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DEFINITION OF SPECIAL OPERATIONS – AMENDMENT TO GENERAL RULE II.2(d), PROGRAMME CATEGORIES OF WFP

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for approval.

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.

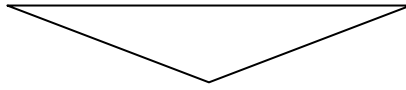
Director, Transport Preparedness and Response Mr D. Morton tel.: 066513-2404
Division (OTP) and Chief, OTL:

Deputy Director, OTP: Mr D. Kaatrud tel.: 066513-2402

Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Supervisor, Meeting Servicing and Distribution Unit (tel.: 066513-2328).



DRAFT DECISION*



The Board approves the following change to the definition of the special operations category in the General Rules as set out in the document WFP/EB.A/2004/5-D:

General Rule II.2(d): Programme Categories

Special Operations Programme Category for interventions undertaken to:

- i) rehabilitate and enhance transport and logistics infrastructure, and carry out or provide technical assistance, to permit timely and efficient delivery of food assistance, especially to meet emergency and protracted relief needs;
- ii) enhance coordination within the United Nations System and with other partners through the provision of designated common services.

* 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.



1. At its First Regular Session, 2004, the Executive Board took note of the information contained in document WFP/EB.1/2004/7 and indicated that it would re-examine the topic of the definition of the special operations (SO) programme category at its Annual Session.
2. Under General Rule XV.1, amendments to the General Rules are approved by the Board and submitted for information to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) and the Council of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO).
3. As outlined in WFP/EB.1/2004/7, the current definition of the SO programme category does not cover the common services that WFP is increasingly called upon to provide on behalf of the humanitarian community, such as the United Nations Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC) and United Nations Humanitarian Air Services (HAS)¹. The proposed text expands the definition to designated common services, given that SOs are used as the programme category for such activities when WFP is a major user of the services.
4. As it currently stands, General Rule II.2(d) does not foresee that WFP could carry out activities that are not logistics-specific under the SO programme category. It is clear that WFP often requires cash to support non-food projects through specific technical assistance. The proposed text provides an opportunity for WFP to have immediate cash inputs through the SO programme category.
5. It is acknowledged that strict criteria for use of the SO programme category for such technical assistance, in exceptional circumstances, is being outlined in an Executive Director circular, citing the type of assistance envisaged,² the parameters for use and the circumstances in which the projects would more appropriately be budgeted in the landside transport, storage and handling, other direct operational costs or direct operational costs of an associated emergency operation, protracted relief and recovery operation or development operation, or when an alternative existing funding mechanism should be used.
6. The text below shows the proposed changes:

General Rule II.2(d): Programme Categories:

Special Operations Programme Category, for interventions undertaken to:

- i) rehabilitate and enhance transport and logistics infrastructure, and carry out or provide technical assistance, to permit timely and efficient delivery of food assistance, especially to meet emergency and protracted relief needs;
- ii) enhance coordination within the United Nations System and with other partners through the provision of designated common services.

Original text:

General Regulations and General Rules, 1 January 2000: General Rule II.2: Programme categories (d): “Special Operations Programme Category, for activities to rehabilitate and enhance transport infrastructure, if necessary and in extraordinary circumstances, to permit speedy and efficient delivery of food assistance to meet emergency and protracted relief needs.”

¹ The official mandates for UNJLC and HAS are specified in WFP/EB.1/2004/7.

² Examples of “technical assistance” could include (i) information-management systems benefiting WFP emergencies, (ii) emergency needs assessment/vulnerability analysis and mapping systems, (iii) supporting governments to develop their own food-assistance programme, (iv) developing disaster management plans and (v) assisting governments in warehouse management.

