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WFP COMMITMENTS TO WOMEN: MID-TERM REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION¹

ABSTRACT

The review examined staff attitudes, established mechanisms and structures which influence the implementation of the WFP Commitments to Women. Gender concerns were found to be part of an increased interest in using food aid to promote sustainable development, through the participation and empowerment of beneficiaries. Attention was paid to elements of the work environment at WFP which affect the recruitment and retention of female staff, in particular security, harassment and staff rights. It was noted that the percentage of women in professional and higher categories had been raised significantly through affirmative action.

Through the Gender Task Force, Gender Focal Points and the Gender Unit at ODT, policy guidance and technical advice were provided, funds raised and allocated, and progress overseen and reported on. The relatively junior status of Gender Focal Points in country offices were observed to be a major constraint. Adequate staffing of the Gender Unit is viewed as essential to ensuring an effective oversight of the implementation of the Commitments.

Gender Action Plans were prepared to transform the broad goals of the Commitments into specific country programme and project targets. They have been used with mixed results as tools to implement the Commitments. There is no complete overview of the gender training process, whereas some staff criticized gender training as being too theoretical. The training process has nevertheless improved staff's capacity to design programmes for women and collect gender-disaggregated statistics. Owing to a weakened oversight function in the Gender Unit in 1997-98, and lack of specific accounting codes, it was not possible to fully determine the funds that have been raised and spent on gender programming, including training.

Gender and women have increasingly been integrated into project design, but the concept of women's strategic (as opposed to their practical) needs should be emphasized, focusing on asset creation, decision-making and control of resources. Baseline surveys, which are crucial to measuring progress towards meeting the Commitments to Women, were rarely conducted in the past. Reporting formats are being designed for collecting gender-disaggregated data, although methods need to be developed to better establish the differential effect food aid is having on women and men. Implementing partners often do not possess the capacity to generate gender-disaggregated data. No interim impact or performance assessment of the Commitments to Women has yet been undertaken by any country office. To improve targeting and programming, some country offices are undertaking Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM), mostly relying on data generated by others. WFP may consider conducting its own data gathering, enabling it to assess the needs of and target specific households and women. WFP further delineated its policy to meet the critical food needs of mothers and small children. The link between women's rights, the Commitments to Women and the right to food needs to be explored, as well as the link between gender, development and food aid.

The Mid-Term Review affirms that success in meeting the Commitments to Women will depend largely on the national context in which WFP works. It is unlikely that the goals of the Commitments to Women will be met by 2001 unless changes are made in the way they are implemented. Alternatively, the Commitments might be reformulated, with more achievable goals. More emphasis should be placed on empowering women through WFP programming. An overview is presented of issues that need to be addressed if the Commitments to Women are to be met. In the Annex, performance and impact indicators are listed which may be considered for evaluating projects and measuring progress made towards meeting the Commitments to Women.

¹ The Mid-Term Review was managed by an Evaluation Officer, OEDE. This summary report was prepared by the Mid-Term Review team leader—a consultant specialist in food security and gender issues. Research was carried out at WFP headquarters and in 10 countries between October and December 1998. Country office and field research was undertaken by the team leader, a team of four consultant gender experts and one of WFP's Senior Gender Advisers (ODT), all assisted by Gender Focal Points and other staff in the country and regional offices.

NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted for consideration to 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.

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PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE REVIEW¹

1. The Review was undertaken to assess how WFP has mainstreamed gender issues and to determine whether the mechanisms put into place in 1995–96 to implement the Commitments to Women are sound. Emphasis was placed on determining how staff members' attitudes towards gender issues affect the implementation of the Commitments.
2. It is too early to measure the impact the Commitments to Women are having on beneficiaries, so no efforts were made to address the parameters of the Commitments. Nevertheless, some time was reserved in the field to determine whether projects incorporate the requirements outlined in the Commitments: how well they are being implemented, how implementation compares to the activities outlined in the country offices' Gender Action Plans, and whether gender programming is improving (or is likely to improve) the situation of women in the wide context of WFP's operations.
3. Research and interviews were conducted at headquarters, and investigations were undertaken in the field and ten country offices. A summary of these findings, as well as recommendations regarding the Commitments themselves, their implementation at the field level and at headquarters, and indicators for measuring the gender sensitivity of projects and progress towards meeting the Commitment to Women by 2001, are provided in this report.

ADOPTION OF THE COMMITMENTS TO WOMEN

4. The Commitments to Women emerged from the Fourth World Conference on Women at Beijing in September 1995. The Commitments concretized WFP's efforts over the previous decade to improve the quality of WFP assistance by promoting gender equity in programming. Preceding the Beijing Conference, several studies were carried out to review ongoing and planned country programme activities in order to compare them with the expectations for gender equity established in 1985. These studies demonstrated that in many cases gender had not been mainstreamed in WFP-supported projects; that efforts to reach the very poorest women with relief assistance had sometimes failed; that women rarely controlled or made decisions regarding projects and food aid delivery; and that WFP-supported development projects did not necessarily promote women's empowerment, all because WFP and its partners still had a relatively limited understanding of how to design and implement gender-sensitive programmes. As stated in one report, "WFP ... staff interpret their mandate mainly and at times exclusively in terms of the technical and logistic[al] aspects of food aid operations".

¹ The field reviews were carried out in Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Liberia, Uganda, Viet Nam and Yemen. The countries were selected according to the following criteria: they should be from each of WFP's four Regions; when taken together, they should include all programme types (complex, long-term emergencies; emergency relief; development projects; and quick action projects); and some should have a wider national environment which affects the ability of WFP to promote gender programming. Separate country reports have been prepared and are appended to the full report of the Mid-Term Review, which is available from the Office of Evaluation, in English only.



5. Efforts were made to concretize WFP's objectives for the Beijing Conference. Ideas were solicited from the Country Directors and meetings were held by field staff in the Regions beforehand to prepare WFP's contribution. Regional Platforms of Action were drawn up, and a film—'Women Eat Last'—was produced. On the basis of these studies, internal discussions and country office recommendations, a set of 'goals for women' to be reached by 2001 was drafted. The WFP Commitments to Women were formulated with inputs provided by Regional Managers of the Operations Department, Gender Focal Points and various WFP departmental managers under the guidance of the Director of the Strategy and Policy Division and the rest of the Executive Staff.
6. Following the Beijing Conference, the Executive Director asked country offices and units at headquarters to define the steps required to meet the Commitments to Women and develop measurable indicators to monitor progress. Meanwhile, a Gender Task Force (GTF) was established at WFP headquarters to advise on overall strategy to develop a WFP Gender Action Plan (GAP) and monitoring mechanisms, to mobilize support, to advise implementers, and to monitor and report on the process of implementation of the WFP Gender Action Plan. The GTF sent documentation on gender concepts and tools for social and gender analysis to the country offices to help them design their individual Gender Action Plans, which were to set country priorities and define steps and measurable indicators for achieving the stated objectives by 2001.
7. Because one of the Commitments regards gender equity in recruitment and employment at WFP, the Gender Task Force began collecting data on women staff in the professional and higher categories. At the same time, it was recognized that while it was desirable to have 50 percent women in professional positions by 2001, this specific target was probably beyond the recruitment capacity of the organization. Hiring, for example, 50 percent women in the following five years would result in women forming only 40 percent of WFP's professional labour force. Nonetheless, the recommendation was made that performance in this sector should be made part of the key tasks of the Management and Appraisal of Performance (MAP) system of Division Directors and Bureau Managers. Subsequently, the Task Force agreed to refer to the United Nations goal of reaching gender parity by 2000 in the section on personnel in the WFP Gender Action Plan, which was finalized in September 1996.
8. By the end of 1996 the effort to implement the Commitments to Women was well under way. Gender training had been started and the country office Gender Action Plans had been written. Four main strategies that needed external funding were to be found in most of the plans of action: initiate consultancies to assess current practices and recommend improvements; build staff capacity in analysis and planning; develop guidelines; and exchange experiences. Plans had been devised in various countries to begin negotiating with counterparts about improvements in gender programming, to collect gender-disaggregated data, to reduce micronutrient deficiencies in women and children at risk, to increase the number of professional women in WFP, and to write the Commitments to Women into all inter-agency and government agreements. A budget of US\$ 700,000 for 1996–97 was established to finance training and travel, and the hiring of technical expertise. Recruitment of female staff rose from 12 percent of total recruitment in 1994 to 39 percent in 1996. However, female project staff in country offices accounted for only 20 percent.



9. The year 1997 saw a consolidation of the process. A standard set of guidelines for development, relief and emergency programmes was written. Country offices produced case studies on the benefits of WFP support and beneficiaries' profiles as promised in the Gender Action Plans. Training modules were gender-sensitized; a funding proposal was drafted to employ Regional Gender Advisers and to ensure skills development of staff in gender analysis, planning, monitoring and evaluation; regional gender meetings were being held; and a second headquarters-based gender specialist was hired in mid-year. Training sessions on participatory food aid management and qualitative monitoring and evaluation were planned; some were held before the end of the year. Further progress had been made on the recruitment of women: in 1997, 43 percent of new appointments were women.
10. But in November 1997, the Senior Gender Adviser left WFP headquarters for a new posting in the field. Owing to a lack of funds, there was no immediate replacement, and this left one (relatively new) gender specialist to move the process forward. She resigned in mid-1998, leaving a vacuum until the recruitment of a new Senior Gender Adviser later in the year. (A second Senior Gender Adviser joined only in early 1999). Therefore, the momentum that had been gained in 1996–97 was largely lost because of under-staffing, loss of institutional memory and, equally important, the lack of core funding.
11. Some US\$700,000 had been earmarked for fiscal year 1997–98 as the Gender Action Fund (GAF) for gender projects. For 1998–99, US\$ one million was requested, but before this sum was allocated, it was cut from the core budget as part of a larger money saving exercise. At this point the Budget Office expected that special funding for gender activities would be secured separately by the Senior Gender Adviser. In fact, this initiative was relatively unsuccessful: few additional funds were secured for gender activities from the end of 1997 until October 1998. Previously allocated funds and grants raised locally by country offices were the main sources of money spent on consultancies, workshops and special activities. In October 1998, core funding of US\$ one million was reallocated to promote gender activities in 1999, with another US\$500,000 promised from external sources.

COMMITMENTS TO WOMEN IN THE WFP CONTEXT

12. WFP's Commitments to Women should not be viewed in isolation, for their successful implementation relies upon wider attitudes, opportunities, mechanisms and structures.

Attitudes and change

13. Gender concerns are part of a new style of management at WFP, a heightened concern with how food is utilized at the community and household levels, and an increased interest in using food aid in a way that promotes sustainable development, through the participation and empowerment of beneficiaries. Therefore, gender programming is just one aspect of a larger transition under way within the organization, a transition that may be difficult for some of WFP's staff. Indeed, part of the resistance to gender policies comes from a lack of understanding of the wider programmatic shift, a defensiveness based on a vague sense of somehow having done things 'wrong' in the past, a reluctance to become involved in household-level concerns, and a lack of understanding of how exactly to implement these new policies on the ground.



14. There is a sense among some staff that gender issues are not particularly important when compared to their other, more vital and urgent work. Also, many WFP staff are under pressure to carry out complex (mostly logistical, financial or administrative, but rarely gender-related) tasks with tight deadlines. Such extraneous factors have an impact on the way the Commitments to Women are perceived and implemented by field and headquarters staff, and on their attitudes towards gender.
15. There is a reluctance by some WFP staff to 'impose', what are perceived to be 'western' or 'feminist' ideas on beneficiaries. This attitude is undoubtedly having an impact on the implementation of the Commitments to Women. For example, efforts to promote female advancement through the use of food aid in school feeding projects or through the creation of women's committees are seen by some staff as inappropriate in predominantly traditional, patriarchal cultures. A lack of awareness of the link between women's rights and universal human rights, and of the need for WFP to promote a rights-based aid regime, means that these staff will be reluctant to push for changes that *empower* women.

Work environment

16. The work environment at WFP affects the recruitment and retention of female staff in particular, and that is why it comes within the scope of this review. Of particular interest are three issues: security and employment of women at WFP; sexual harassment; and staff rights.
17. Insecurity affects both female and male staff, generally in field locations and particularly in difficult, non-family postings. Insecurity ranges from banditry and robbery, to assaults and rape, attacks specifically on foreigners, and open warfare, including bombardments, raids, and land mines. Health hazards are also a form of insecurity, as WFP staff are sometimes required to manage operations in malarial and other disease-infested areas, where water is unreliable and/or unclean, where food may be scarce and where the climate can be extreme. Isolation and threats of violence are also mental health hazards. Traditionally men have been hired to work in such areas more often than women, and there is still some reluctance to hire women for particularly difficult posts. But in some of the most insecure work stations, such as in southern Sudan, women make up half of the WFP field staff. Through proactive search, 18 female food monitors were recruited. However, there are no females at the management level. The key is training—teaching men and women how to take care of themselves in threatening situations and in emergencies—and support. The ongoing Security Awareness Training Initiative will address many of these issues. Nonetheless, in particular situations, where rape is a special risk, WFP should be cautious about sending female staff.
18. Because of its inherently private nature and the threats attached to it, sexual harassment is an issue that is difficult to investigate. Its prevention has been linked in policy documents with the promotion of gender equality within the United Nations. A policy on the prevention and resolution of cases was circulated by the Executive Director of WFP in 1995. There seem to be some cases of sexual harassment but these are not being reported formally or informally through the appropriate channels.
19. It is generally felt that a more nuanced understanding of sexual harassment and a more up-front approach to the problem are needed. In February 1999 changes were made in the policy regarding harassment, now distinguishing between sexual and personal



harassment and abuse of authority. The new policy applies to all staff, including locally recruited, and places a greater onus on managers to deal with harassment. It provides for a joint role by the Human Resources (HR) Division and the Office of the Inspector-General (OEDI) in the resolution of harassment complaints, suggests different recourse mechanisms (such as mediation) for resolving complaints, and adds new contact points for information and advice on perceived harassment situations. This new proactive policy will no doubt go some way towards creating a work environment that is supportive of productivity as well as the personal goals, dignity and self-esteem of every staff member.

20. Finally, various questions about staff entitlements and family relations were raised during the Review, some of which have implications for the retention of female staff. For instance, women wish to know if both international and national staff have the right to take time off daily to breast-feed their babies. Some women with young children expressed an interest (probably shared by some men) to work flexi- or part-time for a period in order to care for their young children while maintaining their careers. Women especially complained that child care was not available to them at work.

MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE COMMITMENTS TO WOMEN

21. The team examined the institutions created to implement and monitor the Commitments, asking whether they were well established, what inhibited their operation, and whether they were functioning as expected.

Gender Task Force, Gender Focal Points and Gender Advisers

22. The Gender Task Force is currently comprised of 11 senior staff (two thirds men) at headquarters and country offices. Since late 1995 it has provided policy guidance and advice on training requirements and technical support, helped raise and allocate funds, promoted the exchange of information and experiences, and overseen and reported on progress. Gender Focal Points at headquarters collect and disseminate information and inform colleagues about available resources, provide guidance to programme staff to help them meet their regional gender targets and sensitize their projects, monitor progress and provide feedback to the Regional Bureaux and the Gender Advisers, and act as training and resource persons on gender issues.
23. The Gender Focal Points in the country offices collect data on gender disparities and on activities to meet the national Commitments to the Platform for Action on the Advancement of Women in their own countries; maintain relations with Gender Focal Points within governments and relevant organizations; act as training and resource mobilizers on gender analytical planning and monitoring tools; help colleagues meet the targets in the country office Gender Action Plans; undertake other routine activities related to gender programming; and monitor the implementation of the overall Gender Action Plan. In some areas there are also Regional Gender Advisers, who support gender training and programming in the countries of the region. Some staff note that these Regional Gender Advisers play an important role, and more should be appointed.
24. One weakness of the administrative structure of the Commitments to Women concerns the Gender Focal Points in country offices. The relatively low status of the Gender Focal Points in the ten countries studied—many are junior staff, with only a limited



understanding of WFP and development/relief operations and little of gender analysis and strategies—may indicate the little importance some supervisors attach to gender as an operational or analytical issue. The fact that the vast majority are female may reflect the fact that in the minds of many Country Directors, gender programming should be entrusted to women. In fact, these Focal Points need to be senior staff, who can effectively attend meetings and be heard, who can insist on seeing project documents and plans before they are sent out of the country offices. Finally, Gender Focal Points often feel that they do not have enough time to do their gender work well because of their work load not related to gender. In order to do the job well, the staff members concerned should be given fewer other tasks to perform. Adequate funds should be made available so they can travel, train, collect and share information, and liaise with other organizations.

25. The full-time job of overseeing the implementation of the Commitments to Women goes to two Senior Gender Advisers at headquarters. As was discovered to the detriment of progress in fulfilling the Commitments to Women in 1998, it takes adequate staffing of the Gender Unit to ensure an effective oversight of the implementation of the Commitments. As the recommendations of this Review are implemented, it may well be that additional staff will be needed in the Gender Unit.

Gender Action Plans

26. In order to transform the broad goals of the Commitments to Women into specific country programme and project targets, in 1996 the individual country offices (and later regions) created Gender Action Plans. These were produced in a hurry, many by staff with little or no understanding of gender programming. The Gender Action Plans reviewed by the Mid-Term Review Team demonstrate that the first plans (and preliminary documentation from country offices leading up to the Gender Action Plans) were often little more than a statement of goals and intentions, with little detail about how to achieve them. The lack of understanding of gender programming is obvious from Action Plan emphasis on the need to schedule country office staff training activities as a first step. The desire to employ specialists and outside expertise to do training and help plan projects was also highlighted. In country offices where staff with a background in gender analysis and programming helped write the Action Plan (e.g. Afghanistan, Kenya and Malawi), they were more detailed, and contained specific activities and strategies for reaching the goals. In any case, it appears that in all countries the Action Plan process and the Commitments to Women were taken seriously.
27. By 1997 the situation had changed somewhat, as country offices were more aware of the issues involved. Some staff had benefited from training and the employment of specialists. Feedback from counterparts was beginning to come in, and the need to coordinate and cooperate with implementing partners and governments—and in some places, the difficulty of getting the cooperation of partners—was felt. These Action Plans were generally more detailed than those produced the year before.
28. Today, the Gender Action Plan as tools to implement the Commitments to Women are used well by some country office staff and forgotten or ignored by others. The process of writing new Action Plans—not as hurriedly as before, and using expertise provided by country office staff who have undergone extensive training, by Gender Focal Points, regional facilitators and the Gender Advisers at headquarters—would reinforce the requirement to engender projects and is therefore recommended.



Training

29. Characteristic of the gender training process is the difficulty to obtain a complete overview of the gender training that has taken place. This is the result of a number of factors—decentralization no doubt plays a role, but so does the administrative weakness (resulting from under-staffing) of the headquarters Gender Unit for portions of 1997–98. As a result, it is difficult to obtain concise information about training activities worldwide, which makes it hard to plan for the future. For instance, are training sessions building on one other? Are the curricula of different workshops compatible and complementary? Have all country offices and staff had training, and what training have specific staff had? This information is not readily available in a central location.
30. Some staff criticized gender training as being too theoretical, or too sophisticated, with concepts that are divorced from everyday reality in the field. They feel that ‘clear-cut tools’ are needed, together with ‘specific guidance’ for designing and implementing projects. Somewhat related is the view that training thus far has mostly been aimed at sensitizing staff in gender issues, rather than providing them with ‘solid socio-economic assessment skills’.
31. Even though it has been criticized, the training process is, in many respects, having the intended effect on staff, most of whom (though not all) have had at least gender-awareness training, if not instruction on gender analysis, programme design, participatory approaches, evaluation and monitoring, or other more advanced topics. Workshops and meetings held only a year ago were much different than those organized today, where beneficiaries and staff are more sophisticated in their analysis and demands. WFP staff are now generally better prepared to design programmes for women and to collect gender-disaggregated statistics. Gender is now being incorporated into Memoranda of Understanding, Letters of Understanding and other agreements with partners. Where NGOs have been reluctant to change their work methods for want of staff, WFP has been able to show them how to integrate gender concerns into their programmes without doing extra work.

Funding

32. As with gender training, it is difficult to gather all the strands together to determine the amount of money that has been raised and spent on gender programming, including training, in the last three years. The reasons are much the same: decentralization, country office fund-raising and spending without reference to the Gender Advisers or headquarters Finance Officers, under-staffing and a weakened oversight function in the Gender Unit in 1997–98, and a lack of accounting codes to monitor gender fund-raising and spending in the country offices and at headquarters.

Documentation

33. The Mid-Term Review examined various programme, project and country office documentation, including monitoring and evaluation formats, to determine whether the Commitments to Women were being written into policy and programme documents and agreements with partners, and whether gender-disaggregated data were being produced. It was found that gender and women have increasingly been integrated into project design in recent years, and that gender analysis is being used by some staff when designing interventions, targeting beneficiaries, and selecting activities. But the concept of meeting women’s *strategic* (as opposed to their *practical*) needs should be re-emphasized in



training, as some planners still seem to think in terms of (and documents too often emphasize this) the number of women beneficiaries involved in a project, rather than asset creation, decision-making and control of resources.

34. Partnership agreements (Memoranda of Understanding, etc.) should continue to be surveyed and revised where necessary to incorporate the requirements outlined in the Commitments to Women. Guidelines and manuals (e.g. Food Aid in Emergencies) should continue to be reviewed and revised where necessary.

Baseline surveys, monitoring and evaluation

35. If, as required by the Commitments to Women, a country office is to provide at least 60 percent of its resources to females, it must demonstrate that gender discrimination exists in the country and that social indicators prove it. Evidence suggests that baseline surveys, which are crucial to measuring progress towards meeting the Commitments to Women—or indeed, any other goals—in any project or programme, were rarely conducted in the past. As ongoing projects have their own dynamics, it is probably as rare for a country office to carry out what amounts to a baseline survey—a qualitative socio-economic analysis—of an existing project. It is more likely that country offices designing new projects are undertaking baseline surveys.
36. Monitoring and evaluation officers have begun to design methods for collecting gender-disaggregated project data on a regular basis. It is relatively easier to determine whether the quantitative goals of the Commitments to Women are being reached than it is to assess how interventions are affecting the quality of beneficiaries' lives. It is not surprising, then, to find that WFP's monitoring and evaluation officers are more capable of designing reporting formats that request implementing partners to collect information on the number of men and women doing food-for-work (FFW) labour, the number of boys and girls in school feeding projects or even the number of women leaders on a project committee than about the differential effect food aid earned in a FFW project is having on men and women in a community, the reasons why gender gaps in enrolment rates are not reducing in spite of school feeding projects, or what power women leaders actually have on committees. Nonetheless, this is a first step in measuring progress towards reaching the goals outlined in the Commitments to Women and should be seen as such.
37. One major constraint to collecting gender-disaggregated data (or any monitoring and evaluation data, for that matter) is the lack of capacity of implementing partners to generate them. While many do not see the need for collecting information on men and women beneficiaries, they will count them if required by WFP. But few are able, or willing, to undertake a serious gender analysis of a project—evaluating, for instance, gender and decision-making, asset creation or resource control. The reasons relate again to the partners' lack of staff, resources, skills and will.
38. It appears that no interim impact or performance assessment of the Commitments to Women has yet been undertaken by any country office. Performance assessments of the Commitments to Women and evaluations of the effect gender programming is having on beneficiaries in specific projects can be undertaken by WFP staff who are trained to ask the right questions. Not only do WFP staff need to gather data on the number of men and women beneficiaries in each project, but it will also be necessary to collect qualitative data (see the Annex). The Office of Evaluation (OEDE) works with minimal guidelines and thus far gender has not been systematically included in the Terms of Reference nor



in the evaluations directed by the Office. On the other hand, the Office of Evaluation is aware of the need to do this.

Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping

39. Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) seeks to measure the capacity of populations to gain access to food under specific political-economic conditions and in the face of crises. Twenty-eight country offices currently have VAM capabilities and many have undertaken VAM exercises to improve targeting and programming. Various methodologies are used, some more participatory and responsive to local conditions than others. According to the VAM unit at WFP headquarters, gender is addressed variously by different country offices.
40. Not having a primary data collection mandate or capacity, WFP is relying on other agencies and host governments for the data to be analysed. Where others have conducted extensive household-level consumption/expenditure surveys, household-level data can be incorporated into the WFP analysis. Otherwise, there is no option short of WFP conducting its own qualitative rapid appraisals.
41. Where WFP is forced to rely solely on existing data sets, there is little opportunity (in terms of data resources) to do much gender analysis. This is true because most governments, NGOs and independent research agencies still do not collect data in a gender-disaggregated manner. However, where WFP has the resources and mandate to do primary data collection, it can influence the design and conduct of data collection efforts to better incorporate gender considerations. Such WFP primary data collection are rarely if ever full-scale household consumption or expenditure style surveys. Instead, these efforts are almost exclusively “rapid assessments” to collect qualitative data aimed at identifying and describing household types. As such, they are useful in defining and describing a commonly occurring household type, and even estimating the approximate number of such households in a given area. They do not provide detailed information on actual, unique households. In most instances, such unique household targeting is not only an unreasonable expectation, but is also not practical, considering the cost-efficiency of an operation.
42. WFP should thus decide what resources—human and financial—it is willing and able to commit to augmenting and improving its primary data (e.g. rapid assessment) collection efforts, particularly—but not exclusively—with respect to gender-sensitive data. With the appropriate level of resources, VAM and other data collection vehicles of WFP can generate more qualitative data to better inform the programming process until more detailed, quantitative data on gender become available.

The ongoing development of gender policy

43. In the years since the Beijing Conference and the enunciation of the Commitments to Women, WFP has continued to develop its policy with regard to gender and women. For instance, in keeping with Commitment I (to provide direct access to appropriate and adequate food to beneficiaries, especially women and children) in 1997 WFP further delineated its policy to meet the critical food needs of mothers and small children. This had implications for assessments of food needs, programme design, targeting, food baskets, financing, and sustainability.¹ WFP also linked women’s advancement directly

¹ Reaching mothers and children at critical times of their lives, document WFP/EB.3/97/3-B.



to the World Food Summit Plan of Action and the role the agency has taken to meet the 27 objectives included in its five Commitments. In October 1998 a workshop on a rights-based approach to women's empowerment provided WFP with the opportunity to explore the link between women's rights, the Commitments to Women, and the right to food. Later that month another meeting—the Consultation on Food Aid and Development—afforded WFP the opportunity to explore the link between gender, development and food aid.

THE PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT OF THE COMMITMENTS TO WOMEN

Staffing, the recruitment of women, and gender in performance appraisals

44. Two Commitments directly address staffing at WFP. Over the years, efforts to increase the percentage of women in professional categories have produced results: the total rose from 17.1 percent at the beginning of 1992, to 24.6 percent soon after the Beijing Conference at the beginning of 1996, and 28.5 percent by mid-1998. Not surprisingly, considering the nature of work in the field and the historical reluctance of some managers to hire women to do it, the percentage of women in country offices in mid-1998 was only 22.5 percent compared to 39.5 percent at headquarters. In the highest categories (P-5 and above), the percentages have also improved: from 9.2 percent in 1992 (when there was no woman above P-5) to 18.9 percent in December 1996, and 23.3 percent at the end of August 1998 (when there were 13 women above P-5). Women from some countries are better represented in the professional ranks than others.
45. Affirmative action in recruitment has been necessary to reach higher percentages of professional women in the organization. In 1994, 12 percent of new recruits were women, compared to 39 percent in 1996 and 43 percent in 1997. But in the first eight months of 1998 that number had dropped to 26 percent, meaning that the overall percentage of women among professional staff had levelled off—slightly declining from 29.2 percent on 1 January 1998 to 28 percent on 31 August 1998. Directors were immediately urged to bring about a major shift towards hiring more women and staff members from developing countries. Moreover, the results—i.e. specific hiring statistics by unit—were to be included in the appraisal performance reports of such staff, and those of their hiring managers. WFP's policy was specified as follows by the Executive Director:
- If a manager hired 50 percent women and 40 percent staff from developing countries, he/she met his/her expected goals. For anything less, the manager did not meet expectations and his/her MAP must reflect that.*
46. Despite the fact that the Commitments to Women state that managers would be held accountable in their performance assessments for implementing the Commitments, until recently, the MAP format did not feature specific criteria regarding Commitments to Women, other than possibly the MAPs of Gender Advisers and possibly some Gender Focal Points. This omission has now been rectified for all senior hiring managers.



Protection of women beneficiaries

47. It will be recalled that the original Commitments to Women were linked to four strategic objectives enunciated in the Beijing Platform for Action. The first of these four objectives was to 'provide protection, assistance and training to refugee and displaced women'. WFP's Commitments to Women and its obligations as a United Nations agency, mandated by the United Nations Charter and other international human rights instruments, invests WFP with a protection role, especially with regard to food. The very difficult and often dangerous circumstances under which WFP works takes these instruments out of the realm of theory. The extent to which the rights to food, assistance, development and life (protection) are being undermined in the various areas where WFP works should be investigated. At the same time, a study should be carried out to assess whether WFP staff are already playing a protection role and what exactly this entails. It should also consider what obligations the United Nations statement on internally displaced persons specifically places on WFP. With such knowledge and a desire to maintain a rights-based food aid regime, WFP can then act with full confidence in trying to meet its Commitments to Women and its human rights obligations.

The national context

48. The data provided by the Review team demonstrate that success in meeting the Commitments to Women will depend to a very large extent on the national context in which WFP works. No matter how much WFP staff are gender-sensitized and the country offices prepared to invest additional resources on implementing the Commitments, this will not happen if national counterparts ignore or undermine the effort. This is especially the case in countries where WFP's implementation role is limited, and where WFP must depend on local partners, and/or where local communities and governments are indifferent or have a negative attitude towards the promotion of gender equality.
49. Some local social, cultural, political and economic influences hinder progress. For instance, in some countries in Latin America *machismo* is very much alive and affecting efforts to promote women. In parts of Asia, Africa and the Middle East, cultural traditions under the guise of religion inhibit the empowerment of women. In other areas, age-old patriarchal institutions keep women in subordinate positions. In some of these countries, governments have made little effort to involve women in decision-making bodies. Generally, in such places women have little economic power, and where civil society is weak, the women's movement is likely to be weak also. In these countries women's NGOs may be almost non-existent. Extension staff working for governments (and sometimes national staff working with WFP) may express rigid views regarding gender relations and women unless specifically re-trained. The same is true of NGO staff. Women beneficiaries themselves will sometimes reject their empowerment as being culturally inappropriate. In other words, traditional bureaucracies, individuals and ideologies can slow WFP's progress towards meeting the Commitments to Women, and country offices should explicitly investigate the extent of the problem and its causes, and formulate a strategy to address them.
50. Training counterparts and 'raising awareness' are the predominant strategies proposed in the Gender Action Plans, and these are useful, but probably insufficient to tackle the fundamental causes of gender inequality. For instance, it is hard to help women in agricultural projects if they own no land and, as such, are not represented on the project committees that design food-for-work interventions or select beneficiaries, and cannot



benefit directly from environmental projects. It is difficult to hire women staff to manage community-based projects if none is literate. It is hard to get girls to attend school when they are required to stay at home as domestic labourers. Such problems do not respond well to gender training because inequality is rooted in the political economy of the society. *WFP staff must understand that and design interventions that specifically address the root causes of inequality rather than the manifestations of discrimination.*

Process, performance and impact: A summary of country office findings

51. Evidence from the field indicates that the Commitments to Women have influenced the design of WFP projects and programmes, and are being implemented. For instance, school feeding projects target girls, women are encouraged to join or form food distribution committees, and affirmative action for women is used to recruit participants in food-for-work activities. On the other hand, the components of the Commitments that promote the empowerment of women—controlling assets created, learning new skills, taking up leadership roles, etc.—are not well implemented. Some of the mechanisms for implementation of the Commitments function relatively well—the Gender Task Force and the Gender Unit in ODT, for example—but others—such as Gender Focal Points and training—need improvement. Some basic gender-disaggregated data are being collected, but not enough. Baseline studies are rarely performed, while more sophisticated socio-economic/gender analyses of projects are needed in some countries. Little household-level data are available, data which may be needed to target women specifically. Gender training has had a variable impact on staff and country offices; in some places, it has been extraordinarily good and useful, and in others almost totally ignored and forgotten. Further data collection is needed to document the problems being experienced in implementing the Commitments in individual country programmes and to assess, in due course, how well WFP is achieving each Commitment.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

52. The problems outlined here are many, interrelated, and very complex. WFP should be praised for addressing the issue of gender equity in relief operations and development projects, and among its own staff. All WFP staff who read this report, especially those in the country offices under study here, should recognize that the criticisms expressed in this report are meant to be constructive, and are presented in the context of a learning experience. Few at WFP know how ‘to do gender’ and many staff are learning what gender analysis can do for their programmes.
53. The findings suggest that it is unlikely that the goals of the Commitments to Women will be met by 2001 unless changes are made in the way they are implemented. Alternatively, the Commitments might be reformulated, with more achievable goals. Pursuing the latter course of action, the Commitments should be reformulated to place more emphasis on empowering women through WFP programming, rather than promoting women’s projects or counting the number of women participants and beneficiaries in projects. Some country offices have empowerment and gender squarely on their agenda, whereas others are mostly limiting themselves to number-counting. There are a number of issues that will need addressing if the Commitments to Women are to be met. These are:



Human resources

- *Gender parity in staffing.* Senior staff have already been reminded that affirmative action for women is policy with regard to hiring in the professional and higher categories. Country Directors and other hiring managers would also benefit from receiving a similar directive. Also, the issue should be discussed at global and regional meetings of Directors and Managers in 1999–2000. Efforts to reach gender parity in lower grades and among national staff might also be considered, as the philosophy behind gender equity in hiring is applicable to them also.
- *MAPs.* If the Commitments to Women are to be taken seriously, indicators to measure an employee's performance and attitudes with regard to gender and gender programming ought to be included in the MAPs.
- *Job descriptions.* These ought to outline the job's requirements with regard to gender.

Implementation mechanisms

- *Gender Action Plans.* These are of variable quality, some are out-dated, and many only make vague reference to the activities, or strategies, to be carried out to fulfill the Commitments. New Plans should be requested—with emphasis not on speed, but on analysis, empowerment and strategies—under the direction of the Gender Advisers. This process might be facilitated by regional gender specialists (where available), workshops, or other means of gaining expert advice.
- *Gender Focal Points.* At the country level, these ought to be senior staff, with the status to influence programming, project design, and policy. They ought to attend policy meetings, and read (with a view to changing them, if necessary) all project proposals and documentation, including Memoranda of Understanding, Letters of Understanding, and other partnership agreements. They should have sufficient time to be able to undertake their gender-related tasks, including attending gender meetings with partners and other agencies. A national officer might work as a gender counterpart to ensure continuity when international staff depart.
- *Regional Gender Specialists.* Efforts to hire full-time Regional Gender Specialists to provide technical expertise should be made. Alternatively, the Regional Programme Advisors who thus far assisted in the implementation of Action Plans should be given the time and resources needed to pursue this task.
- *Gender Unit (at headquarters).* It remains unclear whether the work expected of the advisors can be carried out by only two staff, but consideration should be given to creating a gender unit with more staff to oversee the implementation of the Commitments to Women.
- *Strategy.* A new gender strategy is needed to guide the reforms that are required to meet the Commitments to Women by 2001. This should be designed by the Gender Advisers with the support of Country Directors and Gender Focal Points, the Gender Task Force, and other interested parties.
- *Training.* A review of gender training (and of gender components in other training workshops) should be undertaken, with the aim of designing a training strategy and of discovering what courses (and content) have been given, whether the curricula are compatible (across regions and sequentially in a region), which staff have/have not been trained, and what further training is needed. The investigation ought to include a



consideration of how to make the training more relevant to the staff expected to use it, how to ensure that instruction on gender equity is rooted in human rights discourse, and how to address cultural relativism and gender. Thought should be given to a recommendation made by staff that training modules be designed by trainers who first visit field sites and investigate the project as well as the socio-economic/gender situation on the ground. A training strategy should then be created and monitored by the Gender Advisers.

- *Gender Funding and Accounting.* Efforts are already under way to give gender its own budgetary code, and this ought to be implemented in all country offices. Financial/administrative staff at all levels ought to have some method to account for gender funds raised (from whatever source) and used (for whatever purpose) in all units, bureaux, regional and country offices, and to report these to the Gender Advisers, whose task it would be to monitor funding.
- *Gender fund-raising.* Efforts should be made for the Gender Advisers to work with staff in the Resources and External Relations Division, with a view to regularly writing new proposals to raise funds from donors known to be interested in gender for projects that are likely to receive funding from those donors. A funding strategy should be developed in tandem by the Gender Unit and RE. The Gender Advisers should survey the country offices, bureaux and other units to determine the amount of external funds raised and spent on various gender projects. More use should be made of direct support costs to fund gender-related project activities.

Creating a supportive environment

- *Negative attitudes towards gender/Commitments to Women.* These must be tackled on several levels, including an honest assessment by each unit manager of the extent to which negative attitudes in her/his unit affect implementation of the Commitments. Methods of addressing negative attitudes that affect programming or staff relations include training, discussions, and performance reviews.
- *Work environment.* A survey of the security needs of women should be undertaken (if not already done) and used by the new security training module. When promulgated, the new policy on harassment should be disseminated and openly discussed in various fora, including with country office staff. Staff entitlements (including family rights) should be reviewed with staff in all units, bureaux and especially country offices with national staff on a regular basis (e.g. annually). A summary document with relevant entitlements (e.g. time off to breast-feed, child care, paternity leave, etc.) might be written at the country office level and disseminated to staff.
- *National environment.* The national context in which WFP staff work has a great impact on WFP's success in meeting the Commitments to Women. An analysis of this factor should be undertaken by all country offices, and strategies developed to address it. In any one country the strategy may include training of counterparts or providing other support to partners or NGOs, and may entail working with donors and other United Nations agencies to develop a common strategy on women's advancement.
- *Joint United Nations gender activities.* Where an inter-agency United Nations gender group does not exist, WFP should initiate one. Its role should be proactive and programmatic wherever possible.



Data and documents

- *Gender in project documents.* The lack of gender analysis and strategies for assisting women in documents will only be solved when project designers are fully proficient in these areas and create projects that address gender issues. In the meantime documents should be reviewed by Gender Focal Points in country offices and regional bureaux.
- *Gender in programme documents and materials.* The Food Aid in Emergencies manual should be gender-sensitized, and other design and writing guidelines, such as the new Programme Design Manual, should be surveyed and updated in light of the Commitments to Women.
- *Partnership agreements.* All Memoranda of Understanding, Letters of Understanding, and project and programme agreements should be reviewed to ensure that they reflect the requirements of the Commitments to Women. The roles partners (including governments) are to play in implementing gender programming should be spelled out.

Measurement

- *Baseline studies.* Without baseline data, the measurement of progress (for gender as well as other objectives) is impossible. Baseline socio-economic gender studies should be undertaken before any new project is designed or proposed. Wherever possible, studies of ongoing projects, which might serve as 'baselines', should be undertaken. These should include the collection of information on gender disparities (a measurement that is required in the Commitments to Women) and, where feasible, the effect of gender programming to date.
- *Monitoring and evaluation.* Questionnaires should first be designed for all projects requesting gender-disaggregated data on project beneficiaries, participants, assets created and used, and school enrolment and drop-out rates. Secondly, specific qualitative data should be collected which demonstrate whether women's strategic needs are being addressed and met. All such information should be made available to partner organizations and appear in project and programme documents, and evaluations, to demonstrate and share WFP's concern with gender.
- *Project and programme evaluations.* All evaluations should include a gender component, except those concerned solely with technical aspects of food aid that have no relation to socio-economic or gender issues.
- *Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM).* In order to target women and to promote gender equity, information on community and individual level vulnerability and food security is needed. This means data must be collected and analysed at the household level, which is not often done, or done well, by WFP's partners. A strategy for gender-sensitizing the VAM methodologies should be designed and implemented.
- *Performance evaluation.* Gender/socio-economic specialists or staff trained in these methodologies should determine whether the Commitments to Women are being implemented and the effect they are now having on gender relations and women in particular. Such studies should be undertaken of all projects—perhaps in conjunction with 'baseline' surveys in ongoing projects—with the aim of changing projects that require modification to meet the Commitments.
- *End-of-term impact evaluation of Commitments to Women.* This will be undertaken by the Office of Evaluation in 2002.



New policy and further research

- *Protection of women beneficiaries.* A survey should be carried out to determine what protection problems beneficiaries (female and male) now face, how they are addressed, who (or what agency) is responsible for tackling them, and whether WFP staff are already playing roles (and what they may be) in protecting beneficiaries and project participants.
 - *Gender policy development.* The concept of female-headed households should be examined to determine if all such households should be automatically targeted or whether some other indicator ought to be used to measure the vulnerability of women (e.g. high dependency ratios in households, *de jure* as compared to *de facto* female-headed households, the success of livelihood strategies of households where men may be absent, etc.).
 - *Commitments to Women: Further Study.* Interestingly, one gender focal point said that she thought if the mechanisms were in place to implement the Commitments to Women, the benefits outlined in the Commitments to Women would automatically follow. Another senior staff member suggested that a comparison between the Gender Action Plans as written in 1996–97 and gender programming in country offices today would be sufficient to measure progress. In both cases such thinking demonstrates a faith in the Commitments themselves—that the Commitments (and their specific percentages) were well chosen in the first place, and that if transformed into Gender Action Plan activities and implemented faithfully, they will have the intended effect. Both assumptions should be rigorously tested in more detailed studies. If it is discovered that the impact is not as expected, or that the percentages and benefits are not attainable (or feasible), the Commitments themselves (including the percentages) should be reconsidered. It may be that rather than specific targets, relativistic targets should be set by each country office or unit (e.g. 50 percent improvement on 1995 figures).
54. Engendering programmes and projects is a lengthy, complex, and above all, resource demanding process. Previously WFP took relatively little account of how food aid was used by households, whether it promoted development, or if projects were designed in a participatory manner. Similarly, food—both in development projects and emergency operations—was assumed to be going to women and children, and no extraordinary efforts were made to ensure that it was. But part of the new emphasis on participatory, developmental, local, sustainable, and accountable assistance is the addition of gender. This package of innovations is consistent with the promotion of the rights-based relief regime that is evolving at WFP.



ANNEX

PERFORMANCE AND IMPACT INDICATORS FOR EVALUATING PROJECTS AND MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARDS MEETING THE COMMITMENTS TO WOMEN, 1999–2001

1. A variety of questions which could lead to identifying appropriate indicators for measuring progress in reaching the Commitments to Women emerge from the Mid-Term Review. The list below is not exhaustive and is meant to be illustrative. Country offices are encouraged to develop from these questions indicators which would be most useful in measuring progress, depending on the specific national context within which they are operating.

Commitment I: Provide direct access to appropriate and adequate food

- A. *Target relief food distributions to households, ensuring that women control the family entitlement in 80 percent of operations handled and subcontracted by WFP.*
 - B. *Address micronutrient deficiencies in certain vulnerable groups of women, children and adolescents; and consider local eating and cooking habits in all operations.*
2. This Commitment is relevant to refugee, internally displaced, war-affected and relief operations undertaken by WFP. The fulfilment of target A concerns first the percentage of food carried away by women and secondly, what is meant by 'control'. It is important therefore to measure or determine:
 - What is the number of female-headed and male-headed households receiving food at distribution sites?
 - To what extent do people know their entitlements?
 - What is the effectiveness of the distribution system for ensuring that full entitlements reach households?
 - In which manner are household heads/food recipients selected and registered for receipt of food?
 - Are changes in family status (marriages, new babies, divorces, deaths, etc.) regularly taken into account when registering people and distributing food?
 - To what extent do the voiceless (e.g. the elderly, divorced women, the disabled) and poorest people receive food?
 - Does receiving food place women in vulnerable (dangerous or insecure) situations/positions?
 - Who controls security at distribution sites and is it effective in protecting women?
 - How is food used (cooked, sold, traded, eaten, given to second wives, etc.) within households and who makes decisions about its use?
 - In what way do culture and patriarchy have an impact on the sharing and eating of food within a household?
 - How (and how much) is food other than relief assistance obtained and eaten, and by which groups of people?



- What is the nutritional and micronutritional status of women, children and men?
- Are food commodities acceptable and can they be bartered?
- Does the food basket provide sufficient calories, and is it appropriate and nutritionally complete?
- Is it possible to prepare and cook relief food easily (and with little firewood, which also takes time to collect)?

Commitment II: Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making

- A. *Ensure a lead role of women within all local decision-making committees on food management and in the management of the assets created by food-for-work projects.*
- B. *Contribute to the United Nations goal of reaching gender equity by the year 2001, particularly in higher management positions.*
3. These are two quite different objectives, not necessarily related, and should be considered separately. To measure the success of empowering beneficiary women, an appropriate number of the following should be determined and/or measured:
- Are those groups (e.g. groups of land owners, local chiefs, villages, etc.) that select decision-making project committees or project leaders gender-balanced?
 - What keeps such groups from being gender-balanced (e.g. membership through land ownership, or educational levels, relationship to chief, bribery of officials, etc.)?
 - Do women have a role and a voice at the very lowest level (e.g. peasant associations, village committees, etc.)?
 - Are women selected for leadership positions or decision-making committees because of their relationship to a man (e.g. wife or daughter of a chief)?
 - Do women on committees speak out and make their views known, or are they only token members?
 - Are the views of women on committees respected and acted upon?
 - Do women directly or through representatives have a voice in selecting FFW activities, sites, work norms, or projects?
 - Do women work on FFW activities, receive training and skilled (higher paid) positions equally with men?
 - What assets are created on FFW projects, who benefits from them and are those beneficiaries gender balanced?
 - Do the assets that are created by FFW actually empower women (meet their strategic needs) or do they only address their practical needs?
 - On food management committees, do women have full control of all food distributed, or only certain (e.g. less valuable) foods?
 - Do women on food management committees select beneficiaries, control access (and security), measure portions, handle complaints, control warehouses, set distribution dates and times, etc.—i.e. have full control of the process or only of less vital portions of it?



- Do women learn management and leadership skills, and gain more (self) respect, influence and status?
 - Are women hired by NGOs or WFP or government partners in management positions?
4. With regard to gender equity in *recruitment of staff* at WFP, the following issues may be investigated when measuring progress:
- What is the (changing) proportion of men and women at all Professional and General Service levels?
 - Are there cultural, social, economic or other factors that have an impact on the availability or suitability of women candidates?
 - To which extent is affirmative action being used to hire women (or men)?
 - What measures are managers taking in an attempt to reach gender equity among their own staff?
 - Are managers who refuse to try to reach gender parity being disciplined by their supervisors?
 - Is there evidence of a 'backlash' against hiring women?
 - Are there legitimate grievances against affirmative action that should be taken into consideration?
 - What efforts have been made to address unwarranted criticism of hiring women?

Commitment III: Take positive action to facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade

- A. *Sixty percent of country programme resources will be targeted to women and girls in those countries where gender statistics demonstrate a 25 percent disadvantage of women as compared with men.*
- B. *Fifty percent of education resources within a country programme are to target girls.*
- C. *At least 25 percent of project outputs/assets created through FFW are to be of direct benefit to and controlled by women; at least 25 percent of generated funds are to be invested in activities aimed at the advancement of women; food aid is to be used as a leverage to obtain complementary national and international resources to improve the condition of women.*
5. This programme-oriented Commitment is crucial to women because, without meeting these requirements, female beneficiaries will not be empowered. To measure progress the following issues may be investigated:
- Has a baseline survey been conducted which demonstrates that in the country or project area there is a 25 percent 'gender gap' (e.g. in literacy and schooling, ownership of land and businesses, wage levels, political representatives at all levels, mortality rates, etc.)?
 - How are programme resources used and are they deliberately targeted to women (details needed)?
 - Do the documents governing the projects (e.g. LOU, MOU, Country Strategy Outline, etc.) give evidence that 60 percent of resources are targeted to females?



- Does the Country Office Gender Action Plan acknowledge the gender gap and the need to target resources to women and girls?
- Is there evidence to show that 60 percent of resources (training, food, credit, etc.) reaches females?
- Do women beneficiaries feel that their status, power and economic positions have been strengthened?
- What (changing) proportion or percentage do girls form of school enrolments, drop-outs, advancements, and completions?
- Why do girls leave school early or never attend (cultural, economic and social factors should be explored) and how can food aid address these problems?
- What special efforts are made by WFP to reach females in school (e.g. extra dry rations, special assistance to girls' boarding schools, help with women teachers' housing, latrine construction to offer girls privacy, etc.) and what is the total percentage of resources reaching girls?
- Are gender-disaggregated data regularly collected and disseminated on all of these benefits?
- What factors hinder WFP from providing 60 percent of its resources to girls?
- How are food-for-work projects, sites, goals and activities selected, and do women have a voice in this?
- What assets are created and who benefits from them?
- Do the assets that are created in food-for-work projects (e.g. water points) empower women or only meet their practical needs?
- Is food aid used as a leverage to obtain any policy goal, including the improvement of programming for women?
- Are any funds generated through food for work, who decides how they are used, and how are these invested?

Commitment IV: Generate and disseminate gender disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation

6. All WFP monitoring and reporting will specify:
 - *Men/women percentage share of resources received from food distribution*
 - *Men/women share of benefits by category of activities*
 - *Percentage of positions held by women in the planning and management of food distribution*
7. The following information is needed to measure progress:
 - Are accurate gender-disaggregated data collected and disseminated in a timely fashion (they should be spot-checked to see if they are accurate) and if not, why not?
 - Do the data cover: a) the gender and number of people working on a food-for-work or income-generating activities, in training, obtaining credit and other benefits, benefiting from school feeding or relief projects; b) the extent to which men and



women benefit differently from projects (e.g. one may receive a higher wage, learn more or different skills, do different work, receive more benefits, acquire more assets, etc.); c) food distributed to men and women and to male-headed and female-headed households; d) roles of men and women in planning and management of food distribution, such as control of various commodities, coping with security and complaints, choosing beneficiaries, etc.; and e) how food is used at the household level.

8. Other issues to consider include:

- Are gender-disaggregated data used by management to change the project to benefit women?
- Are the data distributed to partners, donors, beneficiaries, etc.?

Commitment V: Improve accountability on action taken to meet the Commitments

- *Define the implementation and monitoring requirements of the Commitments in the contractual agreements with partners and in relation to the performance of WFP managers.*

9. To determine the extent to which the Commitments are implemented by partners, information regarding the following may be collected:

- What gender requirements are listed in the various documents binding partners (Memoranda of Understanding, Letters of Understanding, etc.)?
- What training in gender programming have partners had to implement the Commitments to Women?
- Do partners agree with the goals of the Commitments to Women and feel they should be implemented in the framework of WFP-supported projects?
- What cultural, religious, political, socio-economic, institutional or infrastructural factors inhibit partners from implementing the Commitments to Women?
- What efforts have partners made to render their projects gender-sensitive and to hire men and women in senior positions in their own organizations?

10. Finally, WFP managers are to be held accountable for implementing the Commitments to Women. This can be judged by measuring the gender sensitivity of their projects using a range of the indicators listed above, and by determining whether they have made an effort to employ female and male staff equally.

- Do MAPs reflect the requirements laid down for managers in the Commitments to Women?

