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de Alimentos

**Executive Board
Second Regular Session**

Rome, 12 - 15 May 1998

PROGRESS REPORTS ON PROJECTS APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Agenda item 8



Distribution: GENERAL
WFP/EB.2/98/8-E/2

6 February 2009
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

PROJECT HAITI 5583.00

Agricultural rehabilitation and soil conservation in marginal mountainous areas

Total food cost	3,098,420 dollars
Total cost to WFP	3,965,771 dollars
Number of beneficiaries	10,700
Date approved	28 April 1995 ¹
Date plan of operations signed	12 December 1995
Date notification of readiness accepted	15 January 1996
Date of first distribution	8 April 1996
Duration of WFP assistance	Three years
Duration of project as at 31 December 1997	One year and nine months

All monetary values are expressed in United States dollars, unless otherwise stated. One United States dollar equalled 16.70 gourdes in December 1997.

¹ The project was approved by the Executive Director since its food value was below three million dollars. The present value is due to subsequent budget revisions.

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted for information to the Executive Board.

Pursuant to the decisions taken on the methods of work by the Executive Board at its First Regular Session of 1996, 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.

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PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT AND OF WFP ASSISTANCE

1. The long-term objective of project Haiti 5583 is to slow—and to the greatest extent possible, halt—natural resource degradation, thereby creating a sustainable base for increasing the productivity of land, expanding agricultural production, and improving living conditions in depressed mountain areas.
2. The immediate objectives are to support small farmers to:
 - a) carry out appropriately selected land conservation measures;
 - b) rehabilitate ravines and gullies in the related watersheds;
 - c) increase domestic water-supply through construction of individual and collective water tanks;
 - d) increase access to markets and social services in project areas through rehabilitation and construction of rural feeder roads;
 - e) rehabilitate degraded land through reforestation;
 - f) develop small-scale irrigation systems through micro-water catchments; and
 - g) train male and female farmers in sustainable land use, agroforestry, erosion control, water conservation techniques, plant production and gully treatment techniques.

IMPLEMENTATION

3. WFP assistance will serve as an incentive for smallholders to: a) undertake, on a self-help basis, soil and water conservation works and adopt improved land-use and agroforestry practices; b) participate in activities of collective benefit such as improving community infrastructure and water systems; and c) participate in skills-training related to these activities.
4. The project is funded through Canada's contribution to WFP for disaster mitigation and other multilateral sources. The project is executed by the Natural Resources Division of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), with technical assistance provided through a UNDP-financed project undertaken by FAO. The Government of Haiti agreed to allocate 26 persons directly to the project, together with additional skilled, administrative and other personnel and administrative costs. WFP provides logistical support and monitoring through internal transport, storage and handling (ITSH) funds. National United Nations Volunteers (UNVs) provide technical and management support and are financed by bilateral contributions and monetization funds.
5. It was initially intended that operations in the field would be carried out in close collaboration with NGOs. After numerous attempts to involve NGOs in the activities, the Natural Resources Division of MOA decided with WFP to involve the population directly in implementing project activities through participatory implementation committees, which were established in each selected commune with the support of local UNVs. This was to ensure a sense of ownership of the project. Direct implementation has proven to be the key to the success of the project.



6. The food and non-food item (NFI) logistics were entrusted to the National Agency for Cooperation with WFP (ONAPAM) up to July 1997, when the Government closed the warehouse as a result of administrative/staff problems and substantial c.i.f. losses. Since then, WFP has been in charge of the logistics. Food distribution in the project areas became the responsibility of the Communal Development Committees (CDCs) managing the eight communal storage centres.
7. The project aimed to involve some 10,700 direct beneficiaries in participatory food-for-work activities for an average period of 65 days a year. This would translate into indirect benefits for over 54,000 beneficiaries. During the first year of implementation, an average of 3,770 beneficiaries worked over nine consecutive months. This number of beneficiaries represents 96.9 percent of the target figure. Community participation in all activities ensured extensive consultation with the beneficiaries, who were selected on the basis of the topography and the environmental state of the communes in which they lived. Seven communes in three departments were covered.

FOOD MANAGEMENT

8. A total of 7,722 tons of commodities (2,592,000 rations) was allocated for this project for three years. Several budget revisions have taken place to include a donation of maize from Argentina and to substitute some cereals not in the food basket of Canada. The total commitment of food as at 31 December 1997 was 9,120 tons. (See Annex I).
9. During the first 21 months of the project, 73 percent of the commodities were delivered. This includes a bilateral maize donation of 2,500 tons, the major portion of which was monetized. The remaining commitment of 2,451 tons is to be delivered during the first half of 1998, thus satisfying the overall commitment for this phase of the project. Despite some difficulties encountered in the delivery of commodities during the first year of implementation, WFP managed to start up the project by borrowing commodities from other projects.
10. Private trucking companies have transported the commodities to eight communal storage sites. The beneficiaries have been responsible for transporting the food from their communal centres to final distribution points. In some locations, trucks have been hired to take the food closer to the beneficiaries. On many occasions, the large-capacity truck owned by WFP participated in the deliveries to lower transport costs, thus enabling the sums set aside for landside transport, storage and handling (LTSH) to cover the commodity delivery costs. The current LTSH rate should be revised for the new phase of the project because the warehousing and trucking costs have gone up since 1994, when the rate was initially calculated.

GOVERNMENT'S CONTRIBUTION

11. The Government's promised contribution to the project was 1.15 million dollars, but since the outset, the Ministry of Agriculture has never had an adequate operational budget. It is estimated that only 10 percent of the Government's contribution has been realized. The amount contributed, approximately 100,000 dollars, mainly consists of salaries of all personnel involved in the project. All other operational expenses have been charged to the monetization budget. The entire public sector in Haiti moved slowly during the second half



of 1997 because the Government was in a phase of transition. As of early 1998, the transition crisis continues.

EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE

12. During the first year of implementation, the Canadian Government, through the Inter-american Institute for Cooperation in Agriculture (IICA), and the Norwegian Government donated non-food-items worth 230,000 and 300,000 dollars, respectively. The materials lacking were purchased through the monetization funds. During 1996, UNDP financed five national UNVs; the value of the donation was 30,000 dollars, and WFP continued the financial support under Direct Support Costs. Technical assistance is provided through a UNDP/FAO project executed by the Natural Resources Division of the Ministry of Agriculture. The budget is approximately 500,000 dollars a year and project Haiti 5583 is the major recipient.

ASSESSMENT

13. Because of a lack of extension service personnel at the Ministry of Agriculture and suitable NGO partners, implementation has been entrusted to CDCs. These committees are comprised of community and agricultural leaders and locally elected officials, both women and men. The MOA's extension service still suffers from a chronic lack of qualified personnel. At the national level, the staff working in the counterpart office are very motivated and are doing the best they can, but the chronic lack of resources makes their work very difficult.
14. WFP and FAO conducted a management-technical review of the project in March 1997 to assess performance and make proposals for better implementation. The mission concluded that the project is achieving its objectives in broad terms despite several constraints. These constraints are mainly of an administrative, financial, political and social nature. The role of food aid must be assessed in terms of relief having been offered to extremely needy populations still gravely affected by the former embargo policies. Food aid has served the intended purposes and remains fully justified. The mission's recommendations are summarized in Annex II.
15. The WFP intervention with food aid in this sector is appropriate; Haiti suffers from a chronic food deficit and food aid works as a direct income transfer to the beneficiaries. It also has nutritional value. The ration size was discussed on many occasions during the first year of implementation. It was observed that the original food ration in the project summary was calculated using prices in effect after the international embargo of Haiti in 1994. Prices were artificially high. The beneficiaries complained continuously that the ration was too small (because of its low cost). This happened despite the efforts of the country office and the counterparts to encourage the idea that food aid, rather than being money-oriented, should be based on a participatory and voluntary approach.
16. Despite the shortcomings in the formal organization of project execution, the enthusiasm and willingness of the beneficiaries has greatly encouraged the project authorities to continue. On many occasions, the beneficiaries have continued communal activities even when food was not available. Also, the declining living standards of the rural Haitian population and the environmental emergency have left project executors little choice but to



continue. It would be unwise to wait for more favourable conditions before implementing this kind of project, given that environmental degradation continues year after year and farmers' incomes are steadily declining.

17. During the first 21 months of implementation, the project has concentrated on communal rehabilitation works, namely gully treatment, road rehabilitation and reforestation. During the second year of activities, additional emphasis was placed on training, as it was observed during the first year that the lack of knowledge among farmers is one of the main obstacles preventing the adoption of better agricultural practices. The empowerment of women during the second year has also been one of the most visible project results. During the first year, the communal committees were composed almost entirely of men, but at the end of 1997, women constituted nearly 50 percent of all committee members. In certain activities well over 60 percent of participants are women and in the communal rehabilitation or construction activities, women constitute approximately 40 percent of all project beneficiaries. Tailor-made workshops to motivate women have been conducted with very positive results. Efforts to increase women's participation will be made in the coming years within the framework of a broader WFP gender strategy to be implemented at the country level, building on these encouraging experiences.
18. Originally, it was planned to build mini-irrigation systems, tanks for potable water and other rural infrastructure under the project. In most areas, the construction of these has not been possible due to high material costs and lack of proper technical supervision. Annex III compares the project's targets with its achievements.
19. It was planned to monetize only 377 tons of the total food commodities allowed to the project, in accordance with the policies in place at the project's approval. This represents 4.1 percent of the project's total food basket. All the rest of the commodities are consumed by the beneficiaries who are involved in the community infrastructure and training activities. The monetization of vegetable oil was intended to generate funds to be used for essential non-food needs of the project. The monetization carried out so far has been cost-effective. The management of the funds was initially the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture. Owing to the Government of Haiti's lack of financial management capacity, all financial matters are now managed by the country office. A bank account is held by WFP under a trust fund agreement.
20. The c.i.f. value of the vegetable oil was achieved in the monetization process. A tender was conducted through a public announcement and sealed bids. To date, 236 tons out of the total of 377 tons has been monetized. The balance is to be monetized in early 1998. A total of 400,000 dollars has been generated and 238,475 dollars has been spent to date, or 60 percent of the planned amount (see Annex IV).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

21. The project's commodity commitments will be exhausted in mid-1998. The continuation of this project is foreseen as one of the basic activities of the Country Programme for Haiti, which was approved by the Executive Board in October 1997. An appraisal mission will plan the scope, nature and mode of implementation of the activities to be carried out in the forthcoming years so that the Country Programme operations can begin in mid-1998.
22. The recommendations can be summarized as follows:



- a) chronic lack of counterpart resources should be taken into account when the direct support costs for the new phase are planned;
- b) the skills training programme should be further expanded so that more technically advanced activities can be undertaken;
- c) to ensure maximum sustainability, project activities should include only those that are technically feasible and for which the resources can be found;
- d) to increase management capacity, counterpart training should be extended to the Ministry of Agriculture's technicians, many of whom have received no updated skills training since they took up employment;
- e) leadership and project management should be included in the training curriculum to cover all implementing community leaders, enabling them to improve the management of development activities in their respective communes. This will ensure the proper 'ownership' of the project and the direct involvement of beneficiaries in the decision-making process;
- f) WFP gender policies should be formally reinforced and gender-sensitive activities should be fully integrated in the future programme. Moreover, to fill the current gender gap, activities specifically targeting women will be included in the new phase of the Country Programme.
- g) The need for an integrated approach encompassing the agricultural, health and education sectors in the implementing communes should be taken into account when future activities are planned.
- h) In light of the increasing integration of activities, not only within the WFP programme, but within the United Nations as a whole, efforts should be made to promote interest in this programme, which could act as a catalyst to stimulate other United Nations agencies and larger NGOs to undertake joint development activities to help needy people.



ANNEX I



ANNEX II

SUMMARY OF THE MANAGEMENT-TECHNICAL REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONSEQUENT FOLLOW-UP

The management-technical review mission conducted in March 1997 recommended that the following constraints be overcome:

Constraint	Follow-up
1. Lack of counterpart funds at the national, department and community level	The lack is still there and no end to the financial crisis of the Government of Haiti is foreseen. DSC should be increased in the next phase to keep the activity operational.
2. Weak participation of certain MOA structures, lack of officers, lack of financial personnel, lack of logistics, and insufficient salaries	The administrative reform is on halt (as is the whole public sector). The counterpart office has been able to nominate 15 technicians to follow up project activities (as at October 1997).
3. Weakness of ONAPAM	ONAPAM was replaced with private warehouse provider in July 1997.
4. Frequent interruptions of operational funds, NFI and commodity deliveries	A problem encountered during the first year, but now corrected. In 1997, food and funds were more available. Norway donated a large NFI package for the project in late 1997. In the next phase, DSC should be made available .
5. Insufficient number of technical officers at the project directorate and over-utilization of UNVs to substitute for MOA personnel	During the second year, the UNVs have been assisting the Project Director at the national level. Their role is better defined.
6. Insufficient means of logistics and communication between field, MOA and WFP	No improvement foreseen, since there are no funds to provide transport and communications means.
7. UNVs not managed by National Direction	All UNVs report directly to the Project Director
8. MOA has provided the Natural Resources Division with too few technical supervisors	More have been provided as the Natural Resources Division had funds available.
9. Lack of qualified farmers to perform tasks requiring technical skills in the field	More training has been provided in 1997
10. The role of cash incentives and the size of the food ration have caused problems and should be restudied	The cash incentive has never been implemented due to resource constraints and would in any case conflict with a participatory approach. The food ration has had to be adjusted, as not all commodities have been available at all times.
11. Work norms do not provide a good basis for planning activities	The technical manual was revised in July 1997 to provide a better base for planning and monitoring and evaluation of activities.
12. The CDCs do not always manage the activities well	Leadership training has been provided and the tasks of the CDC are better defined. On several occasions, the Project Director has intervened and solved problems. More training for the committees is planned.
13. During the third year, a comprehensive evaluation should be carried out	Since the commodity commitment will be exhausted by mid-1998, it is envisaged that a project appraisal mission will be fielded to study the situation and to make recommendations for the future Country Programme activity implementation.



ANNEX III



ANNEX IV

USE AND PLANNED USE OF GENERATED FUNDS, 31 DECEMBER 1997 (dollars)

Budget lines	As per project summary	As per plan of operations	Expenses planned as at 31 Dec. 1997	Actual expenses	Balance
1 Monitoring and evaluation	75 000.00				
1.1 Central management costs					
1.1.1 Local travel costs		10 800.00	6 300.00	7 534.88	3 265.12
1.1.2 Office materials		8 100.00	4 725.00	464.31	7 635.69
1.1.3 Photocopies and supplies		3 600.00	2 100.00	587.48	3 012.52
1.1.4 Secretarial services		4 500.00	2 625.00	263.66	4 236.34
1.1.5 Other		9 000.00	5 250.00	7 966.12	1 033.88
1.2 Field monitoring					
1.2.1 Local travel costs		19 660.00	11 468.33	15 317.96	4 342.04
1.2.2 Office materials		9 000.00	5 250.00	2 843.13	6 156.87
1.2.3 Running cost of offices		18 000.00	10 500.00	19 118.99	(1 118.99)
1.2.4 Running cost of motorcycles		27 000.00	15 750.00	14 007.06	12 992.94
2 Capital purchases					
2.1 Motorcycles		15 172.00	15 172.00	15 172.00	
2.2 Generators		5 000.00	2 916.67	7 315.00	(2 315.00)
2.3 Communications equipment		20 000.00	-	-	20 000.00
2.4 Computers and printers		11 000.00	11 000.00	11 429.52	(429.52)
2.5 Office furniture		7 500.00	7 500.00	-	7 500.00
3 Training programme	25 000.00				
3.1 Training fees		75 000.00	43 750.00	42 382.45	32 617.55
3.2 Training material		9 000.00	5 250.00	2 176.26	6 823.74
3.3 Local travel costs		9 000.00	5 250.00	6 787.53	2 212.47
3.4 Other		3 000.00	1 750.00	1 904.90	1 095.10
4 Specialized manpower	25 000.00				
4.1 Monthly salaries		60 000.00	35 000.00	30 807.72	29 192.28
4.2 Local travel costs		15 000.00	8 750.00	9 871.16	5 128.84
5 Agricultural inputs					
5.1 Fertilizers, insecticides etc.	25 000.00	15 000.00	8 750.00	7 626.29	7 373.71
5.2 Materials	163 000.00	12 000.00	7 000.00	2 611.72	9 388.28
6 Transport and storage of NFI	10 000.00				
6.1 Purchase of storage containers		8 400.00	8 400.00	10 000.00	(1 600.00)
6.2 Transport of materials		9 000.00	5 250.00	12 602.80	(3 602.80)
7 Unallocated reserve	72 850.00	12 000.00	7 000.00	9 684.37	2 315.63
Total	395 850.00	395 732.00	236 707.00	238 475.31	157 256.69



FOOD COMMODITY SITUATION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 1997

Commodity	Commitment (tons)	Revised commitment	Delivered (tons)	Borrowings and repayments					Distributed	Losses	Stock warehouse	Availability in-country
				Borrowings 1996	Repayments made, 1996	Borrowings 1997	Repayments made, 1997	Balance to be reimbursed				
Soya-fortified corn meal	3 420 000			215 000				215 000	198 000	17 000		
Bulgur wheat	2 592 000											
Vegetable oil (monetization)	737 000	377 000	353 460						236 000			117 460
Vegetable oil (distribution)	194 000	194 000	130 279	39 000	27 000 ¹		12 000 ²		100 651	7 651	60 977	60 977
Canned fish	389 000	474 000	357 087						207 124	0 900	49 571	89 492
Pulses	389 000	389 000	237 970			47 350		47 350 ³	158 170	1 700	125 450	125 450
Maize (Argentinean)		2 500 000	2 500 000						1 790 000 ⁷	710 000		
Wheat flour		5 186 000	3 089 721		41 650 ⁴		49 000 ⁴	396 030 ⁵	2 274 150	155 831		659 740
Hard wheat				500 000					469 000	31 000		
Sorghum grits				52 500				53 000 ⁶	44 000	8 500		
Total	7 721 000	9 120 000	6 668 517	806 500	68 650	47 350	61 000	711 380	5 477 095	932 582	235 998	1 053 119

¹ Reimbursed to project Haiti 4111.

² Reimbursed to EMOP 5010.02 which had an outstanding loan with Haiti 4111.

³ To be reimbursed to project Bilateral 5795.

⁴ Reimbursement done in wheat flour but calculated as wheat equivalent from the hard wheat stock (ratio 1:32).

⁵ To be reimbursed to projects Haiti 4111 and EMOP 5828.

⁶ To be reimbursed from the first 1998 delivery.

⁷ Out of the 2,500-ton allocation, 1,642 tons monetized by the Government of Haiti, 148 tons distributed, and 710 tons as c.i.f. losses.

**PROJECT ACTIVITIES, APRIL 1996 TO DECEMBER 1997
COMPARISON OF TARGETS TO ACHIEVEMENTS**

Activity	As per plan of operations		Planned as at 31 December 1997			Achievements as at 31 December 1997		
	Outputs	Rations	Outputs	Rations	% of rations	Outputs	Rations	% of rations
Conservation/rehabilitation of soil	10,000 ha	n/a	5,833 ha	n/a	n/a	2,718 ha	n/a	n/a
Treatment of gullies	650 km	650 000	379 km	379 145	25.1	108 km	412 896	37.7
Construction of feeder roads	160 km	500 000	93 km	291 650	19.3	98 km	467 202	42.6
Construction of water systems	50 systems	200 000	30 systems	116 660	7.7	1 system	12 000	1.1
Reforestation	750 ha	250 000	437 ha	145 825	9.6	n/a	n/a	
Production of plants	3,750,000 plants	215 000	2.19 million plants	125 410	8.3	1,165,881 plants	201 312	18.4
Training activities	4,000 training days	30 000	2,333 training days	17 499	1.2	944 training days	n/a	
Construction of irrigation systems	350 systems	200 000	117 systems	116 660	7.7	735m3 of canals	2 883	0.3
Reserve	n/a	547 000	319,000 rations	319 065	21.1	n/a	n/a	
Total		2 592 000		1 511 914			1 096 293	
			Comparison with target (percent)		58.33			42.30

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE ACTIVITIES IN 1997 (percent)

Conservation/rehabilitation of soil (not calculated as no rations distributed)	
Treatment of gullies	40
Construction of feeder roads	40
Construction of water systems	n/a
Reforestation	n/a
Production of plants	65
Training activities	88
Construction of irrigation systems	n/a

Reserve

n/a
