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BUILDING COUNTRY AND REGIONAL CAPACITIES



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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted for approval by the Executive Board.

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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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

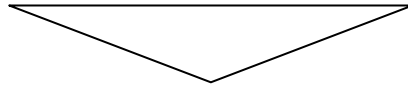
By working to strengthen country and regional capacities to address acute hunger and chronic malnutrition, WFP can improve its contribution to countries' own efforts to save lives, promote development and achieve the first Millennium Development Goal – to end hunger. The Strategic Plan 2004–2007 highlights the need for WFP to move from an ad hoc approach based on technical support to a systematic approach based on building capacities. This paper provides a policy framework for WFP's Strategic Priority 5 and includes implementation and financing principles that set parameters for this policy.

For WFP, the capacities to build, develop or strengthen relate to issues of hunger and malnutrition, especially as they affect the poorest and most vulnerable individuals and communities. These include: (i) the ability to identify and analyse hunger and vulnerability issues; (ii) the capacity to plan and implement food assistance strategies to eradicate hunger and improve food security; and (iii) the commitment to ensure adequate knowledge and advocacy with regard to hunger and food-insecurity issues.

WFP's capacity-building activities should support national strategies such as Poverty Reduction Strategies, or regional efforts such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development. In undertaking capacity-building, WFP will work in partnership with United Nations partners and others. WFP's comparative advantage in undertaking any of these activities must be assessed at the country or regional level, given its own abilities to contribute to capacity development. However, WFP should always maintain an appropriate overall balance between the financial and human resources devoted to Strategic Priority 5 activities, and those devoted to WFP's other strategic priorities, taking into account the core mission and mandate of the organization.



DRAFT DECISION*



The Board approves the policy framework set out in the document WFP/EB.3/2004/4-B. In accordance with decision 2002/EB.A/4, it asked that the Secretariat update the Consolidated Framework of WFP Policies: A Governance Tool (WFP/EB.A/2002/5-A/1) with the following language:

WFP, in partnership with other agencies, will take a systematic approach to building country and regional capacities to reduce hunger. WFP's capacity-building activities will work to build, develop and/or strengthen country and regional capacities related to issues of hunger and malnutrition, especially as they affect the poorest and most vulnerable individuals and communities. WFP's comparative advantage in undertaking any of these activities must be assessed at the country or regional level, given its own abilities to contribute to capacity development. WFP should maintain an appropriate overall balance between the financial and human resources devoted to Strategic Priority 5 activities, and those devoted to WFP's other strategic priorities, taking into account the core mission and mandate of the organization.

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.



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I. BACKGROUND

1. Lives can be saved in emergencies if countries themselves have the capacity to respond quickly, efficiently and effectively to situations of acute hunger. Lives can be rescued from the deadly and debilitating impact of malnutrition and chronic hunger if countries that have the will to act also have the means and capacity. By working to strengthen country and regional capacities to address acute hunger and chronic malnutrition, WFP can improve its contribution to countries' own efforts to save lives, promote development, and achieve the first Millennium Development Goal — to end hunger.
2. WFP's activities in support of these goals are intended to recognize and reinforce three fundamental principles of our work:
 - that national governments have the primary responsibility for addressing hunger;
 - that the international community has an obligation to provide support if national governments lack the means or will to do so; and
 - that international assistance should aim to supplement and strengthen country efforts, rather than replace such efforts.
3. In line with this objective, WFP's Strategic Plan 2004–2007 makes helping countries to establish and manage country food-assistance programmes a strategic priority for the organization.¹ WFP already has considerable experience in building country and regional capacities, and these activities continue today at country and regional level. However, WFP needs to make a shift from ad hoc responses to a coherent and systematic approach to capacity-building.
4. In approving the Strategic Plan 2004–2007, the Executive Board requested that WFP put forward a paper for Board decision that reviews experience and further develops policy, approaches and appropriate funding mechanisms for expanding activities related to capacity-building.

II. DEFINITION AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

5. In 1998, the United Nations General Assembly requested all United Nations agencies to mainstream capacity-building in their operational activities. The General Assembly did not itself define capacity-building, but capacity-building – or capacity development – as it is increasingly called has been the focus of considerable discussion and attention both within the United Nations System – as well as externally.² In 2000, the Administrative Committee on Coordination issued a Guidance Note on Capacity-Building underlining that capacity-building should be “holistic” and “sustainable”, and that it should address needs

¹ Strategic Priority 5 is based on WFP's General Rule II.2 (a); WFP's Mission Statement, which requires the Programme to "... support countries in establishing and managing their own food assistance programmes" and provide services such as "... advice, good offices, logistic support and information"; and the policy paper "WFP Support to Countries in Establishing and Managing National Food Assistance Programmes" WFP/EB.2/97/3-A.

² OECD, 1996. *Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation*. Paris.; World Bank, 1998. *Assessing Aid: What Works, What Doesn't, and Why?* Washington, DC; UNDP, 2002. *Capacity for Development: New Solutions to Old Problems*. New York; Tandon, R. and Bandyopadhyay, K. 2003. *Capacity-Building of Southern NGOs: Lessons from the International Forum on Capacity-building*. New Delhi, PRIA.



identified through a nationally-owned process and in a partnership framework. The Administrative Committee on Coordination also observed that “sustainable capacity-building encompasses the building of organizational and technical abilities, behaviours, relationships and values.”³ In 2002, a United Nations Inter-agency Meeting on Capacity Development added that United Nations system actors could assist in capacity development “both as partners supporting their clients’ efforts and as agents of change in a convening, norm setting and advocacy role.”⁴

6. For WFP, the capacities to build, develop or strengthen relate directly and indirectly to issues of hunger and malnutrition, especially as they affect the poorest and most vulnerable individuals and communities. These include: (i) the ability to identify and analyse hunger and vulnerability issues within a food security context; (ii) the capacity to plan and implement food-assistance strategies to eradicate hunger and improve food security; and (iii) the commitment to ensure adequate knowledge and advocacy with regard to hunger and food insecurity issues. By strengthening country and regional capacities to effectively reduce hunger, WFP can influence the lives of many more people than it is able to reach through its direct food aid operations.
7. WFP’s contribution to building country and regional capacities will be integrated into the coordinated response of the United Nations system to a country or region’s capacity needs. WFP will ensure that its activities complement those of its United Nations’ partners and promote a coherent United Nations system response to a country’s needs. In addition, WFP’s interventions will contribute to the broader capacity-building frameworks of agencies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO), which relate to issues of food security and malnutrition.
8. While capacity-building can encompass a broad range of activities and have a wide range of meanings, two important parameters are applied to the scope of the present policy paper: that capacity-building in the context of WFP Strategic Priority 5 will:
 - focus on activities that are designed to help build the capacities of others (i.e. country and regional capacities) where WFP has the comparative advantage to do so;
 - consider technical assistance as a means of transferring technical capabilities within a capacity-building strategy, not as a stand-alone activity that substitutes for or replaces local capacity.
9. In order to provide more effective and systematic assistance to developing national and regional capacities, WFP capacity-building activities should follow these widely recognized implementation principles:
 - **Sustainability through local ownership.** Capacity needs should be identified through a participatory capacity assessment process, fostering leadership and ownership of learning and change processes, thus promoting sustainable improvements in capacity.

³ ACC Guidance Note on Capacity-Building, 2000, para. 5(c).

⁴ Report of the United Nations Inter-Agency Workshop on Capacity Development, Geneva, 20-22 November, 2002, p.5.



- **Work in partnership.** Capacity interventions should fit within a country's strategic framework such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy and be aligned with the contribution of other partners to this framework. The skills and resources of all partners should be sought and utilized in a coherent capacity-building strategy, in line with each partner's comparative advantage in the context of the country or region. Within the United Nations system, action must be coordinated and complementary.
- **Keep a system view.** Capacity development cannot focus on government institutions alone, but must consider all actors in a "system" – non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society and the private sector. Every actor need not intervene at every level, but serious capacity-building requires a good understanding of how the system functions as a whole and the linkages between various entities and components.
- **Build on existing capacities.** Capacity requirements change as systems evolve. Starting simply and elaborating based on experience allows for greater local ownership as institutions and systems identify their changing needs.
- **Don't rush but be accountable.** Pressure for quick results can be detrimental to capacity-development interventions. Sustainable capacity takes a long term view, with repeated interventions building trust and willingness to learn and change.
- **Stay engaged in difficult circumstances.** Capacity investments, particularly at the community level, can be crucial in crisis and post-crisis situations to mitigate the crisis, promote peace building and support reconstruction.
- **Stay relevant.** Knowledge and abilities are not static; therefore WFP's capacities also need to evolve through learning, from WFP's own experience and experience of others, so that assistance will be relevant to developing countries. Capacity development is no longer solely about transferring a capacity, but rather about facilitating learning between partners so that capacities are developed collectively.⁵

III. REVIEW OF EXISTING POLICIES

10. While capacity-building elements can be found in a number of policy documents approved by the Executive Board, the foundation for existing capacity-building activities rests on two papers approved by the Executive Board in 1997, the first relating to support to countries in establishing and managing country food assistance programmes, and the second dealing with the need for enhanced programming in the poorest countries. In 2001, a policy paper on NGO partnership expanded this policy direction with respect to capacity-building of non-governmental partners. Existing policies emphasize the need for interventions to be locally owned and adapted to the needs and circumstances of the individual country.
11. "WFP Support to Countries in Establishing and Managing National Food Assistance Programmes", 1997. This policy paper dealt with WFP's mandate to provide technical assistance to governments in addition to its food aid programmes, noting that "the Programme is well placed also to facilitate the exchange of food assistance expertise, provide information about effective uses of such programmes, and assist in establishing exchanges and partnerships."⁶ The paper observed that technical assistance had to be more

⁵ UNDP, 2002. p.20.

⁶ WFP, 1997. "WFP Support to Countries in Establishing and Managing National Food Assistance Programmes" (WFP/EB.2/97/3-A), p.4.



than training and provision of inputs. It underlined the importance of technical assistance supporting country, regional and global information sharing on food assistance and hunger reduction strategies.

12. “Measures to Enhance Programming in the Poorest Countries”, 1997. This policy paper highlighted the need for specific strategies to build capacity in the least-developed countries (LDCs), while noting the limited government resources and the often crisis-prone environment of many LDCs. The paper drew attention to the fact that “improving the knowledge and skills of counterpart staff in relevant areas of competence is among the most important means of improving country capacity (governments, NGOs and local organizations).” It also noted that during relief operations “food logistics capacities are developed that often reach into the most remote areas; effective partnerships are formed between aid agencies; and, work relations and trust are developed with local authorities and communities.”⁷
13. “Working with NGOs: A Framework for Partnership”, 2001. Building on the earlier efforts, the Executive Board approved this policy paper – reaffirming the need to look beyond governments in building country capacity and to help strengthen civil society capacities through partnership with NGOs. However, in approving the policy framework, the Executive Board limited WFP’s capacity-building efforts with NGO partners to “...the creation of capacity only when partners’ activities are directly related to existing WFP programmes...and without incurring additional costs.”⁸ The Executive Board decided that such capacity-building of NGO partners should “focus on food logistics and management (in emergency settings), programme planning and design (including exit strategies), gender assessments, monitoring for results, budgeting, reporting and accountability procedures, as these activities are associated with existing WFP Programmes.”⁹
14. In applying these policies, WFP has traditionally maintained its project-based approach, focusing on supporting governments and NGO partners implement its food assistance interventions more efficiently and effectively.

IV. WFP CAPACITY-BUILDING INTERVENTIONS

15. In developing policy guidance on how best to advance capacity-building, it is essential to draw upon the many capacity-building activities and opportunities in which WFP is already engaged. The purpose is not to try to compile an exhaustive catalogue of such activities, but rather to identify some of the various types of capacity-building assistance that WFP has provided *or could potentially provide* in the future in order to strengthen country and regional capacities. This will help to highlight the importance of linking WFP’s capacity-building efforts to those areas which are central in advancing the mission to combat global hunger and malnutrition. It also implies that WFP must mainstream capacity-building. The responsibility to share know-how and build capacities cuts across all of WFP’s work. The comparative advantage – in knowledge, or expertise, or experience – of WFP in undertaking any of these activities must be assessed at the country or regional

⁷ WFP, 1997. “Measures to Enhance WFP’s Programming in the Poorest Countries” (WFP/EB.3/97/3-A), p.7, p.11.

⁸ WFP, 2001. “Summary of the Work of the Annual Session of the Executive Board, 2001” (WFP/EB.A/2001/10), p. 4.

⁹ WFP, 2001. “Decisions and Recommendations of the Annual Session of the Executive Board, 2001” (WFP/EB.A/2001/9), p.3.



level within the context of the United Nations system's response and WFP's own abilities to contribute to capacity development needs.

A. Analysing and Assessing Hunger

16. Analysing hunger is a core function for WFP, and a field of substantive expertise in which WFP is a global leader. Strengthening the capacities of countries themselves to analyse better the hunger challenges they confront within the broader context of food security will not only enable those countries to respond more effectively, but also facilitate and make more effective WFP's own efforts to eliminate global hunger. This includes conducting hunger analysis in a gender-specific and gender-sensitive manner. In practical terms, the task of analysing hunger has a number of key components, including:
 - hunger-reduction strategic planning;
 - analysing vulnerability and improving targeting;
 - needs and supply assessment; and
 - nutrition issues.
17. **Hunger reduction strategic planning.** The first step in addressing hunger, at any level, is to recognize that a comprehensive approach is needed – one that addresses immediate needs as well as root causes, and that confronts these challenges in a way that is both strategic and well planned. At a minimum, the planning process should include formulation of a hunger reduction strategy, the identification of roles and responsibilities between partners and within institutions, and the specification of results indicators to ensure the intervention strategy achieves its aims. WFP has considerable experience in hunger reduction strategic planning, and can provide much needed technical advice and analytical support to country and regional level planning processes. In Ethiopia, for example, WFP has supported the Ethiopian Government in its efforts to design and develop a country action plan for addressing the needs of more than 5 million people facing repeated food crises – drawing upon WFP's analytical expertise and extensive operational experience working with targeted populations in Ethiopia and elsewhere.
18. **Analysing vulnerability and improving targeting.** To tackle hunger, it is necessary to identify who is hungry, who may be vulnerable to food insecurity, where these men, women and children are located, and the main factors hampering their escape from hunger. This ability to identify hunger and understand its root causes is key to social assistance planning and poverty reduction strategies at country level, but too often these capacities are poorly developed or inadequately supported. Such analyses are indeed most effective where they are able to build on and complement strong country systems.
19. WFP's vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) service has developed an analytical framework that helps countries and partners to understand better who is hungry and why. Vulnerability analysis can help countries as well as WFP to better determine where there is a need for support: the countries and WFP are thereby enabled to determine if food assistance may be needed and appropriate, and what other complementary or alternative support might be required. In India, for example, WFP has worked with the Central Statistical Office and the M.S. Swaminathan Foundation to help strengthen existing capacity in the Indian Government, and ensure that decision-makers have the best available information on matters related to country and international hunger issues. VAM also contributes to the inter-agency Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping System (FIVIMS) initiative – creating a network between countries to share information on food insecurity and establish common methods for vulnerability analysis.



20. **Needs and supply assessment.** The ability to identify hunger and vulnerabilities during a food-security crisis is crucial for appropriate and timely responses to unexpected needs. Needs assessments attempt not only to identify needs, but also to provide an overview of possible response options by evaluating the appropriateness of each, fully recognizing the complex nature of emergency situations. In this context, a priority is to understand how food is moving within the region and within the country, and which populations face local scarcity or inadequate access to food. WFP has worked hard to enhance its own capacities in this regard, and it is clear that country and regional authorities also have much to gain from sharing the lessons WFP has learned and the practical experience that has been derived. WFP can also learn much in this regard from its country and regional partners, working together to strengthen national food security monitoring systems. Operational partnerships, with regional partners such as the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), allow WFP and its country and regional partners to share expertise and experiences, and contribute to the development of jointly agreed methodologies.
21. **Nutrition issues.** WFP is already recognized as an important player in emergency nutrition, supporting and advising on micronutrient fortification, designing and supporting HIV-nutrition programming, and implementing school nutrition and mother-and-child interventions. This is important because malnutrition is a major factor preventing sustainable reductions in hunger and poverty, and because there is increasingly compelling evidence of the contribution that targeted food interventions can make in protecting the vulnerable from the potentially crippling results of malnutrition.¹⁰ However, WFP can contribute to further enhancing country and household capacities to recognize and respond to nutritional challenges. Working with a range of national and international partners WFP already engages in a wide variety of capacity-building activities that go well beyond operational programming. In the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea, for example, WFP's operation established food fortification plants, trained factory staff in using the plant and then handed the plants over to provincial governments. Another example is the assistance WFP provides with undertaking national or project-specific nutrition surveys. For example, in Badakhshan province in Afghanistan, WFP with the Italian Nutrition Institute helped Ministry of Health technicians in undertaking a micronutrient baseline.

B. Programming Food Assistance

22. Effective food assistance programming depends on sound design, proper targeting approaches, as well as finding and developing appropriate complementary partnerships. It also puts a premium on the use of participatory methods, supported by effective monitoring and evaluation systems that ensure that programmes are responding to changing needs and achieving results. Through its own operations and through research and partnerships, WFP has much to share and much to contribute. In line with existing policy, WFP should continue and wherever possible intensify its efforts to enhance country capacities in programming food assistance – including by sharing knowledge and experiences, as well as by facilitating the exchange of information between countries.

¹⁰ Behrman, J. & Hoddinott, J. 2001. *An Evaluation of the Impact of PROGRESA on Preschool child height*. Food Consumption Discussion Paper. No. 104. Washington DC, IFPRI; Quisumbing, A. 2002. Food Aid and Child Nutrition in Rural Ethiopia. *World Development*, 31 (7): 1,309.132; Shrimpton, R. et al. 2003. *Maternal nutrition, birth weight and infant growth in Nepal*. London, Institute of Child Health; LoPriore et al. 2004. *Best Practices in the Use of Food for Maternal and Child Nutrition Interventions* (draft). Rome.



23. **Programme design and targeting.** WFP is constantly working to improve programme design and further refine beneficiary targeting. It is important that the outcomes of these efforts be fully shared with WFP's partners, so as to optimize their impact and promote the adoption of best practices more broadly. Some of the areas in which WFP has a substantial contribution to make include: (i) appropriate ration sizes and food baskets; (ii) targeting approaches for each type of food programme; (iii) gender equality and exclusion issues; (iv) partnership frameworks to ensure food aid is used as part of a coherent package of assistance; and (v) results frameworks that help to inform managers and decision-makers of the contribution made by the programme to reducing hunger. WFP is already assisting many countries with the design of school-feeding, nutrition and HIV/AIDS-related programmes as well as with the incorporation of gender issues in programming.
24. **Programme management and monitoring.** As an operational agency, WFP has a strong comparative advantage in sharing expertise on implementing food-assistance programming. WFP has substantial experience in a diverse range of country situations on which to draw as well as collective learning with partner agencies on best practices in implementation methods. As WFP's results-based management approach is developed, programme management tools are being enhanced to improve management decision-making during implementation and increase the contribution made by the programme to reducing hunger. Some WFP country offices have already implemented results-based monitoring and learning systems to better manage their food assistance programmes. Such systems are being shared with other country offices and with national governments, as in the case of the Ethiopian participatory monitoring guides and the Colombian *Sistema de identificación y monitoreo de la vulnerabilidad alimentaria* (Food vulnerability identification and monitoring system).

C. Disaster Preparedness

25. Ensuring adequate preparation for contingencies is essential to saving lives and helping to preserve livelihoods. WFP is working hard to build up its own capacities to anticipate emerging crises where possible, to put adequate systems in place both to assess risks and to manage them, and to take action to address problems effectively when action is required. As a global actor with extensive practical experience, WFP has a significant role to play in sharing information and both supporting and building up country and regional capacities in planning for contingencies.
26. **Early warning.** Early warning is a fundamental component of preparedness, and WFP continues to work to improve its capacity to track potential hazards such as global climate and weather phenomena and analyse the impact that these may have on food security in vulnerable areas. It has also included more systematic and more extensive information sharing with our United Nations partners and others on potential problem situations. WFP can do more to advise governments on early warning indicators and help strengthen monitoring systems.
27. **Contingency planning.** The capacity to analyse and plan for emergency contingencies is one of the keys to a timely, appropriate and effective response. Much of this type of expertise is necessarily best derived from experience, and WFP is uniquely placed to take account of such experiences and to draw lessons from which we and others can benefit. WFP's focus has so far been largely on developing its own capacities in contingency planning, including the incorporation of gender issues in planning exercises. However, a few countries have begun supporting community contingency planning. In Mozambique, for example, WFP worked with the National Institute for Disaster Management to support community-based contingency planning and disaster mitigation planning.



28. In contingency planning it is particularly important to ensure that adequate attention is paid to the development of capacities at the regional level, since contingency planning at the national level is likely to be exceptionally difficult in the case of conflict or other non-natural disasters. However, both non-natural and natural disasters can have significant implications for neighbouring countries, and this makes regional and sub-regional organizations natural and important partners for WFP to support in planning for contingencies.
29. **Damage limitation.** Preparing for contingencies also requires advance efforts to limit damage when disaster strikes. Damage-limitation measures may include prevention activities that aim to reduce people's vulnerability, containment activities taken on early warning of a shock to limit its effects, as well as remedial actions taken in response to a shock once it has occurred. Important lessons have been learned by WFP and others in responding to disasters, and it is essential that these lessons be widely shared and that best practices be employed as broadly as possible. Prevention activities may include physical works such as floodgates and dikes or process activities such as land enclosures and resettlement of households off fragile land. Containment actions can include process activities and direct interventions such as re-location of households threatened by mud slides during intense periods of rain or safety net programmes that provide support to livelihoods during shock periods. Remedial interventions may include programmes and other protection measures designed to prevent a shock from becoming a catastrophe. Areas of support might, for example, include augmenting a social protection programme by including a food-based safety net that expands during crisis periods or sharing experiences on community-level measures such as community food banks – and how to generate and support such initiatives.
30. **Risk management.** WFP has recognized risk assessment and risk management as important tools that can help to enhance its own performance and effectiveness in working to address the problem of global hunger and malnutrition. In other operational contexts, risk management has proved to be an important tool that has produced tangible benefits. In the context of the fight against global hunger, risk management can also play a positive role, and WFP is positioning itself to be a leader in this regard. In time, this effort will likely result in a body of hunger-related expertise that can be a valuable resource and model for all of WFP's partners.

D. Enhancing Food Management and Logistics

31. Improved management of food resources by all actors along the supply chain – from procurement to final delivery point – contributes significantly to minimizing commodity losses, increasing efficiency and maximizing the food available to beneficiaries. WFP has a strong reputation for its logistics capacity and we continue to work hard to strengthen, update and enhance these capabilities. Regular logistics planning, including contingency planning, is essential for ensuring that logistics systems remain effective and respond to changing circumstances. Supporting this planning capacity at country and regional levels has a preparedness benefit in improving relief response capacities. Increasingly, WFP has also been asked to provide advice and support to country systems in improving their ability to manage food logistics.
32. **Procurement.** As the largest procurer of international food aid in developing countries, WFP has established clear, transparent and effective guidelines for institutional buying. There is also increasing interest among WFP's partners regarding how food procurement can help stimulate agricultural production and market development. Where national governments have established food assistance programmes, WFP can assist with



procurement guidelines and procedures to help improve the efficiency and transparency of their procurement. In addition, when governments have regularly committed budgets for food assistance, particularly where this food assistance is targeted at areas where food markets are not well developed, food procurement may have a role in stimulating market development. As WFP explores further the market-development aspects of food procurement and formulates guidance and procedures for doing so, it will also be better able to support and advise counterpart food procurement units in country food assistance programmes.

33. **Transport and storage.** WFP has accumulated substantial experience in all aspects of food logistics, from port operations to final delivery, including logistics capacity assessments, contingency planning, surface transport contracting and warehouse management. The lessons learned from WFP's logistic operations can be of use to our country and international partners in many situations. WFP can assist those countries aiming to build logistics capacities to respond to recurrent natural disasters, including those that face the challenge of reaching communities located in isolated places effectively and efficiently. Logistics capacity assessments help support national planning of logistics systems by reviewing their business processes, particularly supply-chain management, in order to advise on capacity-building or institutional strengthening requirements. WFP's warehouse management training, provided to 63 countries, has already included over 1,000 participants from governments and NGOs involved in food storage. Another training initiative in contracting is also under way. In addition, WFP's experiences in joint logistics coordination can support relief response capacities at national and regional levels, where appropriate. As WFP's abilities in logistics are regularly updated, innovations should be shared with others.
34. **Commodity tracking.** Strengthening the capacity to monitor the location and delivery of commodities from purchase or port to final delivery point helps ensure that those commodities reach their intended beneficiaries – on time, at the right location and with maximum accountability. WFP has been a leader in this field and its COMPAS system is one of the most robust commodity-tracking systems in the humanitarian community. This commodity-tracking capability represents a possible resource that could be transferred to partners to improve their performance in pipeline management, logistics planning, commodity control and reporting. In 2000 in Ethiopia and Eritrea, WFP began its first trials of installing COMPAS with government counterparts. This experience is being assessed to determine whether there is scope for replicating the approach in other regions.

E. Supporting Decentralization Efforts

35. The trend towards decentralization of decision-making to local administrations and communities, often including on matters related to food security, has created new challenges as well as new opportunities for governments, for local communities, and for WFP. The process of decentralizing authority has implications for governments and communities not only at a political and administrative level, but also at a practical operational level. Especially where these changes impact upon food and hunger related issues, WFP has in the past contributed advice, experience and expertise to governments and to communities in order to help promote progress towards advancing these objectives.
36. **Community-based approaches.** Working at the community level is not an easy task, particularly as large-scale food-assistance programmes require a level of centralized control. However, success in the context of food-assistance programmes and decentralization often depends on the dynamic between central and local levels, and particularly the sense of ownership among local administrators in the success of community-based approaches. First, and foremost, women and men need to be aware of



the options available to them – they need to understand the nature of food insecurity faced by the vulnerable people in their community, they need to be able to prioritize the various needs they have and they must be able to articulate these needs to those who can help. Similarly, governments and their partners providing assistance have to understand the various means of addressing needs and whether food assistance is relevant in meeting these needs.

37. WFP has developed useful tools in many countries for women and men to be able to articulate their community's needs and priorities. At the same time, WFP has worked with implementing staff of local administrations to strengthen awareness within government structures of how to listen to communities and respond to their needs. Support to the capacity of community-based organizations and NGO alliances have also been important, further strengthening the ability of vulnerable communities to articulate their needs and their priorities. Several countries have developed local-level planning tools and participatory processes to bring communities, local administrators of programmes and NGOs together to help communities identify their hunger needs, select interventions to help resolve their hunger problem, and provide feedback to programme administrators on the usefulness of the programme in meeting the community's needs. Examples include Ethiopia's local-level participatory planning approach, Mozambique's community disaster-management committees and similar community based approaches being spearheaded by WFP in Peru, Indonesia and elsewhere.

F. Institutionalizing Information Sharing and Advocacy

38. Institutionalizing information sharing and strong public advocacy on hunger issues is the most effective way to enhance country and international commitments to eliminating hunger. While ad hoc appeals and campaigns can draw attention to crisis situations that emerge suddenly, or that rapidly expand in scope or complexity, long-term progress means addressing both short term crises and "hidden" emergencies, as well as issues such as the prevalence of chronic malnutrition and the need to address the root causes of the problem. Information sharing and public advocacy are essential tools for informing and guiding governments and decision-makers in setting priorities – ensuring that the voices of the vulnerable are heard by decision-makers, that their needs are kept high on the agenda of poverty reduction and that adequate resources are focused on reducing hunger. WFP has considerable direct experience in promoting information sharing and advocacy on hunger issues, as well as increasing experience in transferring such skills and techniques to partners.
39. **Lessons learned and best practices.** In line with existing policy, WFP's support to countries includes "promoting the sharing of practical experiences and food assistance expertise among countries through: conducting seminars and training workshops; facilitating the participation of experts from WFP and other institutions in appraisals and evaluations of food assistance programmes; and developing a catalogue of institutions with profound expertise in food assistance."¹¹ In addition, WFP's mandate and recent policies suggest a similar role in sharing learning and practical experiences on hunger and malnutrition issues and how these relate to crisis prevention and development.
40. Traditionally, WFP has held ad hoc seminars and conferences on hunger issues and food assistance programming that facilitate experience-sharing and learning. Examples include a technical workshop, hosted by the Government of Mexico, to encourage South-South

¹¹ WFP/EB.2/97/3-A.



learning from Mexico's *Oportunidades* food assistance programme; and, the Regional Ministerial Consultation on Maternal and Child Nutrition in Asian Countries, hosted by the Government of India, to bring together senior government officials, international organizations, non-governmental partners and research institutions to discuss approaches to reduce the serious levels of chronic malnutrition and infant mortality in many Asian countries. Recently, WFP has also embarked on using a network approach to facilitate learning between WFP and partner countries on what works and how strategies and programmes that address hunger can be improved. The Sahel Alliance for Action brings together nine Ministries of Education with United Nations partners, NGOs and other technical partners to support a regional strategy to promote education and the role of food assistance in supporting access to education. WFP is currently developing an internal knowledge and information sharing system that can better gather learning and information on best practices and will eventually strengthen WFP's ability to contribute to and support wider networks.

41. **Advocacy on hunger issues.** While WFP itself has a clear role to advocate on behalf of the hungry and malnourished, the responsibility for ensuring the political will and adequate resources to eradicate hunger ultimately lies with each country. Strengthening the capacity of civil-society groups to build alliances that can initiate joint action for social change is increasingly seen as the way to ensure home-grown advocacy and political focus on the needs of the marginalized.¹² The ability of civil-society organizations to work with local and national governments and to advocate on behalf of those in need also promotes the sustainability of national capacities to fight hunger by assuring resources are channelled to those most in need. WFP's international NGO partners are increasingly focusing their efforts on building local civil society capacities to organize and advocate for social change, both at a community level and at a political and structural level.¹³ In some countries, WFP has supported these efforts through joint action with NGO partners on advocacy issues, by providing a neutral forum for civil society and government to meet and discuss hunger issues, and by supporting the organization of networks. WFP can do more to share advocacy information and promote networks that bring government and civil society together.

G. Broadening Resource-Mobilization Efforts

42. As long as hunger persists, resources need to be dedicated to programmes fighting hunger. For most of its operations, WFP provides needed external resources to national governments and NGO implementing partners to carry out interventions directly addressing hunger needs. Yet resources increasingly exist in a country or a region that can be channelled to such programmes. In recent years, WFP has embarked on local and regional resource-mobilization strategies to fund local food-assistance programmes. In order to ensure a sustained ability to meet hunger needs, governments and local NGO partners also need to be able to mobilize country and regional resources for their programmes.
43. **Working with the media.** WFP's Strategic Plan highlights the importance of raising public awareness of chronic hunger as well as emergency needs in generating adequate resources for food assistance programmes. Several country and regional offices have worked with the media to highlight the importance of political leaders' engagement in

¹² Tandon and Bandyopadhyay, 2003.

¹³ Feedback from Project Concern, World Vision International, Save the Children UK, German Agro Action, Catholic Relief Service, Norwegian Refugee Council and the American Institute for Research.



hunger issues. In some countries, media campaigns have also attracted private-sector resources to government programmes. WFP is currently developing its own skills training and manuals on how to work with the media and launch campaigns aimed at raising public awareness and mobilizing resources for hunger reduction programmes. These skills should be shared with government and other country counterparts. In Honduras, for example, WFP's advocacy campaign strengthened government commitment to addressing child hunger and education issues, leading to the National Congress adopting a "School Feeding Day" – thereby providing a platform for further advocacy and resource mobilization activities across the country.

44. **Public-private partnerships.** Working with the private sector offers a major opportunity for governments and NGO partners to raise the necessary financial and in-kind resources for their programmes. Many private-sector firms are adopting social responsibility policies and funding social-sector activities. As WFP works with the private sector to raise resources for its programmes, it can also leverage resources for country programmes, facilitating public-private partnerships that build public-sector experience and capacities with raising such resources and managing these partnerships. In the Latin American School Feeding Network headquartered in Santiago, Chile, WFP has supported a regional initiative to bring public and private sector stakeholders together to share information, learn from each other's experiences and support country advocacy on the benefits of food assistance in supporting access to education.

V. IMPLEMENTING CAPACITY-BUILDING

45. Depending on the situation and hunger problem, the implications of what WFP can feasibly do to build capacities will vary dramatically. Programming implications are, therefore, country-specific or region-specific and premised on WFP's own capacity to contribute to the coordinated efforts of the United Nations system, as well as on the available complementary capacities of other partners in that country or region.¹⁴ To mainstream capacity-building, WFP will need to strengthen its own capacity, across the range of activities that it undertakes, in order to build the capacity of others. WFP staff, including national staff, will need to be given guidance, training and support in order to effectively implement capacity-building interventions.
46. Capacity-building interventions should begin at the strategic level so that all activities support a broader framework to implement and sustain hunger reduction activities. Where country capacities are too weak to support national programmes, WFP can nevertheless begin building selective capacities to facilitate greater leadership and learning by government ministries, local administrations and communities in using food assistance to address hunger needs. Wherever possible, WFP should aim to facilitate and participate in South-South collaboration on capacity development so that countries and regions can learn from each other.

A. Capacity-Building in Emergencies, Transitions and Development

47. **Capacity-building in emergency situations.** Providing timely and adequate assistance will continue to be the overriding imperative in emergency situations. Nevertheless, WFP should continually be seeking to identify and seize opportunities to enhance local

¹⁴ This ensures that partners combine efforts, thereby avoiding duplication and ensuring the skills and resources provided by each partner are used as effectively as possible.



capacities to address emergency and longer-term needs as crisis situations stabilize or enter a new phase. Although emergency operations cover a short time frame, WFP often has a longer-term presence. Particularly in areas of recurrent crisis, an emergency operation can provide the opportunity to develop or refine crisis management systems, to build local capacities through community building and training for local administrators and to begin investments in emergency preparedness and disaster-mitigation capacities. Given the uncertain nature of crisis, WFP should start simply and work with partners to respond to changing needs.

48. In conflict situations where government institutions are weak or non-existent, supporting community and local capacities can be crucial to peace-building efforts. In such situations often the process is as important as the capacity-building intervention, helping people to feel in greater control of their lives and the situation. Methods such as training in basic operational skills, learning-by-doing, and developing processes that support community-based approaches are important. Where some capacities exist, particularly in areas of recurrent natural disasters, WFP should review crisis response procedures and capacities and assist where necessary. Ensuring awareness and understanding of SPHERE principles is also a contribution WFP can make to support country and regional capacities in providing humanitarian relief.
49. **Capacity-building in transition situations.** The difficulties of capacity-building are increased in the often politicized and insecure conditions that characterize situations of “transition”. Ironically, transition situations are also typically situations in which capacity-building is especially needed. Despite this, capacity-building efforts may take considerable time and face repeated setbacks. Patience will be required, but the payoff can be substantial – especially where increased capacity can help to extinguish sparks that might otherwise re-ignite conflicts.
50. **Capacity-building in development situations.** In development situations, WFP works within the harmonized efforts of the United Nations system to support the national poverty-reduction strategy. Within its mandate to ensure such strategies directly address hunger and malnutrition issues, WFP should participate in a capacity assessment and with partners identify capacities that it can help to develop within its comparative advantage. This will vary by country, depending on the capacities of a country and the contribution that other partners are able to make to its capacity-development strategy. WFP should also continue to fulfill its role as a facilitator of information sharing on food-assistance programming. In addition, as an operational United Nations agency with community-level reach, WFP should make use of its neutral stance to encourage NGO and civil-society efforts to work in partnership with government programmes. WFP can also support and strengthen country advocacy efforts to build internal capacity to garner political will and raise resources for hunger reduction campaigns.
51. WFP should also maintain a regional perspective in creating learning and information-sharing networks on food assistance programming, hunger and malnutrition issues. Hunger problems often have a regional nature and WFP can facilitate exchange of information and experience as well as support collective efforts and strategies to address hunger. Pooling resources and working with regional organizations is also an important means of furthering understanding on how best to fight hunger. In line with its mandate, WFP should not hesitate to assist developing country governments with improving their food assistance programmes when requested to do so.



B. Implementation Tools

52. Sharing expertise and facilitating learning can be done through a range of programming tools – the same as those used by WFP to support its own operational capacity. The main tools are: (i) training, (ii) learning-by-doing, (iii) establishing procedures/guidelines, (iv) providing capital inputs such as computers, vehicles and plant, (v) information sharing, (vi) exchange visits, (vii) seminars, (viii) support to alliances and (ix) some types of technical assistance and service provision.
53. **Training.** In order to build capacities, training programmes should relate directly to the work of the trainee – for example, warehouse management for warehouse managers, gender and nutrition awareness for programme monitors, and deworming for school teachers implementing a deworming campaign. Use of cascade training is a highly effective means of supporting operational capacities of large-scale country food-assistance programmes, which require large numbers of people to have consistent but basic skill levels. In providing training, WFP should ensure quality control, reviews and consistency. In addition, trainee feedback and post-training manager feedback should be used to refine training programmes and measure the effectiveness of the training strategy.
54. **Learning-by-doing.** Recognized as a highly effective means of building individual and institutional capacities¹⁵, learning-by-doing involves on-the-job learning. This can be done through secondment of a WFP staff member into a government or implementing partner agency or a counterpart staff into WFP, or by involving counterparts in processes. Although highly effective, secondment is limited to a small group of individuals, who therefore need to be carefully selected to ensure they contribute their learning to the institution, either as trainers of trainers or as the essential staff in taking over a WFP programme. Involving country counterparts in processes such as participatory planning processes, survey enumeration or media campaigns does not have as high a capacity outcome but can nevertheless be an important means of sensitizing a wider group of staff and encouraging learning.
55. **Procedures and guidelines.** Instead of relying solely on individual capacities, building institutional capacities includes establishing procedures and processes for undertaking activities as well as providing guidelines to ensure consistent application of these procedures and processes. Activities include procurement and logistics as well as more programme-related activities such as baseline surveys, monitoring and evaluation, and participatory approaches.
56. **Capital inputs (computers, vehicles, etc).** In many WFP countries, the most basic institutional capacities can be built through the provision of organizational capital inputs. Basic computing and communications infrastructure can keep central authorities aware of project implementation needs and results, and ensure that decentralized staff have access to information and support. Light vehicles such as motorcycles in remote areas ensure that local administrative staff can reach communities, monitor changing situations and provide timely assistance. Limited interventions as part of a food aid operation are already part of WFP's capacity-building efforts and should continue.
57. **Information sharing and conducting studies.** As WFP strengthens its own learning on hunger issues, it can work with government institutions, research institutes, universities and civil-society organizations to further develop locally-relevant expertise, facilitate South–South exchange and help to strengthen research and policy analysis capacities in

¹⁵ Kaufman *et al.*, 2002. *Assessing Governance: Diagnostic tools and applied methods for capacity-building and action learning*. Washington DC, World Bank



countries and regional entities.¹⁶ In addition to regular information and knowledge sharing at the country level, WFP has supported regional entities such as NEPAD¹⁷ and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean¹⁸ in undertaking studies relevant to regional hunger reduction strategies.

58. **Exchange visits and seminars.** A relatively simple means of supporting individual and collective capacities is through methods such as exchange visits and seminars, which provide a means for people to be exposed to new approaches, discuss ideas, share problems and learn from each other. These are both useful methods for encouraging South–South cooperation and supporting regional learning and coordination, helping to build sustainable capacities.
59. **Networks and alliances.** A new, powerful method for capacity development is support to networks and alliances. These facilitate knowledge sharing and advocacy and can strengthen societal capacities and accountability by bringing together civil society, the private sector and national governments.¹⁹
60. **Technical assistance.** Technical assistance by experts and advisory services must be used carefully in order to have a capacity-building effect. “Gap-filling” is recognized as a useful tool in a capacity-building strategy, but only when it is clearly part of a broader strategy to build capacity. In a capacity-building context the objective of such assistance should be to develop core functions and ensure that country staff are able to manage these functions. Technical assistance that is intended to substitute for developing local capacity may also have value in certain circumstances, but such activities fall outside the scope of this policy paper and WFP Strategic Priority 5.
61. **Provision of services.** The use of service provision – when a government pays WFP to implement an activity – can be an important means of supporting a government’s ability to reach vulnerable men, women and children, particularly in contexts where the transparency and efficiency of social expenditure is weak. However, it is not capacity-building unless it forms part of a coherent strategy to phase over the service provided to the government or other agency.

VI. ASSOCIATED RISKS

62. A systematic approach to capacity-building broadens the assistance WFP provides from direct operational support to interventions that address capacity needs, and may potentially be the sole WFP intervention in a country. As WFP embarks on this more consistent support to the capacities of countries and regions, it will need to manage and evaluate over time the risks associated with this policy.

¹⁶ Regional entities include organizations, commissions and forums, for example the New Partnership for Africa’s Development, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Southern African Development Community and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation.

¹⁷ WFP assisted NEPAD by coordinating a study for the African Union on food reserve systems in order to inform decision-making on preparedness measures for responding to food crises in Africa.

¹⁸ WFP worked with CEPAL on the study “Hunger in Central America and Actions for Addressing It”, presented at the jointly organized Central American Hunger Forum in Panama, December 2003. This year’s WFP/CEPAL work will cover the Andean region, examining ethnicity, hunger and meeting MDG 1.

¹⁹ Tandon and Bandyopadhyay, 2003. Ekoko, F. and Benn, D. 2002. South-South Cooperation and Capacity Development. *Development Policy Journal*, Vol. 2, December 2002, pp. 119–130.



63. **Sustainability risks.** WFP's primary partner is the government of a country. For capacity interventions directed at national and local governments, there must be the political will to address hunger and to implement change in order to improve the effectiveness of efforts that address hunger. In countries where public-sector incentives for working with the poor are weak or where staff turnover is high or governance structures are weak, government capacity to implement and maintain food-assistance programmes can be compromised. WFP will need to undertake some form of risk assessment on government commitment before undertaking substantial capacity-building interventions. In risk-prone situations, WFP will have to balance support to institutional capacities with more sustainable interventions targeted at communities and the local authorities and civil society organizations that support them.
64. **WFP capacity risks.** WFP remains in a process of organizational change and internal capacity-building. Choices will inevitably need to be made between staff and financial resources allocated to WFP's food operations and improving its own capacity versus transferring capacities to others. WFP may not be able to meet all demands for capacity-building assistance. Support to capacity-building should not undermine WFP's food aid programmes. Therefore, WFP will need to set priorities in the way it implements this policy.
65. **Resourcing risks.** Additional resources will be required, particularly for capacity interventions in development situations where the country is not a priority country. As middle-income developing countries focus their social expenditure on poverty and hunger reduction, they are able to provide finance or allocate development assistance finance to capacity-building interventions. Also, some donors are willing to support South-South collaboration and exchanges that develop capacity. WFP will need to identify and mobilize these new sources of funding.

VII. FINANCING ISSUES

66. Traditionally, the extent of capacity-building activities undertaken by WFP country offices has been closely tied to the food volume being delivered in these operations. Where WFP has large-volume operations, this allows the country office some flexibility in budgeting resources for capacity development initiatives. However, in WFP's development programming, which is typically smaller in volume than its other programmes, further internal cost ceilings limit how much WFP is able to incorporate capacity-building interventions into its programmes. Particularly in smaller development programmes, where handing over capacity may be a major objective, the internal cost ceilings hamper appropriate investments to enable a smooth phase-out of WFP programmes.

A. Existing Funding Mechanisms

67. In 2000, following recommendations from the Executive Board (1999/EB.1/3), WFP re-defined the budget category direct operational costs (DOC)²⁰ to include a fourth sub-category called other direct operational costs (ODOC). Most capacity-building interventions undertaken by WFP in its programmes have been financed through ODOC budgets. These have included training to government counterpart and NGO implementing

²⁰ DOC previously covered only the costs of commodities, ocean transportation, and landside transportation, storage and handling (LTSH).



staff, technical assistance and inputs given to government or implementing partners to assist with food aid monitoring such as vehicles, computers and telecommunications.

68. Only a few interventions have been funded through direct support costs (DSC), or quality-improvement funds available from donor trust funds, or by Headquarters divisions or regional bureaux from WFP's Programme Support and Administrative (PSA) budget. These have included workshops, special studies and support to networks.
69. Capacity-building activities supported through these funding structures have generally been geared towards interventions that support the analytical and operational capacities of counterparts to implement WFP programmes. Capacity-building interventions, when done as a parallel aspect of a WFP programme intervention or separately from a food aid intervention, have usually been funded by a bilateral donor or by the recipient government, including through funds given by a bilateral donor to the government. WFP is in the process of revising its internal procedures regarding such funds.
70. In addition to the mechanisms outlined above, General Regulation XI.1 provides that:
- “Upon approval by the Board or by the Executive Director on its behalf, of a request for a food aid programme or project, *or for technical assistance to help a government establish or improve its own food assistance programme*, an agreement shall be prepared by the Executive Director in consultation with the government concerned. All such agreements shall indicate the terms and conditions on which the proposed activities are to be carried out and the responsibilities of the government of the recipient country.”

Although this mechanism remains in place, there currently are no agreed terms and conditions for technical assistance other than such provided through WFP's food aid programmes.

B. Issues to be Resolved

71. **Harmonization of related financing issues.** In 2003, it was agreed that reviews of WFP's financial policies would be integrated in the strategic and management planning processes. A number of initiatives are currently under way and any discussion on financing capacity-building interventions will need to consider and be harmonized with these corporate financing policies.
72. **Implications for WFP's current resource policies.** Given WFP's efforts to ensure maximum cost-efficiency in its programmes, how should capacity interventions undertaken as part of its food-assistance programmes be funded, given the volume basis of its current funding structure? Should existing cost ceilings on non-food costs be released? In some situations, there may be significant value in WFP undertaking capacity-building interventions independently of food-aid programmes. It could be possible for WFP's sole intervention in a country to be a capacity-building intervention. Should a separate “cash-only project” for capacity-building be established?
73. **How does capacity-building relate to the current programme categories?** Capacity-building can be undertaken in emergencies, transition and development. Should WFP adopt a component approach to all its projects, as in the case of protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs) and country programmes, where capacity-building is a separate component? Should WFP launch a separate cash-only project in the programme category relevant to the situation in which WFP is working? Should WFP launch a separate development project for capacity-building, regardless of the situation to which the intervention will apply?



C. Framework Principles

74. As WFP develops the financing modalities for capacity-building, it will not take resources away from WFP's other existing strategic priorities and redistribute them towards Strategic Priority Five. Instead, WFP will ensure that any new mechanisms and/or changed funding modalities are designed to facilitate additional resource support for Strategic Priority Five activities. As it moves forward, WFP will need to ensure that whatever the level of resources that might eventually be made available for Strategic Priority Five, the organization's operational focus and capacities are not compromised.
75. As directed by the Executive Board, the following five principles should guide WFP's approach to the development of specific mechanisms and funding modalities for Strategic Priority Five:
- Within existing resources, WFP should continue to undertake and should mainstream ancillary capacity-building activities – both formal and non-formal – where it has the resources and capacity to do so;
 - Any significant stand-alone capacity-building efforts should be funded from voluntary contributions given for this purpose – WFP anticipates that many of these contributions will come from national governments themselves;
 - The funding mechanisms and modalities should be as transparent as possible with respect to costs and resources, and designed to facilitate inter-agency partnership wherever practicable;
 - Pending subsequent approval by the Executive Board of the financing modalities, undirected multilateral resources should not be allocated for new capacity-building activities, unless there is specific consent for this from the donor government;
 - WFP should always maintain an appropriate overall balance between the financial and human resources devoted to Strategic Priority Five activities, and those devoted to WFP's other strategic priorities – taking into account the core mission and mandate of the organization.

VIII. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

76. The Strategic Plan 2004–2007 highlights the need for WFP to move from an ad hoc approach of technical support to a systematic, considered approach of building national capacities to use food assistance to reduce hunger. Building-capacity requires more than providing training or technical assistance or necessary inputs. A country's capacity to reduce hunger depends on how people, institutions and governments work together, how they learn and maintain a consistent effort to fight hunger. This means that a capacity-building strategy must keep a system view by considering the capacities needed for a coherent policy environment, national hunger reduction strategy, the implementation of this strategy at national and local levels, and for civil society to advocate on behalf of the vulnerable. Furthermore, capacity-building must be done in partnership to ensure a coherent and mutually supportive strategy to strengthen country and regional capacities, based on the comparative advantage and resources of each partner. In addition, a country's capacity to address hunger often depends on regional efforts and capacities to support hunger reduction. Therefore, capacity-building must include consideration of regional entities and the support they provide to national efforts to reduce hunger.



77. WFP has a role to play in supporting national and regional capacities in fighting hunger. This role will depend on each country/regional situation, the existing capacities and the assistance available from other partners. A systematic approach to build national and regional capacities to reduce hunger will require the following:

- WFP should work with regional, national or local partners to identify their capacity needs and areas where WFP might assist them. WFP should be proactive in encouraging national and regional partners to review their existing capacities in hunger reduction and food-assistance programming, and to suggest how their effectiveness might be improved with WFP assistance.
- WFP's capacity interventions should be part of the coordinated efforts of the United Nations system in support of the national poverty reduction strategy or similar nationally-owned strategy, as well as in support of regional initiatives such as NEPAD. In all cases, WFP's interventions should be agreed with partners to ensure it is working to its comparative advantage, avoiding duplication of effort and complementing broader efforts.
- As much as possible, WFP should mainstream capacity interventions in all its food aid operations by seeking opportunities to encourage learning through the range of tools available to build and further develop strategic, operational and local capacities to reduce hunger.
- WFP should endeavour to build capacities during crisis and transition, and exchange ideas with existing authorities in the country as well as other partner organizations on how best to provide support in these situations.
- In line with existing policy, WFP should continue to facilitate the sharing of learning between countries and regions, particularly South–South exchanges and regional information and practice sharing.
- WFP should explore further its comparative advantage in strengthening national and regional capacity to advocate on behalf of the vulnerable and mobilize resources for hunger reduction strategies. WFP needs to review existing experiences and provide further guidance on appropriate types of support in this area.
- WFP should endeavour to the extent practicable to measure and report on results achieved in its capacity-building efforts. Outcome-level results in sustaining capacities should as far as possible be measured through partnership efforts such as through the UNDAF or PRS process. WFP's own measurement of its achievement of Strategic Priority 5 will be elaborated in the next Annual Performance Report.
- In order to support the capacities of others, it is important for WFP to recognize that it can only do so within the limits of its own capacity. Therefore WFP must also be a learning organization and continually strive to improve its own capacities. In addition, as WFP builds its own capacity in various areas, it should include national and regional partners to learn alongside WFP staff.
- As WFP moves from an ad-hoc to a systematic approach, it should consider how best to ensure that there are adequate institutional mechanisms to provide guidance, coherence and programme support for country and regional capacity-building.
- Any changes required in the financial policy framework will be presented to the Executive Board at the earliest opportunity.



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CEPAL	Economic Commission for Latin America
CILSS	Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel
DOC	direct operating costs
DSC	direct support costs
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping System
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
LDC	least-developed country
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	non-governmental organization
ODOC	other direct operating costs
PSA	Programme Support and Administration (budget)
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAM	vulnerability analysis and mapping
WHO	World Health Organization

