



Rome, 21 - 24 October 1996

DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD APPROVAL

Agenda item 8 a)

PROJECT MAURITANIA 055 (Exp.7)

(WIS No. MAU 0005507)

Assistance to the basic education sector

Duration of project	Four years
Average annual number of beneficiaries	52 000 pupils
Total food cost	4 791 150 dollars
Total cost to WFP	8 713 061 dollars

All monetary values are expressed in United States dollars, unless otherwise stated. One United States dollar equalled 136 ouguiyas (UM) in February 1996.

For relevant statistical data, please consult the WFP country profile for Mauritania, which is available on request.

ABSTRACT

The Second Regular Session of the Executive Board took note of the Country Strategy Outline (CSO) for Mauritania. WFP assistance will be targeted to food-insecure populations in rural areas that face food supply difficulties and where school enrolment rates are lowest.

This project represents WFP's seventh contribution to the education sector since 1964. The expansion involves children attending primary schools in the rural areas of six regions where attendance rates are lowest (particularly among girls). The areas concerned are marked by low agricultural production, and the inhabitants are very low-income earners who are cut off from the overall economy. Food aid is intended to improve conditions of study for the schoolchildren and to harmonize attendance rates.

The project is in line with the Government's priority of education for all by the year 2000 and fits in with the Government's poverty-alleviation programmes.

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Delegates and observers are kindly requested to bring it to the meetings and to refrain from asking for additional copies.

NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Contains recommendations for review and approval by the Executive Board.

Pursuant to the decisions taken on the methods of work by the Executive Board at its First Regular Session, the documentation prepared by the Secretariat for the Board has been kept brief and decision-oriented. The meetings of the Executive Board are to be conducted in a business-like manner, with increased dialogue and exchanges between delegations and the Secretariat. Efforts to promote these guiding principles will continue to be pursued by the Secretariat.

The Secretariat therefore invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document, to contact the WFP staff member(s) listed below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting. This procedure is designed to facilitate the Board's consideration of the document in the plenary.

The WFP focal points for this document are:

Regional Manager: Mrs V. Sequeira tel.: 5228-2301

Desk Officer: Mrs J. Wagner tel.: 5228-2381

Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Documents Clerk (tel.: 5228-2641).

ANALYSIS OF PROBLEMS

1. The Government's 1986 reform of educational and administrative structures triggered a strong social demand for education, but this was in contrast with the lack of facilities for accommodating a larger number of schoolgoers. The Ministry of National Education's (MEN) 1994 budget increase enabled the enrolment rate to grow by 13.35 percent as compared with 1993, with basic education accounting for 40 percent of current spending on education. Between 1990 and 1993, the number of children attending the first year of basic school increased from 33,000 to 57,000, i.e., from 48 percent to 88 percent of the six-year-old school population.
2. Out of a total of 13 regions, the enrolment rates in the six poor regions of the country's eastern and river areas are well below the national average, i.e.: Hodh Charghi -- 45 percent; Hodh Gharbi -- 47 percent; Assaba -- 45 percent; Gorgol -- 49 percent; Brakna -- 57 percent; Guidimagha -- 46 percent. The 1994 national average was 71 percent.
3. Girls' enrolment rates are lower than boys' -- only 45 percent of total pupils. Awareness of the benefits of education for girls is particularly low among the populations of the river and eastern regions. Some 70 percent of Mauritanian women are illiterate as compared with 51 percent of men. Although enrolment rates in the six poorest regions improved substantially between 1991 and 1995, girls' rates lagged behind those of boys and those of girls in all other regions. Over the same period, the national average enrolment rate increased from 49 to 70 percent for girls and from 61 percent to 74 percent for boys.
4. In the least-developed rural areas, the Government is trying to encourage enrolment by grouping together small schools. Recognizing that school places are in short supply, the Government is planning to build 2,000 schoolrooms between 1994/95 and the year 2000, of which 75 percent are earmarked for the above-mentioned six poorest regions. Priority will be given to the reduction of disparities between regions deemed very poor and the rest of the country.
5. Independent smallholder households are considered to be the poorest population group (63 percent are extremely poor). They are characterized by a very low level of education, lack of professional training, and lack of access to credit and administrative support. In addition, they are at risk in terms of food security due to climatic factors (drought and insufficient production), demographic factors (population density) and to institutional reasons (lack of access to basic social services). In rural areas, 46.6 percent of agricultural households are headed by women. The low level of literacy of women thus constitutes one of the constraints on their productivity.
6. After three years of drought between 1990 and 1992, the three subsequent cereal harvests were relatively good, with production levels meeting some 43 percent of requirements. The structural food deficit remains, however. Desertification is continuing, leading to an exodus from the countryside and a strong concentration of rural populations below the 150 mm isohyet, i.e., in the southern part of the country. Gorgol, Guidimagha and the southern parts of Brakna and of Trarza have the highest rates of extreme poverty (60.6 percent). The eastern part of the country (Assaba and the two Hodhs) is more affected by extreme poverty (65 percent) than the centre (49 percent). In its 1995 Report on Human Development, UNDP listed Mauritania as 150th out of 174 countries.



7. According to a survey conducted in June 1995 (lean period) in Brakna, covering 426 schoolchildren aged between five and 14 in 11 villages, 42.4 percent were too thin (below the 10 percent mark) and 45.5 of six to seven-year-olds were anaemic. Schools hold classes both mornings and afternoons, and children are hungry during the midday break. If they go home they do not return for afternoon classes. Families in remote villages in the targeted zones face food procurement difficulties which are exacerbated by insufficient incomes.

Previous WFP assistance to the education sector

8. WFP assistance to the education sector began in 1964 and, with the approval of project Mauritania 055 (Exp.6), amounted to 26.6 million dollars. Before the reorganization of the educational system in 1986, WFP aid had had various objectives: i) helping the Government increase the number of scholarships granted to boarders in secondary education; ii) from 1970, providing pilot aid to 30 school canteens in the basic education sector, and afterwards, in 1973, to 86 canteens. With project Mauritania 055 (Exp.6), WFP assistance was for the first time integrated into an overall national government strategy.
9. During 1995, WFP discovered a number of irregularities in the way commodities were distributed after their arrival at the central warehouse in Nouakchott. Some food was being passed to the commercial sector and sold illegally. The Director of WFP's Office of Inspection travelled to Mauritania to conduct an investigation, and the Government, with the help of police, undertook an inspection and conducted an internal review of the activities of officials responsible for the project. As a result, several people were arrested and sent to jail and the project's director was replaced. Authorities earmarked two million ouguiyas to the project to assist targeted schools in the poorest areas of the six regions involved in the future project. In July 1996, the Government was preparing to reorganize the project's territorial coverage, thus improving execution capacity and school facilities.
10. A WFP/UNESCO technical mission (see Annex I) found that the canteens play an important role in rural areas. The authorities confirm that food aid has contributed to increasing school enrolment rates and encouraged villagers to accept the grouping together of small schools to optimize teachers' employment and salaries. Village groups and parent-teacher associations (PTAs) are dynamic and strongly motivated. The mission concluded that the presence of a simple refectory was essential to attract girls to schools in rural areas and keep up their attendance. Following a study financed by WFP in 1995, MEN agreed to set up a monitoring and evaluation unit.
11. Rural and poor population groups living in conditions of food insecurity have been identified in the Country Strategy Outline for Mauritania. The mission concluded that a year of drought could make the children's nutritional situation very precarious. A school canteen project targeting children in primary schools would mitigate the effects of such a disaster.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS

Long-term objectives

12. The project aims at furthering the Government's efforts to restructure education by targeting the six regions corresponding to the areas hardest hit by poverty. Food aid will assist the country's overall grass-roots development and rural poverty-alleviation programme.



Immediate objectives and expected results

13. The immediate results in the six regions targeted are to contribute to:
 - a) the stabilization of girls' rates of attendance and the reduction of absences after the midday break;
 - b) a homogeneous increase in attendance rates in the six targeted regions as compared with the 1994/95 national rates.
14. Over the project's four-year duration, the number of children enrolled should increase by 5,000 a year (with 45,000 pupils the first year and 60,000 the fourth year), of which 43 percent girls in the first year, 45 percent the second, and more than 50 percent in the final year. Girls should make up 50 percent of pupils from the beginning of the third year.

ROLE OF FOOD AID

Function

15. By providing a midday meal to all children enrolled at targeted schools, food aid will deliver a nutritional complement to pupils from generally poor and often very poor households (annual income below 24,000 UM) facing food insecurity. The food aid therefore encourages regular attendance. Meals served in school canteens encourage families to keep their child(ren) in school and contribute to the reduction of drop-out rates. WFP assistance also represents an income transfer to the parents of children using the canteens.

Food inputs and commodity justification

16. Rice is the leading cereal consumed in the country as a whole. In rural areas, households' consumption of cereals includes more or less equal quantities of rice, sorghum and millet. The midday meal almost always consists of rice, while sorghum or millet is eaten in the evenings. In 1995, a WHO/UNICEF survey of school-age children found that the leading staple consumed by the population was rice (94 percent); cereal consumption involves imported wheat (56 percent), and millet and sorghum produced domestically or in neighbouring countries (46 percent).
17. As niébé beans cannot be eaten daily (as a substitute for fish), the WFP food basket will, along with rice, include canned fish, vegetable oil and salt for the preparation of nutritionally-balanced meals. These should also be rich in calories, and protein, and their preparation should be simple and require little time and fuelwood. In addition, the ration will include tomatoes and onions, and vegetables and peppers purchased by the parent-teacher associations or provided by families. Depending on local availability and preferences, and on WFP resources, fish might be substituted by locally-produced beans. This could lead to a major budgetary saving.
18. Schools are closed on Fridays and Tuesdays. Classes are held in the mornings and afternoons for the 180 days of the school year. The rations supplied by WFP will be eaten at midday, five days a week, in the following proportions: 150 grams of rice, 30 of canned



fish, 15 of vegetable oil and two of iodized salt. The cost of purchasing the ration locally is some 36 UM per pupil. A total of 37,800,000 rations would be required for the four years of the project.

PROJECT STRATEGY

19. The Government has appointed the Minister for Planning to ensure coordination with WFP. MEN's Project Support Directorate (DPA), which looks after school canteens and health and nutritional education, will be responsible for project implementation. The Directorate consists of two services -- the Food Service and the Health and Nutritional Education Service (ESN). The Food Service is charged with: i) programming requirements in collaboration with the WFP country office in Nouakchott; ii) monitoring food management; iii) supervising extended delivery points; iv) managing non-food inputs and the canteens; v) overseeing the mobilization of counterpart funds by the community at the canteen level; and vi) preparing reports for WFP. ESN is responsible for training and for the production of manuals on health and nutritional education.
20. A national commission made up of the directorates of basic education, of planning and of the project will, in collaboration with WFP, examine before the beginning of each school year how the beneficiary schools are distributed among the six regions. This review will take account of the enrolment rate for each region and the expected impact of canteens on school attendance. Project execution in the targeted regions will be managed by the Regional Directorate for Basic Education (DREF). The DREF will be responsible for managing the commodities and for their distribution to beneficiary schools, and is responsible for preparing reports to the DPA in Nouakchott. At the regional level, each department will have a departmental inspector for basic education (IDEF) who will be responsible for monitoring schools from an educational and administrative point of view, as well as the canteens. At the individual canteen level, the school head, assisted on a voluntary basis by a teacher/manager, will be responsible for managing food stocks and cash contributions. At the village level, a local management committee chaired by the school head and including parents and municipal representatives will monitor the canteen and mobilize the counterpart funds needed to purchase extra food items and fuelwood (the counterpart contribution amounts to between five and 10 UM per child per meal).
21. In order to take part in the project, the commune and the PTA concerned must jointly undertake to support their canteen. The PTA, assisted by the commune, will also pay for canteen staff, for the rent of a storeroom if necessary, and for the establishment of a refectory. The latter must not be a schoolroom where classes are held.
22. Before the launch of the project the DPA must provide the WFP country office with a list of beneficiary schools and with the number of children (boys and girls) attending each school before first year of the project. The list for the following year should be updated annually by April at the latest. Criteria for selecting the schools are listed below (see paragraphs 26 to 28). Acceptance of a school as a participant in the project will be subject to WFP approval after checks have been made that the basic preconditions were met, i.e.: availability of a simple refectory for girls, water- supply, the formal commitment of the commune and the support of PTA. Lastly, MEN's monitoring and evaluation unit must be in place before WFP agreement can be given to the notification of readiness following the signature of the project's plan of operations. During the project's second year, a technical mission will assess results in order to submit a report to the Executive Director on efforts



made and results achieved in increasing the participation of girls. In 1997, WFP's Office of Inspection should complete a report on measures taken by the Ministry of Education to prevent misappropriation of commodities as in 1996 and to avoid such events recurring.

Food aid logistics

23. Commodities will be shipped to the port of Nouakchott and stored at the central warehouse (made available to MEN by the Food Security Commission (CSA)). They will be shipped every six months to extended delivery points (EDPs), i.e., to the six regional capitals where a CSA warehouse has been made available to the DREF, which is responsible for project stocks. WFP will contract commercial transport firms to do the deliveries. DREFs will be responsible for the receipt of commodities, for their storage in adequate conditions, and for their distribution to participating schools twice a year. The DPA will be responsible for programming requirements at the regional and school level; twice a year, a chart showing the six-monthly allocation of commodities will be sent to the DREF directors. Transport costs from the EDPs to the schools are the responsibility of the local communities and specifically the PTAs. The latter will also look after the school storeroom and make sure that minimum security and storage standards are met.

BENEFICIARIES AND BENEFITS

24. Direct beneficiaries are girls and boys receiving basic education in schools in the six regions. During 180 school days a year, a total of 37,800,000 rations will be distributed over the four years of the project. The annual number of beneficiaries will average 52,000 pupils.
25. Indirect beneficiaries are the families of the pupils benefiting from the project, who receive an income transfer, plus the cooks who are gainfully employed during the school year.

Criteria for the selection of regions and schools

26. The six regions selected (Gorgol, Guidimagha, Assaba, the two Hodhs and Brakna) correspond to the target areas set by the programme for poverty alleviation in rural areas. They are the poorest of the rural areas: they feature the highest number of illiterates, the highest population density, the lowest school enrolment, and the widest enrolment gap between girls and boys. In addition, they are areas with a potential for development.
27. Schools in the targeted areas will be invited to apply to participate in the project. Allocation of commodities will be conditional on the administrative communes and PTAs sending the DREF an annual commitment form. This form must include arrangements made for minimal norms regarding infrastructure (storerooms and simple refectories), food contributions and kitchen equipment and tableware, hygiene (availability water-supply, mats for refectories and classrooms). Any rural school (having a minimum of 30 pupils) situated in a backward area in the six regions targeted should be able to benefit from the project for all its pupils.
28. Schools will be selected according to a number of criteria: i) schools situated in remote or isolated areas where people need to be made aware of the benefits of education and where formerly socially deprived populations (e.g., landless labourers) are to be found;



- ii) villages whose fields are far away and where pastoralists practise transhumance; and
- iii) villages where schools have been regrouped.

PROJECT SUPPORT

29. Two current projects by the World Bank support the education sector. The first, (Education III, 13 million dollars) co-financed by the African Development Bank, covers the expansion of basic education and the reorganization of education in general. The second (nine million dollars) aims to assist technical and professional education. An expansion of "Education III" titled "Education IV" (35 million dollars) targets basic, secondary and higher education. It aims, among other things, to increase access to basic education in the same regions as those targeted by WFP. The Ministry for Planning is responsible for execution of these projects.
30. Kitchen utensils required for cooking and serving the meals should be provided by the PTAs and communes (See Annex II) or, if necessary, purchased in Mauritania with funds to be identified by WFP. Training of nutritional and health education personnel, as well as of management and monitoring-evaluation staff, will be mainly financed by WFP under its counterpart staff training budget.
31. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Reports made by school heads to the DPA and the Directorate of Planning and Cooperation (DPC) will serve as a basis for setting up a functional monitoring and evaluation system: monitoring forms will be attached to the quarterly reports on the canteens. The DPA and DPC will be responsible for forwarding the statistics to a monitoring unit and to the WFP country office in Nouakchott. This unit, whose creation is one of the conditions for the new phase of the project, will be located at MEN (DPA) and financed by the Government. It will be responsible for collecting, analysing and processing raw data from the reports.
32. Two kinds of data will be handled, i.e.:
- **quantitative:** covering chiefly the shipment and distribution of commodities; the number of beneficiary schools; the number of pupils (boys and girls); the number of PTAs established and active. Most of these data are already available to DPA, but there is still room for improving the collection and above all the processing and analysis of the data received;
 - the second type of data will serve to complement these statistics and will mainly concern the project's **qualitative** aspects. They will be collected in regular field visits through contacts with beneficiaries and individuals.
33. Two research studies financed by WFP in 1995, "The impact of canteens on girls' school enrolment" and "The setting up of a monitoring and evaluation system", reflect the monitoring-evaluation situation at MEN in January 1996. Interviews with teaching staff and PTA members will, among other things, allow the effect of midday meals on classes (attendance) and on pupils' attentiveness to be assessed.
34. Field visits will facilitate contact with beneficiaries, and further research studies will be undertaken. Regular checks must be made every school year to find out whether the conditions for the schools' participation in the canteen programme are being met. In order to



guarantee the observance of qualitative standards in the regions, two United Nations Volunteers (UNVs) will need to be recruited, one of them to be posted in Kaédi, with responsibility for Gorgol, Brakna and Guidimagha. A staff member of the Nouakchott country office will be appointed by WFP to ensure the M and E unit's work is up to standard (see breakdown of project costs below).

35. Introductory courses on monitoring and evaluation for government field staff will be held with the assistance of a specialist. They will help to identify any management problems regarding the canteens and to set up an improved system for checking and verifying the programme's qualitative and quantitative aspects.
36. **Logistics:** The total cost of land transport, storage and handling (LTSH) is estimated at 114 dollars a ton to EDPs. The sum of 849,186 dollars will be covered by the WFP LTSH subsidy. Given the poverty of the villages involved and the precarious nature of their resources, DREFs and the mayors of the communes will help the communities and PTAs raise the money needed to transport the food to each school. This cost is estimated at an average of 62.50 dollars a ton. WFP may contribute to reimbursing such secondary transport costs upon presentation of relevant documentary proof by the DREFs, co-signed by the PTAs. The documents must be approved by the monitoring and evaluation unit and countersigned by the WFP country office. WFP's contribution will be limited to a maximum of 31.25 dollars a ton (average) to be reimbursed every six months by the WFP regional bureau.

PROJECT FEASIBILITY

37. Results of the sixth expansion of assistance to the education sector confirm the project's technical feasibility according to the established criteria.
38. Girls' enrolment at schools may run into certain constraints such as distance between homes and school or socio-cultural problems such as early marriage, lack of suitable refectories, work to be done in the home and relationships between boys and girls.
39. The project's sustainability is dependent upon MEN's infrastructure and on the communities themselves, especially the PTAs, as well as on the communes' commitment to ensuring that the canteens are properly run.
40. Drought periods may affect the availability and supply of water and make the canteen programme more difficult to implement.

Environmental impact

41. Given the low income of the populations involved, wood and charcoal remain the least expensive fuels, while substituting wood with gas cannot yet be envisaged in rural areas.



DISINCENTIVES, DISPLACEMENT AND DEPENDENCY

42. Mauritania has a very high coefficient of food dependency and produces no more than 50 percent of the cereals it requires. Consequently, assistance to the canteens will have no disincentive effect on local production.
43. As regards food supplies to the schools, aid will have a positive effect as the schools involved are located in isolated rural areas and they would find it expensive to purchase food locally, especially as the products in question have to be imported.
44. Annual rations of the three main commodities supplied to pupils as food aid during the project are as follows: 1,417 tons of milled rice, 284 of canned fish and 142 of vegetable oil. These quantities represent some two percent of average annual domestic production of rice in the last five years and slightly under one percent of average annual oil production over the period 1990-93; the country is not a vegetable oil producer. Delivery of WFP food aid will therefore: i) probably have a negligible effect on production and domestic prices; ii) reduce the risks of loss on the domestic market to a minimum as the pupils, who are the direct beneficiaries of the project, will receive their rations at school; and iii) not be likely to displace commercial imports. Mauritania is in fact a major exporter of fish and WFP will therefore try to procure this commodity locally on condition it is available in canned form. As regards the other products, WFP's intended aid represents only a very small proportion of annual commercial imports.

PROJECT COSTS

45. The costs of the projects are as follows:

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN			
	Quantity (tons)	Average Cost per ton	Value (dollars)
WFP COSTS			
A. Direct operational costs			
Commodity ¹			
- Rice	5 670	290	1 644 300
- Canned fish	1 134	2 300	2 608 200
- Vegetable oil	567	950	538 650
- Iodized salt	78	190	14 820
Subtotal commodities	7 449		4 805 970
Transport			
- Ocean transport			809 400
. Superintendence			18 623
- Land transport, storage and handling (LTSH)			
. Transport from port of Nouakchott to EDPs			849 186
. Transport from EDPs to schools (estimated at 62.50 dollars a ton average, of which 50 percent WFP)			232 781



PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN			
	Quantity (tons)	Average Cost per ton	Value (dollars)
Subtotal direct operational costs			6 715 960
B. Direct support costs			
Non-food items			
– Crockery, kitchen utensils/refectory(see Annex I)			108 500
– Software for MEN headquarters			1 000
Training workshops (on WFP training budget)			
– First year (four workshops)			16 000
– Second year (two workshops)			8 000
– Third year (one workshop)			4 000
Project monitoring and evaluation			
– Local field visit costs (WFP personnel)			5 000
– Inter-agency evaluation mission (at half-way mark)			10 000
– WFP internal audit costs			5 000
– Cost of two UNVs (four years)			270 000
– Salary of WFP project officer			458 200
– ad hoc studies on beneficiaries			8 000
Subtotal direct support costs			893 700
Total direct costs			7 609 660



C. Indirect support costs			
– Contribution to ordinary office administrative costs (14,5% of A+B)			1 103 401
Subtotal indirect costs			1 103 401
TOTAL WFP COSTS (A+B+C)			8 713 061
GOVERNMENT COSTS			
– DPA administration costs: salaries and travel			257 300
– Support staff (warehouse staff, drivers, gardeners)			103 000
– Contribution to LTSH: warehousing in EDPs (six CSA warehouses available to MEN)			312 850
– Contribution of LTSH costs from EDPs to schools (50 percent of 465 563 dollars)			232 781
– Maintenance of DPA vehicles/fuel			58 900
– Monitoring forms, registers for schools, bookkeeping registers (printing costs)			20 000
– Training workshops			16 000
TOTAL GOVERNMENT COSTS			1 000 481
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (WFP, Government and communities)			9 713 542
WFP costs as a percentage of total project costs: 90 percent.			

¹ This is a notional foodbasket used for budgeting and approval purposes. The precise mix of products and exact quantities to be supplied to the project, as in all WFP-assisted projects, may vary over time depending on the availability of commodities to WFP and domestically within the recipient country.

COORDINATION AND CONSULTATION

46. This project was the subject of consultations with the ministries involved (Planning and MEN). Other donors involved in the educational sector were also contacted (World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and French Development Cooperation).
47. The project is in conformity with WFP's mandate: it provides food aid to the poorest rural families in the framework of assistance to the development of human resources. The project fits in with the Country Strategy Outline (CSO) examined by WFP's Executive Board in May 1996.
48. The formulation of the project was the subject of a technical review and appraisal mission undertaken by WFP and UNESCO. The project summary was examined by WHO and UNESCO and takes account of their observations.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

49. The project is recommended for approval by the Executive Board.



ANNEX I

SUMMARY OF MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TECHNICAL REVIEW OF PROJECT MAURITANIA 055 (Exp.6) AND FORMULATION OF PROJECT 055 (Exp.7) BY THE WFP/UNESCO MISSION IN JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1996¹

1. On the basis of its findings, the mission recommended a seventh expansion of WFP assistance to the education sector for a period of four academic years. Bearing in mind the Country Strategy Outline (submitted to the second Executive Board), priority should be given to:
 - a) promoting school enrolment and attendance (specially for girls) in the six regions where enrolment rates are low (Hodh Charghi, Hodh Gharbi, Assaba, Gorgol, Brakna and Guidimagha);
 - b) stabilizing school enrolment and attendance rates in those regions and reducing girls' drop-out rates.
2. Recognizing the dynamism and determination of the village communities responsible for the running of the schools and of the parent-teacher associations (PTAs) who look after the canteens, WFP will reimburse 50 percent of handling and delivery costs of commodities from EDP warehouses to beneficiary schools upon presentation of relative documents by MEN twice a year. In no case may the reimbursement exceed 31.25 dollars a ton. In order to facilitate the system of mobilizing funds by communities, PTAs and communes, MEN should set aside an annual budget for DREFs to cover all costs incurred between EDPs and the schools.
3. In order to set up a more efficient system for monitoring and supervising the programme and school enrolment -- including such aspects as attendance, the daily record of absences, drop-out rates and other significant data at the individual school level -- MEN should collect, analyse and process data from surveys and the quarterly and annual reports which it at present conducts. The unit should be closely linked to the WFP country office in Nouakchott.
4. Criteria for selecting areas and departments to benefit from assistance should be clearly defined in the Plan of Operations for the next phase. The number of recipients of rations is unlikely to increase very much during the project and it is therefore essential to select the poorest rural areas in future, where there are the highest number of illiterates, the densest population concentrations and the lowest school attendance rates, particularly of girls.
5. The Health and Nutritional Education (HNE) awareness and information programme run by inspectors and teachers should be kept up by DPA, as this way of educating population groups through schools remains an important priority. Given that a latrines construction

¹ The mission was made up of the WFP desk officer at the Regional Bureau (OMW), a UNESCO expert and a WFP nutritionist (consultant).



programme can only be run in close collaboration with the World Bank or other donors, the mission recommended that DPA coordinate its HNE activities with the World Bank's "Education V" project. The DPA should find out where the wells and latrines to be built under that project are located.

6. As WFP will no longer support a monetization component for infrastructures, the PTAs should become more involved in the construction of refectories or rest rooms for girls. A refectory is important if girls are to eat in school canteens. Having a simple refectory available as distinct from a classroom where classes are held will be essential to the operation of the canteens in the future project. As far as possible, all beneficiary schools should be equipped with latrines for girls. Communes and PTAs should both commit themselves to support the canteens. The DPA should encourage more women to participate in the PTA committees.



ANNEX II

NON-FOOD ITEMS - Cooking and refectory utensils (for the new schools in the six regions)

Item	Quantity	Unit price (UM)	Total price (UM)
Large cast-iron pots	500	3 000	1 500 000
Pots	500	1 500	750 000
Drinking cups	15 000	200	3 000 000
Ladles	500	200	100 000
Knives	2 000	200	400 000
Buckets	3 000	750	2 250 000
Skimming ladles	2 000	100	200 000
Water jugs	500	600	300 000
Brooms	500	500	250 000
Basins (for washing hands)	1 000	1 000	1 000 000
Mats	2 500	2 000	5 000 000
Total			14 750 000

14 750 000 UM equals 108 500 dollars.

