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INFORMATION NOTE ON SCHOOL FEEDING

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INTRODUCTION

1. In 2000, building on almost 40 years of experience, and with the support of the Government of the United States, the World Food Programme launched a global school feeding campaign. This campaign has as its objective to encourage governments throughout the world to put in place national school feeding programmes that will provide nutritious food to all children who need it.
2. School feeding addresses the following commitments of the world community:
 - “Education for All” (Jomtien Declaration of 1990 and the Dakar Framework of April 2000);
 - the reduction of world hunger by one half by 2015 (World Food Summit, 1996);
 - the focus of at least 50 percent of all education resources on girls and women (Beijing +5, 1995); and
 - the improvement of education, nutrition and health conditions for all children (Children’s Summit, 1990).
3. A 2001 survey of 4,004 schools receiving WFP support showed the following benefits:
 - **Increased school enrolment:** School enrolment increased by 10.5 percent in WFP-assisted schools worldwide in 2001 (and by 31.5 percent during the period 1998 to 2001).
 - **Reduction in the gender gap for school enrolment:** Girls’ enrolment in WFP-assisted schools increased by 13.03 percent in 2001, boys’ enrolment by 7.98 percent (the cumulative increase of enrolment for the period 1998 to 2001 was 39.09 percent for girls and 23.94 percent for boys).
 - **Stabilization in attendance:** Attendance remained stable throughout the school year, even during agricultural peak seasons. The average attendance in 2001 was 84 percent for girls and 81 percent for boys.
 - **Improved learning:** Over 88.66 percent of the teachers and 90.66 percent of the students surveyed reported that the food provided was highly or very highly significant to the students’ learning.
 - **Community and parental involvement:** 77.3 percent of parents contribute financially or in kind to the WFP-assisted school feeding programme.
 - **Involvement of women in school decision-making:** 79.3 percent of the parent-teacher associations (PTAs) have women on their panels.
 - **Improved school conditions:** Student-teacher and student-classroom ratios temporarily worsen, but then improve. This shows that additional teachers and classrooms are made available over time to accommodate the increase in students following introduction of WFP-assisted school feeding. During 1998 to 2000, the student-teacher ratio increased on average by 7.59 percent annually, while it increased by only 1.78 percent in 2001. The student-classroom ratio during that period increased on average by 5.65 percent annually, while it increased by only 1.44 percent in 2001.
 - **Leveraging:** It is evident that other donor inputs and activities complement the food provided by WFP, thereby strengthening the positive results of school feeding. Donor support—including government-sponsored support—was given for health services in



57.19 percent of the schools; for materials and books in 46.34 percent; for school infrastructure in 35.91 percent; and for teacher training in 35.53 percent.

4. In 1999, 11.9 million children in 52 countries were beneficiaries of school feeding. In 2000, WFP school feeding reached 12.3 million schoolchildren in 54 countries; in 2001 there were just over 15 million beneficiaries in 57 countries.

FUNDING

5. In 2001, the Governments of France, Honduras, Italy and Switzerland, and the European Union (through the European Commission Humanitarian Office [ECHO] and EuropeAid) made contributions specifically to WFP school feeding operations. In addition, a Japanese non-governmental organization (NGO), a private Japanese donor and the Cargill Corporation have contributed. Canada has stated that it will continue to support the deworming efforts. In 2002 so far, the Governments of Andorra, France and Germany, and the United States Friends of WFP have contributed to school feeding.
6. The 2001 donation from the United States Government to school feeding amounted to US\$96 million, assisting 23 countries. In 2002, the United States Government has offered WFP approximately US\$27 million to maintain school feeding operations. The final details of this 2002 contribution are still being negotiated on a country-by-country basis.
7. In May 2002, the United States Congress passed legislation with provision for the George McGovern–Robert Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program. This provision secures ongoing support to international school feeding efforts through 2011 and sets an initial level of funding at US\$100 million for 2003.

WFP SCHOOL FEEDING SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

8. In September 2000, a School Feeding Support Unit (SPF), comprising two professional staff, was established within the Strategy and Policy Division. The unit's activities to date are detailed below.

Global Survey of National School Feeding Programmes

9. Between May 2001 and April 2002, WFP gathered data regarding national school feeding programmes and related information for 153 countries worldwide. To conduct the surveys, WFP recruited 69 graduate students—representing 44 nationalities—from universities around the world to serve as “Survey and Advocacy Associates”. The Associates visited more than 140 countries to conduct the surveys in person and completed an additional 13 surveys without visiting the countries involved. With the surveys completed, the Associates continue to undertake advocacy work for school feeding.
10. The survey results have been compiled in a central database, which is available on WFP's website. To find the surveys, follow this sequence: www.wfp.org—“About WFP”—“School Feeding”—“Survey”. WFP is now working to develop query tools that will allow for more user-friendly data aggregation, reporting and comparisons.

Baseline Surveys

11. WFP developed and implemented a standardized baseline survey in each of the 23 countries resourced with the 2001 United States contribution. The baseline survey



indicators and questionnaires were developed in consultation, in particular with the Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance Project (FANTA) and UNESCO. The survey was pilot-tested in El Salvador and Uganda in August 2001. Between September 2001 and January 2002, the survey was conducted in all 23 countries. Some 4,004 questionnaires were completed manually, and quality control reviews were conducted in country offices and regional bureaux. The questionnaires were then forwarded to WFP Headquarters for data entry and preliminary analysis. A central database was established, and all the data has been entered. The first School Feeding Baseline Survey Report, containing core information for all 23 countries, was completed in April 2002.

12. Because the baseline survey was conducted primarily in schools where WFP had ongoing school feeding operations, and because data were gathered for a four-year period (1998-2001), the survey provides information that substantiates many positive outcomes from school feeding activities. It also raises new questions that will require additional analysis. For this reason, and due to the richness of the data and WFP's limited capability for additional analysis, other institutions were invited to assist with further analysis. Tufts University has assigned a graduate student to WFP to undertake additional analysis, and discussions for similar collaboration are proceeding with the World Bank, the International Food Policy Research Institute and other organizations.
13. Based on lessons learned from the preliminary experience in the 23 countries, WFP has undertaken to refine the survey tools and to automate and decentralize more of the future baseline and evaluation survey activities. The refined tools are ready for pilot-testing and subsequent use. The baseline survey needs to be undertaken in the additional 34 countries receiving WFP school feeding support.

Sustainability

14. In 2001 SPF undertook a desk study of available documentation on operations where WFP provided and then phased out of school feeding assistance. The study was supplemented by reviews of the current situation in the following countries: Brazil, Cape Verde, Jamaica, Paraguay and Swaziland. The reports of these reviews are summarized in WFP's publication, *Global School Feeding Report 2002*, and will soon be available on the School Feeding section of the WFP website.
15. In early 2002, a WFP school feeding team visited Japan to review the evolution of Japan's school feeding efforts. The review focused particularly on the question of how Japan had made the transition from being the recipient of external assistance for a post-war emergency school feeding operation, to having one of the most comprehensive and well-supported school feeding operations in the world.

Special Studies

16. Some issues related to school feeding require longer-term study and analysis beyond the capacity of WFP. The United Nations University (UNU) was invited to work with WFP on the identification of areas for research, and on the design and implementation of related studies. WFP convened a Stakeholder Meeting in London last year to discuss priorities for the research. Representatives from donor and recipient countries, international NGOs and the World Bank participated in this event, and the UNU facilitated it.
17. The three topics selected are the following: (i) What is hunger for school-age children and how can it be effectively measured? (ii) What nutrition problems can be addressed by school feeding and how can school feeding programmes best be targeted to address those problems? (iii) Have community and parental attitudes changed as a result of more girls



attending school, and if so, how? A follow-up meeting is scheduled at the end of this month in Copenhagen. Hosted by the Danish Government and WFP and presented with the assistance of the United Nations University, the meeting will bring together stakeholders and experts in the selected topics.

New Approach to Monitoring

18. WFP tested a new, satellite-based approach to monitoring in 2001. This approach uses special devices that are installed in schools. Teachers or other designated school officials insert key school feeding monitoring data, which are then transmitted monthly via the Argos satellite system. Data are collected at the *Collecte Localisation Satellite* (CLS), the main Argos “data collection centre”, located in France. The data are then made available to the participating national governments through either a website, electronic mail or hard copy, as appropriate. Only users pre-approved by the national government and provided with an access code have access to country-specific data.
19. Following consultation with relevant government authorities, the devices were pilot-tested in 11 countries where WFP is implementing school feeding programmes: Chad, Colombia, Côte d’Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Honduras, Mali, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Peru and the United Republic of Tanzania. The overall reactions were very positive, with some minor modifications proposed.
20. After an internal review of the results of the test phase, WFP arranged for an expanded pilot to: (i) test the system more extensively and for a longer time in order to assess true costs and technical issues, and (ii) obtain usable monthly data from a correct sampling number of schools in at least two countries before the end of 2002.
21. The Government of France has donated funds to support the pilot-testing of this new system.

Deworming

22. The World Health Organization (WHO) and WFP, with support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the World Bank, collaborated to activate deworming treatment for millions of schoolchildren in association with WFP-supported school feeding. Twenty-one African countries participated in three workshops held in Uganda and Côte d’Ivoire in April and December 2001, respectively. Representatives from the Ministries of Health and Ministries of Education from all 21 countries were trained in those workshops on implementing deworming programmes, and they were assisted in preparing country-specific implementation strategies.
23. Upon WHO and WFP approval of each country’s plan, up to US\$50,000 from a CIDA grant to WFP was allocated for the pilot phase of the treatment programme. Several countries who participated in the first workshop now have deworming programmes under way. Those who participated in the later workshops received approval and funding and are preparing for the start of activities.
24. It is expected that most of the participating governments will be able to pay for the treatment through funds from other sources, especially those designated for school health activities within World Bank education loans and grants.
25. In April 2002, WFP hosted the second annual meeting of the Partners in Parasite Control (PPC). This WHO-led alliance of interested parties is working to improve collaboration and resources to expand deworming and other parasite control efforts worldwide.



INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP ACTIONS

26. In 2000 and 2001, WFP worked with UNESCO, the World Bank, UNICEF, the United Nations University, WHO, FAO, the International Food Policy Research Institute, key branches of several donor governments (for example, the *Centre National d'Etudes Spatiales* of France, the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, and the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology), several universities, interested NGOs, private-sector entities and foundations in the context of the global school feeding campaign.
27. The World Bank is working with WFP and WHO in support of deworming and iron supplementation activities in Africa. WFP and the World Bank are pursuing other opportunities for collaboration, especially in the areas of data gathering and analysis; in-school feeding and take-home rations for HIV/AIDS and war orphans; school infrastructure; and child health and nutrition. WHO and WFP are working with others to implement deworming activities.
28. UNICEF, already an important partner, assigned a professional staff member to work with WFP's School Feeding Support Unit for 12 months, with the goal of bringing about more concrete cooperation. The UNICEF staff member began work in April 2002.
29. WFP has expanded its collaboration with international and local NGOs. In addition to normal consultations and working agreements, the Afghanistan emergency triggered a series of consultations and a partnership for school feeding that may serve as a model for work in other countries. In December, WFP hosted a meeting in Islamabad, bringing together agencies and NGOs that were active in education in Afghanistan or with the education of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. The discussion centred on how food aid could be used to support education in Afghanistan under a new emergency operation. A second meeting was organized to discuss how to partner in the implementation process. Ministry of Education officials of the Afghanistan Interim Authority attended the meeting, along with some 45 representatives of local and international NGOs and relevant agencies. This consultative process is continued now at district and local levels during the implementation of the operation.
30. During the WFP-NGO consultations held in October 2001, WFP invited the participants to comment on the priorities identified in the Stakeholders Meeting and to consider being active partners in subsequent studies. WFP also invited NGO participation in the reviews of school feeding phase-outs, in testing the Argos monitoring device, and in HIV/AIDS-related school feeding activities.

