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EVALUATION WORK PLAN: 1999–2000

Agenda item 6

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted for information to the Executive Board.

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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WFP PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

1. At the Annual Session of 1998, the Executive Board requested that an extended debate be carried out on the principles and methods of monitoring and evaluation. It also recommended that baseline indicators be incorporated into project design to allow the future evaluation of impact.
2. The requests by the Board have been overtaken by events. At the First Regular Session of 1998, the Board asked the Secretariat to undertake a review of Food Aid for Development (Decision 1998/EB.1/4), a process which, among other things, has involved three extensive consultations with and beyond the membership of WFP. The final outcome of the Review on Food Aid and Development is under consideration at this Annual Session. Within the “Enabling Development” implementation strategy, the Secretariat has incorporated a reconsideration and re-statement of WFP’s monitoring and evaluation approaches under the heading “Demonstrating Results”. That will go a long way towards meeting the earlier request of the Board for an opportunity for an extended debate on this subject.
3. Although the Food Aid and Development Review does not focus on emergency or recovery interventions, the broad framework which WFP follows for both monitoring and evaluation in the development context is generally applicable to the crisis-related programmes it undertakes. The debate on monitoring and evaluation within the Review is therefore considered to be an appropriate initial response to the Board’s request of 1998.
4. To elaborate briefly on the issues raised in “Enabling Development”, monitoring and evaluation are recognized as key management tools which must be strengthened. Firstly, they are important for ensuring and demonstrating that WFP’s interventions are reaching the right people and having the desired impact. Another primary aim is to strengthen the management capacity of implementing partners. Within WFP, monitoring and evaluation are the mechanisms for creating a sound knowledge base and a well functioning feedback system which will help WFP more effectively to learn from experience and become more results-oriented.
5. The recent and dramatic shift in WFP’s resources towards emergency and recovery interventions is a factor which supports a review of monitoring and evaluation systems which have traditionally been more geared towards development interventions. The guidelines provided for monitoring and evaluation must more realistically reflect the distinction between the various types of WFP interventions—ranging from emergency to recovery to development—and the challenges posed by each.
6. Monitoring and evaluation systems and the supporting tools have existed in WFP for years. However, it is clear that the current application of these is weak, hampering the Programme’s ability to assess the impact of interventions and become more results-oriented. As mentioned in both the Development Review paper and below in this biennial Work Plan, a number of initiatives will be undertaken to ensure that staff are provided with the appropriate tools in order to strengthen the organization’s ability to monitor and evaluate.



ORIENTATION OF THE 1999–2000 WORK PLAN

7. The new plan will continue to be based on the overall strategic priorities of the Programme and to place strong emphasis on the evaluation of relief operations. Over the next few years, Country Programme evaluations will absorb an increasing share of resources, not least staff time.
8. On the development side, a direct outcome of the Food Aid and Development Review, among other things, is that WFP will develop a much stronger results-oriented approach to the design and implementation of its “enabling development” interventions. On a more regular basis, project design will include clear objectives, baseline data, and indicators of implementation and outcome. Until such rigorous designs are in place, there is little value in continuing the recent level of development project evaluations. For this reason the number of studies on development projects has been reduced for the next biennium and will most likely continue to stay at a low level for a year or two longer until WFP is able more effectively to evaluate impact against sound objectives and clear baseline information.
9. This reduction in evaluations of development activities is temporary. The consultations on food aid and development have clearly demonstrated the importance of collecting and disseminating data on project performance, on the achievement of outputs, and on the impact of the project on beneficiaries. This is particularly relevant within the context of a results-based framework. Evaluations form an essential part of this process: they are crucial for understanding why a programme works or why there are difficulties. Evaluation findings will provide lessons which can be generalized and assist in the implementation of other projects and the design of future interventions.
10. In order for WFP to be better able to move towards a management system based on output and outcome results rather than inputs, the basis for the evaluation must be designed into the intervention at the very beginning. This, however, can only be achieved if WFP field staff are fully conversant with design tools which not only lead to effective projects, but also enable project effectiveness to be verified by evaluation assessments. Among other things, the necessary evaluation tools must be available and staff must be trained in their use. For the current Plan period, the Office of Evaluation is now in a position to give priority to developing recommendation tracking and lessons learned systems and producing evaluation guidelines for field-based staff. These evaluation guidelines will be prepared and disseminated in 1999. They will distinguish between evaluating emergency, relief and recovery, and development interventions. Menus of suitable indicators for various types of WFP interventions will also be prepared, and relevant training programmes developed.

1998 OVERVIEW

11. The 1998–1999 Work Plan, presented to the Executive Board in May 1998 (WFP/EB.A/98/5) is progressing with some adjustments, reflecting the need to consider developments in 1998, in particular the approval of a number of large relief operations.
12. Four development project evaluations have been carried out during 1998 (Burkina Faso 4959.00—Supplementary feeding for vulnerable groups; Niger 2072.03—Support for mother and child health (MCH) activities and nutritional rehabilitation and education;



- India 2206.06—Support to integrated child development services; and Ecuador 4463.00—Primary health care and improved health sanitation). One project evaluation (Pakistan 2237.03—Supplementary feeding of pre-school children, expectant and nursing mothers) was assessed as part of a broader Country Programme evaluation, with another one (Senegal 5655.00—Community nutrition) to be covered by a Country Programme evaluation included in the 1999–2000 Work Plan. One evaluation was cancelled because project implementation had been delayed for security reasons (Congo D.R.—Quick action projects) and one because a management review is now under consideration (Gambia 2729.02—Community-based rural development). Three previously proposed evaluations have been replaced by a thematic study: Support to education of girls (Pakistan 4185.00—Promotion of primary education for girls in Baluchistan and North-West Frontier Province; Niger 2445.04—Food aid to primary schools and transhumant areas; and Morocco 2288.04—Feeding of children in rural primary schools).
13. In addition, one protracted relief operation was evaluated (Mali 5804.00—Food aid for Malian refugees, returnees and conflict-affected persons). It was decided not to proceed with three evaluations of relief operations. Nepal 5324.02—Food aid to Bhutanese refugees—has been removed from the Plan as it is deemed too early for a proper assessment of the impact of WFP assistance. Iraq 5311.00—Food assistance to destitute and vulnerable persons—was deferred because of the current situation in the country. And Haiti 5010.02, 5539.00—WFP humanitarian assistance and the involvement of the military—was removed from the Plan because the issues are clear and the country office is currently re-structuring the programme. Two evaluations, both scheduled for 1999, are included in the 1999–2000 Work Plan (Kenya 4961.04—Food aid for Somali, Ethiopian and Sudanese refugees; and Sudan 4168.05—Food aid for Ethiopian and Chadian refugees), with a third (Sudan 5826.01—Emergency food assistance to war- and drought-affected populations), now being considered for an evaluation of the impact of WFP interventions in Operation Lifeline Sudan, to be undertaken jointly with a donor. A desk study of emergency operation DPR Korea 5959.00 was undertaken in 1998 to prepare material for a formal evaluation which is included in the 1999–2000 Work Plan.
14. One end-of-term Country Programme evaluation was undertaken (Pakistan Country Programme 1994–1998). While the Office of Evaluation may participate in mid-term reviews, the Operations Department will be responsible for them together with the resulting mid-term progress reports to the Executive Board. Three Country Programmes, listed for mid-term reviews in the 1998–1999 Work Plan, have now been included as end-of-term evaluations in the 1999–2000 Plan (Bolivia 1997–2001; India 1997–2001; Yemen 1998–2001). The evaluation of another Country Programme, also listed as a mid-term review in the 1998–1999 Work Plan (Egypt), will be undertaken towards the end of the current phase. In this way, the evaluation will contribute more meaningfully towards the formulation of the next Country Strategy Outline and Country Programme Document. One Country Programme evaluation (Bangladesh) was cancelled, as a mid-term review was undertaken in early 1999. The Office of Evaluation assisted the Bureau in organizing this review and it was felt that a separate evaluation shortly afterwards would not be justified.
15. During the year, three thematic evaluations were also undertaken (Mid-term evaluation of WFP's Commitments to Women; Recurring problems of food assistance in complex emergencies; Assistance to post-conflict and post-emergency settlements). A study on experiences of WFP assistance to development was undertaken in preparation for the consultations on Food Aid and Development. Two thematic evaluations have been



cancelled. One, concerning food aid and demobilization, was no longer regarded as sufficiently relevant. Another study concerning experiences related to graduating from WFP assistance was cancelled as it was felt that an evaluation could unnecessarily complicate ongoing graduation strategies. One theme was reformulated (Analysis of WFP school feeding interventions will focus on assistance to girls' education) and one, planned for 1999, is included in the 1999–2000 Work Plan (Food assistance in areas of recurrent emergencies). This is also the case with the planned institutional evaluation (Organizational change in WFP).

16. Other areas of work planned for 1998, such as the development of an evaluation memory, lessons learned and recommendation tracking systems, had to be deferred to 1999 because of staff constraints.

THE 1999–2000 WORK PLAN

17. The following work plan is indicative and may be modified in order for evaluation work to be in line with WFP's evolving priorities.

Evaluations of projects and operations

Development projects

- PERU—Evaluation of country portfolio

Protracted relief operations (PROs), protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs) and emergency operations (EMOPs)

- AFGHANISTAN 6064.00—Relief and recovery in Afghanistan
- CAMBODIA 6038.00—Food aid for recovery and rehabilitation
- CHINA 6045.00—Emergency food aid to flood affected people
- DPR KOREA 5959.00—Assistance to vulnerable groups
- ETHIOPIA 5241.03—Food assistance for Somali, Sudanese, Djiboutian and Kenyan refugees in Ethiopia
- INDONESIA 6006.00—Emergency assistance to drought victims
- KENYA 4961.04—Food aid for Somali, Ethiopian and Sudanese refugees
- SUDAN—Impact of WFP interventions in Operation Lifeline Sudan
- SUDAN 4168.05—Food aid for Ethiopian and Chadian refugees
- UGANDA 5623.01—Assistance to Sudanese refugees in Uganda

Evaluations of country programme

- BOLIVIA—1997–2001
- INDIA—1997–2001
- MALAWI—1998–2001
- MOZAMBIQUE—1998–2001



- SENEGAL—1999–2001
- YEMEN—1998–2001

Thematic evaluations

- Food assistance in areas of recurrent emergency
- NGO partnership
- Support to girls' education

Institutional evaluations

- Organizational change in WFP
- WFP strategic transport fleet concept

Additional evaluations

18. Evaluations of operations initiated in response to the damage caused in Latin America by hurricanes in late 1998 and by earthquakes in January 1999 may be warranted during the plan period.

OTHER AREAS OF WORK

19. In addition to the evaluation activities outlined above, the Office of Evaluation will continue its work on strengthening the access to evaluation knowledge at WFP. A number of special tasks aimed at improving evaluation skills and facilitating access to evaluation findings and recommendations will be undertaken with the following planned outputs:

- Evaluation guidelines
- Menus of impact indicators for various sectors
- Lessons Learned System
- Recommendation Tracking System
- Evaluation newsletter

