

برنامج  
الأغذية  
العالمي



Programme  
Alimentaire  
Mondial

World  
Food  
Programme

Programa  
Mundial  
de Alimentos

**Executive Board  
Second Regular Session**

**Rome, 16 - 18 May 2001**

# REPORTS OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS

**Agenda item 7**

***For information\****



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## DEVELOPMENT PROJECT APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (1 JULY–31 DECEMBER 2000)— DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 05276.1 (former WIS no. 5276.01)

### School Feeding Programme with Community Participation in Socially and Economically Depressed Areas

Number of beneficiaries	95,000 (decreasing progressively)
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Duration of project	Five years
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#### Cost (United States dollars)

Total cost to WFP	4,003,252
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Total food cost	2,569,312
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Total cost to Government	3,655,288
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\* In accordance with the Executive Board's decisions on governance, approved at the Annual and Third Regular Sessions, 2000, items for information should not be discussed unless a Board member specifically requests it in advance of the meeting and the chair accepts the request on the grounds that this is a proper use of Board time.

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# Note to the Executive Board



**This document is submitted for information 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 point indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

Senior Liaison Officer, Latin America and Caribbean Region (OLC): Ms G. Segura tel.: 066513-2207

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 Conclusion

The Board took note, in document WFP/EB.2/2001/7-A/1, of WFP's assistance to primary and pre-school children in the border area with Haiti provided in order to strengthen the national school feeding programme.

1. The Dominican Republic shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. Covering over 48,000 km<sup>2</sup>, and with a population of 8.1 million, the Dominican Republic is the second largest country in the Caribbean.
2. Local production shortfalls of staple commodities such as rice and beans contribute to the national food balance deficit. The rice deficit is equal to 20 percent of annual consumption and the bean deficit is 30 percent. Major deficits are also registered for milk (60 percent of consumption) and wheat.
3. Although the Dominican Republic is considered to be a middle-income country, its per capita gross national product (GNP) was US\$1,750 in 1998 (UNDP Human Development Report, 1999) and the republic is ranked 88<sup>th</sup> on the UNDP's Human Development Index. It is estimated that over 50 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.<sup>1</sup> The eradication of poverty is a government priority. Many government-sponsored programmes have been designed to that end.
4. The rural population of the project area (in the western part of the country) is considered highly food insecure. The majority of households in this area cannot satisfy basic needs such as access to education and health services; nor do they have adequate or a sufficient number of meals each day. In addition, the population spends more than 60 percent of its income on food consumption, with some communities spending up to 80 percent. Between 15 and 20 percent of children under 5 in this area suffer from chronic malnutrition (low height for age). In isolated communities the illiteracy rate can reach 75 percent. Between 30 and 40 percent of the population is unemployed or informally employed; in some provinces the figure exceeds 45 percent. Living conditions in the border area, which covers about 8,450 km<sup>2</sup>, are very poor. The level of poverty there is alarming, and the infant mortality rate is 47 per 1,000 live births. However, infant mortality is higher still in many other areas, including San Juan de la Maguana, which reports a rate of 67 per 1,000 live births.
5. The aim of the project is to assist and strengthen the national school feeding programme. The project will be complementary to the existing government programmes, which will gradually incorporate the schools receiving WFP food. Moreover, the project will help to stabilize the attendance levels at the schools, reduce drop-out rates and increase the capacity of students to learn. The project will assist primary school and pre-school children of the border area with Haiti.

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<sup>1</sup> *Plan Nacional de Alimentación y Nutrición 1998–2005*, Government of the Dominican Republic, January 1998, p. 17.



6. Haitian immigrants make up a significant proportion of the border area population. Haitian children living with their families in the Dominican Republic regularly attend the primary schools (both officially and unofficially). Teachers are willing to receive them and integrate them in the classes. Given the proximity of the Haitian population at the border, children from Haiti daily cross the road that divides the two countries (called "the International Road") to attend schools on the Dominican side. The project will ensure that all children, regardless of their origin, are enrolled at the schools and provided with meals.
7. Food aid at the school level will benefit the poorest region of the country and ensure that short-term hunger does not inhibit the children's capacity to learn. The project will address priority 2 of the Enabling Development policy by allowing poor families to invest in human capital through education and training. The project will also pursue WFP's Commitments to Women by giving particular attention to the enrolment and attendance of girls and to the participation of mothers in local school committees.

