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BUDGET INCREASE TO APPROVED PROJECT FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD APPROVAL

Agenda item 7 b)



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PROJECT ETHIOPIA 4929

(WIS No. ETH 004929)

Improving education through school feeding

	Previous budget (dollars)	Increase (dollars)	Revised budget (dollars)
Food cost	6 145	2 17	5 318
Total WFP cost	4 774	2 81	7 586

All monetary values are expressed in United States dollars, unless otherwise stated.

¹ Includes 14.5 percent (356,118 dollars) for indirect support costs.

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

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

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

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

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NATURE OF THE INCREASE

1. A 12-month extension in time is proposed, with the following additional commitment of locally produced commodities: 1,975 tons of biscuits, 481 of Famix drink and 464 of Famix mix.

JUSTIFICATION FOR THE INCREASE

2. WFP assistance to the education sector in Ethiopia began in February 1994, and was targeted to food-deficit, war-ravaged areas. Only three of the four types of institutions planned to be included in the project have been assisted, namely pre-primary, primary/junior secondary and senior secondary/technical/vocational schools. The component for teacher training institutes did not become operational because of the lengthy process of project start-up and the consequent decision to focus on the less complicated project activities. It also coincided with strong signals about WFP's policy changes regarding support to the education sector, and in particular with the view that such institutes were no longer eligible for assistance.
3. In the current phase, about 500 pre-primary schoolchildren, 37,000 primary school students and 5,000 secondary/technical/vocational school students receive assistance. In addition, 120 food preparation staff are given WFP commodities as payment in kind.
4. As part of WFP's commitment, 287 tons of oil have been monetized and proceeds utilized to cover the costs of training activities and items needed to support the project. Out of 266,950 dollars generated, the remaining balance of approximately 19,600 dollars will be partly used for training school staff and persons involved in food preparation.
5. Because commodities were utilized at a rate lower than planned, the current phase was extended in time, within the existing commitment, to cover the whole academic year of 1996/97. WFP proposes a bridging operation for the 1997/98 school year with additional food for an increased number of beneficiaries, and an expansion phase, pending the outcome of an appraisal mission in 1997.

Observations and recommendations of the management review cum pre-appraisal mission

6. The Government's request to continue and to expand the project, focusing on primary schools, was pre-appraised by a WFP mission undertaken with UNESCO participation in November 1996. The mission found that although the project has been of a small-scale, pilot nature, it has made an important contribution to the education sector, largely meeting its immediate objectives. The most noticeable effect has been on enrolment, which has risen substantially in the assisted schools. Attendance rates show a general increase, whereas the impact on drop-out rates is less evident.
7. Achievements have been made in spite of the Government's limited resources for project management, cumbersome procedures for contracting transport, and a lengthy reporting chain. Delays in food deliveries to the schools caused by logistics problems have occasionally forced students to be absent from class to search for food or temporary employment. Although attendance rates have improved, the picture might have been even more positive had food always been delivered in a timely manner.



8. The mission noted that commodities have been handled correctly. It also observed that school feeding committees, established at each school, have utilized responsibly funds generated from the sale of empty containers, to procure consumable items needed for the implementation of the project.
9. Rations provided have been appropriate, with a few exceptions. Both under- and over-utilization of Famix products in preparing the meals were, however, observed at some schools, as well as prolonged cooking, which has a detrimental effect on vitamins included in the Famix. Awareness among all persons involved in food preparation must therefore be created through reinforced monitoring and additional training.
10. The project design did not include a special component for women and girls. School feeding at primary schools and take-home rations for students at secondary/technical/vocational institutions have not been found to particularly affect the enrolment of girls, as assumed in the project document. At the same time, however, the project has helped to create employment for 120 food preparation staff, all of whom are women. Efforts are being undertaken at the school level to increase the participation of women in project management by including female teachers and mothers in the school feeding committees, initiatives which need to be further strengthened.
11. The Government's Education and Training Policy addresses the issue of increasing the enrolment of girls at all educational levels, including special measures for female students at the university and teacher training level. Women Affairs Bureaux are established within the regional/zonal education offices. Discussions on strengthening girls' education are actively pursued at the community level.
12. In line with the Government's policy on decentralization, the regions are taking over responsibility for project management. WFP will collaborate closely with the regional education offices in order to ensure a smooth hand-over. As an interim measure, WFP will handle logistics while reviewing the feasibility of regions organizing transports.
13. Based on the mission's positive findings, and further justified by the fact that the enrolment ratio in Ethiopia is significantly below the average in sub-Saharan Africa, WFP recommends the following:
 - a) The project should focus on primary schools, with priority given to all qualified schools in currently assisted *woredas* (administrative level below district) before possibly expanding to additional, selected *woredas* within the regions currently included in the project, maintaining the criterion of food-deficit area. For the bridging operation, an additional number of primary students should be assisted, up to a total of 80,000. The project should thereafter be gradually expanded, the pace to be determined by a forthcoming appraisal mission. Assistance to secondary schools will be discontinued, in line with the Government's policy to give priority to primary education and in compliance with WFP's guidelines for school feeding.
 - b) The current ration should be increased to comply with recommended daily energy and protein requirements. Half-day as well as full-day students should therefore get an additional biscuit upon arrival at school. In addition, the ration of Famix porridge for full-day students should be increased from 75 to 100 grams.
 - c) In view of problems experienced with the monetization of commodities, which are due to current customs and taxation regulations, cash contributions will be solicited for purchasing locally produced commodities.



- d) In order to ensure that 50 percent of WFP resources benefits girls, by April 1997 WFP and the Government of Ethiopia will present a plan to invest in girls' education. WFP will therefore recruit a gender consultant to carry out a survey in view of a possible pilot scheme for distributing additional food as an incentive for girls to attend school. The feasibility of providing take-home rations as a means to further increase girls' schooling has to be carefully studied, as cautioned by the Women's Affairs Department. Establishing kindergartens close to assisted schools might further facilitate the enrolment of girls, releasing them from taking care of younger siblings and freeing the time of mothers for other tasks. Such kindergartens would therefore be considered for assistance.
- e) As a measure to enhance the enrolment of girls at assisted primary schools, the Government will inform school committees that participation in the project can only be considered if the schools have a plan on how to increase the share of girls in the total enrolment. The ratio for girls' enrolment in primary schools in Ethiopia, which was 18 percent in 1994, increased to 22 percent in 1995. The government policy is that girls should constitute 50 percent of primary school students by the year 2004.

COMMODITY REQUIREMENTS

14. Commodity requirements are 1,975 tons of biscuits, 481 of Famix drink and 464 of Famix mix. Daily rations are as follows:

	Biscuits	Famix drink (grams)	Famix mix
Half-day students (56 800)	133	133	30
Full-day students (23 200)	100	30	100

15. The following equipment and materials are required for project implementation: two vehicles, 40,000 mugs, 23,200 plates and spoons, 40 cooking pots with lids (100 litres) and 200 jugs. The total estimated cost of these items is 117,700 dollars.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

16. The 12-month extension in time, plus the additional commodity commitment and equipment and materials, is recommended for approval by the Executive Board.

