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**Executive Board
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PROJECTS FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD APPROVAL

Agenda item 9

For approval



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BUDGET INCREASES TO DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES— LIBERIA DEVELOPMENT PROJECT 107330

Support for Education

Cost (United States dollars)			
	Current budget	Increase	Revised budget
Food cost	8,674,283	6,670,160	15,344,443
Total cost to WFP	20,122,012	17,418,971	37,540,983

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for approval

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

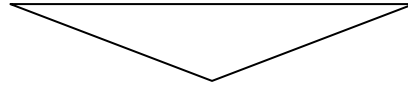
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Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact Ms I. Carpitella, Administrative Assistant, Conference Servicing Unit (tel.: 066513-2645).

* Regional Bureau Dakar (West Africa)

DRAFT DECISION*



The Board approves the budget increase of US\$17.4 million for Liberia development project 107330 “Support for Education” (WFP/EB.2/2011/9-B/3*) with a 13-month extension-in-time from 1 December 2011 to 31 December 2012.

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

NATURE OF THE INCREASE

1. This budget revision for Liberia development project (DEV) 107330 is proposed to continue school meals for 320,000 pupils and take-home rations for 45,000 girl pupils. This will require:
 - an extension-in-time of 13 months from 1 December 2011 to 31 December 2012;
 - an increase in food requirements of 12,590 mt, valued at US\$6.7 million;
 - increased costs for external transport, landside transport, storage and handling, other direct operational costs and direct support costs of US\$9.6 million; and
 - an increase in indirect support costs of US\$1.1 million.
2. This budget revision will provide the institutional and operational foundation for WFP to make the transition to a country programme expected to start in January 2013.

JUSTIFICATION FOR EXTENSION AND BUDGET INCREASE

Summary of Existing Project Activities

3. The DEV supports the objectives of the Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy (2008–2012) and Education Sector Plan (2010–2020): i) to provide free and compulsory education; ii) to increase access to and equity in primary education; and iii) to reduce drop-out rates. The specific outcomes are:
 - increased and stabilized enrolment of girls and boys in WFP-assisted rural schools with a view to reducing the gender gap; and
 - progress towards a nationally owned school feeding programme.

It is aligned with Strategic Objectives 4 and 5¹ and will contribute to Millennium Development Goals 1, 2 and 3.²
4. The project currently provides daily cooked meals for 320,000 schoolchildren in grades 1–6 and take-home rations for 9,000 girls in grades 4–6 to encourage attendance at public primary schools in 12 counties. WFP also provides a monthly family take-home ration for 3,000 school cooks in lieu of wages until the Government and communities can provide sustainable assistance.
5. Protracted relief and recovery operation 108210 “Food Assistance in the Transition from Recovery to Sustainable Development in Liberia” (September 2009–December 2012) includes nutrition and livelihood components, with a focus on social and productive safety nets. Following the recent revision of the operation and the proposed extension of DEV 107330, WFP's school feeding programmes will be consolidated into a single project.

¹ Strategic Objective 4 – Reduce chronic hunger and undernutrition; and 5 – Strengthen the capacities of countries to reduce hunger, including through hand-over strategies and local purchase.

² MDG 1 – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; 2 – Achieve universal primary education; and 3 – Promote gender equality and empower women.

6. A Purchase for Progress (P4P) pilot supports smallholder farmers' access to markets by developing capacity in food processing, packaging, group marketing and cooperative governance. In 2010, WFP began to distribute locally grown rice procured through P4P as part of the take-home rations for schoolgirls.

Conclusions and Recommendations of the Re-Assessment

7. This DEV addresses two challenges related to food security: i) inadequate food consumption; and ii) low school enrolment compounded by significant gender disparity. The 2010 comprehensive food security and nutrition survey found that:
- 41 percent of Liberia's population had "poor" or "borderline" food consumption;³ food insecurity was widespread; Bomi, Grand Kru, Maryland and River Gee counties had food insecurity levels above 70 percent; Bong, Gbarpolu, Lofa and Nimba had food insecurity from 32 percent to 54 percent, with areas of high transitory food insecurity; and
 - i) school enrolment was worse among food-insecure households, irrespective of children's age or gender; ii) school feeding was well targeted in that 27 percent of households with "poor" food consumption benefited compared with 18 percent of households with "acceptable" consumption; and iii) school feeding coverage was inadequate in Grand Kru, where food insecurity levels are high.
8. The 2009 Ministry of Education school census showed a gender parity index (GPI) of 0.88 at primary schools and 0.75 at secondary schools; net enrolment was low at 42 percent for both sexes in grades 1–6. High gender disparities in enrolment are attributed to early marriage, domestic labour and teenage pregnancies; illiteracy among parents reinforces gender-biased cultural practices. The ministry prioritizes support for girls to enable them to: i) enter school at the right age; ii) stay in school; iii) fight micronutrient deficiencies; and iv) reduce the risk of pregnancy.
9. WFP's monitoring shows that girls' attendance falls after grade 4: the take-home rations are an incentive for families to keep girls in school. The rations are distributed in 88 WFP-supported school districts in the most food-insecure areas with GPI values of 0.85 or less. Table 1 shows the gender gap by county.

³ Food consumption score of 13 percent (poor) and 28 percent (borderline).

TABLE 1: GENDER PARITY INDEX IN WFP-SUPPORTED COUNTIES			
County	2008/09 GPI based on gross enrolment rate		
	Primary	Junior high school	Senior high school
Bomi	0.93	0.88	0.59
Bong	0.88	0.74	0.59
Gbarpolu	0.75	0.50	0.38
Grand Bassa	0.79	0.72	0.59
Grand Gedeh	0.86	0.74	0.47
Grand Kru	0.76	0.61	0.28
Lofa	0.86	0.52	0.38
Maryland	0.88	0.72	0.60
Nimba	0.92	0.82	0.74
River Cess	0.83	0.55	0.27
River Gee	0.86	0.47	0.35
Sinoe	0.88	0.60	0.41

10. In response to low school completion rates, the 2011 Education Reform Act redefined basic education as completion of grades 1–9 (previously grades 1–6).
11. An internal review of school feeding in 2011⁴ assessed the challenges facing young people, households, communities and the education system: it confirmed that school meals reduced household expenditure on food and showed that despite the Government's decision to offer free education for all, many social and economic opportunity costs remain.

PURPOSE OF EXTENSION AND BUDGET INCREASE

12. The aims of this budget revision are to: i) continue daily hot meals for the current 320,000 schoolchildren in grades 1–6, take-home rations for 9,000 girls in grades 4–6 and family rations for 3,000 school cooks to the end of 2012; and ii) align the project with the next cycles of Liberia's Poverty Reduction Strategy and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework from 2013.
13. The DEV is implemented in all school districts in Bong, Bomi, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh, Gbarpolu, Grand Kru, Lofa, Maryland, Nimba, River Cess, River Gee and Sinoe counties, which were selected on the basis of widespread food insecurity and low education indicators. The project does not cover Cape Mount, Margibi and Montserrado counties to avoid overlap with partners; in Bomi, WFP coordinates with a non-governmental organization (NGO) to avoid overlap.

⁴ WFP. 2011. A Review of School Feeding in Liberia. Monrovia.

TABLE 2: BENEFICIARIES BY ACTIVITY AND CATEGORY^a		
Activity	Category of beneficiaries	Number
School meals	Pupils in public basic education	320 000
Girls' take-home rations ^b	Girls enrolled in public basic education	45 000
Cooks' take-home rations ^c	School cooks	15 000
TOTAL^d		371 000

^aThis budget increase does not increase the beneficiary numbers.

^bFamily size is taken as five, hence 9,000 girls; monthly ration is 25 kg cereals and 1.8 kg vegetable oil.

^cFamily size is taken as five, hence 3,000 cooks; monthly ration is 62.5 kg cereals.

^dExcludes 9,000 girls counted under the school meals activity.

TABLE 3: RATION BY ACTIVITY*			
Food type	Activity 1 Hot meals (g/person/day)	Activity 2 Girls' take-home ration (kg/person/month)	Activity 3 School cooks' take-home ration (kg/person/month)
Bulgur wheat	120	16.6	12.5
Rice**	-	16.6	-
Pulses	35	-	-
Vegetable oil	10	1.0	-
Salt	4	-	-
TOTAL	195	17.6	12.6
<i>Total kcal/day</i>	<i>716</i>	<i>691</i>	<i>691</i>
% kcal from protein	12.6	10.9	12.6
% kcal from fat	15.9	16.8	3.9
Feeding days per year	166	300 (10 feeding months)	300 (10 feeding months)

* The on-site feeding rations target half-day schools.

** Provided instead of wheat in some districts of Bong, Lofa and Nimba counties, where P4P will operate.

14. This budget revision will enhance capacity to design and manage a national school feeding programme in line with the recommendations of the school feeding review. Activities will include:

- support for the integration of a school feeding monitoring and reporting system into development partners' data systems;
- capacity development for government counterparts in coordination, planning and monitoring; the country office will support the hiring of two additional local experts;
- assistance for the Ministry of Education in developing a school feeding policy under the Education Sector Plan; and
- enhancement of decentralized institutional capacity for school feeding by engaging county and district officials, parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and communities.

15. WFP's support for gender equality in access to education through school feeding is in line with its gender policy. It will work with the Ministry of Education in using school feeding as a starting point for achieving gender equality and as a means of creating awareness of sexual and gender-based violence in the education system.
16. WFP will work with the ministries of education and agriculture to formalize the school garden programme and define responsibilities at the decentralized level: this will include support for the Division of Agriculture and Environment in setting up a national agriculture and environmental science curriculum to create awareness of agricultural activities in all schools.

FOOD REQUIREMENTS

17. The food requirements resulting from the budget revision are shown in Table 4.

Activity	Food requirements (<i>mt</i>)		
	Current	Increase	Revised total
School meals	10 397	10 438	20 835
Take-home rations (girls)	4 352	1 740	6 092
Take-home rations (school cooks)	135	412	547
TOTAL	14 884	12 590	27 474

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND EVALUATION AND RISKS

18. With WFP support, the Ministry of Education has established national and regional school feeding coordination structures. Under the Deputy Minister for Administration, a school feeding division has been established in the planning department to support county and district focal points who supervise school feeding and provide technical guidance. The PTAs formed food management committees to ensure the proper use of food in schools.
19. WFP will coordinate with the international NGOs Mary's Meals and International Relief and Development to manage geographic coverage.
20. As part of capacity development for the Ministry of Education, NGO cooperating partners trained staff at the county and district levels in programme planning, monitoring and reporting; the ministry is now in a position to assume these responsibilities. From September 2011, WFP's school feeding contracts with NGOs will be discontinued and it will seek partnerships with NGOs on the basis of cost-sharing and common capacity development objectives.

21. WFP will work with the Ministry of Education and its partners to set up a single-source monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system and mainstream the monitoring of school feeding at the county and district levels.⁵ WFP, PTAs and the Ministry of Education will conduct joint interventions on governance in schools to combat corruption; WFP, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Justice and law enforcement agencies are seeking to impose punitive measures against malpractices in food distribution.
22. WFP is improving its M&E capacity by appointing four field monitors in each of the five sub-offices who will each make at least ten monitoring visits per month to obtain data on outcome and output indicators; WFP's M&E unit and the Ministry of Education will collect data on impact indicators twice a year.⁶ The country office has increased its internal audit staff with a view to identifying anomalies in implementation. Data from M&E visits will be managed by the M&E unit and recommendations will be shared monthly with management and partners.
23. Except for some of the rice, food will be bought on international markets. Rice for take-home rations will be bought under P4P in Bong, Lofa and Nimba counties if this is more cost-effective than importing it. In some areas, local procurement of rice and beans will be piloted to overcome logistics constraints, particularly during the rainy season. Food will be delivered from the port to the main warehouse in Monrovia and transported from there to the extended delivery point.
24. Contextual risks include corruption and weak capacity of the Government and institutions. Programmatic risks include diversions of food and delays in food distribution because of poor roads and remote distribution locations. To manage these risks, WFP is improving its monitoring and reporting mechanisms and those of its partners, increasing the engagement of government counterparts and enhancing awareness among beneficiaries. WFP will seek full cost recovery from parties responsible for food delivery or food management and distribution, who will be required to repay lost quantities in cash or in kind. The Ministry of Education is implementing a new code of conduct for school feeding with a view to improving governance at all levels. The Government's decentralization programme, which includes the appointment of county focal points, provides greater authority on education issues and ensures faster response to risks.
25. To increase community participation in programme management, sensitization and advocacy activities will be renewed, targeting the same stakeholders but using different advocates, including counterparts at the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. WFP will work with the Ministry of Education and local governments to mobilize community leaders, parents, and young people to: i) support continued school feeding; ii) ensure that children attend school; and iii) ensure that elected PTAs are in place.

⁵ The new School-Based Record System will extend the ministry's monitoring capacity from schools to the county level.

⁶ Outcome data will be collected at the beginning of the school year as a baseline, and at the end of the school year.

ANNEX I-A

BUDGET INCREASE COST BREAKDOWN			
Food¹	Quantity (mt)	Value (US\$/mt)	Value (US\$)
Wheat and rice	9 465.45	488.94	4 628 025
Pulses	2 161.60	470.00	1 015 952
Oil and fats	715.61	1 376.00	984 680
Salt	247.04	168.00	41 503
Total food	12 589.70	529.81	6 670 160
External transport			1 213 653
Landside transport, storage and handling			3 990 101
Other direct operational costs			1 229 305
Direct support costs ² (see Annex I-B)			3 176 194
Total WFP direct costs			16 279 413
Indirect support costs (7.0 percent) ³			1 139 559
TOTAL WFP COSTS			17 418 971

¹ This is a notional food basket for budgeting and approval. The contents may vary.

² Indicative figure for information purposes. The direct support costs allotment is reviewed annually.

³ The indirect support cost rate may be amended by the Board during the project.

ANNEX I-B

DIRECT SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	
Staff	
International professional staff	633 005
Local staff – national officer	206 683
Local staff – general service	1 013 732
Local staff – temporary assistants	94 376
United Nations volunteers	62 833
Travel	194 742
Subtotal	2 205 371
Recurring expenses	
Rental of facility	61 184
Utilities	66 473
Office supplies and consumables	27 459
Communications and telecommunications services	51 397
Equipment repair and maintenance	8 250
Vehicle running costs and maintenance	90 090
Office set-up and repairs	75 976
United Nations organization services	66 188
Subtotal	447 019
Equipment and capital costs	
Vehicle leasing	404 090
Telecommunications equipment,	52 668
Local security costs	67 047
Subtotal	523 805
TOTAL DIRECT SUPPORT COSTS	3 176 194

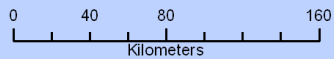
WFP Projects by Counties (Beginning of September 2011)



Classes of Projects for each County (Beginning of Sept. 2011)

- One Project
- Two Projects
- Three Projects

Source: FAO, UNJLC, WFP Progr.
 Production data: June 2011/ Spheroid: WGS84 - Grid: Lat/Long 10 min. interval
 The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations



The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Food Programme (WFP) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its frontiers or boundaries.

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

DEV	development project
GPI	gender parity index
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NGO	non-government organization
P4P	Purchase for Progress
PTA	parent–teacher association