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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: 1998 (Appendix 1)

Issues arising from the implementation of
the United Nations Secretary-General's
Reform Programme

INTRODUCTION

1. In July 1998, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) adopted resolution 1998/27 entitled *Reporting of the United Nations funds and programmes to the Economic and Social Council*. In this resolution, the Council “called on the Executive Boards of the United Nations funds and programmes to ensure that the heads of these funds and programmes include in the annual reports to the Economic and Social Council [...] a thorough analysis of problems encountered and lessons learned, with emphasis on issues arising from the implementation of the Secretary-General’s reform [...] so as to allow the Council to fulfill its coordinating role” (paragraph 1).
2. At its First Regular Session of 1999, the Executive Board reviewed the document *Follow-up to ECOSOC and General Assembly resolutions on actions to be taken by the Executive Boards of the United Nations Funds and Programmes* (WFP/EB.1/99/INF/6) and subsequently decided to attach to the Annual Report of the Executive Director appendices on key issues, including United Nations reform (1999/EB.1/17).
3. The attached appendix to the Annual Report of the Executive Director has been prepared pursuant to the ECOSOC resolution and the Executive Board’s decision. It outlines key initiatives undertaken and contributions made by WFP as part of the implementation of the Secretary-General’s reform agenda, and the problems encountered and lessons learned during the process of implementation.
4. While the Secretary-General’s United Nations reform agenda is very broad, the attached matrix only comprises those elements that are of particular relevance to WFP’s humanitarian and development assistance.
5. Numerous other initiatives have been identified in the reform proposals presented by the Secretary-General, primarily in the context of reforms within the United Nations Secretariat. Many of these are consistent with and complementary to initiatives undertaken as part of WFP’s Organizational Change Initiative. These include: decentralization and delegation of authority to the field, more strategic utilization of human and financial resources, greater emphasis on accountability, ensuring a better gender balance and geographical representation among staff, and investment in training opportunities. Since WFP keeps its Executive Board apprised of developments in these areas through other reports, such information has not been included in the present document.
6. It should be noted that the reform of the United Nations is an ongoing process, and that some of the problems encountered and lessons learned highlighted in the attached document are already being addressed in the work of the Executive Committees and other inter-agency bodies overseeing and implementing reform.



Secretary-General's reform initiatives related to coordination at the headquarters level

- **Establishment of Senior Management Group (SMG).** The establishment of the SMG is an initiative of the Secretary-General to ensure more integrated and cohesive management of the Secretariat. The Group, which is composed of the heads of UN Funds and Programmes, Under-Secretary-Generals and the Deputy Secretary-General, meets on a weekly basis. Teleconferencing enables senior officials based in offices in Geneva, Vienna, Rome and Nairobi to participate. The Group serves: i) as the Secretary-General's senior advisory and central policy planning body to ensure strategic coherence and direction in the work of the Secretariat; and ii) to advise the Secretary-General on all matters of policy preparation and implementation that affect the UN Organization as a whole, and will serve in a crisis management capacity.
- **Establishment of post of the Deputy Secretary-General (DSG).** The DSG has been assigned the task of overseeing, on behalf of the Secretary-General, the continuing UN reform effort. Special assignments undertaken by the DSG relate, among others, to the Regional Commissions, Iraq, the globalization issue and overseeing the preparation of the guidelines for a Strategic Framework approach.
- **Establishment of Executive Committees.** The Secretary-General reorganized the UN Secretariat's work programme around four core missions of the UN: peace and security, economic and social affairs, development cooperation and humanitarian affairs. Human rights, the fifth core area, cuts across the other four. The Secretary-General has established an Executive Committee (ExCom) in each of the
- WFP's Executive Director, as a member of the Senior Management Group, contributes to shaping the UN's policy and strategic agenda and ensuring coherence.
- WFP's Executive Director has contributed to the activities initiated by the office of the Deputy Secretary-General, including efforts to streamline the Strategic Framework Guidelines.
- WFP, as a member of the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) and the UN Development Group (UNDG), actively participates in joint decision-making, at the policy level, on operational issues of common concern.
- The introduction of teleconferencing enables UN funds and programmes located outside New York to participate in the meetings.
- Refer to section on Strategic Framework.
- For agencies with headquarters outside of New York, active participation in the Executive Committees requires considerable investments in terms of financial and human resources.
- The proliferation of meetings held in New York has significant implications for the travel budget and, more importantly, the time which must be invested by WFP Executive Staff.

Secretary-General's reform initiatives related to coordination at the headquarters level

- four areas and has designated a "convenor" for each ExCom. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) is a member in each ExCom. The principal objective of the Executive Committees is to strengthen policy and programme coherence of UN activities through facilitating joint policy formation, decision-making and programme coordination.
- The four Executive Committees are to work together to develop operational linkages across sectoral boundaries.
 - In order to facilitate WFP's active participation in the Executive Committees, WFP has strengthened its Liaison Office located in New York through the addition of one professional post.
 - Convening the undg and ECHA, either on the same day or back-to-back, has facilitated the participation of the WFP Executive Director or other designated senior officials based in Rome and should be continued.
 - A number of issues and concerns relevant to WFP, such as the economic and social roots of a conflict and the conditions that permit the resumption of economic and social development, cut across the work of all four Executive Committees.

UNITED NATIONS REFORM Key WFP initiatives

United Nations reform agenda

Lessons learned and problems encountered

United Nations Development Group (UNDG)

- The Secretary-General established the UNDG to lead the reform process in the area of UN development operations.
- The UNDG includes most UN funds, programmes and agencies engaged in development assistance and related activities (UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, IFAD, UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention (ODCCP), UNAIDS, UNCTAD, UNCHS, UNDESA, UNHCHR, United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), UNOPS, UN Regional Commissions, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict) and is chaired by the UNDP Administrator.
- The UNDG is led by its Executive Committee (ExCom), comprised of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP, and chaired by the UNDP Administrator.
- To facilitate its work, the UNDG has set up Sub-Groups on: i) programme policies; ii) programme operations; iii) personnel and training; iv) Resident Coordinator issues; v) common premises and services; vi) information; vii) gender; and viii) the right to development (the UNDG Sub-Groups have replaced the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) Sub-Groups).
- The UN Development Group Office (DGO) has been established to provide secretariat services to the UNDG, its Executive Committee and Support Group.
- The UNDG assisted in the organization of a joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP (represented by the President of the Executive Board) held to discuss the UN reform with UN funds and programmes, with a focus on impact at the country level.
- WFP contributes, through its participation in the meetings of the UNDG, the UNDG Support Group and the UNDG Sub-Groups, to the strengthening of policy coherence and cost-effectiveness of UN development operations and to promoting a more unified UN presence at the country level.
- As a member of the UNDG Executive Committee, WFP contributes to the identification of priorities and joint decision-making at a senior level on operational issues of common concern.
- WFP has strengthened the capacity of its New York Liaison Office to ensure better and more adequate representation and participation in the UNDG, its Executive Committee, the UNDG Support Group and UNDG Sub-Groups.
- WFP supports the Secretariat of the UNDG and its ExCom—the Development Group Office—through the secondment of a senior WFP staff member to the office. (None of the other Executive Committees has such a secretariat).
- The shift from the old JCGP structure to the new UNDG structure has enhanced collaboration among the UN agencies involved. The new structure has changed the working mode from “voluntary” to “mandatory”.
- The UNDG Executive Committee is the most action-oriented of the four, having made many decisions in areas like improvements in the Resident Coordinator System (RCS), the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and common premises.
- By virtue of a Secretariat of the UNDG (the Development Group Office) which is staffed at the senior level, high demands are made on the UN agencies involved to liaise and follow up on specific issues. As a result, the volume of work has increased considerably.
- The establishment and servicing of an increased number of bodies set up to implement and monitor the reforms, and the increased number of meetings organized, require a significant additional input by the agencies involved.
- Besides staff time and costs incurred at headquarters, the strengthening of the New York Liaison Office involves increased costs.
- At the field level, WFP Representatives have noted that considerable staff resources are required to support WFP’s participation in the UNDAF exercise.
- WFP places increased emphasis on streamlining and efficiency through more frequent use of teleconferencing and stresses the need to avoid that issues are discussed in multiple fora.

Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA)

- ECHA is chaired by the Emergency Relief Coordinator/the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and brings together OCHA, UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, UNHCHR, Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Department of Political Affairs (DPA), UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict, on a monthly basis to address humanitarian concerns (both operational and policy issues) of the UN.
- In addition, WHO and FAO now participate as observers.
- WFP is an active member of ECHA, and uses this forum to raise country-specific issues (e.g. Angola, DPRK) and to discuss thematic issues (e.g. the linkage between funding mechanisms and the reintegration gap).
- ECHA has enhanced information flow among humanitarian, peacekeeping and political entities. It has not yet, however, realized its potential for ensuring more integrated approaches to complex emergency situations. Joint meetings of ECHA and the Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS) may be more useful in achieving this objective.
- Efforts to strengthen ECHA should also aim to make it as decision-oriented as possible.
- It is important that the humanitarian agenda is not defined by or dependent on political and/or peacekeeping objectives.
- More timely dissemination of the agenda and background papers would allow better preparation by the UN agencies, including more consultation with the field.
- Refer to section on IASC.

Executive Committee on Peace and Security (ECPS) and Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs (ECESA)

- ECPS is convened by the Under-Secretary-General of the DPA, and brings together DPA, DPKO, OCHA, the Department of Disarmament Affairs, UNHCR, UNHCHR, UNDP, Office of Legal Affairs, Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator, representatives from the Office of the Secretary-General and individuals who serve in their personal capacity.
- The Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs (ECESA) is convened by the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), and brings together UNDESA, UNDP, UNCTAD, UNEP, UN Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), the five Regional Commissions, UN Division for Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (UNDCP), UN International Drug Control Programme, UN University, UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), UNIFEM, UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), UNHCHR, and the Special Adviser on Gender Issues.
- WFP participates in the joint meetings of the ECPS and ECESA with the UNDG or ECHA.
- It is important that the minutes of the meetings of each of the Executive Committees are shared on a timely basis with the membership of the others to enhance coherence of approach and to minimize duplication of efforts.

Common programming frameworks**United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)**

- The UNDAF is a key component of the Secretary-General's reform programme. The reform proposal states that "in order to achieve goal-oriented collaboration, programmatic coherence and mutual reinforcement, the United Nations programmes of assistance will be formulated and presented as part of a single UNDAF with common objectives and time-frame. Programme funds managed by each of the funds and programmes would be included in the document, but remain clearly identifiable..." (action 10(a)).
- In August 1997, a pilot phase was initiated to test the operationalization of UNDAF in 18 countries, out of which WFP works in 12. As of the end of 1998, 11 of the 18 country teams had completed the UNDAF.
- A support system was set up by the UNDG to support the country teams in the pilot countries through: i) Provisional Guidelines; and ii) a system of 19 facilitators nominated by seven UNDG members to provide field-level support to the country teams, and 69 focal points/hotlines, from members of the UNDG, the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and the United Nations Development Group Office (DGO), who were available to respond immediately to requests for information and support.
- Two countries, Mali and Viet Nam, were selected as pilots for the interface between the UNDAF and the World Bank's Country Assistance Strategy (CAS), with the aim of fostering a strategic partnership between the two institutions.
- WFP participated fully in the UNDAF pilot phase, including the selection of pilot countries.
- At the field level, WFP is an active participant in the UNDAF process in these pilot countries where it has operational activities, both through the WFP Representative's membership in the country team, and through technical working groups and thematic groups.
- WFP participates in a number of thematic groups and in some cases leads thematic groups on disaster management, recovery and rehabilitation, food security and rural development.
- At the headquarters level, WFP has participated actively in the team that formulated the provisional Common Country Assessment (CCA) and UNDAF Guidelines, and is currently participating in the revision of these guidelines.
- To support WFP's participation in the process, a WFP Working Group on UNDAF has been established and facilitators, focal points and persons acting as "hot lines" have been appointed. A system-wide training session took place at WFP headquarters in March 1998 and was attended by staff from 17 different agencies.
- Two WFP staff members were on the inter-agency team which undertook an internal assessment of the UNDAF pilot phase. WFP staff also participated in the UNDAF Assessment Workshop held in Princeton in September 1998.
- WFP has circulated the completed UNDAFs together with country programmes at sessions of its Executive Board. A recommendation to disseminate the UNDAFs, together with the Country Programmes, at the Executive Boards
- WFP Representatives noted several benefits of the UNDAF exercise to WFP's work at the country level, including: i) enhanced dialogue, information sharing and mutual understanding among the UN agencies as a result of the consultation and formulation process; and ii) increased recognition of the need to work together.
- In addition, WFP benefits from the UNDAF document and common databases, common indicators and assessments in the preparation of the Country Strategy Outlines (CSOs) and Country Programmes (CPs).
- However, insufficient staff time, limited budgetary resources, and the need for training and enhanced support from headquarters were noted by WFP Representatives involved in the UNDAF process as constraints during the initial period. Other problems that have been identified are the need for clarification of the UNDAF concept, difficulties related to the harmonization of programme cycles, and differing participation and commitment by the agencies involved.
- It is essential that the UNDAF is prepared prior to the commencement of the programme cycle and preparation of WFP's Country Strategy Outline and Country Programme.

Common programming frameworks
United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)

- An assessment of the UNDAF pilot phase was initiated in May 1998 to analyse lessons learned from the exercise. The assessment was undertaken by two teams, a UNDG assessment team, consisting of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP and UNDESA Representatives, and an external review panel consisting of three high-level development experts. The findings of the two teams were reviewed at an assessment workshop with the participation of representatives from 12 UNDG member organizations (including WFP), 6 specialized agencies, government officials and country teams (Princeton, September 1998).
 - The recommendations of the workshop as well as the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/RES/53/192) are guiding the current enhancement of the guidelines for the CCA and UNDAF.
- of the respective UNDG members was subsequently incorporated in the UNDAF Guidelines which have recently been cleared by all UNDG members.
- WFP participates in the discussions on the inter-relationship between the UNDAF and the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP), which are being held in joint meetings of the Executive Committees (ECHA, UNDG, ECPS).
 - WFP has taken an active role in ensuring that the participation of governments in the UNDAF process is incorporated in the UNDAF guidelines;
 - Through the CCA and UNDAF, WFP, together with its partner agencies, provides an opportunity for civil society and NGOs to be involved in the planning and programming phase of United Nations activities at the country level.

Common programming frameworks
Strategic Framework

- The ACC has initiated efforts to develop the concept of a Strategic Framework, aimed at ensuring more integrated peace-building approaches in a small number of selected countries. A strategic framework is a tool and process that outlines the principles, policy objectives and institutional arrangements for a more integrated response embracing both political and assistance strategies.
- The Generic Guidelines for the formulation of strategic frameworks have been finalized by the Deputy Secretary-General, following receipt of comments and suggestions from members of the ACC.
- The Secretary-General has entrusted the Deputy Secretary-General with the responsibility of overseeing the development of Strategic Frameworks in the small number of countries where such an approach would apply.
- WFP contributed to the formulation of the guidelines of the Strategic Framework and is currently participating in the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Afghanistan. This includes participation in the ad hoc “advisory group” for the Afghanistan Strategic Framework set up by the Deputy Secretary-General in order to, *inter alia*, ensure that outstanding issues, such as gender, human rights and humanitarian relief, will be addressed in the Strategic Framework process.
- WFP participates in discussions in the joint meetings of the Executive Committees to identify countries where the Strategic Framework could be operationalized.
- WFP has presented to its Executive Board a policy document entitled “From Crisis to Recovery” (EB.A/98/4-A), which took note of the Strategic Framework and WFP’s engagement within the initiative.
- The formulation of the Strategic Framework for Afghanistan has proved to be a prolonged and demanding process for all actors involved. Nevertheless, it has enhanced understanding of key concerns of the humanitarian, political, development and security actors;
- In WFP’s view, future efforts to implement a strategic framework should concentrate on countries where a peace process is underway and conditions would allow for a greater role for recovery and development initiatives.
- There is a need to clarify the linkages of the Strategic Framework with other coordinated programming mechanisms, such as the CAP.

Harmonization of programming cycles

- In 1992, the General Assembly called for the harmonization of programme cycles by 2000 (GA resolution 47/199, 22 December 1992).
- UNDG has taken initiatives to review the current status of programme cycle harmonization at the country level and develop proposals for accelerated implementation.
- The Executive Heads of the UNDG ExCom have signed a joint letter to all Resident Coordinators and UN Agency Representatives on harmonization of programme cycles (28 October 1998). The letter reiterates the need to advance the process of harmonization in accordance with GA resolution 47/199 on harmonization of the programme cycles of funding agencies by the year 2000.
- UNDG has established a system, through the UNDG Sub-Group on Programme Operations, to monitor the implementation of the country teams' work plans aiming at an early harmonization of their programme cycles and to provide, if necessary, guidance to Resident Coordinators and country teams.
- WFP and its Executive Board have expressed strong support for harmonization of programming cycles. At the Board's First Regular Session of 1999, Members expressed their expectation that WFP would pursue harmonization and coordination not only with other UN organizations, but also with donors, NGOs and government authorities.
- WFP's Executive Director has circulated to all WFP Country Directors/Representatives the joint letter reiterating WFP's institutional commitment to the harmonization process and proposing concrete steps to advance this process.
- WFP's Country Programme exercise includes as an aim the harmonization of programme cycles with those of governments and of other partners in the country. Since October 1996, WFP's Executive Board has approved some 20 Country Programmes; others are under preparation.
- In several instances, WFP has aligned its programme cycle with that adopted by the government and other UN agencies, including where this has involved shorter time-frames for the WFP programmes or other adjustments.
- WFP is currently adapting its guidelines for the preparation of projects and programmes to include elements of harmonization in their design.
- Harmonization is key to more effective partnerships between WFP and other UN agencies for development activities.
- The harmonization of the programme cycles by the UN funds and programmes with the government cycles has facilitated the dialogue between the UN system and the government.

Strengthening the Resident Coordinator System (RCS)

- In order to strengthen the capacity of the Resident Coordinator (RC) to provide leadership and coordination in the field, the Secretary-General proposed the accreditation of the RC to the Head of Government, in order to ensure that the RC is given the necessary status at the country level to better equip him/her to carry out his/her role as the leader of the UN country team.
- Pursuant to the Secretary-General's reform proposal and earlier General Assembly resolutions, UNDG has proposed various measures to strengthen the Resident Coordinator System (RCS). Key measures include:
 - ⇒ improvement of the RC selection process, including the establishment of an inter-agency advisory panel and formal consultation among the UNDG ExCom heads on each nomination;
 - ⇒ selection of RCs from all organizations concerned;
 - ⇒ increase of the number of women RCs;
 - ⇒ development of a separate RC job description, RC reporting and accountability guidelines and revision of annual reporting procedures for RCs;
 - ⇒ introduction of a separate performance appraisal of RCs and development of a model for RC competency assessment;
 - ⇒ providing stronger backstopping from headquarters, including through the DGO;
 - ⇒ improvement of guidance to be provided to RCs in working with governments on the follow-up to global UN conferences; and
 - ⇒ enhancement of training support for RCs.
- Refer also to the section on Humanitarian Affairs Coordinator.
- Acknowledging the central importance of more coherent UN operational activities for development at the country level, WFP presented a note entitled "Issues related to the implementation of agreed mechanisms to improve the Resident Coordinator System" to the fifth meeting of the Development Cooperation Group (the forerunner of the UNDG). The note contained a list of issues that needed to be addressed in order to ensure the implementation of the agreed measures to strengthen the RCS, including a sharp increase of the number of RC posts filled with individuals coming from agencies, funds and programmes other than UNDP, development of an RC competency assessment process; development of the RC's function as a new career goal for staff of all funds and programmes other than UNDP; the preparation of the terms of reference for RCs, separate from the function of UNDP Resident Representative.
- WFP has taken the following steps in support of its note on "Issues related to the implementation of agreed mechanisms to improve the Resident Coordinator System":
 - ⇒ WFP contributes to frequent meetings held to address the various issues related to the RCS. Among others, WFP has participated as a member of the working group in the development of the selection process and the competency assessment of RCs, and has a representation in the inter-agency advisory panel for the selection of RCs;
 - ⇒ WFP empowered the WFP Country Director/Representative to manage all of the activities within the Programme's mandate (for example, WFP's Country Directors are now clearly responsible for the preparation of
- Although WFP welcomes the considerable progress made in the implementation of the various measures proposed to strengthen the RCS, efforts should be undertaken to accelerate progress. WFP proposes that clear targets and a timetable to reach those targets be agreed upon (e.g. for a more equitable gender balance and selection of RCs from UN agencies other than UNDP).
- On issues related to the RCS, there is a need to challenge traditional assumptions and consider the introduction of different models of the RCS where appropriate.
- WFP fully supports the provision of greater opportunities for staff at all levels to move among UN organizations as an element in career development and advancement, thereby creating a wider pool of RC candidates.
- The adoption of an RC job description increases the transparency of the RC function, separate from the UNDP Resident Representative function, and clarifies the role of the Humanitarian Affairs Coordinator.
- Strengthening of the role of the WFP Representative contributes to a strengthened functioning of the RC as well as enhanced WFP participation in the country team.
- WFP has invested considerable time and energy in the strengthening of the RCS, as this is high priority for the Programme within the scope of the UN reform. WFP is not in a position to participate as actively in the implementation of all the elements of the UN Reform agenda.

Strengthening the Resident Coordinator System (RCS)

Country Strategy Outlines, Country Programmes, protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs) and development projects) (refer to CFA/40, November 1995, Agenda item 10);

- ⇒ WFP has made available three qualified staff members who have taken up RC positions; and
- ⇒ WFP country office staff have been instructed to assign top priority to supporting the RC.

United Nations House and Common Services

Common Premises

- In 1987, the General Assembly invited the governing bodies of the UN system to urgently review and rationalize their field office structure (GA res. 42/196). In 1989, the GA requested all organs, organizations and bodies of the UN system to make necessary arrangements to establish common premises at the country level (GA res. 44/211). In subsequent GA resolutions, the GA emphasized the need to accomplish common premises without increasing costs for the UN system or the developing countries (47/199 and 48/209).
- In March 1997, the Secretary-General noted in his letter to the President of the General Assembly on the strengthening of the UN system that the drive to establish common premises and common services arrangements at the country level would be intensified. In his reform proposal, the Secretary-General decided that common premises of the UN at the country level will be named "UN House". After the establishment of the UNDG, activities related to common premises previously carried out by the JCGP were placed under the UNDG's responsibility.
- UN Houses have been officially designated in eight countries (Algeria, Bhutan, Honduras, Lesotho, Lebanon, Malaysia, Russia, South Africa).
- In the period between year 2000 and 2004, plans for common premises are expected to be realized in 50 countries in three phases.
- The UNDG has initiated a number of elements to support the implementation of the UN House programme, including a proposal by the UNDG Sub-Group for Common Premises and Services (the former JCGP Sub-Group) of a definition of
 - In the implementation of the UN House programme in 1998, eight WFP offices were identified as meeting the criteria for designation as UN Houses (Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Ethiopia, Honduras, Lesotho and Nepal), and either have been endorsed or are pending official endorsement by the Secretary-General.
 - WFP has operations in four of the eight countries where UN Houses have been established. In three of the four countries, Algeria, Bhutan and Honduras, WFP joins the other agencies in the UN House. In Lesotho, WFP has not physically joined the other agencies as there is no space to locate WFP staff in the UN building. However, WFP premises are in the vicinity of the UN building and a plate on the door indicates that WFP is a "UN House".
 - WFP participates in the UN House programme "as appropriate". WFP is managing a large number of emergency operations and it is difficult to engage in long-term construction and renovation project commitments when the duration of the WFP presence is uncertain. In this respect, WFP is currently reviewing the apportionment of common expenditures between member funds and programmes.
 - Of the 16 countries visited by the evaluation missions during the first year, 10 WFP country offices were included. These are: Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau and Honduras.
- While WFP recognizes the inherent benefits of common premises in terms of promoting a more unified UN presence at the country level, there are certain problems, including:
 - ⇒ moving into a UN House might involve higher rental and/or maintenance costs. Increased costs as a result of moving into a UN House involve an increase of the administrative costs and a decrease of resources available for operational activities;
 - ⇒ where WFP is solely or mainly providing emergency assistance, it is difficult for the Programme to make long-term commitments for initiatives which may involve new construction and major renovations. Costs and benefits of common premises vary greatly from country to country, and a full assessment can only be made for the mid- to longer term. Assurance is needed that suitable mechanisms can be put in place which would allow WFP to withdraw from common premises as necessary. However, the current draft guidelines call for any agency wishing to reduce its space requirements, to be responsible for continued payment of rent and services until such time as the space is taken over by another agency.

United Nations House and Common Services

- the UN House, which was endorsed by the Secretary-General on 10 February 1998.
- Members of the UNDG ExCom have recently agreed on the methodology for assessing common premises, i.e.: i) construction by the UN was considered the least preferred option; ii) the Executive Committee agencies would request resources in their 2001 budgets; and iii) there would be renewed emphasis on dialogue with host governments to obtain rent-free premises.
 - In March 1998, the UNDG ExCom established the Management Group on Services and Premises (MGSP) - a committee of director-level representatives from each of the four ExCom member agencies, with decision-making authority concerning common services and premises. The MGSP has oversight responsibility for the UNDG Sub-Group on Common Premises and Services.
 - The Sub-Group has prepared a draft budget of estimated costs for the implementation of the UN House Programme in the next two biennia (2000–2001 and 2002–2003). The budget, which has been presented to the MGSP, poses two options with regard to the speed of implementation of the UN House programme and the associated costs.

- The current arrangement which allocates to WFP one sixth of the total expenditures applicable to common premises and services was introduced in 1995, when WFP was present in more countries than it is today. In 1999, WFP is operating in over 70 countries. In about one third of these countries, WFP activities are exclusively emergency-oriented; in one third they are focusing on development only and in the rest, WFP has a combination of development and emergency-related activities. In the development-only countries, the WFP staff presence is sometimes very limited.
- An information paper providing further details on the issue of common premises is being presented to the Board's Annual Session of 1999.

Common Services

- Common services in the premises are being recognised increasingly as a primary instrument for building a coherent cost-effective and streamlined UN system. Moreover, due consideration is also given to the safety of the premises, to their security access and environment.
- WFP has disseminated the Survey on Common Services to all its Country Directors and Representatives and requested them to cooperate with the MGSP and the Sub-Group in their effort to collect systematic information on the current status of and experience with common or shared services in the field offices.
- As the establishment of common services arrangements is still at an early stage, no lessons learned can yet be drawn from WFP's experiences. It is expected that benefits will be greatest where a significant number of agencies are co-located.

United Nations House and Common Services

- The type of services provided in a UN House include administrative, financial, security, travel, transportation, mail, visa and protocol; publication, library, conference and video conference facilities; information management; housing facilities; management information systems; personnel services; procurement and transportation.
- The Sub-Group on Common Premises and Services is currently undertaking an overall and comprehensive assessment of common services at the country level. A letter is being circulated to all RCs, requesting their cooperation in disseminating to all UNDG agencies the Survey on Common Services. The inputs are considered important to gain an accurate and comprehensive insight into the common services activities. These generate a cost/benefit analysis and detailed description of the planned common/shared services as well as modalities and responsibilities for implementation.
- WFP played a key role in the Tripartite (UNHCR/WFP/UNICEF) Evaluation of the Great Lakes emergency operation which, *inter alia*, recommended common logistics arrangements/ services among the three agencies. WFP also initiated the move to merge its own and UNICEF's communications networks, and to alter accordingly the MOU between WFP and UNICEF.

Security of Field Staff

- Although not addressed specifically within the Secretary-General's reform agenda, consideration is being given to how requirements related to security of UN staff might be more effectively addressed.
- WFP has initiated an ambitious Security Awareness Training initiative for all staff in the field and at headquarters. The training is designed to provide staff members with a basic set of skills and information critical to their safety and security. In addition, it will strengthen WFP's internal capacity and leadership in security, safety and training, all areas of increasing need. Training has already begun in the field and the goal is to implement the Security Awareness Training for all staff within 1999. The WFP Security Awareness Training Programme was presented to UNSECOORD in the course of a Security Working Group in December 1998.
- Open and informed dialogue with UNSECOORD and other operational agencies on field security matters has become even more crucial in today's emergency environment.

United Nations House and Common Services

- WFP has created and filled a post of Security Officer to work within the Management Services Division, liaising with WFP field staff, UNSECOORD and security focal points in other UN organizations. This represents the establishment of a security unit within the headquarters structure.
- WFP provides support to UNSECOORD through the funding of one P-4 post, one third of another P-4 post and one G-3 post.

Reform of the United Nations humanitarian sector

In addition to the establishment of the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA), the following changes were to be implemented in the UN humanitarian sector, including:

OCHA

- The Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) became the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), headed by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs/ Emergency Relief Coordinator, with a focus on three core functions: policy development and coordination, advocacy of humanitarian issues with political organs, notably the Security Council, and coordination of humanitarian emergency response.
- In order to allow the Emergency Relief Coordinator to focus on the core functions described above, the Secretary-General's reform agenda determined that operational aspects of responsibilities previously carried out by DHA were to be redistributed in other parts of the system, including UNDP and DPKO. These included functions related to disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness; demining; management of the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Clearance and the management of the Iraq Programme.
- At the same time, the Department of Political Affairs has been designated as focal point for strengthening post-conflict peace building, ensuring coherence in the activities of all relevant entities in the UN.
- The Iraq Programme has been established as a separate office in the Secretariat.
- WFP has supported the strengthening of OCHA. Two WFP staff were seconded in 1998;
- WFP provides information such as WFP emergency reports and press releases to the ReliefWeb and contributes to the Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) and uses the daily and weekly IRIN reports from Nairobi, Abidjan and Johannesburg.
- WFP believes that in its policy work OCHA should continue to focus on those cross-cutting themes which are of system-wide relevance and where coherence of approach among Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) members is necessary (e.g. humanitarian impact of sanctions, the humanitarian-human rights interface and internal displacement).
- OCHA has been more pro-active than its predecessor in the coordination of humanitarian response in complex emergencies.
- Although there has been progress in moving operational functions away from OCHA, there are still occasional discussions on a possible operational role for OCHA in emergencies.
- Action has been slow in the divestment to WFP of the management of: i) the Pisa warehouse facility, and ii) air operations in Afghanistan.
- Concerns continue to be expressed about issues such as the "reintegration gap", and humanitarian/ development partners often lack the resources to carry out the priority activities identified for recovery activities. Through the introduction of PRROs, WFP has taken steps to address this issue.
- Strengthening of an early warning system should build on existing organizational capacities for monitoring indicators and vulnerabilities and be accompanied by greater emphasis on contingency planning and rapid response.

Reform of the United Nations humanitarian sector

- OCHA has continued to strengthen humanitarian early warning, through the integration of the information collection, analysis and dissemination. For this purpose, the IRIN and the ReliefWeb site have been enhanced.

IASC

- The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), composed of all the key humanitarian agencies and NGOs and chaired by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, was to be strengthened and continue as the primary mechanism for the coordination of humanitarian assistance activities.
- A small Steering Committee of the IASC was to be established to enhance a rapid response capacity based on coherent policy. The Steering Committee was to be comprised of UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, UNDP, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and a representative of the NGO community.
- The IASC has endorsed recommendations related to the Secretary-General's review of the capacity of the UN system for humanitarian assistance, which addresses issues including internally displaced persons, resource mobilization, and field coordination mechanisms for complex emergencies (including the issue of the lead agency at the country level).
- WFP is a member and actively participates in the IASC and its Working Group and the weekly and bi-weekly IASC meetings held respectively in New York and Geneva.
- In addition, WFP is an active member of a number of Sub-Working Groups, many of which are referred to below.
- WFP co-chairs with UNICEF a Sub-Working Group on Gender and Humanitarian Response. This is an important inter-agency forum as it is the first IASC Sub-Working Group to focus on this topic.
- WFP is a member of the Inter-Agency Technical Group of Experts on Sanctions.
- WFP participates in IASC-organized consultations on early warning.
- Through the IASC Sub-Working Group on the CAP, WFP has increased its support both technical and personnel to OCHA (refer to WFP/EB.1/99/3-B).
- WFP takes steps to ensure that decisions taken within the IASC framework are shared with both headquarters and field-based staff, i.e. by informing all those concerned on the issues to be discussed at the meetings, inviting them to provide input into the briefing note and disseminating the minutes of meetings.
- As the IASC normally meets only twice a year, further efforts should be focused on ensuring that the agenda is more substantive, featuring subjects on which action/decision by Members is required. At the level of the IASC Working Group, there has been a more pro-active approach and WFP welcomes a greater focus on inter-agency issues related to natural disaster response. Earlier sharing of background documentation would facilitate consultation with staff in the field on issues to be discussed.
- Efforts to implement the Secretary-General's proposal for a small Steering Committee of the main operational agencies have not been successful. Indeed, more entities have been added to the IASC, either as members or standing invitees.

Reform of the United Nations humanitarian sector

- In October 1998, WFP distributed to its field and headquarters staff the IASC Recommendations Related to the Secretary-General's Review of the Capacity of the UN System for Humanitarian Assistance.

CAP

- OCHA, with its IASC partners, was to take steps to strengthen the CAP, as a mechanism to facilitate not only resource mobilization, but also programming coordination. The new process places emphasis on collaboration among all IASC members, Governments, NGOs and donors in developing the CAP and its common humanitarian action plan (CHAP); and its incorporating of emergency, humanitarian and post-conflict rehabilitation components.
- WFP's emergency operations (EMOPs) are being synchronized with Consolidated Appeals to simplify the donor/UN contribution and reporting processes (WFP/EB.1/99/3-B).
- WFP participated in 13 CAPs in 1998. WFP staff members have taken part in the inter-agency training workshop on CAP; and OCHA has trained a WFP staff member as CAP facilitator.
- Preparation of the 1999 CAPs provided a good opportunity to introduce some of the reforms envisioned and to identify additional enhancements which may be required.
- Two WFP staff members have been made available to the OCHA-led CAP facilitators' missions to support field staff in the formulation of the Common Humanitarian Action Plan and the CAP document.
- WFP is a regular participant in the Sub-Working Group meetings on CAP.
- Greater clarity on the relationship between the CAP and other resource and programming instruments is still required.
- The relationship between country-specific and regional CAPs should be further examined.
- OCHA-organized consultations among those members participating in the CAP and with donors to review the experience to date have been very useful. A regular review of the results of contributions made by donors under the CAP after an emergency would be helpful.
- Reforms which strengthen the inter-agency programming through the CAP must include the identification of goals and objectives against which to monitor, more effective monitoring of the success/constraints in implementing the agreed-upon programmes of action and impact assessment of such programmes.
- There should be clearer prioritization within the CAP of those activities for which funding is sought.

Internal displacement

- Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement were endorsed by the IASC, with a request to all members to share them with their Executive Boards and field staff.
- ERC to enhance coherence of approach among IASC members on issues related to internal displacement.
- An information note on the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (WFP/EB.A/98/INF.5) was disseminated to WFP's Executive Board and field staff in May 1998.
- OCHA has cited human resource constraints as the primary reason for not assuming a more active role on matters related to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in 1998.
- In WFP's view, more can be done at the level of the IASC Working Group to systematically review and try to address gaps in the protection of and assistance to IDPs.

Reform of the United Nations humanitarian sector

ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment

- A humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has been established.
- WFP contributed to the report and addressed the first humanitarian affairs segment at ECOSOC (New York, July 1998).
- Future humanitarian segments of ECOSOC should allow for more dialogue among the IASC, Humanitarian Coordinators and Member States.

Humanitarian Coordinator

- Efforts to strengthen the role of the Humanitarian Coordinator have been initiated. In December 1998, a consultation was organized by OCHA and UNDP, at which recommendations were made on the role of the Humanitarian/Resident Coordinator.
- Although normally the UNDP Resident Representative is designated Resident Coordinator, there are two cases where the WFP Country Director is the Humanitarian Coordinator (Angola and DPRK).
- Future Humanitarian Coordinator consultations could be expanded to include members of the Field Coordination Units. Although the need for OCHA to have a preferential relationship with the Humanitarian Coordinators was well recognized, IASC members should be more involved in the preparations for future consultations.
- The Humanitarian Coordinator must be a person who has expertise and skills in coordinating many agencies in an emergency setting.
- The present arrangements do not respond quickly and adequately to the need for replacement when a Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator is not doing his/her job well.

Collaboration with the World Bank

- In his reform proposal, the Secretary-General has called for "an appropriate distribution of responsibilities between the World Bank Group and the United Nations for the benefit of programme countries. This should take the form of a functional rationalization on a complementary and cooperative manner between the work of the United Nations and the World Bank".
- The UN and the World Bank have identified poverty eradication as a primary objective for development cooperation and attempts to coordinate are currently under way.
 - WFP collaborates with the World Bank at the country level in several countries, such as Bangladesh, China, Egypt, India, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique and Senegal in the areas of community nutrition, household food security, education, agricultural development, rehabilitation of rural lands, and infrastructure and forestry activities.
 - WFP is exploring the possibilities of further strengthening this collaboration for development and post-conflict situations.
 - It is expected that collaboration with the World Bank will be enhanced as part of the UNDAF process and as part of the World Bank's new initiative, the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF).

Reform of the United Nations humanitarian sector

- The UNDG is promoting efforts to strengthen cooperation and achieve greater rationalization and coordination between the UN and the Bretton Woods Institutions in the area of development cooperation. Initiatives to improve UNDG and World Bank cooperation and complementarities in the area of technical assistance and capacity-building are being explored; and discussions are being held between UNDG and the World Bank on possible cooperation in the establishment of a global knowledge network to facilitate information exchange/sharing on key development issues.
- The World Bank has offered utilization by UN agencies of World Bank teleconference facilities.
- Following a proposal by WFP, pilot exercises have been undertaken in Mali and Viet Nam to explore possibilities for building an effective interface between the UNDAF and the World Bank's Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) projects.
- The World Bank has recently introduced the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) which the World Bank will be piloting in 19 Consultative Group countries, in consultation and partnership with the UN. The CDF is intended as a country-level development strategy tool, for the purpose of ensuring an appropriate balance between the macro-economic development of a country on the one side and structural, social and human development on the other.
- Discussion are ongoing on partnerships between the UN and World Bank and linkages between the CCA and UNDAF and the CDF at the field level.

Reform of the United Nations humanitarian sector

Human rights

- As part of his reform programme, the Secretary-General has taken a number of initiatives to help realize the UN's mandate to promote and protect human rights in all their dimensions.
- The Geneva-based programmes on human rights have been combined into a single office, headed by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) has been strengthened.
- The Secretary-General has called for the issue of human rights to cut across each of the four substantive fields of the Secretariat's work programme: peace and security; economic and social affairs, development cooperation, and humanitarian affairs. As such UNHCHR is represented on all four of the Executive Committees;
- The right to development has been identified as a major theme by the UNDG and a working group has been constituted to examine operational implications and provide guidance to RCs and country teams in this regard.
- The UNDG Working Group on the Right to Development reviewed the provisional UNDAF guidelines and made proposals on how to better reflect human rights in the UNDAF process.
- In November 1998, WFP participated in a two-day Consultation on the Right to Adequate Food and Nutrition, organized by the UNHCHR and hosted by FAO. The objective of the meeting was to better define and propose ways to implement and realize the right to food.
- WFP is a member of the UNDG Sub-Group on the Right to Development, which has the mandate to provide guidance to RCs and country teams and input to the UNDAF process for an improved promotion, protection and implementation of the right to development.
- WFP actively participated in a three-day UN/DAC workshop on the subject of A Rights-Based Approach to Women's Empowerment and Advancement and Gender Equality, which was organized by the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (UNDAW). In October 1998, WFP chaired a working group on the subject of Women's Right to Food: Implications for Programming.
- In 1998, WFP's Executive Managers have addressed the issue of human rights in several bodies, including the General Assembly (Third Committee), ECOSOC, and the Commission on Human Rights;
- WFP has contributed a chapter on the Right to Food in Emergencies to an FAO Booklet entitled "The Right to Food in Theory and Practice", which has been published on the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- The work WFP has undertaken in the area of gender mainstreaming should be viewed through the lens of mainstreaming human rights.