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**Executive Board
Second Regular Session**

Rome, 22 - 24 May 1996

PROGRESS REPORTS ON APPROVED PROJECTS

Agenda item 5 e)

PROJECT CHINA 3923

Soil and water conservation works in Luliang prefecture, Shanxi province

Total food cost	10 247 000 dollars
Total cost to WFP	12 238 360 dollars
Date approved by the CFA	13 December 1991
Date plan of operations signed	20 August 1992
Date notification of readiness accepted	21 August 1992
Date of first distribution	1 October 1992
Duration of WFP assistance	Five years
Duration of project as of 30 September 1995	Three years

All monetary values are expressed in United States dollars or Chinese yuan. One United States dollar equalled 8.28 yuan in September 1995 and 5.26 yuan in 1992.

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4. The WFP staff dealing with this document are:

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5. Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Documents Clerk (tel.: 5228-2641).

PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT AND OF WFP ASSISTANCE

1. The project area consists of 568 villages in 31 townships in the Lishi, Linxian and Zhongyang counties in the Luliang prefecture of Shanxi province. Due to its remoteness, broken, hilly terrain, lack of communications, poor soil, low rainfall and serious soil erosion, it is one of the poorest, food-deficit areas in the province. Agricultural production does not satisfy the food needs of the rural population. In 1992 over 80 percent of the 76,110 households were below the poverty line both in terms of income and food availability: annual income was less than 300 yuan (57 dollars), and annual food availability per capita less than 200 kilograms.
2. The long-term objectives of the project are: to improve the incomes and living conditions of the people and to support the environmental rehabilitation of the area.
3. The immediate objectives are a) to increase food production, particularly cereals, by increasing and/or rehabilitating the area under irrigation, and levelling and/or terracing the crop lands; b) to improve soil and water management through afforestation and construction of check-dams and river embankments; c) to diversify agriculture by increasing the area cultivated with fruit; d) to upgrade local skills, through functional literacy courses and basic technical training in the production of food and fruit crops, maintenance and management of the irrigation network, and maintenance and management of forests; e) to improve socio-economic conditions of the target population by constructing roads, increasing safe drinking-water supply and improving village sanitation.

IMPLEMENTATION

4. The project is implemented under the overall responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture, Beijing. The counterpart at provincial level is the Shanxi Water Conservancy Bureau. Project management offices (PMOs) in the field work under the supervision of project leading groups composed of representatives from the government departments in charge. Technical advisory groups (TAGs) provide backstopping on all technical issues related to the project. Some 237 persons work on the project: 153 technicians, recruited from the Bureaus for Water Conservancy, Forestry, Transportation, Health and Statistics, from the Poverty Alleviation Office, the Agricultural Bank of China, and from the All China Women's Federation; 26 full-time administrative staff; and 58 persons involved in the handling and distribution of food.

FOOD MANAGEMENT

5. An amount of 33,000 tons of wheat had been shipped by the end of September 1995, representing 42 percent of the total WFP commitment. Small post-c.i.f. losses amounting to 1.2 percent of the total wheat delivered occurred mostly during



transportation. Thirty-one warehouses and 37 distribution points were set up to store and deliver WFP wheat. The project borrowed wheat from government stocks to implement project activities according to the schedule in the plan of operations. At the end of September 1995, outstanding loans amounted to 12,186 tons of wheat. There will be no more borrowing in the future, and a plan to reimburse the loan through slower implementation is being prepared.

GOVERNMENT'S CONTRIBUTION

6. The Government of China has met all its obligations as stated in the plan of operations and, furthermore, has increased its contribution in order to compensate for inflation. As of 30 September 1995, the Provincial Government had contributed 4.86 million dollars. The technical support rendered by Departments and Bureaus within Shanxi province has been sound. The M&E reports from the PMOs are prepared on time and are of good quality. Some PMO staff members have been involved as trainers in training managers from new projects in other provinces in monitoring and evaluating procedures.

EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE

7. In May 1995 a national consultant from the Beijing Forestry University reviewed the afforestation component, because the survival rate of planted trees was significantly below expectations due, inter alia, to extreme weather conditions during the last two springs. The consultant was financed by the UNDP umbrella project. He recommended that the preparation and maintenance work be strengthened and the number of trees planted per hectare reduced.

ASSESSMENT

8. The project has made considerable progress towards the achievement of objectives. Most targets have been achieved ahead of schedule (see Annex). Only two components did not show the expected results: the afforestation area reached 58.8 percent, and the length of irrigation canals reached 92.6 percent of their respective pro-rated targets. First economic benefits from orchards will appear five years after the planting of fruit-trees. The maximal benefit is expected after eight to 10 years, when the orchards reach full maturity.
9. The physical achievements are as follows: a) 103.9 percent of the pro-rated target of workdays and 57.1 percent of total planned workdays were used. This was possible because of the borrowing of wheat from government stocks; b) overall grain production in the target area increased by 34 percent compared to 1991; c) 65 percent of the previously food-insecure households were reported to be food self-sufficient. The number of households under the prevailing poverty line was reduced from 80 percent in 1990 to 40 percent in 1995; d) newly-constructed drinking-water supply



schemes have given 47,500 persons and 1,500 draught animals in 161 villages easy access to drinking-water. This has particularly improved the situation of women, who have to collect and to carry water; e) 51,150 people attended literacy training; 67,338 farmers were trained in technical matters; f) From "government savings" amounting to 4.58 million yuan, village clinics were provided with equipment, schools built, sanitation facilities improved, and farmers trained in hygiene matters.

10. Achievements in women-in-development (WID) components are as follows: a) the percentage of women in training was 44 percent in literacy courses and 32 percent in technical training sessions; b) women contributed 28.5 percent of total workdays; c) representatives of the All China Women's Federation are included in the project leading groups at all levels; d) 1,100 women were trained in income-generating activities such as sewing, tailoring and the raising of livestock in a locally-initiated project, executed by the All China Women's Federation and encouraged by WFP. (From government funds for the alleviation of poverty, 200,000 yuan were deposited last year in the Agricultural Bank of China. The funds will be used as collateral against credit released to women who have been trained.)

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

11. The project is in line with the policies of the Government of China and WFP's Mission Statement. It is well designed and focuses on food security and the alleviation of poverty. The project has successfully targeted the poorest households in the project area and has used food aid effectively to relieve hunger by providing lasting benefits.
12. The following conclusions and recommendations are warranted: a) the forestry component, although strengthened and improved, requires close monitoring and support. The country office will attend to this matter and follow up as necessary. Additional external assistance may be required; b) continued efforts will be made to plant more protective plants on all steep slopes, above check-dams, along newly constructed roads, etc., to further prevent soil erosion and to protect new structures. External assistance in the selection of species for the different slopes and altitudes might be required; c) as part of the plan of action for the advancement of the status of women, more support will be given to the All China Women's Federation; d) the participation of women in project activities will be further promoted; e) the local project on income-generating activities for women will be supported through the strengthening of the training component.



**DETAILS OF TARGETS AND ACTIVITY ACHIEVEMENTS
AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 1995**

	Total targets		Prorated targets for 30/9/95		Achievements as at 30/9/95		Achievements of work expressed in percentage		Achievements of workdays expressed in percentage	
	Physical targets	Workdays (1,000)	Physical targets	Workdays (1,000)	Physical targets	Workdays (1,000)	Against total target	Against prorated target	Against total target	Against prorated target
Irrigation canal (km)	221	3 455	141	2 150	128	1 991	57.9	90.8	57.6	92.6
Land development (ha)	4 150	6 089	1 915	2 806	2 145	3 140	51.7	112.0	51.6	111.9
Afforestation (ha)	9 491	4 698	4 256	3 605	4 549	2 118	47.9	106.9	45.1	58.8
Nursery in forestry (ha)	42	22	42	25	42	25	100.0	100.0	113.6	100
Check-dams (1,000 cubic metres)	2 761	2 921	1 512	1 600	1 565	1 669	56.7	103.5	57.1	104.3
Water cisterns (No.)	364	2 096	183	906	161	939	44.2	88.0	44.8	103.6
Roads (km)	144	859	59	357	63	381	43.8	106.8	44.3	106.7
Fruit plantation (ha)	1 800	930	1 709	640	1 761	910	97.8	103	97.8	142.2
Nursery of fruit trees (ha)	6	3	6	3	6	3	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Literacy training (person days)	389 440	389	389 440	389	389 443	389	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Technical training (person days)	224 000	224	144 668	145	148 096	148	66.1	102.4	66.1	102.1
Total		23 619		12 695		13 498			57.1	103.9