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DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

ABSTRACT

The UNDP Human Development Report for 1996 ranks the Dominican Republic 87th out of 174 countries. It is a low-income, food-deficit country (LIFDC) with a per capita income of 1,460 dollars, a Human Development Index of 0.701 and a population of 7.8 million (1995). The structural economic limitations and fluctuating policies have eroded the living conditions of an important part of the population. The Dominican Republic presents a society with an unequal income distribution, a high number of poor and extremely poor people, and a noticeable deterioration in the environment. Living conditions on the border with Haiti and in the periurban *barrios* (slum areas) are worse than in the rest of the country. Per capita food production has decreased in the last 20 years, generating an excess of food demand which is met through imports. This assumes great importance when taking into consideration the fact that the poorest 20 percent of the population spend more than 60 percent of their income on food. The deterioration of the environment has caused an increase in infant morbidity and mortality rates, which reach dramatic levels in the poorest areas of the country. The Government which took office in 1996 includes in its objectives the fight against poverty and the improvement of the poor population's income-generating ability. WFP's strategy for the period 1998 to 2002 is in line with the Government's plans. It involves food for work; support to the infant, school-aged and pre-school population; and support for environmental rehabilitation. This cooperation strategy will mobilize human resources in the poorest areas of the country, at the same time facilitating their access to productive and social assets. It will use techniques of community organization to allow people to exploit and protect natural resources. This will translate into a sustained increase in income for the hungry poor. Beneficiaries will be poor peasants—especially women in rural areas—populations living in periurban *barrios*, and pre-school children. WFP assistance will be provided within the framework of programmes coordinated with other international donors, especially other organizations of the United Nations system. A 7.5-million-dollar country programme is envisaged involving 1.5 million dollars a year in WFP resources; possible other resources would come from government counterpart funds and external donors.

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for consideration.

Pursuant to the decisions taken on the methods of work by the Executive Board at its First Regular Session of 1996, the documentation prepared by the Secretariat for the Board has been kept brief and decision-oriented. The meetings of the Executive Board are to be conducted in a business-like manner, with increased dialogue and exchanges between delegations and the Secretariat. Efforts to promote these guiding principles will continue to be pursued by the Secretariat.

The Secretariat therefore invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document, to contact the WFP staff member(s) listed below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting. This procedure is designed to facilitate the Board's consideration of the document in the plenary.

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FOOD INSECURITY AND THE HUNGRY POOR

1. The Dominican Republic is a small country (48,000 square kilometres) which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti. It has a population of 7.8 million, an annual per capita income of 1,460 dollars¹ (1995), and a Human Development Index of 0.701, which ranked it 87th out of 174 countries in the UNDP Human Development Report for 1996. Between 1985 and 1995, a structural change occurred in the Dominican economy, characterized by an increase in tourism and duty-free zones. This has represented the main source of foreign currency and brought about a degree of economic expansion. The growth rate of the real gross domestic product (GDP) fluctuated between 11 percent in the seventies to minus five percent at the end of the eighties, recovering in the nineties to a maximum of seven percent. The Government has established as its main priorities the reduction of poverty and the improvement of the population's quality of life.

Food insecurity at the national level

2. Between 1986 and 1990, a policy of massive public investments caused rapid inflation which reached 80 percent. This situation eroded the incomes of the poorest sectors of the population, increasing the number of absolute poor, and causing skewed income distribution. In 1990 the Government began a strict programme of stabilization accompanied by a number of structural economic reforms which had as their objectives the creation of favourable conditions for economic growth, improvement of efficiency, enhancement of production, and increase of competitiveness. During the period from 1991 to 1994, the Dominican Government also undertook a series of initiatives in the social area aimed at improving the well-being of the population. These consisted in educational reform, modernization of the national health system and the establishment of a social fund.
3. Between 1991 and 1996, the Dominican Republic achieved economic growth rates which averaged 4.7 percent, above the annual population growth rate of 1.8 percent. Economic expansion was achieved through an increase in the export of services (duty-free zones and tourism), a surge in the telecommunications sector, and an active public investment policy. The money remittances from Dominican families abroad also represented an important economic support. During that period the inflation rate dropped to 7.2 percent.
4. Economic growth combined with price stability has not been able to compensate completely for the deterioration of income caused by the earlier inflation; in fact, 57 percent of the population still live below the poverty line. In the last 30 years, the country has lived through a dramatic process of urbanization; it is estimated that almost two thirds of the population live in urban centres.

Food insecurity and the nutritional situation

5. The participation of the agricultural sector in the GDP has been decreasing in recent decades from 23.6 percent in 1970 to 12.7 percent in 1995. The growth of agricultural production in the period 1980-93 averaged 0.4 percent a year. These data contrast with the average of Latin American countries. Only Nicaragua has had a lower performance over

¹ All monetary values are expressed in United States dollars, unless otherwise stated. One United States dollar equalled 14 pesos in September 1997.



the same period. The poor performance of the agricultural sector has resulted in a reduction in per capita food production of 0.9 percent a year.

6. Studies by international organizations¹ reveal that the evolution of agro-economic policy over the last 20 years has resulted in a massive transfer of resources from the agricultural sector to the rest of the economy. The price control policy conducted by the National Institute for Price Stabilization (INESPRE) discouraged agricultural production and distorted trade channels. The Dominican Republic has adopted a policy of protecting local food production through the restriction of imported goods. However, this has not succeeded in increasing the efficiency of domestic food production.
7. Land ownership is concentrated. The Government owns 22 percent of agricultural lands. Three percent of land owners possess one third of the total land area and operate on plots of more than 200 hectares; 12.2 percent of the land is owned by 81.7 percent of the people in the form of plots under five hectares. Most food is produced on small plots. The Agrarian Reform of the seventies limited rice plots to a maximum of 31.25 hectares (497 tareas²). Over 50 percent of rice production is currently provided by the peasants of the Dominican Agrarian Institute. The Agrarian Reform distributed land but did not hand over deeds to those who worked it. This resulted in reduced incentives to invest in agriculture and improving productivity. Private banks gave little priority to funding the agricultural sector. The Agricultural Bank is not in a position to supply such financing, since it has long-standing problems of lack of liquidity. This has forced the Government to transfer resources, or grant emergency funds.
8. Deforestation has also affected the country. It has been estimated that if the current rate of deforestation (25,000 hectares a year) were to continue, the country would become totally deforested in less than two decades. The deforestation process has caused soil erosion, and a reduction in farm output. In the Ocoa Basin bean yields have been reduced by 0.26 kilograms per hectare for each ton of soil lost, and by 2.1 kilograms for pigeon peas. Soil erosion has caused sedimentation in dams and a reduction by 20 years in their useful life span. This has in turn affected food production, especially rice.
9. The evolution of nutritional and health indices in recent decades shows that the Dominican Republic has made progress. Infant mortality decreased from 79 per 1,000 live births in the period 1970-74 to 43 in the nineties. During this decade life expectancy at birth has increased to 63.9 years for men and 68.1 for women, from 60.3 and 63.3 years registered for the period 1975-80. The prevalence of chronic malnutrition (low height for age), is around 20 percent, both in pre-school children and first-graders. In spite of this overall progress, in the rural areas and the periurban *barrios* nutritional deterioration has doubled. The under-five mortality rate is 45 per 1,000 live births, while in the border area it is over 60. The Household Food Security Index for the country is 77.7 (1990-92).
10. The Dominican Republic has a deficit in food production, characterized by dependence on imports. Import demand is greatest for wheat and milk products. Rice has been imported in some years, despite strong protectionist policies. The rice production deficit equals 20 percent of consumption; the deficit in the production of beans is 30 percent of annual

¹ See Alberto Valdés (1996), *Surveillance of Agricultural Price and Trade Policy in Selected Latin American Countries at the Time of Major Policy Reform*, World Bank, Washington, D. C..

² A local land measurement unit, equivalent to 629 square metres.



consumption, and that in milk production is equivalent to 60 percent of consumption.¹ Chicken, garlic, peanuts and other products are also imported.

11. Rice is the staple food crop of the Dominican population. The very poor derive 28.7 percent of their daily caloric intake from rice, 13.6 percent from oil, nine percent from green bananas, 6.7 percent from plantains and 5.9 percent from sugar. They obtain 22.8 percent of proteins from rice, 20 percent from beans, 11.6 percent from milk and 10.8 percent from chicken meat. Their caloric intake is 82.4 percent of the minimum requirement. In the rural and border areas the intake is considerably lower, since these are the areas with the highest percentage of unmet basic needs and the greatest incidence of poverty. In 1993 food imports were 11 percent of total imports (328 million dollars); in 1996 they reached 25 percent (792 million dollars).
12. The poorest 20 percent of the population spend 60 percent of their income on food. This implies that a significant part of the population has a food consumption pattern subject to sudden changes in income. Food security at the household level depends on the ability to acquire food with an appropriate nutritional content and meet the needs of the most vulnerable members of the family circle.
13. The problem of food insecurity translates into a deterioration in the nutritional and health status of the individual. In the Dominican Republic there is a marked deficit in basic micronutrients, making people more prone to disease. Acute respiratory infections and diarrhoea are widespread among infants, often leading to death in suckling infants. Poor environmental conditions partly explain the prevalence of these diseases. Forty percent of the population do not have access to potable water in the house, and in periurban areas there are no regular services for the collection of solid wastes and no sanitary disposal of sewage and waste waters. These problems are more serious in rural areas, where public health services are scarce or non-existent. The Government has expressed an interest in the experience of WFP in environmental sanitation and food production activities. The authorities have requested that WFP-supplied commodities be enriched with essential micronutrients such as iron and iodine, which are deficient in the daily diet of poor families.
14. In the area bordering Haiti, as well as in isolated mountain areas, the degree of malnutrition is higher than the national average. Despite the fact that the national agricultural policy encourages food production, no substantial improvement is foreseen in the medium term as concerns the availability of food in the most depressed areas of the country. This is due to soil erosion in the border areas and consequently an inability to produce enough food.

Location of poverty and target population

15. At the beginning of the nineties, 57 percent of the Dominican population lived below the poverty line. In the rural and border areas this percentage ranges from 61.3 to 87.9 percent. Forty percent of the infant population suffer from malnutrition.
16. In 1992, 27.1 percent of urban homes were headed by women, while in rural areas that percentage was 15.8 percent. Despite poverty in households headed by women, evidence reveals that between 1986 and 1992 women who were heads of households had progressed

¹ See A. Ortiz (1993) - "*Evolución de la Agropecuaria, Balance y Retos para el año 2000*" ("*Evolution of the Agricultural Sector: Balance and Challenges for the year 2000*"). Document prepared for the Workshop on National Policies for the Development of Agriculture, held at the Institute of Higher Agricultural Studies, in Santiago, D. R. 1993.



more than their male counterparts in the alleviation of poverty in their homes.¹ The greater ability to overcome poverty has been related to an increase in the female population employed in the industrial duty-free export zones. Also, it has been demonstrated that micro-businesses established by households headed by women have a higher rate of accumulation of capital and greater chance of future expansion.² This shows that a strategy of targeting assistance to poor homes headed by women would have a high rate of economic and social return, since it would increase their ability to generate income and improve their quality of life.

GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES AND POLICIES

Overall policies

17. During the period 1991-96, the strategic objectives of the Government were: a) improve and modernize the performance of the public sector; b) achieve an active involvement and a pro-active presence of the private sector in the development process; c) accelerate the process of human development; and d) exploit and protect natural resources in a sustainable manner.
18. Between 1991 and 1993 the authorities implemented a package of economic reforms; these included a reform of the tax system, tariffs and the financial system. The objectives of the reforms were to improve conditions for sustained growth and promote stability of the economy. The results were positive. The reforms achieved higher growth rates and reduced inflation. The Government also initiated an ambitious programme to reform the educational sector. The Ten-Year Educational Plan's main objectives are improving substantially the quality of primary education and increasing Dominican children's access to it. A Social Reform Plan was designed with a gender focus, and is based on a broad consensus among the main political leaders and other representatives of civil society. The objective of the Social Reform is to include social policies and programmes into a strategy of integrated development, so as to create the basis for an equitable growth process. The policies are concentrated in four areas of sustainable human development: economic growth and employment generation; public social expenditure; making the State more efficient and modern; and strengthening civil society.
19. The economic and social policies implemented in the nineties have benefited the entire population. The percentage of Dominicans who live below the poverty line has been reduced. Nevertheless, the number of poor and very poor continues to be high, particularly near the border with Haiti, and in the rural and periurban areas.
20. The Government which took office in 1996 includes among its main objectives the reduction of poverty and an improvement in the well-being of the population through the development of human resources and physical infrastructure. In order to finance the increase in social expenditure, the Government presented a package of tax and tariff

¹ See A. Dauhajre et al. (1994), **Estabilización y Pobreza en la República Dominicana: 1986-1992** (*Stabilization and Poverty in the Dominican Republic: 1986-1992*). Economy and Development Foundation. Santo Domingo, pp. 38-40.

² See J. Aristy Escuder (1995). **Ahorro y Producción de las Microempresas y Pequeñas Empresas en la República Dominicana: Un Análisis Econométrico - (Savings and Productivity of Micro and Small Enterprises in the Dominican Republic: An Econometric Analysis)**. FondoMicro, Santo Domingo.



reforms together with the Governmental Income Budget and the Law on Public Expenditures. These reforms were preceded by increases in fuel prices and the unification of the official exchange rate with that of the free market. The implementation of these initial measures brought about a rise in prices which has reduced the purchasing power of the poorest segments of the population. The Government recently promulgated a law which grants a greater amount of resources and autonomy to municipal governments, which will strengthen their ability to implement projects aimed at benefiting their communities.

21. Priority is being given in all sectors to gender equity. The Government and the United Nations Inter-Agency Task-Force for Women, Gender and Development are working together and setting up programmes that guarantee equal opportunities and encourage the active participation of women in the economic sector.

Policies in food security and aid

22. Commissions and Councils were created in the sixties with the aim of promoting food security and improving the population's nutritional status. In 1982, the National Planning Office (ONAPLAN) prepared the First National Food and Nutrition Plan which defined the country's priorities, strategies and policies in these sectors. In 1989, the Ministry of Agriculture prepared a document entitled "Food Security: Strategy Outlines for the Short and Medium Term".
23. The National Commission for the Preparation of the National Food and Nutrition Plan: 1995-2001 was set up in 1994. The Plan includes an analysis of the food and nutrition situation together with a package of policies and actions which are being implemented in the country. It outlines objectives, goals, action plans and implementation strategies required to achieve food and health security.
24. Up to the end of the eighties, governmental food policies were carried out through the National Institute for Price Stabilization (INESPRE) which ensured that food was sold at adequate prices and sought to reduce excessive price fluctuations. The fiscal crisis of the eighties diminished INESPRES ability to intervene by acquiring and selling food products, due to the costs and losses related to such operations. This is reflected in the reduction of INESPRES food imports, which went from 78.3 million dollars in 1984 to 11.3 million dollars in 1992. INESPRES interventions did not help overcome food insecurity, since they did not really ensure that people with low incomes could purchase the food they required.
25. WFP's assistance should be a support to priority programmes aimed at alleviating poverty and enhancing sustainability of the environment. Complementarity with programmes implemented by the Government will increase the impact of WFP assistance: for instance, a feeding programme within an educational reform programme will have a higher impact on the beneficiary population.

ASSESSMENT OF WFP'S PERFORMANCE TO DATE

Evolution of WFP assistance to the Dominican Republic

26. On 8 August 1967, the Government and WFP signed a Basic Cooperation Agreement which covered WFP assistance to a housing project, and to emergency operations between 1969 and 1979. By 1986, collaboration was reinitiated through development projects, some of which are still ongoing. WFP has concentrated its efforts on improving the periurban



and rural habitat, strengthening production under food-for-work schemes, and supporting the School Feeding Programme. Assistance for emergencies has been connected mainly to the hurricanes and drought cycles which annually affect the island and has concentrated on the poorest areas of the country.

27. WFP assistance has been framed within a programme context, with the objective of enhancing efficiency in the utilization of resources. Ongoing projects all benefit the same geographical areas and social sectors; this has brought about a significant increase in the impact on communities receiving food aid.

Resources contributed by WFP

28. Between 1969 and 1996, WFP supplied food commodities to implement six development projects and three emergency operations, with a total value of 22.5 million dollars. WFP has also provided non-food items (construction materials, agricultural equipment, vehicles, gas stoves and gas cylinders) at a cost of 700,000 dollars. Three development projects are still ongoing, at a total cost to WFP of 14 million dollars. These are described below.
- a) **Development of the Highlands (No. 2798.01)**—at a total cost to WFP of 2.2 million dollars—promotes an increase in food production, income-generating activities, soil conservation, protection of the environment and watersheds, and training for farmers in improved cropping practices and agroforestry. This project began operations in November 1991; its termination is foreseen for December 1997.
 - b) **Support to the rehabilitation of slum areas (No. 4549)**—at a total cost to WFP of 7.8 million dollars—promotes the improvement and rehabilitation of poorer areas (the border with Haiti and periurban *barrios*) through the construction of basic sanitation infrastructure. It also supports the training of community leaders and women in community organization, and in nutrition and health, by involving beneficiaries in community works. Through community participation 100,000 families are benefiting from food-for-work activities. The project is executed with the assistance of a UNV/UNDP project (Community Action Network (REDAC)) aimed at supporting community-based organizations and WFP projects along the North-Western Region of the country. The project began operations in March 1994; completion is scheduled for February 1999.
 - c) **School feeding in the poor and economically depressed areas (No. 5276)**—at a cost to WFP of 5.7 million dollars—promotes basic education in the border area. The objective of improving schoolchildren's attention span and attendance rate has been met through the distribution of a school snack and breakfast with the support of the Parents and Friends of the School Associations. The project began in April 1995 and is due to terminate by March 1998. It benefits 100,000 primary schoolchildren. Half of the beneficiary population are girls.
29. Food aid has not created any disincentive for national production, since it has not exceeded two percent of the total local production. The volume of food aid imported does not represent an excessive percentage of total food imports. Markets have not been distorted. This shows that the contribution provided by WFP implies an increase in consumption by the recipients of food aid. WFP has monetized some of the food contributed to purchase locally produced foods. Materials which were indispensable to successful project implementation and complemented the scarce resources provided by the Government were purchased locally or imported through WFP's Non-Food Items Unit.



Cost-effectiveness of WFP's administration

30. WFP costs of operation have been kept within international standards. Monetization is carried out at international prices in such a way that it is always equal to or greater than the c.i.f. cost. The Government is in charge of the procedure, with WFP participation. The method of purchase of local food products has also been effective. The sales and purchases of the products are made through public bidding. The losses in the process of food delivery do not exceed one percent, and generally take place during transportation. Logistic arrangements for food distribution are in place. There was a delay in taking the commodities out of customs; this was caused by the lack of ready availability of government counterpart funds. This has also delayed the transfer of commodities from the port to WFP warehouses.

Performance and impact of WFP aid

Development of human resources

31. During the last five years, an average of 19,000 poor families a year have benefited from food assistance supplied by WFP through food-for-work projects. The Development of the Highlands project trained 3,876 families. The training has enhanced the human resources of the community and resulted in better living conditions for the population. Food aid has favoured regular school attendance through the distribution of individual rations to more than 100,000 schoolchildren. Support was provided for strengthening the training of parents, members of School Associations and community leaders, who received training in rehabilitation and maintenance of schools, financial administration, distribution of text books and preparation of meals, among others. The community women have been very involved in activities aimed at improving the well-being of children, as well as in matters related to health and nutrition.

Income generation and employment in rural areas

32. Food aid provided to poor families, whose yearly incomes are under 600 dollars, has represented an important income transfer. The food ration has stabilized the food consumption patterns of the beneficiaries. In the medium term, the training in effective cropping techniques and environmental sanitation translates into an increase of families' income and purchasing power. At the community level, an improvement in the living conditions of beneficiaries has been observed, together with a reduction in deforestation and soil erosion.

33. WFP's projects have promoted the involvement of women in production schemes and training courses. This ensures that women improve their level of education and ability to generate income, and is the first step towards reducing the degree of malnutrition in children. WFP's contribution therefore goes beyond immediate assistance.

Creation of productive and social assets

34. Food-for-work activities have created productive and social assets which are very important for the community. In effect, the food-for-work modality has enabled the rehabilitation and/or construction of local roads (1,091 kilometres), bridges (19 units), aqueducts (168 kilometres), irrigation systems, small dams, crop improvement and soil conservation (5,019 hectares of land), retention walls (7,013 square metres), housing units (4,298), community centres and classroom rehabilitation (1,645), septic tanks (13,224 square metres), latrines (5,884 units), and sewage systems (20,006 metres of pipes). The



recently constructed infrastructure has improved the productive capacity of the communities and living conditions in poor rural areas. Women's access to productive assets has been increasing, contributing more and more to the community's economic growth.

Organization and development of the community

35. Community team work promoted by the projects has been translated into the improvement of communities' capacity to organize, and their participation in the design and follow-up of project activities. In fact, communities participated in the identification of their basic needs, which imparted greater strength to the projects.
36. Courses, workshops and seminars (approximately 550 in a year) have increased the capacity for self-government in the communities. A total of 722 School Associations have been mobilized to participate in project activities. The members of these associations are responsible for the control, distribution and cooking of the food, and micro-projects (vegetable gardens, poultry raising, etc.).
37. Communities have chosen the activities they carry out to improve environmental conditions. They have also participated actively in the planning and implementation phases of the projects. The training courses for community leaders (7,549) include an important number of women (4,105), who have considerably broadened their knowledge in health, nutrition and environmental sanitation.

Environment

38. WFP's programme has reduced the misuse of Dominican forests. Instead of concentrating solely on the mitigation of consequences, it has addressed the causes of environmental degradation. Improved cropping systems have been identified, established and implemented by entire communities and did not involve isolated activities carried out by separate individuals. This lends greater sustainability to the projects' positive outputs. Means for cooking food which do not deplete the forest environment have been promoted, such as gas stoves used for the preparation of school meals.
39. WFP has also collaborated with the cleaning of drainage systems, rehabilitation of water distribution systems, and in the construction of new systems in *barrios*, improving access to drinking-water (106,200 metres of pipes) for an important part of the lower-income population. Sewage and waste water management systems have been constructed: 5,884 latrines and 20,006 metres of drainage systems. This work was concentrated in 40 poor housing areas in Santo Domingo and other major cities where there are an insufficient supply of potable water and inadequate sanitary services and sewage systems.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

40. The WFP-supported projects established M&E systems which permit efficient administration and evaluation of their progress towards achieving intended objectives. The systems are used to measure the flow of resources assigned to the projects in the form of food aid, financial and personnel contributions provided and received, activities performed, and outputs. The reports, presented periodically, include key indicators in the project areas, such as environmental sanitation, training, families benefited, women and children benefited. With the information available, recommendations are made to improve the efficiency of project implementation.



41. The Government recognizes that the geographical concentration of the projects in the poorest areas has enhanced the contribution of food assistance to improving the living conditions of the community. Such concentration tends to simplify follow-up activities and the logistics of food distribution. The importance of monetization is recognized as a successful support to project implementation. WFP aid has been translated into an improvement of people's ability to generate income, and therefore the sustainability of the projects' achievements.

FUTURE ORIENTATION OF WFP ASSISTANCE

Proposed strategy

42. Future WFP assistance will focus on the socio-economic development of the poorest population and on increasing food security through household-level interventions aimed at enhancing food security and income generation.
43. Project activities will provide high-protein food to mitigate protein and micronutrient deficiencies in children under five years old and primary schoolchildren. Food-for-work activities in rural and periurban areas will remain important, albeit to a lesser extent than in the past. Active participation, particularly of women and government and non-government partners, will be the main strategy of a future country programme.
44. Given the importance of improving the income of WFP's poorest beneficiaries, the main objective of WFP food aid will continue to consist in supporting a sustainable development of the poorest urban and rural communities with programmes to generate income and employment, the creation of assets and means of production, and the development of human resources (support to school meals for primary and pre-primary schoolchildren). WFP will continue to cooperate in those emergency situations which require food aid as an essential element.

Basic elements of WFP's assistance

45. **Participation by the community and sustainability.** The community must be an active player in identifying its own problems and the corresponding solutions. Women's involvement in decision-making processes and in managing the projects' benefits will be a priority which will help increase incomes. It is indispensable that the projects do not create dependency, but increase the ability of people to improve their living conditions in a sustainable manner through their own efforts.
46. **Technical assistance.** Cooperation between WFP, other United Nations organizations, NGOs and government institutions in project implementation is an essential element. WFP is willing to offer the necessary technical assistance in a coordinated manner with other international cooperation actors to maximize the rate of social and economic return of aid received by the country. WFP will obtain the support of United Nations Volunteers in order to profit from their technical assistance.
47. **Monetization.** Experience has shown that the mechanism of monetization is essential to broaden the impact of project activities. It has enabled the acquisition of products indispensable for the projects' performance, complementing the resources committed by the Government. It has allowed beneficiaries to receive food which is compatible with their dietary preferences, at the same time meeting their protein and caloric requirements. It



should be pointed out, however, that monetization should be carried out at the lowest administrative cost possible and with the minimum distortion of internal markets.

Target groups and key areas for assistance

48. The beneficiaries of WFP aid will be the families of poor peasants (approximately 100,000), especially women in rural zones, women heads of households, groups who live in conditions of extreme poverty, and 100,000 primary schoolchildren. WFP assistance should be incorporated into the Government's objective of fighting poverty. The availability of food should be assured in those geographical areas of greatest poverty concentration and most reduced means of production. Poverty targeting includes the border with Haiti, the isolated mountain areas, depressed rural zones and the periurban *barrios*. The experience of WFP in these areas shows that continuing the programme will contribute to a continued sustainable improvement in the quality of life of their inhabitants.
49. In order to identify vulnerable groups, income and expenditure surveys will be followed up, together with specific studies on poverty and the condition of women. This information will be used to prepare projects which are in line with government plans to fight poverty and food insecurity.

National development planning

50. WFP aid will be programmed in a way that is compatible with the National Development Programme; this comprises the Social Development Plan and the National Food and Nutrition Plan, which the new Government is implementing from 1996 to 2000. WFP assistance will be based on the programme approach, and will take into consideration feedback from people in the target areas, in coordination with the plans prepared by the Government's Economic Task Force. The cooperation will prioritize activities that will improve substantially the condition of women heads of households. WFP's contribution will follow the country's development planning for the most vulnerable groups in such areas as food security, the development of human resources, environmental protection, and employment and income generation.

Cooperation with other United Nations organizations and relationship to the Country Strategy Note (CSN) process

51. WFP has coordinated its activities with other United Nations organizations such as WHO/PAHO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNDP. Special attention has been given to inter-agency work and to coordination efforts provided by the Resident Coordinator System. Examples of such coordination include the setting up of thematic groups on AIDS, gender, water and sanitation; the linkage between UNDP programmes/projects (such as the Sustainable Human Development Project for the Enriquillo Sub-Region) and WFP activities, through the participation of the UNV Community Action Network (REDAC) and the National Housing Institute working together in specific geographical areas. A programme to address the Northern Region is being implemented through UNDP with the support of the Italian Government. WFP's assistance in this programme is of special importance. A national movement is under way to reduce child and maternal mortality, involving WFP with UNICEF, WHO/PAHO, UNFPA and UNDP.
52. UNDP is currently preparing its cooperation framework for 1997 to 2001 which clearly establishes its role within the fight against poverty. WFP is preparing a complementary strategy which will directly benefit the poorest sector of the population. A more



harmonized medium-term WFP programme is under way, coordinated with the United Nations system, particularly the Joint Consultative Group on Policies (JCGP). WFP has taken part in projects supported by the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank by providing food aid as a complementary input to financial aid provided by the two organizations. The food aid has also served as an element which increases the projects' economic and social viability.

53. WFP also has excellent NGO counterparts. WFP projects executed by NGOs have been successful due to the NGO experience in the areas targeted and activities carried out, and because of the M&E systems.
54. The Government has committed itself to preparing a CSN, which will create the framework for effective United Nations cooperation towards the country's development policy.

Resources required for a Country Programme

55. It is estimated that for the five-year period (1998'2002) around 7.5 million dollars in WFP resources is required, while other resources would come from Government counterpart funds and outside donors. Activities in natural resources will take into account the new "Quisqueya Verde" Plan presented by the Government. This plan seeks to work towards the protection, rehabilitation and sustainability of natural resources. Project No. 2798.01—"Development of the Highlands", which is about to end—will be extended to encompass these objectives. A three-year extension in the duration of project No. 5276—"School feeding in the poor and economically depressed areas", based on the achievements obtained to date, is also envisaged. Furthermore, WFP also intends to formulate a four-year integrated project for children under six years of age.

KEY ISSUES AND RISKS

56. One fundamental problem due to past budget limitations was appropriate counterpart financial support to the projects from the Government. This has affected the projects' performance in the past, and could negatively affect it in the future. The lack of adequate budgetary resources to move products from the port to the warehouse has had a negative impact on WFP. The new Government is increasing its financial capacity to comply with shared costs and to expedite the projects' implementation. The new authorities have shown interest in collaborating with WFP projects in a more active manner.



ANNEX I

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC SELECTED INDICATORS

	1984	1990	
Total poverty (percent)	39.2	57.0	
Urban	27.4	53.1	
Rural	51.6	62.2	
1989 - 1994 (average)			
GDP per capita (dollars)		1 320.0	
	1985	1990	1994
Government social expenditure (as percentage of GDP)	4.6	4.7	6.7
	1985	1990	1994
Basic monthly salary (dollars)	113.0	104.8	117.5
Basic cereals	1970-75	1980-85	1989-94
Total imports (thousand tons)	226	426	961
Food aid (thousand tons)	16	107	7
Cereals production per capita (tons) (1987=100)	108	101	99
as percentage of GDP in agriculture	21.5	19.7	14.9



ANNEX II

PLANNED DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD (1998-2002) (in tons)						
Activity	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Average
Slums rehabilitation	2 400	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 000	2 080
Primary school and under-5 feeding	1 200	1 200	1 200	1 200	1 200	1 200
Soil conservation and agricultural rehabilitation	1 000	1 000	1 000	1 000	1 000	1 000
Total	4 600	4 200	4 200	4 200	4 200	4 280

ANNEX III

NUMBER OF DIRECT BENEFICIARIES						
Activity	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	Average
Slums rehabilitation	50 000	45 000	45 000	40 000	40 000	44 000
Primary school and under-5 feeding	100 000	95 000	90 000	85 000	80 000	90 000
Soil conservation and agricultural rehabilitation	10 000	10 000	10 000	10 000	10 000	10 000
Total	160 000	150 000	145 000	135 000	130 000	144 000

