**Executive Board
Annual Session**

Rome, 20–23 May 2002

POLICY ISSUES

Agenda item 5
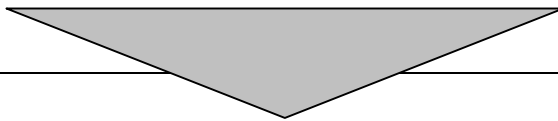
For consideration

CONSOLIDATED FRAMEWORK OF WFP POLICIES:

Establishing and Maintaining a Governance Tool

This document should be read in conjunction with the document "Consolidated Framework of WFP Policies: A Governance Tool" (WFP/EB.A/2002/5-A/1).

Note to the Executive Board

This document is submitted for consideration to 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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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).

Executive Summary

The Consolidated Framework of WFP Policies responds to a decision by the Executive Board that WFP policies should be codified, simplified and reproduced in a compendium. It represents one of the tools proposed by the Working Group on Governance.

The policy framework is the product of an extensive review of Executive Board, Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes and Intergovernmental Committee documents. Its format evolved from consultations between the Executive Board Bureau's Informal Steering Group and the Secretariat's Contact Group on Governance.

This paper recommends ways to keep the policy framework current and accessible and proposes an annual review by the Executive Board to inform the development of its plan of work.

Draft Decision

The Board welcomes the Consolidated Framework of WFP Policies: Establishing and Maintaining a Governance Tool (WFP/EB.2/2002/5-A/2) and asks the Secretariat to maintain an updated version on the WFP web page, incorporating new policy decisions after each Executive Board session. The Draft Decision paragraph in future policy documents should therefore include proposed text for incorporation into the policy framework. The Board agrees that the Secretariat should submit the latest version of the policy framework as a paper for information each year at the third regular session.

INTRODUCTION

1.   At the annual session of the Executive Board in 2000, the Working Group on Governance submitted a paper that included recommendations for strengthening the governance of the World Food Programme. Four frameworks were proposed, including a codified set of policies governing the operations of the Programme, which would serve as a governance tool. The working group suggested that "the Secretariat should bring together existing policy statements, edit and simplify them as appropriate and seek the Board's approval of new text to cover any omissions thus revealed. The result would be a policy compendium covering three main areas: mobilization and management of resources, operations and cross-cutting themes such as gender, environment and relations with NGOs. The compendium should be submitted to the Board".[1]

2.   The working group recommended that "the relevance of the codified policy framework should be kept under regular review, both to validate its continuing relevance and to identify the need for new work".[2] These recommendations were approved by the Executive Board at the third regular session of 2000.

3.   In October 2001, the Secretariat's Contact Group on Governance met with the Bureau's Informal Steering Group to discuss the format of the policy framework. Participants agreed that the framework should include an edited and simplified version of existing policies related to operations and mobilization and management of resources. At a subsequent meeting in March 2002, participants agreed that the policy framework should be a web-based "document", updated regularly as new policies are approved. The Secretariat was asked to prepare a cover note explaining the genesis of the policy framework and the process used to prepare it and suggesting steps needed to keep it under the Board's review.

DEVELOPING THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

Gathering and Synthesizing Governing Board Decisions

4.   The policy framework includes an edited and simplified version of decisions taken by the Executive Board and its predecessors, the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes (CFA) and the Intergovernmental Committee (IGC).[3] It is the result of an exhaustive review by the Policy Service of the official documentation from these bodies.

5.   Collecting policy decisions was facilitated by recent Executive Board documents, which distinguish policy recommendations from other text and include a draft decision, and by the recent practice of issuing a document that summarizes all decisions taken by the Executive Board during each session. Earlier Executive Board documents and CFA and IGC documents did not always follow this pattern. The Secretariat was thus forced to exercise judgement in extracting the important and relevant policy decisions made by the governing body in its earlier years. In doing this the Secretariat defined as policy those

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[1] WFP/EB.A/2000/4-D, Report of the Working Group on Governance.

[2] Ibid.

[3] The Intergovernmental Committee, predecessor of the CFA, was established in 1962 as WFP's first governing body. It initially included representatives from 20 member states, subsequently expanded to 24, half of which were elected by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and half by the FAO Council.

decisions taken by the governing body that provided a definite course of action to guide and determine present and future decisions.

6.   It is important to note that, as a United Nations agency, WFP is responsible for adhering to policies established by the Secretary General and Economic and Social Council decisions regarding United Nations funds and programmes. Any such decisions that were not reviewed by the Executive Board are not included in the policy framework.

Establishing the Format

7.   During preparation of the policy framework, the Secretariat consulted twice with the Informal Steering Committee of the Bureau of the Executive Board to establish the format for the policy framework. The Secretariat agreed to maintain the policy framework on WFP's home page. Further recommendations to aid the Executive Board in keeping the policy framework under its review were developed and are outlined below for the Board's consideration.

8.   The policy framework is organized in five sections.

   a) *Development.* This section, primarily applicable to Country Programmes, includes development policies that are consistent with the Enabling Development framework, which superseded some previous development policies by articulating a more focused approach for food aid in development.

   b) *Emergencies.* This section, primarily applicable to Emergency Operations, includes elements from WFP's Mission Statement and CFA policies that define the criteria for emergency response and articulate programming principles.

   c) *Linking relief and development.* This section is primarily applicable to Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations but would also be relevant to emergency operations that had moved beyond the general relief phase. The programming principles articulated in the development section would apply to protracted operations that were more recovery-oriented. The policies in this section are drawn from Executive Board and CFA documents that articulated the importance of supporting local capacities and moving from general relief to more targeted programmes as quickly as possible. Also in this section are policies for special needs groups, demining and demobilization.

   d) *Cross cutting.* This section includes policies that are broadly applicable to all WFP programmes, although some disaggregate decisions by programme category. It contains policies on partnership with NGOs, environmental impact, monetization, support for national food-assistance programmes, coordination and gender. Decisions taken at the annual session when reviewing policy papers on HIV/AIDs and urban food insecurity, and the Gender Strategy scheduled for review at the Third Regular Session in 2002, will be incorporated into this section.

   e) *Resourcing.* This section outlines the basic objectives of the resource mobilization strategy, the principle of full cost recovery and the three elements of the resource and long-term financing model—funding windows, programme categories and cost categories.

KEEPING THE POLICY FRAMEWORK UNDER REVIEW

9.   Completing the policy framework was the first step. In order to serve as a governance tool for the Executive Board and WFP managers, it needs to stay current. Regular Executive Board reviews of the policy framework will ensure that WFP's policies remain

relevant and will help the Executive Board to identify new policies to consider in the context of its work plan.

10.   The Secretariat proposes the following steps to ensure that the policy framework is regularly updated and kept under the Executive Board's review.

a)   **The Secretariat should maintain an updated version of the policy framework on its web page, incorporating new policy decisions after each Executive Board session.**

The Secretariat proposes to maintain the policy framework as a document on the WFP home page, accessible through the menu under both "Executive Board" and "Policies". The web-based version would include links to all documents referenced in the policy framework. After each Executive Board session, the Secretariat would update the policy framework with any policy decisions taken. Where new policies supersede old ones, the old policies will be deleted.

b)   **The Secretariat should include in future policy documents proposed wording of policy decisions for incorporation into the policy framework.**

The Secretariat proposes that the Draft Decision paragraph of future policy documents include wording that could be incorporated into the policy framework. This recommendation is consistent with the improvements in policy documents undertaken as part of the governance project.

c)   **The policy framework should be submitted to the Executive Board *for information* each year at the third regular session.**

The policy framework will be constantly updated and available on WFP's web page. The Secretariat proposes to submit an updated version of the policy framework to the Executive Board each year after the annual session, where most policy decisions are taken. As an information paper for the third regular session, the policy framework can be reviewed by the Executive Board in the context of its work plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

➢   WFP should maintain an updated version of the policy framework on its web page, incorporating new policy decisions after each Executive Board session.

➢   WFP should include, in the Draft Decision section of future policy documents, proposed wording for incorporation into the policy framework; and

➢   WFP should submit an updated policy framework to the Executive Board *for information* each year at the third regular session.