement. At the beginning of the year, a severe drought significantly damaged agricultural production. In April, the region experienced severe flooding with the highest rainfall in 15 years. Rains continued through May and June, causing more floods and isolated many communities. Starting in May, polar fronts further deteriorated the living conditions of the affected population.
4. The National Emergency Secretariat of Paraguay (SEN) reported that approximately 80,000 people belonging to 215 communities were affected in the departments of Presidente Hayes, Boqueron and Alto Paraguay. According to the SEN, 95 percent of the affected population is indigenous. About 600 people had to be sheltered in five camps. The most critical impact has been on small land-holders, mainly indigenous people, who depend on subsistence production and livestock. Further to the damage to livestock and crops, floods isolated thousands of families for more than two months. Access was impeded to markets, schools, health centres, and various sources of livelihoods, such as hunting and gathering and seasonal work on large farms. To survive, many households were completely dependent on humanitarian assistance.
5. On 13 April, the Government of Paraguay declared a state of emergency for the departments of Alto Paraguay, Boqueron and Presidente Hayes. The Government, through the SEN, provided food, temporary shelter, hygiene kits, blankets and mattresses to almost 80,000 people for the first month. Following the first distribution (April-May), the SEN reduced the number of targeted people to 50,000 as some communities were no longer in need of humanitarian assistance. A second round of distribution was carried out in June by the SEN and the Paraguayan Red Cross on the basis of this figure.
6. In response to the SEN's request for WFP support, WFP launched an immediate response emergency operation (IR-EMOP 200441) and verified, through assessments and technical missions, that 50,000 beneficiaries were in need. The IR-EMOP reached approximately 40,000 beneficiaries during the period of July and August.⁵

³ World Bank. World Data Bank 2012.

⁴ UNDP. Human Development Report 2011

⁵ The IR-EMOP initially targeted 25,000 people but was able to reach 40,000 beneficiaries because of lower commodity prices.

7. Due to the damage to roads, helicopters provided by the governments of Paraguay and Argentina delivered most of the initial assistance. Distributions by road remain difficult, and some distributions must still be carried out by air.
8. On 22 June, Paraguay's Congress impeached President Fernando Lugo and removed him from office. Vice President Federico Franco was sworn in as the country's new leader that same day. Most of the countries in the region have not recognized the new President of Paraguay. The security situation in Paraguay has however remained calm, and WFP did not interrupt food distributions under the IR-EMOP. The new Minister of the SEN has confirmed his commitment to continue working with WFP to provide humanitarian assistance to the El Chaco region.

The Food Security and Nutrition Situation

9. The series of natural events exacerbated the already fragile food security and nutrition situation in the El Chaco region. WFP rapid assessment and monitoring missions have found that families are adopting negative coping strategies, such as the reduction of the quantity and frequency of meals, in some extreme cases to one meal per day. Livestock is being sold to purchase food. Most of the crops in the region were destroyed just prior to the harvest season, leaving families with little or no food reserves. Hunting and gathering has become less feasible due to the flooding. Casual labour, including work for the large farms in the region, which represents a substantial source of income for landless households, has also been reduced significantly. Access to markets is a major obstacle. WFP monitoring reports indicate that food prices in isolated areas have increased due to the limited availability of food.
10. The Government and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimate that the affected families are unlikely to fully restore their livelihoods and recover their food sources before the next harvest in January 2013. Based on these findings and the recommendations of the joint Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs/United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (OCHA/UNDAC) mission,⁶ further food assistance is required in the interim.
11. Prior to the emergency, the indigenous population of the El Chaco region suffered from chronic malnutrition. According to the National Institute of Food and Nutrition (INAN), the prevalence of chronic malnutrition among children under 5 in the indigenous population is 43 percent, while the national average is 17 percent. A joint assessment conducted by OCHA/UNDAC, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and national authorities,⁷ observed a number of children with visible signs of malnutrition. The local health authorities confirmed the deterioration of the nutritional status of children, but could not provide statistical data to assess the prevalence. WFP is currently conducting an in-depth emergency food security and nutrition assessment in coordination with Plan International, which will provide up-to-date and detailed information.

⁶ UNDAC Final Mission Report. Paraguay Floods Emergency. July 2012.

⁷ The assessment took place from 4 to 6 July 2012, visited several affected communities and applied the rapid assessment methodology.

POLICIES, CAPACITIES AND ACTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND OTHERS

Policies, Capacities and Actions of the Government

12. The SEN is mandated by the Government to respond to emergencies and to support risk reduction activities. Following the declaration of a state of emergency, the Government provided additional US\$2 million to the SEN, which was able to respond to the crisis during the first few months. However, due to the high cost of air transportation and the scale of the emergency, the SEN almost exhausted its resources and requested WFP support. Since WFP started providing food assistance under the IR-EMOP, the SEN has been distributing WFP food and covering transportation costs. WFP is providing technical assistance to train staff from the SEN on emergency food security assessments.

Policies, Capacities and Actions of Other Major Actors

13. Due to the scale of the emergency, the United Nations Resident Coordinator requested OCHA to support the Government in assessing the impact of the floods and the needs of the affected families. Plan International funded part of the SEN costs to distribute WFP food during the IR-EMOP 200441. The Paraguayan Red Cross also provided food during the first round of distributions.

Coordination

14. The United Nations Emergency Technical Team (UNETT) is coordinating the response. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), FAO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) are part of the UNETT. Following the OCHA/UNDAC mission, the UNETT along with the Government and NGOs prepared a Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) proposal to jointly respond to the emergency. Food assistance will be complemented with other non-food items such as safe water, basic sanitation and medicines, seeds and other humanitarian items. NGOs such as the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), *Cooperazione Internazionale* (COOPI), Oxfam, and the Red Cross will also cooperate in this effort, within the framework of UNETT coordination.

OBJECTIVES OF WFP ASSISTANCE

15. In line with WFP Strategic Objective 1 ("save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies), the EMOP aims to save lives and protect livelihoods of those that have been affected by the floods and other natural disasters in the El Chaco region of Paraguay. Through the provision of general food rations, WFP aims to improve the food consumption of the most affected communities until they recover their livelihoods.

BENEFICIARIES AND TARGETING

16. The EMOP will cover the needs of 50,000 beneficiaries (or approximately 10,000 households). While WFP plans to provide a two-month supply of food to affected populations, actual distributions may take place over a three- to four-month period due to logistical constraints in purchasing and delivering commodities to isolated communities.

TABLE 1: BENEFICIARIES BY GENDER			
Activity	Male	Female	Total
General food distribution	25,700	24,300	50,000

17. WFP will target a total of 12 municipalities within the departments of Alto Paraguay, Boquerón and Presidente Hayes in the El Chaco region as per table 2 below:

TABLE 2: BENEFICIARIES BY LOCATION		
Department	Municipality	Beneficiaries
Alto Paraguay	Puerto Casado	1,740
	Carmelo Peralta	1,555
	Fuerte Olimpo	870
	Bahia Negra	1,810
	Montelindo	600
Boqueron	Mariscal Estigarribia	9,145
	Loma Plata	6,145
Presidente Hayes	Teniente Irala Fernandez	16,965
	Puerto Pinasco	7,515
	Teniente Esteban Martinez	690
	Gral Bruguez	1,105
	Villa Hayes	1,860
TOTAL		50,000

NUTRITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RATIONS

18. The general food ration contains rice, vegetable oil, wheat flour, beans and salt, which are products usually consumed in this region.⁸ It provides 1,260 kcal per person per day, covering 60 percent of total energy requirements. The food ration has been designed assuming that by September, households will be able to meet part of their food needs from

⁸ The SEN ration contains 10 products but has the same weight as WFP ration and less energy. The SEN ration includes: rice, wheat flour, noodles, sugar, beans, tea, vegetable oil, and salt.

hunting, gathering and casual labour, as these activities will be gradually restored when the water recedes.

TABLE 3: DAILY FOOD RATION (g/person/day)	
Commodity type	General Food Distribution*
Wheat Flour	100
Rice	100
Beans	100
Vegetable oil	24.6
Salt	5
TOTAL	329.6
Total Kcal/day	1,263
% Kcal from protein	11.7
% Kcal from fat	26.7
Number of feeding days per month	30

19. WFP is unable to incorporate in this phase of the operation a nutritional product in the GFD ration due to importation restrictions and unavailability of immediate resources. Once the results of the emergency food security and nutrition assessment are known, WFP will look into alternative options for addressing any nutritional concerns, possibly including a nutritious product within the ration.
20. At this stage of the emergency, cash or voucher transfers are not considered due to the difficulties in accessing markets and the time it would take to establish these modalities. Roads continue to be closed or are very difficult to use. If a prolonged intervention is needed as determined by further assessments, cash and/or voucher transfers could be considered.
21. A total of 989 mt of food commodities are needed to implement the project.

TABLE 4: TOTAL FOOD REQUIREMENTS (mt)	
Commodity Type	General food distribution
Wheat flour	300
Rice	300
Beans	300
Vegetable oil	74
Salt	15
Total	989

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

22. In line with WFP's gender policy,⁹ WFP will promote the active participation of women in planning, implementation and evaluation. At the local level, WFP will coordinate activities with indigenous and municipal authorities on the implementation and monitoring of distribution.
23. As the water recedes and communication by road is restored, WFP will look for opportunities within the EMOP to link food assistance with early-recovery activities. WFP has agreed with FAO, COOPI, Oxfam and ADRA to jointly implement activities in support of the recovery of the affected households. Along with the Government, these partners will distribute seeds and small animals, provide technical assistance, and encourage diversification of production.
24. The EMOP will be implemented through the SEN, which is responsible for providing storage as well as handling, transporting and distributing food. WFP will train the SEN staff on food management, distribution and needs assessment methodologies to assure an adequate implementation. The costs of training sessions and minimum equipment have been budgeted under other direct operational costs (ODOC).
25. Since WFP has no country office in Paraguay, the project will be implemented through the WFP Bolivia country office. Most of the administrative, finance, logistics, procurement and programme activities will be conducted from WFP Bolivia, and relevant staff will undertake missions to Paraguay to implement and monitor the operation. Some of them are also working on the Bolivian-side of the Chaco region, and are familiar with the area. In addition, local field monitors have been recruited under the IR-EMOP and will remain based in Paraguay. Salaries of the relevant WFP Bolivia staff will be partly covered by the project as well as the travel costs.
26. In order to provide a timely response, food will be purchased locally from suppliers, which are already registered on WFP roster. All purchases will follow WFP policy on food procurement to ensure cost efficiency. Suppliers will deliver food under delivery at place conditions in a central warehouse provided by SEN in Asunción. Food will then be transported directly from Asunción to the affected communities, using trucks provided by SEN. The SEN will carry out food distributions under WFP monitoring.
27. Logistics is particularly challenging in the El Chaco region, with the long distances (300-600 km) and a poor road network, which becomes almost impassable when it rains. River as well as air transportation will have to be considered for certain areas, increasing the transportation costs. The SEN has been covering all landside transport, storage and handling (LTSH) costs under the IR-EMOP, and will cover most of them under this EMOP. However, given that the SEN has almost entirely exhausted its resources, WFP will cover a small portion of the LTSH, mainly fuel for trucks. The Commodity Movement Processing and Analysis System (COMPAS) will be managed from the WFP regional bureau in Panama in close coordination with the Bolivia country office.

⁹ WFP Gender Policy: "Promoting Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Addressing Food and Nutrition Challenges" (WFP/EB.1/2009/5-A/Rev.1).

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

28. Corporate indicators for results and performance monitoring will be followed using the SEN's tools, which are fully compatible with WFP Bolivia procedures and tools. This will avoid additional burden and duplication. WFP will carry out post-distribution monitoring. Plan International has also offered to support the monitoring of food distributions.
29. Two local field monitors will be hired to support programme and logistics activities. Another monitor from the Bolivia country office will support and coordinate these activities. They will ensure that food distributions are managed efficiently. These monitors will accompany the work of approximately other 10 technical staff from the SEN that are responsible for distributing WFP food.

HAND-OVER STRATEGY

30. The results of the in-depth EFSA will help to establish an adequate exit strategy and/or to inform further assistance needed.
31. By working closely with the Government, WFP is strengthening its institutional capacities to effectively respond to emergencies. WFP will continue to augment the SEN's capacity to provide and monitor food assistance.

RISK MANAGEMENT

32. The interruption of President Lugo's term and the proximity of upcoming national elections underscore the tense environment in the country and the risk of turnover within the government staff. While WFP has been successful in maintaining close collaboration with the Government, WFP also needs to consider a scenario under which it would need to directly implement the project.
33. Further rains or major disasters could also threaten the achievement of the project's objectives. To mitigate this risk, periodic assessments will allow WFP to adapt its response assistance according to the needs of the targeted population.

Security Risk Management

34. Paraguay is currently under security phase 1. Poor road conditions are the main security concern for this operation. As WFP has no country office in Paraguay, WFP will comply as possible with all minimum operating security standards. For instance, WFP staff will permanently carry satellite phones, as rented vehicles do not have high or very high frequency equipment.
35. WFP will follow the United Nations Department of Safety and Security procedures and measures, as well as the decisions of the United Nations Disaster Management Team.

RECOMMENDATION

36. The Executive Director is requested to approve the proposed emergency operation Paraguay EMOP 200482.

APPROVAL

Ertharin Cousin
Executive Director,
United Nations World Food Programme

Date

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN			
Food ¹⁰	Quantity (mt)	Value (US\$)	Value (US\$)
Cereals	600	315,000	
Pulses	300	300,000	
Oil and fats	74	125,460	
Mixed and blended food	0	00 000	
Others	15	6,000	
Total food	989	746,460	
Cash transfers		0	
Voucher transfers		0	
Subtotal food and transfers			746,460
External transport			0
Landside transport, storage and handling			61,294
Other direct operational costs			74,240
Direct support costs (see Annex I-B)			371,005
Total WFP direct costs			1,253,001
Indirect support costs (7 percent) ¹¹			87,710
TOTAL WFP COSTS			1,340,709

¹⁰ This is a notional food basket for budgeting and approval. The contents may vary.

¹¹ The indirect support cost rate may be amended by the Board during the project.

ANNEX I-B

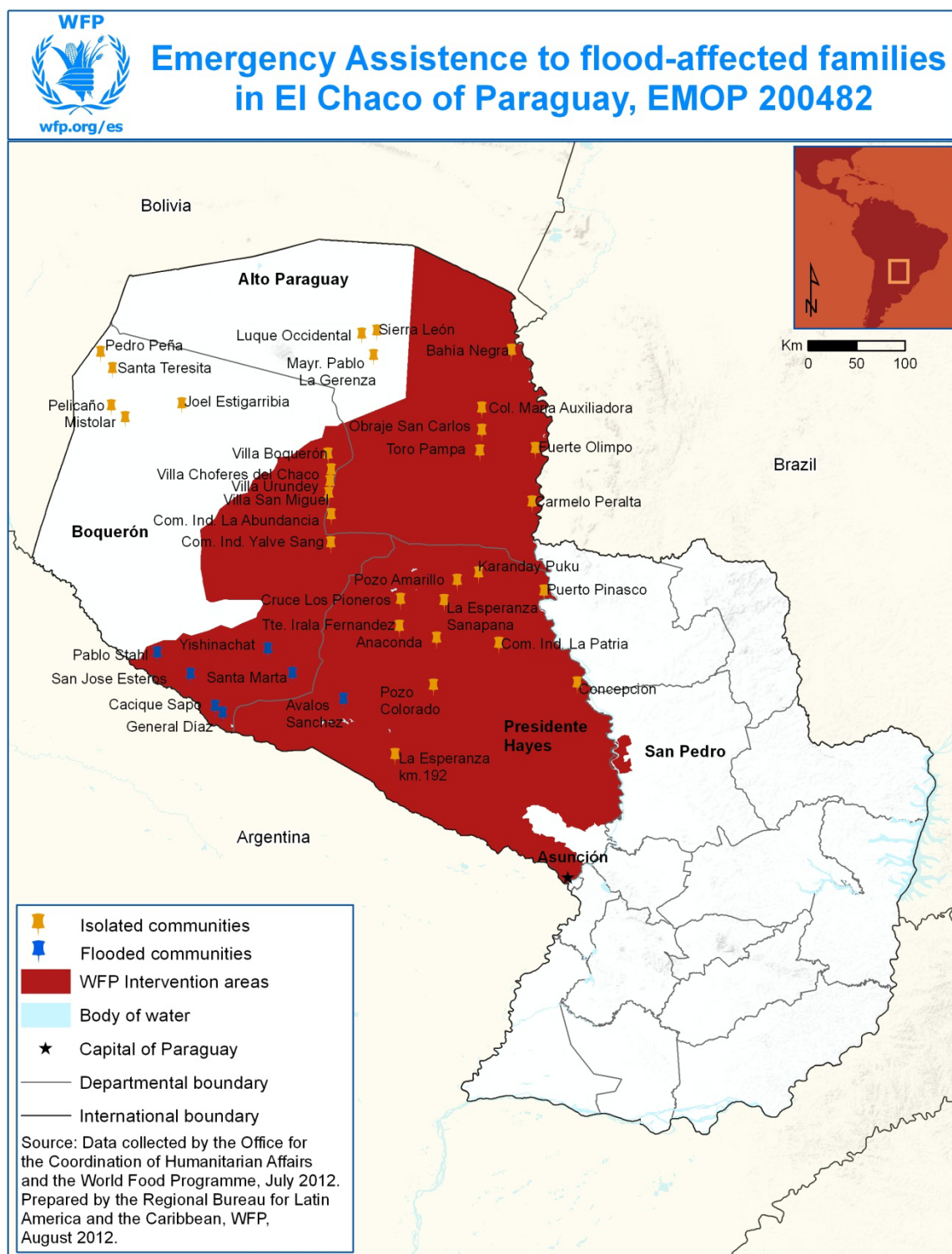
DIRECT SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	
Staff and staff-related costs	
International professional staff	46,807
Local staff - national officers	68,032
Local staff - general service	4,128
Local staff - temporary assistance	25,370
Commercial consultancy services	20,000
Staff duty travel	133,768
Subtotal	298,105
Recurring expenses	
Office supplies and other consumables	2,000
Communications and IT services	5,000
Vehicle running cost and maintenance	44,000
UN organization services	6,000
Subtotal	57,000
Equipment and capital costs	
TC/IT equipment	15,900
Subtotal	15,900
TOTAL DIRECT SUPPORT COSTS	371,005

ANNEX II: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Results	Performance indicators	Assumptions
Strategic Objective # 1 <i>Save Lives and Protect Livelihoods in Emergencies</i>		
Outcome 1 Improved food consumption over assistance period for target households	Household food consumption score Target: - To be confirmed based on EFSA results	The Government minimizes staff rotation and keeps the humanitarian response in the El Chaco region as a top priority. There is no additional major crisis that could affect the food consumption of the target population.
Output 1.1 Food and non-food items distributed in sufficient quantity and quality to target groups of women, men, girls and boys under secure conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of women, men, girls and boys receiving food, by category and as % of planned. ➤ Tonnage of food distributed, by type, as % of planned distribution.¹² ➤ WFP expenditures related to distribution of food (US\$.) ➤ Number of United Nations agencies/international organizations that collaborate in the provision of complementary inputs and services. ➤ Number of NGOs that collaborate in the provision of complementary inputs and services. 	

¹² Planned distribution includes quantity, quality and timeliness.

ANNEX III: MAP



The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
COOPI	Cooperation International
EFSA	Emergency food security assessment
EMOP	Emergency operation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GFD	General food distribution
HDI	Human Development Index
INAN	National Institute of Food and Nutrition
IR-EMOP	Immediate response emergency operation
LTSH	Landside transport, storage and handling
MOSS	Minimum operating security standards
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OCHA/UNDAC	Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs/the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
ODOC	Other direct operational costs
PAHO/WHO	Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNETT	United Nations Emergency Technical Teams
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDMT	United Nations Disaster Management Team
RC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
SEN	National Emergency Secretariat of Paraguay