

Emergency Operation Cuba 201108

“Emergency Food Assistance to Victims of Hurricane Irma in Cuba”	
Number of beneficiaries	647,000
Duration of project (starting date – end date)	16 October 2017– 28 February 2018
Gender Marker Code	2A
WFP food tonnage	4,056 mt
Cost (United States dollars)	
Food and Related Costs	3,549,040
Cash and Vouchers and Related Costs	-
Capacity Development & Augmentation	240,154
DSC	169,506
ISC	277,109
Total cost to WFP	4,235,809

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 8-10 September 2017, Cuba was hit by category 5 hurricane Irma, with winds reaching 250 km per hour, heavy rains and coastal flooding. According to the Cuban Civil Defence, thirteen of Cuba's fifteen provinces, home to a population of over 9 million people, were affected by the hurricane.

In addition to the destruction of buildings and infrastructure, the damages to agricultural production, processing, storage and distribution units have affected the food security of the population. According to preliminary assessments, 22 municipalities in the provinces of Camagüey, Ciego de Ávila, Matanzas, Sancti Spíritus and Villa Clara are the worst affected.

In order to ensure access to food, and as a continuation to the immediate response emergency operation 201207, this emergency operation will provide 100 days of general food assistance to 647,000 people focusing on vulnerable groups, including children under 5, school-aged children, pregnant and lactating women, and the elderly. For the provision of its basic in-kind food basket, WFP will rely on national social protection programmes as well as support the overall multi-sectoral emergency response by the Government and partners.

This operation is in line with WFP's Strategic Plan 2017-2021, particularly Strategic Goal 1 (Support countries to achieve zero hunger, Sustainable Development Goal 2), and Strategic Objective 1 to "End hunger by protecting access to food". In the Cuban context, this Strategic Objective emphasizes WFP's role in supporting government social protection programmes in improving access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food in emergencies.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Context

1. On 8-10 September 2017, category 5 Hurricane Irma, defined as the most powerful Atlantic Ocean hurricane in recorded history, struck Cuba for over 72 hours with winds reaching 250 km per hour. The hurricane ravaged the island with strong winds, heavy rains, sea surges and waves up to 10 metres high.
2. The hurricane caused massive destruction of crops, livestock, housing, infrastructure and telecommunications. Severe damage was reported to the agricultural sector, including the loss of over 145,000 livestock and more than 50,500 hectares of crops.¹ Damage caused to agricultural production, processing, storage and distribution units has affected the food security of the population.
3. Thirteen out of the country's 15 provinces, home to almost 9.5 million people, were hit by the devastating effects of the hurricane. While the ongoing government-led needs assessments will provide accurate data on the structural damage suffered and the number of people affected, preliminary information suggests that the worst affected 22 municipalities lie along the northern coastline in the provinces of Camagüey, Ciego de Ávila, Matanzas, Sancti Spíritus and Villa Clara, with a population of 930,000. Of these, over 647,000 people are in need of immediate relief food assistance. As their main

¹ Preliminary estimates of the Ministry of Agriculture.

livelihood has been critically impacted by Hurricane Irma, farmers will need at least four months to plant and harvest short-cycle crops.²

The Food Security and Nutrition Situation

4. Cuba imports 70 to 80 percent of its food needs, paying high global food prices and transportation costs. A significant part of these commodities is to support government social protection programmes. Food security is a national priority and increasing domestic food production is key to substitute imports and enhance its sustainability.
5. National social programmes related to food security and nutrition include: (i) a highly subsidized monthly ration of staple foods for the entire population; (ii) a nationwide school feeding programme; (iii) a comprehensive maternal and child healthcare programme; and (iv) a comprehensive care programme for elderly people.
6. The population's dietary diversity was reduced by changes in the monthly subsidized food basket, including the limited provision of pulses and eggs. The monthly food ration now covers only about 40 percent of their recommended dietary intake, as compared to the 50 percent that it used to cover until the first decade of 2000. Complementary programmes that used to cover another 20 percent of dietary intake have been reduced or eliminated.
7. This means that Cuban households meet 60 percent of their food needs by buying in non-subsidized food markets with high prices and irregular supply. Cubans are estimated to spend 60 to 75 percent of their income on food³. Demand generated by the private sector and tourism puts additional strain on food availability, leading to higher prices in local markets.
8. Poor dietary diversity resulting from limited availability and access to nutritious foods as well as inadequate eating habits and feeding practices are among the root causes of the main nutritional disorders in Cuba: iron deficiency anaemia, overweight and obesity.
9. Cuba is exposed to sudden shocks, such as tropical storms, hurricanes, heavy rainfalls and earthquakes. Prior to the passage of Hurricane Irma, food security was already at risk due to the intense drought affecting the central and eastern provinces since 2014.
10. Although the Government had taken significant steps to promote early harvests and the evacuation of livestock, Hurricane Irma further decreased food production capacity in the affected areas. While damage is still being assessed, significant losses in agriculture have already been confirmed, particularly in the production of plantains, tubers, vegetables, grains, fruits, as well as in the poultry and swine industry. Farmers have also lost inputs and equipment. In addition, many of the affected municipalities are key areas for the country's food production, representing an important source of vegetables and other fresh food offered to the population and the social protection programmes.
11. The damage to road infrastructure further limits access to affected populations and may lead to an increase in prices of non-subsidized food commodities in local markets. Markets are currently functioning on a very limited scale, but the situation is expected to normalize in the coming weeks, at least in the main cities.
12. Due to the loss of households' own produce and the very limited availability of food in local markets, their ability to access food is hampered in the hurricane-affected areas,

² FAO estimates.

³ Cuban Economy Studies Centre. 2013. Basic expenditure of urban Cuban families in 2011. Situation of families depending on state support. Annual seminar on the Cuban economy and business management, 25-27 June 2013.

while most vulnerable groups, such as children, pregnant and lactating women, elderly people and school-age children, are likely to be at risk.

POLICIES, CAPACITIES AND ACTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT(S) AND OTHERS

Policies, Capacities and Actions of the Government

13. Strong national capacities in emergency preparedness and response, led by the National Civil Defence, ensured appropriate measures to protect the population before, during and after the passage of Hurricane Irma. As a preparedness measure, nearly 2 million Cubans were evacuated either to centres authorised by local governments or to the homes of relatives or friends.⁴ This has significantly reduced the number of casualties.⁵ Before the arrival of the hurricane, the Government had already distributed the monthly food ration to mitigate the hurricane's impact on food security, and to ensure that households could cope during the first few days after the shock.
14. After the passage of the hurricane, the government response shifted to its recovery phase, including immediate and multi-sectoral response and increased assistance in affected areas. Immediate priorities are medical services and supplies, clean water and sanitation, food, nutrition, emergency shelter, logistics and repairs of key infrastructure. The Ministry of Agriculture is leading interventions to restore crops and plant short-cycle crops, with a focus on good farming practices and agro-ecological measures to increase soil fertility.
15. To enhance food access, the government relies on in-kind food transfers through its social protection systems. Cash-based transfers are not in use. In severely affected communities, the monthly transfer was doubled or complemented, particularly with eggs. The Government also ensured the sale of processed food at subsidized prices in the most affected areas.

Policies, Capacities and Actions of Other Major Actors

16. United Nations agencies support government response in various sectors, including water, sanitation and hygiene, food security, shelter and early recovery, health and education. To provide multi-sectoral support, a Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) application has been prepared under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator.
17. WFP actions are coordinated with FAO and UNDP to ensure a harmonized and integrated food security response in the most affected areas. WFP food assistance complements the UNDP efforts in the early recovery and housing sector, such as the provision of temporary facilities, kitchen kits, and water tanks. Agencies of the WASH sector (WHO, UNDP, UNICEF) will aim to improve water quality for the sake of greater food safety during preparation and processing.

Coordination

18. WFP works closely with the Cuban Government and other stakeholders, including United Nations agencies and donors. Effective coordination mechanisms are in place to avoid duplications between government efforts and interventions of the humanitarian community. At the national level, the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment (MINCEX) is responsible for the overall coordination of the emergency response and leads government activities.

⁴ In compliance with the guidelines of the Cuban Civil Defence General Staff.

⁵ Ten casualties were reported by the Government.

19. WFP is an integral part of the United Nations’ emergency response capacity in Cuba. While the cluster system is not activated and responses to shocks are fully led by the Government, WFP is recognized as a key agency for food security and logistics.

OBJECTIVES OF WFP ASSISTANCE

20. In line with Strategic Objective 1 of WFP Strategic Plan 2017-2021 (“End hunger by protecting access to food”), this emergency operation (EMOP) will:
- Support the Government in meeting the food needs of the communities worst affected by Hurricane Irma, and thus to prevent a deterioration in their food security, particularly of vulnerable groups like children under 5, pregnant and lactating women, the elderly and school-age children.
21. This operation will respect the principles laid out in WFP’s humanitarian protection and gender policies.
22. By providing unconditional food assistance over a period of 100 days, WFP will support the Government in ensuring that vulnerable people in the targeted municipalities have stable access to basic foods to meet their dietary requirements following the natural disaster, until local food production and markets stabilize.

BENEFICIARIES AND TARGETING

23. The challenges to food availability and access are likely to result in a deterioration of the food security and nutrition situation among affected populations who had been already vulnerable prior to the shock. WFP estimates that in the 22 most affected municipalities in Camagüey, Ciego de Ávila, Matanzas, Sancti Spíritus and Villa Clara over 647,000 people require immediate food assistance for a period of 100 days as a complement to government response.
24. Targeted areas were identified in consultation with national authorities and comprise 14 extremely⁶ and eight severely⁷ affected municipalities. In these municipalities, WFP will focus on the most vulnerable population groups, including those who have lost their livelihoods, children under 5, school-age children, pregnant and lactating women, and the elderly.
25. Based on the forthcoming findings of assessments conducted by the Government and other stakeholders, WFP may revise the planning assumptions for this operation and adjust the targeting and response strategy.

Activity	Boys/Men	Girls/Women	Total
Blanket GFD	283,000	276,000	559,000
Targeted GFD to vulnerable groups	110,000	115,000	225,000
TOTAL	323,000	324,000	647,000*

* The total number of beneficiaries is calculated without overlaps between beneficiaries of blanket and targeted distribution during the different phases of assistance.

⁶ Esmeralda, Minas, Nuevitas, Sierra de Cubitas (Camagüey province); Bolivia, Chambas and Morón (Ciego de Ávila province); Yaguajay (Sancti Spíritus); and Caibarién, Camajuaní, Corralillo, Encrucijada, Quemado de Güines, Sagua la Grande (Villa Clara province).

⁷ Ciro Redondo, Florencia and Primer de Enero (Ciego de Ávila province), Cárdenas and Martí (Matanzas province) and Cifuentes, Remedios and Santo Domingo (Villa Clara province).

NUTRITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RATIONS

26. In the 14 extremely affected municipalities, WFP will provide blanket general food distribution (GFD) to the entire population for 40 days, followed by targeted GFD to vulnerable groups only for an additional 60 days. In the eight severely affected municipalities, only targeted GFD will be provided to vulnerable groups for a period of 100 days.
27. In order to improve food access of the hurricane-affected population, WFP will provide in-kind food assistance (rice, beans and vegetable oil) to complement rations made available through government social protection programmes. Rice and beans are the key staple foods in Cuba, while vegetable oil is included to increase the nutritional value of the ration. As the situation of affected communities evolves, and if recommended by further assessments, WFP might adjust the composition of the complementary food basket. It is assumed that the affected population will have the ability to safely cook at household or community level, due to the multi-sectorial support to disaster-affected communities provided by the Government and UN agencies.
28. WFP's support will complement the government food assistance based on the subsidized monthly food basket, covering approximately 40 percent of the recommended dietary intake (RDI). In times of emergency, this assistance is usually raised to 55-60 percent of RDI. Taking into account the different needs of the targeted vulnerable groups, WFP will complement government assistance with a food ration that covers an additional 22 percent of the RDI. It is assumed that the remaining food needs will be covered by other sources available at local level.
29. Cash transfers were not considered in the context of Cuba. As WFP assistance is particularly designed to feed into existing food-based social protection programmes, in-kind transfers are the most appropriate modality.

TABLE 2: FOOD RATION BY ACTIVITY (g/person/day)			
Commodity	Blanket GFD (entire population in 14 municipalities)	Targeted GFD to vulnerable groups (children under 5, PLW, elderly)	Targeted GFD to school- age children
Rice	61.33	61.33	30
Pulses	30.67	30.67	
Vegetable oil	15.33	15.33	
Total	107.33	107.33	30
<i>Total kcal/day</i>	458	458	108
% kcal from protein	9.4	9.4	7.3
% kcal from fat	31	31	1.5
Number of feeding days (total)	40	100	60

30. In order to start this operation as soon as possible, initial assistance under this EMOP will borrow 1,606 mt from the prepositioned food stock under the Cuba Country Programme (CP 200703).

TABLE 3: TOTAL FOOD REQUIREMENTS BY ACTIVITY (mt)			
Commodity Type	Blanket GFD	Targeted GFD to vulnerable groups	Total MT
Cereals (Rice)	1,370.92	967.88	2,338.81
Pulses	685.46	459.45	1,144.91
Vegetable oil	342.65	229.67	572.33
TOTAL (mt)	2,399.03	1,657.01	4,056.05

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

31. WFP will implement the EMOP in close collaboration with the government staff, who will lead the response. A pre-existing memorandum of understanding with MINCEX will facilitate the immediate start of the EMOP.
32. Participation: Mobilizing its local representatives and well-established social protection programmes, the Government will work with the communities to make sure that all entitled people receive food assistance. Food distributions will be carried out relying on existing social protection mechanisms. Women will be involved in all stages of the operation, the management of food distribution included.
33. Partners: WFP's main partner is MINCEX that has established partnerships with key line ministries and entities (public health, agriculture, food industry, domestic trade, education, and transport; Civil Defence, the National Association of Small Farmers and the Federation of Cuban Women). Civil Defence plays a critical role in response to disasters, while the Ministry of Internal Trade (MINCIN) leads the delivery and distribution of food assistance countrywide. WFP will rely on these partnerships and sign additional agreements as needed in order to implement the operation at the planned scale.
34. Capacities: In order to strengthen the capacities of the Government and other partners, WFP will provide basic equipment as well as technical assistance on food management and logistics. In particular, to support the overall response, WFP will support the rehabilitation of warehouses, provide ten mobile storage units (MSUs), as well as tarpaulins, pallets and lighting equipment.
35. Procurement: The delivery of internationally purchased commodities (rice, beans and vegetable oil) can take several weeks. However, WFP has strategically pre-positioned food supplies (rice and beans) through its CP 200703. Replacement of borrowed commodities as well as the procurement of additional commodities will rely on all available sources, including regional suppliers and the Global Commodity Management Facility (GCMF). When possible, WFP will procure food regionally and thus shorten delivery lead-times and reduce transport costs.

36. Logistics arrangements: Deliveries of internationally procured food will be organized through the ports of Mariel (30 km from Havana) and Santiago de Cuba. The Government will arrange for the land transportation of food commodities.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

37. The WFP monitoring and reporting system will be adjusted to cover key emergency activities and harmonized where possible with the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities of other agencies. Data will eventually be captured through WFP's corporate tool to design, implement and monitor programmes (COMET). The M&E plan will be jointly developed with the Government to define roles and responsibilities for outcome, output and process monitoring, data collection frequency and sources.
38. The values of key output indicators on beneficiaries and the data on the amount of food distributed will be provided monthly by the Government and monitored by WFP. Indicator target values are specified in the logical framework (Annex II). WFP staff from the main office in Havana will carry out field visits to oversee food distributions, undertake beneficiary contact monitoring as well as random post-distribution monitoring to measure operational performance. Systems are already in place in Cuba for beneficiary feedback through government social protection programmes and community organizations.

HAND-OVER STRATEGY

39. Upon completion of the EMOP, WFP will continue to work with MINCEX and technical ministries to further strengthen shock preparedness and response mechanisms as outlined in the CP 200703.

RISK MANAGEMENT

40. As the five provinces targeted under this EMOP are not covered by WFP's current operations, the Country Office will conduct periodic risk assessments and regularly inform its key stakeholders on progress in implementing risk mitigation actions. Timely communication to partners and other stakeholders on programme response revisions, an increase in beneficiary numbers, etc., will be ensured to maintain the high credibility of WFP.
41. WFP has a periodically reviewed risk register. One of the most significant contextual risks is the sudden onset of another natural disaster, especially tropical storms or hurricanes, as cyclonic activity is currently at its highest peak. This risk places a further stress on response capacity. WFP will continue to work closely with the National Civil Defence and relevant authorities to monitor and prepare for further crises. WFP will also continue to rigorously follow the protocols established in its Emergency Preparedness and Response Package (EPRP).
42. *Contextual risks:* As the full extent of the damage becomes known, logistic constraints due to damaged infrastructure could emerge beyond what is anticipated. To mitigate this risk, WFP will provide the Government additional logistic support and expertise as needed.
43. *Programmatic risks:* As WFP's assistance is part of a broader package of support to affected populations, deliveries and distributions are integrated into government systems. This limits our ability to tailor programmes to specific needs or to measure

outcomes as directly attributable to WFP assistance. The risks associated with errors in targeting are mitigated by the strong and well-established social protection system of the Government of Cuba and by additional monitoring by WFP.

44. *Institutional risks*: The lack of immediate and adequate funding will hinder WFP's ability to meet the needs of the targeted population under this EMOP. To mitigate the risk of a delayed response, advanced financing mechanisms have been activated in order to ensure effective WFP response to this large-scale emergency.

Security Risk Management

45. Prior to the hurricane, the provinces of Camagüey, Ciego de Ávila, Matanzas, Sancti Spíritus and Villa Clara were classified as security level 1. A further deterioration of the situation is not anticipated given the rapid and comprehensive government response to the hurricane. There are no security restrictions for travel of United Nations staff to and within these regions.
46. The WFP country office has a security focal point responsible for the liaison with UNDSS. WFP is committed to complying with the minimum operational security standards (MOSS) and with the minimum security telecommunications standards (MIST).
47. In line with WFP's corporate emergency preparedness and response package, WFP Cuba has performed its minimum preparedness and emergency readiness actions to ensure a minimum preparedness level and to enhance its operational response capacity.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Director and Director-General of FAO are requested to approve the proposed Cuba Emergency Operation 201108.

APPROVAL

.....
David M. Beasley
Executive Director

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José Graziano da Silva
Director-General of FAO

Date:

Date:

Drafted by: [name] Country Office
Cleared by: [name] Country Office on [date]
Reviewed by: [Vera Mayer] Regional Bureau
Cleared by: [name] Regional Bureau on [date]
Reviewed by: [name] Operations Management Support (OMS)

ANNEX I-A

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN			
	Quantity (mt)	Value (USD)	Value (USD)
<i>Food Transfers</i>			
Cereals	2,339	1,309,734	
Pulses	1,145	1,144,912	
Oil and fats	572	610,441	
Mixed and blended food	-		
Others	-		
Total Food Transfers	4,056	3,065,087	
External Transport		451,506	
LTSH			
ODOC Food		32,448	
Food and Related Costs ¹			3,549,040
C&V Transfers		-	
C&V Related costs		-	
Cash and Vouchers and Related Costs			
Capacity Development & Augmentation			240,154
<i>Direct Operational Costs</i>			3,789,194
Direct support costs (see Annex I-B)			169,506
Total Direct Project Costs			3,958,700
Indirect support costs (7.0 percent) ²			277,109
TOTAL WFP COSTS			4,235,809

¹ This is a notional food basket for budgeting and approval. The contents may vary.

² The indirect support cost rate may be amended by the Board during the project.

ANNEX I-B

DIRECT SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS (USD)	
WFP Staff and Staff-Related	
Professional staff	-
General service staff	67,209
Danger pay and local allowances	-
Subtotal	67,209
Recurring and Other	47,308
Capital Equipment	12,500
Security	5,300
Travel and transportation	22,384
Assessments, Evaluations and Monitoring¹	14,805
TOTAL DIRECT SUPPORT COSTS	169,506

¹ Reflects estimated costs when these activities are performed by third parties. If WFP Country Office staff perform these activities, the costs are included in Staff and Staff Related and Travel and Transportation.

Annex II: Summary of Logical Framework of Cuba EMOP 201108

GOAL 1: Support countries to achieve zero hunger

OBJECTIVE 1: End hunger by protecting access to food

RESULT 1: Everyone has access to food

OUTCOME : Vulnerable people in shock-affected municipalities have stable access to basic food to meet their dietary requirements following a natural disaster, as a complement to government food distribution

Outcome Category: Maintained/enhanced individual and household access to adequate food

Assumptions:

1. Contingency food stock available in the country.
2. Local or regional purchase of food commodities is carried out in a timely and swift manner.
3. The beneficiaries receive food provided by WFP, according to the quantity and frequency agreed with the counterparts.

Outcome Indicator: Proportion of eligible population that participates in programme (coverage)

ACTIVITIES and OUTPUTS

Provide unconditional food transfer and mobile storage units to ensure a swift food assistance to shock-affected populations, in coordination with national authorities (URT: Unconditional resource transfers to support access to food)

1.1 Shock-affected populations benefit from food assistance in order to avoid a deterioration of their health and nutritional status (A: Resources transferred)

1.2 Shock-affected populations benefit from enhanced food storage capacity of local state institutions (A: Resources transferred)

GOAL 1: Support countries to achieve zero hunger

C.2. Affected populations are able to benefit from WFP programmes in a manner that ensures and promotes their safety, dignity and integrity

CROSS-CUTTING INDICATORS

C.2.1: Proportion of targeted people accessing assistance without protection challenges

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
COMET	WFP tool to design, implement and monitor programmes
EMOP	emergency operation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GFD	general food distribution
GCMF	Global Commodity Management Facility
IR-EMOP	immediate response emergency operation
LTSH	landside transport, storage and handling
MINCEX	Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment
MINCIN	Ministry of Internal Trade
MIST	minimum security telecommunications standards
MSU	mobile storage unit
MOSS	minimum operational security standards
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
RDI	recommended dietary intake
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WFP	World Food Programme

ANNEX IV - [Project Budget Plan](#)