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SPR Reading Guidance



**Special Preparedness Activity in Paraguay to improve its
preparedness and response Capacity**
Standard Project Report 2016

World Food Programme in Paraguay, Republic of (PY)



World Food Programme

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Country Context and WFP Objectives



Country Context

With nearly 7 million people, Paraguay is a land locked, low middle income country with a per capita gross national income (GNI) of USD 4,010 (World Bank, 2014). Despite growing at an average rate of 5 percent in the last ten years, in 2015 the growth of the Paraguayan economy declined to about 3 percent, due to the reduction in the commodity prices and the effects of climatic shocks (World Bank 2016). However the sustained economic growth of the past decade helped reducing the levels of poverty and the proportion of people who live on less than USD 4 per day fell from 32.5 to 18.8 percent (World Bank 2016).

According to data from the National Institute for Food and Nutrition (2014), the overall prevalence of malnutrition is 5.4 percent, while 12.9 percent of children under five years and 28 percent of pregnant women are chronically malnourished. There is a high proportion of children with a low birth weight.

Paraguayan agriculture is highly vulnerable to climate variability, coupled with problems of land degradation. The El Niño phenomenon has impacted Paraguay's economy, which is largely based on agriculture, and strongly affected the livelihoods of vulnerable families in rural areas. Recurring floods of the Paraguay and Parana rivers led to severe damages to the assets. In 2014, 134,000 people were affected by floods, whereas in 2016, this figure rose up to 166,200 (Secretary of National Emergency, 2016).

Response of the Government and Strategic Coordination

In response to the economic and social challenges faced by the country, the Government prepared its first National Development Plan for 2014-2030 around three pillars: poverty reduction and social development; inclusive economic growth; and inclusion of Paraguay in global markets.

Over the last few years, the Government enhanced its social protection policies. It strengthened cash transfer programmes for families living in extreme poverty, and set up specific programmes for vulnerable people. Law 5210 on "School Meals and Sanitary Control" was approved in 2014 and set a basis for improving the provision of healthy food for children attending school. In 2016, the Ministry of Education and Culture drew attention to the critical situation of children in the poorest departments of the country, where no school meals are provided. The Government responded by distributing basic food kits to more than 70,000 families in the framework of its national programme "Sembrando Oportunidades" (sowing opportunities).

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework – UNDAF (2014-2019) was developed in accordance with the National Development Plan for 2030. The UNDAF defines three strategic areas (economic, social and cultural rights), within which the enhancement of food security and nutrition and access to safe water and basic sanitation are foreseen. Its implementation is supported by ongoing dialogue and joint agreements between the Government and the United Nations agencies.

In order to achieve expected results in priority areas, WFP developed strategic alliances with other UN agencies in the country. In 2016, WFP implemented joint programmes with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Pan American Health Organization - World Health Organization (PAHO-WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (USD 1.5 million) allowed for the implementation of a project in the Paraguayan Chaco jointly with UNDP (lead agency) and PAHO-WHO. The objective was to improve the living conditions of vulnerable populations (specifically indigenous communities) through four areas of work: primary health care, improved food and nutrition security, risk management and adaptation to climate change, and livelihood protection. WFP strengthened the government school meals programme run by Ministry of Education as well as the Comprehensive Nutritional Food Programme (PANI) run by the National Food and Nutrition Institute. It also provided food assistance for assets, focusing on rehabilitating water systems and livelihoods.

Through the Fund for Sustainable Development Goals, the Spanish Cooperation for International Development Agency (AECID) financed a joint programme to improve food security and nutrition in three departments of Paraguay (Caazapa, Caaguazu and Presidente Hayes). With a budget of USD 1.5 million, the project is implemented jointly with PAHO-WHO (lead agency), UNICEF and FAO. WFP carried out a set of activities in order to improve family food production with emphasis on risk management and adaptation to climate change.

The Department of Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection of the European Union (DIP-ECHO), financed two "Plans of Action" (2015-2016 and 2016-2017). WFP, under the leadership of UNDP, implemented activities to strengthen emergency response capacities of the Government in logistics.

South-South cooperation has been an important support to the Government to reach its social and economic goals. Chile, Argentina, Colombia, and Brazil have been valuable partners for institutional strengthening, for the advancement of social protection policies, for the improvement of the agricultural sector and the investment in food security and nutrition related research.

Summary of WFP Operational Objectives

In 2014, WFP formulated a draft Country Strategy Document (CSD) in which potential support areas were identified and prioritized, including: (i) vulnerability analysis mapping and targeting; (ii) improvement of national food-based safety-nets such as school meals and complementary feeding; and (iii) emergency preparedness and response.

In 2016, WFP operated through four trust funds: two to strengthen the National Secretariat for Emergencies (SEN – the risk management authority in Paraguay) and the others to improve indigenous population's livelihoods and assist children under five years old. These operations are in line with WFP Strategic Objectives 1, 3 and 4.

In 2016 WFP implemented the following projects:

Human Security Project: Joint Programme (UNDP, PAHO-WHO) with a total budget of 1,500,000 USD (444,000 USD for WFP) from October 2014 to June 2017.

The project aimed at vulnerable households in the Chaco region and included a WFP food security component to reinforce the national school feeding programme.

Food and Nutrition Project: Joint Programme (PAHO-WHO, FAO, UNICEF), with a budget of 1,500,000 USD (300,000 USD for WFP), for a duration of 24 months (April 2015 to March 2017).

This joint programme aimed at protecting the right to food in rural Paraguay by encouraging local food production.

Disaster Preparedness ECHO programme (DIPECHO) IX: implemented with UNDP, with a budget 290,000 USD for a duration of 18 months (June 2015 to December 2016) and **DIPECHO X:** implemented with UNDP, with a budget of 112,000 USD for a duration of 18 months (April 2016 to September 2017). The DIPECHO programme aimed at strengthening the capacity of local and national governments for emergency preparedness and response, especially in logistics.

IR Emergency preparedness activity 200918: 51,788 USD, duration: 3 months (From November 2015 to January 2016, extension to February 2016). This project aimed at strengthening the capacities of the National Secretariat for Emergencies to gather geo-referenced data on shock- affected people and at enhancing WFP Paraguay's emergency preparedness capacities.

IR EMOP 200937: 1,470,624 USD, duration: 3 months (From February 2016 to May 2016, extension to June 2016). The objective of this operation was to protect lives and livelihoods while enabling safe access to food for flood-affected households.

Country Resources and Results

Resources for Results

The emergency operations IR EMOP 200937 and IR PREP 200918 were both financed with funds from WFP's internal Immediate Response Account (IRA).

Despite efforts by WFP, United Nations agencies and governmental entities, it was not possible to establish a joint national strategy with the Government that could guarantee the sustainability of programmes.

However, given the existing levels of food insecurity and the negative effects of climate change on livelihoods, WFP will continue consultations with the Government on possible joint interventions to strengthen social programs, reduce poverty and combat food insecurity.

WFP does not have an office in Paraguay, and relies on few local staff. All activities are coordinated by the Bolivia country office.

Achievements at Country Level

In 2016 WFP reached more than 29,000 beneficiaries through the emergency response to flood-affected families in Paraguay. Monitoring evidence shows that the operation has been instrumental to achieve food security for flood-affected beneficiaries. Cash transfers through a mobile network enabled beneficiaries to immediately purchase foods to cover their needs. The cash transfer also allowed beneficiaries to select the most needed products according to their dietary preferences, including fresh food, such as meat, eggs, fruits and vegetables.

Under the Human Security Project, activities were coordinated with UNDP and focused on strengthening government programmes to tackle malnutrition and improve food security of vulnerable populations. WFP developed a manioc and corn starch-based supplement for fortified milk in collaboration with the National Institute of Food and Nutrition of the Ministry of Health. The supplement will be distributed in three departments of the country to beneficiaries of PANI (Comprehensive Nutritional Food Programme), namely children aged 6 to 59 months and pregnant women who are malnourished or at risk of malnourishment. The supplement will be added to the fortified milk provided by the PANI, with the goal of quickly enhancing the nutrition status of beneficiaries.

Through IR EMOP 200937, WFP provided effective assistance to people affected by the floods, ensuring their food security. The use of the cash-based transfers was very well received by beneficiaries, as confirmed by the results of the post distribution monitoring exercise. The operation also strengthened the relationship with the National Secretariat for Emergencies (SEN).

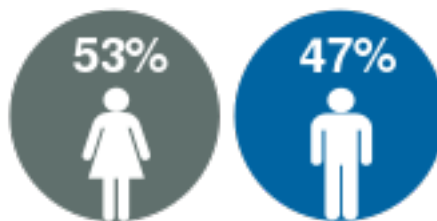
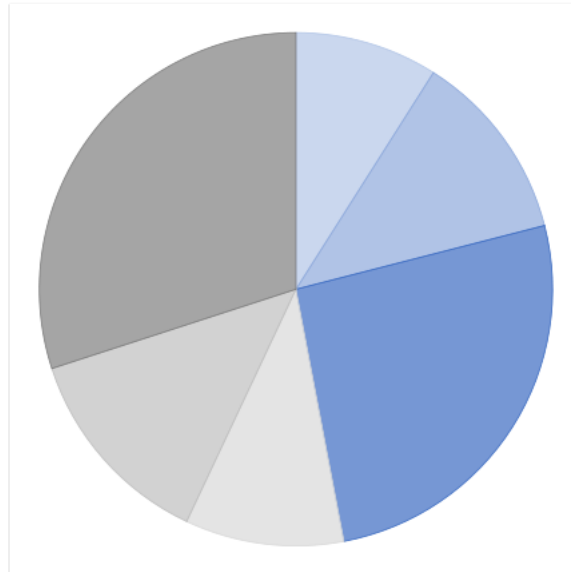


Annual Country Beneficiaries

Beneficiaries	Male	Female	Total
Children (under 5 years)	2,632	2,924	5,556
Children (5-18 years)	3,510	3,802	7,312
Adults (18 years plus)	7,604	8,773	16,377
Total number of beneficiaries in 2016	13,746	15,499	29,245

Country Beneficiaries by Gender and Age

- Children (under 5 years)
- Children (5-18 years)
- Adults (18 years plus)
- Children (under 5 years)
- Children (5-18 years)
- Adults (18 years plus)



Cash Based Transfer and Commodity Voucher Distribution (USD)

Project Type	Cash	Value Voucher	Commodity Voucher
Single Country IR-EMOP	970,366	-	-
Total Distributed in 2016	970,366	-	-

Supply Chain

WFP Bolivia country office is responsible for procurement processes on behalf of operations in Paraguay, specifically for the purchase of local foods (rice, flour and oil) and non-food items. In line with WFP policies and following competitive processes, food was purchased locally, to respect traditional food habits and products to the extent possible. These purchases are made using trust fund resources and therefore don't appear in the below

tables.

At the end of 2016, WFP purchased an energy supplement formulated by WFP and the National Food and Nutrition Institute - INAN). The distribution of this commodity will take place at the beginning of 2017.

The National Secretariat for Emergencies was in charge of food transportation. WFP-purchased food was stored in government warehouses in Asuncion and Chaco and distributed to communities under WFP coordination.

Finally, for the distribution of cash-based transfers, WFP established a partnership with a local mobile operator, for the distribution of cards that allowed the transfer of electronic money to beneficiaries through their mobile phones.

Implementation of Evaluation Recommendations and Lessons Learned

Key lessons learned emerged from the post distribution monitoring (PDM) exercise carried out in 2016 under IR EMOP 200937. Evidence suggests that cash-based transfers are preferred by beneficiaries as compared to in-kind distribution. Also, despite government fears of misuse of the assistance, monitoring showed that beneficiaries mainly spent the vouchers on food, hygiene and school supplies. In addition, improvements in the indicators on food consumption, livelihood coping strategies and food expenditure share, highlighted the positive impact of the intervention on food security.

Capacity Strenghtening

In 2016, WFP carried out a number of training sessions to strengthen the capacity National Secretariat for Emergencies (SEN) in key areas, such as management and administration of warehouses, supply chain, and coordination in emergency and logistics planning. As a result, the SEN logistics unit improved operational management and was able to respond more effectively and efficiently to emergencies. Thanks to WFP support, it also optimized its logistics coordination with other institutions and organizations (mainly the Armed Forces).

Institutional capacity strengthening activities were conducted with the support of WFP logistics experts from Central America who participated in the emergency operations in Paraguay, shared experiences from their countries and adapted them to the Paraguayan context.

Project Objectives and Results

Project Objectives

Faced with forecasts of a strong El Niño phenomenon, that could impact vulnerable areas of the country, the Government of Paraguay through the National Secretariat for Emergencies (SEN), started emergency preparedness activities in collaboration with its humanitarian partners. The SEN requested WFP to develop a multi-sectorial contingency plan. This project aimed at strengthening emergency preparedness capacities of WFP Paraguay in view of a possible response using CBT and that of the SEN to gather geo-referenced data on shock-affected populations.



Approved Budget for Project Duration (USD)

Cost Category	
Capacity Dev.t and Augmentation	23,300
Direct Support Costs	25,100
Indirect Support Costs	3,388
Total	51,788

Project Activities

In order to strengthen emergency response capacity in Paraguay, WFP carried out a supply chain, a financial service provider and an emergency food security assessment in preparation for a possible emergency response using cash-based transfers (CBT).

WFP facilitated a survey of flood-affected families in northern and southern Asunción which enriched available data for the emergency response. In addition, WFP provided technical equipment to the SEN situation room, in order to allow for the geo-referencing and mapping of population data.

Operational Partnerships

WFP implemented the emergency preparedness project jointly with the municipal authorities of the city of Asuncion and the National Secretariat for Emergencies.

Results/Outcomes

WFP conducted three assessments to facilitate rapid interventions relying on cash-based transfers. The results of the assessments allowed to define intervention modality of IR EMOP 200937 “Emergency Response to flood-affected families in Paraguay”, which was implemented after this intervention and provided information for other future WFP emergency response using CBT.

The National Secretariat for Emergencies and the municipality of Asunción provided enumerators to carry out the Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA). The EFSA collected information on the vulnerability and food security of flood-affected families, with a focus on the North of Asuncion. The assessment results pointed to a high level of vulnerability due the impact of floods on their livelihoods. The supply chain assessment identified retailers that could supply necessary food commodities in case of assistance provided using CBT. The assessment recommended that supermarkets are best placed to cover the increased demand by beneficiaries. The financial assessment identified the telephone companies that could offer cash transfer service to beneficiaries, while fulfilling

security parameters on money transfers.

WFP strengthened government capacities by providing equipment and jointly carrying out a survey in northern and southern Asunción that collected household level information, including socio-demographic data, livelihood conditions, health, water and sanitation, shelter, among others. Government counterparts were trained on the survey methodology to be used to inform future emergency response.

Progress Towards Gender Equality

The EFSA results indicated that household resources, including money, are often managed by women. In addition, focus group discussions confirmed that women prefer to be the primary recipients of cash transfer in order to ensure the food security of their families. Therefore, it was recommended that women be the entitlement holder in case of a response using CBT.

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

Main photo:

Caption. WFP staff reviewing the impact of the floods in Asunción, Paraguay © WFP/ Miriam Riveros (Municipality of Asunción)

Project Indicators

Output Indicators

Output	Unit	Planned	Actual	% Actual vs. Planned
SO1: Capacity Development - Emergency Preparedness				
Number of technical assistance activities provided	activity	1	1	100.0%
Number of technical assistance projects conducted by WFP to strengthen the national capacity	project	3	3	100.0%