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## **POLICY ISSUES**

### **Agenda item 4**

***For information***

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## **FOLLOW-UP TO THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT**

**Progress in Implementation of the World Food  
Summit Plan of Action**

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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(s) indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Documentation and Meetings Clerk (tel.: 066513-2645).



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS IN THIS DOCUMENT

CCA	Common Country Assessment
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
ECHA	Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FEWS	Famine Early Warning System
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IAWG	Inter-Agency Working Group
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IRA	Immediate Response Account
LDC	Least developed country
LIFDC	Low-income, food-deficit country
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PRRO	Protracted relief and recovery operation
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping



## INTRODUCTION

1. During its Twenty-fourth Session in June 1998, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) requested that reports on implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action follow a new format to better monitor the progress in meeting the plan's objectives. The new reporting format asks countries and organizations to identify the issues or problems that they prioritize in implementing the plan and describe the concrete actions taken to address these issues/problems.
2. The new reporting format divides the World Food Summit Commitments into two clusters: those relating to "people-centred" objectives (Commitments One, Two and Five) and those relating to "development-centred" objectives (Commitments Three, Four and Six). With the new format, the relevant parts of Commitment Seven (participation and partnerships for implementation of the Plan of Action) are reported as they relate to each cluster. In the year 2000, the CFS will review the "people-centred" commitments only.

## ACTION TAKEN BY WFP

3. All WFP's policies and programmes work towards reducing the number of undernourished people in the world. Since the World Food Summit, WFP has continued to re-focus its assistance to concentrate resources on those problems that WFP can best address.
4. This section describes WFP's interventions in support of Commitments One, Two and Five.

### Commitment One: Peace-building, Participation and Gender

#### *Building an enabling environment*

5. There is no food security without peace and economic stability. With nearly three-quarters of WFP assistance going to humanitarian needs, helping people out of crisis is a priority for WFP.
6. In areas of conflict, WFP supports peace-building through strategies that work to empower people, especially women, and help repair social fabric.
  - In Sudan and Ethiopia, WFP distributes food through women or through community committees on which women are well-represented, helping to empower women.
  - In Indonesia and Malawi, WFP support to community-based safety nets, in partnership with the World Bank, allows community networks to expand their reach to people affected by economic crisis.
  - In northern Uganda, WFP food supports community asset creation by women and youth groups—re-establishing the Acholi tradition of working together.

#### *Enabling development—reaching the marginalized*

7. Poverty and food insecurity cannot be eradicated unless the poor are able to invest in their future. WFP's guiding principle is to use food aid only where it meets a consumption



need and enables food-insecure families to take advantage of development opportunities that build food security. This means working through participatory approaches to understand people's needs and priorities; and working in partnership, to link food aid with development opportunities provided by others. These principles are outlined in WFP's new "Enabling Development" policy, adopted in May 1999.

8. WFP's new development policy works within national food security policies and strategies. In particular, WFP reaches marginalized populations, such as those living on low-potential land, to ensure that they, too, benefit from social investments and new assets.

### ***Gender-empowering women***

9. Plan of Action Commitment One, Objective 1.3 calls on all parties "to ensure gender equality and empowerment of women". WFP's Commitments to Women, undertaken at Beijing, set a bold agenda to "ensure women's access to, and full participation in, power structures and decision-making". WFP has put in place the Gender Action Fund and the Gender Task Force to implement a gender-in-development approach.

#### ***WFP and Women's Empowerment***

In recovery interventions such as Burundi, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Sudan, WFP involves women in the management and distribution of food aid, often creating networks to strengthen the position of women in communities. In development, WFP prioritizes women's access to food, to opportunities and to decision-making. In Bangladesh, Benin, Ethiopia, Pakistan and Uganda, WFP not only puts food in the hands of women but ensures that women are involved in activity design and sit on management committees.

10. WFP is undertaking a number of initiatives to move the gender agenda to a deeper level. These include strengthening baseline data to better measure progress, and increasing capacity in gender analysis at the field level. WFP has formulated a "checklist" of performance and impact indicators for measuring progress towards meeting its Commitments to Women that will serve as a guideline for gender mainstreaming.

### **Commitment Two: Reaching the Vulnerable and Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping**

#### ***Marginalized people, marginal lands***

11. WFP's Mission Statement establishes that WFP should allocate at least 50 percent of development resources to least developed countries (LDCs) and at least 90 percent to low-income, food-deficit countries (LIFDCs) and LDCs combined. WFP reached this goal since 1997. The "Enabling Development" policy focuses WFP's resources on the hungry poor to:
  - a) enable young children and expectant and nursing mothers to meet their special nutritional and nutrition-related health needs
  - b) enable poor households to invest in human capital through education and training
  - c) make it possible for poor families to gain and preserve assets
  - d) mitigate the effects of natural disasters in areas vulnerable to recurring crises of this kind



- e) enable households which depend on degraded natural resources for their food security to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods
12. The new policy builds upon gains already made by WFP in focusing its resources on people in marginal areas. Marginalized people, and isolated areas, are the most likely to be cut off from the early benefits of economic growth, government services and efficient markets. Marginal areas are most likely to be low-potential agricultural areas or fragile lands. WFP's new policy contributes to approaches that will enable people living on these lands to manage natural resources sustainably as well as make protective investments that help mitigate disasters.

### ***WFP and the Environment***

WFP's new environmental policy and guidelines promote sustainable natural resource management. WFP's environmental review process identifies potential environmental risks and means to help counter environmental degradation.

Nearly 50 percent of WFP's development projects are aimed at averting environmental degradation. Through these projects, WFP contributes to the international effort to combat desertification and land degradation. In 1997, WFP participated in the First Conference of the Parties of the Convention to Combat Desertification. WFP continues to support the Convention.

### ***Reaching the vulnerable at critical times in their lives***

13. As a priority, WFP interventions target women and small children, those often the most vulnerable to long-term damage from inadequate consumption. Hunger during critical periods in the lives of women and children leads to a legacy of hunger passed from one generation to the next. WFP has strengthened policy and guidelines to strengthen links with nutritional and health interventions and to seek innovative ways of reaching women.
- In Senegal, WFP works in partnership with the World Bank and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) to reach women through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community centres providing nutritional health training.
  - To support traditional consumption patterns while reaching women and small children with nutritious food, WFP has developed blended foods such as Indiamix, Likuna Phala, and Unimix - all products made in the food-recipient country using local foods.

### ***Working with women to build food security***

14. Increasing the educational level of women and improving their status in society are essential for reducing child malnutrition. In countries with a significant gender gap, 50 percent of WFP's resources for education are targeted to girls.
15. In Malawi, Niger, Pakistan and Yemen, WFP provides a ration of food to the family when the daughter attends school. Targeting is directly linked to the attendance of girls. In Bangladesh, women's empowerment and training schemes have resulted in more women sending their girls to school. Girls' school attendance has increased by up to ten percent among these households.



### ***Vulnerability analysis and mapping***

16. WFP's Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) system is part of the international Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS). As such, the work of VAM is a direct contribution to action (a) of Commitment Two, Objective 2.2: "Develop and periodically update, where necessary, a national food insecurity and vulnerability information and mapping system...."
17. The analytical work undertaken by WFP's VAM units helps the Programme design food aid interventions that better address the needs of food-insecure households. In addition, VAM supports and complements national FIVIMS. For example, in Ecuador, VAM and the FIVIMS Secretariat in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) joined together in a coordinated effort to support the design and implementation of a national FIVIMS. By sharing information and resources through the Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG), WFP is able to support the expansion of FIVIMS at national, regional and international levels. VAM has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Famine Early Warning System (FEWS) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to collaborate and share information worldwide.

## Commitment Five: Emergency Response and Recovery

### ***WFP's response to humanitarian crises***

18. WFP has established mechanisms such as the Immediate Response Account (IRA), regional pipelines and contingency planning mechanisms to get food to people before setbacks become crises. For example, in the Sahel country programmes, contingency activities help mitigate recurring natural disasters.
19. WFP also assists other agencies to ensure that assistance reaches those in need. WFP's telecommunications team establishes communications links for WFP and other agencies working to save people in a crisis. In Kosovo, the Great Lakes region and East Timor, WFP provides NGOs and other agencies with emergency telecommunications infrastructure.
20. For example, WFP provides transport services to partner organizations—both for supplies and for personnel in a number of emergencies.
  - To get relief supplies to Ethiopia, WFP's storage and transport facilities in Djibouti were placed at the disposal of all United Nations and other relief agencies operating in Ethiopia.
  - In Angola, WFP provides transport services for United Nations partners and NGOs—including air transport to get vital supplies and personnel to besieged cities.

### ***WFP's new recovery policy and programme***

21. In recognition of the importance of re-building people's lives, WFP implemented a new policy to support recovery and created the protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) programme category. WFP recovery strategies lay down a plan for introducing developmental approaches, in partnership with organizations providing complementary resources. And, in case of setbacks, contingency mechanisms are included in the PRRO to help protect gains made in recovery.
  - In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, WFP has put in place disaster mitigation activities that work through community structures to support food security.



- In Cambodia, WFP assists displaced persons and residents in natural resource management, particularly sustainable forest management.

### *WFP's special operations*

22. While food in a crisis is a short-term response, the logistics of providing food aid can lead to long-term benefits. WFP's special operations rehabilitate physical infrastructure, including roads, bridges and ports, to ensure food can move rapidly to people. In the last two years, WFP has spent US\$55 million on infrastructure in food aid recipient countries. Some of this investment stays behind to support local commerce long after the crisis.
- In Dili, East Timor, WFP has rehabilitated shipping and warehouse facilities to increase capacity to meet the food needs of thousands of displaced persons.
  - In 1998 in Tanzania, floods washed away the main rail line from Dar es Salaam to Rwanda and Burundi. Within weeks, WFP had created a new rail and road hub in Dodoma to secure the food pipeline.

### Commitment Seven

23. The implementation of Commitment Seven - through a people-centred approach and working in partnership-affects all WFP activities. Ensuring the participation of the hungry poor is the first step in building a food-secure future. In addition, working in collaboration and coordination with all stakeholders, WFP supports wide-ranging measures to reduce hunger.
24. WFP seeks partnerships that promote participation. One result of this priority is WFP's close collaboration with NGOs.
- WFP works with more than 1,100 NGOs worldwide.
  - WFP gives priority to southern partners, sometimes helping to improve their managerial and implementation capability as a means of building national capacities.
  - WFP hosts an annual consultation with its main NGO partners to provide a forum for sharing concerns and strategies for more effective assistance in reducing hunger.
25. WFP relies on partnerships to ensure that food assistance combines with other resources to help people fight hunger. WFP is an active participant in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). During 1999, WFP Representatives were also the United Nations Resident Coordinator in one country and Humanitarian Coordinator in another. In addition, WFP has signed Memoranda of Understanding with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to strengthen collaboration in refugee and recovery operations. Of particular importance to WFP is the strengthened collaboration of the three Rome-based United Nations agencies—FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and WFP. The complementary mandates of the three agencies ensure that the overall impact of operations is greatly enhanced. In 1999, WFP signed a Memorandum of Understanding with FAO to formalize its collaboration in support of the Special Programme for Food Security.

*WFP Support to UNDAF*



In countries piloting the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process, WFP participates in technical working groups and thematic groups, and in some cases heads thematic groups on disaster management, recovery and rehabilitation, and food security. In April, 1999 WFP joined the three other members of the undg in approving and disseminating guidelines on collaboration on Common Country Assessments (CCAs) and the UNDAF.

26. WFP takes seriously its role as an advocate of the hungry poor, forging partnerships and initiating dialogue with those who can help to end hunger worldwide. WFP raises awareness of the plight of those suffering from hunger through: all media outlets, including Internet; donor appeals and United Nations fora, for example the undg and IASC; and, at country level, through the UNDAF/CCA process, and working with national authorities and civil society.