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WFP'S COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY EFFORTS IN 2004–2005

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

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* Communication Division



WFP'S COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY EFFORTS IN 2004 AND 2005

1. In order to eradicate hunger and malnutrition – the core goal of WFP's work – the organization must keep these issues at the top of the international agenda and build a strong body of support. This task has become even more urgent because the international community's efforts to halve the proportion of hungry people in the world have been stalled, and the number of people suffering hunger is increasing, rather than decreasing.
2. WFP faces two major challenges that make it difficult to keep hunger foremost in leaders' minds:
 - First, hunger is largely invisible to most of the world's decision-makers. In general, the public in those countries where WFP raises most of its funds is well fed.
 - Second, although WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency, it has the smallest communications budget in terms of dollars and percentage of total expenditure of any major aid organization. Increasing the number of people who know of WFP and value its work requires the organization to invest more staff, time and money resources than it has traditionally allocated to this activity.
3. In view of the scarce international focus on hunger and the limited funds available, the Communications Division has concentrated its efforts on activities that leverage creativity and partners' resources to maximize the impact of its activities.

Media Outreach

4. Print, radio, television and on-line coverage of WFP's operations and issues is the key to generating financial and other support for WFP's work. As a recent example, it was only after WFP had distributed disturbing images of acutely malnourished children in the Niger that funds began to flow in significant quantities (see Figure 1).
5. WFP has seen concrete results following its decision to increase the numbers of public information officers in the field and at liaison offices, for example London, Berlin and Geneva, and to train staff in dealing with the media. WFP had more media coverage for its operations in 2004 and the first half of 2005 than it had for all of the previous ten years. With a monthly average of more than 400 mentions in a selection of print media in 12 countries, media-monitoring firms estimate that up to 677 million people are likely to have been exposed to WFP's work in 2004; one in five of these people are expected subsequently to remember WFP in a positive light (see Figure 2).
6. Independent media research by Reuters' AlertNet found that WFP was the most quoted agency for "forgotten emergencies" in the Sudan and Haiti, and among the top four aid organizations mentioned in regard to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, northern Uganda and HIV/AIDS.

Internet

7. Considerable effort has been put into WFP's profile on the Internet. WFP's main Website at www.wfp.org is now a recognized source of up-to-date information for the news media, donors, academics, commercial suppliers and humanitarian workers. The site receives an average of 1 million hits per month, rising to 2 million during crises such as the Indian Ocean tsunami. Visits to the newsroom and "how to help" sections have more than doubled in the past year.



8. In a concerted effort to reach beyond the English-speaking world, additional sites have been launched in 13 languages – Arabic, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish.

Donated Advertising

9. In 2004 and the first half of 2005, the value of advertising donated to WFP was US\$34 million, several times the Communications Division's budget for the biennium. Advertising campaigns during the tsunami crisis were seen to increase directly the number of individuals giving online. The largest campaign was sponsored by the Japan Advertising Council, and other advertisements were produced internally at very little cost. Public service announcements for WFP have been broadcast free of charge on television networks including CNN, the BBC, Al Jazeera, NHK, TV5, NTV Russia and MTV. Print advertisements have been published in *TIME*, *Newsweek*, *Fortune*, the *Economist*, *CNN Traveler*, the *New York Times*, the *Financial Times*, *Business Watch*, *Khaleej Times*, *Internazionale*, *Il Tempo*, the *Christian Science Monitor* and *El Herald*.

Special Events

10. Special events, such as the International Rugby Board's benefit match for tsunami recovery and a rowing regatta, have raised WFP's profile and generated US\$3.5 million.

Celebrity Support

11. Eighteen celebrities from royalty, show business, sport and the arts have lent their names and fame to WFP's cause. Soccer Player of the Year, the Brazilian player Ronaldinho, is the latest to join the ranks of celebrities such as Princess Haya of Jordan, Spanish actress Penelope Cruz, Lebanese singer Assi Helani and American photographer James Nachtwey.

Educational Video Game

12. "Food Force", the world's first educational video game based on humanitarian work, is a unique combination of non-violent action and adventure that encourages players to compete for the highest score in a virtual fight against hunger. Nearly 2 million people in more than 40 countries – mostly children aged 8 to 13 and their teachers – downloaded "Food Force" in the first four months after it was launched.
13. The game has been so successful that commercial video game producers are translating it into Japanese, Chinese and Italian, and are also exploring more "grown-up" versions of the game for the adult market.

Cinema

14. WFP has been involved in two films, which were presented at the Venice Biennale in September 2005.
15. *All the Invisible Children* is a collection of vignettes from seven of the world's most distinguished directors. It highlights the plight of children in different parts of the world. Proceeds from the first ticket sales will be donated to joint United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and WFP projects in West Africa.
16. *The Constant Gardener* is a film adaptation of John Le Carre's novel of the same name. It tells the story of an aid worker killed in mysterious circumstances, and features a good deal of footage of WFP's work in southern Sudan. The director Fernando Meirrelles and



lead actress Rachel Weisz took part in a public service announcement for WFP. This has been shown with the film in more than 1,000 cinemas in North America, and will be distributed around the globe.

Figure 1: WFP appeals and donations to the Niger (at 15 September 2005)

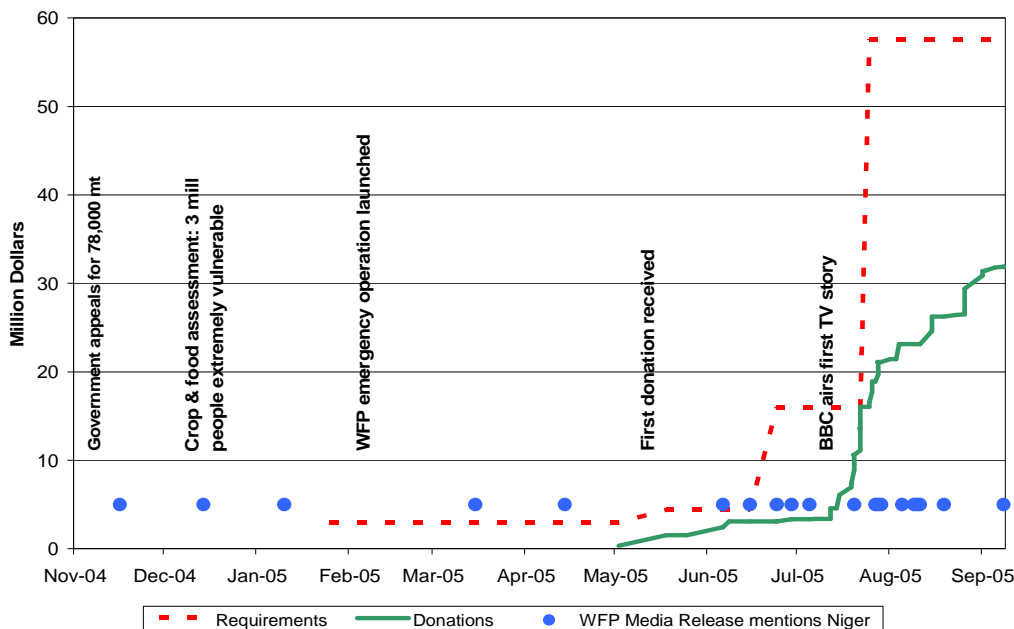
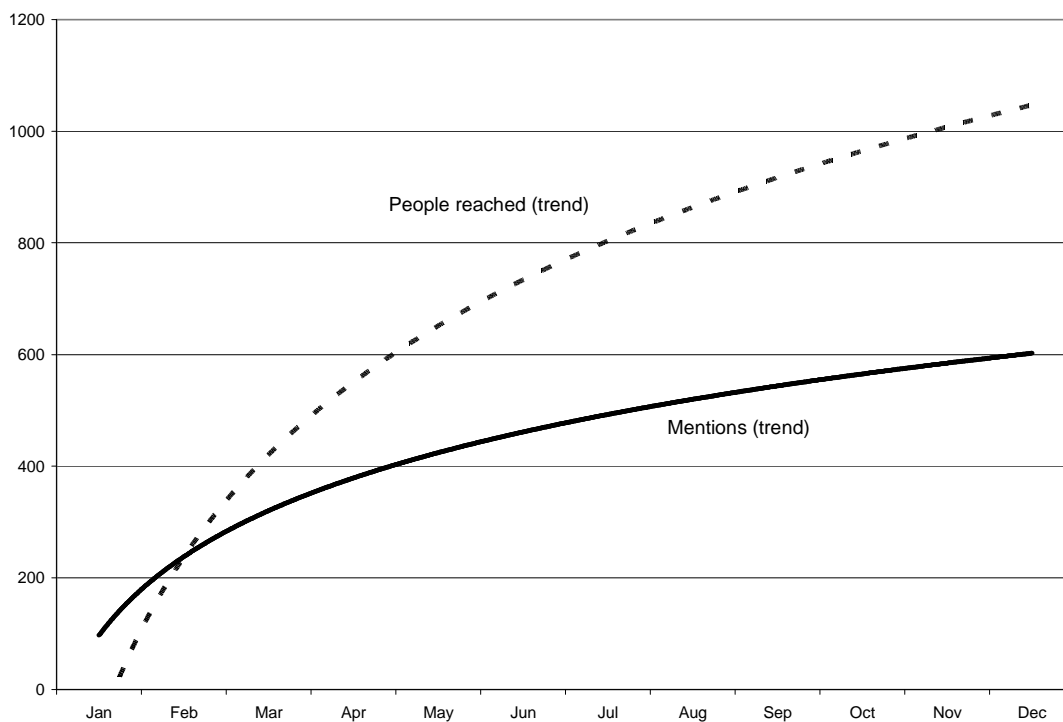


Figure 2: Trend of WFP coverage in selected print media (2004)



Source: Delahaye MediaLink Worldwide Executive Report, January to June, and July to December 2004.

