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PROJECTS FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD APPROVAL

Agenda item 9

For approval



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DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS – JORDAN 200478

Support for the National School Feeding Programme

Number of beneficiaries	300,000 annually
Duration of project	31 months (1 December 2012–30 June 2015)
WFP food tonnage	6,288 mt
Cost (United States dollars)	
WFP food cost	4,458,636
Total cost to WFP	12,131,314

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for approval

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

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite high overall levels of food security, Jordan has pockets of food insecurity where the population is seriously affected by the protracted economic crisis and events in neighbouring Syrian Arab Republic. Government budget constraints on social safety-net expenditures – caused by the economic crisis – have led to a reduction of almost 80 percent in the national school feeding programme.

The Government has requested WFP to resume direct food support for schoolchildren in very vulnerable areas, to pre-empt the negative impact of these significant cuts and to prevent a reversal of the country's significant achievements in education – notably high enrolment and low drop-out rates. The Government remains committed to school feeding as a safety net and will contribute directly to the programme by supplementing the food provided and financing all landside transport, storage and handling costs.

The Government has also requested WFP's technical assistance in making the national school feeding programme more effective and efficient. Working with non-governmental organizations, other United Nations agencies and development partners WFP will provide policy advice and technical support to augment the Government's capacity and improve the quality and sustainability of the programme.

The project is in line with priorities of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Jordan (2013–2017) and contributes to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals 1 and 2 and WFP's Strategic Objectives 4 and 5.

DRAFT DECISION*

The Board approves the proposed development project Jordan 200478 “Support for the National School Feeding Programme” (WFP/EB.2/2012/9-A/2), subject to the availability of resources.

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

1. Jordan is a small, middle-income country with a population of 6.3 million people. In 2011, it ranked 95th of 187 countries in the human development index;¹ the prevalence of poverty and unemployment were both 13 percent.² Most Jordanians reside in urban areas concentrated in the governorates of Amman, Irbid and Zarqa. Women's economic participation is 9 percent compared with 40 percent for men, although women are on average more qualified than men.³
2. Since 1999, the country has taken significant steps towards economic reform: privatization, promotion of foreign investments and price liberalization underpin the economic policy. Service sectors contribute 63 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). Over the last decade the economy showed steady annual growth averaging almost 6 percent, but the gap between rich and poor has increased.¹ Economic reform entailed the elimination of most food and fuel subsidies, but the Government seeks to sustain a functional social safety net system.
3. The global economic crisis damaged the country's emerging economy and revealed the fragility of its economic gains and promising indicators. GDP growth declined from 8 percent in 2008 to 2 percent in 2009 and 3 percent in 2010. When public debt soared in the first quarter of 2012, the Government adopted austerity measures to reduce budget deficits that had reached an alarming 64.6 percent of GDP. The impact of the global crisis has been particularly hard on the poor. Food prices increased by 33 percentage points between 2008 and 2012, with inflation recently reaching almost 50 percent; fuel prices followed a similar pattern.
4. Jordan is directly affected by unrest in neighbouring countries, with disruptions in cross-border trade, slowing of the tourism sector and the need to accommodate growing numbers of asylum-seekers. This has resulted in further price increases and the stretching of scarce resources. The situation is expected to deteriorate further, increasing pressure on the economy and government resources.

Food Security and Nutrition

5. The agriculture sector is fragile and faces scarcities of water and agricultural land, consecutive droughts, land defragmentation and high opportunity costs in the agribusiness sector. Local production covers only 15 percent of food needs, although the open market policy and an efficient supply chain guarantee sufficient food availability.
6. Food insecurity is mostly related to economic access to food and is closely correlated with poverty. The Government has identified 32 of the country's 85 sub-districts as "poverty pockets", where poverty exceeds 25 percent.² In 2008, a WFP food security assessment to measure the impact of high food prices in these areas recorded high rates of food insecurity and vulnerability.⁴ A 2010 food security survey revealed that in poverty

¹ Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2011. *Jordan Human Development Report 2011*. Amman.

² Department of Statistics. July 2010. *Poverty Report*. Amman.

³ European Union. July 2010. *National Situation Analysis Report: Women's Human Rights and Gender Equality – Jordan*. Amman.

⁴ WFP and the Jordanian Alliance Against Hunger. 2008. *Jordan Food Security Survey in the Poverty Pockets*. Available at <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp204530.pdf>

pockets food consumption is borderline for 25 percent of the population, while at the national level, food consumption is poor or borderline for only 2.5 percent of the population.⁵ The regional conflict with the refugee influx is compounding the stress on vulnerable people in food-insecure pockets, affecting food consumption. Anaemia affects 34 percent of children under 5 and is strongly correlated with poverty; the highest prevalence is in rural areas and the south. Anaemia prevalence is the same for boys and girls.⁶

Education

7. With limited natural resources, Jordan's leaders recognize human resources as the country's most valuable asset, and education is a top priority. Significant progress has been made in all educational indicators. In 2009, literacy among 15–24-year-olds was 97 percent – 98 percent for men, 96 percent for women; 98 percent of children attended primary school. There is almost gender parity in primary and secondary education. Drop-outs from primary education are minimal, but the increasing costs of education and economic pressure could reverse these gains, particularly among the poorest families.¹ Informal reports indicate that children are leaving school early to start work.⁷

Government Policies and Strategies

8. The Government is committed to reducing poverty and improving social services. The 2006–2015 National Agenda sets the goal of reducing poverty to 10 percent; a food security strategy is being prepared, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Socio-economic policies have been adopted to combat poverty and hunger by: i) providing a social safety net system for the poor; ii) empowering economically poor population segments through creation of local sustainable economies and enhancement of grassroots involvement; and iii) providing social welfare services in line with best international practices, while enhancing the role of civil society organizations in providing these services.
9. The 2013–2017 United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Jordan is aligned with the 2006–2015 National Agenda. Priority areas are: i) enhancing systemic reform; ii) ensuring social equity; iii) investing in young people; and iv) preserving the environment.
10. The national social safety net system comprises cash-based assistance programmes, food aid, a bread subsidy, free health insurance, and school feeding. Since the onset of the economic crisis, the Government has sought to maintain social safety nets despite increasing costs.
11. School feeding is an important part of the national social safety net. The Government launched the national school feeding programme in 1999, building on WFP's engagement over the previous two decades and with the aims of improving the nutrition status of schoolchildren, enhancing their scholastic performance and introducing positive health and nutrition habits. The programme supports public school children at preschool and primary school level – grades 1 to 6 – with a nutritious daily snack of 50 g of locally produced

⁵ Department of Statistics. 2010. *Household Expenditures and Income Survey, 2010, Preliminary Findings*. Amman.

⁶ Department of Statistics and ICF Macro. 2010. *Jordan Population and Family Health Survey 2009*. Calverton, Maryland, USA.

⁷ The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) will undertake a rapid survey in November 2012 to assess drop-out prevalence.

high-energy biscuits (HEBs) and one piece of fruit. Wheat flour for producing the biscuits is fortified locally.

12. The programme is implemented by the Ministry of Education's school feeding unit, overseen by a central committee with sub-committees at the regional, district and school levels. The Ministry of Education has a long-term agreement with the Jordan Armed Forces to produce and deliver HEBs to schools. The Ministry of Health and the Jordan Food and Drug Administration (JFDA) are responsible for monitoring the meals, including hygiene and commodity specifications.
13. The programme was introduced in the poverty pockets and expanded gradually, to reach 530,000 schoolchildren – 70 percent of the total – by 2009. Based on these positive outcomes, the Government planned to reach all 730,000 public school children in grades 1 to 6. However, following the economic crisis, in 2011 the number was reduced dramatically to 115,000 – a fifth of the 2009 coverage. In 2012 the programme reached 140,000 students. The size of the programme fluctuates depending on the Government's financial capacity.

PAST COOPERATION AND LESSONS LEARNED

14. WFP has been active in Jordan since 1964, with development and emergency projects in agricultural development, public works, education and environment, and emergency projects for displaced persons, refugees and drought victims. WFP's last food-based project ended in 2007.
15. WFP introduced school feeding in 1975. Phases of the project were implemented until 1997, with the primary objectives of increasing enrolment among primary school children, attendance in literacy centres, and women's participation in vocational training centres. The project reached more than 140,000 beneficiaries, mostly in poverty pockets.
16. The Government's national school feeding programme started in 1999. WFP's 2006 school feeding assessment⁸ underscored the importance of developing the Government's capacity to manage, monitor and evaluate school feeding. WFP activities towards this end included a review of the school feeding monitoring and evaluation system, development of a comprehensive system to capture the results chain, training of government school feeding managers, and an advocacy campaign.
17. The Government welcomed these activities, but implementation was affected by WFP's funding limitations and lessons were learned:
 - WFP support was not embedded in an overall strategy for school feeding in the country. Despite interest from the highest political levels, the absence of a national school feeding strategy limits the potential for different stakeholders to interact in assessing the best course of action and exploiting emerging possibilities.
 - The national programme is funded entirely from the State treasury and funding stability is affected by the Government's spending priorities, which fluctuate in response to national and international economic dynamics.
18. WFP's 2006 assessment also highlighted the insufficient energy and nutrient content of the ration. The Government is interested in expanding the variety of foods provided and introducing facilities for cooking meals at schools. Priority is given to food produced

⁸ WFP. 2006. WFP's Capacity-Building Support to the School Feeding Programme at the Jordan Ministry of Education. (unpublished)

locally, including by small businesses and community groups. However, the project supply chain is heavily centralized, which limits direct economic benefits at the provincial and community levels.

19. The Government has requested WFP to provide more substantial and systematic support for the budget-constrained school feeding programme, including by providing in-kind support.

STRATEGIC FOCUS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Goals and Objectives

20. The main purpose of the WFP project is to support the Government in developing a quality, sustainable school feeding programme as part of the national social safety net system, in line with international school feeding quality standards. This aim is aligned with the national development goals of “strengthening principles of social justice and equal opportunity” and “reducing the poverty rate in Jordan”.⁹ The project will support UNDAF outcome 2¹⁰ and contribute to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 1 and 2.¹¹
21. The specific objectives are to support the Government in:
- expanding school feeding coverage as a productive social safety net and maintaining school enrolment at a time of government budgetary constraints and economic hardships among poor households (Strategic Objective 4);¹² and
 - enhancing the quality and sustainability of the national school feeding programme through the provision of technical assistance in improving institutional capacity for the design, management and planning of school feeding (Strategic Objective 5).¹³

In-Kind Support

22. WFP will provide wheat and sugar for the local production of fortified HEBs. The Government will continue to provide fruit from its own resources. This pooling of resources will enable the national programme to reach schoolchildren in the 66 sub-districts with the lowest food consumption and the highest poverty, ensuring a safety net while encouraging children to stay in school.

Capacity Development

23. WFP’s technical and strategic support will enhance government capacity for efficient programme implementation and sustainable results. Within the framework of the international school feeding quality standards set out in WFP’s school feeding policy, capacity development activities will comprise the following:

⁹ Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. 2005. National Agenda 2006–2015. The Jordan We Strive For. Amman; Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation. 2011. Executive Development Program 2011–2013. Amman.

¹⁰ UNDAF outcome 2 – Jordan has institutionalized improved social protection and poverty alleviation mechanisms for vulnerable people at national and sub-national levels.

¹¹ MDG 1 – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; MDG 2 – Achieve universal primary education.

¹² Strategic Objective 4 – Reduce chronic hunger and undernutrition.

¹³ Strategic Objective 5 – Strengthen the capacities of countries to reduce hunger, including through hand-over strategies and local purchase.

- *A comprehensive, multi-stakeholder assessment* of the national programme based on school feeding quality standards, to forge a common vision for school feeding in the country, identify gaps and design a roadmap for programme development, building on WFP's 2006 assessment.
- *Development of a national school feeding strategy* that enhances the institutional stability and uniformity of the programme by aligning objectives and consolidating funding flows, legislation and prioritization in relation to other national priorities.
- *Design of a strategy for more stable funding* based on a school feeding costing exercise that analyses cost parameters and options for enhancing cost efficiency. Additional funding sources will be explored, particularly among communities and the private sector. The funding strategy will present the rationale for engagement and approaches for different funding modalities.
- *Development of an advocacy campaign* for enhancing public awareness of and support for school feeding. Messages will be diffused through radio, television and print media, tailored for potential donors, communities, parents and children.
- *Implementation of the improved monitoring and evaluation system*, including automatized data collection, linking of results chain indicators to the Educational Management Information System (EMIS), training in the use of the system and establishment of standard operating procedures.
- *Feasibility studies on diversified food baskets, alternative transfer modalities and home-grown school feeding* to: i) establish specifications for locally produced school food, such as fruit bars, to ensure adequate nutritional content; ii) examine the cost-benefits of different options; iii) review resourcing possibilities, including in-kind donations; and iv) identify production capacities and food quality control mechanisms.
- *Annual refresher training in school feeding management* using a training module developed by the country office. A training-of-trainers approach will ensure that school feeding managers at the central, governorate, district and school levels are covered.

Targeting

24. The project will target 66 sub-districts ranked by poverty level correlated with food consumption (see map in Annex III). It aims to reach 300,000 children each year – double the number covered by the reduced national programme in 2012.

TABLE 1: BENEFICIARIES			
	Boys	Girls	Total
School feeding	150 000	150 000	300 000

25. The school feeding ration is shown hereunder in Table 2.

TABLE 2: FOOD RATION (g/child/day)	
HEBs	75
Total kcal/day	338*
% kcal from protein	17
% kcal from fat	11
Number of feeding days per year	124

* The Government will continue to provide fresh fruit, bringing the total energy value of the ration to 426 kcal per child per day.

26. The national programme currently distributes HEBs because schools lack facilities for preparing cooked meals. WFP will provide 75 g of HEBs, which will be locally produced using wheat flour fortified with a premix of essential vitamins and minerals. This ration will replace the current 50 g provided by the Government, increasing the nutritional value and bringing it closer to the minimum recommended requirements for half-day primary schools. The Government will continue to provide one piece of fresh fruit per day as an additional source of energy and vitamins.
27. The food requirements for the HEBs are shown below in Table 3.

TABLE 3: FOOD REQUIREMENTS (mt)	
Fortified wheat flour	4 325
Sugar	1 963
TOTAL	6 288

28. WFP's main partner will be the Ministry of Education and will coordinate with the Ministry of Health, JFDA and other stakeholders. WFP's cooperating partner, the Social and Industrial Food Services Institute (SIFI) – a Russian non-governmental organization – will provide technical assistance for capacity assessments, capacity development activities and project evaluation. WFP will explore opportunities for working with United Nations partners under the UNDAF, particularly UNICEF and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.
29. The Government will cover all landside transport, storage and handling (LTSH) costs. The funding strategy to be designed is expected to lead to a more stable resource base for school feeding, which will strengthen government capacity to continue the programme when WFP assistance ends.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

30. Food assistance will be implemented through the existing programme management mechanism under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. A technical project task force will be set up with representation from the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, JFDA, the Jordan Armed Forces, SIFI and WFP. The task force will have an advisory role in the supervision, management and coordination of project activities, and will facilitate decision-making and approve work plans.

31. WFP will import fortified wheat flour and sugar for the production of HEBs. Options for expanding local procurement will be explored during the project. Factories will be selected through a competitive process. JFDA will retain responsibility for quality control.
32. Flour and sugar will be delivered to the port of Aqaba,¹⁴ where selected suppliers will be responsible for clearance and dispatch to HEB factories and eventual onwards transport of the biscuits to schools.
33. The Ministry of Education's school feeding unit will be responsible for monitoring and presenting progress reports to WFP using the recently developed result-based indicators. Outcome-level data are already collected annually through EMIS. Outcome and process indicators will be collected through monthly reports by schools and visits to schools by district- and central-level Ministry of Education staff. WFP staff will also monitor project activities.
34. The Social and Industrial Food Services Institute will report to WFP on capacity development activities. An evaluation at the end of the project will review: i) the efficiency and effectiveness of WFP assistance; ii) the relevance of capacity development activities to the Government's needs; and iii) lessons learned. The results will inform future strategies.
35. WFP's country office will add staff to ensure sufficient capacity to implement the project and achieve its objectives. Cooperating partners will provide additional technical expertise and resources.
36. The main contextual, programmatic and institutional risks identified for this operation are: i) ongoing regional turmoil; ii) increased food and fuel prices; iii) delays in procurement and delivery; and iv) poor stakeholder perceptions of the project. These risks will be mitigated through: i) monitoring of regional developments and preparation of contingency plans; ii) price monitoring and adjustment of the project scope and budget when needed; iii) monitoring of the food supply chain; and iv) advocacy and awareness-raising.

¹⁴ Confirmed in-kind contributions are on a "delivered at place" basis, so no external transport costs are budgeted.

ANNEX I-A

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN			
Food ¹	Quantity (mt)	Value (US\$)	Value (US\$)
Cereals	4 325	2 926 295	
Others	1 963	1 532 341	
Total food	6 288	4 458 636	
Subtotal food			4 458 636
Other direct operational costs			3 980 727
Direct support costs ² (see Annex I-B)			2 898 314
Total WFP direct costs			11 337 677
Indirect support costs (7.0 percent) ³			793 637
TOTAL WFP COSTS			12 131 314

¹ This is a notional food basket for budgeting and approval. The contents may vary.

² Indicative figure for information purposes. The direct support costs allotment is reviewed annually.

³ The indirect support cost rate may be amended by the Board during the project.

ANNEX I-B

DIRECT SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	
Staff and related costs	
International professional staff	1 533 055
Local staff – national officers	396 560
Local staff – general service	268 292
Local staff – temporary assistance	321 342
Local staff – overtime	39 600
International consultants	37 523
Local consultants	21 292
Staff duty travel	42 320
Subtotal	2 659 984
Recurring expenses	
Rental of facility	72 500
Office supplies and other consumables	14 500
Communications services	20 200
Equipment repair and maintenance	5 800
Vehicle running costs and maintenance	45 780
Office set-up and repairs	6 000
United Nations organization services	7 250
Subtotal	172 030
Equipment and capital costs	
Vehicle leasing	49 300
Communications equipment	17 000
Subtotal	66 300
TOTAL DIRECT SUPPORT COSTS	2 898 314

ANNEX II: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK		
Results	Performance indicators	Assumptions
<p>UNDAF OUTCOME 2 Jordan has institutionalized improved social protection and poverty alleviation mechanisms for vulnerable people at national and sub-national levels</p>	<p>UNDAF outcome indicators % of targeted population receiving social benefits as per the social protection floor</p>	<p>Government is committed to reducing poverty levels in the country. Government endorses the Framework on Social Protection Floors. Parliament accepts amendments to protection and child rights laws. Budget constraints do not limit poverty alleviation efforts.</p>
Activity 1: Expansion of the national school feeding programme		
Strategic Objective 4: Reduce chronic hunger and undernutrition		
<p>Outcome 1 National school feeding programme expanded as a social safety net</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ % of schools in areas with high poverty rates covered by the national school feeding programme Target: 60% ➤ % of students – boys and girls – in areas with high poverty rates covered by the national school feeding programme Target: 60% 	<p>Government is committed to school feeding, poverty alleviation and social protection. Government maintains its school feeding budget allocation. Budget constraints do not limit the government contribution to school feeding. Food and fuel prices do not increase further. There are no influxes of people from neighbouring countries.</p>
<p>Output 1.1 School feeding coverage aligned with programme of work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of primary school girls and boys receiving WFP rations Target: 300,000 ➤ Number of schools assisted by WFP Target: to be determined 	<p>WFP and the Government ensure timely and adequate resources. Schools are accessible. There are no delays in external procurement, delivery or local production of HEBs.</p>





ANNEX II: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK		
Results	Performance indicators	Assumptions
<p>Outcome 2 Continued access to education and human-capital development in assisted schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Enrolment: average annual rate of change in number of girls and boys enrolled Target: no decrease ➤ Drop-out rates, by sex Target: maintained at 1% 	<p>Value of WFP transfer is sufficient to maintain children at school. Government continues to provide fresh fruit. No other significant events have an impact on access or quality of education. Household vulnerabilities do not increase.</p>
<p>Output 2.1 Food of sufficient quantity and quality distributed to targeted girls and boys under secure conditions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Quantity of food distributed to targeted schoolchildren Target: 100% of planned ➤ Number of feeding days per school year Target: 124 	<p>Sufficient, cost-efficient local production capacity for HEBs is available. There is timely and adequate availability of resources. Schools are accessible by surface transport. Schoolchildren accept HEBs.</p>
Activity 2: Improving the quality and sustainability of the national school feeding programme through capacity development		
Strategic Objective 5: Strengthen the capacities of countries to reduce hunger, including through hand-over strategies and local purchase		
<p>Outcome 3 Progress made towards greater quality and sustainability of national school feeding programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ National Capacity Index¹ for school feeding Target: to be determined 	<p>WFP capacity augmentation activities target core issues in the national school feeding programme and meet Ministry of Education/government interests. Government remains committed to social safety net programmes and poverty alleviation. Changes in the Government do not negate prior agreements.</p>

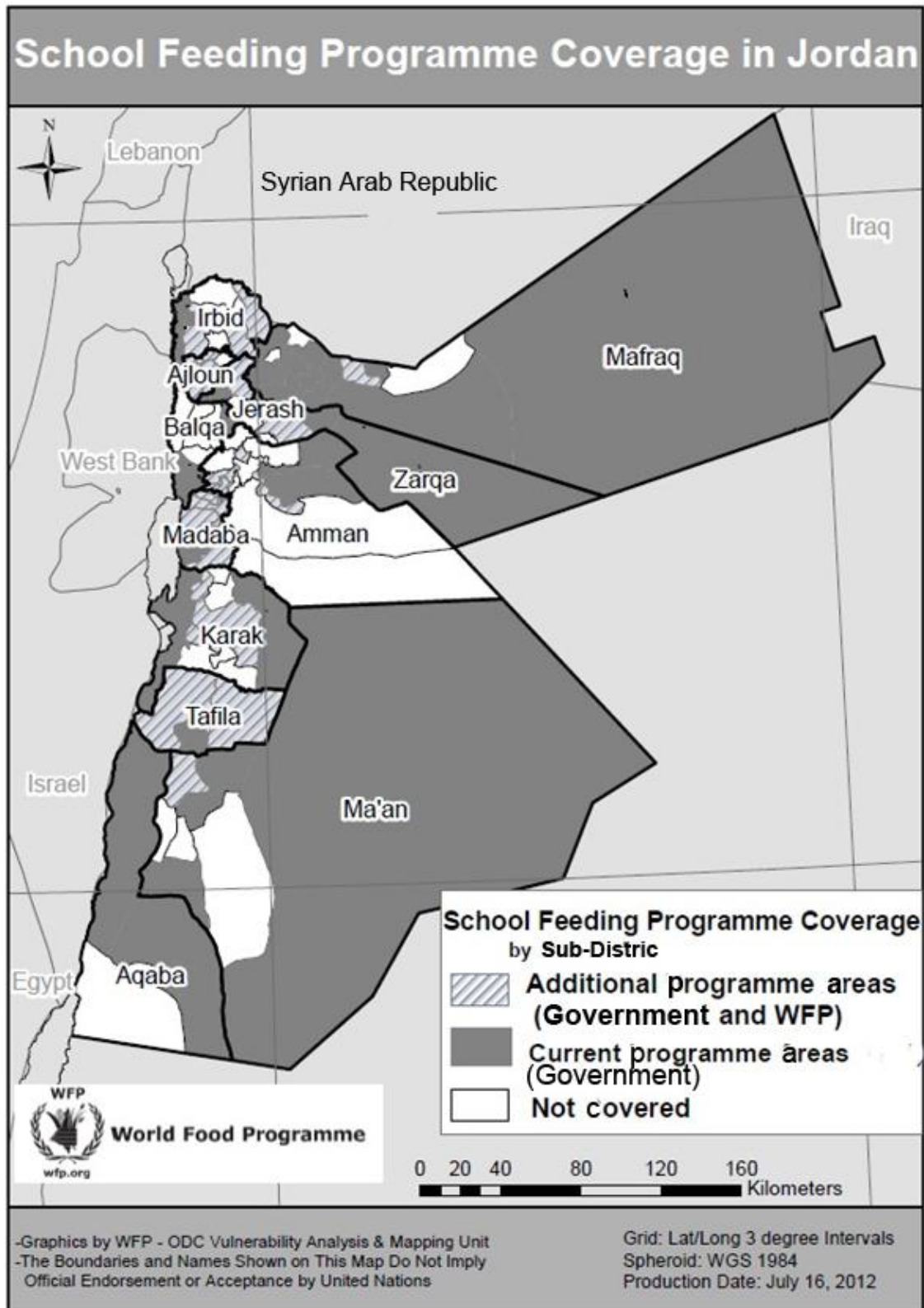
¹ The National Capacity Index measures progress against five quality standards: i) sound alignment with the national policy; ii) strong institutional frameworks; iii) stable funding and budgeting; iv) quality programme design; and v) strong community participation. The capacity development assessment tool is based on standards adapted by WFP from a World Bank capacity development framework.

ANNEX II: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Results	Performance indicators	Assumptions
<p>Output 3.1 School feeding capacity and awareness developed through WFP-led actions and training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of men and women trained in programme design and planning, implementation procedures and practices, disaggregated by category – national Government, partner staff Target: 250 ➤ Number of technical assistance projects to strengthen national capacity conducted by WFP Target: to be determined ➤ WFP support for technical assistance to strengthen national capacity Target: US\$1,065,000 	<p>There is timely and adequate availability of resources. Partnerships can be forged with other United Nations agencies.</p> <p>There is minimum turnover of government staff. Cooperating partners are available.</p>



ANNEX III



The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Food Programme (WFP) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its frontiers or boundaries.



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

GDP	gross domestic product
EMIS	Educational Management Information System
HEB	high-energy biscuit
JFDA	Jordan Food and Drug Administration
LTSH	landside transport, storage and handling
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
SIFI	Social and Industrial Food Services Institute
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund