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PROTRACTED RELIEF AND RECOVERY OPERATION— TAJIKISTAN 6087.01

Food Assistance to Vulnerable Groups and Recovery and Rehabilitation Activities

Number of beneficiaries	575,000
Duration	Two years (1 January 2001 to 31 December 2002)

Cost (United States dollars)	
Total cost to WFP	44,971,394
Total food cost	19,613,431

ABSTRACT

Prior to Tajikistan's independence in 1991, the Soviet Union was its main economic partner. Tajikistan was the poorest republic of the Union. The political turmoil and the civil war in 1992 had a devastating impact on the country's economic and social infrastructure. The fighting subsided in 1993, followed by a United Nations-monitored cease-fire in 1994. The election of a President and Parliament improved the political environment. Both refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) (700,000 in all) who had either fled the country or left their homes started returning.

From 1991 to 1996 real output in Tajikistan declined by more than half due to internal and external factors, largely stemming from the break-up of the Soviet Union. The official unemployment rate is around 40 percent and inflation has severely worsened already poor conditions, placing 85 percent of the people below the poverty line and making them potentially food-insecure.

The current economic uncertainty in Tajikistan, accentuated further by the collapse of the Russian economy and a lack of foreign investors due to political instability, indicates that the recovery and rehabilitation process will need to continue for some time. The country is likely to remain food-deficit and poor in the foreseeable future. Political and economic conditions permitting, the expansion phase may set the stage for a transition to a longer-term Country Programme.

This PRRO is intended to provide humanitarian aid relief assistance to most vulnerable households in the country. It represents an opportunity for a transition aimed at moving the beneficiaries towards self-sufficiency by providing them with food security at the household level and enhancing their productivity and productive assets. WFP is planning to move towards food security and rehabilitation activities through the implementation of land-lease and food-for-work (FFW) activities. Most of these activities will be related to rehabilitating infrastructure, the land-lease programme, rehabilitation of schools and hospitals, rehabilitation of irrigation channels, reforestation and land protection through anti-erosion measures. In addition, new food for training (FFT) and small income-generating activities involving women will be initiated, such as poultry raising, bee keeping, duck raising, vegetable gardening, carpentry and sewing. WFP will address the needs of children through school feeding and health nutritional programmes. The two-year PRRO plans to reach 575,000 beneficiaries with a commitment of 86,213 tons of commodities.

The implementation capacity of the Government of Tajikistan is very limited; the feeding of vulnerable groups and part of the land-lease programme will be implemented directly by WFP in cooperation with local authorities. The FFW activities will be implemented increasingly through international and local NGOs and in cooperation with local authorities where they agree to provide non-food items and machinery.

NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted for approval by 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 point(s) indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

ACF	Action contre la faim (Action against Hunger)
CAP	Consolidated Appeal Process
CDC	Community Development Centre
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CSO	Country Strategy Outline
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
FACC	Food Aid Coordination Committee
FFT	Food for training
FFW	Food for work
GAA	German Agro Action
GBAO	Gomo Baudakhshan Autonomons Oblast
GDP	Gross domestic product
GRDI	Gender-related Development Index
HDI	Human Development Index
IDP	Internally displaced person
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LIFDC	Low-income, food-deficit country
MLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PRRO	Protracted relief and recovery operation
RRS	Region of Republican Subordination
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SRSR	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UNMOT	United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan
UTO	United Tajik Opposition
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
VGf	Vulnerable group feeding



CONTEXT AND RATIONALE FOR PROVIDING ASSISTANCE

Context of the Crisis

1. WFP was a major force in alleviating the suffering of the most vulnerable and hungry poor in Tajikistan during the five-year civil war (1992-1997). In order to prevent the country from sliding back into the abyss of violence and war, WFP together with other United Nations agencies, needs to be part of its recovery and rehabilitation. Tajikistan was one of the poorest republics when the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991. A bloody civil war that engulfed this Central Asian country in 1992 decimated the already fragile economic and social infrastructure. For the five years that followed, Tajikistan grappled with deteriorating conditions despite a United Nations-monitored cease-fire in 1994, followed by both Presidential and Parliamentary elections the same year. Meanwhile, the Tajik-Afghan border remained tense and some armed groups defied the shaky political settlement.
2. In spite of these uncertainties, the relative stability tempted some of the 700,000 refugees and IDPs to trickle back home. To their dismay, fighting erupted again in late 1996 and took a turn for the worse when civilians, including United Nations personnel, became targets of kidnappings. Common crime was on the rise, and together with terrorism, it plunged the country into chaos.
3. Parallel to this tragic situation and following difficult negotiations, a new hope was ushered in when the Government and most of the opposition, under the banner of United Tajik Opposition (UTO), reached a peace accord in 1997 to share power and stabilize the country.
4. In the last two years, this agreement has held in the face of challenges from break-away factions and outlaws. The fact that Tajikistan was able to hold rather peaceful and fair Presidential elections in November last year was a good sign for the direction the country is taking. Parliamentary elections for the lower chamber took place on 27 March this year while the seats for the upper chamber should be contested in April. After this, Tajik political institutions should turn their attention to a long-ignored but fundamental task—rehabilitation.
5. International organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as well as Dushanbe-based diplomats and government officials believe that vigorous efforts have to be exerted to consolidate peace through development. Without investing in peace, the ominous threat of ethnic, religious and political strife would certainly loom again in Tajikistan, posing a formidable challenge to a region fraught with divisions.
6. For WFP to remain part of these efforts is a risk. But it is a risk worth taking, because, as other stakeholders believe, the world should not neglect Tajikistan.
7. WFP will remain in Tajikistan and steadily move from emergency feeding into efforts supporting recovery and rehabilitation. WFP will join other international organizations in the critical mission of investing in peace in Tajikistan.



Situation Analysis

8. Tajikistan has considerable mineral resources but they remain largely unexplored due to the challenging nature of its mountainous terrain. With declining revenues from their two main exports, cotton and aluminium, Tajikistan's 6.1 million people live in the poorest country in Central Asia, with a per capita GDP of US\$330. According to the 1999 UNDP Human Development Report, the Human Development Index (HDI) for Tajikistan is 0.665, ranking it 108 among 174 countries. Tajikistan is categorized as a low-income, food-deficit country (LIFDC).
9. Only 7 percent of Tajikistan's area of 143,100 sq. km is arable. The rest is covered either by mountains or deserts. Agriculture is traditionally the primary sector of the economy. Most of the cultivated land is irrigated; cotton, the major cash crop, depends entirely on irrigation. The deteriorating irrigation infrastructure, the obsolete machinery, and the lack of arable land, inputs and expertise have had severe negative consequences for agricultural output. The pressure to earn foreign currency, together with declining per-hectare yields, has led the Government to increase the amount of land for cotton cultivation at the expense of cereal production. Moreover, there has also been a significant decline in the per-hectare yield of cereals (down by 17 percent just in 1999) due to unfavourable weather conditions, deteriorating irrigation facilities, brown rust, smut and the lack of funds to procure necessary inputs on time.
10. The Government is implementing a farm-restructuring programme, which envisages a gradual replacement of state and collective farms (*Sovkhoz* and *Kolkhoz*) by *Dekhan* farms (cooperatives and joint stock-holding associations). The transition process is slow and as of January 1999, only 8 percent of the total state arable land was transferred to *Dekhan* farms and 160 out of 863 *Kolkhozes* were transformed into various different kinds of private holdings.
11. *Dekhan* farms are not entirely private as the Government still exercises some control over them and pursues its agenda to grow more cotton. *Kolkhozes* are not only responsible for state agricultural lands, but also take care of social services for the rural communities (health, education, social security, sanitation, etc.). The abandonment of the *Kolkhoz* system, with no alternative structure in place, shifts this responsibility to the Government, which has few financial resources to bridge the ensuing gap. This is likely to impair the social sector and further reduce support to the vulnerable groups in the rural areas in the immediate future. In addition, it implies a continuing need for strong external support including food aid, especially for those hungry poor who are participating in land-lease projects as smallholders.
12. The country's annual cereal requirement is around 1 million tons, with domestic cereal production for 1998/99 at 430,000 tons (about 70,000 tons lower than 1997/98), making a cereal deficit of 570,000 tons. The total amount of food aid has never exceeded 100,000 tons per annum and it is likely to be further reduced in the short term as donors move from direct distribution and focus on agricultural production.
13. Recent developments in the region, including a 15 percent grain price increase in Kazakhstan (the main grain exporter in the region), the recent infestation of locusts in Russia and Kazakhstan and its possible spread to Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, all have potentially serious implications for the food security situation in the region, including Tajikistan. These come at a time when severe financial constraints facing the Government limit its capacity to purchase wheat from the international market.
14. Tajikistan also faces a serious problem of environmental degradation. Erosion is very intense, causing the loss of fertile topsoil and surface water. Deforestation is taking place at



a threatening pace as people are felling bushes and trees to meet their fuelwood requirements. This is leading to recurring natural disasters such as landslides and floods, which are causing the loss of human lives, property and infrastructure.

15. Real output in Tajikistan declined by more than half from 1991 to 1996, due to internal and external factors, largely stemming from the break-up of the former Soviet Union. The GDP growth rate was 2 percent in 1997, but increased to 5.8 percent in 1998, thanks to the peace agreement between the Government and UTO in June 1997. It declined to 5 percent in 1999.
16. The official unemployment rate is around 40 percent and inflation has ranged from 630 percent in 1995 to 43.4 percent in 1998. This has severely worsened the already poor conditions, placing some 85 percent of the population below the poverty line and making them food-insecure.
17. Social indicators are rapidly declining. The education system, which historically had impressive statistics, is crumbling with the decay and destruction of school buildings, the lack of teachers, textbooks, furniture and heating. Many families are unable to provide their school-age children with clothing and shoes. This is leading to a social menace of street children who are prone to falling prey to criminals, drugs and child-labour abuse. There has also been a decline in the health status of people, due to increased poverty, poor housing, the low quality of water supplies and poor nutrition, compounded by a near-collapse of the health services. Thus, the poor suffer from the inaccessibility of basic health services and medicines. Furthermore, the collapse of the social safety-net system has weakened the family and social structure. This is due to the fact that the transition to a market economy was not accompanied by an adequate social safety net and is contributing to the country's impoverishment. As a result, the coping mechanisms for the majority of the population have been seemingly exhausted.
18. A study of 1,085 households in Leninabad and the Region of Republican Subordination (RRS) conducted by German Agro Action (GAA) in 1998, indicated that deteriorating nutrition is largely attributable to the precarious food security situation because people lack the means to buy enough food. Food availability at the household level is generally low and the nutritional status of children is worsening. The national nutritional survey conducted by Action Against Hunger (ACF) in September 1999 found the following rates of malnutrition:

Area	Malnutrition			
	Acute		Chronic	
	Global	Severe	Global	Severe
Dushanbe	8.8	2.6	27.5	7.5
RRS	13.6	3.6	37.3	13.2
Leninabad	8.8	2.4	34.0	11.8
Khatlon	11.0	3.2	40.6	15.4

19. Despite differences in methodology, both studies indicate a high level of malnutrition. Moreover, a health and nutrition survey conducted in the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Badakhshan in 1998, by the Aga Khan Foundation, indicated that the health and nutritional situation has deteriorated since the first survey carried out in 1994. In



Gomo Baudakhshan Autonomons Oblast (GBO), 6.1 percent of children under 5 suffered from stunting and 53.8 percent from wasting.

20. All surveys show a trend of worsening malnutrition, especially among children. Malnutrition is a problem across the country, but the most affected regions are Khatlon and the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Badakhshan. In these areas, WFP directly implements free food distributions (in the absence of qualified implementing partners), FFW activities and land-lease programmes. In other parts of the country, for example, RRS and Leninabad region, WFP works through NGOs.
21. Although the IMF and the World Bank (World Bank Tajikistan Country Overview, 1999) noted that the Government had restored some macro-economic stability through an adjustment programme, the overall economic situation remains precarious. The collapse of the Russian economy has also adversely affected the economy of Tajikistan, particularly the northern part of the country where two thirds of the money supply is still in Russian roubles, a currency that has devalued four times against the United States dollar since August 1998. A more coherent economic strategy and a clearer sense of direction are expected to materialize after the Parliamentary elections.
22. The Government, WFP and other donor agencies have worked together to alleviate these problems through joint interventions. These efforts need to be continued and strengthened through relief and recovery operations at least until the end of 2002, in order to achieve some degree of self-sufficiency and minimal food security at the household level, build institutional capacity and create an environment for a long-term sustainable development programme.

The Situation of Women

23. The 1992 civil war in Tajikistan affected the lives of all women—urban and rural, Russian and Tajik, Communist and Islamic—in varying degrees. “War seems to affect men and women alike” said Shahrbanou Tajbakhsh in “Women and War in Tajikistan”. She stressed: “It was the men who fought and men who overwhelmingly participated in political groups turned militant. Yet victimization of women in situations of conflict has also been gender-specific (...).” As expectant mothers in society plagued by economic and medical inefficiencies magnified by war, as refugees in hostile lands, as wives of dissidents and widows and mothers of “martyrs”, women have also suffered as a category in this war. Yet women have also acted as instruments of change. As dissidents themselves and organizers of women’s committees they have contributed to the direction of their society.
24. In Tajikistan, women and men have equal legal rights, including education and ownership of private property. One of the indicators is the UNDP Gender-related Development Index (GRDI), which shows that in 1999 the literacy rate was 98.3 for females and 99 percent for males. Being a part of the former Soviet Union, where the equality of women and men was one of the hallmarks of government policy, the status of women in Tajikistan is not a cultural issue. In 45 administrative units throughout the country, women occupy positions of deputy chairpersons and in five units they head the administration. About 18 percent of government employees are women. They work at different levels of Government: 7 percent in ministries and 21 percent in State Committees; in addition, 11 percent (2 out of 18) of Tajikistan's ministers are female. The President nominated a woman as one of the five Vice Premiers in the January 2000 reshuffling of ministerial posts. The gender problem in Tajikistan relates to the worsening overall socio-economic situation in the country, where women are the most directly affected part of the population.



25. Since 1991, however, women have suffered disproportionately from civil war and the economic decline, especially in the rural areas. According to the above-mentioned UNDP Index, real per capita GDP in 1997 was US\$850 for women and US\$1,404 for men. Women receive only 60.54 percent of men's income. The rapid deterioration of the health care infrastructure and a changed diet, which includes less nutritious food, have resulted in a 70 to 80 percent female anaemia rate and a 60 percent malnourishment rate among expectant mothers.
26. The civil war and a high divorce rate in the country have led to a significant number of women-headed households, which in most cases are extremely poor and need assistance, especially food. The number of female beneficiaries covered by NGOs during 1999 was 115,000 out of 240,000, which is 48 percent. For the same year, the number of female beneficiaries covered by WFP was 192,116 out of a total of 372,182, which is 51.62 percent.
27. The Government and both international and national organizations are acting to address the problems of women, provide them with possibilities to become independent and give them an economic basis to sustain themselves and their families. As of 1999, for example, the number of NGOs dealing with gender issues has increased to 71 from just two in 1995.
28. WFP works increasingly with local NGOs and seeks to attract support from other agencies. These efforts cover a wide range of activities such as land-lease projects, vocational training courses, sewing centres, supplementary feeding at maternity houses, school feeding schemes and income-generating activities. The total number of women covered by these projects is 20,425.
29. WFP has been concentrating about 70 percent of its activities in the southern part of the country, which is the poorest and the area most affected by the war. WFP directly implements 95 percent of its programme in the south and relies on NGOs for the remaining 5 percent. Out of the projects implemented by WFP, 95 percent are managed by women and most of the senior staff in the sub-office are also women. About 40 percent of WFP staff are women. WFP for the moment has no field office in the north, therefore there is only one person monitoring activities through NGOs. WFP is currently assessing the need to open such a field office.

WFP ASSISTANCE TO DATE

30. WFP has completed three phases of emergency operations from 1993 to June 1999, providing a total of 101,000 tons of assistance. During this period, WFP distributed supplementary food rations to the most severely affected by the civil war: pensioners, households without breadwinners, invalids and people in institutions. FFW, training and income-generating activities were also undertaken during this period. The land-lease programme, which started on a pilot basis in 1996, became a major activity towards the end of the emergency phase. Around 9,446 hectares of land were rehabilitated in Khatlon region by directly involving 17,000 beneficiaries, 57 percent of whom were women.
31. As recommended by the 1997 evaluation mission, a transition from relief to rehabilitation was introduced and the number of beneficiaries for vulnerable group feeding (VGF) was reduced by 20 percent in April 1999. Further reductions are being implemented by progressively shifting the beneficiaries to FFW and income-generating activities.



32. An emergency operation was followed by a PRRO, which was approved in May 1999 by the Executive Board (document WFP/EB.2/99/5-B/4) for a duration of one year, from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000. The PRRO covers 370,000 beneficiaries with a commitment of 50,082 tons of commodities.

Rationale

33. An overall framework for WFP activities in Tajikistan was provided in a Country Strategy Outline (CSO), which was considered by the Executive Board in October 1996 (document WFP/EB 3/96 Add. 5). The CSO underscored the need to expand the programme beyond pure emergency operations and to support recovery and development activities such as the rehabilitation of rural and urban infrastructure and the promotion of private plots for household food security. The PRRO phase represents a transition period aimed at moving the beneficiaries towards self-sufficiency by ensuring their food security at the household level and enhancing their productivity and productive assets. This phase is expected to set the stage for a long-term development assistance programme.
34. Tajikistan's social and economic situation has not improved significantly since the CSO was prepared in 1996, and recent trends indicate that it is not likely to improve in the near future. Therefore, it is prudent to assume that external assistance will continue to be required to address the basic problem of food insecurity in the foreseeable future. Food aid is appropriate for Tajikistan because of the gravity of food insecurity at the household level, the likely shortfall of food availability against estimated needs and the lack of sufficient purchasing power for large segments of the population to meet basic food requirements.
35. According to the World Bank, as shown in its 1999 Country Overview, about 1 million people in Tajikistan are poor and destitute, and experience acute or chronic food insecurity. The 1999 Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) notes that there are around 1.4 million vulnerable people, who constitute 23 percent of the total population of Tajikistan. Thirty percent of vulnerable people are destitute and 70 percent are extremely poor. Various nutrition surveys confirm a high degree of malnutrition among the vulnerable groups and children under the age of 5 years.
36. Save the Children Fund (SCF-USA) conducted a socio-economic survey for all regions of Tajikistan in 1998, funded by USAID, using the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO) definition of food security as: "assured access by the household, primarily by production or purchase, to enough nutritious food to sustain healthy lives, excluding food aid." With the addition of food aid, the same definition was used for "food adequacy". Basing its analysis on the per capita consumption of major food items by households, the survey concludes that 23 percent of the households are food-insecure and 18 percent of these are food-inadequate.
37. A GAA study on nutrition, health and food insecurity researched the coping mechanisms of people when they experience food shortages and insufficient income. Two thirds of the households reported that they tend to eat smaller portions and shift to cheaper food. Financial problems stemming from unemployment and/or low salaries are partly dealt with through growing their own food, raising livestock, working for private employers, bartering and petty trade.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Objectives and Goals

38. The ultimate goal of this PRRO is to invest in peace and recovery in Tajikistan.
39. To achieve these goals, WFP will help the most vulnerable groups to ensure minimal food security, thus supporting the process of rehabilitation and development during this critical period of social and economic transition.
40. The specific objectives to achieve the above goals are to:
 - a) assist in rehabilitation and development, with priority given to activities whose purpose is to increase productivity and create sustainable assets, focusing primarily on women;
 - b) provide opportunities for the beneficiaries to become self-reliant;
 - c) help the critically food-insecure and severely malnourished children; and
 - d) contribute to the improved food security of vulnerable groups.

KEY PROGRAMME COMPONENTS

41. The PRRO will comprise two programme components:
 - **The relief programme** will provide food assistance to food-insecure vulnerable households. Targeting will be based on vulnerability criteria designed by WFP/Tajikistan in collaboration with NGOs. Returnees and disaster victims will be considered separately through WFP contingency planning programmes. Special programmes will address the nutritional status of children. These programmes will be implemented by NGOs and the Government. WFP assistance through school feeding programmes will enable children to attend school.
 - **The recovery programme** will be geared to self-sufficiency, working towards the rehabilitation of agricultural assets through FFW activities and sustainable food security by using food assistance to support land-lease programmes. FFW will be used to support project-related training, such as improved agricultural skills for small-scale farmers and business and marketing training for women entrepreneurs in the small-scale business sector. Income-generation projects will be used to help establish small enterprises, providing jobs to most poor able-bodied members of the local communities.

Protracted Relief Programme

Vulnerable Groups

42. The plan is to reduce the number of beneficiaries progressively from 250,000 in the ongoing PRRO to 200,000 in the first year of the new PRRO, and to 185,000 in the following year. This reduction will be achieved by refining targeting through vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) studies, and particularly by shifting able-bodied beneficiaries to FFW activities. The reduction will be carried out in consultation with district and local officials, on a case-by-case basis, in each district and within the categories of vulnerable groups. About 60 percent of beneficiaries are expected to be



women. Distribution will be carried out under the supervision of WFP female monitors and in collaboration with local authorities.

Returnees and Disaster Victims

43. Tajikistan is prone to natural disasters such as landslides, mudslides and floods, which occur every year. In July 1999, the northern part of Tajikistan was severely hit by floods and landslides, which killed 720 people and inflicted severe damage to infrastructure. The Autonomous Region of Mountainous Badakhshan, in particular, is subject to landslides and other natural disasters almost every year. WFP will continue to provide help to the victims of these disasters.
44. There are several coordination mechanisms for disaster mitigation, both at the national and regional levels. The Government has strengthened the coordination between the State Ministry of Emergency Situations and international organizations. Both the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the WFP regional office are equipped to respond to the needs of disaster victims. The link with the regional office, especially with regard to sharing the same food pipeline, permits great flexibility in responding to natural disasters. The Food Aid Coordination Committee (FACC) meetings chaired by WFP also provide a mechanism for coordinating food assistance in case of disasters. Furthermore, the expansion phase includes a contingency provision to cater for up to 20,000 beneficiaries. For large-scale disasters, however, resources will need to be requested under a separate emergency operation.
45. WFP will continue its support for returnees in collaboration with UNHCR, the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and UNDP through FFW activities.

Health and Nutrition

46. Families with malnourished children under 5 will receive supplementary food rations from the primary health care centres (known locally as *feldsher akkusherski punht*—FAP). There is a plan for health workers to screen families with malnourished children. Each family will receive four rations daily for a period of six months. They will also receive important health and nutrition information and the weight-height growth of the children will be monitored. In addition, three health workers in each centre will receive food as an incentive for regular attendance.

School Feeding

47. Tajikistan used to boast a literacy rate of almost 100 percent. After the collapse of the former Soviet Union and the gruelling civil war, the educational system is in disarray. Primary school attendance rates are down to about 65 percent. WFP, therefore, intends to promote school attendance and improved child nutrition through the continuation of its school feeding programme, in collaboration with international and national NGOs.

Recovery/Rehabilitation Activities

Food Security Activities

48. The land-lease programme will be the main food security activity. Under this programme groups of poor beneficiaries receive leased land for a period of four years in order to cultivate agricultural crops, mainly wheat and maize. WFP will provide the participants with wheat flour during the first year, which will allow them to meet their household subsistence needs while they tend to the land and await the harvest. Production



increases in the order of 25 to 30 percent are expected. This programme, therefore, is expected to substantially improve the food security and economic self-sufficiency of the participants. The availability of irrigated lands for the land-lease programme is likely to decrease as cotton production is expanded and collective farms are privatized. Hence, the programme will increasingly take over the fallow and non-irrigated lands, which will require additional rehabilitation, particularly for irrigation.

49. One of the key potential problems facing the land-lease programme is the absence of a solid legal system which enables enforcement of agreements and laws. The Parliamentary elections should lead to a clearer statement of position by the Government regarding the tripartite agreement between the beneficiaries, *Kolkhoz*/landholder, and WFP.
50. WFP has been engaged in the land-lease programme from the start and the Government has been very supportive to date. There is a risk, however, that the authorities may take over the land at the end of the four-year lease period. WFP has informed the Government of its opposition to such a take-over and stressed the danger that it could compromise future assistance. WFP and the international community in Dushanbe, including the World Bank, consider continued WFP support to be a risk worth taking in light of the array of benefits involved. These include not only the increased food production, but also extend to the basics of private ownership and burgeoning self-reliance.

Food-for-Work (FFW) activities

51. FFW activities are one of the most useful tools for facilitating the transition from relief to rehabilitation in Tajikistan. These activities make it possible to involve households and individuals in sustainable activities which improve their living standards. These activities are very popular among the local population and with local authorities. Using community participation methods for the identification, design and implementation of FFW activities means not only that the food assistance is self-targeted, but also that it builds local capacity and helps to ensure the sustainability of the assets created.
52. Afforestation, field terracing and land protection works have started on a modest scale in the ongoing PRRO phase. This sector has tremendous potential for expansion. Other FFW activities would include rehabilitation of roads, houses, schools, hospitals, urban and rural infrastructure, canal cleaning and sanitation facilities, and flood protection works.
53. As mentioned above, the lack of a solid legal system and still unsolved constraints on privatization and private business are the main risks to the sustainability of the projects in the long run. They are also a major concern regarding the large-scale implementation of FFW projects. Introducing the needed policy reforms and ensuring compliance will be a major challenge for the newly elected President and Parliament.

Recommendations of the Evaluation Mission

54. The evaluation mission of November 1997 (WFP/EB.3/98/5/2) noted:
 - the need for improved beneficiary targeting within the VGF programme;
 - the need for a gradual transition from relief to rehabilitation activities;
 - the initial successful efforts in the land-lease programme; and
 - the need for an increased commitment by the Government of Tajikistan and communities to complement WFP assistance.



Income-generating Activities and Food for Training (FFT)

55. Food aid will support income-generating activities, specifically for women, such as bee keeping, livestock breeding, fish farming and seed multiplication. Food will also be used to enhance the productive potential of various groups through vocational training in sewing, carpentry and handicrafts.
56. The selection of schemes will be guided by criteria of effectiveness, sustainability and how well they target the poor. A Project Review Committee in the country office (consisting of the Country Director, Programme Officer, Administrative/Finance Officer, Reports Officer, Logistics Officer and local programme assistants) will scrutinize all project proposals focusing on the:
- role of food aid;
 - technical and logistical feasibility;
 - targeting of beneficiaries;
 - creation of assets and their primary beneficiaries;
 - involvement of women;
 - community and implementing partners' contribution;
 - environmental risks; and
 - implementation capacity.

Non-food Items

57. WFP is proposing to include non-food items under this PRRO in response to requests from implementing partners. Thus, US\$100,000 has been earmarked for the supply of agricultural tools, building materials, pumps and other similar items.

SUMMARY OF FOOD RATIONS, WFP BENEFICIARIES AND OVERALL NEEDS
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Daily ration scale (grams)

Activity	Feeding days	Commodity			
		Wheat flour	Vegetable oil	Sugar	Iodized salt
Relief to food-insecure	365	200	15	10	5
Land-lease programme	250	2 400	-		-
Recovery activities	150	3 000	-		-
Health and nutrition	180	200	15	10	5
School feeding	180	175	15	-	5
Income-generating and training activities	150	3 000	-		-
Other (disaster/relief)	90	400	30	15	5

WFP BENEFICIARIES AND FOOD NEEDS



First year	Beneficiaries			Requirements (tons)				TOTAL
	Male	Female	TOTAL	Wheat flower	Vegetable oil	Sugar	Salt	
Relief to food–insecure	80 000	120 000	200 000	14 600	1 095	730	365	16 790
Land lease programme	6 000	9 000	15 000	9 000	-	-	-	9 000
Recovery activities	15 000	10 000	25 000	11 250	-	-	-	11 250
Health and nutrition	8 000	13 000	21 000	756	57	38	19	870
School feeding	5 000	6 000	11 000	347	30	-	10	387
Income generating and training activities	1 000	4 000	5 000	2 250	-	-	-	2 250
Other (disaster/relief)	5 000	5 000	10 000	360	27	14	5	406
Subtotal	120 000	167 000	287 000	38 563	1 209	782	399	40 953
Second year								
Relief to food–insecure	74 000	111 000	185 000	13 505	1 013	675	338	15 531
Land–lease programme	6 000	9 000	15 000	9 000	-	-	-	9 000
Recovery activities	21 000	14 000	35 000	15 750	-	-	-	15 750
Health and nutrition	9 000	16 000	25 000	900	68	45	23	1 036
School feeding	5 000	6 000	11 000	347	30	-	10	387
Income–generating and training activities	1 500	5 500	7 000	3 150	-	-	-	3 150
Other (disaster/relief)	5,000	5 000	10 000	360	27	14	5	406
Subtotal	121 500	166 500	288 000	43 012	1 138	734	376	45 260

OVERALL NEEDS (TWO YEARS)

	Beneficiaries			Requirements (tons)				TOTAL
	Male	Female	TOTAL	Wheat flower	Vegetable oil	Sugar	Salt	
Relief to food–insecure	154 000	231 000	385 000	28 105	2 108	1 405	703	32 321
Land–lease programme	12 000	18 000	30 000	18 000	-	-	-	18 000
Recovery activities	36 000	24 000	60 000	27 000	-	-	-	27 000
Health and nutrition	17 000	29 000	46 000	1 656	125	83	42	1 906
School feeding	10 000	12 000	22 000	694	60	-	20	774
Income–generating and training activities	2 500	9 500	12 000	5 400	-	-	-	5 400
Other (disaster/relief)	10 000	10 000	20 000	720	54	28	10	812
TOTAL	241 500	333,500	575 000	81 575	2 347	1 516	775	86 213

Activity Approach

58. For the reasons stated earlier, a relief programme providing the free distribution of food to the poorest and most vulnerable will continue in the expansion phase, albeit at a largely



reduced level. Targeting will be further sharpened through VAM studies and on the basis of the findings of the national nutritional survey, conducted in September 1999. The category of pensioners and invalids will be critically reviewed and only pensioners above 60 years of age and with no family support will be included.

59. The main emphasis of this PRRO, however, will be on the rehabilitation and creation of sustainable assets through FFW activities to target hungry poor people who are willing and able to move towards self-sufficiency. Most of the activities will be related to rehabilitating infrastructure, the land-lease programme, rehabilitation of schools and hospitals, rehabilitation of irrigation channels, reforestation and land protection through anti-erosion measures. Priority will be given to those areas where enough possibilities exist to shift VGF beneficiaries to FFW activities. It is anticipated that many of the direct beneficiaries under the free distribution programmes would become indirect beneficiaries through the involvement of family members in FFW and land-lease activities.
60. Income-generating activities such as poultry raising, bee-keeping, duck raising, vegetable gardening, carpentry and sewing will be specifically designed for women to provide them with a sustainable livelihood.
61. Envisaged health and nutrition-related activities include the reconstruction of health facilities, primary health care training, hospital support, nutrition education, support to the malaria control programme and targeted supplementary feeding for severely malnourished children.
62. WFP will also respond, as needed, to natural or man-made disasters and continue to provide small amounts of assistance to returnees from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Central Asia.
63. A programme approach will be adopted with a built-in flexibility to shift resources from one activity to another as deemed appropriate during the course of implementation of the PRRO.
64. The implementation capacity of the Government of Tajikistan is very limited. Hence, the feeding of vulnerable groups and part of the land-lease programme will be implemented directly by WFP in cooperation with local authorities. The FFW activities will be implemented increasingly through international and local NGOs and in cooperation with local authorities where they agree to provide non-food items, machinery and other support.
65. To date the majority of WFP activities are located in Khatlon and the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Badakhshan provinces. The economic crisis in Russia has adversely hit the northern region, which used to be considered relatively well-off. Due to improved security, parts of RRS have opened up and FFW activities have been initiated there in collaboration with NGOs.

Institutional Arrangements and Selection of Partners

66. There is a high level of coordination within the United Nations family and NGO community in Tajikistan. The Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) holds regular meetings with all the United Nations agencies, as well as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and other international organizations. The United Nations Resident Coordinator, who is also the Humanitarian Affairs Coordinator, coordinates all humanitarian assistance in Tajikistan. WFP chairs the FACC meetings that are held every two weeks and in which all food-related organizations, agencies and NGOs participate to review programmes and policies and share field experiences. On 17 January 2000 the United Nations agencies in Tajikistan submitted a review of the



United Nations CAP to OCHA for US\$30.2 million, which includes US\$19.2 million for basic commodities to enhance food security.

67. Within the United Nations system, WFP's principal collaboration is with UNHCR, UNDP, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the World Health Organization (WHO). WFP provides FFW opportunities for the poorest families, and UNHCR and UNDP supply non-food items and technical support. WFP is also working together with UNDP's Community Development Centres (CDCs), which implement FFW and income-generating activities. UNDP is phasing out its support for this programme, but WFP will continue to use the CDC structure to undertake FFW and income-generating activities through community participation. WFP is also assisting WHO in its malaria campaign and public health programmes. WFP also has partnerships with a number of NGOs, primarily in rehabilitation activities and VGF projects in regions where WFP is not directly involved.
68. WFP works with the following international NGOs:
- GAA (free food distribution, rehabilitation of roads and canals, afforestation-working in RRS and Leninabad);
 - Shelter Now International (damaged housing-working in Khatlon region);
 - Mercy Corps International (emergency, health and sanitation-working in RRS and Khatlon);
 - Agence de la Coopération et du Développement (canal cleaning, women manufacturing mosquito nets and raising livestock, afforestation-working in Leninabad and Khatlon regions);
 - Aga Khan Foundation (FFW-working in Autonomous Region of Mountainous Badakhshan);
 - SCF-UK (income generation-working in Khatlon region);
 - Mission Øst (supplementary free food distribution and FFW projects-working in Khatlon region); and
 - ACF (supplementary feeding for malnourished children-working in Khatlon region).
69. WFP is also working with a number of registered local NGOs in small FFW, training and income-generating activities.

Capacity-building

70. Capacity-building of national staff, counterparts, implementing partners and local authorities will remain an important task. Strengthening the capacity of implementing partners, and in particular of local NGOs to manage food, will continue. The country office has acquired access to capacity in VAM, geographical information systems and food security issues through assistance from the regional office and the VAM Unit at headquarters.
71. The local population has inherited an over-mechanized agricultural system and a disdain for manual labour. WFP is gradually changing this attitude and will help develop the capacity of the population to undertake labour-intensive manual works through FFW programmes, particularly in land rehabilitation and afforestation activities. WFP will continue to disseminate its policies and strategies at all government and local administration levels.



Target Areas

72. Food aid in Tajikistan is targeted to those who need it most. The most vulnerable groups directly receive supplementary rations, and many of the unemployed poor and food-insecure participate in FFW and income-generating activities. However, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection (MLSP) has registered vulnerable cases on the basis of social welfare categories, which do not necessarily correspond to WFP's perception of who is most vulnerable. WFP therefore targets beneficiaries through close collaboration with the local authorities (*hukumats* and *jamohats*) and monitors the food distributions. Many WFP monitors are women who visit households and are instrumental in identifying and finalizing WFP's beneficiary lists. WFP plans to develop a database that will include the names of the beneficiaries in order to closely monitor the shift from VGF to FFW and income-generating activities, and to avoid any duplication.
73. In the first half of 2000, WFP/Tajikistan, with the assistance of the Regional VAM Officer, will start to define food security zones throughout the country. WFP/Tajikistan is currently collaborating with NGOs such as ACF, GAA and Mission Øst to work out food security indicators and criteria for better targeting of the most poor and food-insecure households. The VAM Unit will draw on the work of various organizations such as the World Bank, SCF-USA, UNHCR, ACF and GAA. By the end of the current PPRO phase, the VAM Unit should provide sound guidance for improved targeting. WFP/Tajikistan has already acquired the capacity to produce maps. Training has been provided to the focal person and will continue during the current PPRO.
74. The changed approach to targeting is shown below:
- a) Current targeting based on present government categories—individual approach:
 - pensioners;
 - invalids;
 - women-headed households with children from 3 to 15 years; and
 - orphans living with a guardian.
 - b) Targeting based on a household approach. Households more likely to be food-insecure:
 - land availability less than 1 ha;
 - household without livestock;
 - household without an adult male;
 - household without savings;
 - female-headed household;
 - single pensioner only (urban area);
 - returnee household; and
 - the evidence of negative coping mechanisms, for example, keeping children out of school.

Monitoring and Evaluation

75. The monitors will carry out routine checks for all activities. During the VGF distribution periods, monitors will verify that food is given only to registered beneficiaries, that



beneficiaries receive the right rations/quantities and that records are accurately kept. In the FFW activities, monitors will also look at the actual achievements compared to the planned targets and will suggest corrective measures if needed. Visits to randomly selected project sites will be made to inspect the quantity and quality of work carried out and interview the beneficiaries (beneficiary contact monitoring) about their perception of the project and the extent to which they benefit from the assets created. Different verifiable output indicators will be developed to track the physical progress of each activity in comparison to its stated objectives. In particular, information on participants/beneficiaries will be gathered on a gender-disaggregated basis.

76. Building on previous experience and the work of the Food Impact Assessment Team set up by the country office, monitors will concentrate their assessment work on food security information and the impact of food aid interventions. This should improve overall needs assessment, targeting and the quality of monitoring and evaluation. The major tasks will be to:
- enhance needs assessment exercises by defining criteria for vulnerable households and categories of vulnerable households;
 - provide quantitative information on the geographic distribution of vulnerable households and insights on coping mechanisms;
 - conduct monitoring and evaluation to determine whether actual beneficiaries were consistent with the target population and activities met WFP objectives in terms of impact; and
 - provide analytical information to improve the preparation, implementation and revision of FFW/land-lease activities and the free food distribution programme.

Logistics Arrangements

77. Food is transported to Tajikistan through two routes:
- a) by ship to ports of the Baltic Sea (Riga) for on-forwarding by rail through Russia and/or a CIS country; or
 - b) by rail from Eastern Europe through CIS countries.
78. The opening of the road link to the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Badakhshan through Kuliab (Tajikistan) and the completion of the railway link to Kuliab will change some of the extended delivery points (EDPs). As a result, the food requirement in some parts of the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Badakhshan will be met in future through Kuliab and for some parts through Osh (Kyrgyzstan), depending on the cost-effectiveness. The internal transport, storage and handling (ITSH) costs beyond EDPs are paid in cash, thereby boosting the local road transport sector.
79. Owing to the severity of the winter and the closure of transport routes in mountainous areas in the Autonomous Region of Mountainous Badakhshan, food needs to be pre-positioned before winter.

EXIT STRATEGY

80. The current economic uncertainty in Tajikistan—accentuated by the fragility of the economy of the surrounding Central Asian CIS States and influenced by the Russian



economy and a lack of foreign investors due to political instability—indicates that the recovery and rehabilitation process will continue for some years. The country is likely to remain food-deficit and poor in the foreseeable future. Political and economic conditions permitting, the expansion phase may set the stage for a transition to a longer-term Country Programme.

RISK ASSESSMENT

81. The overriding risk in Tajikistan continues to be the possibility of the renewed outbreak of civil war, which would disrupt the recovery and rehabilitation process and result in a greater number of people requiring food assistance. Although the peace process is holding so far at the highest level, economic uncertainty combined with sporadic outbreaks of criminal violence make the country unattractive and this is reflected in the lack of significant response from donors. The country is caught in a vicious circle where donors demand improvements in security before the release of funds, while the lack of funding for rehabilitation causes the situation to deteriorate further.
82. While success in achieving the goals of the PRRO depends on political and economic stability, the very implementation of the PRRO will undoubtedly enhance stability in Tajikistan.

Security Measures

83. The internal security conditions have a direct impact on programme implementation and the delivery of food assistance. Certain regions may occasionally be inaccessible due to an unacceptable level of criminal activities. Fighting in Afghanistan can also have a bearing on the programme in Tajikistan and the political situation in general.
84. Strict monitoring of the security situation in the country by the United Nations and a coordinated course of action will continue to be part of the daily routine.

WFP Training Requirements

85. Training will be provided to upgrade the capacity of the existing staff. The country office will focus on enhancing monitoring capability, computer skills, financial management and logistics. A primary focus will be placed on the ability of staff to identify, design, monitor and assess FFW activities in order to further improve the quality, as well as the number of recovery activities. In addition, increased attention will be given to monitoring relief food distribution, more specifically to ensure better implementation of the previously mentioned targeting criteria at the household level. Training is also required to improve monitoring of beneficiary lists and overall food distribution mechanisms. Finally, training will be required to ensure better knowledge and application of new commodity tracking and other computerized systems.
86. In light of the increased involvement of local and international NGOs in the programme, training sessions will be required to ensure a good understanding by them of WFP's mandate in assisting the hungry poor and especially WFP's Commitments to Women. WFP will give special attention to NGO initiatives that empower and enhance women's involvement in decision-making processes. Training will also concentrate on current implementation mechanisms.



87. All of this will be necessary to implement the various activities of the PRRO, which requires experienced skilled staff.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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



ANNEX I

PROJECT COST BREAKDOWN

	Quantity (tons)	Average cost per ton	Value (dollars)
WFP COSTS			
A. Direct operational costs			
Commodity ¹			
– Wheat flour	81 575	211.73	17 272 093
– Vegetable oil	2 347	802.65	1 883 820
– Sugar	1 516	220	333 520
– Iodized salt	775	160	124 000
Total commodities	86 213		19 613 431
External transport		79	6 844 048
Landside Transport		95	8 190 235
ITSH		40	3 448 520
Total LTSH		135	11 638 755
Other direct operational costs		13.94	1 201 800
Total direct operational costs			39 298 034
B. Direct support costs (see Annex II for details)			2 419 400
C. Indirect support costs (7.8 percent of total direct costs)			3 253 960
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS			44 971 394

¹ 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 IIDIRECT SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS (*dollars*)

Staff costs	
International	1 132 000
United Nations Volunteers	60 000
Local staff and temporaries	372 800
Overtime (in USD only)	20 000
Subtotal	1 584 800
Technical support services and Training	
Project preparation	5 000
Technical Advisory Services (including VAM)	20 000
Project Monitoring and Evaluation	30 000
Training	30 000
Subtotal	85 000
Travel and DSA	
Blanket	15 000
In-country	35 000
Subtotal	50 000
Office expenses	
Rental of facility	140 000
Utilities	20 000
Communications	30 000
Office supplies	34 000
Equipment repair and maintenance	12 000
Subtotal	236 000
Vehicle operation	
Fuel and maintenance	85 000
Subtotal	85 000
Equipment	
Vehicles	100 000
Communications equipment	42 000
Computer equipment	50 000
Furniture and equipment	40 000
Subtotal	232 000
Other	
Advocacy	28 600
Security (Sec. Comms./Fire Safety, Cost share UN Field Security Officer)	68 000
Other—Cost-sharing for 1 Regional TC/IT Officer	50 000
Subtotal	146 600
TOTAL DIRECT SUPPORT COSTS	2 419 400

