

## **ODD INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT: EB A/2007**

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Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

ODD has three projects for your consideration; before introducing it to you, I would like to give you a strategic overview of food security situation in the region.

In my presentation, I would like to cover the following major topics:

- Update on the situation in Northern Sahel
- Update on Mano River Union states
- Update on Côte d'Ivoire
- Update on operations in Chad
- Update on CAR
- Support to CILSS
- Projects for Consideration of the Board: Mali, Sierra Leone and Cameroon CPs

### **SITUATION IN THE SAHEL**

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1. As Distinguished Delegates would recall, I informed you in our last Board meeting, about the unprecedented and unacceptable high rates of malnutrition in Northern Sahel. Acute malnutrition rates hover around 15% and stunting rates around 37% making malnutrition in the north Sahel the highest in the world. Undernutrition is the attributable cause of 56% of all child deaths in the Sahel. I also informed you that UNICEF and WFP had prepared a joint action plan in 2006 to assist the governments concerned to take steps in reducing child malnutrition.
2. We have provided the necessary **leadership and advocacy** on child hunger and undernutrition in the Sahel; **technical support to Governments for the development of national protocols for the management of acute malnutrition**; up to date information on child survival, nutrition and food security;
3. We **fostered interagency coordination among UN-agencies, NGOs and key financial partners** and this facilitated the rapid scaling-up in the delivery of **two essential packages for Nutrition and Child Survival**. UNICEF reinforced therapeutic feeding programmes and the delivery of key preventive interventions for child feeding, nutrition and survival; WFP expanded targeted and blanket supplementary feeding, food security and safety net interventions for children and their households.
4. In 2007, we need to take this effort to a next level of **scale, ownership and prioritisation**. **We are convinced that the MDGs to reduce child malnutrition by half and child mortality by two thirds by 2015 is doable**.
5. As of 2007, we will need to consolidate the work and vision we put forth in 2006. **Child hunger and undernutrition need to become policy, programme and investment priorities for national governments, UN-agencies and their humanitarian and development partners**.
6. I am happy to inform you that national policies have already been elaborated in Mali, Mauritania and Niger. UNCTs in the region have committed themselves in making the fight against malnutrition a centerpiece of UNDAFs and CCAs.

7. In order to effectively respond to the challenges we face, WFP needs about **USD 9.8 million over the next 6 months for the four Sahelian countries**<sup>1</sup>.
8. The Sahelian experience is being reviewed by the Boston Consulting Group as I speak, with to learn from the Sahelian experience with a view to developing a prototype of UN collaboration and wider partnership building that would be useful to other countries and regions whose governments wish to scale up efforts to end child hunger and under nutrition. Mission started on 29 May and expected to finish by 8 June.
9. Side by side with these developments, the Rome-based UN agencies of IFAD, FAO and WFP have been consulting with member states of northern Sahel , ECOWAS, and CILSS to embark on a Sahel Agricultural and Rural Development Initiative (SARDI), the twin objectives of which are to assist the population at risk and to reduce rural poverty through reduction of food insecurity by increasing agricultural production and intra-regional trade. The concept note has been prepared, approved by the Heads of States in their Ouagadougou meeting in March. Formulation mission is under way.

#### **UPDATE ON MANO RIVER UNION**

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10. With the positive developments in Liberia, the plan to robustly support the repatriation of Liberian refugees into Liberia so that voluntary repatriation could be brought to closure by this month is now a reality. The camps in Guinea and Sierra Leone will be closed by the end of this month and HCR plans to reintegrate the caseload that will remain in these countries by the end of this month.
11. Therefore, the regional operation will also end and single-country PRROs will be prepared to address country-specific issues. Liberia will focus essentially in creating the enabling environment for resettlement of returning refugees through school feeding and rehabilitation of food production and health infrastructure. The PRRO has already been approved and ready to take off next month. It will require USD 9.6 million for the next 6 months. Sierra Leone and Guinea are preparing smaller PRROS to provide support for the rehabilitation of refugee affected areas through food-for-work, nutritional support to vulnerable groups, etc.

#### **UPDATE ON CÔTE D'IVOIRE**

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12. The political and security situation in IVC have teetered on the abyss for about 5 years now but the Ouagadougou accord signed in March this year has ushered in a new lease of hope: new Government formed on 29 March; Zone of confidence dismantled on 16 April; and with the successful implementation of the next steps (revival of DDR process; registration and identification process, return of federal administration to the north and holding of elections), the outlook for the country is promising.
13. With these positive developments, WFP is preparing a country-specific transition PRRO for IVC which will essentially focus on creation of an enabling environment for peace and resettlement.
14. The project will need USD 6 million for taking off. (PRRO 10372.0 still has an outstanding IRA repayment of USD 6.7 million).

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<b>Sahel PRROs and shortfalls over the next 6 months</b>	
Burkina Faso PRRO 10541.0	US\$ 762,980
Mali PRRO 10452.0	US\$ 885,044
Mauritania PRRO 10359.0	US\$ 6,058,190 (includes 2,286,790 of outstanding IRA repayment)
Niger PRRO 10509.0	US\$ 2,067,371

## **UPDATE ON WFP OPERATIONS IN CHAD**

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15. The security situation in eastern Chad is tense and difficult and sometimes affecting the physical security of our staff and movement of convoys which oftentimes creates a hiatus for our operations. During the April mission of ED to Chad, she raised these security concerns with government officials and she was assured of resolution. It however continues.
16. About 140,000 persons are reported to have been displaced by the recent fighting and WFP is assisting about 110,000 IDPs. I visited some camps in the East myself in April and it became evident to me that these people have no other coping mechanisms but food delivered by WFP.
17. WFP continues to provide a monthly ration to 225,000 Sudanese refugees. Malnutrition has been brought down to below 5% in camps.
18. There about 30,000 CAR refugees in 3 camps in southern Chad.
19. Contingency Planning is being coordinated with Cameroon.
20. Need about USD 5 million to repay the IRA.
21. Propositioning of food for the eastern camps: on top of and will all be done before the closure of the roads by the end of this month.

## **UPDATE ON CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC**

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22. Recent clashes between the army and rebels – 1.1 million according to UN; WFP plans to assist **300,000**; detailed assessment in NW is on-going with NGOS (CARITAS and COOPI);
23. Need about USD 11.6 million for the PRRO in the next 6 months (including an IRA outstanding repayment of USD 1.8 million).

## **SUPPORT TO CILSS**

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24. CILSS, WFP and partners have established a **regional steering committee for market monitoring; various market surveys have been conducted jointly.**
25. WFP has recently based one of its **Regional Assessment Officers in Ouagadougou**, the base of the Executive Secretary of CILSS.
26. Main steps for future collaboration include :
  - The finalization of the process to harmonize the analysis and identification of zones and populations at risk in Sahel (February 2007).
  - The reinforcement of the field co-operation for undertaking joint food security and nutrition assessments through a formal agreement (case of Niger with involving WFP CO and AGRHYMET Centre, *inter alia*).
  - The implementation of the UNICEF/WFP regional nutrition strategy with CILSS as regional focal point for the concerned countries
  - The implementation of SARDI (Sahel Agricultural and Rural Development Initiative) involving CILSS and other regional inter-governmental organizations. A regional workshop is planned early 2007 followed by regional programme formulation.

## **ITEMS FOR PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD**

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27. My task now is to introduce the following Country Programmes for your consideration: Mali, Sierra Leone and Cameroon.
28. These are already before you and I will not get into the details; I will only say the following:

29. They are all geographically targeted; harmonised with PRSP and UNDAF; gender-sensitive and cost-effective. I highly recommend them for your consideration.

Thank you Mr President.