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# REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS

Agenda item 10

*For information\**



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## PROTRACTED RELIEF AND RECOVERY OPERATIONS APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR– (1 JULY–31 DECEMBER 2006) – BURKINA FASO 10541.0

### Reversing Growing Undernutrition in Food-Insecure Regions

Number of beneficiaries	426,000 children under 3 242,500 pregnant and lactating women
Duration of project	24 months (1 January 2007–31 December 2008)
WFP food tonnage	24,211 mt
<b>Cost (United States dollars)</b>	
WFP food cost	9,101,330
Total cost to WFP	18,337,142

\* In accordance with the Executive Board's decisions on governance, approved at the Annual and Third Regular Sessions, 2000, items for information should not be discussed unless a Board member specifically requests it, well in advance of the meeting, and the Chair accepts the request on the grounds that it is a proper use of the Board's time.

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## NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

**This document is submitted to the Executive Board for information.**

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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## ABSTRACT

1. The prevalence of undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies in Burkina Faso has worsened over the past decade to precarious levels. The latest Demographic and Health Survey showed that 90 percent of children under 5 are affected by anaemia. Acute undernutrition has increased from 13.0 percent to an alarming 18.6 percent, well above the WHO emergency threshold. Stunting has increased from 31 percent to 39 percent; underweight has increased from 30 percent to 38 percent.
2. Undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are direct causes of the prevalence of low birthweight among babies: 15 percent of newborns weigh less than 2.5 kg. Infant mortality doubles among children with low birthweight. Two children in ten die before the age of 5: this translates into 110,000 deaths per year, half of which occur before the age of 12 months.
3. Following recent studies of malnutrition in Burkina Faso promoted by the World Bank, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization and WFP, a joint Government/UNICEF/FAO/WFP nutrition and food security assessment was conducted in September 2006 that identified inadequate food consumption – insufficient quantity and poor quality – and morbidity as the immediate causes of these high levels of undernutrition.
4. Despite good cereal production over the past five years, seasonal food insecurity and frequent crop losses in the northern and eastern regions increase the vulnerability of undernourished population groups.
5. Given the precarious health and nutrition situation, the Government has been increasing the number of health facilities and personnel in an attempt to improve public health coverage; but capacities and resources have not been sufficient to reverse the negative trend.
6. In 2005 and 2006, WFP and UNICEF supported the Government's response to the food and nutrition crisis in the three regions most affected by drought and locust infestation: Sahel, North and Centre-North. Subsequent analyses of the nutrition situation revealed that it cannot be addressed through small-scale development-oriented interventions. This was confirmed by the joint nutrition and food security assessment, which recommended an integrated multi-sectoral approach including curative and preventive activities by the Government, the United Nations country team (UNCT) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to provide young children and pregnant and lactating women with a minimum nutrition package to improve their nutritional status.
7. To address acute undernutrition, a protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) focusing on 426,000 children under 3 and 242,500 undernourished pregnant and lactating women in Sahel, North, Centre-North, East and South-West is required. The operation is a part of the WFP/UNICEF regional operation, in coordination with the Government, the UNCT and NGOs.
8. The objectives are to:
  - reduce levels of moderate acute undernutrition among children under 3 and pregnant women and lactating women; and
  - enhance government capacity to implement the National Plan of Action for Nutrition, in particular aspects related to enhancing household food security and setting up a nutrition surveillance system.