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SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF THE ANNUAL SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, 2013

In accordance with the methods of work of the Executive Board, the present document reflects the main points of its deliberations to be taken into account by the Secretariat in the implementation of the Board's decisions and recommendations. In accordance with a request by the Board at EB.A/2010, the decisions and recommendations from the session are contained as Annex I of this document.

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CURRENT AND FUTURE STRATEGIC ISSUES

Opening Remarks by the Executive Director (2013/EB.A/1)

1. The Executive Director drew attention to the highlights of a productive year. The Fit for Purpose process had helped to clarify responsibilities and accountability and to optimize the staff profile. Reforms were pursued in many areas, in particular those of human resources, partnerships and business and programming processes. The P2–P5 reassignments had been completed earlier than usual to give staff more time to prepare to move, while agreed separations had enabled WFP to introduce new skills, increase the number of junior positions, improve the promotion system and enhance the gender balance. The completion of the P2–P4 promotion exercise had been postponed until the end of October 2013 to give time to design an improved process linking performance and potential to ensure that promotions were fully merit-based. Efforts continued to look at types of contracts and other issues for national staff, including long-term career development opportunities. Based on the Global Staff Survey, three staffing priorities – growth, effectiveness and performance management – were to be reflected in departmental work plans with a view to establishing a culture of communication and accountability. Efforts were being redoubled to protect the health and wellbeing of staff.
2. WFP was extending its partnerships with the other Rome-based agencies, including joint field visits by the executive heads to promote cooperation. New funding arrangements for the Committee on World Food Security were being tested to try and support a permanent and transparent solution enabling the Committee to sustain its important work with funding structures reflective of its community ownership. The African Risk Capacity – a tool developed and supported with the African Union for maximizing self-reliance disaster response – was to be delivered to a stand-alone specialized agency of the African Union and could be regarded as a model for operational partnerships at the regional level. WFP's business processes were being reviewed to improve resource management and achieve cost savings; in this context WFP was looking at the functioning of its liaison offices.
3. With regard to financial issues, WFP was aware of the need to demonstrate value for money. Traditional funding, private-sector contributions and South–South cooperation were essential to closing the gap between needs and resources; multi-year unearmarked contributions gave WFP the flexibility it needed.
4. The Executive Director outlined WFP's operations in response to the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic; in a context of shrinking humanitarian space, beneficiary numbers were expected to rise by the end of 2013 to 4 million inside the country and to 3 million in the neighbouring countries. Cash and voucher (C&V) transfers were being used extensively for refugees in the surrounding countries. Operations in Mali were being significantly scaled up; WFP presence was being reinforced in Gao and Timbuktu. A poor harvest in northern Nigeria was driving up food prices in the Niger. Border conflicts between Mali and the Niger had led to the evacuation of WFP personnel in northern Niger. Beneficiary numbers across the Sahel had reached 9 million and additional resources were needed to meet continuing needs. In the Central African Republic, food assistance for internally displaced persons (IDPs) was being scaled up in spite of instability. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) WFP and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were in discussion about opening refugee camps for refugees from the Central African Republic. In the Sudan and South Sudan, the needs of IDPs were being assessed in spite of persisting insecurity. Opportunities to enhance resilience to drought were being sought in the Horn of Africa and Somalia, with capacity development and safety nets as priorities. In Afghanistan

and Pakistan plans were being made with the humanitarian country teams to address evolving needs: improved humanitarian access was a fundamental requirement.

5. The Executive Director's aim was to create an effective, efficient and innovative organization to respond to the Zero Hunger Challenge set by the United Nations Secretary-General. She requested members to advocate through their representations in New York for a stand-alone post-2015 goal on food security and nutrition.

ANNUAL REPORTS

Annual Performance Report for 2012 (2013/EB.A/2) (for approval)

6. The Secretariat presented the Annual Performance Report (APR) for 2012, recalling that it was both an accountability document and a learning tool. The report incorporated enhancements suggested by the Board.
7. The Board welcomed the positive results reported: WFP's greater share of global food assistance; increased procurement in developing countries; greater use of innovative tools such as C&V and Purchase for Progress (P4P); higher percentages of women and children maintained in total WFP beneficiaries; reduced delivery times and other efficiencies from use of the Forward Purchase Facility (FPF) and strategic food stocks; improved compliance with minimum operating security standards; integration of gender equality into programming and performance measurement, and inclusion of men and boys in nutrition activities; resilience-building efforts in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa; strengthened partnerships and monitoring activities by partners; and retained inclusion of annual reporting of the Ethics Office in the Annex.
8. Members also noted some negative findings: fewer total beneficiaries, IDPs and schoolchildren receiving food assistance; declining trend in food for training, asset-creation and resilience-building; fewer corporate and other private contributions; increasing numbers of children requiring nutrition support; and a large gap between contributions received and the programme of work.
9. The Board recognized improvements in this high-quality APR. Members suggested it should provide a stronger sense of WFP's strategic direction and indications on how WFP would use the lessons learned from findings. They suggested reporting results in other contexts such as the Management Plan and felt that management results were overemphasized in comparison with reporting on Strategic Objectives. It was noted that performance indicators should reflect changes in quality rather than achievement of targets. More information was requested on capacity-development results and the benefits of multilateral contributions.
10. The Board encouraged the Secretariat to improve its tracking of partnerships, and continue enhancing the effectiveness of emergency response, including through roll-out of the emergency response package for country offices. Assessment of the impact and effectiveness of new tools – including comparisons with other tools – and use of learning from country offices where costs had been cut would help reassure donors about WFP's efficient use of resources. WFP was urged to work with the rest of the humanitarian community to develop ways to measure performance in resilience-building.
11. The Secretariat took note of the Board's comments and suggestions. The APR source of information was drawn from Standard Project Reports, evaluation findings and the audited financial statements, which complemented information on results. All performance measurement on humanitarian and disaster responses was in reference to the Sphere

Standards. The benefits of multilateral funding included enabled FPF and strategic stocks. Furthermore, lessons learned from the APR would be passed on to country offices and regional bureaux to guide their work, and efforts were being made to improve reporting on capacity development and of outcomes in addition to outputs.

POLICY ISSUES

WFP Strategic Plan (2014–2017) (2013/EB.A/3) (for approval)

12. The Executive Director presented the WFP Strategic Plan (2014–2017), which had been discussed at three informal consultations, thanking the Board for its support. The plan sought to prepare and respond to shocks, restore and rebuild lives and livelihoods, and reduce vulnerability and build resilience, with four Strategic Objectives. It renewed WFP's commitment to working with partners, including governments, communities and the Rome-based agencies (RBAs), and to the work of the Committee on World Food Security; mainstreamed gender equality and women's empowerment; elevated capacity development in all programming phases; improved operational services; built on core strengths; and was committed to catalysing innovative operational solutions.
13. The Strategic Results Framework (SRF) was being refined in consultation with the Board and other stakeholders. It would be aligned with the Management Results Framework and presented, as part of the performance management system, at the Second Regular Session 2013. The Management Plan also supported implementation of the Strategic Plan.
14. The Board thanked the Secretariat for incorporating suggestions made at informal consultations; for the document's emphasis on WFP's core strengths, partnerships and capacity development; and for the attention being paid to cost-saving and efficiency. It particularly welcomed the promotion and mainstreaming of gender equality, and encouraged WFP to devote more resources to gender. While lauding the sharper focus of the plan, the Board looked forward to more details, which the SRF might provide. Board members encouraged WFP to focus on emergency work, while others appreciated the Strategic Plan's recognition of middle-income countries and of the importance of development work and technical assistance.
15. The Board encouraged an integrated and multi-sectoral approach to overcoming vulnerability, recognizing the continuum of humanitarian and development work. Some emphasized the importance of a longer-term perspective and continuing to provide technical as well as food assistance. Members requested information on how WFP would adhere to humanitarian principles in particular contexts, and recalled the importance of Do-No-Harm principles. They expressed appreciation for the plan's mention of the Food Assistance Convention and data-validation strategies. They asked for clarification of how Fit for Purpose was expected to move the plan forward, and for a vision of how WFP was to meet future challenges in the areas of management, resourcing and staffing. Encouraging prompt scale-up of C&V schemes, they recalled the importance of ensuring WFP staff had the right skill sets. Members also mentioned the relevance of the post-2015 agenda, climate change, triangular cooperation lessons learned, the Hyogo Framework for Action and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation.
16. The Executive Director assured the Board that, where possible, its concerns would be taken into account in the SRF. She further committed that WFP would ensure alignment of its results frameworks with other United Nations funds and programmes as part of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review process, including on gender issues and management results. Management had lent priority to formalizing learning and knowledge

management across WFP; the Board would be updated on performance management along with other activities at the Second Regular Session, 2013. She clarified that “undernutrition” rather than “acute malnutrition” had been used in the Strategic Plan in order to fully address beneficiary needs in emergency responses. The Executive Director also clarified that while P4P continued to be a pilot activity, it was a key example of innovative work being undertaken.

17. The Assistant Executive Director, Operations Services Department, provided an overview of WFP’s evolution from its inception, through the introduction of emergency work in the mid-1990s, and to where it was positioning itself for 2014–2017. He explained how WFP’s mandate enabled it to work with food-insecure communities in a range of contexts.

WFP Private-Sector Partnerships and Fundraising Strategy (2013–2017) (2013/EB.A/4) (for approval)

18. The Secretariat presented the document, which reflected changes in the private sector’s role since the original 2008 strategy, and incorporated the additional information requested by the Board at a recent informal consultation.
19. The Board welcomed the new strategy, particularly its new due diligence process, six principles for private-sector partnership, recognition of the private sector as a source of partners for both fundraising and internal capacity development, process for assessing strategy implementation and results, closer links to the Strategic Objectives, and greater involvement of regional bureaux and country offices. Members noted that the high initial costs of private fundraising were offset by the sustainability and flexibility of private contributions.
20. Members noted that private-sector partnerships were concentrated in a few countries and were mostly corporate. The Secretariat should seek more partnerships in middle-income countries, which could lead to greater government involvement in and public awareness of WFP in those countries; in turn, greater public awareness encouraged more private-sector contributions, including from individuals. Fundraising efforts should focus on the programme areas most likely to attract private support, with partner selection based on shared values and principles and consistency with United Nations partnership and human rights principles.
21. Regional bureaux and country offices could provide Headquarters with valuable feedback. Staff with the requisite skills in identifying and establishing private-sector partnerships were required. Members recognized the benefits of full cost recovery from private partners, but feared it might discourage potential partners; the 9 percent annual increase in private contributions seemed ambitious.
22. The Secretariat added that it had identified capacity gaps that the private sector could fill and was working to increase the geographic diversity of its partnerships. The exceptional circumstances in which lower cost-recovery rates were applied included in rapid private-sector fundraising for sudden-onset emergencies. As part of the new organizational design, a research team at the Legal Office reviewed all potential partners, passing its findings to a senior-level committee for decision-making.

Update on WFP’s Role in the Humanitarian Assistance System (2013/EB.A/5) (for information)

23. The Secretariat introduced the report and briefed the Board on WFP’s participation in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Transformative Agenda (TA) and leadership in the cluster system. Efforts to advance accountability to affected populations (AAP)



mechanisms through the IASC Task Force co-led by WFP were highlighted, in particular ensuring consultation with beneficiaries throughout the programme cycle, which also improved staff safety and security. IASC Principals had endorsed the Commitments to AAP and supported work to develop an operational framework to implement them in the field. A common strategy on preparedness was being developed, spanning disaster risk-reduction to resilience. An integrated simulation exercise would be held to refine the TA Protocols, with the inter-agency rapid response mechanism deploying in Switzerland. Normative guidance built on best practices would be incorporated into internal WFP guidance for leadership. Coordination needed to enable delivery and was not an end in itself.

24. The Board welcomed WFP's leading role in the humanitarian system and suggested that such updates be submitted for consideration in future. Members supported TA implementation and requested a timeline and regular updates; one member suggested that the TA also be applied to non-Level 3 emergencies, incorporating lessons learned from ongoing emergencies. Members commended the transparency of communications to donors on organizational change and TA implementation.
25. The Board recalled that the TA was intended to facilitate collective accountability for collective results. One member suggested that WFP Country Directors be given dual lines of accountability to Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) and WFP, perhaps through performance evaluations. Senior staff should be encouraged to serve as HCs.
26. The Board commended WFP's lead roles with clusters, the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot network and the United Nations Humanitarian Air Service, requesting further analysis of recurring costs and noting the need to mainstream global clusters into agency budgets. It requested further information on the new protection policy and encouraged WFP's robust participation in protection clusters.
27. Responding to Board comments, the Secretariat noted a number of positive aspects resulting from the IASC's system-wide L3 activation for the Syrian crisis and committed to updating the Board on TA implementation. The terms for the "empowered leadership" of HCs during the first three months of a system-wide Level 3 response were recalled, noting that there was consensus within the IASC on retaining accountability of agency country representatives to their agencies; however, management was open to considering HC input to Country Director performance evaluations and had advocated for OCHA to reopen the L3 HC pool. The Secretariat agreed that sustainable funding was needed for cluster activities, which were still supported in part by extra-budgetary contributions. The AED, Partnerships and Governance Services Department, had been appointed as WFP's senior focal point for AAP and the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. Regular updates on protection would be provided to forthcoming meetings.
28. The President proposed amending the Biennial Programme of Work to submit the current agenda item for consideration rather than information at future sessions.

Update on the Nutrition Policy (2013/EB.A/6) (for information)

29. The Secretariat outlined recent developments in research and the coordination of nutrition approaches through the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) and Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Undernutrition (REACH) movements and other organizations. With the focus of nutrition programmes shifting to include adolescents, there was a need for research into the relative effects of food-based and of cash-based approaches and into the development of cheaper specialized food products. There was also a need for more trained nutritionists, particularly because more nutrition work was being carried out in partnerships.

30. The Board praised the quality of the document. Members recommended the introduction of more accurate indicators for reporting on nutrition issues, which could be done under the SRF. They urged WFP to explore cash-based nutrition interventions based on thorough studies and recommended increased attention to food safety and food quality in nutrition approaches and noted the need to scale up the production of specialized nutritional foods. The Board noted the fundamental significance of nutrition in all of WFP's food assistance, and emphasized that multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder initiatives were the best way forward. It commended WFP work in achieving political commitment and international coordination with regard to nutrition issues, particularly through its involvement in the SUN and REACH initiatives. WFP was urged to integrate nutrition programmes with social protection programmes and sectoral policies for agriculture, hygiene and education; and to base approaches on community and household needs rather than available products. Members noted that school feeding was an ideal vehicle for nutrition interventions.
31. The Secretariat was asked to provide at least annual updates on developments in nutrition, particularly in the context of the post-2015 agenda. Board members urged WFP to ensure that country and regional offices had the tools and systems to manage nutrition interventions.
32. Responding to the Board's observations, the Secretariat noted that vaccinations were a necessary but subsidiary component of nutrition interventions, and that HIV patients were supported at the earliest possible stage to maximize positive outcomes. Work was ongoing with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other partners to optimize nutrition value chains, for example with regard to local production, food quality and delivery modalities. Nutrition experts were being recruited, and staff were being trained to handle nutrition in operational settings. WFP's involvement in nutrition research would continue: its experience in the field was a valuable input.

RESOURCE, FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

Audited Annual Accounts, 2012 (2013/EB.A/7) (for approval)

33. Observing that the document complied with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), that it had received an unqualified audit opinion from the External Auditor, and that it had been scrutinized by the Audit Committee, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the FAO Finance Committee, the Secretariat outlined the principal changes in WFP's financial position and financial performance since the previous reporting period. The External Auditor highlighted the significant issues and recommendations, related mainly to inventory management, presented in the Audit Report.
34. The Board welcomed an unqualified opinion on the Financial Statements from the External Auditor, supported all the recommendations and urged their timely implementation. It noted that the decline in the level of cash and short-term investments reflected WFP's use of its resources in operations, transfer to long-term investments and purchase of capital assets. Contribution revenues and expenses, and the proportion of resources allocated to C&V modalities, had increased significantly. Board members were assured that the current deficit position was not a cause of concern, given the overall positive fund balance. The improved position of funding for staff liabilities – currently at 60 percent – was welcomed.
35. The Board was particularly pleased that the Statement on Internal Control, which included a risk management component, was now an integral part of WFP's governance system and that the five areas identified as needing improvement were continuing to be addressed.

Members also looked forward to improvements being made to the Performance and Competency Enhancement system that should lead to increased accountability for staff performance.

36. The Board suggested that the new Logistics Execution Support System (LESS) for food tracking be rolled out as soon as possible, noting that it would resolve some inventory issues. Members asked for details of the allocation of the US\$20 million from the Programme Support and Administrative (PSA) funds for organizational strengthening; the levels of risk inherent in WFP's FPF; and WFP's approaches to valued added tax (VAT) exemptions. Board members were pleased to know that WFP's system of internal controls provided levels of assurance over and above those required by IPSAS, and that the system was attracting interest from other United Nations organizations.
37. The Secretariat thanked the Board for its observations, noting that LESS constituted a major investment in data quality whose advantages would accrue over time and that funding alternatives were being explored. The FPF risk element would be addressed, and the Board kept up to date. The reconciliation of stocks held by cooperating partners would be improved under a new system of internal reviews, in line with the recommendation of the External Auditor. The Secretariat pointed out that several figures in the financial statements were not comparable year by year in that they reflected different types of operational intervention. It was noted that the employee benefit liabilities were subject to variation because of demographic and economic factors such as the discount rate used in the annual actuarial valuation. With regard to the VAT receivable, WFP normally negotiated exemptions up front; where this was not possible it sought refunds.
38. Improvement of WFP's organizational systems was proceeding under the organizational strengthening workstreams addressing issues relating to regional and country presence, country office resource management, liaison offices, business processes, partnerships, management, communications and reassignments. Of the US\$20 million from PSA, around half had been allocated to finance the workstreams, while the other half would be used to cover human resource-related costs arising from the reorganization.

Appointment of Two Executive Board Members to the Selection Panel for the Appointment/Renewal of Two Audit Committee Members (2013/EB.A/8) (for approval)

39. The President introduced the two nominations, which had been put forth at recent Bureau meetings. The appointments were approved without discussion.

Review of Financial Regulation 9.2 – Timing of the Management Plan (2013/EB.A/9) (for approval)

40. This Secretariat introduced this document and noted that the FAO Finance Committee had suggested a slight change to the decision: key extracts of the draft management plan – rather than the full plan – would be presented to the Board ten days before the last informal consultation on this matter. The full Management Plan would be presented 30 instead of 60 days before the last regular Board session of the calendar year.
41. The Board approved the new wording of Financial Regulation 9.2, on condition that no waivers to the 30-day minimum for presentation of the full Management Plan were requested.
42. The Board adopted the revised decision.

Annual Report of the Audit Committee (2013/EB.A/10) (for consideration)

43. The Chairperson of the AC introduced the report and highlighted the main activities of the Committee.
44. The Board commended the quality of the report and praised the AC as an important tool for enhancing oversight, accountability and governance. Members noted the recommendations and encouraged follow-up on succession planning, the development of a reservoir of skills among staff for rotation, and food-price risk management. They urged appraisal of the impact of separation package expenditure; and urged the AC to expand its activities to addressing whether WFP was achieving its mandate.
45. Regarding proposed AC site visits, some members expressed reservations in the light of financial constraints and the AC's terms of reference; the Board had been awaiting a formal proposal on the issue. The Board had also looked forward to a proposal for how WFP's oversight bodies could contribute to a central repository of opportunities for institutional improvement; there was a need to clearly delineate the respective responsibilities of those bodies so as to avoid duplication. The Board suggested that the AC hold discussions with the Secretariat regarding the possibility of developing metrics for measuring fitness-for-purpose. It urged corrective action regarding adjudication of investigation findings to improve transparency and timeliness.
46. The AC Chairperson thanked the Board for its comments and questions. The next report of the AC would further advise on whether WFP was complying with its mandate. He explained that the December 2012 AC meeting had been held in Dubai in conjunction with the WFP Global Management Meeting. He proposed that site visits be carried out by having individual AC members visit locations in their own regions.
47. The Secretariat informed the Board that it hoped metrics on the Fit for Purpose initiative could be developed for inclusion in the 2014 APR. Informal consultations on the performance evaluation system would be held prior to the Second Regular Session. Agreeing that it could be valuable to put oversight body recommendations together, the Resource Management and Accountability Department was put forward as a good focal point. The Secretariat explained that recent reassignment exercises had made the importance of succession planning clear; the new Human Resources Director would both assess internal talent for development in anticipation of senior staff turnover and map out relevant talent pools external to WFP. Concerns brought out by the Global Staff Survey regarding systematic skills development and career development would also be addressed strategically.
48. The President noted that AC site visits had been discussed in the Bureau and would not put a burden on the budget. The Secretariat explained that there was some flexibility within the 2013 budget for AC meetings, including a limited number of site visits. The AC was very conscious of its cost to WFP and visits would be managed well within budget.

Annual Report of the WFP Inspector General and Note by the Executive Director on the Annual Report of the WFP Inspector General (2013/EB.A/11) (for consideration)

49. The new Inspector General introduced the 2012 report. The Secretariat introduced the note by the Executive Director setting out her response.
50. The Board noted with satisfaction the assurance opinion. It appreciated the proactive management response, including the seven actions already underway to address high-risk internal audit recommendations. It noted with concern the reported perception that WFP did not apply zero tolerance consistently or rigorously. Members encouraged management to



pay more attention to reputational risk; accelerate management decision-making processes; implement deadlines for internal justice; and establish corporate standard operating procedures for high-risk operations. They recommended more investment in staff development to ensure better matching of experienced staff to posts, and other support for food safety and quality.

51. The Inspector General agreed that the number of outstanding high- and medium-risk recommendations was high. He commended the management response in recent months and urged swift action over the coming year. He would launch a quality review of the investigations function to enhance preventative measures. He would also look into the prospects and time scale for moving from limited to positive assurance and share his perspective with the AC in 2013.
52. The Secretariat noted a positive trend: 263 recommendations implemented in 2012, up from 151 in 2011. Outstanding recommendations would inform 2014 management planning, which would also consider whether funding constraints had impacted implementation. Financial rules already included the charter of the Office of the Inspector General as an appendage.
53. While the Executive Director had not responded specifically to the issue of standard corporate operating procedures for complex operational environments, such risks were a concern across WFP and incorporated into the Inspector General and Oversight Office 2013 work plan. The current work plan did include review of complex environments, such as in the Syrian Arab Republic and DRC. In addition, the Secretariat was incorporating lessons learned through prior audit, evaluation and review exercises; for example, procedures put in place in the Syrian response had been guided by experiences in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel.
54. The Executive Director was committed to a review of internal justice and would shortly discuss it with the AC. There was no question of the Secretariat's commitment to zero tolerance of fraud and corruption but there could be a need to look into how other types of misconduct were handled. On staff development, the Secretariat was taking steps to map succession planning among senior staff and to build the internal and external pools of talent, in addition to addressing skill and career development.

Report of the External Auditor on Working with Cooperating Partners and WFP Management Response (2013/EB.A/12) (*for consideration*)

55. The External Auditor presented the report, outlining the key areas of weakness of WFP's work with the non-governmental organizations (NGO) and government partners at Headquarters and in selected field offices. Accepting the report's ten recommendations, the Secretariat noted that the ongoing business process review and partnership strategy would underlie their implementation. It emphasized that partnerships were varied, complex and generally strong; the report had focussed on weaknesses in processes for managing those partnerships.
56. The Board welcomed the document and commended the detailed research on which it was based. It appreciated the concrete recommendations and welcomed their acceptance by management, especially in view of the increased focus on partnership in the new Strategic Plan. Noting the extent of WFP's engagement with partners, the Board urged strengthening of internal controls to improve compliance with procedures for managing partnerships. Board members requested clarification on the regional bureaux's increased oversight role under the Fit for Purpose organizational design, including with regard to the central unit to manage information and operational procedures relating to cooperating

partners. They urged the Secretariat to develop tools to improve monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of cooperating partner activities and suggested that the report could have examined partnerships with other United Nations agencies.

57. Noting that field-level agreements (FLAs) were not always up to date, the Board recommended that WFP expedite implementation of stronger mechanisms for FLA review and management. A question was raised as to the feasibility of implementing the recommendations in the time envisaged, but overall the Board welcomed the proposed approach.
58. The External Auditor thanked the Board for its positive comments. While acknowledging the significant role being played by United Nations agencies, she pointed out that the scope of the audit covered WFP's partnerships with NGOs and governments given that they shared similar food distribution and operational roles on the ground; in future reporting on partnerships, audit could also examine those with United Nations agencies. The Secretariat observed that information and guidance related to cooperating partners was to be centralized in Headquarters; management of partner relationships was delegated to Country Directors with oversight by the regional bureaux, supported by Headquarters as needed. Regional bureaux oversight would be enhanced with new tools and standard operating procedures that were to be available by June 2014. Updated templates for FLAs had been issued and guidance for Country Directors was to be issued shortly; guidance was to be revisited when the business process review and partnership strategy were finalized. Reiterating its commitment to following up the reports' recommendations, the Secretariat committed to holding a follow-up discussion with the External Auditor by October 2013. The Secretariat was to fully update the Board at its 2014 Annual Session.

Report of the External Auditor on the Use of Cash and Vouchers and WFP Management Response (2013/EB.A/13) (*for consideration*)

59. The External Auditor presented the key findings of the performance audit related to gaps in selection of appropriate transfer modalities; engagement of cooperating partners and financial service providers for C&V; delivery of assistance; capacity-building; oversight by regional bureaux and Headquarters; and impact evaluation. All 11 recommendations were accepted by management. The Secretariat provided additional information on progress made by the Cash-for-Change initiative and efforts to increase WFP knowledge of C&V use and to ensure proper design, implementation and monitoring of operations.
60. The Board recognized the good timing of the audit for guiding the scale-up of C&V use and commended the quality of the report. It supported all the External Auditor recommendations and welcomed management's acceptance of them. Members commented on the pressing need to develop corporate tools for C&V interventions, measure their cost-effectiveness and select the best partners for their implementation. They emphasized the importance of gender considerations, post-distribution monitoring, rolling out of the corporate information technology system, risk mitigation measures and periodic impact evaluations, as highlighted in the report.
61. WFP's lack of internal capacity and funding for C&V development were particular concerns; the target of providing 40 percent of WFP assistance through C&V seemed overambitious, as noted by the FAO Finance Committee. Members suggested analysing capacity gaps at all levels and in particular at the regional bureau and country office levels; learning from NGOs with C&V expertise; expanding partnerships with financial service providers including contingency planning and putting the systems in place before scaling up. Decision-making on C&V needed to be based on feasibility studies and market analysis, to avoid negative effects on local markets and vulnerable people. The Board noted the C&V

evaluation planned in 2014, and suggested it should analyse the effects of C&V on local food markets in comparison with food distributions.

62. The External Auditor thanked the Board for its positive comments and took note of its suggestions for future audits. The Secretariat explained that regional bureaux and country offices would be involved in implementing the recommendations. Many of the tools examined were still being developed or finalized at the time of the audit; expertise in the use of C&V in emergency response was difficult to find. Evaluations had begun to include assessment of whether the right transfer modality had been selected. According to gender and protection studies by WFP and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR, C&V interventions did not have significant negative or positive impacts on gender issues, but they were taken into account when selecting transfer modalities. Updates on implementation of the recommendations would be presented in the annual report on implementation of all External Auditor recommendations.
63. The Executive Director noted that WFP aimed to develop a sustainable C&V system that could adapt to changes and developments and make it a leader in this area.

Report on the Implementation of the External Auditor Recommendations (2013/EB.A/14) (for consideration)

64. The Secretariat presented this annual document, which since 2012 had been supported by a mid-year review in September.
65. The Board welcomed this valuable oversight tool and appreciated the progress reported. Members asked the Secretariat to consider prioritizing recommendations for implementation and establishing a central platform for all internal and external recommendations.
66. The Secretariat noted that the timeframe for implementing recommendations was a form of prioritization. While noting the overall progress, the External Auditor drew attention of the Board to the need to focus on the implementation of recommendations of the 2011 performance audit on management of projects. She pointed out that the feasibility and value of all recommendations was discussed with management and that their prioritization could be considered for inclusion in future reports.

EVALUATION REPORTS

Annual Evaluation Report 2012 and Management Response (2013/EB.A/15) (for consideration)

67. The President reminded the Board that evaluations had been discussed at the Annual Consultation on Evaluation in May. The Director of the Office of Evaluation (OEV) presented the report, noting that it highlighted partnership findings. WFP was highly valued by partners for its country presence, scale, staff and results-oriented culture. However, partnership principles needed to be mainstreamed and a more strategic partnership perspective was required, supported by financial and reporting systems to meet partners' transparency needs. The recommendations focused on partnerships, country strategies, monitoring and application of analytical tools for programme effectiveness. The Secretariat presented the management response.
68. The Board welcomed the report, its focus on partnerships and its increased clarity on using the lessons learned from evaluations. Members encouraged OEV to: continue disseminating its findings to guide strategy and policy design; increase its attention to partnerships in country portfolio evaluations (CPEs); and continue coordinating its work with that of other

United Nations agency evaluation offices. Emphasizing the importance of gender reporting, the Board recommended inclusion of the gender marker in all projects. M&E was a continuing concern; the new strategy would improve it, but there was much to be done to make the planned decentralized evaluations a reality. WFP's improved tools would be especially valuable in high-risk and fragile situations. Country strategies enhanced WFP's alignment with governments and other partners, creating synergies in the field; their design should involve more consultations with national partners.

69. The Board looked forward to the results of deepened partnerships and WFP's participation in inter-agency discussions of cooperation such as the planned joint strategy with UNHCR on enhancing self-reliance in protracted refugee situations. It also looked forward to the findings of the ongoing peer review of WFP's evaluation function.
70. In response, the Director noted that OEV was increasing its attention to partnerships in CPEs. She reported that 21 percent of the consultants used for evaluations were from developing countries, excluding researchers subcontracted locally; future evaluations would continue to track the issue closely. She would inform the Board on future collaboration among United Nations evaluation offices.
71. The Secretariat confirmed that it would follow up on formulating a joint WFP-UNHCR corporate strategy. Training was an integral part of the overall M&E strategy and plan, particularly at field level. Decentralized evaluations were in the early stages of development and would be discussed with Regional Directors in the coming days. The Secretariat recognized the need to ensure adequate capacity at the regional and country levels, along with the value of consultations with national stakeholders during formulation of country strategies.

WEST AFRICA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

72. The Regional Director noted that the region was affected by large-scale vulnerability, widespread poverty and serious structural challenges. In the Sahel alone, 9 million people were chronically malnourished, 20 percent of children under 5 died of undernourishment, and serious insecurity was displacing people and limiting trade. The long-term need was for resilience-building, which needed government support and the integration of relief, recovery and development interventions focused on communities and women in particular. In the region overall the most successful assistance modality was school feeding using local produce, benefiting education and local economies. In the Central African Republic, where markets barely functioned and where crop planting was limited and schools were closed, WFP and FAO were carrying out food needs assessments with a view to scaling up assistance. In Mali, WFP had used its forward purchase and advance finance systems effectively to reach 100 percent of beneficiaries.

Summary Evaluation Report—The Niger Country Portfolio (2007–2011) and Management Response (2013/EB.A/16) (*for consideration*)

73. The Director of OEV presented the report. The overall assessment was positive, despite the highly challenging country context during the portfolio evaluation period. The Secretariat noted that the country office was already implementing some of the recommendations.
74. The Board welcomed the evaluation as a sound basis for discussion of WFP's future involvement in the Niger. It commended WFP's responsiveness to changing national circumstances; alignment with the priorities and policies of the Government and other

partners; targeting of vulnerable areas with different combinations of responses; and longer-term partnerships with FAO and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) on food- and cash-for-work (FFW and CFW) activities, noting that field-level collaboration was particularly valuable.

75. Members encouraged the Secretariat to increase policy dialogue with the Government and strengthen the country office's capacity to engage with the Government; include NGOs in enhanced efforts to develop national capacity to manage crisis response and food safety nets; and collaborate with bilateral programmes to avoid duplication of efforts. WFP should exploit the opportunities offered by the Preparedness and Response Enhancement Programme and the country office's new Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit, scale up cash transfers, roll out the corporate beneficiary management system currently being piloted, and develop a knowledge bank on blanket feeding and its targeting.
76. The Director of OEV noted that future evaluations would provide more information on the effectiveness of CFW compared with FFW. This evaluation was a portfolio evaluation and thus had not addressed the issue; in addition, there was limited data available on the use of cash.
77. The Secretariat acknowledged the importance of ensuring clarity concerning what WFP would be able to undertake. The previous Country Director in Niger added that WFP inter-agency collaboration included community-level targeting for IFAD's country presence, and local procurement for school feeding, with FAO supporting local farmers on seed quality and storage. The regional bureau had provided training on seasonal livelihood programming for asset creation. Voucher distributions in refugee camps had started recently and appeared to be working. The household economy approach was used for the targeting of cash and food; WFP was working with the Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) on improved targeting for food security and blanket feeding interventions.

Development Projects—Côte d'Ivoire 200465 (2013/EB.A/17) *(for consideration)*

78. The Country Director presented the Côte d'Ivoire development project in support of school feeding, which aimed to increase enrolment and improve gender balance. The project had an ambitious scope requiring extensive resources, but the context in the country had improved to the point where such a project was appropriate.
79. The Board appreciated the project's emphasis on enhancing local structures and community involvement, and its alignment with the national school feeding programme. WFP's support to school feeding had been flexible over the years, adapting to the emergency and post-crisis contexts. Members welcomed the national education strategy, with which the project was aligned, and urged WFP to follow-up on government partnership.
80. Replying to specific questions, the Country Director reported that the use of cash transfers to encourage families to keep girls in school was a pilot intervention for 10,000 girls in the first year, the only such WFP intervention in the region. Lack of infrastructure was unlikely to impede project implementation, because the Government had already restored most school infrastructure as one of its priorities. Indicators for monitoring the project's contribution to national school feeding objectives would be included in the logical framework. The country's President prioritized investments in human capital, and WFP was working with the Minister of Education and Professional Training to increase cooperation with the private sector.

81. In response to the suggestion of a Board member, the Secretariat agreed to investigate the feasibility of holding a round table on a recent WFP report on global school feeding, possibly involving other agencies.
82. The Minister of Education and Professional Training of Côte d'Ivoire thanked the Board for approving the project and emphasized the contribution of school feeding in children's return to and retention in school after the crisis.

EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

83. The Regional Director noted positive trends in food security following good harvests, but drew attention to the 4.9 million people still in crisis and emergency conditions, especially in parts of Ethiopia, Somalia and South Sudan. The main risk in the region was resource shortfalls: US\$2 billion was needed, but to date there was a 47 percent shortfall, which particularly affected refugee operations in Kenya and asset-creation efforts in South Sudan, and could undermine recent nutritional gains in Somalia. Food had been pre-positioned in South Sudan as planned, but recent insecurity, particularly in Jonglei State, limited humanitarian access and put beneficiaries and stocks at risk. The Regional Director alerted the Board that moving the Somalia country office from Nairobi to Mogadishu was underway and would have ramifications for Kenyan nationals. WFP was involved in several successful partnerships in the region and was looking into ways of enhancing the impact of its operations, for example by increasing biometric identification for targeting and using electronic voucher systems; and through coordinated resilience-building efforts with FAO and UNICEF.

Country Programmes – Rwanda Draft Common Country Programme (2013–2018) (2013/EB.A/18) *(for approval)*

84. The Country Director outlined the document, which was common to UNICEF, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and WFP, with a WFP Results Framework being submitted to the Board for approval. WFP would work in the most food-insecure areas and provide capacity development and technical support for the Government's programmes until hand-over was feasible.
85. The Board approved the alignment of the common country programme with the One UN initiative and the United Nations Development Action Framework (UNDAF), and with the Government's economic and development targets. Some members felt that the targets were ambitious, particularly because donor support was declining, with success depending largely on the establishment of peace and stability across the country. The multi-sector programme approach to addressing chronic malnutrition was seen as suitable. Board members also approved the local purchase plans and the focus on smallholder farmers. Some members urged WFP to ensure that its assessments were reconciled with those of the Government and that adequate risk analysis was carried out.
86. Board members recommended that WFP ensure that an effective hand-over plan was in place. In general the Board commended the programme, particularly in that it involved communities in work to ensure that the activities were sustainable.
87. The Country Director noted that stability was indeed a prerequisite for success, confirmed that local procurement was part of the country programme and described training conducted through triangular cooperation with Brazil. An oversight committee was tasked to ensure coordination of activities; refugees were primarily the responsibility of UNHCR, but WFP

also provided support. WFP and other stakeholders were carrying out nutrition studies to supplement the Government's household surveys and ensure accurate beneficiary counts; the SUN and REACH frameworks also helped coordinate the nutrition activities. The Regional Director emphasized how the common country programme demonstrated WFP alignment with other United Nations agencies and the Government.

SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

88. The Regional Director focused on harvest prospects and WFP's contribution to addressing HIV and AIDS. The harvest outlook was generally positive in spite of drought in Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa. In Zimbabwe, food insecurity was expected to increase after floods followed by dry spells had severely reduced crop production. As a member of the Regional Inter-Agency Standing Committee (RIASCO), WFP was assessing the food security situation in the region and was starting to develop a long-term resilience-building strategy and advocating for the use of WFP's forward purchasing approach in order to make the most of the anticipated good harvests and to support regional markets. With regard to HIV and AIDS, the Regional Director noted that the epidemic was exacerbated by concurrent malnutrition and tuberculosis. WFP's approach was based on capacity development for governments to enable them to establish programmes to address AIDS and HIV prevalence. In 2012, WFP had supported 800,000 beneficiaries in the region, using C&V assistance modalities to assist 10 percent of the beneficiaries. A new five-year HIV and AIDS strategy for the region was being developed.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations—Democratic Republic of the Congo 200540 (2013/EB.A/19) (for approval)

89. The Country Director presented this protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO), noting the recent developments in re-establishing peace in DRC.
90. The Board commended WFP's leadership role in DRC, congratulating staff and partners on their perseverance in insecure conditions. It encouraged the continued scale-up of C&V distributions where conditions were appropriate. Concerns were expressed regarding risks to beneficiaries and cooperating partners from use of C&V and the limited ability to reach beneficiaries and ensure monitoring in several parts of DRC.
91. Members recommended that monitoring activities include beneficiary feedback and that beneficiaries be involved in the selection of assets for cash-for-assets and food-for-assets activities. WFP should seek new partnerships with stakeholders and other agencies, and carry out joint contingency planning to ensure beneficiaries' protection. Some members requested more information on lessons learned, particularly regarding security and partners; the transfer modalities used and their different impacts on protection issues; and WFP's plans for increasing the resilience of severely food-insecure communities.
92. The Country Director reported that C&V had increased to 15 percent of WFP distributions. Application of the Do-No-Harm principles included common assessments with partners to ensure their application and to select the safest intervention mode, minimizing the risk of beneficiaries before and after distributions. Regarding questions about the impact of the intervention brigade and how WFP would work with others to minimize humanitarian risks, the Country Director mentioned that WFP was working with the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to understand its plans and adjust accordingly. WFP had deployed a civil-military coordinator to Goma, but it was difficult to predict the impact of the brigade. WFP, UNHCR and UNICEF were seeking innovative ways of reaching refugees and IDPs outside camps, including via

helicopter and through NGOs. Resilience-building included P4P activities with small farmers where security conditions allowed. DRC operations faced frequent pipeline breaks, a risk mitigated by increased local procurement.

ASIA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

93. The Regional Director noted that increased insecurity in Afghanistan had meant WFP had had to reduce the scope of its work and to prioritize its interventions: in 2013 it would target 2.4 million people compared with 7 million in 2012. Nutrition and emergency preparedness would be the focus of WFP's interventions. Complex challenges continued in Pakistan: emergency relief interventions for IDPs were needed in the north-east; in the south, 2.2 million people required nutritional support following floods. Government wheat donations were warmly acknowledged. In Myanmar, the Government had worked with WFP to address risks, and to meet the needs of 125,000 IDPs in Rakhine State; in general IDP camps were under-serviced. In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), negotiations with the Government had led to a robust new memorandum of understanding that addressed WFP's requirements for access and monitoring, but the current food pipeline was close to breaking point and several factories producing nutritional foods had had to close for lack of raw materials. Available funding would cover operations only until August, which was the middle of the hunger season. In view of this situation, and of WFP's 20 years of nutrition interventions for mothers and children, the Regional Director urged donors to understand the importance of WFP's continued in-country presence.

Summary Evaluation Report—Timor-Leste Country Portfolio (2008–2012) and Management Response (2013/EB.A/20) (*for consideration*)

94. Presenting the evaluation, the Director of OEV noted that the activities of this small country portfolio were to be handed over to the Government and WFP was to exit by December. Thus the evaluation gave special attention to capacity development and transition, and drew lessons that may have wider relevance for WFP. The work of the country office had been effective, particularly in partnerships, and had contributed to state-building. The quality and reach of monitoring and addressing of gender issues had been limited, in part owing to chronic underfunding. In accepting the recommendations, the Secretariat acknowledged that a multi-sectoral approach to malnutrition would have been desirable, but WFP had been the only major organization working at scale.
95. The Board noted that overall the evaluation was thorough and highlighted a number of successes that could be applied elsewhere. It appreciated the portfolio's alignment with government policies, and was encouraged that the Government was to take over school feeding even though funding was a problem. Noting the resourcing problems that had affected the portfolio, Board members suggested that WFP re-examine its funding model and the roles and budgeting of small country offices; it should also evaluate the cost of continuing operations as requested by the Government. The local food procurement element of the programme would help to ensure sustainability, but national capabilities had to be developed to continue the work. Board members urged WFP to ensure that it reported fully on the extent to which capacity development targets were met. Several members recommended that WFP ensure that its hand-over plans were practicable and that gender issues were taken into account.
96. The Secretariat assured the Board that reporting would address capacity development more fully. The hand-over strategy would be developed in accordance with the country strategy, in full consultation with the Government and other partners. The Regional Director

was to provide a regional update on gender issues at the Second Regular Session, 2013. It was estimated that US\$4.3 million would be needed to continue WFP's work for another 12 months beyond December in support of Government's efforts and its goodwill contribution.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations—Democratic People's Republic of Korea 200532 (2013/EB.A/21) (for approval)

97. The Country Director presented this PRRO. Despite increased food imports and production in DPRK, 3.5 million people remained vulnerable to food insecurity. A Letter of Understanding between the Government and WFP guaranteed immediate access to the field for monitoring, access to markets, international Korean-speaking staff, and permission to travel over weekends; similar operating conditions to those of the previous PRRO and EMOP.
98. The Board commended WFP's work in DPRK and its collaboration with the Government. The PRRO built on previous programmes; was well targeted and feasible; supported government efforts to increase food security and development; and contributed to national disaster preparedness and response capacity. Members emphasized the PRRO's humanitarian focus on vulnerable women and children, and welcomed WFP's cooperation with UNICEF and FAO. Members were concerned about the current lack of funding, and urged the country office to ensure adequate monitoring and transparency.
99. Thanking the Board for its support, the Regional Director clarified that the PRRO sought to improve nutrition status using locally produced products, rather than filling gaps in the Government's public distribution system. WFP had strengthened its collaboration with UNICEF, which was vital to the PRRO, including for annual impact monitoring. WFP provided food to the families of pregnant and lactating women and through orphanages, paediatric hospitals, schools etc. The Government covered the costs of fortified food production, with WFP providing capacity development, in preparation for eventual hand-over. Far more socio-economic development was necessary before WFP could plan its exit from DPRK.

MIDDLE EAST, NORTH AFRICA, EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

100. The Regional Director noted the large-scale instability and displacements caused by conflicts and drew attention to high unemployment, social unrest and rising food prices in a region that was largely dependent on imported food. However, most countries in the region were middle-income with functioning markets which offered WFP an opportunity to deploy a range of tools and transfer modalities. WFP was working to scale up humanitarian responses and support stabilization and recovery in conflict areas, with a focus on the large numbers of Syrian refugees. WFP was cooperating with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and 19 NGOs, but was facing a 51 percent funding shortfall. WFP's humanitarian work in Yemen was helping to achieve peace and stability: almost 5 million beneficiaries had received food assistance, but a 39 percent funding gap would have to be filled. In the Sudan, where WFP was supporting 3.6 million vulnerable people, there was concern over increasing conflict in Darfur and Kordofan that was restricting humanitarian access. In Palestine, WFP was leading a transition programme from emergency response to relief and resilience and improving disaster risk approaches. Across the region, WFP was enhancing national food security and nutrition-related safety nets, policies and services while building resilience.

WFP was seeking to ensure the sustainability of its interventions through integration into UNDAFs, in coordination with United Nations agencies, governments and other partners.

Summary Evaluation Report—The Kyrgyz Republic Country Portfolio (2008–2012) and Management Response (2013/EB.A/22) (for consideration)

101. The Director of OEV summarized the main findings and conclusions of the evaluation, noting that operations had been appropriate and efficiently delivered, particularly direct food assistance. Partnerships with the Government and NGOs had been fundamental to the successes achieved. The country portfolio positioning had improved as it moved away from the original emergency focus. WFP's food assistance should be better integrated into national social protection and structural safety-net reforms. Accepting all the evaluation recommendations, the Secretariat observed the document had noted the need to re-examine the roles and funding of small country offices.
102. The Board expressed its approval of the efficiency, timeliness, appropriateness and continuity of WFP's interventions in spite of funding constraints. Partnerships had been effective and beneficiary satisfaction high, and the logistics and oversight functions had worked well. It was generally accepted that the programme had provided good returns on investment and that the lessons learned could be usefully applied in other contexts. Board members praised the way in which WFP's operations had supported development objectives and contributed to national stability, noting that small country offices needed to maximize partnerships. The Board approved the positive gender outcomes achieved.
103. Board members recommended that WFP look into ways of optimizing its funding and support for small country offices with a view to enabling them to operate to their fullest potential, and in particular to engage in policy and development dialogue with governments. The Secretariat assured the Board that the question of funding and support for small country offices was being addressed in the Fit for Purpose exercise; the WFP funding model was being re-examined, especially with regard to capacity development activities and predictable, long-term funding. Multi-year funding would give WFP greater flexibility in re-aligning its country office system, especially with regard to the sustainability of small country offices. The Secretariat thanked the Board and donors for their support.

Country Programmes—Egypt Country Programme 200238 (2013–2017) (2013/EB.A/23) (for approval)

104. The Country Director introduced the country programme (CP), which reflected the complex political transition and deteriorating economic situation with a focus on vulnerable regions in partnership with national institutions.
105. The Board welcomed the CP and acknowledged the need to take the political transition and government priorities into account. It praised the technical assistance for addressing food insecurity and the broad consultations and partnerships, but encouraged more analysis to ensure adherence to Do-No-Harm principles and to reach the most vulnerable, including those without ration cards. Members urged WFP to provide further details on its objectives; more precise indicators in the logical framework; a clearer idea of how the CP aligned with the Strategic Plan(s); and what the hand-over strategy was for all components. Monitoring should continue to ensure that targeted communities were reached and to avoid security risks. It was suggested that given the number of people in need the CP be scaled up, and that assistance to Syrian refugees in Egypt be aligned with the CP.
106. In response to Board comments, the Country Director explained the links between the CP and the previous and newly adopted Strategic Objectives; more precise indicators would be

developed in relation to the new SRF. Board advocacy for a more ambitious CP encouraged expanded future interventions. Hand-over was incorporated into activities through capacity development and technical assistance; the feasibility of expanded social security nets would have to be assessed. WFP participated in dialogue on targeting and other challenges with partners in the context of the Cairo-based Development Partners Group. WFP would continue to monitor security closely to prevent risks to staff, partners or beneficiaries.

107. The Regional Director underscored that the CP leveraged a mix of in-kind, cash and voucher modalities; incorporated funding for climate change adaptation; used an innovative funding model; and showed WFP was a good partner in middle-income countries.

Development Projects—Yemen 200432 (2013/EB.A/24) (*for approval*)

108. The Country Director introduced the development project, noting that the situation in Yemen was fragile: 45 percent of the population were food-insecure. The project would address the needs to increase girls' school attendance, along with nutrition and health needs in partnership with UNICEF and the World Health Organization.
109. The Board strongly approved of the food assistance approach to increasing girls' schooling. The Board observed that major international support was needed to enable the project to address gender disparities and contribute to stability and democracy in Yemen. Some members felt that the proposed project was inadequate in view of the seriousness of the situation with regard to girls' education and raised concern on the proposed decreased beneficiary numbers. Board members suggested redesigning of the project after one year of operation to increase its coverage. Donors highly appreciated the country office's efforts to give them high visibility, which they felt would help them to be transparently accountable to taxpayers.
110. The Country Director thanked the Board for its observations and strong support for the project. There was much more to be done in support of girls' education; the country office would to increase coverage if more resources were made available. He stressed that every effort would be made to raise the resources needed from private and international sources: the outlook was encouraging and he appealed for support from the membership. He assured the Board that insecurity had not so far hampered humanitarian access in Yemen, and thanked donors for their generous contributions.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL BUREAU PRESENTATION

111. The Deputy Regional Director noted that in Haiti 1.5 million people still had difficulty in accessing adequate food. National and international post-disaster response had allowed providing food assistance to 40 percent of the severely food-insecure people, but 800,000 people still had not received any assistance. A funding shortfall of US\$1.5 million was limiting WFP's preparedness actions in advance of an expected severe hurricane season. WFP had mainstreamed capacity development into all areas of its work in middle-income countries in the region. In Central America, WFP was involved in six national emergency simulations with a view to improving logistics arrangements and government disaster management capacities. WFP was working with FAO and the Central American Agricultural Council to develop an Action Plan to recover productive capacity of coffee, in view of the coffee rust crisis. Revenues from coffee harvesting were a significant source of income for poor households and the negative impact of the crisis on labour demand was likely to reduce household food access. WFP welcomed the advances in the peace process in Colombia and congratulated the Government for the agreement reached on agrarian development, offering its support in the on-going efforts for peace and rehabilitation.

OTHER BUSINESS

Report on the Joint Field Visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-WOMEN and WFP to Bangkok, Thailand and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (2013/EB.A/25) *(for information)*

112. The Ambassador of Brazil, who had led the delegation consisting of 23 members representing 21 member states of the Executive Boards of the six United Nations funds and programmes, introduced the report and expressed his appreciation to the United Nations country team (UNCT) in Yangon, the United Nations Development Group in Bangkok, the Resident Coordinator in Myanmar and the people and Government of Myanmar for having made the joint visit successful. The Board praised the Secretariat for the comprehensive programme and excellent coordination, which had been appreciated by all delegations, and commended the WFP staff, who often worked under extremely difficult conditions.

113. The Board noted the report's recommendations and underscored its particular concerns at the conditions observed in some remote IDP camps in Rakhine State, advocating for the Government to relocate camps and take timely action to avoid a protracted IDP crisis. More broadly, there was an urgent need to close funding gaps for conducting the 2014 census, realign UNCT efforts so as to foster national ownership in setting the development agenda, and scale up assistance to achieve national poverty-reduction goals.

Address by the Staff Representative Bodies to the Board

114. The President introduced the second annual addresses to the Board by representatives of the Union of General Service Staff (UGSS) and the WFP Professional Staff Association.

115. The UGSS expressed its appreciate thanks for the opportunity to address the Board and for the open-door policy fostered by the current Executive Director. UGSS looked forward to the outcome of the National Staff Project and the Business Process Review. The General Service (GS) perspective was crucial, especially with regard to field contracts and



special service agreements; team consultations on organizational realignment had allowed GS voices to be heard. UGSS had contributed to the design of the recent Global Staff Survey and welcomed the management commitment to run such surveys every year and to make changes in response to them. Clearer recruitment and career development processes and greater fairness, transparency and management accountability would enhance productivity, effectiveness and efficiency.

116. UGSS expressed concern that the freeze on GS recruitment at Headquarters was jeopardizing the knowledge of work processes and transmission of institutional memory, leading to losses and inefficiencies for WFP: temporary workers should not be used to replace core staff functions. The UGSS appreciated the Board's interest in improving staff-management relations.
117. The Professional Staff Association also welcomed the opportunity to address the Board. It acknowledged the flexibility and support shown by management in the joint Professional Staff Association-Human Resources Division working group on the implementation of system-wide rest and recuperation for hardship duty stations, along with the much-improved communication with the Executive Director's Office.
118. As per recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit reassignment, rotation and mobility processes needed to be reviewed and fairness, transparency and communication with staff improved. The Association looked forward to working with the Human Resources Division to make promotion and reassignment more strategic and transparent by ensuring staff members' work was duly recognized, presented and recorded in the context of reassignment, promotion and conversion of contracts from fixed-term to indefinite.
119. The Association expressed great concern regarding compensation changes under consideration by the General Assembly and International Civil Service Commission. Changes to rest and recuperation policy and Special Operations Living Allowance had already negatively affected conditions for WFP staff in hardship duty stations and for their distant families. The Association looked forward to working with management to speak with a strong voice on these critical common system issues.

ANNEX I

DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**Adoption of the Agenda**

The Board adopted the Agenda.

3 June 2013

Appointment of the Rapporteur

In accordance with Rule XII of its Rules of Procedure, the Board appointed Ms Andrée-Caroline Mebandé Bate (Cameroon, List A) Rapporteur of the Annual Session of 2013.

3 June 2013

The decisions and recommendations in the current report will be implemented by the Secretariat in the light of the Board's deliberations, from which the main comments will be reflected in the summary of the work of the session.

CURRENT AND FUTURE STRATEGIC ISSUES**2013/EB.A/1 Opening Remarks by the Executive Director**

The Board took note of the presentation by the Executive Director. The main points of the presentation and the Board's comments would be contained in the summary of the work of the session.

3 June 2013

ANNUAL REPORTS**2013/EB.A/2 Annual Performance Report for 2012**

The Board approved the Annual Performance Report for 2012 (WFP/EB.A/2013/4/Rev.1), noting that it provides a comprehensive record of WFP's performance for the year.

3 June 2013

POLICY ISSUES**2013/EB.A/3 WFP Strategic Plan (2014–2017)**

The Board approved the WFP Strategic Plan (2014–2017) (WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/1), in accordance with General Rule VI.1. It looked forward to the submission of the Strategic Results Framework at its Second Regular Session in November 2013.

The Board also took note of the comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/2, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/2) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Finance Committee (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/3, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/3).

3 June 2013

2013/EB.A/4 WFP Private-Sector Partnerships and Fundraising Strategy (2013–2017)

The Board approved “WFP Private-Sector Partnerships and Fundraising Strategy (2013–2017)” (WFP/EB.A/2013/5-B).

4 June 2013

2013/EB.A/5 Update on WFP’s Role in the Humanitarian Assistance System

The Board took note of “Update on WFP’s Role in the Humanitarian Assistance System” (WFP/EB.A/2013/5-C).

5 June 2013

2013/EB.A/6 Update on the Nutrition Policy

The Board took note of “Update on the Nutrition Policy” (WFP/EB.A/2013/5-E).

5 June 2013

RESOURCE, FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS**2013/EB.A/7 Audited Annual Accounts, 2012**

The Board:

- i) approved the 2012 Annual Financial Statements of WFP, together with the Report of the External Auditor, pursuant to General Regulation XIV.6 (b);
- ii) noted the funding from the General Fund of US\$632,889 during 2012 for the write-off of cash losses and receivables; and
- iii) noted post-delivery losses of commodities during 2012 forming part of the operating expenses for the same period.

The Board also took note of the comments of the ACABQ (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/2, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/2) and the FAO Finance Committee (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/3, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/3).

4 June 2013

2013/EB.A/8 Appointment of Two Executive Board Members to the Selection Panel for the Appointment/Renewal of Two Audit Committee Members

The Board approved the following appointments to the selection panel of Audit Committee members in relation to the selection or renewal, as appropriate, of two Audit Committee members:

- Mr Zulfiqar Haider Khan, Alternate Permanent Representative of Pakistan, as representative of the Executive Board
- Mr Benito Santiago Jiménez Sauma, Alternate Permanent Representative of Mexico, as representative of the Executive Board

and requested the selection panel to report its recommendations to the Executive Director and the President of the Board.

The Board also took note of the comments of the ACABQ (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/2, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/2) and the FAO Finance Committee (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/3, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/3).

4 June 2013

2013/EB.A/9 Review of Financial Regulation 9.2 – Timing of the Management Plan

The Board approved a change to Financial Regulation 9.2 by which the proposed Management Plan shall be circulated to members of the Board no later than 30 days before its last regular session of each calendar year. It requested that the Secretariat provide a draft of the key extracts of the Management Plan 10 days prior to the last informal consultation on the proposed Management Plan so that all comments and concerns could be taken into consideration before the document is finalized.

The Board also took note of the comments of the ACABQ (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/2, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/2) and the FAO Finance Committee (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/3, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/3).

5 June 2013

2013/EB.A/10 Annual Report of the Audit Committee

The Board took note of “Annual Report of the Audit Committee” (WFP/EB.A/2013/6-D/1).

The Board also took note of the comments of the ACABQ (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/2, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/2) and the FAO Finance Committee (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/3, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/3).

4 June 2013

2013/EB.A/11 Annual Report of the WFP Inspector General and Note by the Executive Director on the Annual Report of the WFP Inspector General

The Board took note of “Annual Report of the WFP Inspector General” (WFP/EB.A/2013/6-E/1 + Corr.1) and the note by the Executive Director (WFP/EB.A/2013/6-E/1/Add.1) and noted that the oversight work performed and reported did not disclose any significant weaknesses in the internal control, governance or risk management processes in place across WFP that would have a pervasive effect on the achievement of WFP’s objectives.

The Board encouraged management to take advantage of the opportunities for further improvement highlighted in the report.

The Board also took note of the comments of the ACABQ (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/2, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/2) and the FAO Finance Committee (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/3, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/3).

4 June 2013

2013/EB.A/12 Report of the External Auditor on Working with Cooperating Partners and WFP Management Response

The Board took note of “Report of the External Auditor on Working with Cooperating Partners” (WFP/EB.A/2013/6-F/1*) and the management response in WFP/EB.A/2013/6-F/1/Add.1 and encouraged further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

The Board also took note of the comments of the ACABQ (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/2, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/2) and the FAO Finance Committee (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/3, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/3).

4 June 2013

2013/EB.A/13 Report of the External Auditor on the Use of Cash and Vouchers and WFP Management Response

The Board took note of “Report of the External Auditor on the Use of Cash and Vouchers” (WFP/EB.A/2013/6-G/1) and the management response in WFP/EB.A/2013/6-G/1/Add.1 and encouraged further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

The Board also took note of the comments of the ACABQ (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/2, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/2) and the FAO Finance Committee (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/3, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/3).

4 June 2013

2013/EB.A/14 Report on the Implementation of the External Auditor Recommendations

The Board took note of “Report on the Implementation of the External Auditor Recommendations” (WFP/EB.A/2013/6-H/1).

The Board also took note of the comments of the ACABQ (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/2, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/2) and the FAO Finance Committee (WFP/EB.A/2013/6(A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H,I,J,K)/3, WFP/EB.A/2013/5-A/3).

4 June 2013

EVALUATION REPORTS

2013/EB.A/15 Annual Evaluation Report 2012 and Management Response

The Board took note of “Annual Evaluation Report 2012” (WFP/EB.A/2013/7-A) and management response in WFP/EB.A/2013/7-A/Add.1, and encouraged further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

5 June 2013

WEST AFRICA REGIONAL PORTFOLIO

2013/EB.A/16 Summary Evaluation Report—The Niger Country Portfolio (2007–2011) and Management Response

The Board took note of “Summary Evaluation Report – The Niger Country Portfolio (2007–2011)” (WFP/EB.A/2013/7-C/Rev.1) and the management response in WFP/EB.A/2013/7-C/Add.1, and encouraged further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

5 June 2013

2013/EB.A/17 Development Projects—Côte d’Ivoire 200465

The Board approved the proposed development project Côte d’Ivoire 200465 – “Support for the Integrated Programme for Sustainable School Feeding” (WFP/EB.A/2013/9-A/1).

5 June 2013

EAST AND CENTRAL AFRICA PORTFOLIO

2013/EB.A/18 Country Programmes—Rwanda Draft Common Country Programme (2013–2018)

The Board approved common country programme Rwanda (2013–2018) (WFP/EB.A/2013/8/2) and the WFP Results and Resources Framework (WFP/EB.A/2013/8/2/Add.1), for which the total cost to WFP is US\$31 million.

5 June 2013

SOUTHERN AFRICA PORTFOLIO**2013/EB.A/19 Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations—Democratic Republic of the Congo 200540**

The Board approved the proposed protracted relief and recovery operation Democratic Republic of the Congo 200540 “Targeted Food Assistance to Victims of Armed Conflict and other Vulnerable Groups” (WFP/EB.A/2013/9-B/2).

5 June 2013

ASIA REGIONAL BUREAU**2013/EB.A/20 Summary Evaluation Report—Timor-Leste Country Portfolio (2008–2012) and Management Response**

The Board took note of “Summary Evaluation Report – Timor-Leste Country Portfolio (2008–2012)” (WFP/EB.A/2013/7-D) and the management response in WFP/EB.A/2013/7-D/Add.1, and encouraged further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

6 June 2013

2013/EB.A/21 Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations—Democratic People’s Republic of Korea 200532

The Board approved the proposed protracted relief and recovery operation Democratic People’s Republic of Korea 200532 “Nutrition Support for Children and Women” (WFP/EB.A/2013/9-B/1).

6 June 2013

MIDDLE EAST, NORTH AFRICA, EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA BUREAU**2013/EB.A/22 Summary Evaluation Report—The Kyrgyz Republic Country Portfolio (2008–2012) and Management Response**

The Board took note of “Summary Evaluation Report – The Kyrgyz Republic Country Portfolio (2008–2012)” (WFP/EB.A/2013/7-B) and the management response in WFP/EB.A/2013/7-B/Add.1, and encouraged further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

6 June 2013

2013/EB.A/23 Country Programmes—Egypt Country Programme 200238 (2013–2017)

After due consideration, the Board approved, on an extraordinary basis, the proposed country programme Egypt 200238 (2013–2017) (WFP/EB.A/2013/8/1), for which the food requirement is 74,022 mt at a cost of US\$52.0 million and the voucher requirement is US\$9.3 million; with associated costs, the total cost to WFP is US\$87.2 million.

6 June 2013

2013/EB.A/24 Development projects—Yemen 200432

The Board approved the proposed development project Yemen 200432 “Food Assistance to Promote Girls’ Education” (WFP/EB.A/2013/9-A/2).

6 June 2013

OTHER BUSINESS**2013/EB.A/25 Report on the Joint Field Visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-WOMEN and WFP to Bangkok, Thailand and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar**

The Board took note of the report on the joint field visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP to Bangkok, Thailand and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (WFP/EB.A/2013/13/Rev.1).

6 June 2013

SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**2013/EB.A/26 Summary of the Work of the First Regular Session of the Executive Board, 2013**

The Board approved the document “Draft Summary of the Work of the First Regular Session of the Executive Board, 2013”, the final version of which would be embodied in the document WFP/EB.1/2013/12.

6 June 2013

ANNEX II

AGENDA

1. ***Adoption of the Agenda*** (for approval)
2. ***Appointment of the Rapporteur***
3. ***Opening Remarks by the Executive Director***
4. ***Annual Reports***
 - Annual Performance Report for 2012 (*for approval*)
5. ***Policy Issues***
 - a) WFP Strategic Plan (2014–2017) (*for approval*)
 - b) WFP Private-Sector Partnerships and Fundraising Strategy (2013–2017) (*for approval*)
 - c) Update on WFP's Role in the Humanitarian Assistance System (*for information*)
 - d) Update on WFP's Response to HIV and AIDS (*for information*)
 - e) Update on the Nutrition Policy (*for information*)
 - f) Update on the Implementation of the WFP Gender Mainstreaming Accountability Framework (*for information*)
6. ***Resource, Financial and Budgetary Matters***
 - a) Audited Annual Accounts, 2012 (*for approval*)
 - b) Appointment of Two Executive Board Members to the Selection Panel for the Appointment/Renewal of Two Audit Committee Members (*for approval*)
 - c) Review of Financial Regulation 9.2 – Timing of the Management Plan (*for approval*)
 - d) Annual Report of the Audit Committee (*for consideration*)
 - e) Annual Report of the WFP Inspector General (*for consideration*) and Note by the Executive Director (*for consideration*)
 - f) Report of the External Auditor on Working with Cooperating Partners and Management Response (*for consideration*)
 - g) Report of the External Auditor on the Use of Cash and Vouchers and Management Response (*for consideration*)
 - h) Report on the Implementation of the External Auditor Recommendations (*for consideration*)
 - i) Financial Rules Update (*for information*)
 - j) Report of the Executive Director on the Utilization of Contributions and Waivers of Costs (General Rules XII.4 and XIII.4 (h)) (*for information*)
 - k) Report on the Utilization of WFP's Advance Financing Mechanisms (1 January–31 December 2012) (*for information*)

7. ***Evaluation Reports (for consideration)***

- a) Annual Evaluation Report, 2012 and Management Response
- b) Summary Evaluation Report — The Kyrgyz Republic Country Portfolio (2008–2012) and Management Response
- c) Summary Evaluation Report — The Niger Country Portfolio (2007–2011) and Management Response
- d) Summary Evaluation Report — Timor-Leste Country Portfolio (2008–2012) and Management Response
- e) Implementation Status of Evaluation Recommendations (*for information*)

Operational Matters

8. ***Country Programmes (for approval)***

- Egypt Country Programme 200238 (2013–2017)
- Rwanda Draft Common Country Programme, 2013–2018

9. ***Projects for Executive Board Approval (for approval)***

- a) Development projects
 - Côte d'Ivoire 200465
 - Yemen 200432
- b) Protracted relief and recovery operations
 - Democratic People's Republic of Korea 200532
 - Democratic Republic of the Congo 200540

10. ***Organizational and Procedural Matters***

- Biennial Programme of Work of the Executive Board (2013–2014) (*for information*)

11. ***Administrative and Managerial Matters***

- a) Address by Staff Representative Bodies to the Board
- b) Report on Post-Delivery Losses for the Period 1 January–31 December 2012 (*for information*)
- c) Update on WFP Food Procurement (*for information*)
- d) Statistical Report on WFP International Professional Staff and Higher Categories (*for information*)
- e) WFP Security Report (*for information*)

12. ***Summary of the Work of the First Regular Session of the Executive Board, 2013 (for approval)***

13. ***Other Business***

- a) Report on the Joint Field Visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP (*for information*)
- b) Oral Report on the Joint Meeting of the Executive Board Bureaux of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP (*for information*)

14. ***Verification of Adopted Decisions and Recommendations***



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

AAP	accountability to affected populations
APR	Annual Performance Report
C&V	cash and vouchers
CP	country programme
CPE	country portfolio evaluations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department
EMOP	emergency operation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FLA	field-level agreement
FPF	Forward Purchase Facility
GS	General Service
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDP	internally displaced person
IFAD	International Food and Agriculture Organization
IPSAS	International Public Sector Accounting Standards
LESS	Logistics Execution Support System
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OEV	Office of Evaluation
NGO	non-governmental organization
P4P	Purchase for Progress
PRRO	protracted relief and recovery operation
PSA	Programme Support and Administrative
REACH	Renewed Efforts Against Child Hunger and Undernutrition
SOs	Strategic Objectives
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
TA	Transformable Agenda
UGSS	Union of General Service Staff
UNCT	United Nations country team

UNDAF	United Nations Development Action Framework
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAM	vulnerability analysis and mapping
VAT	valued added tax