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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE SUMMARY REPORT OF THE END-OF-TERM EVALUATION OF WFP'S GENDER POLICY (2003–2007): ENHANCED COMMITMENTS TO WOMEN TO ENSURE FOOD SECURITY

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for consideration.

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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BACKGROUND

1. This document presents the Secretariat's response to the recommendations of the Summary Report of the End-of-Term Evaluation of WFP's Gender Policy 2003–2007: Enhanced Commitments to Women to Ensure Food Security.
2. The evaluation found that unlike many other United Nations organizations and donor agencies, WFP went beyond rhetoric to require action at the operational level; delivered significant support through training initiatives and set measurable targets for monitoring; and laid strong foundations for gender mainstreaming by enhancing the visibility and inclusion of women.
3. The evaluation noted that understanding of gender analysis for innovation in local contexts was limited, despite the policy and training initiatives introduced in WFP over the past five years. Enhancing gender expertise, providing adequate resources at country offices and improving understanding of gender roles and relations would make a significant contribution to increasing the resilience of households and their ability to achieve food security.
4. Recognizing the importance of implementing the recommendations of the report with a view to improving the effectiveness of future gender mainstreaming policy and interventions, the Secretariat will take action accordingly.
5. The Secretariat's responses to the recommendations are presented in the matrix.



ANNEX: RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE MATRIX

Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>I. Take immediate steps to communicate the Enhanced Commitments to Women (ECW) and gender equality.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Issue the new gender policy with strong senior management endorsement. b) Develop and disseminate a gender-integrated version of WFP's Strategic Plan (2008—2011). c) Improve gender content of WFP's public statements by coaching public information staff in gender mainstreaming. 	<p>Policy, Planning and Strategy Division (OEDP); Communications and Public Policy Strategy Division (OEDC)</p>	<p>The Secretariat agrees with this recommendation and believes that a supportive policy environment is important for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. During the 2009–2010 biennium, a new gender policy is to be approved and a corporate gender action plan is to be developed and implemented, reaffirming WFP's commitment to these concepts. This commitment is also demonstrated by the linkage of the gender policy with the Strategic Objectives in the new Strategic Plan. The corporate gender action plan will set out action to address capacity development, accountability, advocacy, coherence, coordination, knowledge and information sharing, and human and financial resources to promote gender mainstreaming. The Secretariat will develop guidance to ensure that gender perspectives are reflected in the Country Strategy Document (CSD) process. Public information staff will be trained in gender advocacy; corporate messages on gender will be developed for incorporation into all public statements.</p>	<p>May 2009</p>
<p>II. Build gender mainstreaming capacity by enhancing training and guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Gender mainstreaming requires staff and partners who understand gender analysis. The new gender policy should include a strategic action plan for capacity-building and a list of requirements that may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) basic training for all new staff and partners, perhaps through an interactive CD-ROM such as that used for training on sexual harassment; ii) training for country directors, deputy country directors and programme managers; iii) multiple options for the field, incorporating professional gender expertise and learning from experience; 	<p>OEDP; Human Resources Division (OMH); Programme Design and Support Division (OMX)</p>	<p>The Secretariat agrees with this recommendation and believes that capacity development will ensure that field staff are able to support gender mainstreaming. Training needs will be assessed to identify the staff to be trained and areas where training is needed. A training plan will be developed and implemented to increase capacity in gender analysis, gender audit and the use of gender information in policy and programming decisions and learning. The Secretariat will collaborate with academia on gender research that will inform its policies and programmes.</p>	<p>December 2010</p>

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<p>iv) an alternative to corporate training programmes such as grants or vouchers: country directors could access resources with which to recruit gender experts for technical assistance or training; and</p> <p>v) opportunities for gender experts in regional bureaux to provide technical expertise and promote exchanges among countries in the region.</p> <p>b) Monitoring and evaluation should be a basis for learning and innovation. All programmes should be expected to analyse data and invite staff and cooperating partners to share gender-related observations, concerns and experiences.</p> <p>c) WFP demonstrated its willingness to take innovative approaches with the ECW. It should use its new gender policy to encourage forward thinking and collaboration with other agencies to research the impacts of different approaches while supporting sustainable food security, focusing on government capacity and the handing over of programmes, and on household-based resilience. There is no justification for claiming, as many do, that it is difficult to determine whether programmes benefit target groups and then claiming, without verification, that they are effective. There are rapid and cost-effective ways of providing acceptable assessments of outcomes and impacts that are well within WFP's financial, professional and data-collection capacities.</p>			
<p>III. Re-orient the roles of Headquarters, country offices and regional bureaux.</p> <p>a) Headquarters should concentrate on: i) making it clear that WFP takes gender mainstreaming seriously; ii) generating commitment to gender mainstreaming by engaging with staff and sharing successes; iii) mobilizing and managing technical</p>	<p>Operations and Management Department (OM); OEDP; Finance and Legal Division (FL)</p>	<p>The Secretariat agrees with the recommendations. Headquarters and the regional bureaux will continue to provide policy guidance and technical support for country offices. The Secretariat also recognizes the importance of country office ownership of actions to achieve gender equality and empower women, and encourages country offices to include gender activities in project budgets. The proposed gender</p>	<p>December 2009</p>





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<p>and financial support for country offices, sub-offices and cooperating partners; and iv) collecting and sharing reports from the field. Other aspects of gender mainstreaming should be left to context-driven needs and initiatives.</p> <p>b) Country offices should be responsible for: i) undertaking or gaining access to gender analyses; ii) formulating locally appropriate targeted measures and developing relevant and meaningful indicators; iii) providing gender-related training or expertise; and iv) identifying resources and attracting gender-oriented funding from country-focused donors.</p> <p>c) To shift funding and control to the local level, a mechanism such as a grant fund could be used – the Gender Funding Facility of the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) is an example - to which country offices could submit proposals for gender-focused initiatives. Funds could be leveraged to encourage Rome-based agencies to share resources.</p>		<p>policy requires country offices to develop action plans that reflect country-specific contexts. The Secretariat will help country offices to build gender planning and analysis capacity to inform programme design and decision-making. Management will make a financial commitment to support gender activities at the country level.</p> <p>The Secretariat will follow up on this recommendation and seek extra-budgetary funding to establish a gender facility fund to help country offices develop and implement gender initiatives. Country offices will be helped to develop and use country-level gender indicators under the results-based management approach. Country offices will use performance indicators agreed by United Nations country teams to report progress in achieving gender equality.</p>	

ANNEX: RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE MATRIX

Recommendations	Action by	Management response and action taken	Implementation deadline
<p>Overall Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Rather than expecting improvements in all areas at all levels, WFP should focus on priority areas. In particular, qualified women should be found for the highest levels of WFP leadership and for contexts where reaching female beneficiaries requires female staff (e.g. conservative countries and environments with high levels of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV)). b) To recruit and retain qualified women, WFP must address systemic issues. The will to recruit women must come from hiring managers and field-based HR staff. Some staff need to understand the ways in which women are critical for delivering food assistance; others understand the issues but need to acquire skills and receive support. c) Many qualified men and women have entered the United Nations through national recruitment in recent years. WFP has a large pool of experienced nationally recruited women food aid monitors and programme assistants: it could address some gender balance issues by removing systemic obstacles to training and promoting them. 	<p>OMH and OEDP</p>	<p>The Secretariat agrees with the recommendation.</p> <p>OMH is developing a strategy that addresses the recommendations of the gender evaluation and considers action to increase the percentage of women in the WFP workforce.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CSD	Country Strategy Document
ECW	Enhanced Commitments to Women
FL	Finance and Legal Division
OEDC	Communications and Public Policy Strategy Division
OEDP	Policy, Planning and Strategy Division
OM	Operations and Management Department
OMH	Human Resources Division
OMX	Programme Design and Support Division
SGBV	sexual and gender-based violence
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme