



**Executive Board
Annual Session**

Rome, 4–8 June 2007

SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF THE ANNUAL SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, 2007

In accordance with the methods of work of the Executive Board, the present document reflects the main points of its deliberations to be taken into account by the Secretariat in the implementation of the Board's decisions and recommendations, contained in the document WFP/EB.A/2007/15.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CURRENT AND FUTURE STRATEGIC ISSUES	
2007/EB.A/1 Strategic Statement by the Executive Director	1
ANNUAL REPORTS	
2007/EB.A/2 Annual Performance Report for 2006	3
POLICY ISSUES	
2007/EB.A/3 Progress Report on the Implementation of the Management Response to the External Evaluation of WFP's Enabling Development Policy	4
RESOURCE, FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS	
2007/EB.A/4 Fourth Progress Report on the Implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards	5
2007/EB.A/5 Funding of Employee Termination Payments	5
2007/EB.A/6 Update on the WFP Management Plan (2006–2007)	6
2007/EB.A/7 Costs and Benefits of New Initiatives in Profile Raising – Report by the External Auditor	6
2007/EB.A/8 Progress Report on the Implementation of the External Auditor's Recommendations	7
2007/EB.A/9 Annual Accounts (2006) — Part I and Part II	8
2007/EB.A/10 Update on Capacity-Building (Strategic Objective 5)	9
EVALUATION REPORTS	
2007/EB.A/11 Summary Report of the Thematic Evaluation of School Feeding in Emergency Situations	10
EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO	
2007/EB.A/12 Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations — Democratic Republic of the Congo 10608.0	11
2007/EB.A/13 Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations — Kenya 10258.2	11
ASIA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO	
2007/EB.A/14 Summary Report of the Evaluation of PRRO Indonesia 10069.1	13
2007/EB.A/15 Draft Country Programme — India 10573.0 (2008–2012)	13
2007/EB.A/16 Development Project — Bhutan 10579.0	13
2007/EB.A/17 Development Project — Cambodia 10170.2	13
2007/EB.A/18 Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations — Indonesia 10069.2	13



SUDAN REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

2007/EB.A/19	Report of the WFP Executive Board Bureau Members on their Visit to the Sudan	14
---------------------	---	-----------

SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

2007/EB.A/20	Summary Report of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Southern Africa Regional PRRO 10310.0	15
2007/EB.A/21	Development Project — Malawi 10581.0	15
2007/EB.A/22	Report of the WFP Executive Board Members on their Visit to Malawi and Zambia	15

WEST AFRICA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

2007/EB.A/23	Draft Country Programme — Cameroon 10530.0 (2008–2012)	17
2007/EB.A/24	Draft Country Programme — Mali 10583.0 (2008–2012)	17
2007/EB.A/25	Draft Country Programme — Sierra Leone 10584.0 (2008–2010)	17
2007/EB.A/26	Report of the Joint Field Visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP to Liberia	17

MIDDLE EAST, CENTRAL ASIA AND EASTERN EUROPE REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

2007/EB.A/27	Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations — Occupied Palestinian Territory 10387.1	18
---------------------	---	-----------

REGIONAL PRESENTATION: LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN 19**ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

2007/EB.A/28	Cooperation among the United Nations Rome-Based Agencies	20
---------------------	---	-----------

ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGERIAL MATTERS

2007/EB.A/29	Report on Post-Delivery Losses for the Period 1 January – 31 December 2006	21
2007/EB.A/30	Statistical Report on WFP International Professional Staff and Higher Categories	22

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT 23

CURRENT AND FUTURE STRATEGIC ISSUES

Strategic Statement by the Executive Director (2007/EB.A/1)

1. The President welcomed Board members and the new WFP Executive Director, who acknowledged the work of her predecessor and welcomed the representatives of the other Rome-based agencies and members of the Board. The Executive Director then presented her strategic statement, stressing the importance of best practices in partnerships, governance and management. She paid tribute to WFP staff, especially in view of the dangers they faced in the field. She drew attention to the proximity of the target year for meeting the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halving hunger. The Executive Director acknowledged the role of Member States as owners, donors and beneficiaries and noted that strategies would have to be adjusted to meet the challenges of an evolving operating environment: climate change, rising food and fuel prices, declining global food surpluses and the development of biofuels were all factors.
2. The Executive Director stressed the importance of partnerships with the other Rome-based agencies and of WFP's participation in the United Nations "Delivering as One" initiative. She drew attention to the effectiveness of the Humanitarian Response Depots (UNHRDs), the beneficial effects of local purchases on small-scale farmers, the role of food safety nets and the impact of HIV/AIDS on food security. She made special mention of WFP's successes, for example reducing malnutrition in the Sudan, and drew attention to the increased number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in Somalia and to WFP's work in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Ethiopia, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe. She noted that hunger could be a cause and a consequence of conflict.
3. There was a need to create bridges between emergency humanitarian assistance and long-term development. The Executive Director encouraged use of the term "handovers" rather than "exit strategies" to emphasize WFP's interest in creating local capacity to deal with hunger; the WFP "toolbox" for breaking the cycle of hunger would be developed, and greater transparency and accountability in WFP would be sought. All these issues would be considered in the context of the strategic planning process.
4. The President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) spoke of the challenges of poverty and hunger, citing population growth and a growing middle class as factors in the need for increased cereal and meat production. He recognized the need for the United Nations to work collectively, citing the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) objective of convergence at field level and encouraged the twin-track approach of feeding the hungry and supporting sustainable agriculture. The Deputy Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) reiterated the importance of improving the partnership between the three Rome-based United Nations agencies: it was being expanded in terms of cooperation, policy-making, investment and emergency response but needed to become more effective in addressing hunger.
5. The Director General of the European Commission Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) stressed the importance of consultation with regard to the management planning process and of prompt, thorough needs analyses. He expressed support for the Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity (SENAC) initiative, logistics coordination and improved food security analysis, and encouraged WFP to establish strong



partnerships from the beginning of interventions. He recognized the value of untied cash contributions and of local and regional purchasing.

6. In response, members of the Board unanimously welcomed the new Executive Director, congratulated her on her remarks and applauded her decision to visit operations in the field as a first priority.
7. Members of the Board expressed concern about the effects of conflict, climate change, decreased food surplus and increased prices, especially as related to the development of biofuels. They encouraged WFP to emphasize risk reduction, disaster prevention and early warning. Concern was expressed that hunger had not been reduced.
8. Board members emphasized the importance of gender mainstreaming and improving women's participation at all points in the food distribution chain. They called for increased work towards the MDGs affecting women and drew attention to the importance of protection on the ground. They applauded WFP's school feeding programmes, emphasizing the benefits for girls.
9. Increased coordination among the Rome-based agencies was encouraged: they should work transparently to ensure that resources reached the needy. Board members called for improved coordination at the country level and encouraged partnerships with civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector as a means to bridge the gaps between relief, recovery and development. The Board expressed support for WFP's core capacities in emergency humanitarian response and logistics, but suggested that work could be extended through partnerships. Some members called for increased attention to development.
10. The Board highlighted the importance of clear priorities, transparency and improved oversight to attract increased funding; Board members praised WFP's work on broadening its donor base, encouraging it to seek multi-year, unrestricted funding. Some Board members cautioned, however, that financial constraints called for a clear focus and increased efficiency: prudence in setting budgets was needed. WFP was encouraged to take geographic representation into account in recruitment. Some Board members encouraged local hiring and questioned the need for permanent staff in some functional areas.
11. Several Board members stressed the importance of improved needs assessment and food-security analysis leading to improved targeting. There were repeated calls for local procurement as a lever for development, and for investments through food for work (FFW) and food for education (FFE) where conditions allowed. WFP was called on to support purchases from small farmers, and the need for technical assistance was stressed. Board members emphasized the importance of building national capacity to prevent crises, make handovers possible and improve transitions from relief to development.
12. In response, the Executive Director acknowledged the growing economic potential of new sources of funds and skills such as Brazil, China, India and the Russian Federation. She expressed her recognition of the importance of the role of women as recipients of aid and as farmers and of the effectiveness of strategies such as take-home rations for girls and ration cards in the names of women; she called for special efforts to build the capacity of women to enable them to participate in markets.
13. The Executive Director recognized the difficulties in distinguishing between relief and development in complex situations: the need was to identify core principles and the right tools for each setting. WFP was finding it necessary to help countries to develop new capacities such as de-mining and road building so that handovers could be achieved – but lack of experienced operators with field presence was often a constraint. It was important



to identify the actors to whom handovers could be made when government partners were not available. Attention should be given to the sustainability of development work, which involved reinforcing local institutions and building local capacity. Further investment in disaster preparedness would be considered. The Executive Director noted that saving money was a means of reaching more people with the right interventions, but cautioned that local procurement was not a panacea in that markets and communities could not always absorb large local purchases; internal regional costs could be higher than shipping in from outside. The emerging market for grain crops for biofuels could be an opportunity for poor farmers.

14. The Executive Director recognized the need for a collegiate, constructive approach to governance issues and evaluation, and pledged to work for diversity in WFP's staff with a view to encouraging leaders with a variety of perspectives. The Executive Director concluded by recognizing the importance of sustainable recovery to help people to feed themselves and, above all, to maintain human dignity.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Annual Performance Report for 2006 (2007/EB.A/2)

15. The Secretariat presented the 2006 Annual Performance Report (APR) as a major accountability and management tool that identified progress in building on strengths and addressed weaknesses, and that provided evidence that food made a difference in the lives of food-insecure people and those affected by crises. The APR highlighted WFP's commitment to achieving the MDGs and to ending hunger.
16. The Board approved the 2006 APR, commending the improvements in structure, clarity and content. Board members commented on the usefulness of the document for strategic planning, policy development and management and stressed that the lessons and analysis in the report would be instrumental in developing the Strategic Plan and Management Plan for the next biennium. Board members were particularly concerned about the declining proportion of multilateral donations, the continuing dependence on the top ten donors and the proportion of food in WFP's cost structure.
17. The Board noted the operational challenges of 2006, in particular those related to the complexity of operations in the Sudan, WFP's largest emergency operation, and in Lebanon, WFP's only corporate emergency in 2006. Board members noted that the emphasis on lessons and learning was well placed and that the Secretariat would need to apply these lessons in future. Board members expressed appreciation of the Advance Funding Analysis and the openness with which WFP discussed gender trends. The Board re-emphasized the importance of working in partnership, which was a clear message in the 2006 APR, highlighting United Nations reform and WFP's continued contribution to it. Board members expressed interest in assessing the performance of the clusters. Some Board members asked for clarification as to how WFP results were aligned with the MDGs and called for the results to be more fully discussed in the APR.

18. Board members were of the view that the report was a substantial improvement over its predecessor, but called for continued progress in setting indicators and targets and measuring outcomes. The Board noted the need for improved monitoring and continued progress in results-based management (RBM); the inclusion of more trend analyses and efficiency indicators would be appreciated. Some members called in particular for indicators that measured the effectiveness of partnerships and asked the Secretariat to provide more detail as to ways in which WFP activities were aligned with the MDGs. The Board also asked that food aid and inputs be assessed in terms of quality.
19. In response, the Secretariat emphasized that WFP outputs were aligned with the MDGs; WFP's contribution in 2006 had been particularly important in support of MDG 1. The Secretariat also stressed that WFP was working to improve indicators and the setting of targets. Evaluation recommendations would continue to be integrated throughout the APR, but they would be contained in a separate document submitted to the Board addressing the year's evaluations and recommendations. The Secretariat reiterated commitment to partnerships and to working to ensure that food assistance was part of a package.

POLICY ISSUES

Progress Report on the Implementation of the Management Response to the External Evaluation of WFP's Enabling Development Policy (2007/EB.A/3)

20. In presenting the progress report, the Secretariat observed that WFP had made considerable progress in implementing the management response to the recommendations of the external evaluation of WFP's Enabling Development Policy (EDP). The EDP had re-focused development assistance to five priority areas where food assistance was most relevant; measures had been implemented to improve the quality of WFP's development interventions. The external evaluation had identified areas where further improvements would enhance the comparative advantage and relevance of WFP development activities, which were covered in three strategic and four implementation recommendations. Since the management response presented to the Board at its Second Regular Session in 2005, further progress had been made in frameworks and partnerships to address poverty, pro-poor targeting, mainstreaming nutrition, RBM, support for national safety nets and sustainability issues. The Secretariat observed that EDP required a comprehensive set of actions and donor support to realise them, but funding shortfalls had limited progress in EDP and restricted long-term planning; the Secretariat appealed to donors to increase their support for development.
21. The Board endorsed the report, agreeing that it reflected encouraging progress on EDP. One Board member appreciated the progress made in cooperation with multilateral agencies, NGOs and civil society. Several members saw the report as an important input to the new Strategic Plan. The Board acknowledged the challenges and shortcomings, including funding constraints. Some Board members emphasized the importance of focusing development activities on areas where WFP had a comparative advantage, of coordinating with international agencies and of supporting handovers. Board members sought clarification on WFP's strategic approach to EDP, multilateral funding and allocation of resources. Several Board members linked EDP to capacity-building for national institutions and requested further clarification on the links between monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and governments. The Board noted the relevance of WFP's involvement in long-term food security in collaboration with partners.



22. The Secretariat appreciated the Board's constructive comments, many of which would be addressed in the next Strategic Plan. Regarding resource allocation, 90 percent of multilateral development funding went to the 31 concentration countries; half of all resources for development were multilateral; the other half were directed. The secretariat emphasized that government involvement in M&E was central to its interventions, for which WFP provided training and support; M&E systems were needed to support government systems and to ensure accountability to the Board.

RESOURCE, FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

Fourth Progress Report on the Implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards (2007/EB.A/4)

23. The Secretariat presented the document as a further progress report on WFP's transition to International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) – WFP was one of the first United Nations organizations to adopt the system – and described actions in the United Nations and WFP to achieve compliance with IPSAS while addressing harmonization issues. The Secretariat noted that discussions were ongoing with the External Auditor on the matter. The document set out challenges, and the impact of IPSAS implementation on inventories, fixed assets and employee benefits, and proposed an amendment to General Rule XIII.6 to allow contributions in kind to be valued at "fair value" with effect from 1 January 2008. This amendment had been endorsed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the FAO Finance Committee.
24. The Board welcomed the document and expressed appreciation for the work done by the Secretariat on implementing IPSAS. Board members suggested the information be provided to improve awareness of IPSAS with a view to improved governance and oversight. Some members noted that the timelines for introducing IPSAS and WINGS II appeared to be ambitious.
25. The Secretariat explained that the funding of employee benefits under IPSAS might require a transitional approach, which the Board would need to consider. An informal consultation was proposed for the third quarter of 2007. The secretariat would inform the Board at its Second Regular Session of 2007 whether a revision of the WINGS II and IPSAS timelines was necessary.

Funding of Employee Termination Payments (2007/EB.A/5)

26. The Secretariat presented the document on the funding of employee termination payments. The draft decision in the document had been amended to take account of concerns expressed by ACABQ and the FAO Finance Committee; the issue of short-term staff would accordingly be discussed at a later date.



27. Board members sought clarification, at the next regular session if necessary, of the authority under which termination payments had been made to date. Further information was requested on the current practice of termination payments; some members asked whether WFP was setting a precedent on the matter for other agencies. Other members suggested that any future document should explain the practice of applying different staff rules to different categories of staff. The Board hoped that once IPSAS had been implemented, the whole approach to the termination of contracts at WFP would become clearer.
28. The Secretariat took note of the requests for information, which would be supplied when the issue of short-term staff was discussed.

Update on the WFP Management Plan (2006–2007) (2007/EB.A/6)

29. The Secretariat presented the document updating on the WFP Management Plan (2006-2007), noting that two corrigenda had been issued. The draft decision had been amended to take into account the recommendations of the FAO Finance Committee. The Board suggested a further amendment to the draft decision to state that the amount transferred to the WINGS II special account would be reduced for any voluntary contributions received for the project.
30. The Board thanked the Secretariat for the information provided on implementation of the Management Plan and welcomed further updates on the current and future status of the Programme Support and Administration (PSA) Equalization Account, WINGS II implementation and policy on landside transport, storage and handling (LTS). The Board commended the work of the Secretariat to hedge foreign exchange risk, noting that hedging for PSA spending in the next biennium might not be possible before the Board approved the PSA appropriations.
31. The Secretariat agreed to provide regular information on WINGS II implementation, noting that cost savings from the new system could not be quantified at the present time. The Secretariat assured the Board that M&E would be integrated into the new system. The Board and the Secretariat agreed to discuss the expenditure and income predictions for the next biennium at informal consultations.

Costs and Benefits of New Initiatives in Profile Raising – Report by the External Auditor (2007/EB.A/7)

32. The External Auditor presented his report on the costs and benefits of new initiatives in profile raising at WFP.
33. Members of the Board noted that the report confirmed the concerns expressed by the Board at a perceived lack of management planning and analysis with regard to profile raising at WFP and therefore welcomed the External Auditor's recommendations, which Board members endorsed and supported. It was agreed that the recommendations should be fully discussed, in particular in relation to the new Strategic Plan. Concern was also expressed at the fact that Board targets concerning profile raising at WFP had not been fully adhered to; the Board suggested that in future the Secretariat should carry out a thorough cost analysis and risk assessment before embarking on fundraising involving the private sector.



34. The Secretariat informed the Board that the report of the External Auditor had been received too late for it to prepare a management response in time for the meetings of the ACABQ and of the FAO Finance Committee which considered the report of the External Auditor; such response would be submitted to the Second Regular Session of the Executive Board, at which time the Board would be in a position to consider the matter in more detail. WFP envisaged a growing role for new donors to WFP funds as a result of the new initiatives in profile raising. It suggested that a Board decision on a profile raising strategy should be deferred until the new Strategic Plan had been adopted.

Progress Report on the Implementation of the External Auditor's Recommendations (2007/EB.A/8)

35. The Secretariat presented the progress report, noting that 12 of the 29 outstanding audit recommendations had been implemented; those relating to WINGS II could not be completed until WINGS II had been implemented. The Secretariat explained that completed recommendations had been excluded from the current progress report. The External Auditor indicated that he would continue to provide comments on the recommendations designated by the Secretariat as completed.
36. Some Board members commented on the low percentage of implementation, which the Secretariat explained was a result of excluding completed actions on recommendations from the report; had they been included, the percentage of implementation would have been higher. A request was made for a more detailed analysis of the work of the Dubai office; the Secretariat undertook to present the information requested in the next progress report.
37. The External Auditor also delivered an interim oral report on the special audit requested by the Board in relation to WFP's activities in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK):
38. The United Nations Secretary-General had requested a system-wide review to focus on past and current compliance with: the applicable Financial Regulations and Rules; foreign currency transactions; staff hiring; assurance that resources expended in DPRK went to the intended recipients; access to review of local projects and their outputs; and direct payments for projects undertaken by national authorities.
39. The Executive Board had subsequently requested a special external audit of WFP operations in DPRK, emphasizing the need to consult and coordinate with the United Nations Board of Auditors' special audit (requested by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)) of the same issues relating to other United Nations funds and programmes.
40. WFP's external auditors had undertaken to report back to the June 2007 meeting of the Executive Board, as an interim report, orally or in writing.
41. Prior to these issues being raised and the Executive Board's request for a special audit, the external auditors had already visited WFP's country office in DPRK in September 2005, as part of a regular programme of field visits.
42. The 2005 visit to DPRK had examined areas which the external auditors considered to be of significant risk, including financial oversight, compliance with regulations, monitoring of food delivery, staff hiring and payments to other United Nations organizations or to ministries.



- 43. Audit findings at that time included the recording and disclosure of transactions; risks arising from limitations the Government placed on field monitoring activities; and under-reporting of post-delivery losses of food.
- 44. WFP's activities in DPRK had been the subject of reporting to and oversight by the Executive Board in recent years. There had been a significant reduction in operations in DPRK in 2006–2007.
- 45. Following the EB's request for a special audit, the external auditors had updated the audit findings from late 2005, and carried out further work from WFP Headquarters to address more directly the specific concerns raised. The report on the special audit would provide findings and recommendations in relation to the key areas which had been the subject of concern.
- 46. The Board of Auditors had just issued a report to ACABQ and the external auditors would now be able to analyse the Board of Auditors' findings in WFP's context and proceed to the preparation of a written report for the Executive Board.

Annual Accounts (2006) — Part I and Part II (2007/EB.A/9)

- 47. The Secretariat introduced the 2006 Annual Accounts, which comprised two documents: Part I was the Financial Statements and Notes; Part II contained the report of the External Auditor on his review of the Financial Statements, with a focus on progress towards IPSAS. The 2006 Annual Accounts had been prepared through a rigorous process, but no formal audit was currently required.
- 48. The External Auditor presented his report and recommendations, emphasizing that the recommendations were designed to assist the Secretariat in the preparation of financial statements. He stressed the need to maintain management engagement in the IPSAS project in preparation for its adoption in 2008. The External Auditor commended the Secretariat on its presentation of the 2006 accounts and that there was a firm basis for adopting IPSAS.
- 49. The Board commended the Secretariat for its commitment to accountability and for the timely preparation of the 2006 Annual Accounts and welcomed the recommendations of the External Auditor.
- 50. Board members expressed concern about large increases in some cost components and declines in other components, particularly food costs, which could mean that less food was distributed to beneficiaries; with regard to increases in staff salaries, the Board had requested the Secretariat to conduct an analysis and provide a mechanism that would allow WFP to curb increasing costs. The Board commented on the readiness of the Secretariat to adopt IPSAS and noted that changes would be required in the presentation of cash contributions, which constituted a large proportion of income but were labelled as "other contributions".
- 51. The Secretariat explained that the financial statements to be presented at the end of the biennium would be accompanied by additional analysis that would support the biennial accounts; this would include a report by the Executive Director. The Secretariat observed that the decline in food costs in 2006 was a result of the impact of several special operations (SOs) carried out in 2006 and of a large inventory of food from 2005 that had been carried forward into 2006. With respect to the timing of IPSAS implementation, the Secretariat reiterated that it would report to the Board at its 2007 Second Regular Session.



Update on Capacity-Building (Strategic Objective 5) (2007/EB.A/10)

52. In presenting the document, the Secretariat highlighted the two main modes of implementation – support and stand-alone – and summarized WFP expenditures. It was stressed that most Strategic Objective 5 activities had been mainstreamed and that many new country programmes (CPs) had strong Strategic Objective 5 components; work was ongoing to improve programme quality and support in relation to Strategic Objective 5. WFP was a participant in the United Nations working group on capacity development. In the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Bureau (ODP), alliances had been established with regional political entities and technical institutions with a focus on WFP's specialized capacities in issues related to nutrition and hunger. In the Southern Africa regional bureau (ODJ), partnerships had been established with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and national authorities for capacity-building in food-security monitoring, vulnerability analysis and formulation of food-security policy. Since 2006, new CP with technical components in addition to food operations had been developed.
53. Funding for Strategic Objective 5 came from other direct operational costs (ODOC), bilateral donations and trust funds; since 2005, US\$59 million had been spent on capacity-building. WFP had had more success fundraising at the country level than at the central level. Capacity-building took place at three levels: policy and institutional, organizational and individual; WFP invested most in the last two, and was working to address the policy and institutional levels. Capacity-building was particularly important in view of handovers and phasing down of WFP assistance. WFP was using project-specific indicators for capacity-building and was developing corporate indicators.
54. The Board recognized the importance of capacity-building, but asked WFP to provide an evaluation of its work on it and to develop outcome indicators. Questions to be asked during such an evaluation related to whether WFP had a comparative advantage for carrying out capacity-building, and in which situations, the value-added and the experience gained in handing over, the future focus of capacity-building and the costs involved. It was suggested that the purpose of the evaluation be to improve capacity-building and not to question WFP's participation in it.
55. The Board expressed support for mainstreaming capacity-building. Members of the Board appreciated reading about the work done in individual countries; some members suggested that WFP capacity-building was also useful at the beneficiary level. Several Members of the Board suggested that WFP's comparative advantage was in capacity-building for vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM). Board members stressed that WFP should align its work with national and regional structures, institutions and civil society. It was suggested that the term "stand-alone" be avoided because it could lead to misunderstanding about the roles of partners. The Board asked for clarification of the relationship between WFP's VAM system and the FAO Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS).
56. The Secretariat drew attention to the fact that the Board had established capacity-building as a Strategic Objective. WFP focused on practical matters in response to requests from countries to help governments to improve their own effectiveness, which enhanced WFP's impact. Countries were free to request that WFP do capacity-building where WFP was best placed to offer it in relation to operational work: for example in Egypt WFP was recognized among several potential providers as best placed to support the Government in reforming its food subsidy programme. WFP had developed a conceptual framework on capacity-building that was in line with United Nations work on guidelines and tools for developing national capacities; the framework was being tested in ODP and would be used in identifying practical and rigorous corporate indicators.



Capacity-development had emerged as an important theme in poverty-reduction strategies. The Secretariat drew attention to examples of good collaboration with FIVIMS and other systems, and underlined the importance of understanding the relationship between needs and capacity in terms of disaster prevention and response, early warning, emergency food needs and food and nutrition interventions. Ideally each country would in time be able to take care of its own needs, but in the meantime WFP was in a position to share its experience, knowledge and resources, for example in addressing HIV/AIDS. Evaluations should include a long-term view of emergency situations and could suggest tools to address them. There could be flexibility about who provided services as long as capacity was built and was country-driven.

EVALUATION REPORTS

Summary Report of the Thematic Evaluation of School Feeding in Emergency Situations (2007/EB.A/11)

- 57. The Secretariat presented the summary report of the thematic evaluation of emergency school feeding (ESF), prepared in response to the Board's request for more evaluations of WFP's emergency activities. The report and the Board's input would contribute to framing future FFE policy. Attention was drawn to the full technical report, which contained more details than the summary report: in particular it captured the diversity of contexts in which ESF could take place. Assessment of ESF efficiency and measurement of outcomes had proved difficult because of a lack of data and methodological problems.
- 58. Some Board members pointed out that educational systems were disrupted in emergencies, which constrained implementation of ESF; several Board members suggested that WFP should therefore focus on school feeding in non-emergency situations. Board members indicated that WFP needed a clear and coherent policy on ESF that took into account its value-added compared with other emergency activities and clarified the objectives that could be addressed. There was agreement that ESF would have to be designed to respond to locally assessed needs and that its nutritional benefits were most important in areas facing acute food insecurity. More emphasis should be given to nutrition, especially where HIV/AIDS was prevalent; WFP should demonstrate the linkages between school feeding and improved nutrition. For many members, the most compelling argument in support of ESF was the need to meet children's psycho-social needs: in this context, more attention should be given to the views of communities, parents and children. Community institutions and government partners should be given a greater role in implementing ESF and in the transition to ongoing school feeding. Some members of the Board felt that two distinct sets of guidelines were required for ESF and non-emergency school feeding and that all ESF actions should be limited in time, adequately resourced from the outset and adequately monitored; others argued that it was not essential to distinguish between emergency and non-emergency school feeding. Some Board members commented that the summary report of the management response needed to be given in a consolidated format. Further study of ESF efficiency and impact was suggested, which should be more inclusive in geographical terms and should consider the issue of coordinating aid.
- 59. In response, the Executive Director noted that evaluation was a vital strategic tool, pledging that WFP would act with even greater speed, rigour, sensitivity and sustainability in the future; the Secretariat emphasized the importance of evaluation in strategic planning. Consideration would be given to improving the coverage of summary reports, which were



succinct by definition; the Board was encouraged to read the full report on ESF: it contained detailed information on consultations with local communities and on gender issues in ESF, matters that would be addressed when the policy on ESF was framed. There was no clear distinction between ESF and school feeding in general: it should be recognized that there was a continuum from acute emergencies to development. The evaluation had shown that ESF could have unique benefits in terms of learning and retention in emergencies; it was one of WFP's most flexible tools, meeting many objectives at critical moments. Educational activities often resumed surprisingly soon after emergencies, and ESF facilitated continuity in school attendance. The Secretariat agreed that flexible ESF guidelines were needed: it would include issues of sustainability when considering them. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) were major partners for ESF. In response to the observation regarding a consolidated management response, the Secretariat noted that a follow-up workshop had been organized to consider ways forward and that a revision of follow-up systems was under way.

EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations — Democratic Republic of the Congo 10608.0 (2007/EB.A/12)

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations — Kenya 10258.2 (2007/EB.A/13)

60. The Director of the East and Central Africa Regional Bureau (ODK) presented an overview of the region, emphasizing food security, partnerships, United Nations reform, and markets and local procurement. In the Horn of Africa, vulnerability resulting from drought, flooding and conflict was aggravated by the effects of rapid population increase. All but two countries in the region were extremely low on the Human Development Index; malnutrition and food insecurity rates were high everywhere; pastoralists were particularly affected by disasters. In the Great Lakes region, conflict leading to increased numbers of IDPs and flooding had contributed to widespread food insecurity. United Nations reform was evident in the region: Rwanda and Tanzania were pilot countries for the "One UN" initiative. The Regional Director emphasized the importance of partnerships with host and donor governments, NGOs, African regional institutions and other United Nations agencies, particularly in work on HIV/AIDS, health and nutrition, agriculture and the environment and in relation to assessments. Local procurement was widely used; an innovative programme in Uganda was purchasing directly from small farmers.

61. Political instability in Somalia and impediments to repatriation to the Sudan made continued assistance to refugees in camps in Kenya necessary: the protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) would help to combat acute malnutrition, which exceeded the World Health Organization (WHO) 15 percent emergency threshold. Refugee girls were being encouraged to attend school through distribution of take-home rations. The PRRO for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was concentrated geographically, focusing on IDPs and returnees in the east and other vulnerable groups; it emphasized the linkage between programming, logistics and infrastructure, and local procurement and market development. WFP was reducing costs, for example by closing sub-offices, but costs fluctuated depending on conditions in the transport corridors and on security. WFP was using local procurement and was lead agency of the logistics cluster. There were shortfalls for the PRROs in Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda and DRC.



62. Members of the Board expressed support for the PRROs and reinforced the Secretariat's appeals for funding. They congratulated WFP on its focus on the most food-insecure areas in the DRC and its innovative approaches combining logistics and local procurement. They expressed concern about continued insecurity in parts of DRC and urged the Government to support WFP. The Board encouraged WFP to continue its cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and to take into account medium-term and long-term prospects in DRC, in part through participation in the infrastructure and agriculture working groups and through awareness of the potential of areas rich in agricultural resources. The Board encouraged local procurement, but called for a focus on smaller markets and opportunities to move food from surplus to deficit areas. Board members called for clearer goals for feeding programmes to facilitate monitoring and information on non-food aid needs. Questions were raised as to the high price of grain offered by the Kenya National Cereals and Produce Board. Board members suggested seeking ways to engage refugees in income-generating activities, intensifying monitoring, improving reporting on impacts, supporting host communities through FFW and providing increased opportunities for vocational training. They also encouraged regular review of contingency plans for increased influxes of refugees.
63. In response, the Kenya country director noted that talks were in progress with the Government on ways to continue support for 30,000 beneficiaries of the host population, possibly through FFW, food for assets (FFA) or food for training (FFT). New partners had been recruited to reinforce monitoring, supplementary feeding and home-based therapeutic feeding. Continued donor support was invited to prevent pipeline breaks and allow pre-positioning of stocks. The appreciation of the Kenyan shilling had contributed to price increases. In recent discussions with the Kenya country team, expected arrivals of refugees were being adjusted downward to 30,000 by the end of 2007; discussions were ongoing with a view to improving roads and upgrading reception facilities and resolving bottlenecks at border crossing points. The DRC country director emphasized that improvements in the security situation would allow WFP to phase out more of its sub-offices.
64. The Regional Director thanked the Board for its support and asked it to provide political and financial support for the region. She invited Board members and their representatives to participate in the international consultations to be held in Nairobi on 25 and 26 June. She praised the commitment of national and international staff in all countries in the region.



ASIA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

Summary Report of the Evaluation of PRRO Indonesia 10069.1 (2007/EB.A/14)

Draft Country Programme — India 10573.0 (2008–2012) (2007/EB.A/15)

Development Project — Bhutan 10579.0 (2007/EB.A/16)

Development Project — Cambodia 10170.2 (2007/EB.A/17)

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations — Indonesia 10069.2 (2007/EB.A/18)

- 65. The Director of the Asia Regional Bureau (ODB) focused first on Indonesia, where levels of anaemia had been reduced, school attendance had improved and several value-added services had been developed with the Government. The proposed three-year PRRO took into account evaluation recommendations and included a shift in targeting of food aid toward eastern Indonesia, where indicators of food insecurity were most severe. The 1997 financial crisis had contributed to increases in underweight among children in Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) province and higher food prices, which were compounded by the effects of more recent natural disasters. The PRRO was a transitional project that would address micronutrient deficiencies through partnerships with the Government; it integrated food security, water and sanitation, and included contingency reserves for natural disasters.
- 66. Special guest H.E. Abdurizal Bakrie, Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for People's Welfare, congratulated the new Executive Director and spoke of the continued high levels of malnutrition and disease in the country and the importance of continued WFP assistance through the PRRO. He praised WFP for its work and pledged government support for the PRRO.
- 67. Members of the Board expressed their appreciation for the Indonesian Government's support for WFP's work. Concern was voiced as to the gap between emergency response and development aid in Indonesia, but the Board praised the evidence-based targeting and local purchases. Board members commended WFP's partnership with United Nations agencies and donor coordination and praised the work on early-warning systems, vulnerability mapping and nutritional surveillance. The Board recognized that WFP had incorporated evaluation recommendations into the PRRO and expressed satisfaction that preparations had been made for eventual handover. Some members suggested that aspects of the PRRO could be integrated into a country programme.
- 68. The Regional Director appreciated the Board's close reading of the documents and its support for operations in Indonesia. He emphasized the increased role of the Indonesian Government in WFP projects: many elements of the new PRRO were integrated into government programmes; provincial governments were increasingly important as a result of decentralization.



69. The Regional Director then presented (i) the proposed five-year development project for Bhutan, which focused on rural children's access to basic education, emphasizing the transition to the Government, (ii) the proposed three-year development project for Cambodia, which focused on mother-and-child health, noting the increased Government ownership, and (iii) the India CP, which aimed to improve national and state governments' food-based schemes to combat child undernutrition through capacity-building and the provision of food aid. The financial contribution of the Government of India surpassed WFP's; resources could also be generated from the private sector and from state governments. The handover process was already under way.
70. The Board commended the design of the development projects and the country programme. Members encouraged further capacity-building, cooperation with governments and assessments of results. The Board endorsed the proposals for raising funds from the private sector, and noted the Regional Director's observations that WFP's country priorities were determined in part by government priorities and capacities, the results of evaluations, the availability of partners and the expertise of country directors. The country directors thanked the Board and responded to detailed questions raised by some members.
71. The Regional Director then summarized the regional programme. There were severe security risks in Afghanistan, where humanitarian space had shrunk as high-risk areas increased from 10 percent in 2006 to 25 percent in 2007. A structural food gap persisted in DPRK, where the funding situation was critical – only 24 percent of PRRO requirements had been received. In Nepal, where political unrest continued, drought had affected food security and Bhutanese refugees continued to depend on WFP aid. WFP's programmes in Pakistan were being reoriented toward areas of greatest needs in the west of the country. Conflict was increasing in Sri Lanka. The Regional Director briefed the Board on a new training initiative that used distance learning to improve impact and reduce costs and highlighted funding shortfalls for the programmes.
72. In view of time constraints, Board members were encouraged to make their comments on the regional programme bilaterally.

SUDAN REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

Report of the WFP Executive Board Bureau Members on their Visit to the Sudan (2007/EB.A/19)

73. The Director of the Sudan Regional Bureau (ODS) presented a video of the Executive Director's visit to the Sudan. WFP had made progress in reducing malnutrition, but the security situation was getting worse: abductions were frequent and there had been recent killings. Fragmentation among rebel groups had hindered negotiations for humanitarian access; only a change in delivery modes, including less frequent distributions, had allowed WFP to deliver food. Negotiations with the Government on immigration and customs regulations for NGOs had removed some of the impediments to humanitarian assistance. Food had been pre-positioned in eastern Chad in advance of the rainy season. In southern Sudan, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was still fragile and the return of refugees had been slow. WFP was helping to repair roads, clear mines and rehabilitate airstrips, with support from the Government of Southern Sudan. WFP had reduced beneficiary numbers in eastern Sudan. The EMOP was 75 percent funded; early receipt of donor funds this year had allowed for significant cost savings per metric ton of food. WFP continued to



benefit the entire humanitarian community with an air service, which had a US\$10 million shortfall.

- 74. Members of the Executive Board Bureau reported on their field visit to the Sudan, where they had witnessed the serious security and humanitarian problems. They had had valuable meetings with the African Union Mission and were impressed with inter-agency efforts. The visit had brought home to them the professionalism and commitment of WFP staff. It was suggested that visits by smaller groups would be more economical.
- 75. The Board considered the issues of climate change and its potential negative effect on progress toward the MDG of halving the number of hungry people by 2015. Board members emphasized importance of supporting WFP across the globe and called for more countries to donate to WFP. Members of the Board commended WFP for its work in the extremely difficult situation in the Sudan and expressed their appreciation and concern for WFP staff working in harsh and sometimes insecure conditions.
- 76. The Regional Director emphasized that early donations provided funds for pre-positioning stocks in remote locations and had a direct effect on reducing transport costs in that fewer air drops were required. The Executive Director commended the work of the Regional Director and others working in the Sudan and hoped that lessons being learned in southern Sudan might eventually be applied in Darfur. WFP was working for greater efficiency and better targeting, because by economizing it was able to save more lives.

SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

Summary Report of the Mid-Term Evaluation of the Southern Africa Regional PRRO 10310.0 (2007/EB.A/20)

Development Project — Malawi 10581.0 (2007/EB.A/21)

Report of the WFP Executive Board Members on their Visit to Malawi and Zambia (2007/EB.A/22)

- 77. The Board heard an oral report of the visit by WFP Board members to Malawi and Zambia, during which Board members had met children suffering from malnutrition and HIV/AIDS, the main beneficiaries of WFP's work in both countries, and had observed the positive role of nutrition. WFP had made considerable progress in improving disaster preparedness and mitigation. The level of inter-agency cooperation was high in both countries.
- 78. The Director of the Southern Africa Regional Bureau (ODJ) gave a regional presentation, noting that floods, cyclones and drought had recently affected large areas. In Zimbabwe, a drought had been declared, which was having severe effects on basic food stocks and prices; WFP had reduced the number of beneficiaries to preserve food stocks. Poor harvests were expected in Lesotho, where large numbers of people would need food aid. The situation was worse in Swaziland: current weather patterns there and in South Africa had triggered a disaster. Mozambique had been badly hit by severe weather that had affected hundreds of thousands of people. There had been severe floods in Zambia: the Government had provided for victims' food needs but would need assistance with the recovery. Infrastructure had been damaged by a series of cyclones in Madagascar, but



funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was supporting immediate relief. Good harvests in Malawi would help with food procurement in the region. Smaller WFP operations in Angola and Namibia were being wound down and future operations would need to be negotiated with the national governments with a view to possible handovers. The Regional Director gave an update on the regional PRRO, which would need a budget revision. He emphasized that HIV/AIDS prevalence rates were the highest in the world and that food insecurity was increasing. Single-country PRROs for Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe, to be presented later in the year, would focus on social protection.

79. The Secretariat presented the summary report of the mid-term evaluation of Southern Africa regional PRRO 10310.0. The simultaneous provision of food aid and medical care had been successful in treating HIV/AIDS; 9 million people had been reached. Greater efficiency would have been achieved had information on targeting been shared more fully among the country offices. Evaluation had shown a need for greater partnerships, above all of a technical nature. More had to be done to reduce the populations' vulnerability to natural disasters. The Secretariat also presented an overview of development project Malawi 10581.0, explaining the problems facing the education sector and WFP's support for education.
80. The Board commended the Secretariat on its comprehensive reports and on WFP's achievements in the region, in particular its focus on nutrition when addressing food insecurity and HIV/AIDS, and its model cooperation with other United Nations agencies. WFP needed to work more with other bodies to enhance national and local capacities and ensure sustainability. Some members felt that better preparation of the regional PRRO could have avoided setbacks such as widespread rejection of imported genetically modified grain. More information on the benefits for women of WFP projects would have been welcome, and support was expressed for more gender mainstreaming in WFP projects in the region. Board members called for further information on the methods and effectiveness of market analysis in the region; some members expressed a preference for regional rather than single-country PRROs. The complementary role of food aid in the region was stressed: it was preferable to leave leadership of development activities to national institutions and other agencies. The availability of food stocks in neighbouring countries was signalled. It was pointed out that donors responded where situations were more urgent and sometimes chose to channel donations through other bodies. WFP needed to establish uniform target criteria for the region. There should be further debate in the Board of the place of capacity-building in WFP strategy. The work done in the region by FAO, IFAD, the World Bank and bilateral donors was acknowledged.
81. The Secretariat noted that a regional PRRO was not necessary for drawing regional conclusions: that was the function of the Regional Bureau. The Secretariat was developing a new form of country-level evaluation for WFP operations. Evaluation reports were submitted to national governments for comments, which were incorporated into the final version; independence, impartiality and professional standards were important criteria in evaluation reports. The Secretariat undertook to cross-reference full reports in summary reports. Board members were encouraged to read the full report, which contained detailed information of government input and met many of the concerns voiced by the Board. Information on the gender aspect would soon be made available. More time was needed before the impact of WFP operations in the region could be comprehensively assessed; evidence of success or potential success had been presented in the report. Government partners had been the main providers of feedback. Country scenarios could be made the subject of separate reports in the future if requested. Assurance was given that regular



exchanges of information were held at country level to avoid overlap. Consideration would be given to partnerships with national and local associations for the aged.

82. The Regional Director noted that the findings and recommendations of the evaluation had been taken seriously and that future programmes would benefit, but felt that it could have given greater prominence to regional work on targeting, monitoring and reporting, in which there had been considerable investment. Regular surveys had provided extensive data, which had been accessed by the international community. The regional bureau had produced useful indicators in the form of fact sheets that showed that food aid had greatly helped beneficiaries. The Regional Director acknowledged that the impact of food aid varied according to the category of beneficiary.

WEST AFRICA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

Draft Country Programme – Cameroon 10530.0 (2008–2012) (2007/EB.A/23)

Draft Country Programme – Mali 10583.0 (2008–2012) (2007/EB.A/24)

**Draft Country Programme – Sierra Leone 10584.0 (2008–2010)
(2007/EB.A/25)**

Report of the Joint Field Visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP to Liberia (2007/EB.A/26)

83. The Director of the West Africa Regional Bureau (ODD) presented an overview of the food-security situation in West Africa. In the northern Sahel, WFP, UNICEF, governments and partners had responded to high levels of acute and chronic malnutrition with programmes that had achieved high impact. To achieve the MDG of cutting child malnutrition rates in half by 2015, child hunger and undernutrition would need to become even greater policy, programme and investment priorities of national governments, United Nations agencies and other stakeholders. WFP's PRROs in the northern Sahel were facing a US\$10 million shortfall. The Boston Consulting Group was reviewing the activities of the Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative (ECHUI) in the Sahel with a view to developing a prototype of United Nations and stakeholder collaboration that would be useful to other governments wishing to scale up efforts to end child hunger and under nutrition.

84. Given the positive developments in Liberia, single-country PRROs had been prepared for Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone; the Liberia PRRO was contributing to an enabling environment for returning refugees and IDPs by focusing on school feeding and rehabilitation of food production and health infrastructures. A PRRO for Côte d'Ivoire was to replace a regional PRRO to assist recovery under a new unity government. In Chad, internal problems and problems emanating from the Sudan and the Central African Republic had led WFP to assist refugees and local populations: using Immediate Response Account (IRA) funds, food stocks had been pre-positioned before the rainy season, when access routes would be cut. The United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) had a shortfall of US\$3 million. In the Central African Republic, IDPs were being assisted through a PRRO that would need a further US\$11 million. WFP had assigned a regional assessment officer in Ouagadougou to assist the Permanent Inter-State Committee for



Drought in the Sahel (CILSS) with enhancement of its nutrition assessment and market monitoring capacities. The Regional Director presented the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and UNDAF-harmonized CPs for Cameroon, Mali and Sierra Leone, all of which were gender-sensitive, geographically targeted and cost-effective.

85. The Board viewed a video and listened to a report on a joint field visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP to Liberia. The 19-member delegation viewed Liberia as a test of the ideas of the United Nations High-Level Panel and had been impressed with the potential for post-conflict rebuilding and development as this emerging democracy moved from emergency interventions to development assistance. Large numbers of IDPs and refugees had returned home, and there was continued need for food assistance in support of mothers and children and capacity-building. The delegation was particularly struck by the way that food for education activities had targeted the most vulnerable families.
86. Members of the Board shared their concern about food security in the region and supported the proposed CPs, which included handover strategies and increased national government commitment. They encouraged increased government ownership, incorporation into national programmes and extended partnerships. Board members expressed satisfaction that the CPs complied with the PRSP and contributed to the MDGs. They asked about non-food requirements and requested greater itemization and detail on some aspects. Board members advised caution in establishing and maintaining micro-credit schemes and revolving cereal stocks, because they were complicated and needed to be designed and implemented with account taken of national, local and village concerns.
87. The Regional Director thanked the Board for its support. He emphasized that an important activity in Liberia was support for schools for returning IDPs, refugees and demobilized soldiers. The Cameroon country director stressed that the Government supported the CP and that eventual handover was being taken into account; work was in hand with FAO on early warning and disaster prevention. The Mali country director noted the need to improve data. FFW was based on local purchases, which kept LTSR costs low; WFP and FAO worked together to advise the government on food-security issues. The Sierra Leone country director emphasized that the Government provided staff and other resources to support WFP activities.

MIDDLE EAST, CENTRAL ASIA AND EASTERN EUROPE REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations – Occupied Palestinian Territory 10387.1 (2007/EB.A/27)

88. The Director of the Middle East, Central Asia and Eastern Europe Regional Bureau (ODC) gave an overview of the region. Conflict and humanitarian crises continued, with particularly severe effects in Iraq, Gaza and the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. WFP's work was bearing fruit and conditions were improving in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Egypt, Georgia, Jordan, Syria and Tajikistan. Government capacity and commitment were increasing; partnerships were strong, including those addressing humanitarian emergencies. The cluster system was being used in Iraq, but the security situation was hampering the delivery of assistance. There were a number of emerging and potential donors in the region.



89. The Deputy Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) – the largest United Nations agency in the Middle East – addressed the Board. He explained that the role of food aid in the region was evolving: it was replaced by education and vocational training where the situation allowed. The level of food needs was an indicator of the seriousness of the situation: food aid for the Occupied Palestinian Territory had increased tenfold in the last year to include even families of government workers whose salaries had not been paid. UNRWA coordination with WFP for monitoring food security was avoiding overlaps of services. There was a resource shortfall for United Nations agencies because donors were withdrawing from the region; institutions were losing cohesion and poverty and insecurity were increasing. The Deputy Commissioner-General encouraged careful consideration of the consequences for regional security.
90. The country director of the Occupied Palestinian Territory presented the proposed PRRO for non-refugee Palestinians, which included general food distribution, institutional feeding, food-for-work, food-for-training and school feeding activities. A partnership with other United Nations agencies and the Government was implementing a food-security monitoring system.
91. Members of the Board thanked the Secretariat for its presentations and expressed concern about the bleak situation and food insecurity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. They supported the PRRO, but asked for clarification about economies of scale, capacity-building, the conditions for local procurement, exit strategies, targeting mechanisms and evaluation. Board members congratulated WFP on its partnerships and on the multi-dimensional approach of the PRRO. They encouraged broadening the WFP donor base and greater government and civil society involvement. Some members asked whether skills training was appropriate for women only recently made poor by the political situation and a question was raised as to the 24 months duration of the PRRO. In relation to UNRWA, Board members encouraged greater harmonization of programmes and cooperation on needs assessments. They also asked for more information on handover strategies for programmes in eastern Europe.
92. The Regional Director described possibilities for local procurement, including procuring in Egypt for the Occupied Palestinian Territory. The conditions for cash transfers were being analysed. Work was being done with emerging donors and to raise WFP's profile in Central Asia. The PRRO had been designed for only 24 months in order to allow for evaluation and adjustments in the light of the rapidly changing situation. The country director considered local purchases of processed food in the context of promoting local employment: it did not deprive the local population of food because transport limitations curtailed imports of food. Cash transfers were thought to contribute to inflation under current conditions. The deterioration in the economic situation had made supplementary school feeding a more significant part of children's diets. LTSI costs had increased in part because of storage costs for pre-positioned stocks, controls on local transport and the security situation.

REGIONAL PRESENTATION: LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN

93. In his overview of the regional situation, the Director of the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Bureau noted that the main challenges were the inequality between the rich and the poor, the continued high levels of chronic child malnutrition and pockets of poverty in countries with medium-level gross domestic product. The region continued to be vulnerable to natural disasters.



94. WFP was working in partnership with agencies and governments to support national plans to combat child malnutrition, for example through micronutrient fortification, and to mainstream national capacity-development for food-based interventions, early warning and rapid response; an inter-governmental initiative aimed at eradicating chronic child malnutrition in Central America and the Dominican Republic had been launched, complementing the FAO regional initiative. A humanitarian response depot was to be established in Panama, with three sub-regional depots in other countries. A web-based knowledge management platform was being developed. A hunger study was in the late stages of development; hunger maps and VAM were being prepared. Nutrition was being linked to anti-retroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS. The largest WFP programmes were in Central America, Colombia and Haiti, but operational shortfalls were critical: US\$65 million was needed until December 2007.
95. The Board expressed support for international partnerships to support livelihoods, and congratulated WFP on the regional special operation to improve disaster response. Board members suggested transferring lessons learned from country to country and suggested that in order to build capacity, governments should be involved in project implementation and the evaluation of results. The Board appreciated the regional, integrated approach to work in the region.
96. In response to questions, the Regional Director explained that ODP worked in collaboration with FAO and other United Nations agencies, but WFP programmes did not duplicate other efforts.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Cooperation Among United Nations Rome-Based Agencies (2007/EB.A/28)

97. The Secretariat briefed the Board orally on the current status of cooperation among the Rome-based agencies, which was more extensive than was generally believed. Cooperation on field operations was considerable; future emphasis would be on cooperation in Africa. WFP worked with the Rome-based agencies on policy advocacy in many areas. In administrative and support services, all three agencies had benefited financially from working together; common standards for procurement were being achieved. The three agencies cooperated on staffing, leadership and logistics. New areas of cooperation in the spirit of United Nations reform were being established. Long-term food insecurity was being addressed jointly. Future challenges included ensuring that partnerships were purpose-driven. It was stressed that cooperation was not an end in itself: it had to be harmonized with strategic planning and account had to be taken of the differences in funding among the three agencies. A clear division of labour might be more effective than cooperation in some cases; decentralization versus centralization had also to be considered. Sharing services should only be considered if it led to cost savings. The Secretariat would present a paper reflecting the views of all three agencies to the Board at its 2007 Second Regular Session.

98. The Board welcomed the statements made earlier in the session by representatives of the other two agencies highlighting the need for cooperation, above all on working towards achievement of the MDGs and addressing major humanitarian crises, and the commitments to cooperation made by the leaders of all three agencies. The Board agreed that cooperation needed to be purpose-driven: the mandates of the three agencies should not be changed, but further cooperation would avoid duplication or overlap. Synergies between



the three agencies should be introduced gradually and cautiously, with a view to reducing costs. Procurement and service costs could be shared, but there should be no new level of bureaucracy. New partnerships could be considered for training, security, fundraising, advocacy, country reporting and programming. The effect of cooperation on the governing bodies and on delivery in the field needed to be determined. Board members emphasized that the three agencies should focus on the proposals already made, implement them and keep the governing bodies informed of progress made.

99. The Secretariat welcomed the support given to its proposals, agreeing that cooperation should be partnership-based. With regard to food security, partnerships went beyond cooperation between the Rome-based agencies, but it was for the governments of Member States to determine how they would deal with governance issues across the United Nations system. The main challenge was to prioritize areas where cooperation would result in the greatest gains. A suitable vehicle had to be found for sharing services without increasing bureaucracy – it would be unsustainable for one agency to provide services for the other two.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGERIAL MATTERS

Report on Post-Delivery Losses for the Period 1 January – 31 December 2006 (2007/EB.A/29)

100. The Secretariat presented the report on post-delivery losses for the period 1 January – 31 December 2006, in its revised version. WFP took the matter extremely seriously and a number of measures had been taken to minimize losses. The Board received an update on the situation in Eritrea.
101. The Board welcomed the report, which took into account the recommendations made by the External Auditor. They noted the measures taken to improve the situation, but urged WFP, in particular its regional offices, to take corrective measures to reduce losses further. Members asked for more information on “other causes” of post-delivery losses of commodities. The media needed to be better informed of WFP’s food distribution activities to avoid harm to its reputation resulting from high-profile reports of post-delivery losses. Local procurement should be encouraged, where possible, since it helped to reduce post-delivery losses.
102. The Secretariat undertook to give details of “other causes” in future reports. The amount of post-delivery losses was higher than in 2005, but the level was still regarded as the norm. Food declared unfit for human consumption was destroyed; food declared fit for animal consumption was disposed of under controlled conditions; fuller explanations of procedures to the media would help to reduce public misunderstandings. The high levels of losses of corn-soya blend/wheat-soya blend in 2006 were a result of production problems; losses of food directly managed by WFP was higher than that of food managed by partners because WFP often handled food distribution in emergencies, where post-delivery losses tended to be higher. WFP was seeking reimbursement of losses for which national governments had been responsible.



Statistical Report on WFP International Professional Staff and Higher Categories (2007/EB.A/30)

103. The Secretariat presented the statistical report on WFP international professional staff and higher categories.
104. The Board welcomed the report, but expressed concern as to the low percentages of women and nationals from developing countries. Board members felt that WFP needed to respond to the challenge of increasing those percentages by means of a targeted approach and deadlines. It hoped that such a response would be included in the policy paper to be presented to the Board at its Second Regular Session of 2007.
105. The Secretariat took note of the Board's concerns and undertook to take them into account in the human resource paper. The Executive Director conveyed her assurance that the matter was a high priority.



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

ACABQ	Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
AIDS	auto-immune deficiency syndrome
APR	Annual Performance Report
CP	country programme
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
ECHUI	Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative
EDP	extended delivery point
ESF	emergency school feeding
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFA	food for assets
FFE	food for education
FFT	food for training
FFW	food for work
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems
HIV	human immune-deficiency virus
HRD	humanitarian response depot
IDP	internally displaced person
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
IRA	Immediate Response Account
LTSH	landside transport, storage and handling
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NGO	non-governmental organization
ODB	Asia regional bureau
ODD	West Africa regional bureau
ODJ	Southern Africa regional bureau
ODK	East and Central Africa regional bureau
ODOC	other direct operational costs
ODP	Latin America and the Caribbean regional bureau
ODS	Sudan regional bureau



PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSA	Programme Support and Administration
RBM	results-based management
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SENAC	Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity
SO	special operation
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHAS	United Nations Humanitarian Air Service
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHRD	United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRWA	United Nations
VAM	vulnerability analysis and mapping
WHO	World Health Organization