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SUMMARY OF THE WORK OF THE THIRD REGULAR SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, 2001

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, contained in document WFP/EB.3/2001/14.

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CURRENT AND FUTURE STRATEGIC ISSUES

Current and Future Strategic Issues (2001/EB.3/1)

1. The Executive Director made an oral presentation on the resources, management and programme strategic issues facing WFP.
2. She reported that at the session of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), held in New York on 19–20 October, it had become clear that the organizations of the United Nations system would have to redouble coordination efforts as humanitarian-related work progressively touched a broader group of agencies that might not have been affected until relatively recently.
3. The Executive Director pointed out that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank had predicted that a worldwide economic slowdown could cause more than 10 million more people to fall under the one-dollar-a-day minimum, and be more prone to disease and more affected by inadequate food intake. The impact of such a slowdown could also affect the ability of donor countries to help those in need. WFP might need to face the consequences of such a slowdown both in terms of increasing needs and decreasing available resources.
4. She pointed out that with many United Nations operations experiencing severe shortfalls in the resourcing of non-food items over the long term, how the United Nations addressed non-food item needs would have an impact on the work of WFP. The Executive Director expressed her intention to address this issue as part of her report to the Secretary-General on her missions as Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa. She stated that she would make the relevant parts of that report available to the Board and that, within the context of WFP activities, the Board might wish to consider the issue during its review of the protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) programme category.
5. The Executive Director drew the Board's attention to the ongoing emergencies in Angola, the Great Lakes region, the Democratic Republic of Congo, West Africa, Central America, the Balkans, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Horn of Africa.
6. From the inter-agency perspective, there were a number of international conferences re-scheduled to take place in 2002. The Executive Director expressed the wish that governments would take advantage of the opportunity presented by the conference on Financing for Development (scheduled for March 2002, in Mexico) to come up with concrete ideas on how to improve the state of development around the world.
7. The Executive Director highlighted a number of achievements and challenges related to the staffing of WFP, particularly those regarding gender balance and equitable geographic representation. Furthermore, she informed the Board on the measures that she had begun taking since the departure of Mr Namanga Ngongi, former Deputy Executive Director, to ensure a smooth transition process. She reiterated her strong commitment and that of the Executive Staff in continuing efforts to run an efficient organization.



8. The Board congratulated the Executive Director and the staff of the Programme for the award of the Nobel Peace Prize. Members and observers welcomed the Executive Director's efforts in the area of inter-agency coordination at the Headquarters and field levels and supported further work towards harmonization with other United Nations Funds and Programmes. Furthermore, the Board looked forward to receiving information on issues related to the resourcing of non-food items emanating from the Executive Director's report to the Secretary-General on her missions as Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa.

9. The Board heard a statement from the President of the Executive Committee of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, H.E. Mr Johan Molander, Ambassador of Sweden to the United Nations Organizations based in Geneva. Ambassador Molander thanked the Board for its invitation to observe its proceedings, expressed strong support for all inter-agency coordination efforts and exhorted governments to maintain coordinated and coherent positions vis-à-vis all agencies. He expressed great interest in the governance project of the Board and looked forward to receiving information on the results-based management debate.

POLICY ISSUES

Progress Report on Results-based Management, October 2001 (2001/EB.3/2)

10. The Board welcomed the Progress Report on Results-based Management, October 2001, submitted for information and subsequently selected for discussion. WFP's commitment to results-based management (RBM) was lauded, as was the linking of RBM to the governance project.
11. Some members noted that, in future, WFP would have to extend its objectives and measure results at the impact level. However, other members noted the great difficulty in identifying and using realistic indicators for impact-level achievements, stressing that WFP should be cautious in attempting to measure impact.
12. Several members emphasized the need for extensive training in RBM for use at all levels of operations—from planning to implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. It was felt that this training should be given not only to WFP staff, but also to host-country counterparts, since the adoption of a results-oriented approach by WFP's partners was essential to the success of the RBM approach.
13. One delegation suggested a prioritization scheme, under which RBM would be applied first to projects using resources valuing over US\$5 million. Several members recognized the importance of the logical framework approach, but noted that it was not sufficient, since RBM was not only about systems, but also about changing the culture of an organization.
14. The President, in her role as a member of the Informal Steering Group, noted that RBM had to be considered in the context of the governance project, and that the Board should expect to see RBM evolve together with the new governance tools.



15. In addressing the concerns of the Board, the Secretariat pointed out that RBM was not a separate budget item for WFP, as it was being integrated into all stages of existing operational mechanisms. Future submissions to the Board on RBM would expand upon the link between RBM and the WFP Information Network and Global System (WINGS), vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM) and decentralization.
16. In conclusion, the Board noted that RBM was an integral part of several key governance tools; that the Secretariat should examine the possibility of extending results indicators to the impact level; that training in RBM would be essential; and that RBM was a tool, not a goal.

WFP's Follow-up to the Millennium Summit, Its Role in the World Food Summit: Five Years Later, and the United Nations Special Session on Children (2001/EB.3/3)

17. The Board expressed support and appreciation for the WFP development and emergency operations that contributed to the goals of the Millennium Summit, in particular WFP's support for Africa. It noted that a more strategic approach was needed for integrating those goals in WFP's work.
18. The Board noted also that the documents should focus more on specific goals and on identifying how WFP's work related to the Secretary-General's road map for implementing the Millennium goals.
19. Moreover, the Board was interested in understanding better how WFP interacted with other agencies and partners in the pursuit of the Millennium development goals. It also requested information on the changes the organization had made or planned to make to meet those goals.
20. It requested that a future paper be presented to the Board on WFP's strategic approach to realizing the goals and objectives of the Millennium Declaration.

Guidelines for the Meetings of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme (2001/EB.3/4)

21. The Board praised the document as original and of great value. It went on to discuss the various issues related to governance, in particular the treatment of documents presented for approval, for consideration, and for information. The Board agreed that items submitted for approval were to be approved and those submitted for consideration were to be discussed.
22. Some members felt that the Board should avoid discussing items presented to it for information, as this took up valuable Board time and led to longer meetings. However, other members pointed out that had that rule been applied at the present session, some important and valuable issues would not have been raised. In general, the Board felt that controlling the length of such discussions was important.
23. During a report on the work of the Steering Group on Governance, it was suggested that: (i) the Decisions and Recommendations document include only decisions, and the document's title be changed accordingly; and (ii) that recommendations be reserved for the Summary of the Work of the Executive Board document. Therefore, the President suggested that the draft decisions in all documents include only a decision, and not recommendations. However, special attention should be given to the use of recommendations in the case of the common format of the Executive Board's report to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).



24. One member suggested that the role of the Rapporteur—as the link between the Secretariat and the Board—be reassessed, and that the Board consider electing a Rapporteur on an annual basis. It was also suggested that the post of Deputy Rapporteur be created, in order to assist the Rapporteur in this most demanding duty. The President suggested that this issue be discussed at future Bureau meetings and brought before the Board again at a later date.

FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

Second Progress Report on the Implementation of Recommendations in the 1998–1999 Audit Report of the External Auditor (2001/EB.3/5)

25. The Board welcomed the detailed and comprehensive report and underscored the importance of the following issues discussed therein:
- cash management;
 - investment management and its outsourcing with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) or third parties;
 - decentralization;
 - actual versus budget cost reports in WINGS for greater transparency; and
 - implementation of full-cost recovery by all donors.
26. Addressing the questions raised during the discussion, the Secretariat explained that it would implement the recommendations of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Finance Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) that were addressed to the Secretariat. In February 2002, the Secretariat would present to the Board detailed reports on cash and investment management, and later that year on the evaluation of decentralization. On outsourcing the monitoring of investment managers' performance, the Secretariat pointed out that it was aware of the ongoing experts' review of IFAD and that it awaited the results. However, it had not abandoned the idea of outsourcing in the interest of inter-agency cooperation with FAO and IFAD. In the meantime, the Secretariat had set up mechanisms to ensure that the performance of investment managers was properly monitored. The Secretariat confirmed that WINGS could report on actual expenditures and disbursements versus budgets, for greater transparency in assessing the use of contributions. It went on to inform the Board that a separate report on cost analysis and cost containment in WINGS, to be presented during this session, would explain how WINGS would enable the management and accounting of full-cost recovery.
27. In response to questions raised by members, the External Auditor confirmed that WFP's implementation of the recommendations was generally satisfactory. Some recommendations, such as those concerning decentralization and others linked to WINGS, had a longer time frame for their implementation. When asked for her opinion on WINGS functionalities, the External Auditor explained that WINGS was an integrated solution and, in theory, had functionalities that could allow real-time access to data and could meet WFP's information needs. The External Auditor said that they would evaluate WINGS at a later date, when the process of migrating from the old to the new system was completed. Finally, the External Auditor confirmed that they would also implement the FAO Finance



Committee's recommendation that the External Auditor prioritize audit recommendations in the final report on the 2000–2001 biennial accounts.

Appointment of the External Auditor of WFP for 2002–2005: Final Report of the Evaluation Panel (2001/EB.3/6)

28. The Chairperson of the Evaluation Panel presented to the Board the outcome of the evaluation, recommending the Comptroller and Auditor-General of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as the External Auditor of WFP for 2002–2005. The Board expressed its appreciation of the work done by the panel and supported the panel's decision. It praised the fact that there had been seven applicants, thus offering a wide field of choice.
29. Some members raised concerns over the scoring methodology and selection criteria used, questioning how international experience and unit cost were evaluated, and suggesting that the process be reviewed for possible improvement. Furthermore, it was suggested that the panel make its final recommendation only after receiving the comments of the FAO Finance Committee and the ACABQ. A member commented that the report of the Evaluation Panel should disclose the name of only one candidate, no matter how close the final scores.
30. After deliberation, the Board requested that the methodology for scoring candidates be reviewed.

The WFP Biennial Budget for the Period 2002–2003 (2001/EB.3/7)

31. During discussion of WFP's biennial budget estimates for the period 2002–2003, as submitted by the Executive Director, and the comments of the FAO Finance Committee and the ACABQ, the Board:
 - a) expressed its appreciation for the clear, concise and well-structured presentation of the budget document;
 - b) took note of the operational levels, including the projected expenditure components by programme and cost category, as outlined in Table 2 (paragraph 32);
 - c) acknowledged that the development of this document took into account the relevant factors outlined by the ACABQ and FAO Finance Committee;
 - d) requested regular feedback on the costs and benefits of the decentralization process in WFP; and
 - e) encouraged WFP to continue to seek cost-saving measures in all programme categories and to strengthen collaboration and cooperation with other United Nations agencies.
32. The Executive Director proposed that the indirect support cost (ISC) rates be reviewed, in consultation with the donors, during the Third Regular Session of the Executive Board, in October 2002.
33. Several members expressed concern over the availability of resources for development activities and encouraged WFP to implement fully the recommendations of the Enabling Development policy, with a view to increasing the availability of food aid for development activities.



WFP Information Network and Global System (WINGS) for Cost Analysis and Cost Containment (2001/EB.3/8)

34. In introducing the information document, the Secretariat highlighted that the document was not the full report on the implementation of the Financial Management Improvement Programme (FMIP), which would come after the completion of FMIP at the end of 2001. It was pointed out that the current document focused on newly installed integrated information systems, which comprised the largest component of FMIP, and on how such systems would provide information on the utilization of donor contributions and the financial implementation of WFP projects. Members were also provided with clarification on how WINGS could be used to contain costs, such as in the case of local food procurement.
35. Members expressed appreciation for the efforts that went into the FMIP and the development of WINGS. It was noted that WINGS was a good tool for cost control because it made information available in a more timely manner. However, it was stressed that cost containment should be part of management culture, and that WINGS was a tool with which to monitor and control costs. Members expressed their understanding that there was a need for the system to settle down, and for people to be trained to use it. Members also expressed their expectations that WINGS would provide information to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of FMIP against specified benchmarks.
36. The Secretariat agreed with the comments of the members that the system provided the tools but that cost containment required a change in management culture. It was felt that WINGS would be a great investment in developing benchmarks against which efficiency and effectiveness could be measured or assessed. The Executive Director stated that WINGS could provide accurate information on the utilization of funds, which had not been very transparent in previous systems. She also indicated to the Board that in the process of migrating information from the old system to the new system, some surplus of funds from closed projects had been identified. The Secretariat would be proposing a use for those funds at the Board's First Regular Session, in February 2002.

EVALUATION REPORTS

Summary Report of the Evaluation of Emergency Operations in East Timor (2001/EB.3/9)

37. The Board welcomed the constructively critical report of WFP's emergency operations in East Timor, noting that, overall, the operation had been successful in a difficult environment. In that context, members expressed appreciation for the frank identification of the weaknesses in programming and monitoring; the limited local involvement in the decision-making process; and the risk of an adverse impact on local food production. The need to strengthen WFP's capacity for regional disaster preparedness was emphasized. Some members welcomed the proposal of a two-step process in the approval of WFP emergency operations, especially in situations where assessments were problematic because of lack of access or data.
38. The Secretariat responded that the East Timor evaluation had been a rigorous examination of a complex emergency operation carried out under exceptional circumstances. Many generic lessons had been identified for future corporate consideration and action. It was hoped that monitoring of future similar operations would be facilitated



by the use of the new monitoring-and-evaluation guidelines that were currently being field tested. It was pointed out that finding sufficient experienced programming and monitoring staff was always a challenge because of the number of sizable emergency operations in other countries. This was being addressed by WFP on a corporate level. WFP was now phasing out of East Timor and was planning to leave behind a nascent capacity to deal with small-scale natural disasters. Meanwhile, the new Regional Bureau for Asia was enhancing its regional disaster preparedness and response capacity.

Summary Report of the Evaluation of Sudan PRO 04168.5 and PRRO 06189.0 (WIS nos. 4168.05 and 6189.00) (2001/EB.3/10)

39. While the Board welcomed the useful report, one member felt that it lacked clarity and clear conclusions, being descriptive rather than analytical. A major issue was the need for improved WFP-UNHCR cooperation and information-sharing at the field level. Some members queried the extent to which the evaluation had been a joint WFP-UNHCR undertaking and indicated that they would have welcomed a UNHCR presence at the discussions. WFP was encouraged to conclude as soon as possible the latest version of the global Memorandum of Understanding with UNHCR. Some members asked for more analysis of the need for food aid for the longer-term refugee population. The Board noted the need for both more non-food items to deter the sale of food and environmental food-for-work activities. It was pointed out that since the writing of the report, appreciable repatriation had taken place and was ongoing.
40. In response, the Secretariat acknowledged the lack of analysis in the report. It was mentioned that the evaluation had been conducted jointly with UNHCR, which had seconded a staff member to the mission, but it was hoped that there could be more comprehensive joint ownership of evaluation results in the future. For clarification, it was explained that the evaluation had covered two caseloads. Repatriation was ongoing, and the combined caseload was expected to fall to around 20,000 over the next year or so. Meanwhile, most of the recommendations made by the mission regarding local-level implementation had been acted upon.

Summary Report of the Mid-term Evaluation of Cameroon Project 04387.1 (WIS no. 4387.01) (2001/EB.3/11)

41. The Board welcomed this useful and frank report, which underlined some of the weaknesses currently facing the primary education system in Cameroon. Concern was expressed that WFP food aid might not have a longer-term impact, owing to the lack of non-food inputs, and the Board encouraged greater collaboration with other development partners, such as the World Bank and UNESCO. It was noted that funds made available under the Heavily Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) Debt Initiative should contribute to poverty reduction and the improvement of national education. It was stressed that to the extent possible, the local purchase of food should be encouraged. Concern was expressed that lack of direct support cost (DSC) funds had limited the country office's project monitoring capacity.
42. The Secretariat noted that, at the time of the project's approval there had been some scepticism about its national educational framework. It was pointed out that this was during a period of difficult economic adjustment, when the Government was under pressure to reduce public-sector expenditure. Despite the educational framework's weaknesses, there were now encouraging signs of progress, such as the recent re-opening of 22 teacher training colleges and a greater willingness on the part of the donor community to provide



support to Cameroon. Monitoring and data collection for the project were currently being improved. On the question of the lack of DSC funds, the Secretariat suggested that this could be discussed with the Executive Board during 2002, as it was a fundamental problem, facing many of the smaller country offices in particular.

Summary Report of the Evaluation of Country Programme—Bolivia (1997–2001) (2001/EB.3/12)

43. The Board praised the report and noted that all its recommendations were reflected in the Country Strategy Outline (CSO). The Board noted that the recommendations were consistent with the conclusions of a recent visit to the country by Executive Board members. Several members observed that beneficiary targeting required improvement, and that available in-country VAM data could help achieve that end. It was felt that more concise and measurable indicators would also contribute to an improvement. The Board stressed the importance of continuing to seek strategic partnerships with technical bodies, to improve not only activity monitoring but also overall coordination between WFP's main partners. The Board highlighted the need for better linkages among WFP's various in-country interventions, and requested additional information on programme impact. The Government's collaboration and financial contribution were commended, together with the high level of WFP staff dedication.
44. The Secretariat acknowledged that the Country Programme (CP) for Bolivia was one of the first to be designed at a time when guidelines were rather limited. However, the excellent relationship between WFP and the Government and other partners had been instrumental in allowing adequate measure to be taken for early improvement of targeting mechanisms and monitoring practices. WFP would continue to work on improving coordination between key players, making use of VAM techniques to target the most needy families, and monitoring and reporting on results.

Summary Report of the Mid-term Evaluation of Country Programme—Haiti (1998–2002) (2001/EB.3/13)

45. The Board expressed its appreciation for the report. One member emphasized its agreement with the conclusion that food commitments under the new CP should not be increased above the current levels. The Canadian delegation expressed appreciation for having been able to include an officer from the Canadian Embassy in Haiti on the evaluation team. The Secretariat acknowledged this and extended an invitation to other members of the Board to participate in future evaluations in a similar manner.

Summary Report of the Mid-term Evaluation of Country Programme—Mali (1998–2002) (2001/EB.3/14)¹

46. The Board expressed overall support for the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. A number of members noted with concern that the limited DSC available for small CPs continued to be a constraint on effective implementation and monitoring of CP activities. The Secretariat agreed to discuss this broad issue further with the Board in 2002.

¹ The Country Programme dates for Mali are 1999–2002 (not 1998–2002, as stated in the Executive Board summary report).



Summary Report of the Mid-term Evaluation of Country Programme— Zambia (1998–2002) (2001/EB.3/15)

47. The Board expressed its appreciation for the well-prepared report and for the fact that its recommendations were reflected in the new CSO document. However, some delegations felt that the mission should have given more attention to the national food security context in which food aid was being justified for Zambia, and to how the Government was contributing to the partnership. Several delegations drew attention to the findings on gender and to the fact that participation in food-for-asset projects could add to women's work loads.
48. The Secretariat responded that the standard Terms of Reference for CP evaluations would be reviewed to ensure that they took into account the overall national food security context in which a CP operated. It was pointed out that full reports of the evaluation missions, which gave more detailed findings, were available (in the original working language only) for information.

OPERATIONAL MATTERS

Country Strategy Outline—Bolivia (2001/EB.3/16)

49. Several members praised the Government's excellent contribution to the ongoing CP. They noted that Bolivia was a beneficiary of the HIPC Debt Initiative, which deserved support. They also noted that the recommendations of the Board members' visit, as well as those of the evaluation mission, had been taken into consideration in formulating the strategy for the next CP.
50. One member recommended that links between emergency operations (EMOPS)/PRROs and WFP development activities be clearly incorporated in the CP. Several members praised the inclusion of the CSO in the Bolivia Strategy for Poverty Reduction.
51. One member mentioned the evident coordination with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the importance of supporting disaster-prone countries. The Board noted the importance of strengthening partnerships with technical partners.

Country Strategy Outline—Haiti (2001/EB.3/17)

52. The Board commended the country office for its coordination with other United Nations agencies, bilateral donors and NGOs.
53. Members noted the extreme level of food insecurity in Haiti and acknowledged the need for continued assistance. However, two members expressed the view that, because of the operating environment, food commitments should be maintained at their current level. The importance of gathering VAM data for the preparation of the CP was underlined. The country office was encouraged to increase the number of staff and its capacity to strengthen monitoring and evaluation. It was felt that in the preparation of the CP, the HIV/AIDS component should be strategically mainstreamed.
54. The Board encouraged the Government to increase its support to CP activities.

Country Strategy Outline—Mali (2001/EB.3/18)



55. The Secretariat confirmed that the CP would be targeted geographically to food-insecure areas of the country. WFP had conducted studies to understand better the prevailing complex social structures in these areas. The knowledge obtained from those studies and from VAM studies would assist in the design of the CP.
56. Some members suggested that WFP include EMOPs and PRROs in the deliberations of CSOs. The Secretariat indicated that for countries where WFP had such ongoing operations, mention should be made of them in the CSOs. In the case of Mali, there was no plan to extend the PRRO, and no EMOPs were foreseen, but the development approach in the CSO was to make provisions for disaster-mitigation activities, and to support the Government in strengthening early-warning capacities.
57. Several members commented that DSC resources were inadequate in countries implementing relatively small operations. The Secretariat acknowledged that this was the case in Mali and that the CP would be built around strategic partnerships in order to ensure non-food requirements. However, it was felt that under current financial procedures, it would be difficult to cover expenses connected with the recommendation to maintain adequate staff levels and introduce comprehensive monitoring-and-evaluation systems.
58. A number of members commented favourably on the positive support that WFP had provided to Mali's Cereal Market Restructuring Programme (PRMC) (the cornerstone of the national food-security system). WFP was encouraged to continue the local purchase of sorghum and millet when appropriate, and to work closely during the preparation of the CP with partners concerning Niger River utilization modalities and the expansion of primary school infrastructure.

Country Strategy Outline—Zambia (2001/EB.3/19)

59. The Board endorsed the CSO, noting that the strategy and objectives outlined in the document were in line with government priorities, and with WFP's Enabling Development policy. The Board noted with appreciation the efforts to address the challenges related to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which had hit Zambia particularly hard. One member made reference to the World Bank/IMF Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) on Zambia, which the country office had been encouraged to take note of while preparing the CP. The Secretariat responded that the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) had been actively involved in the PRSP, and that WFP, as a member of the UNCT, would continue to follow the debates.
60. Several members emphasized the need to increase the involvement of local authorities and populations in order to achieve the objectives of the future CP. The Secretariat assured the Board that the CP would emphasize partnerships.
61. Several members reiterated the importance of the targeting and prioritization of activities, along with the necessity of VAM analysis for doing so. The Secretariat informed the Board that HIV/AIDS-affected households and orphans would be the main target groups for the future CP.
62. Some members pointed out that Zambia's agricultural potential was considerable and that food aid should therefore be used carefully in rural areas, while addressing underlying problems through appropriate agricultural and rural policy measures.
63. One member urged the country office to provide more details on monitoring and evaluation in its forthcoming CP. Another member commended the country office for its



active relationship with donors in the country, noting that this relationship helped stimulate both ongoing policy discussions and the prioritization of operations.

64. The Board encouraged the Secretariat to use food aid to improve women's conditions, in collaboration with national authorities. The Secretariat responded that a national gender policy existed and that WFP would work with the Government to integrate gender aspects into the CP.

Country Programme—Malawi (2002–2006) (2001/EB.3/20)

65. The Executive Board approved the Country Programme for Malawi (2002–2006), noting that the document was well prepared and fully reflected the Government's development priorities. One region's representative expressed appreciation that logical frameworks were required for all new CPs, and summaries of them annexed to the documents.
66. Several members emphasized the need to ensure, before entering into the CP agreement and operational contracts, that appropriate institutional and management frameworks were in place to implement planned activities. The Secretariat commented that WFP was working closely with the Advisory Committee for the Malawi CP, headed by the Government, in order to ensure that national programme coordinators were assigned by the Government to each CP activity, with a view to strengthening institutional capacity.
67. Recognizing the continuing widespread poverty in Malawi, and considering the country's high HIV/AIDS and malnutrition rates, several members stated that the CP was well designed and focused. One member suggested that the WFP regional bureau work with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in defining strategies and actions to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic, not only for Malawi but also for other countries in the southern Africa region. The Secretariat welcomed this suggestion and stated that the regional bureau would coordinate closely with SADC, not only on HIV/AIDS but also on food security and other issues of common concern.
68. Responding to one member's request for clarification of the term "child-headed household", the Secretariat explained that the phenomenon of children heading families comprising their younger siblings was common in Malawi because of the high number of AIDS orphans.
69. One member called for a more sustainable WFP intervention in Malawi. The Secretariat informed the Board that support to income-generating activities aimed at assisting beneficiaries in becoming more self-reliant, such as the Soybean and Vegetable Seed Revolving Fund, would be given key attention in the next five-year programme. While appreciating the Government's efforts to implement the national safety net programme, a few members considered that the activities of the CP were not well integrated, and they urged WFP to work with its United Nations partners to help improve coordination, and to prioritize and implement the various programme activities. The Secretariat assured the Board that the new national safety net programme was being developed in close partnership with WFP and other United Nations agencies.

Country Programme—Mozambique (2002–2006) (2001/EB.3/21)

70. The Board approved the Country Programme, noting that the strategy and objectives outlined in the document were in line with government priorities, and with WFP's Enabling Development policy and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in Mozambique.



71. Several members noted the country's economic progress and the efforts that had been made to address the challenges arising from the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which had hit Mozambique particularly hard. The Secretariat commented that addressing HIV/AIDS would be a priority area of the CP. The recommendations by Board members who visited Mozambique in June 2001 would be taken into consideration when implementing the CP.
72. One member suggested that the effort to increase girls' enrolment for the second level of primary education be documented as a case study. Another member raised the need to strengthen collaboration with FAO, particularly in the Special Programme for Food Security. The Secretariat informed the Board that WFP worked closely with FAO to ensure the synchronization of programmes and to avoid overlaps.
73. Several members noted the flexibility of the Food for Development Fund activity, its community-participation approach and its disaster-mitigation objective, but one member was concerned about district-level capacity to implement the activity. The Secretariat informed the Board that a current mission to appraise the Food for Development Fund activity was also considering the inclusion of more national partners with a view to strengthening district-level capacity.
74. Replying to a query concerning WFP's comparative advantage in assisting community school construction, the Secretariat explained that schools were community assets. One member asked that more attention be given to disaster response, coordination and monitoring. The Secretariat assured the Board that those elements would be included, and carefully designed and implemented. The Board expressed its appreciation for the progress made by the Government and WFP in developing a national food aid strategy.

Country Programme—Sudan (2002–2006) (2001/EB.3/22)

75. The Executive Board approved the Country Programme for Sudan (2002–2006), noting that it was in line with the strategic focus of the CSO and that it showed WFP's flexibility in the face of an unpredictable future.
76. Several members expressed appreciation for the good working relationship between WFP and other donors in the Sudan. The CP's integrated approach was welcomed by several members, one of whom encouraged early application of development activities for other countries in transition. One member observed that it was legally constrained from providing non-humanitarian economic assistance to the Sudan and therefore urged that WFP use caution in proceeding from an EMOP to a PRRO.
77. One member felt that development activities should await peace. The Secretariat clarified that the CP was advocating that countries in turmoil could not afford to wait for peace before undertaking longer-term development. It was felt that if development activities did not begin while the country was still in crisis, the addressing of essential needs such as primary education and health would be postponed indefinitely. Acknowledging that further peace-building and capacity-building were needed most in war-torn areas, the Secretariat pointed out that the situation in parts of the Sudan might not permit the immediate implementation of rehabilitation activities, and that further relief assistance was warranted.

Country Programme—Ghana (2001–2005) (2001/EB.3/23)

78. The Board approved the Country Programme for Ghana, noting the clear link between the activities and the logical framework.



79. Several members expressed support for efforts to resource the supplementary HIV/AIDS activity to prevent the disease from reaching the epidemic stage.
80. The Board welcomed the targeting of vulnerable areas in the northern regions, where poverty and high degrees of malnutrition and low rates of girls' school enrolment prevailed.
81. One member enquired about the acceptability of food given to children and the feasibility of distributing two meals a day. The Secretariat responded that cooked meals—composed of rice, oil, sugar and beans—were served, and that mothers were provided with nutrition and health classes.
82. One member asked why the level of contribution from the Government had dropped from US\$8 million in the previous CP to US\$3.3 million in the new CP. The Secretariat explained that the reduction related to a decrease in the number of regions targeted—from five to three. The erosion of the exchange rate had also contributed to the apparent difference in government support.
83. One member suggested that WFP's collaboration with United Nations agencies and NGOs be considered a model. Another drew attention to the importance of WFP's collaborating with UNICEF in the health and education sectors. The Secretariat assured the Board that such consultation was ongoing.
84. Replying to a query about using the 2001 poverty-reduction strategy paper (PRSP) rather than the 2020 Vision paper, the Secretariat pointed out that the CP had been prepared prior to issuance of the latter.

Country Programme—Senegal (2002–2006) (2001/EB.3/24)

85. The Board approved the well-prepared CP for Senegal, noting that it took into account the Board's deliberations on the CSO. Several delegations welcomed the CP's integration and harmonization with government, UNDAF and NGO initiatives. Several members commended Senegal for its effective efforts in addressing the HIV/AIDS pandemic.
86. The Secretariat explained that the extension of professional and literacy training to urban areas was a supplementary rather than a basic activity, because of concerns regarding the availability of resources. One member thought that the Government should provide a portion of internal transport, storage and handling (ITSH) expenses.
87. The Board supported the plan to phase out from community feeding centres over a three-year period and to focus on community development centres.

Country Programme—India (2003–2007) (2001/EB.3/25)

88. The Board approved the Country Programme with strong support, noting WFP's catalytic role in the country's efforts to eliminate hunger and food insecurity among the targeted hungry poor. Some members noted the extremely large number (200 million) of chronically malnourished people in India and the need to continue food aid. The Board commended the Government's true ownership of the WFP food aid programme, which was reflected in the large share of government matching funds. The Board welcomed gender mainstreaming in the India CP, commending its replication in other countries.
89. In response to a query, the Secretariat emphasized that within the proposed CP objectives, policy framework and resources ceiling, the Government of India and WFP would jointly prepare the plan of operations, which would reflect government priorities and



required institutional arrangements. In answer to a question concerning the CP's external transport budget, the Secretariat explained that this budget item covered the transport cost of the vegetable oil (or other commodities) to be shipped to India, where it would be swapped for cereals. In responding to a query about the CP's size, the Secretariat pointed out that its annual budget was less than 10 percent of WFP's projected global budget for development, even though 25 percent of the world's hungry poor were found in India.

90. The President, on behalf of the Board, expressed appreciation to the Government of India for its generous contribution of food to the victims of the Afghanistan crisis.

Country Programme—Sri Lanka (2002–2006) (2001/EB.3/26)

91. The Board approved the Country Programme with strong support, after considering together the CP and the PRRO for Sri Lanka. Several members noted with appreciation the integrated linkage between the CP and the PRRO, and the joint presentation of the two documents, and noted that the Board's comments on the recently approved CSO for Sri Lanka had been taken into account.
92. The Board commended the clear logical framework attached to the CP document.
93. Several members commended WFP's close coordination with other United Nations agencies, such as FAO, within the UNDAF framework. One member requested that HIV/AIDS-awareness activities be incorporated into the training. The Board welcomed the gender mainstreaming in the Sri Lanka CP.
94. Replying to a query, the Secretariat advised the Board that the country office was establishing a sub-office in a conflict-affected area in the north and another one in the drought-affected area in the south. A member expressed appreciation for the EMOP recently approved for drought victims and commended the efficient functioning of the decentralized regional bureau and the country office.

Country Programme—Egypt (2002–2006) (2001/EB.3/27)

95. The Board approved the Country Programme, noting the Government's strong commitment. The Board expressed hope that funding would be forthcoming from the planned Italian Debt Swap.
96. Several members had taken part in the Executive Board member visit to Egypt in May 2000 noted that most of the mission's recommendations and those made during the Board's discussion of the CSO were reflected in the CP.
97. The Board expressed appreciation for the emphasis on women's empowerment, partnerships and collaboration among United Nations agencies through the UNDAF and the Common Country Assessment (CCA).
98. One member, referring to WFP's diminishing global development funds, asked the Programme to exercise greater stringency in the allocation of those resources, taking into account the overall level of Official Development Assistance for a specific country. The Secretariat replied that WFP development resources were allocated taking into account projected levels of resources. It stressed that Egypt continued to be classified as a low-income, food-deficit country (LIFDC), and underlined that a broad-based presence was critical to WFP's ability to respond to emerging crises and emergencies. It was pointed out that, in Egypt, WFP was phasing out of relatively developed areas and phasing into areas



where poverty rates and food insecurity were high, and where other assistance was least available.

Country Programme—Honduras (2002–2006) (2001/EB.3/28)

99. The Board approved the Country Programme for Honduras and commended the high quality of the document.
100. The Board noted with satisfaction that the CP had taken into consideration all recommendations made by the Board during the discussion of the CSO, and that the document responded to the Government's poverty reduction strategy. The Board commended the participatory approaches used in the CP's elaboration. In view of the forthcoming elections, some members expressed satisfaction that consultations with political parties had taken place to ensure the continuity of government support to the CP.
101. The Board expressed its appreciation for the important financial contribution of the Government of Honduras. One member commented that Honduras qualified for the HIPC Debt Initiative and for a bilateral debt moratorium, and the member expressed hope that the Government would direct the funds released towards primary social services.
102. It was observed that to ensure sustainability of the VAM activities, more capacity-building with counterparts should take place, also involving FIVIMS.

Development Project for Executive Board Approval—Syria 10070.0 (2001/EB.3/29)

103. The Board approved the development project for Syria and expressed appreciation for the Government's strong commitment to the project. The Secretariat pointed out that the total project cost on the cover page of the project document should have read US\$32,959,690, instead of US\$32,933,650.
104. One member requested that a logical framework analysis be prepared. The Secretariat replied that this framework would be attached to the plan of operations.
105. Several members referred to and expressed appreciation for the project's strong gender focus and the targeting of poor households in marginalized, food-deficit areas. They also expressed pleasure that the project was very well integrated and harmonized with government strategies and that WFP was working closely with FAO and IFAD.
106. One member noted that its country was legally prevented from providing economic assistance to Syria, and therefore it could not support the project.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval—Sri Lanka 10067.0 (WIS no. 6152.01) (2001/EB.3/30)

107. Considering the CP and the PRRO for Sri Lanka at the same time, the Board approved PRRO 10067.0 for Sri Lanka, giving it strong support.
108. The Board expressed its satisfaction with WFP's close coordination with other United Nations agencies within the framework of UNDAF and its focus on providing humanitarian assistance to conflict-affected areas and people. Members welcomed the gender mainstreaming that characterized both the CP and the PRRO. A number of members noted with appreciation the integrated linkage between the CP and the PRRO, and the joint presentation of the two documents.



109. In response to a question, the Secretariat advised the Board that the country office was in the process of establishing a sub-office in a conflict-affected area in the north and another one in the drought-affected area. One member expressed appreciation for the EMOP recently approved for drought victims in the country and commended the efficient functioning of the decentralized regional bureau and the country office.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval— West Africa Coastal 10064.0 (WIS no. 6271.00) (2001/EB.3/31)

110. The Secretariat clarified the targeting modalities concerning food for work, food for training and emergency school feeding activities in Sierra Leone. It was explained that all three components operated only in food-insecure areas where beneficiaries were most vulnerable and that the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO had assisted WFP in developing vulnerability criteria.

Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Executive Board Approval— Zambia 10071.0 (2001/EB.3/32)

111. The Board approved PRRO Zambia 10071.0, noting that it provided much-needed assistance to refugees from Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and that it supported the Government of Zambia in its efforts to maintain its open-door policy for refugees. The Government was complimented for the role it had played by allowing its orders to remain open. One member observed that there should not be a fourth generation of refugees in Zambia. Another remarked that, along with HIV/AIDS, refugee support should be the main focus of assistance provided by the country office.

ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Provisional Biennial Programme of Work of the Executive Board (2002–2003) (2001/EB.3/35)

112. The Board requested the Secretariat to amend the Provisional Biennial Programme of Work of the Executive Board to include various requests agreed upon during the session. Notably:
113. At the First Regular Session of 2002:
- an information paper on issues related to the resourcing of non-food items emanating from the Executive Director's report to the Secretary-General on her missions as Special Envoy to the Horn of Africa;
 - in the document on change management, the inclusion of decentralization issues.
114. At the Second Regular Session of 2002 and 2003:
- a report on emergency operations approved by the Executive Director for the period July–December of the preceding year;
 - a report on emergency operations approved by the Executive Director jointly with the Director-General for the period July–December of the preceding year.
115. At the Third Regular Session of 2002 and 2003:
- a report on emergency operations approved by the Executive Director for the period January–June of the same year;



- a report on emergency operations approved by the Executive Director jointly with the Director-General for the period January–June of the same year.
116. At the Annual Session of 2002:
- in the Executive Director’s presentation of current and future strategic issues, the inclusion of a statement on the outcome of and follow-up to the Conference on Financing and Development;
 - in the document on emerging issues of relevance to WFP, the inclusion of a review of the consolidated appeal process (CAP) and measures to enhance the quality of the CAP document;
 - a document on challenges for WFP in resourcing non-food inputs (including direct support cost issues);
 - a document containing a preliminary review of the indirect support cost rates;
 - in the Evaluation and Monitoring Workplan for 2002–2003, the inclusion of the monitoring and evaluation guidelines;
 - a report on the final decision of the General Assembly of the United Nations on implementation of the funding arrangements for United Nations staff safety and security, and a summary of the surplus funds from closed projects identified during the migration to WINGS.
117. At the Third Regular Session of 2002:
- a document presenting a strategic approach to WFP’s engagement in inter-agency affairs and summit issues, including a review of the role of WFP in the follow-up to the Conference on Financing for Development;
 - in the report on budgetary performance (2000–2001), the inclusion of cost containment aspects;
 - in the Audited Biennial Accounts (2000–2001), the inclusion of a review of the indirect support cost rates.
118. At the Second Regular Session of 2003:
- in the document containing a thematic evaluation of PRROs, the inclusion of financing aspects.
119. At the Annual Session of 2003:
- a document reviewing decentralization, including aspects of cost-efficiency, decentralization’s effect on programming, etc.;
 - a document reviewing issues related to financing policies.

Status Report on WFP’s Decentralization Initiative (2001/EB.3/36)

120. The Executive Director briefly introduced the topic of discussion. She highlighted the fact that, since 1996, more senior decision-makers were now located in the field, with more delegations of authority and operational tools to help them carry out their work more effectively.
121. The Assistant Executive Director of Operations introduced the status report. He mentioned that, overall, decentralization was going very well and was on track, and that it had brought the decision-makers closer to the beneficiaries for whom WFP provided food.



He pointed out that WFP's WINGS would make decentralization much more efficient. Some of the resulting challenges mentioned were: to strengthen WFP's oversight services; to focus even more on staff training; to keep normative guidance up to date; and to maintain a two-way flow of information between Rome and field-based offices.

122. The Board was very encouraged by WFP's work thus far in implementing the decentralization initiative, and commended the Programme. Nevertheless, it looked forward to the review of WFP's Organizational Change Initiative, to be submitted to the First Regular Session, 2002, as well as to the more in-depth cost-benefit study to be submitted to the Annual Session, 2003. It also looked forward to the regular opportunities it would have to discuss this issue as part of future Executive Board session agendas.
123. The Board acknowledged the many challenges that lay ahead as WFP continued to implement the decentralization initiative. Among the challenges highlighted were the need to upgrade field staff skills in programme design, preparation and formulation; the need to hold decision-makers accountable for their actions; the need to upgrade staff leadership skills; the need to develop project budget and financial management skills in the field and to clarify country office budget benchmarks; and the importance of maintaining a single WFP corporate profile rather than various dispersed foci. One member requested that WFP follow up on the United Nations Staff Code of Conduct.
124. Some members mentioned the fresh opportunities that decentralization could open up in future WFP/donor relationships. One member suggested that WFP learn from the decentralization experiences of other organizations (e.g. the World Bank, the European Commission and even some bilateral donors). Another member suggested that coordination be strengthened among regionally based international organizations. The President concluded by commending WFP, and especially its field offices, for being able to meet the various Executive Board deadlines associated with operational documents while decentralizing the regional bureaux and implementing WINGS.

OTHER BUSINESS

Funding Arrangements for United Nations Staff Safety and Security (2001/EB.3/39)

125. The Executive Board welcomed the paper on Funding Arrangements for United Nations Staff Safety and Security and thanked the Secretariat for providing updated information on the progress made in this most important area.
126. The Board expressed appreciation to the Executive Director for the seriousness and focus she had brought to the issue and acknowledged the many fora, including the ACABQ and the United Nations Security Council, in which she had advocated for staff safety. Following the statements of the Executive Director, the Board underlined the importance of staff safety and security and acknowledged the global nature of the issue, which went beyond financial or geographical considerations. The Board encouraged continued advocacy by all parties to address broader issues concerning the safety of United Nations staff, including the punishing of those found guilty of crimes against humanitarian workers.
127. The Board noted WFP's share of costs for the biennium 2002–2003, based on the United Nations census, and approved the proposal to pay out of the General Fund, on a one-off basis, the final WFP share as approved by the General Assembly. The



Executive Director explained to the Board that the total costs of US\$53 million, as currently calculated, were based on a one-year estimate of recurring staff costs and would therefore increase in the next biennium. She added that the United Nations Secretariat currently estimated that the total costs for the 2004–2005 biennium would increase to US\$69 million. The Board indicated that it would revisit the issue of the best way to fund WFP's share.

128. The Executive Director also informed the Board of other activities in which she had engaged in the continuous advocacy for staff security, and of her planned appearance before the ACABQ when it would review the security issue again later in the year. The Board noted the Executive Director's efforts in this regard and expressed its desire that the General Assembly would also reconsider the issue during the next biennium.
129. Concerning the issue of a governance mechanism, the Board insisted that WFP would have to participate on any committee established to provide oversight of the United Nations security management system, given the fact that the Programme was one of the largest Funds and Programmes and with the most staff in high-risk security areas. The Board therefore instructed the Secretariat to convey the Board's message clearly to the United Nations. It reiterated that those parties covering the costs of staff security arrangements should have a say in the management and implementation of those arrangements.
130. The Board requested the Secretariat to report back at the Annual Session in 2002 on the final decision of the General Assembly, and on how that decision would be implemented.

WFP, Food Security and HIV/AIDS (2001/EB.3/40)

131. The Board expressed its appreciation for the Secretariat's Information Note on HIV/AIDS and fully endorsed WFP's approach to HIV/AIDS as an issue of food security and nutrition. It was noted, however, that a more strategic approach to integrating HIV/AIDS into CPs would be needed.
132. The Board noted with satisfaction WFP's proactive collaboration with other United Nations agencies, NGOs and governments and encouraged continued commitment to partnership.
133. Some members felt that WFP should also work to ensure the availability of medicines. It was noted that without access to affordable treatment, a person living with HIV/AIDS would benefit little from food aid alone. The Secretariat replied that adequate food and good nutrition could help slow the HIV-to-AIDS progression and improve the quality of life for individuals living with HIV/AIDS.
134. Several members expressed the view that this Information Note should be viewed as the first step and be followed up with a comprehensive policy document.

Harmonization of Programming Processes among the United Nations Funds and Programmes (2001/EB.3/41)

135. The President of the Board, referring to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board decision on the harmonization of programming processes in June and the invitation to the WFP and UNICEF Boards to discuss the issue, noted that the Board would need to communicate its position to the General Assembly in New York, which was discussing harmonization during the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review on Development Activities.



136. She invited the Deputy Executive Director to brief the Board on the new UNDP/UNFPA approval process. This process involved presentation, for discussion, to the Annual Session of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board in June of short draft CP outlines (with the corresponding UNDAFs available on the website). After this, the Secretariats prepared CPs. The final version of a given CP was posted on the websites of the respective organizations by October of the last year of the current CP. The Country Programmes were then formally approved at the Board's First Regular Session the following January, on a no-objection basis (without a document or discussion), unless at least five members requested in writing prior to the Executive Board session that a CP be discussed.
137. The Board reaffirmed WFP's full commitment to the coordination and harmonization of programming, while noting that WFP's approval process for Country Programmes and its calendar differed from those of UNDP and UNFPA. It was pointed out that WFP CSOs were presented to regular, not annual, sessions of WFP's Executive Board, along with CP evaluations, and that the Board then directed the Secretariat to prepare a CP for approval within one year. The Deputy Executive Director mentioned that the WFP and UNICEF Executive Boards were not required to change their programme approval processes, but that they should consider the various options for CP review and approval, as had UNDP and UNFPA.
138. The President of the Executive Board noted that under the WFP governance project, the programming and CP issues would be revisited and discussed. It was decided that until such discussion was held, WFP should develop an appropriate position to be sent to the General Assembly in New York. Members decided to communicate the following decision to New York:

“Reaffirming its strong support for the coordination of United Nations Development Activities, and the harmonization of programming, the WFP Executive Board noted that its approval process for CPs and its calendar are slightly different from those adopted by UNDP and UNFPA. The WFP Board is in the process of examining its governance procedures and its programming processes. When that process is complete the WFP Board will be able to communicate its decision for CP approval procedures specific to the World Food Programme. The Board also appreciates the continued and full WFP participation in undg discussions concerning harmonization of programming.”

