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## PROJECTS FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD APPROVAL

### Agenda item 5



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## PROTRACTED RELIEF AND RECOVERY OPERATION— TAJIKISTAN 6087.00

### Food assistance to vulnerable groups and recovery activities

Number of beneficiaries	370 000
Duration of project	One year (1 July 1999–30 June 2000)

Cost (United States dollars)	
Total cost to WFP	23,184,936
Total food cost	9,720,352

### ABSTRACT

Following the 1992/93 civil war, Tajikistan has suffered a continuous economic and social decline. Although a peace agreement was signed in June 1997, localized security incidents are common and continue to hinder a return to normalization. Tajikistan is the poorest country in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and since 1995 has been classified as a low-income, food-deficit country by FAO and low-income economy by the World Bank (the annual per capita income was 340 United States dollars in 1997).

The economic and social difficulties have affected a large proportion of the population, increasing the number of vulnerable people among the six million inhabitants. Local food production is unable to meet domestic requirements. The 1998/99 cereal shortfall is estimated at 40 percent of total requirements—which is met partly through commercial imports and partly by food aid. Various nutrition surveys have shown a deterioration of general health indicators.

WFP responded to the difficulties in Tajikistan with targeted emergency vulnerable feeding in 1993. The current PRRO continues to shift the emphasis from relief to rehabilitation with various food-for-work activities, including the promotions of the land-lease scheme whereby food aid is provided to farmers leasing plots from state farms. Under the ongoing phase, EMOP 5253.03, 15,000 beneficiaries benefited from this “pilot” scheme. In view of the increased demand for participation into the land-lease scheme, the new project will expand these activities. WFP assistance will also include rehabilitation or urban and rural infrastructure, and a focus on demobilized soldiers and returnees in implementing food-for-work schemes.

## NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

**This document contains recommendations for review and approval by the Executive Board.**

Pursuant to the decisions taken on the methods of work by the Executive Board at its First Regular Session of 1996, the documentation prepared by the Secretariat for the Board has been kept brief and decision-oriented. The meetings of the Executive Board are to be conducted in a business-like manner, with increased dialogue and exchanges between delegations and the Secretariat. Efforts to promote these guiding principles will continue to be pursued by the Secretariat.

The Secretariat therefore invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document, to contact the WFP staff member(s) listed below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting. This procedure is designed to facilitate the Board's consideration of the document in the plenary.

The WFP focal points for this document are:

Regional Director: Ms. J. Cheng-Hopkins tel.: 066513-2209

Programme Coordinator: H. Tongul tel.: 066513-2041

Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Documentation and Meetings Clerk (tel.: 066513-2641).



## CONTEXT AND RATIONALE FOR PROVIDING ASSISTANCE

### Situation analysis

1. Since the early eighties, Tajikistan has suffered continuous economic and social decline. The process started in the unsettled years before the political disintegration of the Soviet Union, when Moscow began to cut back sharply on its transfers to Central Asia, leaving Tajikistan the poorest of the Soviet republics.<sup>1</sup> The situation deteriorated even further following independence in 1991. The break-up of the Soviet Union disrupted trade among the former republics, led to monetary instability in the rouble zone, and ended altogether the transfers from Moscow that had kept Tajikistan afloat. According to the World Bank Atlas for 1997, annual per capita income was 340 US dollars, ranking Tajikistan among the world's poorest countries.
2. The crumbling of the economy was compounded by a bitter civil war, during 1992/93 which left at least 50,000 people dead and a further 500,000 displaced (of whom more than 150,000 fled the country) out of a population of six million.<sup>2</sup> The conflict is deeply rooted in religious and ethnic differences and struggle for power in the post-Soviet politics of Tajikistan. Although the war subsided in most parts of Tajikistan in 1993, there have been localized incidents since then. However, by late 1996 there was renewed violence, and hostage-taking led the United Nations to evacuate from February to May 1997. Pressure from the United Nations and others nevertheless led to a peace agreement, signed in Moscow in June 1997. This formally ended the civil war, even though the overall security situation remained precarious. International agencies were forced to evacuate from the Karategin Valley, following the murder of four United Nations Military Observers Tajikistan (UNMOT) staff members in July 1998. In November 1998, hostilities in the northern province of Leninabad once again demonstrated the fragility of peace accords. Security conditions continue to affect the implementation and at times obstruct the delivery of humanitarian assistance.
3. Tajikistan is embroiled in the ongoing ethnic, religious and political strife in the region. Ethnic and religious divisions exist in all neighbouring countries, posing internal security threats. Tajikistan itself is more ethnically diverse, has a smaller economic base and is less endowed with natural resources, placing it at even greater risk of instability and insecurity. Afghanistan, where more Tajiks reside than in Tajikistan, has been extremely unstable and insecure for the past 20 years.
4. Much of Tajikistan is covered by either mountains or deserts, leaving only about 7 percent of the land for agriculture. Most of that land is irrigated, since the major cash crop, cotton, heavily depends on irrigation water. The huge irrigation network was built and maintained at a time when forced labour was available on a large scale and costs were a minor issue. The agricultural situation has worsened with the running down of irrigation infrastructure, the lack of essential inputs and cash transfers, the collapse of distribution mechanisms, the decline and cuts in resource allocations to the state farm systems (kolkhozes and sovkhoses), and a sharp increase in corruption throughout the system.

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank, "Note on Poverty in the Republic of Tajikistan: Prepared for the Consultative Group Meeting, May 20, 1998", p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> UNDP/Tajikistan, "Tajikistan Human Development Report 1997", p. 34.



Deterioration of the irrigation system, especially since independence, has severely affected Tajikistan's capacity to feed itself, owing to its inability to continue to produce and exchange cotton in sufficient quantities for wheat, its essential staple. In addition, the transport network has sharply deteriorated, with almost 75 percent of trucks out of order due to lack of spare parts or funds for new vehicles. During the initial period in the civil war the acute food shortages in Dushanbe and many other urban centres stemmed from a lack of fuel and collapse of the transport system. Although the railway system is still partly in use, it is badly in need of repairs.

5. Economic production fell (from an already low base) by 40 percent between 1990 and early 1995. Over the next two years, there were further declines of 12 percent and 7 percent, followed by a small increase of roughly 2 percent in 1997.<sup>1</sup> By any social indicator, the current situation is extremely serious. Unemployment ranges between 30 percent and 40 percent, according to World Bank observers, although many believe it is even higher. As in many ex-Soviet countries, women have rapidly filled the ranks of the unemployed since state industries (light manufacture factories) and public sector activities (such as education and health) have been drastically curtailed as a result of lower public expenditure. The country's low revenue base has drastically limited public sector expenditures, particularly in the health and education sectors. The education system has crumbled to the point where the World Bank speaks of "a real danger of a 'lost generation' of children", there is a "near collapse" of the health services, and a "collapse" of the state social safety net.<sup>2</sup> While workers' incomes have remained fixed, and very low, the consumer price index has soared, rising by an annual rate of more than 130 percent through 1997. Similar increases have been registered for 1998.<sup>3</sup>
6. Tajikistan has always depended on cereal imports to feed its population. With domestic cereal production for 1998/99 estimated at 510,000 tons (some 13 percent lower than 1997/98 because of lower yields and slightly smaller sown area), the cereal deficit amounts to some 360,000 tons. As noted above, due to economic recession and much lower cotton production, barter arrangements are no longer possible, nor is there sufficient money to purchase wheat on the international market.
7. The outlook for a rapid increase in food production is discouraging. Moreover, the population's ability to procure food such as wheat, rice, edible oil and sugar, as well as fuel, has been eroded by massive unemployment, devaluation of the currency, collapse of the state support system and inflation. Tajikistan is and is expected to remain food-deficit and low-income for many years.
8. To restructure Tajikistan's economy land reform is a critical element. The first steps in this direction were taken in 1994 and 1995, when small amounts of state land were allocated to private farmers. In mid-1996, the Government and the World Bank designed a comprehensive land reform programme, intended to privatize state and collective farms. The International Monetary Fund estimates that 25 percent of agricultural land (but only 5 percent of good irrigated land) was privately farmed in September 1997.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> World Bank, *op. cit.*, pp. 13, 18, 19, 27.

<sup>3</sup> International Monetary Fund, "Republic of Tajikistan: Recent Economic Developments" (IMF Staff Country Report No. 98/16, February 1998), p. 88.

<sup>4</sup> IMF, *op. cit.*, p. 57.



9. According to the World Bank, ordinary poverty (where family incomes are insufficient to meet basic food and other needs) affects two thirds of the population. An additional 12 percent are “extremely poor” (surviving only by such means as selling assets, begging or stealing), and another 5 percent are “destitute” (unemployable, pensioners without family support, etc.).<sup>1</sup>
10. This economic status has had serious implications for food security. One study found that per capita weekly consumption of meat dropped from 0.57 kilograms in 1990 to 0.14 kilograms in 1995. Over the same period, consumption of oil dropped by 50 percent that of sugar by 80 percent, and of potatoes by 60 percent. Only consumption of (subsidized) bread increased over that period.<sup>2</sup>
11. Other studies confirm in essence the World Bank findings on poverty. The European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) reported in 1997 that 16.4 percent of households in Tajikistan, comprising roughly one million people, were food-insecure. (This corresponds roughly to that part of the population defined by the World Bank as being “extremely poor” and “destitute”.) By region, food insecurity affects 18.8 percent of households in Khatlon (the most populous region), 14.7 percent in Republican Subordinated Rayon (RRS), 10.3 percent in Leninabad, and 72.5 percent in Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBO) (a traditionally highly dependent area, but comprising only 3 percent of the total population).<sup>3</sup> A nutrition survey conducted by German Agro Action (GAA) in RRS/Garm and Leninabad provinces in September 1998 indicated that the nutritional status of the populations was critical: more than 46 percent of children under five suffered from chronic malnutrition (stunting) and over 11 percent were affected by acute malnutrition (wasting).

## WFP ASSISTANCE TO DATE

12. WFP assistance to Tajikistan has been delivered through three emergency operations (EMOPs) for which a total of around 101,000 tons of food has been committed so far. The current EMOP, Number 5253.03, is due to terminate at the end of June 1999. In 1993, WFP began distributing supplementary rations in Khatlon, the area most seriously affected by the civil war. According to data from the migration service of Khatlon, 35,000 women have been left as heads of households since the war. Since the beginning of WFP’s emergency feeding operation, Khatlon has received the largest share of WFP assistance. During 1994, WFP broadened its coverage to address the needs of vulnerable groups country-wide (pensioners, households with no income earner, people in institutions). In 1995, assistance was extended to food for work activities such as reconstruction of war-damaged housing. In 1996, WFP began to support pilot projects to allocate land on state farms for private use, especially by households headed by women (“land-lease”).
13. An overall framework for WFP’s activities in Tajikistan was provided in a Country Strategy Outline (CSO) submitted to the Executive Board for consideration at its Third Regular Session in October 1996 (document WFP/EB.3/96/6/Add.5). The CSO

<sup>1</sup> World Bank, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Birkenes, Robert M., “Tajikistan: Survey of the Household and Bazaar Economies” (report for Save the Children/US and UNHCR, January 1996), p. 48.

<sup>3</sup> Freckleton, Ann, “Who’s Needy: An Assessment of Household Food Insecurity in Tajikistan” (report for ECHO, August 1997), p. 39.



noted the consensus among United Nations agencies, NGOs and donors that assistance should be expanded beyond purely emergency operations to support rehabilitation and development. While anticipating the continuation of relief for the destitute, the CSO underscored the need to support transitional activities such as rehabilitation of rural and urban infrastructure, as well as promotion of private plots for household food security.

14. The evaluation mission that visited the country in November 1997 (summary report presented to the Executive Board in October 1998) recommended that while the need for continued WFP food assistance remained valid in its present form, especially in view of the current socio-economic conditions, further efforts to refine beneficiary targeting within the vulnerable group feeding programme would be essential. It also recommended a gradual transition from relief to rehabilitation activities and commended the initial successful efforts in the land-lease programme. The mission also stressed the need for an increased commitment by the Government and communities to WFP's assistance programme.
15. Tajikistan's economic situation has not improved significantly since the CSO was prepared in 1996, nor is it expected to do so in the near future. Many factors combine to make prospects bleak: the inability of the state to raise resources to compensate for past substantial transfers from Moscow; the massive investment required to rehabilitate the irrigation system on which agriculture depends; and the exodus of many ethnic Russian professionals following independence. Other problems stem from the lack of a private enterprise culture to replace the former command economy, the resistance to change on the part of kolkhoz managers and other members of the old guard, the rise of an active "mafia" controlling major sectors such as cotton and aluminium, and the insecurity associated with the (still not wholly resolved) civil war. It is prudent to assume that external assistance will be required to address basic problems of food insecurity for the foreseeable future.

## BENEFICIARIES AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

16. As noted earlier, around 300,000 people in Tajikistan are destitute, and 700,000 more are extremely poor. These figures provide a reasonably accurate indication of the extent of food insecurity, since part of the Bank's definition of the extremely poor and destitute is that people "experience acute or chronic food insecurity". The 1999 Common Appeal Process (CAP) covers the food needs of one million food-insecure people in Tajikistan, approximately the "destitute and extremely poor" portion of the World Bank estimate.
17. There is a growing recognition, however, that food security in Tajikistan is usually a family matter, not an individual one, and that the traditional approach may not be adequate to new circumstances. A study conducted by Save the Children Fund (SCF)-US and UNHCR notes, "if one person in a large family (e.g. a pensioner) is potentially vulnerable, everyone in the family contributes to make sure that the person is provided for".<sup>1</sup> The same would apply to "vulnerable people" such as invalids, or orphans (who are normally lodged with relatives or guardians). There is no reason to assume that individuals are food-insecure simply because they fall into one of these categories.
18. If the entire *family* is vulnerable, various coping mechanisms come into play: eating less, selling assets, borrowing from relatives or friends, stealing, or, in rural areas growing food

<sup>1</sup> Birkenes, op. cit., p. 60.





on rented or borrowed land.<sup>1</sup> If these coping mechanisms become saturated, the family as a whole may fall into the category of “food-insecure”.

19. At the family level, however, it is often difficult to determine which *kinds* of families are most likely to be in need. The ECHO study of 1997, for example, looked at the types of family groups often considered to be particularly vulnerable: families with more than four children or with members unable to work, households with expectant and nursing mothers, households headed by women or single parents. In every case, the study found either that such groups as a whole are *not* more food-insecure than the general population or that differences are not “statistically significant”. The only households that clearly suffered from a significant degree of food insecurity were those with no income earner.<sup>2</sup>
20. To the extent that this analysis is accurate, the implications for targeting are very important: to target pensioners or households headed by women without considering whether there are other income earners in the family would risk providing food to people who do not need it, and missing those who do.<sup>3</sup> The challenge is to identify those families within each category who are food-insecure, and to target assistance to them.
21. The first step in doing this is to analyse the characteristics of food-insecure households. The ECHO study, for example, finds that such households (compared with food-secure ones) are less likely to own vehicles or other productive assets, to have working-age male members willing to move to new areas, and less likely (in rural areas) to be using irrigated land, among others.<sup>4</sup>

### Targeting mechanism

22. Categories targeted by WFP for both vulnerable group feeding and food-for-work programmes are based on social welfare cases registered by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP). Owing to differences in definition of categories, not all Government social welfare cases qualify as vulnerable for WFP (i.e. women over 50 with more than five children are considered social welfare cases regardless of their or their spouse’s employment status). WFP targets beneficiaries through close consultation with relevant local Government authorities and verification by monitors. Many of the WFP monitors are women (including those who have been unemployed because of the prevailing economic and security conditions) and this has assisted in improving targeting of vulnerable women. Therefore, WFP’s beneficiary lists are a sub-set of the social welfare cases provided by the Department of Social Security, under the MLSP, and fine-tuned by WFP monitors.

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<sup>1</sup> See Freckleton, *op. cit.*, pp. 33, and Birkenes, *op. cit.* pp. 58-60.

<sup>2</sup> Freckleton, *op. cit.*, p. 43. These results are viewed as controversial by some, and are subject to confirmation by further studies currently under way.

<sup>3</sup> The ECHO study (p. 43) found that 85 percent of pensioners and 79 percent of female-headed households were *not* food-insecure. Any targeting to such groups as a whole would misdirect resources.

<sup>4</sup> Freckleton, *op. cit.*, p. 45.



23. In the initial phase of the new PRRO, WFP will continue to utilize the beneficiary lists for the current phase, further refining them with monitors. However, as the results of the Regional Vulnerability analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit's targeting exercise become available, the beneficiary lists will be changed accordingly.
24. WFP's Regional VAM Unit is developing profiles of food economy zones, mapping vulnerable areas and populations, identifying food insecurity indicators, and assisting the country office to use those indicators for targeting families most in need of food aid. The Unit is also relying in part on work already completed or under way in Tajikistan, e.g. by ECHO, SCF-US/UNHCR, World Bank/UNDP, Action Against Hunger, German Agro Action, and others. The results of the VAM Unit's work should be available by mid-1999, in time to guide the implementation of the new PRRO in the latter part of the year.

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## PARTNERSHIPS

25. In general there is a high level of coordination within the United Nations family in Tajikistan. The Special Representative Secretary-General (SRSG) holds regular meetings with all United Nations agencies, as well as the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and other international organizations. The Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Affairs Coordinator coordinates humanitarian assistance in Tajikistan. WFP chairs the Food Aid Coordinating Committee (FACC) meetings held every two weeks, in which all food-related organizations, agencies and NGOs participate. The 1999 CAP launched in December 1998 totals \$24 million and primarily includes food assistance, agricultural revival, and support to the health and education sectors.
26. Within the United Nations system, WFP's principal collaboration is with UNHCR and UNDP. WFP provides food-for-work opportunities for the poorest families. Non-food inputs are supplied by UNHCR and UNDP to assist returnees and demobilized soldiers, and in the land-lease scheme, where UNHCR provides water pumps and fertilizer for beneficiary farmers. WFP has also been coordinating with UNDP's Community Development Centres (CDCs), which are built on former youth clubs through food-for-work schemes. To date, cooperation with UNICEF has not materialized mainly because of its limited presence in Tajikistan.
27. The United Nations system has prepared a "United Nations Strategy Support Plan for Tajikistan (1998–2000)".<sup>1</sup> Although not yet endorsed, the Plan sets forth: a description of the development process in Tajikistan, an analysis of ways to match "needs" and "supplies", ways to establish coordination and information systems, and a resource mobilization strategy. It is similar to the strategic framework exercise for Afghanistan completed in 1998.
28. WFP also has partnerships with a number of NGOs, principally for rehabilitation activities. WFP works with German Agro Action (rehabilitation of roads, canals, buildings), Shelter Now International (damaged housing), Mercy Corps International (health and sanitation), Agence de l'Aide à la Coopération et au Développement (canal clearing, support to women manufacturing mosquito nets), Orphans Relief Agencies (agricultural production in support of orphans), SCF-US (school feeding). In addition, there

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<sup>1</sup> UNDP/Tajikistan, "Research Dossier for the Preparation of the U.N. Strategy Support Plan for Tajikistan, 1998-2000 [draft]", June 1998.





are new prospects for collaboration with the Aga Khan foundation. Local NGOs are still very young and cannot implement substantial assistance programmes.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

### Objectives

29. The overall objectives of WFP's intervention in Tajikistan over the year July 1999-June 2000 are to:
- a) help support the critically food-insecure; and
  - b) assist in the country's rehabilitation and development, with priority given to activities whose specific purpose is to promote long-term food security, focusing primarily on women beneficiaries.

### Activities

30. To achieve the above objectives, WFP will use food in support of the following activities:
- a) distribution of food as relief to the critically food-insecure (250,000 beneficiaries);
  - b) school feeding (45,000 beneficiaries);
  - c) food for temporary support to returnees and demobilized soldiers (10,000 beneficiaries);
  - d) provision of subsistence rations to families establishing crops on land leased from collective farms (30,000 beneficiaries);
  - e) food for work for rehabilitation of urban and rural infrastructure, with emphasis on activities leading to greater household food security (30,000 beneficiaries); and
  - f) food for victims of sudden disasters (5,000 beneficiaries).
31. Table 1 gives a breakdown of beneficiary groups.

**TABLE 1: WFP BENEFICIARY GROUPS UNDER PRRO 6087.00**

Activity	Total number	Male	Female
Relief to the critically food-insecure	250 000	100 000	150 000
School feeding	45 000	22 500	22 500
Returnees <sup>1</sup> and demobilized soldiers	10 000	–	–
Land-lease scheme	30 000	9 000	21 000
Food-for-work programmes	30 000	12 000	18 000
Disaster victims	5 000	1 500	3 500
<b>Total number of beneficiaries</b>	<b>370 000</b>	<b>145 000</b>	<b>215 000</b>

<sup>1</sup>Gender breakdown is not available for returnees. It should be noted, however, that all demobilized soldiers are men.



### **Relief to the critically food-insecure**

32. The WFP beneficiary lists include only vulnerable people. With VAM-determined results regarding food-insecure families, the lists will be refined and the targeting improved, to reach the most vulnerable people and eliminate those able to fend for themselves. The food ration is for the full year; however, with a gradual reduction of the ration, vulnerable groups have been able to obtain alternative sources of food, mainly through trade and small plots for growing crops.
33. Food for vulnerable beneficiaries will be transported from WFP warehouses to distribution centres near the beneficiaries' homes. Distributions will be made by local authorities with WFP monitors in attendance. Monitors will also conduct post-distribution surveys to ensure that eligible beneficiaries have received their food. The entire process will take place in close collaboration with district and local officials, most of whom are women. It will also allow WFP's eligibility criteria to be tested against the Government's evolving sense of how a new social safety net will be constructed once resources are available for it. This collaboration will increase the accuracy of targeting. Since a majority of WFP monitors are women, steps have been taken to ensure that women are fully involved in the planning and management of distributions. In the ongoing phase monitors have helped with setting up women's village groups that are applying for food-for-work projects.

### **School feeding**

34. Tajikistan used to have universal education and literacy rates of close to 100 percent. However, according to the World Bank, since independence the situation has deteriorated radically given "the decay and destruction of school buildings, the flight of teachers both away from the country and away from the profession, [and] lack of textbooks and furniture."<sup>1</sup> In some desperately poor families children are required to work in order to contribute to household income. As a result, educational standards and school attendance rates have plummeted.
35. All WFP-assisted school feeding programmes are based in Khatlon. Targeting for school feeding is handled by SCF-US. Working with the latter, WFP is providing primary schoolchildren (age 7 to 11) with a mid-day serving of bread as an incentive for them to attend school throughout the academic year. The bread is baked on site at the schools. SCF-US reports that school attendance increases significantly where food is made available in such a way. Gender is not an issue in education in the Khatlon region, where boys and girls have similar attendance rates.

### **Returnees and demobilized soldiers**

36. During 1997–98, approximately 15,000 civilians and opposition soldiers who had fled to Afghanistan returned to Tajikistan. Programmes have been developed by the international community to demobilize soldiers (UNMOT, UNDP, International Organization for Migration (IOM), World Bank, WFP) and to rehabilitate civilian returnees (UNHCR, WFP, NGOs). Food assistance to returnees is distributed by UNHCR, while that to demobilized soldiers is distributed through WFP and implementing partners. Both beneficiary groups receive on-site feeding for six months. However, under the proposed PRRO, food assistance will be primarily in the form of food-for-work and other income-generating activities. The number of returnees and demobilized soldiers is set at 10,000, and there is

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<sup>1</sup> World Bank, op. cit, p. 17.



no gender breakdown since the returnees are not identified. All demobilized soldiers are men.

### **Land-lease scheme**

37. Under the land-lease scheme, WFP helps organize groups of poor farmers on a given state farm or kolkhoze. The participants enter into a written agreement with farm management stating the terms of the lease. Usually, farmers are granted a four-year lease to a half hectare of land. In return, farmers pay either in kind (20 percent of their crop) or in cash (annual payments ranging between \$25 and \$50 per hectare).
38. Farms and farmers all benefit from this arrangement. State farms currently in extreme economic difficulty are able to obtain some income from otherwise unutilized land, allowing them time to work out the transition to a privatized form of agriculture. Farmers who are paid little or nothing for their work on the farms are able to grow their own food for consumption and sale.
39. In addition to playing a catalytic role in getting such schemes under way on specific farms, WFP provides participants with wheat flour which allows them to meet their household subsistence needs while they plant crops and await the harvest. From 1996 to date, over 15,000 lessees have been involved in this scheme, including 57 percent women beneficiaries. Under the proposed PRRO the land-lease scheme will expand to cover 30,000 beneficiaries, a large majority of whom are women-headed farmer households, i.e. 70 percent of the beneficiaries of the land-lease scheme. Studies have shown that the project has brought about a degree of food security and economic self-sufficiency for the scheme's participants. The main setbacks have been legal, such as a framework safeguarding lease contract terms and longer-term guarantees with regard to land ownership.
40. Wheat flour will be delivered to beneficiaries as a family ration at the project sites, under the supervision of WFP food monitors. Of the total food to which beneficiaries are entitled, 50 percent will be distributed at the start of activities, and the remaining 50 percent will be pro-rated according to completion of certain activities. This pattern will be reviewed during the PRRO to ensure that distributions correspond to times of greatest need for food.

### **Food-for-work programmes: Rehabilitation of urban and rural infrastructure**

41. In recent years, a great deal of urban and rural infrastructure in Tajikistan has been destroyed by war or has deteriorated through lack of funds for proper maintenance. To help restore such assets, WFP will support food-for-work activities in areas such as rehabilitation of drainage and irrigation systems, community roads and buildings, and water and sanitation facilities with partners who are able to provide the necessary technical inputs. Certain food-for-work activities are aimed at environmental conservation—canal clearing and river bank fortification which support efforts to prevent landslides and floods.
42. In some cases, WFP directly implements food-for-work activities targeted to food-insecure households. In these situations, food is distributed upon certification by WFP monitors that work is progressing according to plan. In cases where work is supervised by NGOs, the NGO concerned will confirm that work has been carried out, collect commodities at the WFP warehouse, and distribute the food to beneficiaries. WFP monitors periodically check that work has been satisfactorily carried out according to plan.



### Logistic strategy and policy

43. Food has been transported through two routes: a) by ship to ports on the Baltic (Riga) or Black Sea (Novorossisk) for on-forwarding by rail through Russia and/or CIS countries; or b) by rail directly from eastern Europe through CIS countries.
44. Over the last four years, WFP logistics officers have completed several major assessment missions and produced a revised logistics matrix which builds upon a very inexpensive railway system through CIS countries in Central Asia, including the Tajik leg, where WFP enjoys a special discount. Distributions and transport to Gorno Badakshan are carried out by trucks from Osh in Kyrgyzstan on the main railway line connecting with the CIS countries. Similarly, northern Afghanistan is also served by the Osh railway organizing delivery schedules before the onslaught of winter in mountainous areas.
45. Owing to the severity of the winter conditions and the closure of transport routes in mountainous areas, food needs will be pre-positioned before the winter. These are then trucked in smaller quantities to the delivery points.

### Capacity-building

46. To implement the various activities of the proposed PRRO, the country office (including the sub-offices of Kurgan-Tube and Khorog) will require four additional staff with skills in designing and implementing rehabilitation and development programmes. This includes recruitment of international staff to head both sub-offices, in place of the United Nations Volunteer (Khurgan-Tube) and local staff (Khorog) who have been assisting to date. The main office in Dushanbe requires a finance/administrative officer (project staff) and an international junior professional reporting officer. Additional local programme staff will also be needed to monitor activities carried out by NGOs and WFP. The enhancement of staff reflects the complexity of operations and increased responsibilities in running a programme that will evolve from pure relief to recovery.
47. Training will be provided to upgrade the capacity of existing local staff to design, supervise, and monitor FFW activities. Of specific concern will be means of identifying and targeting food-insecure households. Training in food security issues will be overseen by the programme assistant responsible for Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) activities.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

48. Routine monitoring will be carried out by monitors stationed in Dushanbe and the two sub-offices. During distribution periods, monitors verify distribution and beneficiary numbers. Basic indicators to be tracked will include:
  - a) **Relief food:** number and category of beneficiaries with gender breakdown; amount of food distributed;
  - b) **Land-lease:** number and category of beneficiaries; women-headed farmer families, surface area of land leased; amount of food distributed; types of crops; percentage of beneficiaries who continue to farm after food aid ends;
  - c) **Food for work:** number and category of beneficiaries with gender breakdown; amount of food distributed; types of activities and levels of achievement;



- d) **School feeding:** number of schools; students enrolled and attending classes; amount of food distributed;
  - e) **Returnees and demobilized soldiers:** number of beneficiaries; amount of food distributed; types of activities; achievements.
49. In addition, periodic surveys/studies will be carried out by the country office with support from the regional VAM Unit to determine the extent to which food aid beneficiaries remain food-insecure as well as to assess the degree of vulnerability of other potentially food-insecure families.

## EXIT STRATEGY

50. It can be assumed that Tajikistan will remain food-deficit in the near future. Moreover, the country is suffering from a new and particularly insidious type of disaster: the total collapse of the social, economic and political system, along with the disintegration of the former Soviet Union safety net. This “emergency” situation is durable and has a great impact at the national and regional levels. Therefore, a phasing out strategy would be unrealistic under these conditions.
51. The degree of uncertainty about economic and political events in Tajikistan remains great. This PRRO therefore covers only one year; future PRRO submissions may be made to cover food aid requirements over the following two years if local conditions permit. During the coming years, it should be possible to design an appropriate strategy, including transition to a longer-term Country Programme.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

52. The overriding risk in Tajikistan is that there could be a renewed outbreak of civil war, resulting in greater numbers of people requiring assistance. The peace process, although on track at high levels, meets with difficulties at the local level because of frustrations concerning implementation mechanisms and the uncertainties that make the process unattractive for many players. The lack of significant response from donors has caught the country in a vicious circle whereby donors demand improvements in security before releasing funds, while the lack of funds at the country level causes the situation to deteriorate further.

### Security

53. The security conditions have an impact on the implementation and delivery of food assistance. Certain areas and regions occasionally become inaccessible as a result of security incidents. Information-sharing with UNMOT on security conditions will continue. Precautionary improvements such as the installation of alarms will be made in the country office and sub-offices, as well as for the residences of staff. An amount of \$18,000 has been planned for these security improvements. Furthermore, WFP shares expenses related to Field Security Officers with other United Nations agencies in Tajikistan.
54. A major imponderable is the extent to which the Government will be able to take the necessary macro-economic and policy initiatives to begin what will be a long and difficult economic recovery process. WFP activities will be greatly influenced by these initiatives.



For example, the ultimate success of the land-lease programme will depend on land reform policies that allow participants to gain title to the land they lease.

55. Tajikistan is also subject to natural disasters such as landslides, earthquakes, floods and avalanches. There are several coordination mechanisms for disaster mitigation, both at the national and regional level. The Government has been strengthening the coordination between the State Emergency Committee and international organizations. Both the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the WFP regional office have a reserve in case of disasters. The link with the regional office, especially with regard to sharing the same food pipeline, permits greater flexibility in responding to natural disasters. The FACC meetings chaired by WFP also provide a mechanism for coordinating (food) assistance in case of disasters. Furthermore, the proposed PRRO includes a contingency provision for responding to a modest number (up to 5,000 beneficiaries) and scale of such disasters; a major calamity would require resourcing under a separate emergency operation.

## INPUT REQUIREMENTS

### Food aid requirements

56. The food basket is composed of wheat flour, vegetable oil and sugar—commodities normally consumed by the local population. Rations differ for the various activities because of two main reasons: a) difference in activities (land-lease scheme and FFW will receive a family ration of 3 kilograms of wheat flour on a work-day basis, whereas the school feeding component involves bread that is baked at the school, and food is also provided in camps to returnees and demobilized soldiers); and b) activities such as relief to critically food-insecure vulnerable groups have been reduced over time (WFP has been assisting vulnerable groups since 1993) in line with the plan for gradual phasing down. For the vulnerable groups the nutritional gap is met through other food procured by different means such as small gardens, petty trade and remittances from relatives abroad (although with the majority working in Russia, the recent economic crisis there will adversely affect this flow of cash into Tajikistan).
57. The project will require 50,082 tons of food resources during the period 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000. This requirement will be used 41 percent for Relief to the food-insecure, 55 percent for FFW and land-lease, and 4 percent for school feeding and food for displaced and disaster-affected population as shown in Table 2 below.

**TABLE 2. FOOD NEEDS PER ACTIVITY  
(JULY 1999–JUNE 2000)**

Activity	No. of Beneficiaries	Daily ration (grams)			Duration (days)	Planned requirement (metric tons)		
		Wheat flour	Vegetable oil	Sugar		Wheat flour	Vegetable oil	Sugar
Relief to the food-insecure	250 000	200	15	10	365	18 250	1 368	913
School feeding	45 000	175	15	0	180	1 417	122	-
Returnees/	10 000	400	30	20	180	720	54	36





Demobilized soldiers									
Land-lease scheme	30 000	3000	0	0	150	13 500	-	-	
Food-for-work	30 000	3000	0	0	150	13 500	-	-	
Disaster victims	5 000	400	30	20	90	180	14	9	
<b>Total</b>	<b>370 000</b>					<b>47 567</b>	<b>1 557</b>	<b>958</b>	

### Non-food items

58. The country office has good collaboration arrangements with NGOs and United Nations agencies; this is expected to meet initial requirements for non-food items. However, this may not be sufficient. A review of requirements will be carried out during the course of the next year.

### Technical assistance

59. An NGO (Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development—ACTED) has been assisting with the services of one expatriate agronomist and one local expert to provide technical assistance to the land-lease beneficiaries. Required engineering expertise is available locally at minimal cost. This will require \$15,000, as in the attached budget.

## RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

60. The PRRO is recommended for approval by the Executive Board within the budget provided in Annexes I and II.



## ANNEX I

<b>PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN</b>			
	<b>Quantity (tons)</b>	<b>Average cost per ton</b>	<b>Value (dollars)</b>
<b>WFP COSTS</b>			
<b>A. Direct operational costs</b>			
Commodity <sup>1</sup>			
– Wheat flour	47 567	176	8 371 792
– Vegetable oil	1 557	700	1 089 900
– Sugar	958	270	258 660
<b>Total commodities</b>	<b>50 082</b>		<b>9 720 352</b>
External transport	50 082	82.42	4 127 457
LTSH a. or b.			
a. Landside Transport	50 082	95	4 757 790
b. ITSH	50 082	37	1 853 034
<b>Subtotal direct operational costs</b>			<b>20 458 633</b>
<b>B. Direct support costs (see Annex II for details)</b>			
<b>Subtotal direct support costs</b>			<b>1 189 300</b>
<b>Total direct costs</b>			<b>21 647 933</b>
<b>C. Indirect support costs (7.1 percent of total direct costs)</b>			
<b>Subtotal indirect support costs</b>			<b>1 537 003</b>
<b>TOTAL WFP COSTS</b>			<b>23 184 936</b>

<sup>1</sup> This is a notional food basket used for budgeting and approval purposes. The precise mix and actual quantities of commodities to be supplied to the project, as in all WFP-assisted projects, may vary over time depending on the availability of commodities to WFP and domestically within the recipient country.



**ANNEX II****DIRECT SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS (*dollars*)****Staff costs**

International	386 000
United Nations Volunteers	55 000
Local staff and temporaries	281 300
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>722 300</b>

**Technical support services**

Other	15 000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>15 000</b>

**Travel and DSA**

International	15 000
In-country	70 000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>85 000</b>

**Office expenses**

Rental of facility	44 500
Utilities	3 000
Communications	35 000
Office supplies	8 000
Equipment repair and maintenance	17 000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>107 500</b>

**Vehicle operations**

Maintenance	70 000
Fuel	45 000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>115 000</b>

**Equipment**

Communications equipment	12 000
Vehicles	50 000
Computer equipment	30 000
Other equipment (Security)	18 000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>110 000</b>

**Non-food items**

Other (temporary assistance, overtime, hospitality, miscellaneous)	34 500
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>34 500</b>

<b>TOTAL DIRECT SUPPORT COSTS</b>	<b>1 189 300</b>
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