



Tropical Cyclone Winston

Fiji Government and World Food Programme
Joint Emergency Response —
Lessons Learned Workshop Report, April 2017



World Food Programme

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1. Executive Summary

In the search for more effective ways to provide food assistance to people affected by emergencies, WFP is exploring the use of existing government social protection schemes and social safety nets, and their related targeting mechanisms, transfer modalities and delivery mechanisms. In developing or strengthening these existing systems, WFP aims to increase the effectiveness, cost efficiency and timeliness of emergency response.

By providing complementary support to the affected population through existing government structures and channels, WFP can reduce duplication of operational components (targeting, transferring, monitoring, etc) and help develop a strong partnership with the government. By transferring assistance directly to beneficiaries to address food insecurity, such joint collaboration and cooperation can benefit the entire emergency response operation.

In February 2016, the Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Winston struck Fiji with sustained winds of up to 230 km/h. This was one of the most violent storms ever registered in the Southern Hemisphere with almost 62 percent of the population affected and losses estimated at USD 1.38 billion (corresponding to approximately 31 percent of GDP).

The Fiji National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) led the response with all national government-led clusters activated and with support from the international community. The Fiji Government requested support from the WFP, part of which was provided in the form of USD 3.4 million for food security support through cash based transfers, for an assistance period of two months (May-June 2016). WFP used the shock responsiveness capacity of the existing Fiji social safety nets (targeting and assistance delivery mechanisms) to reach over 72,000 people of those worst affected by the cyclone (12,761 households + 7,895 individuals).

A workshop was organised in Suva on 14-15 September 2016 to bring together stakeholders¹ involved at different levels in the joint WFP and Government Emergency Response to TC Winston, to present the achievements, opportunities and challenges of the response and to discuss opportunities to strengthen future responses to emergencies in Fiji.

Approximately 35 stakeholders participated in the workshop, including donors, government agencies, NGOs, multilateral organizations, UN Agency representatives and WFP experts from the Fiji Country Office and the Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau.

Presentations by various agencies of the Fiji Government (MOA, MOE and DSW), WFP, the World Bank and ADRA, shared the scope of work of each stakeholder, and provided a forum for stakeholders to share their experiences and findings and an opportunity to highlight the challenges encountered during the implementation of the response as well as recommendations for addressing these challenges in future (see Annex 1: Workshop Agenda).

Based on the workshop outputs, this report will review and capture the operational challenges in each area of implementation and provide some direction and concrete suggestions for the improvement of the emergency response. The recommendations from this workshop could be used, together with the recommendations from the internal lessons learned workshop held by the Fiji Government, to inform policy-making and foster capacity to build and strengthen social safety nets with a shock responsive component.

The main recommendations include the development of standby agreements and standard operating procedures (SOPs) with potential stakeholders, with clear definitions of roles, responsibilities and timeframes for the implementation of emergency response through shock responsive social safety nets. Other recommendations include the development of communications strategies and tools, information management and sharing instruments, internal and external coordination plans and mechanisms for all stakeholders involved both at the central and local levels, and improvement of emergency assessments and vulnerability analysis, types of assistance modalities and delivery mechanisms. Training of pre-selected surge staff able and the development of an M&E strategy to follow up on evolving contexts, assistance delivery processes and beneficiaries' satisfaction and recovery, are also recommended.

Ultimately, the collection and formalisation of the entire body of knowledge related to this emergency response operation could be shared at the regional Pacific governmental level, in order to facilitate the transfer of information on the strengthening of social protection schemes and their shock responsiveness, and to foster the capacity of the Fiji Government to provide support, operationally or institutionally, to neighbouring countries facing similar challenges.

¹ Included representatives from MOA, MoWCPA, DSW offices, World Bank, WFP, West Pac, DFAT, OCHA, and ADRA.



The Department Of Social Welfare
WTP - Food Voucher

Reference: SV/SP5/135/1-0516

Recipient: Filipo Noiveli

Reference No:	DSW Centre	Month	Year
SV/SP5/135/1		MAY	16

Amount: ***** Fifty Dollars Only *****

Cashing Agency: Morris Hedstrom

Signature / Thana Pine

581

2. Introduction

A. Fiji Country Background

The Republic of the Fiji Islands, situated in the South Pacific Ocean, is composed of an archipelago of 332 islands (of which approximately 110 are inhabited), with a total land area of approximately 18,300 km² across a geographic area of almost 50,000 km², with 23.3 percent of agricultural land. A multi-ethnic population of approximately 915,300 people reside mostly on the two largest islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, with half of them living in urban settlements. The country is divided into 14 provinces and the capital Suva is situated in the southern part of the main island of Viti Levu.

Fiji is one of the wealthier countries in the Pacific, with a gross domestic product (GDP) of USD 4.53 billion and a gross national income of USD 4,870 per capita, but with an unemployment rate of 8.8 percent. Whilst the country has achieved broad coverage in the provision of basic social services, 31 percent of Fijians live below the poverty line, with a substantial “near poor” population that is vulnerable to poverty due to possible shocks (World Bank, 2011). Additionally, the functions of the current social protection systems are largely focused on protection, with the prevention and promotion functions still to be developed.

Although poverty has recently declined, a significant rural-urban variation exists, with 44 percent of the rural population and 26 percent of the urban population living in poverty respectively. Enrolment in primary education is almost universal, with a primary net enrolment rate of 96.8 percent. (World Bank 2016).

Economic growth has been strong in recent years, reaching 3.6 percent in 2013, 5.3 percent in 2014 and an estimated 4 percent in 2015, which is significantly above the 2 percent average for the period 1980–2012. Remoteness of the population, in conjunction with island dispersion, means high trade and transportation costs as well as complexity in providing public and private services.

Fiji is located in the tropical cyclone belt, and is thus affected by frequent rain and storm surges, with an average of one cyclone per year, usually from November to January. It is also situated inside the Pacific Ring of Fire,

which is associated with extreme seismic and volcanic activities, strong earthquakes and tsunamis. In addition, the country is vulnerable to extreme events associated with climate variability and changes, including sea-level rise, temperature extremes and droughts and, as a man-made environmental challenge, deforestation and soil erosion.

In the past few decades, Fiji has been affected by multiple devastating cyclones. In 2012, Fiji experienced two major flooding events and one tropical cyclone (Evans). The effects of natural disasters in Fiji are devastating, mostly impacting agriculture, housing, transport, infrastructure and tourism. Since 1980, disasters in Fiji have resulted in average annual economic damage of around FJD 35 million (USD 16.5 million) and have impacted around 40,000 people each year. Fiji is also expected to incur, on average, FJD 158 million (USD 85 million) per year in losses due to earthquakes and tropical cyclones. In the next 50 years, Fiji has a 50 percent chance of experiencing a loss exceeding FJD 1.5 billion (USD 806 million), and a 10 percent chance of experiencing a loss exceeding FJD 3 billion (USD 1.6 billion) in relation to these shocks. However, these figures may increase once the impacts of climate change are taken into consideration. (Post Disaster Needs Assessment 2016)

B. Tropical Cyclone Winston

Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Winston struck Fiji on February 20, 2016 with sustained winds of up to 230 km/h. This was one of the most violent storms ever registered in the Southern Hemisphere. The cyclone-related losses were estimated at USD 1.38 billion (31 percent of GDP), with more than 30,000 homes destroyed, approximately 540,400 people affected (62 percent of the population) and 44 deaths. Final assessments by the Ministry of Agriculture showed that total damage to the agriculture sector amounted to FJD 208.3 million² (USD 100 million) with almost 44,522 farmers affected. The reconstruction cost was estimated at USD 940 million and the recovery phase is expected to take several years.

In the aftermath of the disaster, the Fiji National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) led the response with all national government-

2 <http://www.pina.com.fj/?p=pacnews&m=read&o=162213907556e739290a8d0a183c98>

3 Government clusters are: Communications, WASH, Health and Nutrition, Shelter, Logistics, Food Security, Safety and Production, Education, Public Works and Utilities: http://www.ndmo.gov.fj/images/NDMO%20OLD/Fiji_National_Cluster_System_for_Disaster_Management.pdf

led clusters³ activated. Food was immediately distributed to severely affected populations in 12 identified priority areas⁴, accompanied by the provision of shelter and building materials for temporary rehabilitation of damaged homes.

To support the shock-affected population, in addition to the funds released and committed to this emergency operation by the Fiji Government, the country received approximately USD 33.4 million in humanitarian assistance. Of this USD 19.8 million came from the UN Flash Appeal earmarked for the response, while the remaining USD 13.6 million was unmarked funding. Approximately 60 percent of the UN Flash Appeal went to projects implemented by the government in direct response to the shock. The governments of Australia, Canada, the European Commission, Germany, Belgium, Lithuania, New Zealand, Sweden, the United States and the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund also contributed generously to the response. (World Bank, 2016)

Part of the government response was provided by the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation (MoWCPA), in coordination with the National Disaster Management Office of Fiji (NDMO), who topped up the existing monthly social protection welfare benefits (through non-contributory cash + food vouchers) of members of the population previously identified as vulnerable with additional cash assistance for the TC Winston shock recovery. Three existing government social safety net programmes were identified as suitable for the emergency operation and reinforced with top-ups within one month of the cyclone: the "Poverty Based Scheme" (PBS), the "Care and Protection Scheme" (CPS) and "Social Pension Scheme" (SPS), with the latter providing support to almost 15 percent of the country's older people. While PBS beneficiaries received a top-up of FJD 600 in cash, the CPS families and SPS beneficiaries each received a top-up of FJD 300. (See Table 1 below)

Government support also took the form of housing assistance to rebuild damaged housing (Help for Homes), for affected households with an annual income of less than FJD 50,000. Government grants were disbursed as follows: FJD 1,500 for households with partial roofing damage, FJD 3,000 for households with serious roofing damage and FJD 7,000 for households with almost completely destroyed roofing.

Table 1: Fiji Government social welfare programmes and government top-up benefits for the response to TC Winston

Safety Net Schemes	Safety Net Target Groups	Number of Beneficiaries	Regular Fiji Government Safety Net Benefits	Additional Top-up for TC Winston Response
PBS	Households in the poorest 10% of the population	23,035 households, or 90,000 individuals (10% of population)	FJD 30 cash through bank accounts, per person (for up to four HH members) + FJD 50 in Food Voucher*, or max. FJD 170	FJD 600 as a lump sum
CPS	Disadvantaged households (facing special needs) with children (e.g. single mothers with children)	3,257 households or 12,725 individuals (1.4% of population)	FJD 110 cash through bank accounts (maximum amount) + FJD 50 in Food Voucher*	FJD 300 as a lump sum
SPS	Elderly (68+ years old) with no alternative means of support	17,232 individuals (7.4% of population)	FJD 50 cash + FJD 50 Food Voucher*	FJD 300 as a lump sum

* The Food Voucher consists of an electronic value voucher card which can be redeemed at local supermarkets, or (in areas with no supermarkets) manual printed vouchers distributed through the Post Office and West Pac, to be redeemed at small local shops.

⁴ Government priority areas for emergency response were: i) Lau group, ii) Lomaiviti group (Koro), iii) Lomaiviti group (Ovalau), iv) Taveuni, v) Cakaudrove West, vi) Bua, vii) Tailevu & Naitasiri, viii) Ra, ix) Ba (eastern), x) Ba (western), xi) Nadroga & Navosa, and xii) Mamanuca group.

C. Fiji Government— WFP Joint Emergency Intervention

In addition to these specific interventions, the Fiji Government requested assistance from WFP to support those who were identified as needing extra help to ensure they could meet their food needs in areas where damage was particularly bad. After discussions with the Fiji Ministry of Finance and the NDMO, it was decided that WFP would provide the necessary support by topping up existing food assistance managed by the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) under the MoWCPA. Thus, WFP provided additional support to more than 72,000 shock-affected individuals. A total of USD 2.3 million was delivered to individuals or households in cash via beneficiaries' bank accounts, through additional food vouchers or by increasing the value of existing government vouchers, in line with the medium used in the existing government social safety nets. The WFP operation lasted two months (May-June 2016), topping up the government food assistance already delivered through three existing government social safety net programmes.

The value of the additional WFP top-up was FJD 150 for beneficiaries under the PBS and CPS schemes, and FJD 50 for individuals covered by the SPS. Values were calculated based on a basic nutritious food basket that would provide 2,100 kcal per person per day, additionally meeting daily protein and fat requirements.

Map 1: Number of households that received WFP food assistance top-ups through government safety nets by area (and TC Winston path)

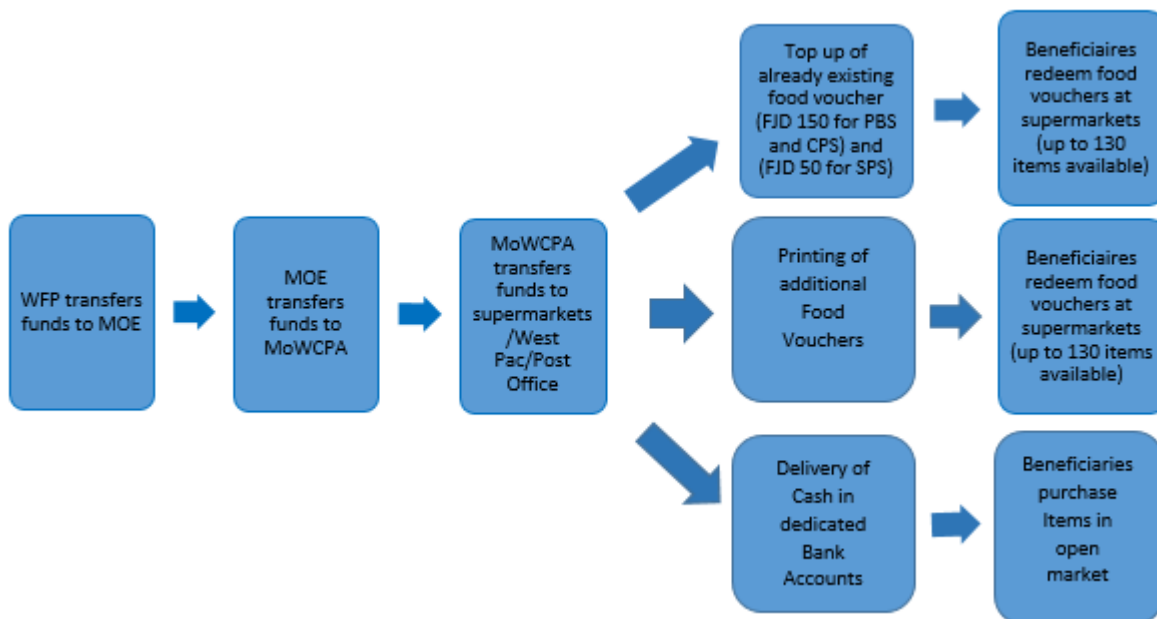


Source: WFP Fiji Country Office

The transfer of the WFP top-up assistance in the 12 priority areas affected by TC Winston was managed, in close collaboration with WFP, by the DSW, under the MoWCPA. The previously established DSW social welfare database was used to identify beneficiaries. The top-up was channelled through existing transfer mechanisms, which included primarily electronic cards. Paper vouchers, distributed via Social Welfare and Post Offices, were also issued for pensioners. For beneficiaries living in remote areas, where access to supermarkets was limited, bank transfers - available from Fiji's main financial service provider (Westpac) - were used, and, in a few cases, direct cash distributions.

The Fiji Ministry of Economy (MOE) facilitated the reception of humanitarian funds and internal transfers of WFP assistance top-up funds during the emergency response, to be used on time by DSW for reaching the selected beneficiaries in the field. WFP funds were disbursed in 2 tranches to the MOE: FJD 2.3 million + FJD 2.2 million = FJD 4.5 million (USD 2.3 million), corresponding to the two instalments planned for the beneficiaries.

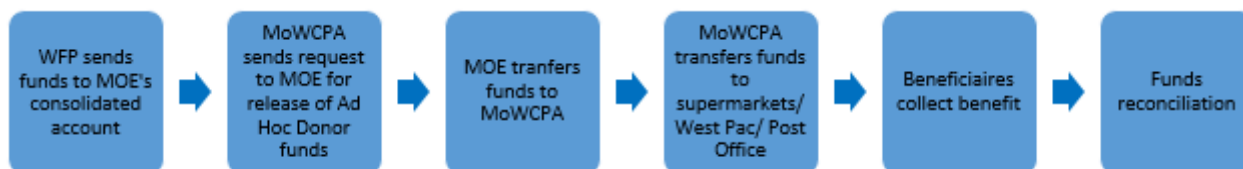
Flowchart 1. Operational process for WFP top-up assistance delivery and use



The Reserve Bank of Fiji (RBF) confirmed the deposits and advised the debt management unit of the disposal of such funds. On WFP’s request, WFP funds were additionally deposited into a special consolidated account exclusively dedicated to the operation.

The financial process was established as follows:

Flowchart 2. Financial process for delivery of WFP top-up assistance



The main challenge faced by the MOE was to receive a substantial amount of committed funds from an external humanitarian sources, and to release those funds at once according to humanitarian project needs, and to monitor the operation without being directly involved in the distribution of the cash assistance. Additionally, the reconciliation process of the expenditures was only performed at the end of the entire operation, raising several questions of accountability. It was soon recommended to have monthly reconciliations between MoWCPA and MOE throughout the operation.

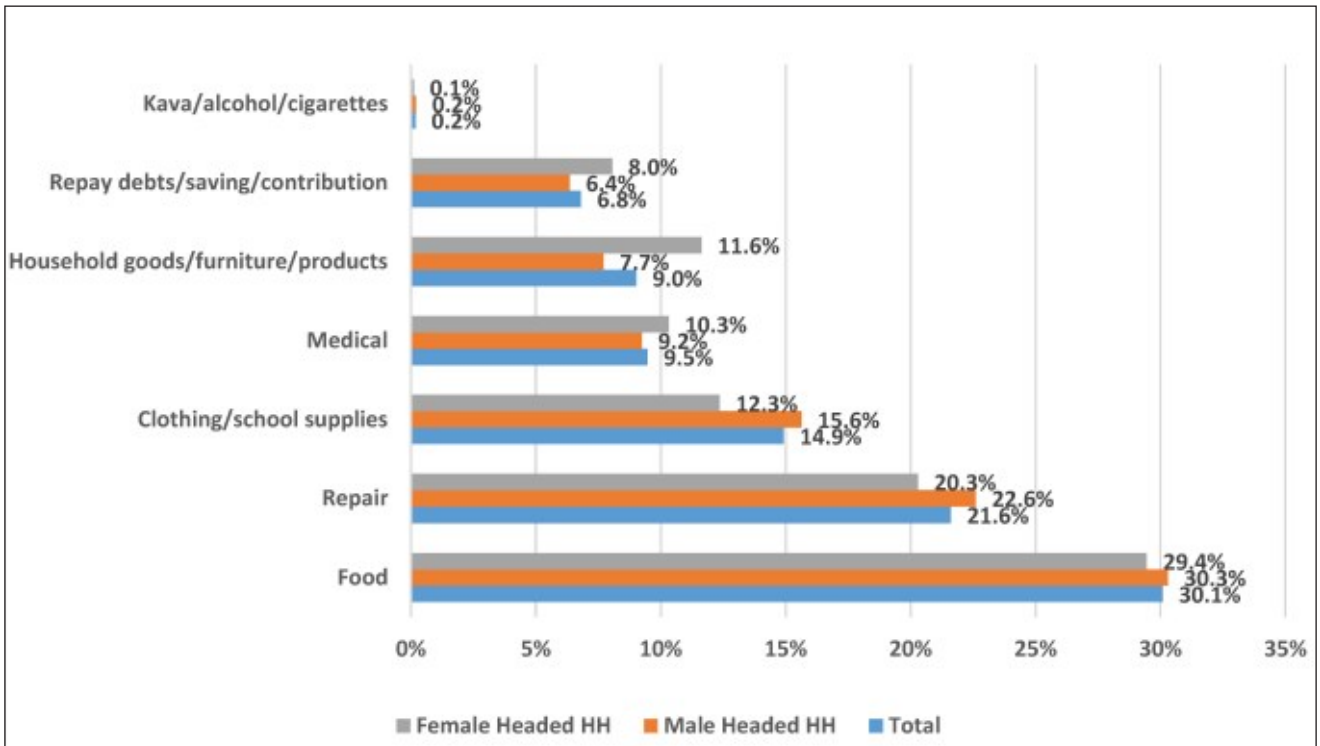
The operation was set up very quickly and several challenges were rapidly overcome with regard to linking the Government of Fiji with WFP in the establishment of new operational and financial processes. The Fiji Government recognised the pioneering effort as the first cash-based food assistance initiative in the history of disaster response in Fiji. It also appreciated the recognition and use of existing government safety nets as an efficient system to reach affected populations and maximise the emergency response for the fast recovery of food security. Flexibility and a solution-oriented joint approach have proven to be very important in emergency response efforts, especially when trying to combine processes that are already well established for very specific activities with emergency response or developmental programmes.



A family redeems their entitlements at a government-contracted supermarket. Photo: WFP/ Francesca Ciardi

Based on the success of the joint emergency response initiative, the Fiji Government showed a high interest in exploring options with WFP to strengthen and improve the Fiji National Disaster Relief Systems, and to work on mechanisms for future joint interventions linking Fiji social protection schemes and disaster management. The first planned activity formalising this collaboration was the setup of a joint lessons learned workshop on the TC Winston emergency response.

Table 2: How top-up cash assistance was spent by men or women head of household



Note: 7-8 percent of "other expenditures are not shown in the figures above.
Source: World Bank, 2016.

3. Lessons Learned Workshop

PURPOSE

In order to improve future emergency interventions, the Government of Fiji and WFP held a lessons learned workshop in Suva, Fiji on September 14 and 15, 2016, with approximately 35 participants from various Fiji Ministries, NGOs, UN and multilateral organisations coming together to:

- A. Review the Government of Fiji/WFP/ADRA joint emergency programme activities in response to TC Winston, to take stock of key achievements and challenges
- B. Identify best practices and lessons learned from the emergency response intervention
- C. Identify key areas of potential improvements
- D. Identify key areas and opportunities for further collaboration, support and assistance, including in the area of social safety nets

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- A. Best practices and gaps identified, challenges discussed and action points agreed on ways to improve the emergency operations
- B. Key areas of further collaboration identified and a way forward mapped on how to take these possible improvements forward
- C. Work plan and timeframe set up for key stand-by documents to be developed (MOU/LOU, SOPs, Standby Agreements and FLAs, etc.)

ORGANISATION

The workshop was organised around 7 modules exploring, through stakeholder presentations and mixed group discussions, the following themes:

Module 1: Partners Presentations on key roles played in the specific Joint Partnership Programme for the Cyclone Winston Response

(Ministry of Agriculture, NDMO, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Adventist Development and Relief Agency, World Bank and WFP presentations)

Module 2: Group Discussions on Preparedness for Emergencies

- a. Early warning Systems, Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Plans
- b. Inter-Ministerial Coordination (Internal)
- c. Stakeholders Coordination (External)

Module 3: Group Discussions on the Emergency Response Conception

- a. The Transfer Modality
- b. Unconditionality / Conditionality
- c. Use of government social safety net system versus other alternative options to channel assistance

Module 4: Group Discussions on the Emergency Response Design

- a. Geographical Targeting
- b. Beneficiary Targeting
- c. Assistance Transfer Value + Duration of Assistance

Module 5: Group Discussions on the Emergency Response Implementation

- a. Workload of Stakeholders
- b. Coordination of Stakeholders
- c. Supporting activities (transition to recovery phase, regional support, etc.)

Module 6: Group Discussions on the Emergency Response Monitoring & Evaluation

- a. Context monitoring, sensitization of beneficiaries and complaints/feedback mechanisms
- b. Transfer process monitoring, service provision by contracted service providers, etc.
- c. Programme, beneficiaries satisfaction monitoring, protection & gender issues considerations

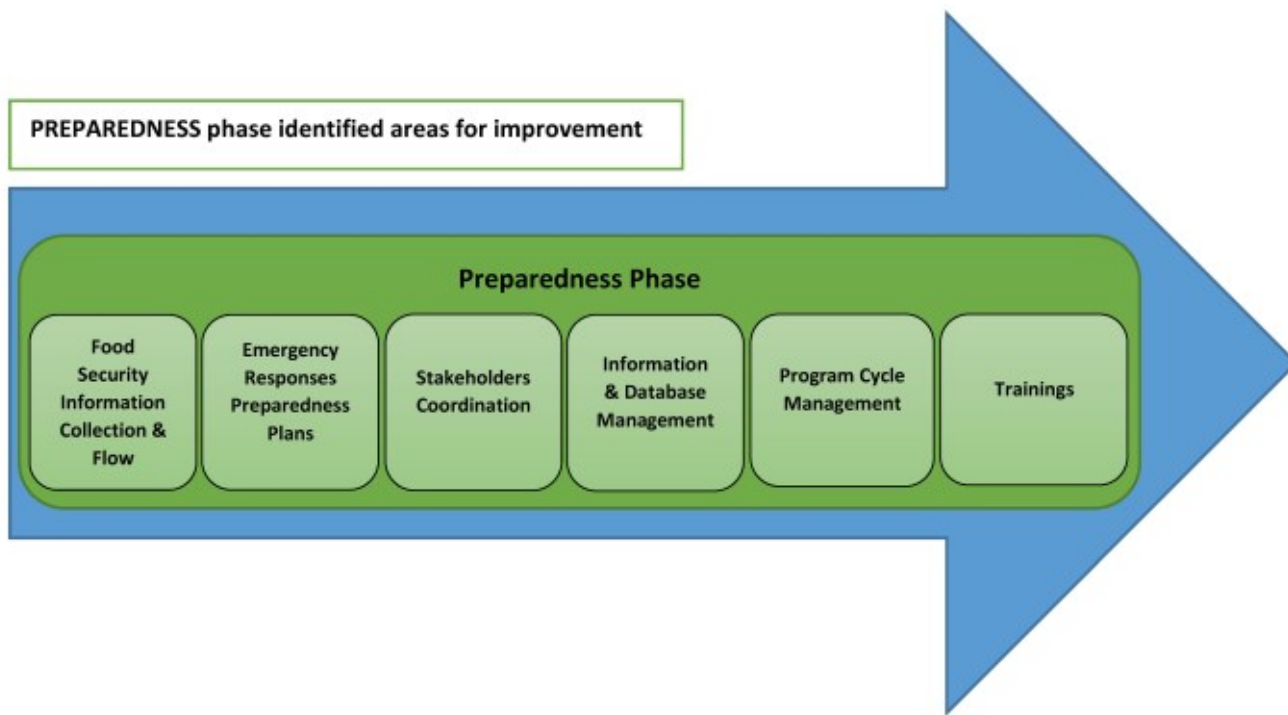
Module 7: Plenary Discussion on Ways Forward

- a. What can be improved in preparation for the next disaster?
- b. What can be improved in the implementation of the response, using government safety nets as a shock responsive mechanism?
- c. What are the action points for the ways forward on short, medium and long term?

4. Workshop Recommendations

A. Preparedness Phase

To increase the cost-efficiency, effectiveness and timeliness of the Emergency Response, the following operational recommendations have been identified:



a. Food Security Situation – Data Collection

To evaluate the impact of a shock on the food security of a population and define an emergency response plan to tackle possible food insecurity, it is necessary to have a complete understanding of the pre-disaster food security situation, thus allowing a comparison to measure deterioration in food security as a result of the disaster. This baseline is also necessary to establish the first parameter of a monitoring process.

Participants of the lessons learned workshop suggested the development of a Food Security Information Collection activity that could inform the food cluster of the ongoing situation in the country. This assessment would be reviewed yearly and should be able to provide analysis on related vulnerabilities, on the patterns of food consumption, on the seasonal component of food production and markets functioning, and on household's potential food and nutrition gaps. This information should be the basis for informing and designing various catastrophe scenarios and associated response plans.

b. Emergency Response Preparedness Planning (Operational Setup)

Emergencies necessitate rapid response in order to support an affected population. Thus, a joint government – WFP intervention made sense, taking advantage of already existing assistance delivery mechanisms, structures and processes. This also benefited from the previously established partnership of the Fiji Government with food vendor and service providers linked to the social safety net operations. However, the joint implementation was more based on an opportunity rather than a rational preparedness plan. Additionally, although the Fiji Government, through its NDMO, had already worked on a National Emergency Response Plan, the shock responsive component of the social protection schemes was never considered as an option for delivering assistance to people affected by crisis.

As a result of the success of the special operation, workshop participants recommended building on the experience to elaborate and

actualise the National Emergency Disaster Preparedness and Response Plan, taking into consideration this response option. In order to do so, it will be necessary to work on:

- I. The policy level, reflecting the principles and objectives of this type of intervention
- II. The conceptual level, formalized through the establishment of guidelines, protocols and operational plans, from the national down to the local levels. Scenarios reflecting the various possible intensities and dispersions of the shocks should be developed to build models of potential response interventions
- III. The implementation level: for all scenarios & intervention models, Standard Operating Procedures (internal for government and external for stakeholders) should be developed to know exactly who will be doing what and when.

c. Stakeholder Coordination

The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) operates as the coordinating centre for the Fiji Government in times of natural disasters, under the National Disaster Management Act and the National Disaster Management Plan and through the Ministries of Rural Development, Maritime Development and Disaster Management. During the emergency response, there was no formal mechanism in place for external stakeholder coordination on disaster management, but after TC Winston, weekly meetings of stakeholders were held to discuss the way forward for future disaster responses.

Workshop participants proposed, in order to improve government stakeholder coordination in the implementation of any emergency response, to establish a formal committee in the form of a working group/task force able to boost inter-Ministerial coordination. The focus of this task force should be, at the preparedness phase, to conceive a response strategy, to design and formalise plans and associated implementation activities, and to standardise the internal procedures and tools for the management of disasters from the ministerial level down to local authorities at the lower/divisional levels. As such, it was proposed to revise the National Disaster Management Act and National Disaster Management Plan to inform the development of a humanitarian policy that will enhance current coordination structure and mechanisms. Such

improvement should also cover post disaster rehabilitation activities by promoting the BBB (Build Back Better) approaches towards policies and plans when rebuilding infrastructures.

It was also suggested, for external stakeholder coordination, to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each involved stakeholder and to improve and formalise the cluster coordination mechanisms and schedule (regular meetings with partner agencies and NGOs) to share information and any plan of action to avoid duplication. Greater private sector involvement within the cluster coordination mechanisms of the humanitarian response were also advocated. The Fiji Business Disaster Resilience Council was established in July 2016 with the mandate to synchronise emergency preparedness and response activities between humanitarian partners and the private sector and its role should be strengthened. In addition, for better preparedness, there is the need to pre-identify and establish standby agreements with service providers such as supermarkets, hardware stores and financial institutions to quickly engage during disaster response, whenever necessary.

d. Information & Database Management

The Fiji National Disaster Act (1998) and a National Disaster Plan (1995) outline how immediate post disaster needs assessments should be done at the governmental level. Similarly, humanitarian agencies have their own strategies and tools to assess the impact of the shock. This diversity of approaches, tools and assessment instruments increases the potential for duplication of activities leading to waste of resources and time.

Workshop participants identified that there is currently no standardisation of assessment tools or centralised information sharing systems providing information for all stakeholders, after a disaster, allowing for better organised and coordinated approach to response plans which would facilitate expedited assistance.

A suggestion was made to develop a standardized assessment toolkit/guidelines for pre/post disaster phases taking into consideration a wide range of information able to cover several sectors, avoiding the duplication of assessments to be done. Stakeholders should agree on a standard data set and information needs covering all of the

areas. A process gathering all necessary questions should be conducted through a consultation of major stakeholders to ensure all needs are reflected in these assessments, for all parties involved. Issues such as ownership, hosting, implementation and maintenance or revision of the emergency assessments should be addressed in the early phases in order to be fully operational during an emergency.

A government-run online centralised information sharing system, accessible to all emergency response stakeholders and digitalised, was also proposed. However, it was stated that this information management tool to be developed should not replace the cluster coordination setup and meetings where decisions will be taken concerning the implementation coordination.

e. Programme Cycle Management Process

The Fiji Government is planning to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 1 (to end poverty in all its forms) by developing projects and programmes that have a longer-term impact on bringing or keeping people over the poverty line and reducing the number of persons falling under it. As a middle income country, Fiji has developed a solid social protection strategy and efficient and reliable social safety nets that provide predictability and sustainability to their beneficiaries, contributing to ending poverty from the country level down to the individual level. For the build-up of this social protection, a country strategy has been developed linking various schemes in a combination that is intended to increase the impacts on poverty among vulnerable populations but also to benefit the general population. A Programme Cycle Management process has also been developed to run those schemes.

For WFP, although it is exploring new areas of intervention based on the establishment of new Corporate Strategic Objectives and the Integrated Roadmap (IRM) process, the main goal of its emergency operations is to save lives in emergencies by having an immediate impact on the food insecurity of specific persons affected by a shock. These projects are often temporary, limited in funding and mainly focused on the short-term impact but they are also all based on a Programme Cycle Management Process that is similar to the one developed by governments for their social safety nets.

Overall, with different objectives and related tools, the Fiji Government and WFP developed bridges between the developmental and the emergency approach, between the long-term and short-term impacts, between government procedures and WFP internal processes. The successful result of this collaboration, ie the use of the shock responsive components of government social protection schemes for the transfer of assistance to the most vulnerable shock affected populations, has been facilitated by the sharing of a similar Programme Cycle Management Process where some activities will benefit from the expertise brought by the other partner.

Workshop participants identified several areas of possible cooperation between the Fiji Government and various stakeholders where the capacity building and strengthening of government capabilities could be improved through a series of trainings, joint workshops and simulations. The main areas of capacity building and strengthening are:

- ⇒ Emergency assessments
- ⇒ Context and need assessments
- ⇒ Vulnerability & food security & markets functioning assessments
- ⇒ Finance, telecom & supply chains country capacities assessments
- ⇒ Food gaps identification, value & time of assistance analysis
- ⇒ Targeting & registering of beneficiaries
- ⇒ Sensitization of beneficiaries (eligibility criteria – access to benefits & complaints mechanisms setup)
- ⇒ Information sharing & management
- ⇒ Project design, operational plans & SOPs development
- ⇒ Selection of the most appropriate assistance transfer modality and delivery mechanisms
- ⇒ Cash based transfers processes
- ⇒ Logistics & procurement capacity building
- ⇒ Conditional Food for Assets/Cash for Work activities
- ⇒ Disaster risk reduction strategies and instruments
- ⇒ Nutrition sensitiveness possibilities
- ⇒ Monitoring strategies, mechanisms and tools
- ⇒ Evaluation systems & standards of implementation & tools
- ⇒ Coordination of stakeholders (clusters, inter-ministerial, etc.)

It was also recognized that WFP has broad experience in preparedness and implementation of emergency response and has already been coordinating on this with the Fiji Government through EPR logistics training focusing on strengthening government logistic capacity to respond to emergencies. In addition, by developing new processes, procedures and tools in the entire Programme Cycle Management, and training staff on how to operate them, the shock responsiveness of government social safety nets can be enhanced.

f. Training

Although Fiji had cyclone early warning systems and related mechanisms in place, it was found that citizens did not rely on these for preparedness or immediate action to mitigate the impending shock. Workshop participants underlined the necessity to improve the communication channels linked to these early warning systems and organize simulation exercises for the population to develop best practice reactions when facing such disastrous events.

Additionally, it was clearly suggested that in order to increase the local staff capacity to respond to affected populations, it could be useful to have additional standby surge staff (NEC/CSOs/NGOs/religious organisations) trained well in advance during the preparedness phase, to cope with the additional workload related to the emergency operation. Further, the development and roll-out of training of surge staff on emergency response assessments may also be one of the fields where support is needed.

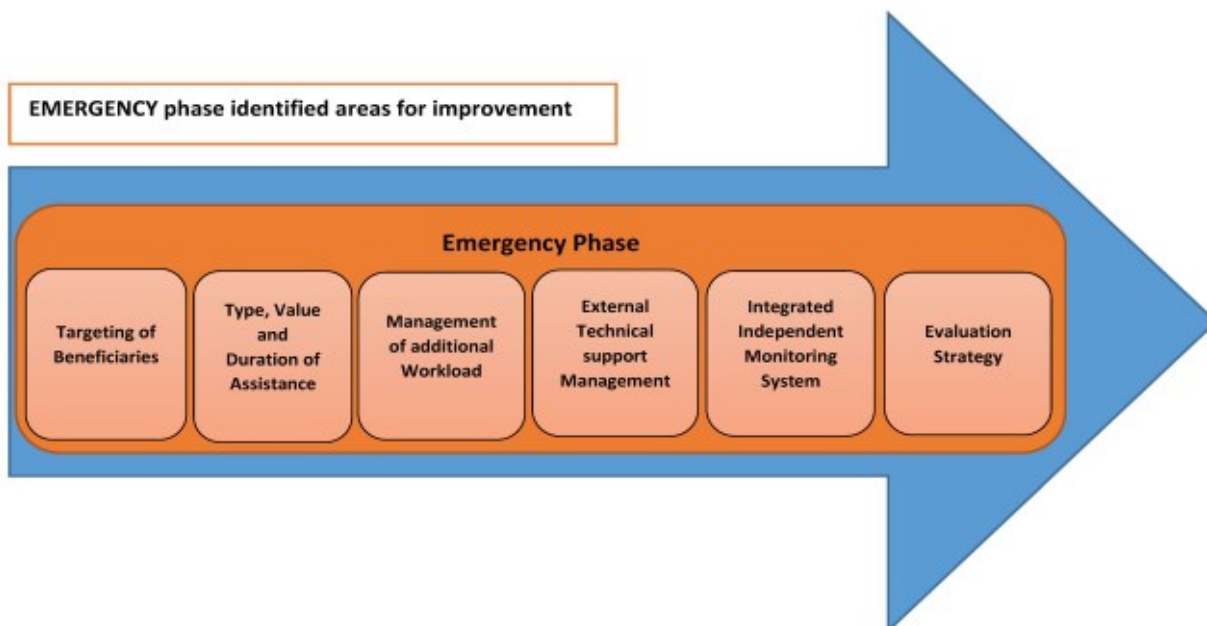
Finally, if a new Government Global Emergency Response Plan is developed, it is essential to share it with all stakeholders and possible actors in an emergency response, to inform/train them on the processes, procedures, roles and responsibilities of each one and eventually test this understanding in a simulation that reflects, in a protected environment, the problems that may be encountered in a real emergency. This will allow for fine-tuning of the global response, and the collaboration, cooperation and coordination of all actors.



The Fiji Government also provided building materials to families whose homes had been damaged by the cyclone.
Photo: WFP/ Francesca Ciardi

B. Emergency Phase

To increase the cost efficiency, effectiveness and timeliness of the emergency response, the following operational recommendations have been identified:



a. Targeting of Beneficiaries

Geographical targeting

Immediately after TC Winston, the Pacific Community (SPC)⁵ and the Fijian military conducted area surveys to identify the affected areas, followed by rapid assessments undertaken by DISMACs (Disaster Management Committees) lasting one to two weeks. The "Damage & Loss" assessments were also conducted by different ministries linked to the sector to be specifically evaluated (i.e. education, health, agriculture and housing).

NDMO gathered the information related to the most affected areas, mainly in the Eastern, Western and Northern Divisions, provided by different sources, using different assessments formats and within a different timeframe. This multiplication of tools and reports generated some confusion in establishing a clear picture of the situation.

Workshop participants identified that the establishment of a "standard set of emergency evaluation assessment tools" (from government and stakeholder sources) would be useful, in all essential domains (food, water, buildings, livelihoods, etc), especially if the results of these

assessments are integrated in a "joint report" that could be shared with all stakeholders in a coordinated manner and through a centralized information sharing system. All stakeholders would then benefit from a global understanding of the entire situation, identifying priorities for highly affected areas, sharing common information which would enable all actors to better coordinate the actions to be undertaken in each sector.

Individual targeting

WFP's identification of beneficiaries in the TC Winston operation was based on the assumption that the MoWCPA social assistance programmes had already identified the most vulnerable people of the entire population pre-shock (on and under the poverty line - targeting more than 70 percent of beneficiaries among the poorest 30 percent of the population) and, by geographically targeting to the most shock-affected locations, it can be assumed that these people would be heavily affected by the cyclone due to their already existing vulnerabilities. The combination of this "individual status" with the geographical regions identified as most affected provided the final caseload to be considered for the operation.

⁵ The **Pacific Community (SPC)** is the principal scientific and technical organization in the Pacific region. It is an international development organization owned and governed by its 26 country and territory members. With more than 600 staff, the organization's headquarters are in Nouméa, New Caledonia, with regional offices in Suva, Fiji, and field staff in other Pacific locations.



More than 130 food items were made available under the existing social safety net scheme to ensure participants could access a nutritionally sound diet. Photo: WFP/Francesca Ciardi

Although the selection criteria was satisfactory for an emergency response targeting, workshop participants expressed that this targeting could be improved by taking into consideration the “near poor” not covered by the social security schemes, who could have been severely affected by the shock to the extent that they drop below the poverty line. A parallel targeting operation could in the future be put in place, either by government or through an NGO, to identify this additional caseload in need of assistance that is not already covered by the social safety nets, to ensure that no one is left behind.

In addition, one of the challenges found in the TC Winston response was locating existing beneficiaries due to their remote locations, mobility and lack of contact information. As the DSW database is neither centralised nor updated regularly, rapidly locating beneficiaries for an emergency response becomes even more difficult. Workshop participants suggested that having a centralised database would be crucial to tackle this problem, mainly by linking databases from DSW, BDM registry, the Bureau of Statistics, and other national databases. The cross-checking of information such as location and status of beneficiaries (including capturing information on deaths as a result of or since the shock) will highly benefit the accuracy of the targeting and beneficiaries localization process.

b. Type, Value and Duration of Assistance

Type of Assistance

In the early stages of the emergency response and after further discussions between the Fiji Government and WFP, a decision was reached to use the mechanisms present in the existing safety nets to transfer the assistance to the shock affected population. Despite an initial preference to use in-kind food distributions, based on the assumption that beneficiaries would not misuse assistance transferred in this way, a conceptual shift towards cash eventually took place, partially based on the confidence WFP expressed in working through the well-established government social safety net schemes including distribution of cash assistance. The longer-term strong government-vendors partnerships (i.e. Westpac, Post Office and supermarkets) already in place for the transfer of assistance under a social protection perspective proved to a success factor for the efficient implementation of the response.

Concretely, the three existing social safety net transfer modalities and delivery mechanisms (cash through bank accounts, Paper Value Vouchers linked to local shops and Electronic Value Vouchers linked to supermarkets) gave the beneficiaries access to an increased nutritionally diverse food basket. More than 130 food items were made available to the beneficiaries using

the vouchers, including meat and fresh vegetables as additional food options.

Workshop participants felt that, given the lack of overall coordination with all humanitarian actors, the risk of assistance duplication was real, with families potentially receiving double benefits, but also the risk of multiplying uncoordinated transfer modalities, increasing the complexity of accessing assistance and confusion for the beneficiaries. It was difficult for retailers in rural areas to stick to the pre-determined list of 130 food items, mainly due to limited supplies and reduced supply channels. Finally, although there is a general assumption that assistance given as cash has greater potential for misuse, the monitoring of beneficiaries' assistance expenditure show that this was not the case and cash assistance was used for the same purposes as the other assistance transfer modalities.

Assistance Value and Duration

The overall food assistance was calculated based on a 2,100 kcal requirement per person which was valued at approximately FJD 200 for each household, based on local market prices. As the Government was already providing FJD 50 through its regular safety net programmes, WFP decided to top up the remaining amount required.

Workshop participants identified the need for the Government to develop a policy or instruments to determine the kind of emergency assistance to be delivered, transfer modalities and delivery mechanisms to be used, their financial values, and a clear time frame for the operation implementation, based on the disaster amplitude, context and food gap. In particular contexts such as in a recovery phase after an emergency, a decision should also be taken as per the use of conditionality (Food for Assets programmes, Food for Trainings, etc) associated with the delivery of assistance.

Subsequently, depending on the type of disaster and the necessary timeframe for entering in the recovery phase, decisions should be taken concerning the assistance period coverage (2-3 months), as well as the frequency of the assistance instalments. Although this planning is necessary for the efficient delivery of assistance, little control can be exercised on when the households collect their benefits. After

TC Winston, some households waited 4-5 months to claim their benefits, raising questions on the targeting of some households and their actual immediate needs. Research on behaviour patterns would help better understand the reasons for such delays and estimate optimal assistance duration in the future. Therefore, post-disaster monitoring assessments and impact evaluations are crucial to determine the length of assistance.

Finally, special groups (i.e. elderly, people with disabilities, etc) may have specific needs in addition to the effects specific to the shock and it may be necessary to consider an adjustment of the food assistance, based on pre-established targeting criteria, for those particular groups.

c. Management of Additional Workload

Government representatives raised the issue of the increased workload during the emergency for government officers, who also had to cope with their ongoing regular activities. Even if everyone participated and worked extra hours to support the implementation of the emergency response, the additional workload could be problematic as it could be unfeasible for staff to maintain it longer term.

Workshop participants suggested tackling this additional workload issue with four options that could support the emergency operation and release government officers from the highest demands linked to the additional work:

- I. Externalise the entire emergency response monitoring operation by contracting an independent organization (NGO) that would be able to provide additional field-level staff able to collect and manage the necessary information, according to a pre-established plan.
- II. Request the support of technical staff (engineers, nutritionists, logisticians, telecom specialists, CBT experts, etc) that could support technically the various assessments required and projects run by the Government.
- III. Provision of staff seconded inside the Government for the support of governmental agencies & ministries in the day-to-day operational work but also in the coordination of government clusters,



The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster deployed specialised staff to assess damage to communications systems.
Photo: WFP / Francesca Ciardi

including in the information management systems (stakeholders coordination)

- IV. Request the temporary mobilization of surge volunteers previously selected and trained for specific tasks under the leadership of government officers

d. External Technical Support for Building Capacity

As co-lead agency of the Food Security Cluster, WFP supported government and humanitarian actors in mapping out partners' relief activities, identifying key gaps in food security and strategically aligning the response to address the food and livelihood needs of thousands of cyclone-affected people. The Logistics Cluster deployed four Mobile Storage Units (MSUs) from emergency contingency stocks to augment the NDMO and humanitarian partners' local storage capacity, trained emergency units in MSU construction practices and maintenance, and worked together with its national counterparts to facilitate coordination and information-sharing among emergency responders. Finally, the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster deployed specialised staff to assess damage to communications systems. It provided equipment to bolster the government response, and upgraded the NDMO's radio network and

headquarters' communications room to make it fit for purpose as a central hub for field coordination. This support increased the capacity of the government to respond.

Workshop participants suggested this capacity support should remain in place for emergencies but also, once the gaps are identified, to contribute to their resolution either through technical improvement or by strengthening the capacities of the government through related training, as a preparedness measure.

e. Integrated Independent Monitoring system

The NGO Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) was contracted by WFP to assess the progress and performance of the emergency response intervention. The monitoring activities were very useful during the implementation in terms of identifying and addressing issues and gaps linked to the operation in a timely manner. Specifically, the exercise kept track of beneficiary satisfaction, helped service providers to improve on service delivery, monitored timely disbursement of funds and follow up on process issues at the field level.

Throughout the operation, ADRA worked in

close coordination with the Social Welfare offices and supported the dissemination of information to beneficiaries about food assistance availability, entitlements and ways to access it, as a part of the beneficiary’s sensitisation process.

At the end of the intervention, ADRA conducted quantitative and qualitative analyses of the joint Government-WFP operation. A total of 3,121 households (representing almost 4 percent of beneficiaries) and 8 retailers were surveyed, and 55 life stories were collected in the 12 priority areas which constituted the basis of their final report. The quantitative survey tool was created by WFP, which was then transferred to ADRA using the Kobo Toolbox (electronic software). Twenty monitors were trained in Suva to use the Kobo Toolbox.

Analysis results show that a total of 72 percent of beneficiaries reported no problems when receiving their entitlement, and 28 percent manifested having constraints. On average, it took 30 minutes for beneficiaries to reach the distribution site. The travel times varied from 5 minutes to 4 hours. On average, people spent 86 FJD at the distribution point (from 2 FJD to 160 FJD) and the average waiting period to receive food was 60 minutes. In general, there was a high level of satisfaction with the Government-WFP joint response, with 84 percent of respondents not having any complaint regarding the constraints faced. However, only 63 percent had knowledge of their entitlement and benefits

received. Almost all respondents (99.7 percent) reported that they did not exchange or sell their entitlement and 57% said they were satisfied with the quality of food purchased using the food voucher. The average food consumption score (FCS) was 65.7 percent which is considered acceptable. Coping strategies after the disaster included consuming less preferred and less expensive food, reducing portion size of meals and borrowing food or relying on help from friends or relatives.

Workshop participants found that the main challenges for the monitoring operation resided in the short timeframe for the collection of information and the management of outdated beneficiary information provided by DSW, mainly due to the mobility of beneficiaries and the impossibility of tracking them in real time. The monitoring teams also had to cope with technical problems such as power outages causing problems with using the android phones for the KOBO monitoring tool, and transport issues linked to the remoteness of the areas / villages where household interviews were supposed to take place. Additionally, the monitoring teams had to manage questions and information for non-beneficiaries concerning the criteria of selection for the reception of assistance, highlighting the limitations of the sensitisation campaign.

It was therefore recommended that future operations should strengthen the sensitisation campaign through a prepared communication



Social Welfare offices supported the dissemination of information about what food assistance was available, who was entitled to it, and how it could be accessed. Photo: WFP / Francesca Ciardi

strategy, under government leadership and implementation, via radio messages and information directly communicated to the beneficiaries by implementing staff in areas affected by electricity outages. One specific recommendation was to leverage existing communications channels such as the participation of the Turaga ni Koro (Village Leader) and District Advisory Councillors to disseminate information on the benefits and beneficiary selection criteria.

Additionally, recommendations were made to better design the monitoring questionnaires by translating them into local languages, supporting the monitors in collecting the relevant information. Comprehensive training of the monitors, to be conducted in advance of possible shocks, was identified as essential, especially concerning the Kobo Toolbox, but also concerning the entire operation in order to be able to respond to beneficiaries concerns. As disaster situations are prone to generate protection and gender problems, some staff involved in the operations should also be additionally trained on these issues and able to identify and report the needs of women, children and of the most vulnerable. Therefore, it was also suggested to develop an assessment tool for physical, emotional and mental (psychosocial) impacts taking more seriously into consideration these aspects that were left aside when reporting on conditions in the evacuation centres or in the assessments or monitoring reports.

Finally, although constant feedback was received from beneficiaries about the assistance delivery during the actual operation, workshop participants suggested a more formal feedback mechanism should be put in place, such as a government call centre or suggestion boxes at distribution points and retail centres. This should be in a place where beneficiaries and the public in general can obtain information or submit a claim or an anonymous complaint.

The main recommendation for the monitoring component was that the Disaster Management Plan should include the development and use of a set of M&E Tools (such as Kobo Toolbox) with clear SOPs stating their use from the beginning of the operation. M&E should be fully integrated during the entire emergency response operation (establishment of a baseline at the beginning of the operation and an endline at the end), and workshops/meetings should be conducted with stakeholders to disseminate its results in order

to systematically improve the response.

f. Evaluation Strategy

At the end of the emergency operation, the World Bank conducted an assistance impact evaluation on the government cash top-up intervention (FJD 600/FJD 300). A sample of 700 beneficiaries was screened, including government social assistance beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries (who were nevertheless poor) in the identified affected areas. The evaluation shows that both groups faced similar effects of TC Winston in the affected areas, with most households having to reduce their food consumption. In addition, they experienced restricted access to food in local markets during the first month, mainly linked with supply chain disruption. The poorest of the poor were greatly affected, and those who were already highly dependent on social welfare (i.e. main source of income) were even more dependent immediately after TC Winston. Social safety net insiders and outsiders (those covered and not covered by social safety nets) faced similar threats following TC Winston, suggesting the need to consider the extension of support to the “near poor” (social safety net outsiders) who may have been affected to the point they dropped below the poverty line.

Cash top-ups provided by the Government to PBS beneficiaries were highly effective with 98 percent of people receiving their funds through electronic transfers. However, a large portion of the population was not aware they had received the cash in their bank accounts and only 60 percent knew what the cash top-up was for the response to the recovery of the shock affection. This suggested future sensitisation campaigns could be more efficient in providing beneficiaries with the right information.

The majority of the cash was used up within the first 4 weeks of receiving it. Most of the cash assistance received was used to purchase essential items like food. There is no data on beneficiaries using the cash assistance on non-essential items like cigarettes or alcohol, however, this tends to be under-reported. It was also found that the cash benefits were not shared amongst beneficiaries. The World Bank impact evaluation report show that households receiving cash top-ups had a faster recovery rate compared to non-recipients. It was concluded that the cash top-ups were significant in overcoming the adverse effects of TC Winston.



Once food markets were restored and fully functional everywhere, top-up cash transfers proved an effective intervention
 Photo: WFP / Ralph Ofuyo

In addition to the food assistance top-up, the PBS/SPS beneficiaries were more likely to receive housing vouchers (Help for Homes). There was consistency in the numbers receiving housing vouchers, aligned to the numbers of affected persons that reported damage/loss of housing. This assistance, transferred through the same mechanism, proved to be effective, where most beneficiaries anticipated at least half of the damage would be fixed using the cash assistance. More than 90 percent of households in the affected areas received additional non cash assistance (food parcels, construction materials, etc.). A total of 86 percent of households surveyed judged the government response as good, very good or perfectly satisfactory.

The World Bank report concluded that, for the emergency response to the TC Winston, the use of the shock-responsive component of the government social protection schemes in Fiji was: (i) rapidly implemented and clearly targeted through the existing social safety nets databases, and (ii) helped affected families cope with the impacts of TC Winston. Households acted responsibly and the top-up payments were put to good use and helped beneficiaries to cope and recover faster.

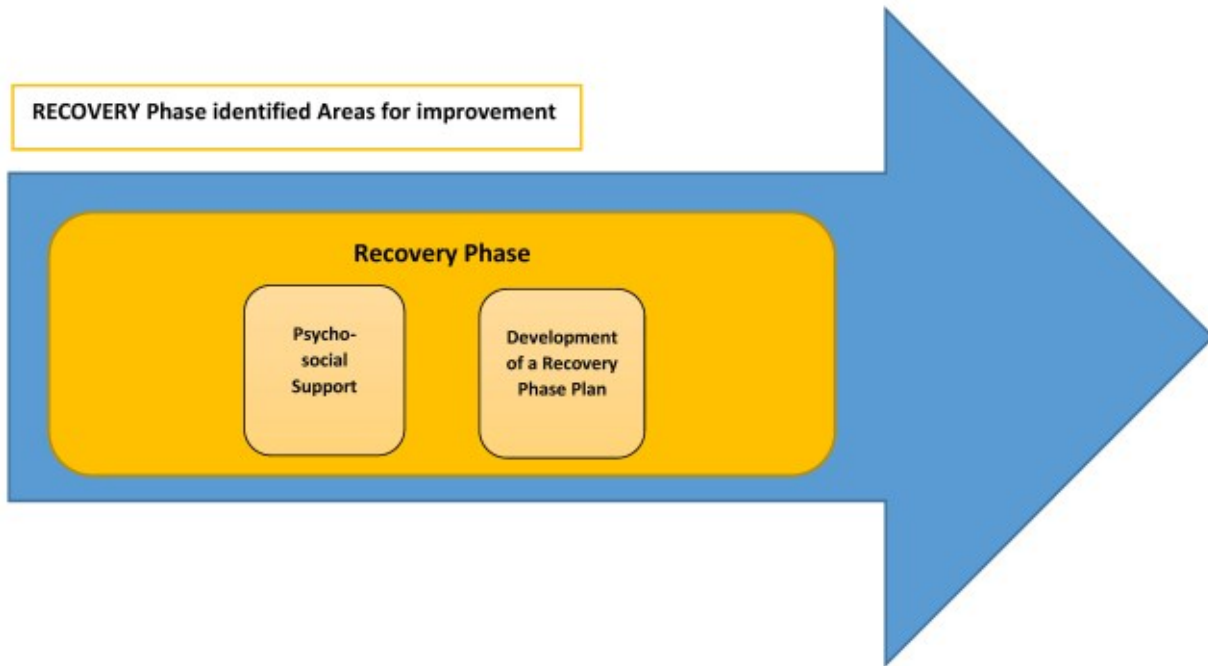
Workshop participants identified the benefits of using such government assistance transfer mechanisms, but raised some concerns related to food availability in the markets. It was recognised that one of the major problems for households right after TC Winston was the availability of food in the supermarkets in very remote areas, as it took almost one month for their supply chain to recover fully everywhere. During the first month,

in-kind assistance proved to be very effective for immediate relief in those particularly isolated places. Top-up assistance cash transfers were an effective intervention one month after the disaster, once the food markets were restored and fully functional everywhere. It was therefore recommended to consider a combination of assistance transfer mechanisms. In-kind assistance should be prioritised while markets are recovering, and food vouchers and cash could be provided once markets have recovered (approximately one month later). In urban accessible areas, depending on the level of supply chain disruption, cash assistance could be undertaken immediately. Exploring the immediate delivery of basic kits of food and essentials (stored in decentralised locations to speed up the delivery) by social workers assessing the situation after the shock was also proposed.

Questions were also raised about those people who might be highly affected by a shock but were not previously covered by a social protection scheme and therefore would not benefit from a related top-up operation. For this type of affected population, it was suggested to use an independent NGO to identify them and, either integrate them temporarily into the government social safety nets (for them to access some assistance and benefit temporarily from the assistance delivery mechanism already in place), or to deliver assistance through a parallel system. It is therefore recommended to undertake an exploration of both options with the government and partners in order to better identify the risks and benefits linked to each one of them.

C. Recovery Phase

In order to increase the cost-efficiency, effectiveness and timeliness of the Emergency Response, the following operational recommendations have been identified:



a. Psychosocial Support

The intensity of TC Winston was so sudden and high that it affected the population not only physically, but also psychologically. While threats to food security, impact on livelihoods, damage to housing and infrastructure can be immediately seen and acted upon for immediate rehabilitation, the psychosocial effects from and trauma experienced by the population may have longer lasting implications, as they may not appear immediately and are not so obviously identifiable.

Additionally, the staff engaged in the emergency operation can experience negative psychological outcomes due to stress, frustration, limited capacity and difficulties in coping with the effects of the shock. This situation needs to be seriously taken into consideration as it may affect the emergency response if the staff is incapacitated to the point of being unable to perform their duties.

Workshop participants identified these two components of the psychosocial impact from the shock (effect on population and effect on emergency response staff) and proposed three possibilities to support the affected population:

- I. Setup of a team of psychosocial experts that can train operational staff to identify the main symptoms of severe psychological trauma. People suffering such trauma can then be referred to a network of professional counsellors for follow-up.
- II. Operational staff should also be trained in engaging with affected communities and supporting them by implementing community sessions where all individuals, as a part of the community, can express their concerns, and encourage the community to strengthen solidarity mechanisms for finding solutions and support for the entire community.
- III. During the preparedness phase, operational staff should also receive guidance on how to cope with or overcome some of the problems, frustrations and difficult feelings they will go through while engaged in the emergency response operation. It may also be advisable to have a team of psychosocial counsellors available for any necessary debriefing of staff, including surge volunteers supporting government officials.

b. Development of a Recovery Phase Plan

Although a detailed evaluation and analysis of the overall impact of the TC Winston is not yet available, it appears already that the damage has had a strong effect on various sectors of the economy including agriculture, food and non-food markets supply chain and functioning, the tourism industry, etc. This concern was raised several times during the workshop and participants came to the conclusion that it is necessary to undertake such a study as soon as possible in order to identify the areas particularly affected and plan for their recovery.

Once the areas requiring particular attention are identified, a recovery plan for the entire country should be designed, taking into consideration all the sectors, including the ones less severely affected, in order to support recovery. In order to

do so, all ministry agencies, humanitarian and development stakeholders as well as possible donors should collaborate, under the leadership of the Government and on a specific platform, in making this recovery plan a realistic instrument for guiding its implementation. While developing this recovery plan, it may be advisable to integrate the mitigation measures that may limit the impact of the next shock, and help to build the resilience of the population facing such climatic events. Project options such as Food for Assets, Cash for Work, Cash for Trainings, Cash for Livelihood recovery, etc, should be considered in the recovery plan as they may be able to have an impact in the medium-longer term (Food Security support objectives by rehabilitating agricultural land, water irrigation systems, ponds, etc) while also having an immediate impact on food security preservation (assistance receive based on the work done).

5. Conclusions & Recommendations

A. Conclusions

Responding to emergencies is tremendously complicated in Fiji and other South Pacific countries, with their multitudes of scattered islands and isolated populations. The old school logistics-based response of bringing in food to distribute to affected people is no longer the ultimate solution. When assistance needs to get to people in needed as fast as possible, this is not the most cost-efficient or effective way to do it.

We must find new ways to respond to disasters, ways that take into account the unique conditions of each situation and that give due consideration to all available options.

With the joint response to TC Winston, WFP and the Fiji Government demonstrated the viability of linking the Fiji national social protection system with emergency humanitarian assistance. The use of different transfer modalities, including cash and vouchers, brought immediate improvement to the food security of thousands of families.

The Lessons Learned Workshop, jointly organised by the Fiji Government and WFP, was a concrete step of the government to make its social protection schemes more shock responsive in order to use this mechanism to respond to future disasters.

The workshop brought together stakeholders from within the government, humanitarian and development partners, as well as donors and specialised agencies, to share their experiences and findings from the TC Winston response, all with a view to making future disaster responses even more successful. Support was offered to make Fiji's social safety nets more shock responsive through the review of existing disaster management policies, coordination mechanisms and internal processes.

Participants of the Lessons Learned Workshop also felt that the findings from this exercise would benefit the wider Pacific community, and proposed sharing them through a Pacific Regional Social Protection and Emergency Response Workshop. WFP has expressed willingness to facilitate such an initiative, also in view of strengthening South-South collaboration.

B. General Additional Recommendations

I. Stand-by Agreements & Standard Operating Procedures

- Revise existing disaster management policies with a view to including the use of shock responsive safety nets where appropriate.
- Jointly develop SOPs clearly explaining the roles and responsibilities of different actors and respective levels of authority. SOPs should cover different potential emergency scenarios and should consider short-, medium- and long-term needs.
- As a preparedness measure, carry out vulnerability analysis and food security mapping, including nutrition needs, consumption patterns and the needs of particularly vulnerable groups such as the elderly, people with disabilities, children, etc.
- Carry out analysis to help identify the most appropriate transfer modalities and delivery mechanisms for an emergency response, for example market assessments, supply chain analysis and financial sector capacity analysis.
- Map and pre-approve potential service providers (supermarkets, shops, etc.) and partners with expertise/experience, including standby agreements for special requests such as extended opening hours.

II. Stakeholder Coordination

- Establish a task force to boost inter-ministerial coordination, as well as strengthening links with the private sector and INGOs.
- Establish an easily-accessible, online information sharing system for all stakeholders involved (central and local government, private sector, NGOs, UN Agencies and donors), which would include GIS maps and aerial surveys, online software-based data collection systems for sector assessments, and lists of service providers (finance, supply chain, telecom, private sector supermarkets, etc).

III. Communication Strategy

- As a preparedness measure, develop a communications strategy clearly establishing roles and responsibilities, communication channels and messages at each level.
- Consider the involvement of community structures including the Turaga ni Koro (villag leader), as well as counsellors and volunteers to disseminate information such as what assistance is

available and who is eligible.

- Establish an effective feedback mechanism, for example government call centres and suggestion boxes, to allow beneficiaries to flag problems.

IV. DSW Database

- Update and improve the DSW database, which is the main information source to identify and target vulnerable populations.
- Include in the DSW database the 'near poor' who may need temporary support after a disaster.
- Consider linking the DSW database with the BDM (Birth, Death and Marriage) Registry, with FIBOS (Fiji Bureau of Statistics) and other national databases.

V. Surge Staff

- Establish a pool of volunteers, staff and standby secondees with specialist skills such as engineers, nutritionists, logisticians, telecoms specialists, CBT experts and psychosocial counsellors, with a view to augmenting government capacity when needed and to minimise avoidable trauma during an emergency.

VI. Monitoring & Evaluation

- In M&E strategy, framework and tools should be developed within the Disaster Management Plan and Act. This centralized and systematic M&E system should be standardised through the development and use of standard tools (e.g. Kobo toolbox), baseline data collection to monitor progress of affected populations, etc, and should benefit from monitors fully trained on the whole programme.
- Develop a standardised M&E strategy, framework and tools as part of the Disaster Management Plan and Act, using standard tools such as the Kobo toolbox.
- Train monitors to fully use the entire M&E programme.
- Use this Emergency M&E system to develop an independent M&E system for ongoing social safety net programmes and social protection schemes, with integrated feedback mechanisms allowing the readjustment of programmes, and improving their flexibility to temporarily incorporate shock-affected vulnerable people.

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Acronyms

ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
BBB	Build Back Better
BDM	Births, Deaths and Marriage Registry
CBT	Cash Based Transfers
CFW	Cash for Work
DM	Disaster Management
DOF	Department of Fisheries
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
FFA	Food for Assets creation
FNPF	Fiji National Provident Fund
HfH	Help for Homes
HH	Household
LLW	Lessons Learned Workshop
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOE	Ministry of Economy
MoWCPA	Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
PBS	Poverty Based Scheme
RBF	Reserve Bank of Fiji
SP	Social Protection
SPS	Social Pension Scheme
SSN	Social Safety Nets
TC	Tropical Cyclone
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme

