

## WFP SCHOOL FEEDING

- Over the past 38 years, WFP has become the world's largest provider of school meals to poor children. In 2000, the Programme fed more than 12 million children in schools in 54 countries.

- WFP is one of the world leaders in promoting girls' education through its take-home rations programme. The Programme gives a month's supply of food rations to the parents of girls who are enrolled in school and who maintain a minimum attendance rate. The result is that girls' enrolment has increased by nearly 300 percent in some areas.

- WFP plans to implement a specific school feeding strategy for war and HIV/AIDS orphans. Already the Programme manages these types of projects in Cambodia, Kenya, Uganda and Zambia, and it is preparing to expand to other countries.

***The United Nations World Food Programme is the largest humanitarian aid agency in the world. WFP emergency food aid keeps people alive in every crisis on the planet, from wars in Sierra Leone, Angola and the Sudan to drought in Ethiopia and Afghanistan, flooding in Mozambique and hurricanes in Central America. WFP also uses food aid to fight the slow, agonizing hunger that affects millions of poor people in countries from Armenia to Zambia. Its development operations aim to make communities food secure so they can devote time, attention and work to escaping poverty. In 2000, WFP assisted 83 million people in 83 countries.***

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Providing nutritious food at school is a simple but effective way to improve enrolment, attendance and literacy rates among the world's poor children. WFP firmly believes that using food aid to attract poor children to school and to keep them there is fundamental to ensuring that those children become educated, self-reliant adults.

- Some 300 million poor children in the world today either do not attend school or do not receive a meal during the school day. Most of them are girls.
- Research confirms that basic education is the most effective investment for improving economic growth and creating literate, self-reliant and healthy societies. A UNESCO survey showed that in countries with an adult literacy rate of about 40 percent, per capita gross national product (GNP) averaged US\$210 annually; in those countries

with at least 80 percent literacy rates, the annual per capita GNP was US\$1,000 and higher. A World Bank study of 13 countries found that a minimum of four years of primary education increased farmers' productivity by 8.7 to 10 percent.

- UN studies show that illiterate girls are married off as early as 11 years of age and may have up to seven children before they are 18. In contrast, girls who go to school marry later, practise greater restraint in spacing births, and have an average of 50 percent fewer children.
- Research shows that between 1970 and 1995, women's education and relative status accounted for more than 50 percent of the reduction in child malnutrition in developing countries. Improvements in women's education contributed to this more than did any other factor.

## SCHOOL FEEDING FACTS

- When a school meal is provided, enrolment and attendance rates increase significantly and children are ensured at least one nutritious meal a day.
- On a full stomach, a student is able to concentrate and learn better.
- With school meals, and take-home rations for families, girls, who otherwise would be expected to stay at home, are given an opportunity to learn.
- Parents are motivated to send their children to school instead of sending them to work when a school meal is served.
- In emergencies, when schools cannot operate normally, school feeding, even in makeshift situations, provides nutrition and ensures that education is not interrupted.
- For an average of only 19 cents per day, or US\$34 annually, a child can be fed in school for one year.



*Into School, Out of Hunger*

## HELPING THE VICTIMS OF CONFLICT AND CLIMATIC DISASTERS - 2000

- 36 million victims of natural disasters
- 7 million victims of man-made disasters (war and civil unrest)
- 18 million beneficiaries in longer-term relief and rehabilitation operations

### These included:

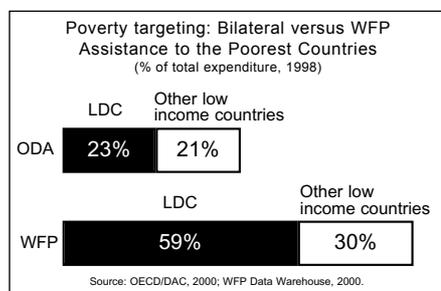
an estimated 18 million internally displaced persons in 32 countries

3 million refugees in 25 countries

## TARGETING THE POOREST

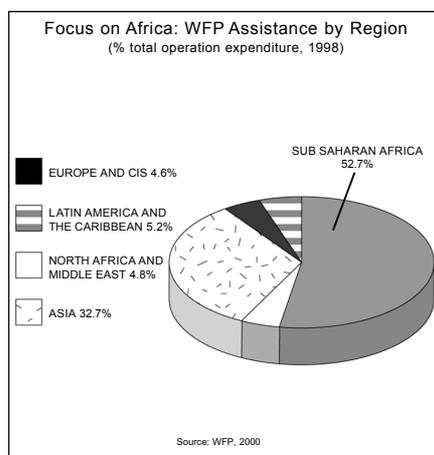
To make a dent in global poverty levels, Official Development Assistance (ODA) needs to be better focused on assisting the poorest. As it stands, less than half of bilateral aid is actually reaching the poorest countries. Aid given through WFP, on the other hand, is twice as likely to reach the poorest, most desperate people.

The bar graph below shows ODA and WFP funding to countries grouped by income levels. These graphs show that in 1998, 44 percent of bilateral ODA went to least-developed and other low-income countries, whereas WFP targeted about 90 percent of its expenditures to these poorest countries, more than twice the proportion of bilateral aid to them. In 2000, more than 5 out of every 6 tons of WFP emergency and development food aid went to the world's poorest countries.



Assistance to the poorest countries involves a greater focus on assistance to Africa—particularly sub-Saharan Africa. In 1998, WFP spent 52 percent of its total operational expenditures on that region. This is approximately twice the proportion devoted to Africa by bilateral ODA. In 1997 and 1998, 26 percent of bilateral ODA went to sub-Saharan Africa.

In 2000, WFP spent almost 60 percent of its operational expenditures in Africa, which made the Programme the largest provider of grant assistance to Africa within the United Nations system.



## PARCHED EARTH

In 2000, more than 100 million people in more than 20 countries were severely affected by drought. Droughts strike with particular frequency and intensity in poor countries, contributing to a sharp decline in the capacity of people to meet their basic needs, especially food. As a result, drought has become the most frequent cause of WFP involvement worldwide, representing 53 percent of WFP's total responses to natural disasters in the 1990s. From 1988 to 1998, WFP responded to 102 drought-related emergencies. This number was more than 50 percent higher than that for food crises caused by floods, the next most prolific natural disaster in terms of WFP response. In the last five years, the number of drought victims being assisted by WFP has more than quadrupled.

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## WFP AND MICRONUTRIENT MALNUTRITION

One of the biggest nutrition challenges for the 21st century is combating micronutrient malnutrition. Over a third of the world's population has deficiencies in iron, iodine, and vitamin A, which have particularly devastating consequences for women and children.

By correcting micronutrient deficiencies, we could:

- prevent four out of ten childhood deaths
- lower maternal deaths by more than one third
- increase work capacity by up to 40 percent
- improve a population's IQ by 10–15 points
- increase GDP by up to 5 percent

WFP uses fortification programmes to address the micronutrient needs of its beneficiaries. Many food aid commodities distributed by WFP, such as salt (iodine), oil (vitamins A and D), and blended foods (micronutrients), are fortified in the country of origin.

In recent years, WFP has played a key role in bringing fortification technology to countries such as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Eritrea, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Malawi, Nepal and Senegal. Fortifying in the country of distribution has major advantages, including saving time, building local technological capacity and saving on cost.

In India, through WFP's initiative, local firms now produce a blended fortified food called Indiamix. A 100-g ration of Indiamix provides 80–90 percent of the recommended daily allowance of essential micronutrients. Also, the product is sustainable, as it is processed from indigenous materials: wheat (75 percent) and soy (25 percent). Over 25,000 metric tons of Indiamix is now produced locally, and distributed to more than one million WFP beneficiaries.

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