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FROM CRISIS TO RECOVERY

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted for consideration 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.

The WFP focal points for this document are:

| | | |
|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Chief, SPP: | D. Spearman | tel.: 6513-2601 |
|-------------|-------------|-----------------|

| | | |
|----------------|----------|-----------------|
| Senior Advisor | D. Hines | tel.: 6513-2233 |
|----------------|----------|-----------------|

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INTRODUCTION

1. Recovery from natural and man-made crises will continue to represent one of the major challenges confronting humanitarian and development agencies in the coming decades. Since 1980, over 50 countries have faced major protracted conflicts; many are still ongoing. Currently, about 35 million people are displaced in 30 low- and middle-income countries. Accompanying this population displacement and exposure to violence is the erosion of social structures and human capital; damaged housing, schools, health facilities and infrastructure; and reduced productive capacity. The magnitude of crises is apparent in the profile of WFP beneficiaries. In 1996, WFP assisted 16 million internally displaced people, 4.5 million refugees and 4.1 million victims of natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods and droughts, about four million people more than the 20.7 million reached through development projects.
2. The international community has responded to the proliferation of crises with a range of relief, peace-keeping, rehabilitation, disaster mitigation and development measures, in addition to exploring new mechanisms for coordination. The result has been a shift of aid away from development towards those in need of relief assistance. For example, official development assistance (ODA) devoted to relief increased from two percent in 1989, to approximately ten percent in 1994 (World Bank, 1997). For WFP, this shift has been significant; in 1989, 70 percent of WFP's resources went to development and 30 percent to relief, whereas in 1996, 70 percent of the Programme's assistance was targeted to relief needs. In Rwanda the total cost of three months of conflict, including relief assistance, is estimated at the equivalent of over a decade of ODA (World Bank, 1997).
3. WFP's extensive experience in protracted or complex emergency situations has demonstrated that traditional relief responses—treating a crisis as essentially an abnormal short-term event distinct from development—is often inadequate in addressing the real needs of people who are trying to stabilize and secure their livelihoods in a conflict situation. Development activities in support of a humanitarian effort can help prevent further deterioration in social and economic structures, establish foundations for recovery and reconciliation, and help to avert future conflict-related emergencies.
4. Experience with emergencies triggered by natural events such as earthquakes or drought also demonstrates that responses to these crises are often not a one-time short-term effort. Because crises resulting from natural phenomena and resource degradation affect both immediate food consumption and longer-term production, longer-term approaches are required; responses which include prevention, preparedness and early warning measures are needed.
5. WFP work in recovery situations directly supports Commitment 5 of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, in particular, objectives 5.4 b) and c), which call for strengthening linkages between relief operations and development programmes, and fostering the transition from relief, through recovery, to development.

6. The United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) supports the necessity for complementary relief and development actions, and the development of strategies that better integrate relief and development programmes. WFP's dual mandate of providing relief and development assistance places it in a key position to assist, in tandem with partners, in the transition from crisis to recovery. Through its interventions WFP collaborates with the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and acts in ways that promote access to food for vulnerable people.
7. The purpose of this paper is to set out policy and operational issues that confront WFP in supporting the transition from crisis to recovery. It highlights the need to formulate a recovery strategy to assist in bridging the gap between relief operations and development programmes. It also addresses measures needed to support a smooth transition to recovery, for example, staffing requirements, funding arrangements and appraisal/design and monitoring mechanisms. Finally, recommendations are presented.

LESSONS LEARNED

8. Background work for the preparation of this paper included a review of: the current literature on humanitarian relief, with a focus on issues pertinent to linking relief and development; and rehabilitation policies and strategies, including those of: the Commission of the European Communities, Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (DAC/OECD), FAO, IFAD, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, now the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF and the World Bank.
9. The review highlighted that the idea of linking relief and development is appealing but the practicality of securing relief/development linkages is hampered by a number of factors. Among the most important are: the often inherent conflict between the short-term perspective of relief and the longer-term focus of development; coordination in the field, links between humanitarian and development organizations and the need for integrated strategies; the tendency to unduly postpone the introduction of developmental activities; the unpredictability of relief assistance from year to year; and the difficulty of securing funding for rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery.
10. In addition, lessons were summarized from WFP's more than 20 years of assistance to crisis-affected populations through two recent WFP initiatives:
 - a) missions to Angola, Cambodia, Mozambique and Sudan which examined recovery issues in complex emergency operations;
 - b) a series of in-country case studies which examined development, transition and relief programmes: Ethiopia, Guatemala, Kenya, Mali and Pakistan.
11. Participation in the missions included FAO, ILO, UNESCO and WHO.
12. The following six lessons were the most important ones drawn from the literature review and WFP's wide practical experience in recovery and rehabilitation.

Lesson 1. Recovery is haphazard, uneven and complex

13. The uneven and haphazard nature of emergencies poses challenges for individuals, communities, local governments and donors as they make the transition from relief to recovery. Transition to more development-based approaches will be uneven, moving back and forth between relief/recovery and recovery/development, depending upon the security and stability in the affected area and the immediate needs of affected groups. Both complex (for example Rwanda and Angola) and “chronic” emergencies (for example Afghanistan and Sudan) tend to merge relief, recovery and development until the divisions between emergency and development become blurred.

Events in Angola over the past decades illustrate that the transition from relief to development is more a pendulum than a continuum...Intermittent periods of relative peace permitted rehabilitation activities to begin in fits and starts, more successfully in some areas than others. WFP Rehabilitation Angola Case Study, 1997.

Lesson 2. There is a need for a strategy to integrate developmental approaches in relief and recovery

14. Relief and development are not explicit, unrelated phases. The provision of basic relief items (food, immunizations, water and shelter) has indeed saved millions of lives, but relief programmes can achieve more if a longer-term strategy, incorporating developmental approaches, is formulated. This is the conclusion not only of WFP, but also of its partners. Moreover, it is important to introduce developmental approaches and activities early on in the crisis, even if a strategic planning process is not in place.

A UNHCR review of its reintegration programme in Mozambique stated: the impact, sustainability and cost-effectiveness of the UNHCR operation might have been strengthened in a number of ways. In terms of programme planning, the review argues that the formulation of a reintegration strategy should have started earlier, given greater attention to links with longer-term development agencies.¹

Lesson 3. Prior planning is important for logistics operations

15. Rapid assessments of transport infrastructure prior to the initiation of WFP food operations are important for determining the level of resource mobilization required for logistics and in identifying weak links in the delivery chain of relief aid.

The operation in the Caucasus demonstrated that prior planning and the establishment of coordination mechanisms makes the flow of food aid less erratic and less costly, and reduces losses, thus ensuring a better chance of donor confidence and support. Summary Evaluation Report, EB.2/97/5/Add.4.

¹ Rebuilding a War-torn Society - A Review of the UNHCR Reintegration Programme for Mozambican Returnees, UNHCR, July 1996.

Lesson 4. Situation-specific responses work best

16. Recovery approaches are most successful when they are situation-specific in addressing persistent food consumption constraints after the initial emergency situation; are tailored to meet immediate and longer-term food needs of targeted women and men; and include flexible responses. Some of the most successful recovery programmes incorporated approaches such as: working with and through local institutions; consultation with local people about their perceptions and needs; community participation in planning, implementation and monitoring; and linking activities with ongoing programmes.

The Cambodia operation developed situation-specific approaches, in the transition from relief to recovery, which moved away from general food distribution as quickly as possible, integrated target groups into food-for-work projects and tried to match target group needs with activities. WFP Cambodia case study, 1996.

Lesson 5. Standards need to be adopted for recovery

17. Recovery interventions can lay the foundation for development to take place in the future. Activities may be based on developmental approaches, but the expectations, standards and impacts during recovery will be more modest. The generally accepted development programming concepts of sustainability, return on investment, risk, technical standards, phasing out, institutional take-over capacity, and criteria for monitoring and evaluation need to fit the actual conditions of crisis and recovery in specific locations. A rural road built during recovery may be less sophisticated than one built as part of a rural road development project with a major technical assistance component. Nevertheless, the road may serve the immediate needs of a community and lay the base for a better road in the future.

In Sudan, WFP assisted in the reconstruction of destroyed schools using local materials which could be obtained by parents. From the onset it was realized that given the materials, the life of the buildings would be most likely only around five years and would be at risk to future attacks. These constraints were accepted by parents as part of the process of rebuilding children's lives in a war situation. WFP Rehabilitation Sudan Case Study, 1997.

Lesson 6. Funding arrangements need to facilitate recovery

18. There is a recognition that inadequate coordination in planning and resource mobilization by relief and development communities has resulted in gaps, delays and even duplication of efforts. Moreover, recovery activities are often supported through short-term funding arrangements—generally of about 12 months—favouring projects that demonstrate a quick impact and are administratively and technically simple. Under such arrangements there is less scope for interventions which have capacity-building potential.

The funding issue is very important in considering rehabilitation in Sudan. NGOs strive to push the boundaries of what donors will accept in order to develop more flexible, creative and longer-term responses to drought.¹

¹ Harvey, Paul. Care, Rehabilitation and Greater Horn Project: Rehabilitation in Sudan. IDS, 1997.

BUILDING ON LESSONS LEARNED—OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

Recovery – Restoring Livelihoods

19. In a relief situation, WFP's mandate is to save lives. When this has been accomplished, the next aim of a WFP food-aid-assisted recovery programme is to enable people to restore their livelihoods in order to assure immediate and longer-term food needs.
20. Recovery interventions have the potential to achieve more than just returning to the status quo. In fact, returning to the status quo—recreating conditions that led to the outbreak of war or drought—is usually not desirable. WFP can contribute to the process of transforming insecure, fragile conditions into durable, stable situations with activities that:
 - a) meet the food needs of the most vulnerable through targeted assistance;
 - b) rehabilitate cases of acute malnutrition in mothers and children;
 - c) rebuild self-reliance and restore positive coping mechanisms;
 - d) restore social cohesion and human capacity, capitalizing on the important contributions of women in these processes;
 - e) develop better access to food by strengthening local food distribution and marketing systems;
 - f) restore/create productive capacity and physical infrastructure to provide direct benefits to targeted groups, address constraints to household food security (specifically labour and energy constraints) and free income and time for further developmental activities.
21. To the extent possible, recovery builds upon humanitarian assistance by conserving or improving upon local capacities and avoiding a significant deterioration in services to populations. For example, in camps for IDPs, people have access to sufficient food and health care. The same should be assured during the resettlement process. Conversely, recovery aims to reduce any perverse effects of humanitarian aid. Attention should be given to progressively removing distorting actions (e.g. dependency on relief inputs) by introducing self-help and payment mechanisms and removing the economic substitution role of aid and agencies.

During periods of crises, such as drought, when the Government of Ethiopia receives large amounts of relief aid, assistance is channelled to disaster areas; development activities are expanded according to existing plans to employ larger numbers of affected, but physically able people through food for work. Development activities designed to prevent future disasters continue to be implemented, averting famine and hunger, linking relief and development and avoiding dependency on free food distribution. WFP Ethiopia case study, 1997.

When Does Recovery Begin and End?

22. There is not a precise moment to signal the transition from an emergency response to recovery. Recovery is not a sequential process, rather one that overlaps with both emergency and development assistance due to:
 - a) **The complex needs associated with emergencies and war.** Conflict situations are characterized by: a significant number of war-related deaths; the collapse of social and physical infrastructure; large groups of the population forced out of production; and high

numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons. Thus, different groups will have contrasting needs and require different forms of assistance. Special attention is required to ensure that the special needs are met.

- b) **The overlap between relief and development situations.** The needs of people who have been afflicted by natural or man-made crises are very similar to those of people living in absolute poverty, in adjoining or adjacent areas. Poor women, for example, have needs which correspond to those of women in crisis situations.
23. Staying too long in a pure relief phase can create distortions in economic and social structures, impede the rebuilding process and delay the emergence of locally based food supply systems. It is important to appropriately time the move to a recovery phase to:
- a) avoid dependency by responding to the decreased need for general free food as people develop self-reliance;
 - b) ensure the targeting of the most vulnerable and those most urgently requiring food;
 - c) support people in restoring their livelihoods and in meeting their food needs; and
 - d) prevent and mitigate future crises and enhance people's capacity to cope with crises.
24. The following conditions signal the opportunity for a WFP recovery response:
- a) **Food assistance is able to meet other needs.** After the immediate food crisis has abated, food may no longer be required for survival only. With pockets of relative security and political stability and greater access to groups in need, general free food distribution is gradually replaced by targeted help for selected groups. In Cambodia for example, food supported activities helped increase labour productivity and encouraged people to develop the capacity to address their own food needs in addition to meeting critical food needs.
 - b) **The emergence of different target groups with different needs.** Food insecurity increasingly becomes linked to specific target groups who are still not in a position to rely on pre-crisis coping strategies. New mechanisms are required to meet their different needs. For example, in Sudan WFP tailored its assistance to those unable to rely on traditional coping mechanisms: mothers and their children received supplementary feeding; WFP assisted farmers to begin again their agricultural activities by linking food deliveries and the distribution of seeds and tools; and in a third region WFP helped to secure access to food by strengthening markets.
 - c) **A decrease in the volume of food assistance required combined with better targeting.** In order to reach and meet the changing needs of afflicted people, more precise targeting and technical appraisal of activities are needed.
 - d) **A partial return to a functioning cash economy.**
 - e) **Less reliance on external food distribution and management structures.** During the recovery phase the need for relief structures decreases and can gradually be replaced by local government and reorganized community-based structures.
 - f) **Secure working environment.**
 - g) **Donor support for recovery and development.**

A STRATEGIC RESPONSE

A Recovery Strategy

25. The traditional approach to recovery has relied on emergency planning tools and practices, which by their nature incorporate a short-term perspective. Too little attention has been given to establishing effective development linkages at an early stage. It is critical that recovery and development objectives be integrated into the design of relief operations at a very early stage, so that the relief phase does not prejudice longer-term recovery and development or create dependency. A recovery strategy will allow WFP the flexibility to respond to changing situations and developmental needs within the contexts of protracted relief and recovery situations. It would need to be periodically reviewed and annually updated to consider changing circumstances.
26. A recovery strategy, including programme activities and a funding proposal, will mirror the country strategy outline and the country programme on the development side. The recovery strategy will explain the rationale for operating in protracted relief and recovery situations; define where food aid is an appropriate response and where it can be used effectively and efficiently to ensure adequate food consumption; identify recovery interventions which can promote the Programme's people-centred, gender-sensitive mandate; specify partners; and capacity-building and coordinating mechanisms. The funding proposal will cover up to a three-year period. Both recovery and development strategies and programmes may be part of WFP's activities in a particular country. However, there will be country situations where only a recovery intervention is appropriate, and conversely situations where only development is warranted. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, WFP will likely move from early recovery directly to phasing out, whereas in Mozambique WFP moved through recovery to a development programme. Table 1 shows the essential components of a WFP recovery strategy.
27. During the preparation of a recovery strategy, two important considerations are to be kept in mind: planning for a more comprehensive recovery or development programme and for exiting or down-scaling relief initiatives. A recovery strategy should assess the likelihood of resurgence of violence, loss of international support, changing needs of target groups, the continued appropriateness of food aid and the appropriateness of ongoing activities and risks. Mechanisms should be built into intervention approaches so that the operations and infrastructure of partner relief organizations can be scaled down in the transition from relief to recovery. Similarly, donors must be wary of creating vested interests in relief aid.

TABLE 1 - ELEMENTS OF A WFP RECOVERY STRATEGY

Situation analysis - WFP country offices would develop an understanding of:

The political, economic, social, security and environmental context of the situation; gender roles and relations; market stability

The potential role of food aid

Target groups and their respective needs

Implementing partners and their comparative advantage

The longer-term implications of short-term relief strategies

Demographic, economic and environmental problems resulting from large-scale displacement

Risk assessment - WFP country offices would assess the:

Probability of set-back and reversal and the ability of beneficiaries to recover from loss

Security situation and the potential effects of proposed interventions from the point of view of women and men beneficiaries and aid workers

Interventions that can help to overcome tensions and lead to recovery and reconciliation

Programme response - WFP country offices would identify:

Immediate and longer-term programme priorities and objectives

How food aid can help to reach these objectives

Small-scale and pilot activities, which consider women's skills and needs, that can be undertaken relatively quickly and have the potential to become larger-scale interventions

Partners and assess their capacity

Programmes for gender and capacity-building

Appropriate funding arrangements

Success indicators - WFP country offices would identify elements which could influence the success of the strategy, for example:

Capacity of women and men to identify and address their needs

Integration of immediate and longer-term needs

Ability to deliver food to those in need

Ability to meet recurrent costs

Coordination mechanisms amongst agencies, authorities and NGOs

Participation of beneficiaries and the allocation of benefits to men and women

The formulation of a feasible exit strategy

Coordination

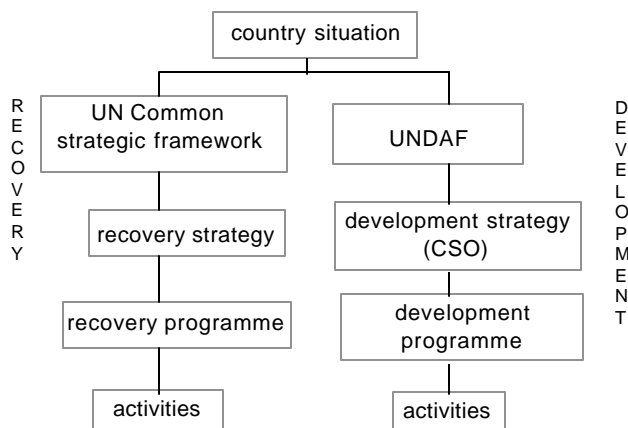
28. In times of conflict, the need to adopt common strategies and approaches is especially important. Yet it is often difficult to achieve coordination that includes longer-term objectives, given the large number of humanitarian and development agencies in some operations and the lack of development actors in others. The Consultative Committee on Programmes and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) has identified the need to expand the involvement of partners to include the Bretton Woods institutions, bilateral and multilateral donors and NGOs, in addition to United Nations humanitarian and development agencies (ACC, 4/11/1997).

29. WFP is committed to working in consultation with partners and strongly supports coordination in-country and within the international community. In both recovery and development, WFP will work to develop effective coordination in planning and resource allocation by working through inter-agency mechanisms, such as the United Nations Common Strategic Framework and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Diagram 1 shows the linkages

between WFP recovery and development assistance and other United Nations strategic processes.

30. The notion of a United Nations Common Strategic Framework is a useful starting-point for addressing the many issues and challenges inherent in a recovery programme as well as the linkage between relief and development and the establishment of priorities at an early stage in the process. Ideally, a common approach will also allow multilateral agencies to incorporate the goal of reconciliation into their recovery activities in a more integrated and comprehensive way.
31. WFP participates in and contributes to the preparation and implementation of the United Nations Common Strategic Framework. During the preparation of a recovery strategy, WFP will ensure a link between inter-agency initiatives and WFP support for recovery. This coordination will promote more efficient and effective use of existing resources and improve collaboration between recipient authorities and partners. In addition, WFP will participate actively in inter-agency consultations to expand the scope of the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP).
32. Where a United Nations Common Strategic Framework does not exist, WFP can help to lay the groundwork for one with the preparation of a WFP recovery strategy. In the process of preparing its strategy, WFP will maximize the use of existing mechanisms including the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator systems.
33. WFP will work with its sister United Nations agencies (FAO, IFAD, ILO, UNICEF, UNDP, etc.) and donor partners to create collaborative arrangements in which these agencies help WFP to support and implement technically sound and well-targeted food aid interventions. However, WFP should not compromise its mandate to address the food needs of the poorest in order to work with available partners in areas that are not food insecure.

Diagram 1
Country Assistance Elements



Targeting

34. The efficient and effective use of resources in protracted emergency and recovery situations is directly linked to targeting. The challenge is to distinguish between those households which can cope with little or no assistance, without missing those most in need. Such efforts will be affected by problems of access, insecurity and unreliable information, as well as logistic and cost

constraints. WFP may not be able to reach all people in need of food. However, country offices will participate in needs assessments to determine which population groups require food assistance, for how long, what type and how much food. This information will allow planners to better determine when to move from general to a targeted distribution, when to reduce the size of food rations and to retarget needy groups on an annual basis.

Interviews with women and men refugees from Mauritania and their host communities in Mali revealed differences in needs and preferences between men and women, refugees and residents. Women refugees stressed their demand for activities which transfer skills and provide employment, such as soap-making and small trade. Refugee men indicated that support to agriculture and animal raising and employment opportunities were of primary importance to them. The resident population identified the need for more durable assets, particularly irrigation structures and community infrastructure. These differences point to the necessity of identifying target groups, and undertaking gender specific problem analyses and needs assessments before identifying activities to be supported through food aid. WFP Mali case study, 1996.

35. Appropriately deciphering regional and localized differences in vulnerability in order to target communities and vulnerable groups is a large yet crucial task. The fact that there are clear distinctions between population groups in terms of the risks they face, their coping strategies and their relative needs highlights the importance of targeting methodologies that can distinguish between geographical zones and, in some situations, households.
36. WFP experience in crisis situations has demonstrated the effectiveness of developing minimal data sets and a three-tiered targeting approach which defines zones of vulnerability, as well as food-insecure communities and households.
 - a) **Regional level:** Ongoing vulnerability assessment such as the joint FAO/WFP crop assessments, working with available secondary data, WFP VAM analysis, and composite household food economy surveys to identify geographical zones of vulnerability, for example, at the district level;
 - b) **Community level:** More localized targeting techniques, for example, rapid rural assessments (RRA) and participatory rural assessments (PRA) to identify vulnerable communities. These assessment methodologies provide the basis for identifying villages in selected districts, provide detailed information on food availability, food consumption, coping strategies and causes of food insecurity;
 - c) **Household level:** Community-level approaches, based upon existing social structures, to identify the most vulnerable and assist in food distribution. Women's organizations and village relief committees are effective mechanisms for identifying vulnerable households as well as causes of food insecurity.
37. Even streamlined targeting methodologies and procedures involve intensive staff time and training. Targeting effectiveness and efficiency will need to be evaluated against costs to determine the appropriate level of targeting for different stages in each recovery intervention.

Capacity-building

38. WFP recognizes the need to effectively build and utilize local capacities at all levels: government and national authority counterparts, NGOs, beneficiary communities and the beneficiaries themselves. Capacity-building is an essential component of recovery programmes, enabling WFP to effectively reduce vulnerabilities, strengthen coping mechanisms and increase the role of communities in governance. This takes time, training, resources and a coordinated, forward-looking approach. Support for capacity-building would be built into the Consolidated Appeal Process and a capacity assessment will need to complement the vulnerability assessment.

Governments and national authorities

39. Financial and technical capacity often pose serious constraints to viable partnerships with governments. Thus, the implementation of recovery activities generally requires some strengthening of government capacity, preparing for the implementation of later-stage recovery and development interventions.
40. If capacity is weak and resources are scarce, it generally makes little sense to create parallel government relief departments to handle emergencies. WFP will identify capacity-building needs and opportunities crucial to the implementation of food aid operations and address those needs within its capacity. A recovery strategy will specify what support to partner organizations is required.

NGOs

41. The transition from relief to recovery often involves a shift in implementing partners from international NGOs to different NGOs, typically local. Other arrangements are required to involve NGOs through, for example, tripartite implementation agreements, or working with local-level government and village structures. International NGOs should be encouraged to develop partnerships with local organizations, with the objective of obtaining broader-base capacity-building. WFP and international NGOs should assist in local NGO capacity-building in support of food aid activities.

Beneficiaries and their participation

42. The typical constraints in emergencies and post-war societies—the absence of legitimate political leaders, effective government administrations and intermediary institutions—render WFP's people-centred approach highly appropriate in recovery situations. Beneficiary participation is an essential ingredient to the successful and effective implementation of recovery activities. Through participatory approaches, WFP can initiate developmental activities which strengthen community organizational capacity for economic, social and physical recovery.
43. A key to moving from relief assistance to more developmental activities is to involve beneficiaries in identifying their basic needs, understanding constraints to meeting these needs, and in developing their own solutions. WFP-supported community committees demonstrate that both women and men can be involved in the distribution of food and the targeting of the most vulnerable, even during a relief response.
44. As the situation begins to stabilize, beneficiaries are able to increase their participation in terms of organization, management, and commitment, thereby promoting a sense of ownership in the activity and the asset created. It is also essential that, to the extent possible, people contribute to the activity, usually through their labour. Through the different stages of the recovery process,

beneficiary participation becomes increasingly defined in terms of such contributions by the beneficiaries themselves.

In Southern Sector of Operation Lifeline Sudan, relief food aid distribution takes place through Village Relief Committees, consisting of seven women and six men. In addition to better targeting, the committees have helped to empower women as decision-makers in the village structure. From preliminary findings, it would appear that the participation of beneficiaries, especially women, has yielded positive results and is supported by all parties involved, including the village chiefs, who previously had sole responsibility and accountability for food distribution. WFP Rehabilitation Sudan case study, 1997.

45. At the same time, a one-time intervention is insufficient to build village-level structures which can manage and replicate activities and assets. If a recovery intervention adopts participatory approaches, a longer-term planning horizon and a more integrated community development approach will need to be adopted early on in the process.

Coping mechanisms and capacity-building

46. In order to effectively assist crisis-affected populations it is essential to understand how people cope with crisis. Ill-conceived relief and recovery interventions can undermine existing coping mechanisms. Moreover, a lack of understanding of coping mechanisms opens the door to misuse of assistance. WFP and other humanitarian and development agencies need to be aware of the potential of local communities to respond to crisis. A number of studies indicate that support to the often subtle but effective coping mechanisms of affected communities enables people to help themselves and is one of the most effective means of overcoming hunger.¹ The link between capacity-building and support to coping mechanisms is an essential part of a recovery strategy.
47. Recovery strategies can play a key role in:
- a) Building and strengthening local capacity, involving communities in defining priorities and directing initiatives which generate longer-term benefits;
 - b) Restoring indigenous forms of social security and coping mechanisms; for example, households headed by women suffering from labour shortages in need of special support (start-up capital and organization of self-help groups).

WFP staff

48. The experience of WFP and its partner agencies has highlighted the need to introduce more development-oriented planning early in the emergency stage in order to develop and apply a proactive, coherent and strategic approach to recovery programming. Most agencies, including WFP, do not as yet mobilize the capacity to undertake this type of planning early enough. Often, the pressing demands of managing an emergency do not allow emergency staff to stand back and take a more strategic longer-term approach.
49. A forward-looking solution would be to assign recovery planning staff not long after the onset of an emergency, people with skills to develop a recovery strategy, and plan and implement more

¹ Lautze, Sue and Dr. John Hammock. *Coping with Crisis; Coping with Aid*. 1996.

development-oriented activities as opportunities arise. The key is to recognize and develop capacity to respond to recovery opportunities.

50. The transition to recovery may require temporarily assigning additional staff early on in an emergency – staff with broader experience; strengthening recruitment at the local level; phasing in transition staff with the departure of emergency staff; and/or training existing staff to undertake more development-oriented assessment and monitoring tasks. Recovery programmes will require staff with a profile to work in both relief and development situations, and training for staff to ensure that they are equipped to make the transition from relief to recovery.
51. The volume of food provided should not be directly equated with staffing levels, as there is not a direct correlation between volume of food and the staff required to use it effectively in different situations. Developmental approaches, intensive rapid assessments and monitoring increase the costs of an operation. In some cases, this will be offset by a decrease in total costs as general distribution gives way to more targeted assistance. In other situations, costs are more closely linked to the ease of access than to staff.

Activities for Recovery

52. Table 2 summarizes activities most likely to be suitable for recovery situations. These include:
 - a) employment through food-for-work activities which directly benefit targeted populations and restore food security;
 - b) support to restore production capacity and increase food production at the household level. Activities should be closely associated with reactivating positive coping mechanisms, income generation and restoring productive capacities by which households gain access to basic means of production;
 - c) supplemental nutritional programmes;
 - d) market support through local purchases, private sector involvement in food transport and delivery, social-market outlets and community-based activities such as small enterprises for both women and men;
 - e) enabling people to participate in education and skill training;
 - f) the maintenance of an emergency response capability to respond to set-backs;
 - g) the implementation of disaster-mitigation activities to reduce the impact of natural disasters during periods of conflict.

TABLE 2 - RECOVERY FOOD AID ACTIVITIES

| Early Recovery | | Late Recovery |
|--|---|--|
| Targeted free food distribution | Free food distributions to targeted vulnerable groups | Supplementary feeding |
| Supplementary feeding | Supplementary feeding | Risk reduction and disaster prevention activities |
| Activities to secure basic needs: Food, shelter, water | Support to coping strategies | Training: feeding at centres |
| | Low-input, low risk activities to support livelihood strategies – | Rehabilitation of schools |
| | livestock/fodder, grain/seed banks, ponds | Food for work: livestock/pasture, agro-forestry, roads |
| | Basic training | Agriculture-based activities to support food security |
| | Market support | Market support |

Assuring Appropriate Programme Quality

53. In recovery situations country offices and their implementing partners face a very real dilemma, that of responding quickly to the needs of target groups, while ensuring an appropriate level of technical quality in project activities. If activity feasibility and design is not properly assessed, there will be inadequate attention to the identification of the participants; the link between distributed food and work norms; and ensuring that the cost and design correspond to the local situation. Moreover, as recovery proceeds, WFP tends to take a less direct role in implementation, relying more on the capacity of its local partners, who show great variation in implementing capacity.
54. As part of a recovery strategy, the country office will work with local experts to modify or develop appropriate, context-specific standards to ensure that activities meet the identified needs of beneficiaries and to facilitate monitoring. These standards will be based on the need for: low-input and low-risk activities; simple design; and small-scale activities with potential for quick implementation. WFP would, under special circumstances, support the maintenance of restored/created assets during the initial stages of the recovery process. Specifically, the country office will develop:
- a) community/implementing partner participation in a feasibility review of proposed activity designs;
 - b) quick and easy mechanisms to assess the feasibility and monitor the progress of the food-assisted activity;
 - c) mechanisms to secure contributions from communities and partners to ensure their commitment;
 - d) appropriate technical standards, working with local experts and partner agencies;
 - e) training to communicate to its partners specific guidance on appropriate technical standards, emphasizing designs and material requirements suited to the situation; and

- f) criteria for the selection of implementing partners and means of assessing their technical capacity.

Sustainability

55. Given that recovery is an intermediary step meeting transitional needs, it will be nearly impossible to apply standard development criteria for sustainability. Sustainability in recovery is related to three main considerations:
- a) the primary emphasis on restoring self-reliance of affected groups and helping women and men rebuild their livelihoods with more independence and resilience to future crisis;
 - b) the need to programme for set-backs and reversals in certain situations and thus trying to minimize resource inputs to reduce risk; and
 - c) the process nature of sustainability in recovery. There will be a gradual incorporation of sustainability concerns, integrating social, economic, technical and environmental elements as appropriate. Social sustainability is an essential concern early in the transition process, as it is a strengthening of social structures that will allow people to emerge from and rebuild after a crisis.

Monitoring and Evaluation

56. As the process of recovery takes over from the acute emergency phase, the focus of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) will shift. The first priority should be to establish minimal information systems which can improve targeting and determine the appropriate ration level over the course of a recovery operation.
57. In order to understand changing beneficiary needs and to know when to initiate a change in food distribution, sufficient data must exist to support the development and application of food reduction strategies and a move from general to targeted distributions. Thus, it is important to establish a baseline and then systematically monitor the impact of the food ration and any changes in the nutritional status of crisis-affected populations.
58. As the transition proceeds to a targeted distribution with a greater emphasis on capacity-building, productive activities and support to livelihood strategies, data on direct nutritional effects gives way to information on coping strategies, effects of assistance on household food security and whether the people receiving WFP rations are the intended beneficiaries. This requires sufficient data on emerging coping mechanisms, nutritional status and food consumption, local food supplies and pricing mechanisms.
59. In recovery, closer monitoring of activities is required in order to ensure technical quality, usefulness of the asset, and that intended beneficiaries are benefiting from the asset. The usefulness and effect of an intervention are not necessarily a function of completing an activity.
60. However, in recovery situations, monitoring is restricted for a number of practical reasons: short project time frame; lack of security; and short notice and unforeseen priorities. These factors influence the quality of monitoring in a recovery situation and require adjustments in the design of monitoring and evaluation systems. As a minimum, WFP should be able to respond to the questions: which groups are benefiting from food assistance? how they are benefiting? and what difference food is making in the lives of women, children and men beneficiaries?

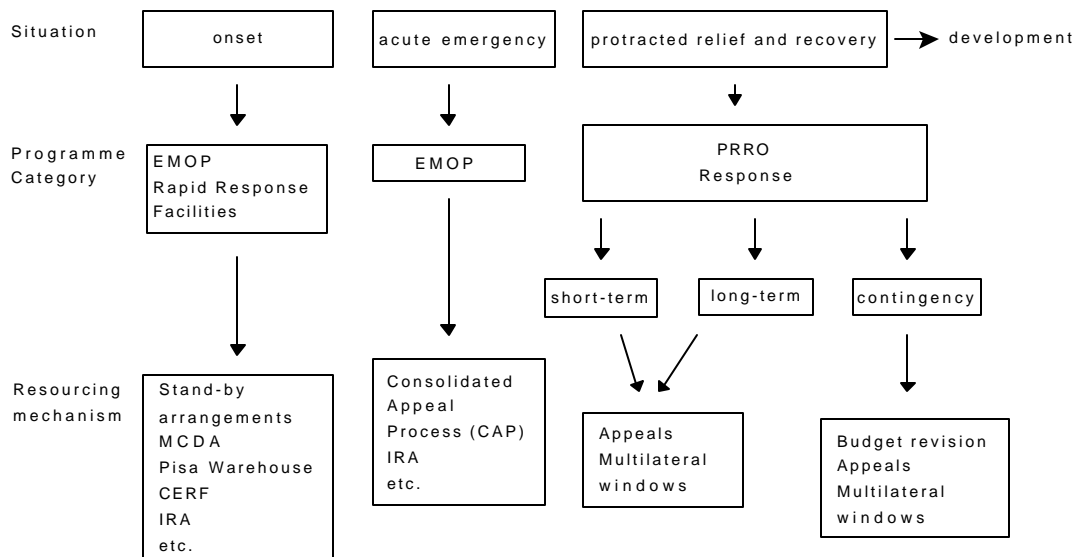
61. To respond to these questions more in-depth monitoring is required in recovery than in an acute crisis situation. To reduce costs, efforts will be made to undertake joint monitoring and evaluation activities with other United Nations agencies, donors and implementing partners and use secondary data sources when practical. However, the fact remains that cost and security considerations may prevent the optimal degree of monitoring.

FUNDING FOR RECOVERY

62. Recovery activities are normally funded through EMOPS and protracted refugee and displaced person projects/operations (PROS) which have certain drawbacks:
- a) short-term funding—generally of 12 months or less at a time—tends to promote quick action projects which have limited scope for longer-term impacts, for example those which have capacity-building potential;
 - b) some donor budgeting arrangements make it necessary for them to fund both relief and recovery activities from relief funds;
 - c) lack of flexibility to respond to recovery opportunities as they arise; and
 - d) short-term funding puts additional burdens on partner organizations with respect to proposal writing and reporting.
63. In recognition of these constraints, the Executive Board recommended an examination of procedures with the intent of streamlining the financial implications of WFP's recovery activities (Executive Board 3, 1996). As well, the Task Force on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD has, over the past year, been examining *inter alia* the need for innovative modalities for the allocation of resources for post-conflict assistance. It has also been one of the issues of concern for the current Secretary General of the United Nations during his first year in office. He stated that the inter-agency consolidated appeals process should be expanded to allow for the possibility of a bridging mechanism in order to facilitate a more integrated and holistic recovery process. In his July 1997 *Report on Reform in the United Nations*, he declared, "As the aim of humanitarian actions always must be to seek durable solutions, appeals for rehabilitation and reconstruction will be included in the consolidated appeal process, where appropriate, based on inputs from the United Nations Development Group".
64. WFP requires funding arrangements which will enable it to: secure longer-term financial commitments for recovery and plan situation-specific assistance in a more comprehensive manner. It is proposed, therefore, that the future EMOP programme category would be used to respond only to acute emergency needs and, except in rare circumstances, cover a period not to exceed two years. During the EMOP phase the country office would begin to develop a longer-term vision, even without a recovery strategy, to address possible recovery opportunities.
65. Country office experience has demonstrated that, realistically, a time of about six months is often required for operation start-up, and another six months is needed for the situation to stabilize, consistent with the current 12-month EMOP time frame. Over the next six-month period, the recovery strategy would be formulated to become operational no later than at the end of a two-year time lapse. If the situation allows, WFP will attempt to reduce the period required to prepare and operationalize the recovery strategy, thus shortening the time of the EMOP.

66. An operation would move as quickly as feasible into a protracted relief and recovery operation, incorporating recovery approaches and activities when windows of opportunity emerge. Thus, it is likely that an operation would include a mix of relief and recovery activities at any given point in time. With the early introduction of more forward-looking approaches, WFP would be able to simultaneously respond to situation-specific relief and recovery needs.
67. The recovery strategy would be prepared no later than the eighteenth month of the EMOP. The strategy would include proposed programme activities and a funding proposal, including an adequate provision for non-food items. Both the strategy and the associated programme activities and proposed funding would cover up to a three-year period, be developed in one document and be submitted to the Executive Board for approval. The recovery programme would commence immediately upon the termination of the current EMOP. Funding would be provided through a revised PRO.
68. It is proposed that the current PRO programme category be renamed the PRRO (protracted relief and recovery) and become the WFP programme category consistently used for protracted relief and recovery needs. The PRRO would be the mechanism through which relief and recovery programme activities, as outlined in the recovery strategy, would seek financing. The programme response would be periodically reviewed and adjusted by the country office to reflect current needs and priorities. The Country Director would have the authority to transfer resources between activities and areas as outlined in the recovery strategy and programme of activities and a contingency mechanism would be available to respond to possible set-backs, reversals and new emergency/disaster outbreaks. This would be funded through a budget revision using the same delegation of authority used for Country Programmes and development projects. In the case of a return to a large-scale acute emergency situation, and where a reallocation of resources within the programme and contingency funds are not sufficient, the Country Director would seek additional relief resources through the EMOP mechanism. These modifications are depicted in Diagram 2.

**DIAGRAM 2
PROGRAMME CATEGORIES AND FUNDING MECHANISMS**



69. The three-year recovery strategy will allow WFP, partners and donors to establish a basis for commitment to a protracted relief and recovery strategy according to the requirements of their respective funding mechanisms. Donors could continue to finance their commitment to a recovery strategy according to the requirements of respective donor funding mechanisms.
70. The provision of adequate non-food items, including technical support, is a major concern for WFP interventions as they shift from relief to recovery. Options are to be discussed in the review of the Long-term Resource and Financing Policies (tentatively scheduled for the Executive Board's Annual Session of 1998), but these items would normally be financed as direct support costs. However, monetization may be considered *under exceptional circumstances* and consistent with WFP's monetization policy (1997) - "flexibility will be extended to recovery situations, given their transitional nature and complexity". For example, security reasons may favour monetization, or it may make sense when the objective is to restore trade structures.

OTHER ISSUES

Demining

71. WFP will continue to pay special attention to people whose lives have been devastated by mines and are faced with the daunting task of building livelihoods in mined areas. WFP will participate in all inter-agency demining discussions which have a direct link to its mandate and operations. WFP will support the Department of Peace Keeping Operations (DPKO) in its coordinating mandate and will help determine emergency and humanitarian mine clearance needs as they relate to food transport, storage and distribution issues. WFP will also collaborate with

UNDP and NGOs such as Halo Trust, MAG and COFRAS, specifically on issues related to local capacity, awareness building and livelihood support to affected communities.

72. WFP participation in demining will be restricted to:
- a) supporting mine clearing in situations where food cannot reach targeted beneficiaries due to mines, and other funding sources are not available;
 - b) supporting communities to articulate and advocate their needs and concerns regarding mines in their environment, in situations where this is relevant to the food operation;
 - c) using food to assist community-based activities which are directly linked to demining programmes and where food aid is an appropriate intervention resource, for example in the re-establishment of agriculture fields in areas cleared of mines.

Demobilization

73. Demobilization and reintegration programmes are complex exercises which WFP will support only within the context of national reconciliation processes and implemented as part of a United Nations strategy. Within the context of a United Nations strategy, careful analysis must be conducted to ensure that food aid is an appropriate input and will contribute to the longer-term integration of ex-combatants and their families. Food aid would be provided as one of complementary resources. In demobilization and reintegration programmes, WFP participation will:
- a) not interfere with meeting the survival needs of vulnerable populations or negatively affect urgent humanitarian efforts;
 - b) be in the context of a coordinated and credible peace process which integrates demobilization, resettlement, reinsertion and recovery elements;
 - c) strive to provide a longer-term support which extends to post-war reinsertion of former combatants. WFP assistance is best suited to reinsertion programmes that aim to address the food consumption needs of newly inserted ex-soldiers and their families.
74. WFP assistance will not include support to armed personnel at any stage of demobilization or reintegration. However, WFP would assist weapons exchange programmes in selected cases where food is a suitable element within the context of an integrated demobilization programme.

Environment

75. Relief programmes can have short- and long-term environmental impacts if prevention and mitigation measures are not incorporated into the planning. Evidence from Rwanda, Liberia, Tanzania and Kenya shows that environmental impacts associated with refugees, internally displaced persons and affected by crises who depend on natural resource-based coping strategies can have negative implications for all concerned, including local populations. Host countries and communities have become more sensitive to the potential economic loss due to environmental damage in crisis situations and are increasingly asking for assistance to rehabilitate damaged areas.
76. Mitigating environmental impacts early on in relief and recovery operations is more cost-effective than relying on damage-control interventions. WFP will develop recovery interventions that incorporate community-based natural resource management activities as a mechanism for meeting the food needs of food insecure people and for simultaneously addressing issues of

environmental degradation. The Programme will also continue its efforts to provide milled grains and other commodities which require less cooking.

The influx of refugees is felt in local markets. While sections of local populations may benefit, the local poor are usually affected adversely as refugee demand forces up the price of fuel. Deforestation, land degradation and water resource depletion all carry with them an economic cost for the local population. UNHCR Environmental Guidelines, 1996.

77. The recovery strategy will address environmental concerns by:
- a) examining energy-related issues when assessing the composition of the food ration, for example cooking time of food commodities provided;
 - b) working with other agencies to consider basic environmental principles in the siting of IDP and refugee camps;
 - c) taking into account potential environmental impacts when identifying sectoral activities;
 - d) supporting environmental rehabilitation where appropriate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

78. It is recommended that:
- a) The EMOP programme category will be used to respond only to acute emergency needs and only in exceptional circumstances exceed a period of two years. A recovery strategy would be prepared, no later than the eighteenth month of the EMOP. As and where opportunities arise, WFP will begin introducing recovery approaches and activities, even prior to the formulation of a recovery strategy.
 - b) WFP support for protracted relief and recovery from crisis will be guided by the recovery strategy, which will provide the rationale for operating in protracted relief and recovery situations, will identify the role and justification for food aid, target areas and groups, and define assistance modalities.
79. The recovery strategy will propose programme activities and include a funding proposal, with an adequate provision for non-food items and the preparation of the recovery strategy. It would cover up to a three-year period and be submitted to the Executive Board for approval. Activities would commence immediately upon the termination of the EMOP currently in effect and the availability of funds.
80. It is proposed that the current PRO programme category be renamed the PRRO (protracted relief and recovery) and become the WFP programme category which would respond to protracted relief and recovery needs. The PRRO would be the mechanism through which protracted relief and recovery programme activities, developed in the recovery strategy, would be funded.
81. The PRRO would include a contingency mechanism to respond to possible set-backs, reversals and new emergency/disaster outbreaks. This would be funded through a budget revision using the same delegation of authority as for Country Programmes and development projects.

82. WFP will work in consultation with partners and through inter-agency mechanisms; participate in and support the formulation and implementation of the United Nations Common Strategic Framework in those situations where a Strategic Framework is being formulated; support the UNDAF process; and participate actively in inter-agency consultations to expand the scope of the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP). The WFP recovery strategy will be linked with these processes to the extent feasible. In addition, country offices will participate in needs assessments with partners to determine which population groups require food assistance, for how long, what type and how much food.
83. WFP participation in demining will be restricted to: supporting mine clearing in situations where humanitarian food responses are restricted by mines and food cannot reach targeted beneficiaries, and other funds are not available; and using food to assist community-based programmes which are directly linked to demining programmes and where food aid is an appropriate intervention resource.
84. Demobilization processes in countries emerging from conflict will be conceived and implemented as part of a United Nations strategy. WFP assistance will not include support to armed personnel, nor will it include support at any stage of demobilization or reintegration. WFP would assist weapons-exchange programmes in selected cases where food is a suitable element within the context of an integrated demobilization programme.
85. With the approval of these recommendations by the Executive Board, operational guidelines for the planning and implementation of a recovery strategy and programme response would be prepared.