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**Emergency Food Assistance to Communities Affected by
Hurricane Matthew in Cuba**
Standard Project Report 2017

World Food Programme in Cuba, Republic of (CU)



World Food Programme

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Country Context and WFP Objectives



Achievements at Country Level

Throughout 2017, WFP continued to support the Government in strengthening food security and nutrition among the most vulnerable groups, by providing food assistance and capacity strengthening activities. The **National Food Consumption Survey**, launched in 2016 with methodological support by WFP, was completed. Such a survey had not been conducted since 2001. The results will be shared in early 2018 during a national workshop and could represent a strategic tool to support decision making for social protection programmes, to make them more efficient. WFP also continued working with the supra-ministerial body that oversees the implementation of the Socio-Economic Guidelines for the update of Cuba's social and economic model, positioning itself as a valuable partner to provide technical assistance on beneficiary targeting and food transfers.

WFP advanced in **strengthening local agricultural value chains** to ensure timely, adequate, and sustainable food supply to social safety net programmes. In addition to supplying agricultural equipment, WFP focused on delivering training and promoting innovative practices to enhance the efficiency of these value chains, such as the “variety gardens”, the “service fairs” and the auto-assessment methodology for cooperatives. A series of gender sensitization workshops for both men and women were also carried out to foster gender equality and women's empowerment among the actors of the bean value chain.

WFP also supported the Government in adapting different methodologies to enhance community resilience and disaster risk management. An enhanced system for **the comprehensive management of drought** was developed and tested with national and local institutions, using innovative procedures to include indicators to measure the vulnerability of food production in risk assessments, as well as strengthening the drought early warning system to

improve dissemination of information and decision-making. WFP also engaged in dialogue with its partner institutions (including the Ministry of Environment, Civil Defence and the Ministry of Agriculture) to promote a greater involvement of women in the different processes envisaged by comprehensive drought management.

WFP finalised its emergency assistance to the populations affected by **Hurricane Matthew**, and launched two operations in response to the devastating impact of **Hurricane Irma**. Swift food assistance was made possible by the prepositioned in-country stocks under the country programme. Due to the massive damage to warehouse infrastructure, WFP also provided logistic support to enhance the food storage capacities of local authorities. WFP's commitment to support the Government's response was emphasized during a visit of the Executive Director one week after the impact of Hurricane Irma, and was highlighted on various occasions by local and national press.

Country Context and Response of the Government

Cuba has some of the most comprehensive social protection programmes in the world, which allowed it to largely eradicate poverty and hunger. The country's 2016 human development index ranked 68th out of 188 countries (high human development category), and its global hunger index was below 5, which is considered low. However, recurrent financial and economic crises, frequent natural hazards, low productivity and limited access to credit have put at risk food security and the nutrition of the population. This situation is compounded by the continued U.S. embargo that is likely to remain in place following the recent cooling of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States.

It is estimated that the country imports around 70 to 80 percent of its food needs. These imports are primarily used in the social protection programmes, which include a highly subsidized monthly food basket for each citizen. With the prices of imported commodities increasing over the last decade, this food basket currently covers only 38 percent of household food needs, while it used to cover up to 50 percent in the early 2000s. Cubans now meet most of their food needs through purchases in non-subsidized markets, spending 60 to 75 percent of their income on food [1]. Although effective, the high cost of social protection programmes with universal coverage puts the national budget under unsustainable strain.

The diet of the average Cuban family is poor in micronutrients [2]. This is due to the limited consumption of a diversified diet because of limited access and cultural habits. Anaemia is a major public health concern: since 2011, the Cuban Government invested significant effort in strengthening its National Plan for the Prevention and Control of Anaemia, a programme supported by WFP. The Food Security and Nutrition Monitoring System (SISVAN) still pointed to the continued high prevalence of anaemia in 2017. In the 34 municipalities – considered the most vulnerable to this nutritional disorder and, therefore, assisted by WFP – the prevalence of anaemia is 24.4 percent in children aged 23 months and is up to 44 percent in children aged 6 months. Pregnant and lactating women are also particularly vulnerable to anaemia, with a prevalence rate of 31.5 percent in 2017.

The rising obesity rate is yet another concern: nearly 45 percent of the Cuban population (55 percent women) is overweight or obese, which is a risk factor for chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease (Ministry of Health) [3].

WFP supports the Government in developing a new management model and innovative approaches to strengthening social protection programmes and ensuring food security and nutrition. The focus is on enhancing the efficiency and sustainability of national food-based social protection programmes for vulnerable groups, strengthening agricultural value chains and promoting resilience.

Recurrent climate hazards affect the economy and food security of the population. The 2017 Atlantic hurricane season was rated as one of the most active since 1851 (Cubadebate, 2017). Cuba's Central region – already suffering from a severe drought over the last three years – was heavily affected by the passage of powerful Hurricane Irma, causing significant damage to homes and livelihoods. According to official reports, overall damage amounted to over 13 billion Cuban pesos (Cubadebate 2017). A positive consequence of the hurricane season was more rainfall during the last quarter of 2017, mitigating the drought that had been affecting agricultural production and public water supply in most of the country over the last four years.

Despite Cuba's positive results in achieving Millennium Development Goal 3 to promote gender equality and empower women – as reflected by a high gender global indicator (ranking 62 out of 188 countries) – inequality persists regarding women's participation in socio-economic activities and in decision-making processes. This is particularly true of rural areas where women represent 16.4 percent of the agricultural workforce, 17 percent of cooperative members at national level, but only 11 percent of those new members who have benefitted from land allocation in recent years.

In 2016, the Government of Cuba launched the 2030 National Plan for Economic and Social Development, which lays down the guiding principles for updating Cuba's economic and social model. This plan links up to the process

launched in 2011 with the Socio-Economic Policy Guidelines for 2011-2015 and maintains it for the period 2016-2021. In line with Sustainable Development Goal 2, food security is identified as a national priority and the increase in domestic food production is considered the key measure to substitute imports and ensure sustainable food security. Nutrition priorities are included in the Comprehensive Plan for the Prevention and Control of Iron-Deficiency Anaemia and the Cuban Public Health Projections.

[1] Centros de Estudios de la Economía Cubana. 2013. Gastos básicos de una familia cubana urbana en 2011. Situación de las familias “estado-dependientes”. Annual seminar on the Cuban economy and business management, 25-27 June 2013. Hotel Nacional de Cuba.

[2] This is confirmed by national scientific researches carried out by the National Institute of Hygiene, Epidemiology and Microbiology (“Iron-deficiency anaemia in childhood in Cuba”, Gisela Pita-Rodríguez and Santa Jiménez-Acosta, 2011; and “Food consumption and preferences of the Cuban population with over 15 years of age”, Carmen Porrata-Maury, 2009).

[3] Ministry of Health, Third National Survey on risk factors and prevention activities for non-transmittable diseases (2010-2011). This phenomenon is more severe in the age group 35-54 years old.

WFP Objectives and Strategic Coordination

In Cuba, WFP supports national food security and nutritional priorities, as outlined in the Guidelines to update the country's economic and social model, and reiterated in the 2030 National Plan for Economic and Social Development. Technical support and capacity strengthening are emphasized in accordance with national and local authorities work towards more sustainable, targeted and gender-sensitive social protection systems for vulnerable groups (which include children aged 6-23 months, pregnant and lactating women, and elderly people). WFP also supports the National Plan for the Prevention and Control of Anaemia, focusing on iron supplementation, food fortification, food diversification and nutritional education.

In 2017, WFP's portfolio comprised the following operations:

Country programme - CP 200703 (2015-2018): supported national efforts in improving the sustainability and targeting of social protection programmes in 43 municipalities of the five eastern provinces and in Pinar del Rio and Matanzas in western Cuba. Benefitting nearly 900,000 people, activities include: i) supporting food security and nutrition-related social protection programmes for vulnerable groups; ii) strengthening links between social protection systems and agricultural value chains; and iii) improving community resilience, disaster risk management and climate change adaptation capacities at the local level. These activities are in line with Sustainable Development Goals 2, 5 and 17 by promoting food security and improving nutrition, while bolstering gender equality and partnerships.

Emergency Food Assistance to Communities Affected by Hurricane Matthew in Cuba - EMOP 201034 (2016-2017): supported Cuban authorities in preserving the food security and nutrition of nearly 180,000 people in eight eastern municipalities that had been most affected by Hurricane Matthew. Special emphasis was placed on food assistance for vulnerable groups, including children aged 12-23 months and pregnant or lactating women, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 2, especially on the objective of improving nutrition and food security. To ensure timely assistance, WFP used food stocks already prepositioned in-country under the country programme. WFP also provided mobile storage units, lightening equipment and pallets to enhance local food storage.

Assistance to Victims of Hurricane Irma in Cuba - IR-EMOP 201107 (2017): provided immediate food assistance – using in-country food stocks prepositioned under the country programme – to the most affected populations in 22 central municipalities, supporting nearly 640,000 people. In alignment with the Government's strategy, particular emphasis was placed on vulnerable groups, including children aged 6-23 months, school-aged children, pregnant and lactating women, and the elderly.

Emergency Food Assistance to Victims of Hurricane Irma in Cuba - EMOP 201108 (2017): ensured continuity for another three months to the immediate relief provided with the IR-EMOP 201107 in 22 central municipalities. In addition to food assistance, WFP supplied mobile storage units, lightening equipment and pallets to enhance local food storage. This operation supports nearly 640,000 affected people, including vulnerable groups (children aged 6-23 months, school-aged children, pregnant and lactating women, and the elderly).

Both emergency operations are in line with Sustainable Development Goals 2, 5, and 17, by supporting, in partnership with national and local institutions, the food security of shock-affected populations while ensuring equal support to women and men.

WFP works in synergy with the United Nations System in Cuba, as well as with a number of development partners. All WFP operations are part of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Cuba

2014-2018, supporting its outcomes 3, 4, 6 and 8. WFP also leads the United Nations Emergency Technical Team and co-leads the food security cluster with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). In addition, WFP promotes synergies with the Rome-based International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to improve the bean value-chain, and implements joint operations on drought resilience with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNICEF.

WFP also places emphasis on South-South Cooperation within Latin America and the Caribbean by sharing good practices and experiences in disaster management and response, and in managing food security and nutrition programmes.

Country Resources and Results

Resources for Results

In 2017, as part of the Integrated Road Map, WFP Cuba embarked on a process of improving its financial, monitoring and reporting procedures. This process entails the revision of WFP's operational structure to better demonstrate results in approaching the Sustainable Development Goals and promoting greater accountability and financial transparency. In particular, in order to be aligned with the WFP Strategic Plan (2017-2021), the Corporate Results Framework and the Country Portfolio Budget, WFP Cuba has prepared a “transitional interim country strategic plan” (T-ICSP) to commence in 2018. The T-ICSP will be followed by a country strategic plan that will guide future operations in the framework of the next United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Cuba.

Compared to previous years, the overall funding level of the **country programme** did not change significantly in 2017, with funding availability not being homogeneous across the three strategic areas. While activities to strengthen resilience and disaster risk management were almost entirely funded, operations to strengthen agricultural value chains faced funding shortages. Therefore, WFP had to adjust the geographic coverage of these activities, reducing the number of target municipalities in the province of Guantánamo. Moreover, WFP experienced a significant increase in the cost of irrigation systems needed to strengthen the bean value chain in the eastern provinces and in Matanzas province. As a result, WFP had to further adjust, in coordination with the Government, a series of activities in the province of Pinar del Río in Western Cuba, focusing on capacity strengthening rather than on the purchase of agricultural equipment. [1] In addition, due to these funding challenges, WFP could not support the implementation of gender economic empowerment initiatives in the framework of the bean value chain. Overall, due to these funding challenges, nearly 2,000 participants in the bean value chain could not benefit from WFP's capacity strengthening activities.

In the second part of the year, new contributions were received from Italy and Germany to support the nutritional activities planned for 2018. Other key donors for the country programme include Brazil, Canada, Cuba, European Union, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Switzerland and the private sector.

The **Hurricane Irma emergency** in the Caribbean, affecting a large number of other islands and exacerbated by the passage of powerful Hurricane Maria, was also initially challenging in terms of mobilizing funds for Cuba. However, the Cuba United Nations Country Team prepared an Action Plan and a proposal for the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), to foster a coordinated and harmonized response, covering all clusters (i.e. food security and nutrition, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene, health and education). Coordination among all UN agencies was particularly effective in avoiding duplication of efforts and optimizing the geographic coverage of activities. WFP played a particularly active role by coordinating the food-security area and by the timely launching of two emergency response operations (IR-EMOP 201107, followed by EMOP 201108). WFP also followed a very active fund-raising strategy, both with traditional (CERF, Canada, European Union, Italy and Switzerland) and non-traditional donors (Portugal and the private sector). Thanks to these efforts, almost 90 percent of the funding needs of the two emergency operations were covered in nearly 3 months.

In 2017, WFP also concluded its emergency operation in response to **Hurricane Matthew** that had struck Eastern Cuba in October 2016. Despite the extent of devastation and the active fundraising strategy, coordinated with other UN agencies, only two-thirds of the operation were funded over the nine months of project duration (donors to this operation comprised the CERF and the governments of Canada, Italy and the Republic of Korea). Given these financial constraints, WFP could purchase less food commodities to assist the target populations.

[1] Adjustments in geographic targeting of the provinces of Guantánamo and Pinar del Río were conducted in close consultations with the Government, and according to the priorities identified by the bean value chain actors during the value chain assessments. The rationale was to maintain WFP's assistance in both provinces.



Annual Country Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Children (under 5 years)	54,140	51,519	105,659
Children (5-18 years)	105,184	102,430	207,614
Adults (18 years plus)	340,645	342,138	682,783
Total number of beneficiaries in 2017	499,969	496,087	996,056



Annual Food Distribution in Country (mt)

Project Type	Cereals	Oil	Pulses	Mix	Other	Total
Country Programme	556	-	250	58	12	876
Single Country EMOP	1,454	214	1,359	-	-	3,027
Single Country IR-EMOP	720	188	478	-	-	1,386
Total Food Distributed in 2017	2,730	402	2,087	58	12	5,289

Supply Chain

Cuba has **two main ports**: Mariel in western Cuba (55 km from Havana) and Guiller món Moncada in eastern Cuba (in the city of Santiago de Cuba). There are also **six international airports** [1] and several domestic airports almost in every province. A national highway connects Havana to central Cuba, along with a network of provincial roads, some of them in precarious condition.

Most **WFP-purchased commodities** arrive in the two main ports. Upon arrival, the commodities are handed over to the Government that warrants their internal transport, storage and distribution, while WFP ensures monitoring throughout the food distribution process until the final beneficiary. Due to the limited availability of goods in Cuba, most food and non-food items required for the country programme and the emergency operations have to be imported. The main non-food items **internationally procured** for the WFP country programme in 2017 were: i) agricultural equipment to strengthen the bean value chain in the eastern provinces, as well as the production of fresh food in the urban areas of Santiago de Cuba; ii) equipment to support comprehensive drought management in the eastern provinces and kitchen tools for emergency preparedness in Pinar del Río; iii) kitchen tools to enhance food processing capacities in health institutions for the elderly; and iv) computer equipment to support data processing for the National Survey on Food Consumption and the national Food Security Monitoring System

(SISVAN).

Under WFP's response to Hurricane Irma, part of the vegetable oil slated for the affected populations was **purchased locally**. The in-country availability of this commodity, coupled with the selection of a state enterprise as a provider, enabled WFP to reduce the delivery time of vegetable oil to final beneficiaries.

In 2017, WFP maintained a small **contingency stock** of beans and rice for disaster response in the cities of Cienfuegos, Havana and Santiago de Cuba. This contingency stock – established under the country programme activities to promote resilience – represented a valuable mechanism to reduce the delivery times of immediate response. However, the distance from international markets often lengthens international purchase processes. Hence, the availability of funds does not necessarily ensure a rapid continuation of the assistance provided with the prepositioned food stocks.

WFP continued strengthening national and local logistics capacities. Given the massive damage caused to the warehouse infrastructure by Hurricane Irma, WFP supported local authorities in improving their storage capacities, with particular attention to maintaining the food security and nutritional status of the population. Collaboration with the Panama UNHRD confirmed its effectiveness to ensure the swift purchase of mobile storage units.

In 2016, the Government launched a revision of the national customs clearance and distribution procedures, decentralizing the import management mechanisms by distributing the tasks among multiple actors – each with their own distinct standards and procedures. To date, these new regulations – resulting in complex procedures to obtain import permits – have caused various delays in the international purchase processes.

[1] The Havana international airport is the only facility able to receive air cargos.



Annual Food Purchases for the Country (mt)

Commodity	Local	Regional/International	Total
Beans	-	1,454	1,454
Rice	-	4,431	4,431
Vegetable Oil	195	338	533
Total	195	6,222	6,418
Percentage	3.0%	97.0%	

Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

In 2017, a centralised **mid-term operation evaluation of the Cuba country programme** was carried out by an external firm. The evaluation assessed the performance and preliminary results of the country programme, while identifying lessons learned and good practices that have emerged in the course of implementation.

As part of the analytical work, the evaluation team conducted a field mission in March 2017, interviewing national and local authorities, institutions, and beneficiaries. The main conclusions were provided in the evaluation report, issued in July 2017, which comprised a series of **findings and recommendations** (both for the remaining part of the country programme and the country strategic plan) that were shared with the Government, donors and other UN agencies.

Evaluation findings: The Cuba country programme proved to be **highly relevant**, responding to the government priorities on food security and nutrition and supporting its decentralization goals. The evaluation report highlighted the effectiveness of WFP's **capacity strengthening activities** for national and local partners, empowered by the provided innovative tools to enhance food security and nutrition. Moreover, WFP is enhancing **synergies with other United Nations agencies**, mostly in its actions to support the early-warning systems for climate hazards, to strengthen agricultural value chains, and to promote drought resilience in the city of Santiago de Cuba.

Evaluation recommendations and WFP's compliance: Throughout the second part of 2017, WFP successfully complied with all the short-term evaluation recommendations:

- As a first step, WFP revised its monitoring and evaluation system, streamlining the data collection and information reporting procedures for government counterparts.
- WFP enhanced linkages between disaster risk management and the activities to strengthen the bean value chain, by introducing risk analysis in the value-chain assessment methodology.
- WFP continued to support the systematization efforts already in place, covering various operational areas such as South-South cooperation, gender equality in rural areas, disaster risk management, and the strengthening of the bean value chain.
- WFP strengthened gender mainstreaming throughout the country programme, mainly in disaster risk management. A gender analysis of the operation was facilitated to foster women's participation in the comprehensive management of drought.
- Given the gradual increase in bean production, WFP also began a dialogue with the National Grain Institute, responsible for seed selection and distribution, drawing attention to the potential shortages of basic seeds, which may affect the objective of supplying a greater quantity of beans to the social protection systems. As a result, a seed production strategy to ensure the availability of beans was developed by the National Grain Institute and was submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture.

WFP also continued its dialogue with government counterparts to strengthen social protection programmes in the medium to long term by considering the use of other food assistance modalities. Results of this dialogue will guide the formulation of the coming country strategic plan.

Strengthening capacities at the national and local level

In 2017, WFP placed special emphasis on strengthening capacities at the national and local level to enhance food security and nutrition. These activities entailed the use of innovative tools and methodologies, fostered coordination among diverse actors (ministries, technical institutions, farmers, state enterprises, etc.) and empowered local institutions and beneficiaries in various strategic areas such as:

- **Promoting comprehensive drought management and community resilience.** Over the last three years, WFP has supported a multi-sectoral group of institutions (including the Ministry of Environment, the Institute of Meteorology, Civil Defence, the Institute of Hydraulic Resources and the National Bureau of Statistics) to develop and test innovative tools for managing drought through a comprehensive approach. [1] These tools are the result of joint work with national and local institutions carried out with WFP's technical assistance, and are tailored to the priorities of each targeted territory. As a significant achievement, WFP facilitated the preparation of previously missing standard operating procedures for the comprehensive management of drought, which will represent a valuable tool for national and local authorities.

- **Enhancing the efficiency of agricultural value chains.** WFP continued to strengthen the capacities of different actors in the targeted agricultural value chains [2] through training sessions and the provision of equipment. In particular, WFP facilitated practical activities that increased the capacities of participants in the agricultural value chains in different areas (bean cultivation, services to the value chain, cooperativism skills). It also promoted the adoption of new practices and fostered dialogue among the various stakeholders, (including farmers, cooperative managers, national and local authorities, as well as representatives of social protection programmes).

The organization of “variety demonstration plots” was a useful experience to showcase good agricultural practices in the production of beans and fresh food, identifying the varieties most suited to local conditions and consumers' preferences. For the first time in the country and with great success, WFP also hosted “service fairs” that promoted an exchange related to the value chain between farmers and service providers. This enhanced awareness about the local services available. In addition, the “self-assessment tool for cooperatives”, adapted to the Cuban context in collaboration with WFP's regional office, was among the most innovative activities promoted by WFP. With this tool, WFP-supported cooperatives learned to assess their efficiency and compliance with the principles of cooperativism, and they could identify specific measures to address weaknesses.

In addition, the provision of equipment (i.e. tractors, moisture meters, etc.), accompanied with training on its use, also promoted an increase in the production capacities of farmers.

- **Positioning nutritional education as a strategic topic in the school system.** In 2017, WFP continued to assist the Ministry of Education with the implementation of the Strategy on Nutritional Education for Schools that had been developed in 2016 with WFP's technical assistance. The strategy – adopted for the school feeding programme in five eastern provinces, and the Pinar del Río province in western Cuba – aims at enhancing knowledge on healthy nutrition in the educational sector, by training the staff (including caregivers, teachers, personnel responsible for handling food and decision makers) who then sensitize schoolchildren and their families. As confirmed by a mid-term review conducted by the Ministry of Education with WFP's assistance, the Nutritional Education Strategy that uses the school system as a priority channel promoted the knowledge of schoolchildren and their families on good nutritional practices, and contributed to strengthening coordination between the ministries of Education and Health. [3]

- **South-South cooperation on disaster management and response.** As part of a Forecast-based Financing pilot project in Haiti, WFP facilitated the exchange of capacities and skills between Cuba and Haiti on disaster management and response, leveraging the experience of Cuba with South-South cooperation. In 2017, WFP promoted various exchanges and field visits between Cuban experts and their homologues in Haiti to set up a short-term meteorological forecasting system, and provide training for its use. Additionally, capacity development activities were promoted in Haiti to strengthen risk assessments and the contingency plan for hurricanes, with the aim to mitigate the impact of extreme events on food security and nutrition. Food security is not automatically highlighted in disaster risk management. Hence, the involvement of WFP and its experience to introduce this dimension constituted an added value. The tools and methodologies shared with WFP's support will ultimately facilitate assistance to the most vulnerable groups.

[1] Comprehensive drought management is based on four pillars: i) drought surveillance; ii) inclusion of food production vulnerability indicators in municipal multi-risk assessments; iii) dissemination of drought-related information to key users; and iv) procedures to support decision-making on mitigation measures.

[2] In the eastern provinces (Granma, Guantánamo, Holguín and Las Tunas) and in western Cuba (provinces of Matanzas and Pinar del Río), WFP is supporting bean value chains, while it is strengthening fresh food value chains

in the province of Santiago de Cuba.

[3] In particular, the Ministry of Health provides the knowledge on food and nutrition, while the Ministry of Education develops the methodology to transmit this knowledge to schoolchildren and caregivers.

Project Results

Activities and Operational Partnerships

Strategic Objective 1: Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies.

Following the passage of Hurricane Matthew, WFP supported the Government by providing an initial six-month assistance (from November 2016 until April 2017) to improve the food security of approximately 180,000 hurricane-affected people in the provinces of Guantanamo and Holguin. WFP focused on the most vulnerable groups in these provinces, including those who had lost their livelihoods, pregnant and lactating women, children aged 6-23 months, and the elderly. Food assistance was extended until July 2017 due to the delays in the international purchases of commodities.

In line with Strategic Objective 1 of WFP Strategic Plan 2014-2017 (saving lives and protecting livelihoods in emergencies), this operation aimed to contribute with two activities to adequate access to food by vulnerable people who had been affected by Hurricane Matthew: i) general food distribution and ii) technical assistance on food management, logistics and storage. The operation also contributed to the prevention of micronutrient deficiencies in children aged 12-23 months and to preventing the deterioration of the nutritional status of pregnant and lactating women by two further activities: iii) the distribution of micronutrient powders (MNPs) to children aged 12-23 months, and iv) the distribution of Super Cereal to pregnant and lactating women. [1]

All WFP assistance was provided within the framework of the Government's extensive social protection programmes in order to ensure adequate access to food by affected households.

The operation was implemented under the oversight of the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Investment (MINCEX), and in close coordination with the Ministry of Domestic Trade (MINCIN) that is responsible for the transportation and distribution of general food assistance country wide. In addition, all activities were planned and implemented in coordination with the United Nations System in Cuba, in order to maximize results and avoid duplication. In this framework, WFP took a leading role in logistics and, jointly with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in food security.

Outcome SO1.2: Stabilized or improved food consumption over assistance period for targeted households and/or individuals.

Activity: General food distribution to vulnerable populations

In 2017, WFP completed its general food assistance to the worst affected populations in the provinces of Guantanamo and Holguin, complementing the ration delivered by the Government's social protection programmes. Food assistance consisted of beans, rice and vegetable oil. The duration of assistance varied according to the needs of the impacted populations. Given delays with the process to purchase internationally the required commodities, distribution was only completed in July.

In the four hardest hit municipalities (Baracoa, Imias, Maisi and San Antonio del Sur), WFP provided blanket general food distribution to the entire population, while in four other affected municipalities (Caimanera, Manuel Tames, Yateras and Moa), there was a targeted general food distribution to support vulnerable groups (including children under three, pregnant and lactating women, and the elderly). The targeting strategy was aligned with the government priorities in assisting the affected populations. [2]

All commodities were delivered to final beneficiaries by the national food distribution units ("bodegas") that belong to the Ministry of Domestic Trade (MINCIN), WFP's key partner in the logistics and distribution of commodities.

Immediate WFP response was made possible by: i) food stocks prepositioned under the country programme; and ii) a government food loan to cope with the delays in international procurement processes. The loan agreement with MINCIN confirmed WFP's reliability as a key partner in emergency response, given its extensive experience in supporting the country during natural disasters.

Activity: Technical assistance on food management, logistics and storage

As part of the WFP emergency response, WFP continued supporting local government capacities in all eight affected municipalities by providing equipment to improve food management, logistics and storage. Upon delivery of the equipment, WFP's field monitor provided technical assistance to the recipient local institutions to ensure proper usage. Priority needs of all targeted institutions (such as local and provincial warehouses, and food processing centres) were identified in coordination with the Civil Defence of Guantanamo province. This authority acknowledged the swiftness of WFP's response and expressed its interest in learning about WFP's response

mechanisms to prepare for future disaster events.

[1] In 2016, WFP carried out one distribution cycle of specialised nutritious foods (micronutrient powders for children aged 12-23 months, and Super Cereal for pregnant and lactating women) covering 6 months of consumption (November 2016-April 2017). That is why no additional beneficiaries were reported for 2017.

[2] Overall, this operation – which started in Oct 2016 and ended in July 2017 – covered four months of consumption through blanket general food distribution in the four hardest hit municipalities, followed by two months of targeted general food distribution to vulnerable groups.

Results

Strategic Objective 1: Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies

Outcome SO1.2: Stabilized or improved food consumption over assistance period for targeted households and/or individuals

Activity: General food distribution to vulnerable populations

WFP largely achieved its targets in terms of beneficiary coverage, continuing the trend of the previous year.

Distribution of rice, beans and vegetable oil in 2017 also included commodities that could not be distributed in 2016 due to delays in the international food procurement process. Hence, the total amount of food commodities distributed in 2017 was higher than planned. Given the severe damage to agricultural production and markets disruptions, WFP's assistance contributed to cover the gap between the food needs of the affected populations and the ration provided by the public distribution system (subsidized monthly food basket). In times of emergencies, this food basket is increased to cover nearly 70 percent of the recommended dietary intake (RDI). Taking into account the different needs of the targeted populations, WFP complemented the government assistance with a food ration that covered an additional 30 percent of the RDI.

While designing this operation, WFP's beneficiary targeting figures were based on the population data provided by the National Bureau of Statistics (ONEI), updated 31 December 2015. However, when delivering the food commodities to final beneficiaries, local authorities used the latest figures provided by the Office of Supply Distribution Control (OFICODA), which are updated on a monthly basis. As the number of actual beneficiaries was higher than planned, the days of consumption were slightly reduced to assist all the population [1].

As the assistance was channelled through the government social protection programmes, it was difficult to carry out as envisaged surveys to measure corporate outcome indicators. However, qualitative information collected by WFP field monitors and cooperating partners suggests that WFP's assistance complementing the Government's response contributed to the improved availability of food among hurricane-affected populations.

A positive trend observed in 2017 was the increased awareness of WFP's food assistance among the affected populations. This was bolstered by a series of visibility actions in the distribution centres ("bodegas") used by the government social protection programmes and where WFP assistance was also distributed. These actions included: (i) the delivery of promotional products (branded t-shirts for bodega employees, food bags for beneficiaries and posters); (ii) specification of the amount of food donated by WFP in the beneficiaries' public distribution system ration books; (iii) strong emphasis by government authorities on WFP's assistance; and iv) active promotion of WFP support on local and national media.

Activity: Technical assistance on food management, logistics and storage

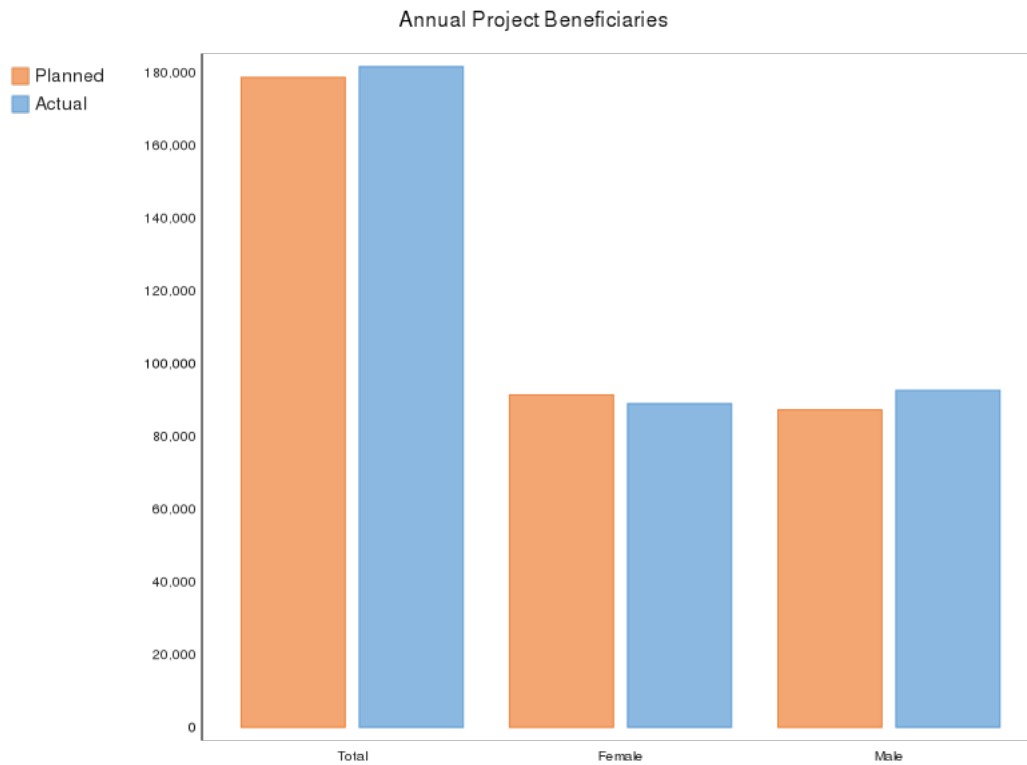
In 2017, WFP continued supporting local government capacities on food storage through the provision of planned non-food items. Four mobile storage units (MSUs) and two lightning towers were provided to Guantanamo province. Given the late arrival of these commodities – since they were purchased with the last contributions received for this operation, they were not assembled. However, soon after the passage of Hurricane Irma, the provincial authorities of Guantanamo agreed to redirect these MSUs to Cuba's affected central provinces as a loan to support the food storage capacities of local institutions.

Moreover, WFP purchased warehousing lamps and scrubbing machines to improve storage and handling conditions. These items were set up in six local warehouses that store food commodities for the affected municipalities. While the warehousing lamps enabled operational continuity during the night in the absence of electricity, scrubbing machines improved sanitary conditions – and hence food safety – in these warehouses.

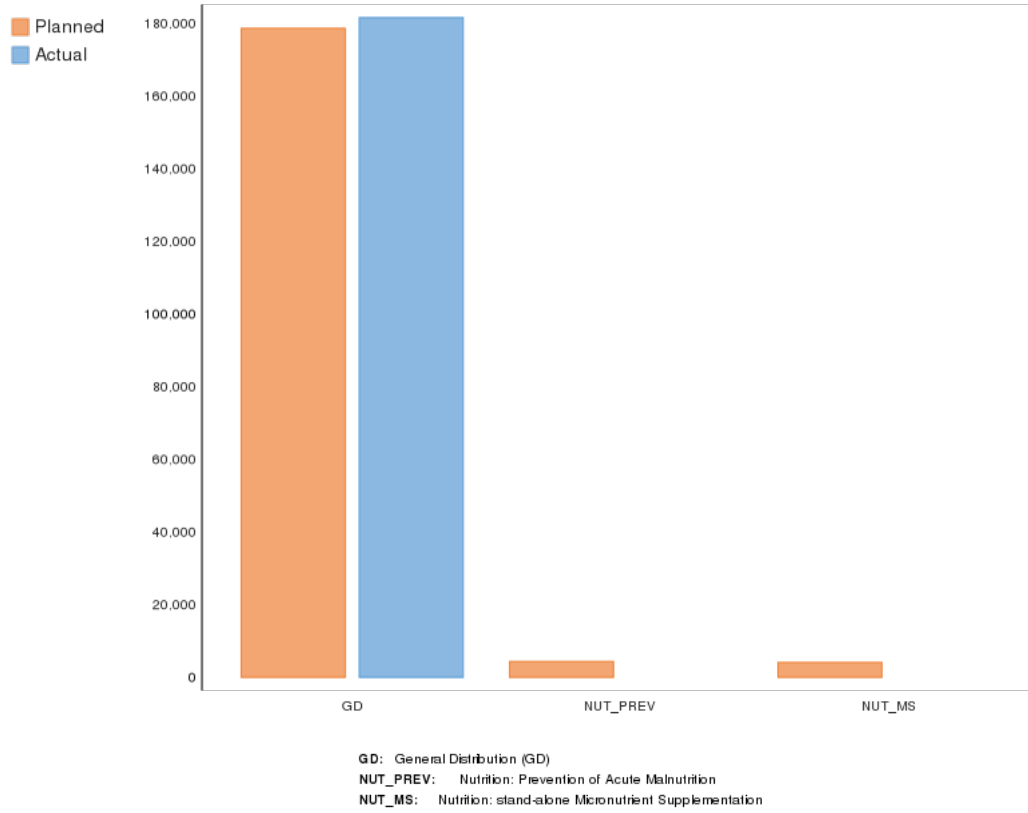
WFP also provided kitchen tools to strengthen the food elaboration capacities and improve food safety in six food processing centres in the two most affected municipalities (Baracoa and Maisi), with a capacity to support over 2,400 people in future emergencies.

WFP's role as a partner in emergency response was highly appreciated at national level as well as by the local authorities in Guantanamo and Holguin provinces. This was reiterated by the President of Guantanamo Province in November 2017, during an official visit by the Director of the Sustainable Development Goal Fund.

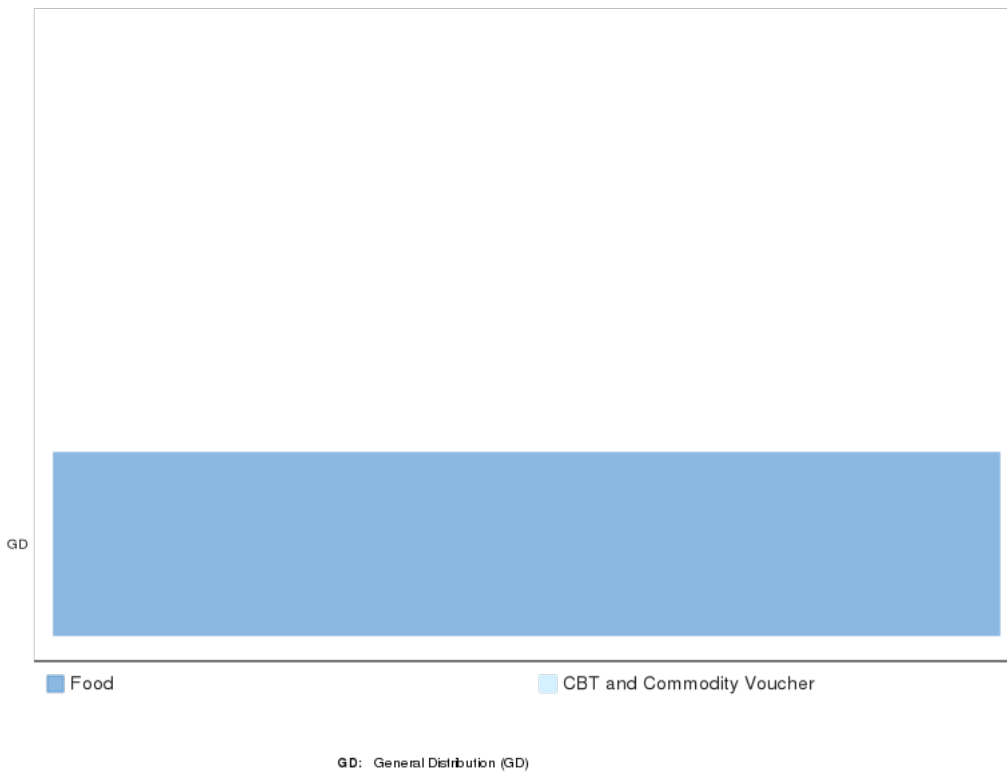
[1] This slight reduction was also necessary due to funding shortages that led to a decrease in commodities purchased.



Annual Project Beneficiaries by Activity



Modality of Transfer by Activity





Annual Project Food Distribution

Commodity	Planned Distribution (mt)	Actual Distribution (mt)	% Actual v. Planned
Beans	584	1,021	175.0%
Corn Soya Blend	9	-	-
Rice	625	608	97.2%
Vegetable Oil	128	214	167.5%
Total	1,346	1,843	137.0%

Performance Monitoring

Given the existing arrangements with government counterparts for the response, it was not feasible for WFP to measure food security outcomes at the household level. The monitoring system was therefore largely geared towards processes: accountability in distributions, programmatic adjustments and decision-making, and generating evidence and identifying lessons learned to be shared with local partners.

All monitoring activities were planned and carried out in coordination with local authorities. WFP's field monitors in Guantanamo and Holguin provinces played a crucial role in overseeing food distributions to the most affected people, with frequent on-site visits coordinated with local authorities. Monitors provided regular updates on the food distribution process and submitted monthly distribution reports, prepared by the Government. WFP's field monitor in Santiago de Cuba also coordinated and monitored the dispatch and transportation of commodities from Santiago's port to the hurricane-affected municipalities.

Missions from the WFP's main office in Havana were also carried out to monitor food management in cooperating partners' warehouses and check compliance with basic food storage standards. Representatives of government authorities at the national level joined these missions, reinforcing WFP's role among local institutions and beneficiaries.

Progress Towards Gender Equality

WFP ensured equitable access to food assistance for vulnerable men and women under its general food distributions.

Gender considerations were mainstreamed at each step of project life: design, monitoring and implementation. While designing the operation, the targeting of beneficiaries devoted – in close consultation with government counterparts – special attention to the vulnerable groups in the affected populations. Of these, women (including pregnant and lactating women) and children under 5 represented an important portion, nearly half of WFP's beneficiaries.

Through periodical field visits to monitor food distribution, WFP could confirm that the beneficiary data provided by government counterparts was disaggregated by sex and age. WFP also observed the participation of women in collecting the emergency assistance: both women and men were collecting food for their households, although women kept a primary role in processing it at home.

Additionally, WFP noted that women's participation was significant throughout all stages of project implementation, including the management of food storage in cooperating partners' warehouses, as well as the distribution of WFP's food assistance. The great majority of employees at the final food distribution points ("bodegas") were women.

Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations

No incident was reported that might have jeopardized the security of beneficiaries. Under this operation, WFP delivered food through national social protection programmes, with on-site distributions in institutions where the

safety of beneficiaries is ensured by national law and order mechanisms.

Government institutions engaged in the distribution of food assistance are requested by law to display publicly the ration entitlement of each beneficiary. Moreover, community-based mechanisms allow beneficiaries to file their complaints related to food distribution.

Government counterparts and WFP continuously monitored food distributions in order to ensure food safety and quality.

“The fastest response to the population we have ever had”

"The WFP-prepositioned food stock has been a huge support to the people of Maisí.

Hurricane Matthew had destroyed all agricultural production areas in our municipality, which represented the main source of food in the area. Food supply in markets became limited.

WFP's prepositioned food stocks not only guaranteed that over 28,000 people in our municipality were able to receive rice and beans with high quality standards, but also that this assistance was provided within days of the hurricane's impact.

Looking at our previous experiences, this was the fastest response to the population we have ever had. As compared to the Hurricane Ike emergency in 2008, the prepositioned food stocks contributed to reduce the response period by 70 percent".

Testimony of Jorge Luís Sánchez, Vice-President of the municipality of Maisí, Province of Guantánamo

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

Cover page photo © WFP/Marianela González

Elderly people are among the vulnerable groups who receive WFP's food assistance in the province of Guantánamo.

Overview of Project Beneficiary Information

Table 1: Overview of Project Beneficiary Information

Beneficiary Category	Planned (male)	Planned (female)	Planned (total)	Actual (male)	Actual (female)	Actual (total)	% Actual v. Planned (male)	% Actual v. Planned (female)	% Actual v. Planned (total)
Total Beneficiaries	87,283	91,397	178,680	92,633	89,002	181,635	106.1%	97.4%	101.7%
By Age-group:									
Children (under 5 years)	10,531	10,453	20,984	5,697	5,474	11,171	54.1%	52.4%	53.2%
Children (5-18 years)	13,645	13,645	27,290	-	-	-	-	-	-
Adults (18 years plus)	63,107	67,299	130,406	86,936	83,528	170,464	137.8%	124.1%	130.7%
By Residence status:									
Residents	87,283	91,397	178,680	91,701	89,934	181,635	105.1%	98.4%	101.7%

Participants and Beneficiaries by Activity and Modality

Table 2: Beneficiaries by Activity and Modality

Activity	Planned (food)	Planned (CBT)	Planned (total)	Actual (food)	Actual (CBT)	Actual (total)	% Actual v. Planned (food)	% Actual v. Planned (CBT)	% Actual v. Planned (total)
General Distribution (GD)	178,680	-	178,680	181,635	-	181,635	101.7%	-	101.7%
Nutrition: Prevention of Acute Malnutrition	4,393	-	4,393	-	-	-	-	-	-

Activity	Planned (food)	Planned (CBT)	Planned (total)	Actual (food)	Actual (CBT)	Actual (total)	% Actual v. Planned (food)	% Actual v. Planned (CBT)	% Actual v. Planned (total)
Nutrition: stand-alone Micronutrient Supplementation	4,115	-	4,115	-	-	-	-	-	-

Annex: Participants by Activity and Modality

Activity	Planned (food)	Planned (CBT)	Planned (total)	Actual (food)	Actual (CBT)	Actual (total)	% Actual v. Planned (food)	% Actual v. Planned (CBT)	% Actual v. Planned (total)
General Distribution (GD)	178,680	-	178,680	181,635	-	181,635	101.7%	-	101.7%
Nutrition: Prevention of Acute Malnutrition	4,393	-	4,393	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nutrition: stand-alone Micronutrient Supplementation	4,115	-	4,115	-	-	-	-	-	-

Participants and Beneficiaries by Activity (excluding nutrition)

Table 3: Participants and Beneficiaries by Activity (excluding nutrition)

Beneficiary Category	Planned (male)	Planned (female)	Planned (total)	Actual (male)	Actual (female)	Actual (total)	% Actual v. Planned (male)	% Actual v. Planned (female)	% Actual v. Planned (total)
General Distribution (GD)									
People participating in general distributions	89,340	89,340	178,680	90,817	90,818	181,635	101.7%	101.7%	101.7%
Total participants	89,340	89,340	178,680	90,817	90,818	181,635	101.7%	101.7%	101.7%
Total beneficiaries	89,340	89,340	178,680	90,817	90,818	181,635	101.7%	101.7%	101.7%

Nutrition Beneficiaries

Nutrition Beneficiaries

Beneficiary Category	Planned (male)	Planned (female)	Planned (total)	Actual (male)	Actual (female)	Actual (total)	% Actual v. Planned (male)	% Actual v. Planned (female)	% Actual v. Planned (total)
Nutrition: Prevention of Acute Malnutrition									
Pregnant and lactating women (18 plus)	-	4,393	4,393	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total beneficiaries	-	4,393	4,393	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nutrition: stand-alone Micronutrient Supplementation									
Children (6-23 months)	2,099	2,016	4,115	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total beneficiaries	2,099	2,016	4,115	-	-	-	-	-	-

Project Indicators

Outcome Indicators

Outcome	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
SO1 Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies				
Stabilized or reduced undernutrition among children aged 6–59 months and pregnant and lactating women				
Proportion of eligible population who participate in programme (coverage)				
<i>TARGETED MUNICIPALITIES IN GUANTANAMO AND HOLGUIN PROVINCES, Project End Target: 2017.04, Base value: 2016.10, WFP programme monitoring, Previous Follow-up: 2016.12, Secondary data, Latest Follow-up: 2017.07, Secondary data</i>	>90.00	0.00	100.00	100.00
Stabilized or improved food consumption over assistance period for targeted households and/or individuals				
FCS: percentage of households with acceptable Food Consumption Score				
<i>TARGETED MUNICIPALITIES IN GUANTANAMO AND HOLGUIN PROVINCES, Project End Target: 2017.04</i>	=80.00	-	-	-
Diet Diversity Score				
<i>TARGETED MUNICIPALITIES IN GUANTANAMO AND HOLGUIN PROVINCES, Project End Target: 2017.04</i>	>6.00	-	-	-

Output Indicators

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
SO1: Capacity Development - Emergency Preparedness				
Quantity of equipment (computers, furniture) distributed	item	103	103	100.0%
Quantity of kitchen utensils distributed (plates, spoons, cooking pots etc.)	tool	310	310	100.0%

Protection and Accountability to Affected Populations Indicators

Cross-cutting Indicators	Project End Target	Base Value	Previous Follow-up	Latest Follow-up
Proportion of assisted people who do not experience safety problems travelling to, from and/or at WFP programme site				
<i>CUBA, General Distribution (GD), Project End Target: 2017.04, Base value: 2016.12, Latest Follow-up: 2017.07</i>	>90.00	100.00	-	100.00

Resource Inputs from Donors

Resource Inputs from Donors

Donor	Cont. Ref. No.	Commodity	Purchased in 2017 (mt)	
			In-Kind	Cash
Italy	ITA-C-00206-01	Rice	-	50
MULTILATERAL	MULTILATERAL	Rice	-	925
Republic of Korea	KOR-C-00135-01	Rice	-	425
UN CERF	001-C-01507-01	Vegetable Oil	-	20
		Total	-	1,420