Situation Update

• A 7.5 magnitude earthquake struck the Highlands region on 26 February, which destroyed or damaged homes, roads, and food gardens in the affected areas.

• WFP’s remote mobile assessment in December showed that 37 percent of the population in affected areas were already severely food-insecure before the earthquake.

• The Government declared a state of emergency in earthquake-affected areas in Hela, Southern Highlands, Western and Enga provinces, and announced PGK 450 million (~USD 142 million) for relief and service restoration operations over the next three years.

• In April, the Papua New Guinea Food Security & Livelihoods Monitoring System reported that households in 9 of 31 Local Level Government areas (LLGs) included in the assessment experienced high or extreme food shortages, with the destruction of food gardens in these areas removing the main livelihood and food supply source for the majority of people. The full report can be accessed at https://tinyurl.com/y7a4vgzd.

• Humanitarian access to Tari, an area close to the epicentre of the earthquake, is restricted due to security concerns. There have been some reports that while the earthquake and aftershocks impacted infrastructure and shelter in this area, the food security situation has not been as affected.

WFP Response

• As WFP does not have a permanent presence in Papua New Guinea, WFP initiated its first limited emergency operation, in line with WFP’s new global organizational framework.

• WFP is providing food assistance to the most vulnerable populations affected by the earthquake. WFP has also responded to a government request for humanitarian coordination support by deploying logistics coordinators,
information management staff-members, and a food security cluster co-lead to augment the government’s earthquake response.

Food and Nutrition Assistance

• On 13 April, WFP began food distributions of rice and micronutrient fortified high-energy biscuits, distributed alongside canned tuna provided by the Government of Papua New Guinea. In total, WFP is planning to reach 38,000 of the most food-insecure population, including internally displaced persons residing in four care centres in Southern Highlands Province, and those residing in isolated, remote communities across Southern Highlands, Hela and Western provinces.

• Due to the widespread damage and nature of food insecurity, WFP is providing blanket assistance in targeted earthquake-affected areas to ensure the most vulnerable receive assistance. WFP works closely with the National Disaster Centre and the Office of the Emergency Controller to ensure targeting covers those with the greatest needs.

• Food is needed in remote communities that lost their fields and homes in landslides, to stabilize the situation and allow them to focus on rebuilding their livelihoods.

Supply Chain

• The earthquake-affected communities WFP is assisting are remote, mountainous and isolated, with minimal government presence, limited basic services and poor road access.

• Even before the earthquake, the logistics infrastructure of the operation was challenging. The road from Mendi to Moro was accessible only via small 4x4 vehicles. After the earthquake, the road was completely cut-off due to landslides.

• WFP has so far purchased 184 mt of rice and 83 mt of high-energy biscuits for this operation. Distributions have been completed in Mendi theatre, which serviced four care centres in the Southern Highlands Province. Distributions are ongoing in Moro theatre, which services Hela, Southern Highlands and Western provinces, including the Tari area, if accessible.

Protection

• Vulnerable individuals—persons with disabilities, elderly persons, pregnant and nursing women, households headed by women—are prioritized during food distribution and, where possible, are first to receive their rations. Volunteer porters are selected in consultation with community leaders to support vulnerable individuals to carry food from the distribution site.

Clusters and Common Services

Food Security Cluster

• Priority response activities of the cluster include distributing food and providing farming supplies, seeds, planting materials, and trainings for farmers and households.

• In general, earthquake-displaced people report that they want to move back to their villages but need early maturing crop seeds and planting materials and tools to restart their gardens.

Logistics Working Group

• As of 21 May, the Logistics Working Group facilitated the handling, storage and transport of 383 mt of humanitarian relief items.

• The Logistics Working Group continues to support requests through the established Requests for Assistance (RFA) mechanism. Information products from the Logistics Working Group can be found at: Logistics Working Group PNG.

• The Logistics Working Group is coordinating an in-kind donation of 32 flight hours from Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) for use over a six week period in Hela Province and other affected provinces by the humanitarian community.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WFP Operation</th>
<th>Total Requirements (in USD)</th>
<th>Total Received (in USD)</th>
<th>Net Funding Requirements (in USD)</th>
<th>People Assisted (13 April-20 May 2018)</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
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<tr>
<td>Limited Emergency Operation TOTAL (20 March-19 July)</td>
<td>21.6 m</td>
<td>3.7 m</td>
<td>0.62 m</td>
<td>21,770</td>
<td>10,450</td>
<td>11,320</td>
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