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Memorandum

Proforma for requesting an IRA allocation for preparedness activities

To:	Calum Gardner, Chief, Organizational Budgeting Service (RMBB)	Date:	21 December 2018
Through:	Margot Van Der Velden Director of Emergency Preparedness And Response		
From:	Parvathy Ramaswami Deputy Regional Director & Office in Charge, RBB		

Subject:	Request for funds allocation from the Immediate Response Account (IRA) for Special Preparedness Activity

PART 1: INFORMATION NOTE

RATIONALE:

Climate forecasts predict up to an 80 percent chance of an El Niño event from December 2018 – March 2019. For much of Southeast Asia, including Viet Nam, an El Niño is associated with widespread, drier conditions than average. In 2018, much of the region has already experienced El Niño-like conditions during the growing season, and although an El Niño has not been declared yet, current conditions on the ground lend credence to the forecasts.

An El Niño event is projected to peak in January-February 2019 and have the greatest impact on the growing seasons of Indonesia, Philippines, and Viet Nam. Under their Country Strategic Plans (CSPs), WFP Indonesia and Philippines are providing analytical support for climate risks and are strengthening national data systems, therefore enhancing preparedness for El Niño. In Viet Nam, however, WFP's analytical and monitoring support is more limited. WFP has operated under an alternative presence model – that is, without an operational presence or CSP but with analytical support from the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific. Additional resources are being sought to scale-up WFP's analytical capacity in Viet Nam.

In 2018, WFP carried out a CLEAR (Consolidated Exercise for Analyzing Resilience) assessment in Viet Nam at the request of the Government of Viet Nam. CLEAR Viet Nam

cc:
Regional Director, [Regional Bureau],
Chief, OMEP
Director, OSZ
Chief, RMBP
Chief, RMBB

examined the resilience of communities to climate shocks and climate change and improved the granularity of livelihood zone mapping. In particular, it identified pockets of northern areas where singular, climate vulnerable livelihood zones were predominant. It also improved the mapping of livelihood zones of the Mekong River Delta, Southern Central and Central Highlands Regions, which are periodically affected by drought during El Niño and are considered the most climate vulnerable regions of the country. In 2016, an El Niño drought particularly affected these regions and resulted in an estimated USD 10.5 million loss in paddy rice.

The purpose of the IR-PREP is to strengthen WFP's analytical capacity in Viet Nam to support the Government with the following deliverables:

1)   *Livelihoods monitoring and risk forecasting for El Niño 2018-2019*

The Government has capacity in place to monitor drought and saltwater intrusion, two dynamics associated with El Niño. However, there is scope to strengthen the capacity to monitor the most climate-sensitive populations through a livelihoods approach. Building off the livelihoods mapping of the CLEAR, WFP will analyze the potential effects of El Niño on the least climate resilient communities in Viet Nam, particularly in the Mekong River Delta and northern upland paddy areas. This livelihoods-based analysis would contribute to the predictive analytics work that is being carried out by the Government and UN partners.

Recovery assistance and resilience planning is becoming an increasing priority for the Government. Relief action, and the repair of roads, bridges, schools, upgrading of river control and irrigation systems is important, but this needs to be complemented by more effective and targeted support to those most impacted by the disaster- with an emphasis on reaching poor and marginalized groups. Therefore, UN partners have been working with the Government on predictive analytics to determine how vulnerable populations would be impacted by potential disasters. WFP´s additional livelihoods monitoring would help the Government and partners determine who would be most vulnerable to an El Niño induced drought

Using the livelihoods monitoring for El Niño, WFP and partners will recommend adaptation strategies to these vulnerable communities during the drought period and potential resources that they could access to increase their climate resilience. This initiative would synthesize the CLEAR data with other data to improve vulnerability indexing collected by CIAT (International Center for Tropical Agriculture - Asia) to enhance El Niño risk forecasting.

2)   *Advocacy for climate change adaptation policy*

CLEAR Viet Nam showed that communities require assistance to transition from traditional subsistence practices to climate-resilient livelihoods. WFP may contribute to this transition by continuing to monitor the most vulnerable populations and advocating that climate adaptation policies and interventions be catered to improve their wellbeing. In 2019, the Government is continuing to prepare national and local climate change adaptation plans. WFP is well-positioned to contribute to these policies with the livelihood zone mapping and climate analysis that were produced in the CLEAR. WFP and partners will build off previous CLEAR analysis to make climate change adaptation recommendations at the national and local levels.

3)   *Strengthening national data collection; exploring feasibility for PRISM*

The humanitarian-development community in Viet Nam has expressed that the main information gap in-country is consolidating existing vulnerability data from numerous studies of poverty, nutrition, food security, etc. WFP would organize a workshop to bring UN and government partners together to consolidate data for the Government. WFP would also explore a potential Platform for Real-time Impact Situation Monitoring (PRISM) to fuse satellite data with population, community and household survey data. PRISM would host the consolidated vulnerability data from partners in an online system and would be used to disseminate early warning to at-risk populations.

IRA AMOUNT REQUESTED: USD 145,234

The request for IRA funds has two main objectives: 1) monitoring support for the 2018-2019 El Niño drought; and 2) seed funding for WFP to support the Government strengthen national data collection.

DURATION OF THE ACTIVITY: 01 February 2019 – 30 April 2019

JUSTIFICATION:

Investing in monitoring and analytical support in Viet Nam would provide multiple benefits. First, it would help to ensure WFP's continuous and holistic commitment to preparedness for El Niño in the region, supplementing the existing monitoring support that is being provided through CSPs for Indonesia and Philippines.

Second, WFP would continue the analytical support and policy advocacy that began with the CLEAR. WFP would leverage the livelihood zoning and resilience analysis from the CLEAR for use in the Government's national and local climate change adaptation plans. WFP would build off existing working relationships with government agencies (MARD, VIFEP and IMHEN) to contribute further to climate resilience analysis.

Third, WFP would collect and analyze data that the Government and partners require to achieve Zero Hunger. Despite Viet Nam's strong and recent economic growth, chronic poverty and malnutrition are still a reality in some provinces. Eradicating all forms of hunger is within reach, but only if interventions are evidence-based. WFP can contribute evidence-generation in Viet Nam, specifically through improved monitoring of the El Niño, but also by strengthening data collection for food security and nutrition.

WFP does not have an operational presence in Viet Nam or a CSP but has provided analytical support for climate change adaptation through the CLEAR assessment. This project would be implemented through a continuation of WFP's alternative presence model in the country. WFP is employing this model in Papua New Guinea, where it is successfully implementing a partnership project that uses digital technology and mobile phone surveys to assess and track the food security and humanitarian situation in rural areas. WFP also uses this model in Mongolia, where IR-PREP funds are supporting the Government with their national data systems and vulnerability analysis. Investing in WFP's analytical capacity in Viet Nam would help to strengthen WFP's position as a partner for data preparedness and monitoring in the Asia-Pacific region.