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Agenda item 9

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DEVELOPMENT PROJECT APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (1 JANUARY—30 JUNE 2000) SRI LANKA 6107.00

Assistance to Settlers in the Uda Walawe Project

Number of beneficiaries	8,250 (1,650 households)
Women	4,245
Men	4,005
Duration of project	Thirty months (1 May 2000 to 31 October 2002)

Cost (United States dollars)

Total food cost	627,080
Total cost to WFP	1,004,249
Total cost to Government	525,800

Note to the Executive Board



This document is submitted for information to 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 points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact the Supervisor, Meeting Servicing and Distribution Unit (tel.: 066513-2328).



1. Sri Lanka is a low-income, food-deficit country of 18 million people, with an average yearly per capita income of US\$807. The World Bank estimates that 35 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. Nearly 45 percent of Sri Lanka's cereal requirements are met through imports. The average daily dietary energy supply amounts to 2,260 Kcal. In 1998, Official Development Assistance amounted to US\$823 million, out of which about 1 percent was received as food aid. WFP's total food contribution (11,700 tons) accounted for 37 percent of the total food aid.
2. Agriculture has traditionally been centred in the dry zone which covers 75 percent of the land surface. About 80 percent of the poor live in rural areas. Geographically, poverty largely coincides with the rain-dependent dry zone, which has been subject to prolonged and recurrent drought. A major cause of poverty in the rural areas is landlessness; landless agricultural labourers are among the most vulnerable sectors of the population.
3. On the request of the Government of Sri Lanka, WFP has recently approved a project valued at US\$1 million in support of the settlement of 1,650 landless households in the framework of the left bank of the Uda Walawe Irrigation project. During the thirty-month project period, WFP will provide a total of 2,470 tons of commodities comprised of rice, pulses and sugar.
4. The objective of WFP assistance is to achieve food security for poor landless labourers by assisting them in developing and maintaining agricultural land. Food assistance will be provided during the initial settlement period (two crop cycles), thus enabling these households to fully concentrate on the development of their lands and the construction of their homesteads.
5. In accordance with decision 1999/EB.A/2 of the Executive Board, WFP focuses its development activities on five objectives. This project addresses objectives 3 and 5: it will make it possible for poor households to gain and preserve assets, and enable households which depend on degraded natural resources for their food security to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods.
6. Efforts will be made to provide women with equal access to local decision-making bodies and enable them to fully participate in them. Special training courses will be designed and conducted in this regard. Farmers' organizations with at least two women on their executive committees will be responsible for the management of the distribution canals of the irrigation system. On the completion of the WFP intervention, 1,650 households, 240 of them dependent on a female's income, will have acquired lasting assets in the form of improved land with land ownership titles which will help them to meet their food and other basic requirements. Joint land ownership titles for wife and husband are expected to be the outcome of advocacy efforts agreed between WFP and the Government within the framework of this project.
7. The project is in line with the Government's National Policy Framework, which accords priority to integrated land and water management on river basins, watersheds and micro-catchment areas. The Government of Japan has provided assistance amounting to US\$50 million for construction and infrastructure works in the Uda Walawe Project.

