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SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, 2000

In accordance with the methods of work of the Executive Board, the present document reflects the main points of its deliberations to be taken into account by the Secretariat in the implementation of the Board's decisions and recommendations, contained in document WFP/EB.1/2000/10.

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FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

Report on WFP Chartered Flight KSV 3275 to Kosovo (2000/EB.1/1)

1. The Board extended its heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of the accident of Flight KSV 3275. Representatives, sometimes on behalf of the families, expressed their thanks and gratitude for the truly exemplary fashion, both very efficient and compassionate, in which WFP staff and management responded to the tragedy. The Board also expressed its thanks to the Italian authorities for their exceptional support.
2. The Board looked forward to the publication of the final report on the circumstances of the accident, to regular updates on the charges made to the Special Account and to the monitoring of insurance-related issues by the Secretariat. The Board, in line with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), encouraged WFP's initiative to share lessons learned from the accident with other United Nations agencies through the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC).

POLICY ISSUES

Disaster Mitigation: A Strategic Approach (2000/EB.1/2)

3. Given the number and impact of recent large-scale natural disasters, the Board endorsed the general approach of the document Disaster Mitigation: A Strategic Approach, which will remain open for future consideration. It appreciated the emphasis on linking preparedness and prevention activities with response to early warning. The Board highlighted the importance of defining where food aid can make a difference in disaster mitigation by focusing on people who are vulnerable to natural disasters, rather than merely on areas where natural disasters occur. It was stressed that disaster mitigation was to be viewed in light of the framework provided in the document Enabling Development (WFP/EB.A/99/4-A).
4. The Board underlined the key role of coordination and partnership in addressing preparedness, prevention and early response in an effective manner. The importance of identifying WFP's particular role in light of broader mitigation efforts, particularly by national authorities and international partners, was noted. In addition, the Board noted the relevance of clarifying the relationship between WFP's contribution in the context of inter-agency mechanisms. The Board underlined the importance of using vulnerability analysis and mapping, and, in that regard, also stressed the need for cooperation with other United Nations organizations.
5. Representatives raised questions concerning the funding implications of such a strategy. The Secretariat assured the Board that existing funding mechanisms were adequate and that changes were not being proposed. The Secretariat underlined the fact that borrowing commodities to enable a quicker response to disasters is a common occurrence, and that recommendations had been made to improve the effectiveness of current practices. The disaster mitigation strategy would be implemented in a selected group of countries to learn from experiences and provide feedback on best practices. The Secretariat will inform the



Board of its findings and lessons learned from these pilot experiences and the Board will decide how these should be integrated into the future policy approach.

Follow-up to the World Food Summit (2000/EB.1/3)

6. The Board stressed the importance of supporting the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action. It expressed concern that the Summit's goal to halve the number of undernourished people in the world by 2015 would not be achieved without the concerted efforts of governments, agencies and donors.
7. The Board highlighted that all WFP programmes, projects and operations work towards reducing hunger in the world, in particular by: linking food aid with development opportunities; working in partnership, especially through the United Nations Development Assistant Framework (UNDAF) process; strengthening the role of women in development; and supporting the poorest, food-deficit countries and targeting the vulnerable within these countries.
8. Representatives noted the importance of quantitative and qualitative information, as well as lessons learned, to understand WFP's contribution to achieving the objectives of the World Food Summit Plan of Action and to the struggle against hunger.
9. The Board encouraged WFP to continue to assess how food aid can most effectively contribute to the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action and requested that the report be sent directly to the Committee on World Food Security.

EVALUATION REPORTS

Evaluation Reports (1999/EB.1/4)

a) Summary Evaluation Report of Emergency Operation Central America 6079.00—Emergency Food Assistance to Households Affected by Hurricane Mitch

10. The Board considered the Summary Report of the Evaluation of emergency operation (EMOP) Central America 6079.00 and commended WFP's effective response to the Mitch emergency. Representatives noted that in-country development food stocks enabled a timely distribution of food aid to disaster victims in the four countries affected. The Secretariat confirmed that most of the food stocks loaned had been reimbursed. The early introduction of food-for-work activities aimed at recovery was welcomed, as well as the fact that those activities adhered to national development priorities. Some representatives pointed to the need for assessing the impact on local economies of a massive influx of emergency food aid. The Secretariat explained that national authorities and commercial importers had been consulted, and the quantities of food aid to be delivered had been fully coordinated with them.
11. The Secretariat informed the Board that a re-assessment of food aid needs was being planned for March 2000, and clarified that since WFP was not informed in a timely manner, it was unable to participate in an earlier joint United Nations review of the Mitch emergency. The Secretariat assured the Board that shortcomings noted in the implementation of the EMOP would be addressed. Great efforts were made to overcome logistic constraints faced in the delivery of food aid to rather isolated areas.



12. The Board requested the Secretariat to take into account the comments made by the members and the generic lessons contained in the report in the implementation of future activities.

b) Thematic Evaluation of WFP-NGO Partnerships

13. The Board considered the Summary Report of the Evaluation of WFP-NGO Partnerships. Representatives noted that tripartite collaboration between governments, NGOs and WFP was essential to gain the added value which NGOs can provide in a partnership with WFP. At the same time, it was stressed that WFP-NGO partnerships should not bypass government institutions, as indeed was recommended by the evaluation.
14. The Board strongly supported the need for evolving criteria for the selection of NGO partners in a transparent manner which takes into account their effectiveness and performance among other things. It also expressed its endorsement of the recommendation on the development of local tripartite memoranda of understanding with NGOs as an instrument of accountability, task specification and performance results criteria. The Board stressed the need to maintain a good balance among international, national and local NGOs and urged the Secretariat to seek closer involvement with NGO partners from countries in transition. It noted with pleasure that new cost-sharing arrangements had been introduced.
15. The Board requested the Secretariat to take into account the comments made by the members and the recommendations contained in the report in the implementation of future activities.

OPERATIONAL MATTERS

Country Strategy Outline—Tanzania (2000/EB.1/5)

16. The Board endorsed the Country Strategy Outline for Tanzania, noting that it was in line with the Programme's policy on using food aid to enable development. Praising government efforts to introduce economic and political reforms, several representatives underlined the need for assistance to Tanzania, given growing food insecurity, widespread poverty, and the burden of hosting about 500,000 refugees.
17. The Board expressed satisfaction to the Secretariat for developing a strategy that was closely linked with the Tanzania Assistance Strategy and UNDAF, and that also provided a link between development and emergency assistance. WFP was encouraged to work closely with district government authorities in the preparation of the Country Programme and to ensure that activities would be identified in a participatory manner, including cooperation with United Nations organizations.
18. Several representatives found the Strategic Grain Reserve an important instrument to maintain a minimum level of food security in the country; they noted with pleasure that a technical review committee had recently been set up by the Government to review the ownership and structure of the reserve. A few representatives also encouraged WFP to continue the practice of local purchases to support the development of agriculture and to facilitate food transfers from surplus to deficit areas.
19. The Secretariat was encouraged to ensure linkages with relevant sectoral programmes supported by the Government and donors, such as health—including HIV/AIDS prevention, and education and to continue cooperation with FAO and IFAD in activities



related to the agricultural sector in Tanzania. The Board further encouraged WFP to address localized food security problems in close cooperation with the communities concerned and the local authorities. The Board authorized the Secretariat to prepare a Country Programme for Tanzania, taking into account the Board's comments and guidance.

Development Projects for Executive Board Approval—China 6147.00 (2000/EB.1/6)

20. The Board considered that the project was generally well designed, comprehensive, included collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and involved a significant government contribution.
21. The Board noted that China had recently made important progress in economic development and poverty alleviation, but acknowledged that the country continued to harbour large populations of poor, food-insecure people.
22. The Secretariat indicated that the project should be seen in the context of a general model for a gradual phasing out of WFP's assistance to China, which would include continued collaboration with IFAD and significantly increased cost-sharing from the Chinese Government. Most representatives endorsed the idea of developing this model further in the context of a Country Programme, and many found that this innovative approach could be a model for other countries. Representatives appreciated the Secretariat's clarification of some technical issues, particularly regarding the project's economic and environmental viability, and the role of leading groups in implementation.
23. In response to some representatives' concerns that a five-year Country Programme might be too long, the Secretariat indicated that the time frame could be discussed and reviewed with the Government in the context of developing a Country Programme. The views of the Board regarding an appropriate exit strategy and the duration of the Country Programme for China will be taken into account in the preparation of the Country Strategy Outline and Country Programme, of which the present project will be a part.
24. The representative of the Netherlands stated for the record that he did not join the consensus because the project contravened WFP policy of focusing assistance on the poorest areas of the poorest countries, and recommended that WFP phase out of China in the shortest time possible. The Secretariat clarified that the project respected fully the decision of the Board on food aid and development, and fell in line with an earlier decision of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes (CFA) that at least 90 percent of development resources be devoted to low-income, food-deficit countries.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval—Indonesia 6195.00 (2000/EB.1/7)

25. The Board expressed support for the objectives of PRRO Indonesia 6195.00, noting that although the Indonesian economy was showing signs of improvement, large numbers of the urban poor were still facing food insecurity.
26. A few representatives were reassured that the project would complement the Government's social safety net programmes while the Government was also involved with and financially supportive of WFP operations. NGO involvement was endorsed by the Government and recognized by all concerned parties as being the most effective and cost-efficient way to target assistance to the most needy in this heavily populated nation,



covering such an extensive area. WFP would continue to work with the same 14 local NGOs engaged under EMOP 6006.00. In response to representatives' concern regarding the cost of training, the Secretariat explained that training of NGO staff would be carried out by WFP personnel using project direct support funds.

27. One representative, noting that the PRRO targeted 2.4 million people while the EMOP targeted 5.1 million people, encouraged WFP to continue its efforts to develop an appropriate exit strategy for Indonesia.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval— Ethiopia 6180.00 (2000/EB.1/8)

28. In expressing support for PRRO Ethiopia 6180.00, the Board noted that it meets the relief and basic recovery needs of Sudanese, Somali and Kenyan refugees in Ethiopia. School feeding and small-scale development projects were considered a welcome addition to the PRRO.
29. The PRRO's focus on household-level food security, health and nutrition, women beneficiaries and children was noted with satisfaction. Close collaboration with other organizations and appropriate-level government bodies was encouraged in implementing rehabilitation works, such as road repairs, and longer-term development activities. The Secretariat was encouraged to call forward food as early as possible in order to avoid borrowing too heavily from the Emergency Food Security Reserve.
30. It was noted that repatriation plans in the PRRO were less ambitious than those presented by UNHCR; the Secretariat was requested to keep the Board informed of progress made in the repatriation programme. The Secretariat was also encouraged to collaborate closely with initiatives supported by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in north-west Somalia in order to facilitate the integration of returning Somali refugees.
31. The Board requested the Secretariat to continue its efforts to reduce the high cost of transporting food to the beneficiaries.
32. Several representatives commended the WFP Representative and the country office in Ethiopia for their management of WFP operations, active public relations work and close contacts with embassies of donor countries. One representative emphasized the importance of monitoring closely the effects of the current drought on the refugees, particularly health and nutritional status.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval— Sudan 6189.00 (2000/EB.1/9)

33. The Board expressed support for the objectives of PRRO Sudan 6189.00, and welcomed measures being taken by the concerned Governments, UNHCR and WFP to repatriate the refugees to their homelands. Representatives also expressed satisfaction that, in preparation for repatriation, WFP assistance would gradually shift from a general to a more targeted food distribution. It was recommended that a semi-annual review of the repatriation process as well as of the shift from general to targeted food distribution be carried out jointly with UNHCR. It was also suggested that WFP and UNHCR undertake a joint evaluation of the long-standing refugee programme in Sudan with a view to using lessons learned.



34. In response to a question regarding the monitoring of dry rations distributed to moderately malnourished children, the Secretariat assured the Board that the WFP field staff stationed in the refugee areas undertook distribution and post-distribution monitoring. In reply to a question by a representative about who would provide security to the refugees during the repatriation, the Secretariat explained that a repatriation plan normally included a tripartite agreement between UNHCR, the host Government and the Government of the country of origin, taking into consideration all security issues.
35. The representative of Eritrea informed the Board that his Government was designing a project to accommodate the Eritrean returnees, and added that the security situation throughout Eritrea was good.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval— Uganda 6176.00 (2000/EB.1/10)

36. The Board expressed its support for the aims of PRRO Uganda 6176.00. Representatives noted its important contribution to meeting the basic needs of refugees and displaced persons in northern Uganda—especially women—and its contribution to the process of greater integration of northern Uganda into the national economy.
37. The Board noted the PRRO's aim to reduce the number of refugees and respond flexibly to the changing situation in northern Uganda, and the document's contents and clarity regarding the situation of the beneficiaries. It emphasized the importance of purchasing as much food locally as possible because parts of the country produced a surplus. The Board also noted the good collaboration between WFP, other United Nations agencies, the Government of Uganda and NGOs.
38. In response to questions by members of the Board, the Secretariat clarified the nature of the rehabilitation activities planned, the roles of the implementing partners and the effect of recent security problems in northern Uganda on the implementation of the project.

OTHER BUSINESS

Update on Operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Republic of Congo

39. The Secretariat informed the Board that WFP's field visit activities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo were being strengthened to address the humanitarian needs of conflict-affected people and in support of the current peace initiatives. It was also noted that additional contributions to WFP were urgently needed.
40. The Secretariat praised the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) for facilitating humanitarian access. It drew attention to the need for further donor support to the WFP emergency operation in the Republic of Congo, where there were about 400,000 internally displaced persons. In response to a Government request, WFP was re-establishing a country office in Brazzaville, and a WFP Representative for the Republic of Congo would be proposed to the Government.



Update on Operations in Angola

41. The Secretariat briefed the Board on the Angola PRRO, which covered the period January-December 2000 and aimed to assist 1,130,000 war-affected and internally displaced persons (IDPs). The operation was 60 percent under-sourced with the pipeline sound only until May 2000. The number of IDPs was increasing steadily due to continued insecurity, while the nutritional status of the population affected by the war had deteriorated more rapidly than anticipated.
42. The Board's attention was also drawn to the WFP special operations (SOs) for the transport of non-food items and for the passenger air service which provided service to the entire humanitarian community in Angola. For the year 2000 contributions had not yet been announced for either of the two operations.
43. The Secretariat also informed the Board that as a result of the conflict in Angola, many people had sought refuge in neighbouring countries such as Namibia and Zambia, where WFP had approved EMOPs to assist them. Contributions were urgently needed for those EMOPs as well.

Update on PRRO Colombia 6139.00—Assistance to Persons Displaced by Violence in Colombia

44. Concern was expressed for the lack of response to this humanitarian project, as it was the right moment to support the peace process, particularly as operations were fully resourced in other regions. One representative urged the WFP country office to contact his country's mission in Bogotá.

Update on PRRO Democratic People's Republic of Korea 6157.00—Recovery Assistance for Vulnerable Groups in DPRK

45. The Secretariat reported to the Board that implementation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) PRRO 6157.00, approved at the Board's Third Regular Session in October 1999, had not yet begun, pending signature of the letter of understanding (LOU) between WFP and the Government. The new donors to the PRRO were aware that their contributions were pending and would not be scheduled for shipment without the LOU.
46. Two of the new donors to the PRRO explained that they were disappointed over the current LOU delay. The donors hoped that the issue could be resolved soon, as they could not put their contributions on hold indefinitely—especially with so many other emergencies to address. Both members stated, however, that they fully agreed with the WFP policy which dictated that the LOU signature was essential before proceeding to ship new PRRO contributions.
47. A representative asked for details on the delay in the LOU being signed. The Secretariat explained that DPRK's primary concern was that the LOU called for an additional 10 international staff specialists beyond the current level of 46 WFP international staff.
48. With respect to the implementation of EMOP 5959.01, the Secretariat informed the Board that the food pipeline would run out in April 2000, and the lean season in DPRK was between April and June.



49. The Secretariat reported that the Government of DPRK had announced that a nutrition survey would be carried out by the Government without international participation. The Secretariat reminded the Board that yearly surveys were foreseen as a follow-up to the joint European Union (EU), UNICEF and WFP 1998 survey which was to serve as a baseline. Two representatives raised concerns over the nutrition survey, specifying the importance of conducting a follow-up nutrition survey with the same methodology and international agency participation as in the 1998 survey. A representative explained that the nutrition survey data assisted the international community to help the children of DPRK. One representative also stated that his country would be watching for improved monitoring conditions.

Update on the Balkans Operations

50. The Secretariat presented to the Board an overview of current WFP activities and strategies in the Balkans.
51. In the province of Kosovo, WFP's strategy had been to rapidly phase down assistance, from nearly 1.4 million beneficiaries after re-entry (June 1999) to a planned figure of 250,000 in the summer of 2000. WFP would work in cooperation with the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) to integrate the remaining beneficiaries into a social safety net programme.
52. In Serbia, WFP was taking steps to make the distribution system more accountable through enhanced monitoring, closer supervision of its main implementing partner and the introduction of international NGOs as additional implementing partners.
53. In Montenegro, WFP supported 70,000 internally displaced persons, refugees and social cases, in close cooperation with other United Nations agencies and Red Cross Movement organizations.
54. Following the departure of most refugees from Albania, WFP had reoriented its activities to support 60,000 vulnerable Albanians through, *inter alia*, food-for-work activities.
55. Relief food aid was being provided to 15,000 refugees remaining in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYRoM). It was expected that additional refugees would return to Kosovo after the winter; however, WFP presence in FYRoM would still be needed to provide logistical support for other operations in the region.
56. The Board was informed that pledges so far covered only 22 percent of WFP's requirement for its activities in the Balkans for 2000.

Update on the Drought in the Greater Horn of Africa

57. The Secretariat informed the Board that, altogether, 14.7 million people in the Greater Horn of Africa had been affected by drought. Of these, WFP was expected to assist about 8.3 million, or 56 percent of the total affected population. WFP planned to provide 374,000 metric tons to the drought victims at a total cost of US\$226 million.
58. In response to a question by a representative, the Secretariat clarified that for the purpose of drought effects analysis, 10 countries were included in the Horn of Africa, namely Burundi, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.



Update on East Timor Emergency Operation

59. The Secretariat informed the Board of progress of the East Timor Emergency Operation, in particular the transition from general food distribution to more targeted activities, such as food for work, seed protection schemes, school feeding and supplementary feeding.

Update on the EMOP 6197.00—Emergency Food Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in the Northern Caucasus

60. The Secretariat briefed the Board on EMOP 6197.00, on the implementing partner, the Ministry of Emergencies of the Russian Federation (EMERCOM), and on monitoring carried out by World Vision. It clarified various issues recently faced by the operation, such as food aid not having reached beneficiaries, application of 20 percent Value Added Tax (VAT) to local purchases and food distribution to the host families.
61. One representative expressed concern about the reported diversion of food aid, the VAT issue and the limited number of WFP staff in Moscow for the operation. Another representative inquired on the basis for selecting the WFP implementing partner.
62. The Secretariat, replying to the above queries, informed the Board that following discussions with the implementing partner the diversion issue was being resolved with all of the food either to be returned or replaced. It was also mentioned that the VAT issue was of concern to all United Nations agencies and was being negotiated under the United Nations umbrella agreement. WFP would be hiring a logistics officer to work under an implementing partner.

