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INFORMATION NOTES

VISIT OF WFP EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS TO MOZAMBIQUE

2–9 June 2001



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INTRODUCTION

1. From 2 to 9 June 2001, a delegation of WFP Executive Board representatives undertook a mission to Mozambique to observe the WFP programme firsthand. The projects the Board members visited afforded them insight into the implementation of WFP programmes in the field and enhanced their understanding of food aid and development issues in general. The mission was accompanied by the Regional Director for Africa, the Regional Director for Southern Africa and other WFP professionals. The mission participants are listed in Annex I, the programme of the visit is in Annex II and the list of government officials and the United Nations and donor community with whom the Board members met is in Annex III.
2. The delegation met with the Foreign Minister; the Ministers of Agriculture and Rural Development, Education, and Women and Social Affairs; the Governor of Sofala Province; and staff of the Institute for Disaster Management. It found a high degree of government commitment to WFP's interventions in Mozambique. The top political leadership and district-level functionaries all showed deep interest in WFP initiatives. This confirms the observations of the mid-term evaluation of the Mozambique Country Programme (CP) regarding the high degree of ownership of the CP by the Government.

MOZAMBIQUE AND WFP

3. With an average per capita income of less than US\$250 per year, Mozambique is among the poorest countries in the world. Two thirds of its population live in absolute poverty. In the last decade, the country has begun to recover from nearly 20 years of destructive warfare, and growth rates have been high. However, the economy remains heavily dependent on agriculture and is vulnerable to natural disasters. Severe drought followed by dramatic flooding in 2000–2001 wreaked havoc on the food supply and caused large numbers of people to flee their homes. Most Mozambicans are ill equipped to cope with such disasters. Fifty-eight percent of the population is illiterate, and the rate is even higher for women. At 17 percent, Mozambique has one of the highest rates of HIV/AIDS prevalence in Africa. HIV/AIDS drains the economy of its most productive workers and strains the social structure with the burden of caring for the sick and for children orphaned by disease.

WFP's Country Programme Strategy

4. The WFP Country Programme is aimed at reducing short-term hunger and helping the Government achieve its goal of eliminating poverty. It focuses on disaster mitigation, education and health projects. The current Country Programme for 1998–2001 has reached a level of US\$63 million and has targeted 1,189,000 beneficiaries, using 129,310 tons of food. It is 100-percent funded, although problems obtaining funding have delayed implementation.
5. The next five-year Country Programme will retain the same basic strategy, albeit with greater emphasis on education and a new focus on HIV/AIDS mitigation and disaster mitigation through the Food Fund. The CP is projected to reach a level of US\$39.8 million, with a contingency fund of US\$19.7 million for supplementary activities in school construction and school feeding.
6. In February 2001, heavy flooding occurred along the Zambezi River valley. Heavy rains also caused flooding along the Buzi and Pungue Rivers in Sofala province. When it became evident that the flooding would occur, WFP pre-positioned food supplies in affected areas,



greatly facilitating the relief effort. It also extended emergency operations that were already under way in Mozambique when the floods occurred and is now feeding more than 230,000 people.

VISITS AND OBSERVATIONS

7. The south and central areas of Mozambique are the most vulnerable and food insecure areas of the country. Accordingly, Board members' field visits were to Sofala and Maputo Provinces.

Relief and Resettlement

8. The delegation travelled by air to Beira to the internally displaced persons (IDPs) camp near Mutua and continued overland to the relatively remote Guara-Guara resettlement area. Large numbers of IDPs remain in the camps, although many may return to their villages as the flood waters recede. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) distribute food aid to affected populations, concentrating on particularly vulnerable groups such as women and children.
9. The Government is seeking to encourage the IDPs' resettlement to higher ground but has difficulties in securing suitable land. The community in Guara-Guara provides cement floors and tin roofs to 600 families, but no water or electricity. However, residents told Board Members that they were pleased with the improved access to schools and the health centre, and are thus more likely to stay than to return to easily flooded locations.
10. It was abundantly evident to the Board Members that the swift response to the floods for which WFP was being widely praised was owing in large part to WFP's presence in the country and the availability of commodities from the Food Fund.
11. It was also felt that while WFP's support to flood victims through the EMOP should continue, it was important that it move beyond emergency relief to strengthen relief-recovery-development linkages.

Education and Health Projects

12. In Mozambique, where 70 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, human resource development is a pillar of the development strategy. Despite strong support from the Government and other development partners, over 60 percent of the adult population in Mozambique is still illiterate.
13. The uncertainties surrounding the progression from primary to secondary and tertiary levels of education and the apparent failure to recognize the correlation between education and becoming an active economic actor in the society tend to create a disincentive for rural people to pursue education beyond the primary level. Therefore, there is need to focus on qualitative aspects and to make education more functional.
14. It is difficult for the Government to deliver educational services in rural areas where the population is spread out. The drop-out rate is especially high for girls, who are the first to be withdrawn from school when their families suffer a crisis. WFP's school feeding intervention has undoubtedly improved school enrolment at the primary and secondary levels.
15. Board members visited food-for-work activities involving school construction. The members observed that the construction of the structures was rather elementary, with the walls built of sticks plastered with mud. The structures had no floors and their roofs were of



corrugated tin. For seating, the schools did not offer even the minimal comfort of benches, let alone chairs and desks. Teachers informed the Board members that they were glad just to have a roof over their heads.

16. Community members and government officials alike cited improvements brought by food-for-work construction activities. One recounted the story of an expectant mother who had lost her baby when she was taken to the hospital (15 km away) perched on the handlebars of a bicycle. While the new health centre visited at Chigubuta lacked most amenities, it would provide life-saving emergency medical advice much closer to the community and possibly prevent such deaths. The Government planned to train a health professional for approximately two months to serve at the clinic.

School Feeding Programme

17. Twenty percent of WFP's resources in Mozambique are dedicated to school feeding programmes. WFP school feeding activities support the Government's objective of expanding access to education while improving the quality of education.
18. In order to continue their education, secondary students must attend boarding schools. Despite having a name that connotes luxury in developed countries, in Mozambique these facilities are overcrowded and offer the bare minimum in comfort. Although the schools cost their boarders only US\$30 per week, this fee is far beyond the reach of two thirds of the population, who live in absolute poverty. WFP programmes reduce the financial burden this fee places on poor families.
19. The delegation visited both primary and secondary schools benefiting from school feeding. Positive results of these programmes were obvious, although government officials could not provide statistics documenting their effect on enrolment, academic performance or gender balance.
20. Although therapeutic feeding programmes are being phased out, Board members noted evidence of malnutrition in many children in Mozambique. They visited the primary school run by the Sisters Maria Auxilliadora, where school lunches were provided to more than 300 children, and the Centro Saude Polana, a health point in Maputo, operated by a Spanish NGO, where dozens of mothers with infants participate in a supplementary feeding programme.

HIV/AIDS

21. The HIV/AIDS epidemic is concentrated in rural areas along refugee, migration and trade routes. Mozambique is beginning to feel the effects of the epidemic as the number of able-bodied workers in agriculture declines. HIV/AIDS further impoverishes households as members sell assets to pay for the care of sick or for funeral expenses. Also, the number of HIV/AIDS orphans has burdened the already over-extended family network.
22. Activities to reduce HIV/AIDS prevalence have been initiated and will be coordinated through the UNDAF theme group. WFP activities emphasize prevention and the provision of information as well as direct assistance to those affected by HIV/AIDS. School feeding activities also target the growing number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS.
23. The WFP staff in Mozambique conceded that like most other development agencies, the Programme is experimenting with various interventions to find an appropriate niche consistent with its comparative advantage. The Board members were informed that in line with the recommendations of mid-term evaluations, future actions in this regard would be determined in concert with the UNDAF HIV/AIDS theme group in the context of a



broad-based, long-term programme approach encompassing production, education, training and income-generating activities.

Food Fund

24. The Food Fund is an interesting concept envisaging substantial flexibility for carrying out bottom-up, community-driven micro-development projects. Micro-projects under the Food Fund range from traditional food-for-work projects to school feeding and assistance to the HIV/AIDS-affected population. The Fund is not fully operational yet owing to an initial delay in receiving food commodities and because the food commodities were used for emergency relief purposes. Though welcomed by the communities, ongoing activities under the Fund represent random and isolated development interventions and will need to be integrated in the overall development framework of the target areas in order to have enhanced impact.

RECOMMENDATIONS

25. In order to make education an effective tool for the creation of human capital in Mozambique, it is important to give adequate attention to its “quality”, particularly by making it more functional. This would require further strengthening of collaboration with other specialized agencies, such as UNICEF and UNESCO.
26. A poverty-reduction strategy in an economy dependent on agriculture requires strengthening of the commercialization of production systems through enhanced commercial linkages between small producers and markets. Poor physical infrastructure in Mozambique has impeded market integration by increasing the transaction costs for small farmers. WFP should take the initiative in supporting building of rural infrastructure such as feeder roads, minor irrigation schemes and rural growth centres through its Food Fund activities.
27. The dearth of skilled people at the provincial and village levels to facilitate preparation and implementation of development initiatives at the grass-roots level is a serious obstacle to poverty-reduction efforts in rural Mozambique. WFP should give more importance to training local counterparts who deal with development matters, including food-based interventions.
28. Community mobilization is important for empowerment and for creating a sense of local ownership. Emphasis should be placed on forming community groups to increase beneficiaries’ bargaining power. WFP may consider boosting its cooperation with local NGOs willing to work in poor areas.
29. The presence of Mr M. Aranda da Silva—Director, Regional Bureau, West Africa—as a resource person greatly facilitated the team’s understanding of the situation on the ground and provided a unique insight into the socio-cultural and politico-economical milieu in which WFP was operating in Mozambique. WFP may consider the viability of having such a resource person accompany Executive Board members in future visits.
30. The Board members found that Junior Professional Officers (JPOs) performed very useful work by filling in staffing gaps. Discussions with some JPOs revealed that they found it useful to spend time at Headquarters before being sent to the field. They further pointed out that some of the work assigned to them was technical in nature and that they did not always possess the requisite qualifications to perform such work.
31. It was noted that northern Mozambique produced sufficient food for the whole country, but that transportation to food-insecure areas was a major obstacle. WFP may consider the local purchase of food as more feasible.



32. Inter-agency coordination in Mozambique requires further strengthening. Specifically, the three Rome-based agencies must find ways to collaborate with one another, as all three have programmes and projects in the country.



ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Mr M.S.M.A. Harbi
Counsellor
Embassy of the Republic of Sudan

Ms Rachel Refilohape Ntsinyi
Ambassador of the Kingdom of Lesotho

Mr Adnan Bashir Khan
Agriculture Counsellor
Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Mr Mohammad Mejbahuddin
Counsellor
Embassy of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Ms Ana María Navarro Arrúe
Permanent Representation of the Republic of Cuba

Mr Johan Sorensen
Head of Section
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Copenhagen, Denmark

Mr Risto Lokka
Department for International Cooperation
Unit for Humanitarian Assistance
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Helsinki, Finland

Mr Alexander V. Yakimushkin
Alternate Observer
Permanent Representation of the Russian Federation

Mr Hideya Yamada
First Secretary
Embassy of Japan

Ms Carolee Heileman
Minister Counsellor
United States Mission to the United Nations Agencies



ANNEX II

PROGRAMME FOR THE WEEK

Sunday – 3 June 2001

Arrival

Monday – 4 June 2001: Maputo City, Meeting with counterparts

- 09.00 Briefing on WFP programme—current and proposed
- 10.00 Meeting with Foreign Minister
- 12.30 Working lunch with UN Country Management Team
- 14.30 Meetings with key counterparts: Ministry of Education and Ministry of Women and Social Affairs
- 16.00 Meeting with key counterparts: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Institute for Disaster Management (INGC)

Tuesday – 5 June 2001: Sofala Province: Beira

- 09.30-11.30 Briefing on Beira Sub-office and the Emergency Operation—flooding 2001.
- 11.30-12.30 Meeting with the Sofala Governor/INGC
- 14.30-15.30 Visit to Food Fund micro-projects in Beira—Association for Mozambique Children (ASEM).
- 15.30-16.00 Meeting with activists from ADPP Esperanza (*Ajuda Desenvolvimento Populacao para Populacao*)—HIV/AIDS sensibilization project.

Wednesday – 6 June 2001: Sofala Province: Dondo/Buzi

- 09.15 Visit to camp area of displaced persons in Mutua (floods 2001—Pungue River). Meeting with Dondo's Administrator
- 12.00 Arrival in Guara-Guara and meeting with district administration
- 12.15 Visit to Guara-Guara resettlement area (floods 2000)
- 14.15 Visit to FFW projects in Chindo—school construction



Thursday – 7 June 2001: Maputo

- 08.40 Visit to Kindlimukas Office
09.15 Travel to the Estaleiro
09.45 Visit to Kindlimukas income-generating activity—Estaleiro
10.05 Travel to the resettlement area
10.45 Resettlement site—Magoanine in Maputo City
14.30 Visit micro-project in Maputo—Centro Saude Polana
16.30 Press conference
18.00 Cocktails hosted by WFP Representative

Friday – 8 June 2001: Maputo Province: Namaacha

- 08.30-09.30 Travel to Namaacha
09.30-10.45 Discussion with district administration and key members of the District Food Fund Committee
10.45-11.30 Visit to the day feeding school Maria Auxilliadora
11.30-12.15 Visit to the community forest site
12.15-14.00 Lunch with key members of the District Food Fund Committee at Hotel Pequeno Lebombos
14.45-15.30 Visit to the Chigubuta primary school construction
15.45-16.15 Visit to the health post construction in Porto Henrique

Saturday – 9 June 2001:

- 14.30 Departure



ANNEX III

**GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND UNITED NATIONS AND DONOR
COMMUNITY****Government Officials**

Mr Leonardo Simao
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

Mr Alcido Nguenha
Minister of Education

Ms Telmina Pereira
Vice-Minister of Education

Mr Antonio Chambal
National Director of Administration and Finance, Ministry of Education

Mr Virgilio Juvane
National Director of Planning, Ministry of Education

Mr Joao Carilho
Vice-Minister of Agriculture

Mr Sergio Gouveia
National Director of Agriculture

Mr Boaventura Nuvunga
Deputy National Director of Agriculture

Mr Silvano Langa
Director, National Institute for Disaster Management

Ms Virginia Matabele
Minister of Women and Social Affairs

Ms Antonia Xavier
National Director for Planning
Ministry of Women and Social Affairs

Mr Duarte Joaquim
National Director of Social Coordination
Ministry of Women and Social Affairs

Mr Avelino Munhemeze
Director of Cooperation
Ministry of Women and Social Affairs

Mr Felicio Zacarias
Governor of Sofala Province

Ms Marta Valente
Administrator of Namaacha District



United Nations Country Management Team

Mr E. de Casterle
United Nations Resident Coordinator

Ms Marie-Pierre Poirier
UNICEF Representative

Ms Solange Kouo Epa
WHO Representative

Mr Georgis Georgi
UNFPA Representative

Ms Brigitte Jallof
UNESCO

Mr Peter Vandor
FAO Representative

Ms Arcilia Barreto
UNHCR Representative

Mr James Coates
World Bank Representative

Mr Arnim Schwidrowski
IMF Representative

Donor Community/Ambassadors

Mr Thomas Schjerbeck
Ambassador of Denmark

Mr Juhani Toivonen
Chargé d'Affairs, Embassy of Finland

Mr Yoshihiro Nose
Ambassador of Japan

Mr Vladimir V Zernsky
Ambassador of Russia

Mr Eduardo Gonzalez Lerner
Ambassador of Cuba

Mr Dani Ceuninck
Counsellor for International Cooperation
Belgium Consulate

Ms Cynthia Rosell
USAID Director

