

World Food Programme



Progress Report on Implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action

Rome, February 2006

INTRODUCTION

The Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) continue to provide a backdrop to WFP's work as a United Nations organization and a leader in the fight against hunger. The recent final report of the United Nations Millennium Project acknowledged the contribution of food-based programmes towards reaching the MDGs.

WFP's newest Strategic Plan (2006-2009) reaffirms that WFP aims to use food assistance, where most appropriate, to support national efforts to achieve the MDGs.

In 2005, WFP contributed to the implementation of the World Food Summit (WFS) Plan of Action and the MDGs by working in partnership with governments, United Nations organizations and civil society in meeting the needs of refugees and IDPs and the most vulnerable beneficiaries in food security, emergency response, nutrition, HIV/AIDS and education. In addition, FAO, IFAD and WFP worked together to ensure that food security, hunger reduction – particularly for children – rural development and expansion of school feeding were highlighted in the outcome document of the World Summit in 2005.

PROGRESS MADE BY WFP IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WFS PLAN OF ACTION

For the mid-term review of the implementation of the WFS Plan of Action, WFP has been specifically asked to report on progress made in the implementation of the WFS Commitment 2, Objective 2.3 and Commitment 5, Objectives 5.3 and 5.4. However, it was felt that in addition it was also important to report on Commitment 1, Objective 1.3; Commitment 2, Objective 2.4; and Commitment 5, Objective 5.2.

COMMITMENT 1

[Ensure an enabling political, social and economic environment designed to create the best conditions for the eradication of poverty and for durable peace, based on full and equal participation of women and men, which is most conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all.]

Objective 1.3

[To ensure gender equality and empowerment of women]

WFP continued to implement its Enhanced Commitments to Women (ECW) to ensure food security, in line with its Gender Policy 2003–2007. WFP made considerable resources available for several major initiatives:

- Comprehensive guidelines were prepared and are available to help staff and partner agencies implement ECW. The guidelines specify minimum implementation requirements for each commitment. Practical guidelines for gender-sensitive vulnerability and food-security analysis have also been prepared.

- A training and learning initiative was developed with technical assistance from a partner institution, InWEnt, Capacity-Building International, Germany. This initiative assists country offices (COs) in building the capacity required to implement ECW. Staff members were trained as trainers for ECW country workshops; training roll-outs took place in about 60 country offices and all six regional bureaux (RBs); around 1,400 staff members and partners were trained.
- Baseline surveys on all ECW were undertaken, with self assessments in 48 countries, 27 of which also conducted site-level surveys. These baselines and related follow-up surveys in 2007 will allow WFP to assess progress towards its ECW targets. This is in line with a Results-Based Management (RBM) aim to enhance programme management.
- With regard to Commitment V of the ECW - “Ensure that women are equally involved in food distribution committees and other programme-related local bodies” - the achievements were as follows:
 - Positive results were found regarding participation of women in food distribution committees related to food for work (FFW) activities. Beneficiary-level food distribution committees were in place in 92 percent of the FFW sites, and women were at least half of the representatives and at least half of the executive-level members in about 70 percent of these sites.
 - In food distribution committees established in relation to food for training (FFT) activities, women were at least half of the representatives and at least half of the executive-level members in about 80 percent of surveyed sites where committees were in place.
- Case studies were undertaken in Colombia, Indonesia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Zambia to enhance understanding of beneficiaries’ perception of the ECW that strengthen women’s control of food in relief distributions. The studies have validated the ECW measures and identified numerous good practices. Additional studies are foreseen in 2006-2007.

Further, WFP’s Gender Policy has been operationalized and mainstreamed into the main operational sectors of WFP’s programmes and guidelines:

- Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) focuses on the use of gender-disaggregated data to increase the gender sensitivity of VAM analyses and improve emergency preparedness and response. Thematic guidelines – *Integrating a Gender Perspective into Vulnerability Analysis* – were released in March 2005. At present the Gender Unit is closely collaborating with the Emergency Needs Assessment Unit to integrate a gender perspective into the emergency needs assessment and the food distribution guidelines.
- Gender was well integrated into the recent food security and nutrition assessment in Darfur, through questions that investigate differences in the needs and perceptions of the sexes at the household and community levels. The Darfur mission’s report featured a chapter on demographic and gender issues. Gender was also mainstreamed into food security assessment questionnaires in Niger and Pakistan.
- In terms of accountability, gender issues are increasingly scrutinized during evaluations of WFP field programmes; gender is integrated into WFP’s results-based monitoring and reporting system.

COMMITMENT 2

[Implement policies aimed at eradicating poverty and inequality and improving physical and economic access by all, at all times, to sufficient, nutritionally adequate and safe food and its effective utilisation.]

Objective 2.3

[To ensure that food supplies are safe, physically and economically accessible, appropriate and adequate to meet the energy and nutrient of the population]

WFP has long sought to ensure that the food delivered to its beneficiaries is sufficient to meet at least their minimum nutritional needs. Likewise, procurement policies and technical reviews of food commodities are in place to ensure that food provided is safe, fit for human consumption, and culturally appropriate. In order to reach as many beneficiaries as possible, WFP prioritizes the purchase of low-cost, nutritious commodities, such as basic cereals and pulses, over much more costly products such as animal protein.

As an organization following an RBM approach, WFP aims to achieve positive outcomes for its beneficiaries. For programmes with objectives of saving lives and preventing/treating malnutrition, it is essential that:

- the food provided is nutritionally adequate, addressing both macronutrient and micronutrient gaps;
- the food arrives in a timely and consistent manner, and
- it is coupled with appropriate interventions from partners, such as health and water and sanitation.

The importance of addressing vitamin and mineral (micronutrient) deficiencies, in addition to macronutrient deficiencies, as a key to saving lives has only recently been fully appreciated in emergency contexts. Provision of fortified blended foods has been the main WFP strategy for ensuring that populations achieve a minimum intake of micronutrients, but it is recognized that current micronutrient specifications may not be sufficient in all cases, especially where populations are entirely dependent on external assistance, for sick people, and for young children. Over the past two years, WFP has been involved in a number of initiatives related to nutrition, with the goal of strengthening its ability to achieve results on the ground:

- WFP is collaborating with the Micronutrient Initiative to expand salt iodization in a number of countries, as well as to help ensure that all the salt procured by WFP is iodized.
- In 2005, WFP convened a working group of technical experts to explore options for revising the micronutrient specifications of blended food products.
- In collaboration with Tufts University, WFP hosted a meeting in 2004 to look at the role of specific foods and nutrients in alleviating child malnutrition and implications for food assistance programmes.
- WFP is actively exploring innovations such as the use of micronutrient sprinkles and other approaches to address micronutrient deficiencies.

- WFP is working on developing approaches to build in assessment of nutritional status into emergency needs assessments to better understand the causes of malnutrition as well as the linkages between programme implementation and nutritional outcomes.
- WFP is strengthening its capacity in nutritional and mortality surveys, and working with UN agencies and other partners to improve the way nutritional status and mortality indicators are measured in the field.
- In 2004, WFP's Executive Board approved three policy papers related to nutrition: "Food for Nutrition: Mainstreaming Nutrition in WFP," "Nutrition in Emergencies: WFP Experiences and Challenges" and "Micronutrient Fortification: WFP Experiences and Ways Forward". These papers are now being put into practice.

Objective 2.4

[To promote access for all, especially the poor and members of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, to basic education and primary health care provision in order to strengthen their capacity for self-reliance]

WFP has been using food aid to support education programmes in primary schools, pre-schools and secondary schools, with particular emphasis on girls' education.

In 2004, WFP fed more than 16.6 million children in schools in 72 countries (an increase of 9 percent compared with 2003). WFP Standardized School Feeding Surveys have revealed encouraging results in school feeding during 2003/2004. Main successes include:

- Enrolment increased significantly in schools where WFP school feeding assistance was recently introduced (32 percent increase in 17 countries in sub-Saharan Africa where surveys were conducted).
- More girls were enrolled than boys, resulting in a global gender ratio above parity (1.05). The largest increase in girls' enrolment was found in countries where take-home ration programmes for girls were recently expanded (41 percent in Myanmar and 66 percent in Yemen).
- The survey also indicated global attendance rates of over 90 percent for both boys and girls in WFP-assisted schools.

Essential package:

WFP worked together with governments, UNICEF and other aid organizations, to find ways to improve not only the overall nutrition of children but also to help make the school environment better. The result was the **essential package**, an integrated approach that includes: support for basic education, on-site school feeding and/or take-home rations, micronutrient supplementation, systematic de-worming, safe drinking water, non-food items including environment-friendly fuel-efficient stoves, hand-washing and latrine facilities, especially separate latrines for girls, health, nutrition and hygiene education, HIV/AIDS education and malaria prevention, school gardens and woodlots, safety and security for school-goers, as well as psycho-social support.

WFP and UNICEF worked closely to implement the essential package in 40 countries to-date. WFP and FAO were in collaboration to better link school feeding and school gardens in 12 countries.

School-based environmental activities:

WFP recognized environmental degradation as a leading cause of food insecurity. School-based environmental activities make schools a healthier and safer learning place and make WFP's school feeding environmentally responsible as pre-conditions for improving children's health, nutrition and education.

- WFP provided and/or improved water and sanitation facilities in schools, including hand pumps or protected wells to avoid contamination and transmission of diseases. WFP also taught healthier cooking practices of school meals. Twenty-six countries had ongoing projects on water and sanitation.
- Fuel-efficient stoves were installed in school kitchens to prevent indoor smoke emissions and reduce negative environmental impacts of fuel wood consumption. Thirteen countries had ongoing projects using fuel-efficient stoves.
- The establishment of school gardens was an educational resource for agricultural knowledge and skills training, nutrition and environmental education and the greening of school surroundings. Twenty-one countries had ongoing projects on school gardens.

De-worming activities:

Systematic de-worming became a part of WFP school feeding programmes in 33 countries, 22 of them in Africa. Since de-worming training and treatment began in 2001, 3.9 million children have been treated in Africa. The programme's success prompted some governments to include systematic de-worming as an integral part of the national parasite control programmes. In Afghanistan, WFP, WHO and UNICEF launched a massive de-worming campaign which targets 6.1 million children to receive treatment for intestinal worms during the 2005/06 school year.

Home-grown school feeding programme:

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Millennium Project Task Force on Hunger proposed the home-grown school feeding programme to link school feeding directly with agricultural development through the purchase of locally/domestically produced food, school gardens and the incorporation of agriculture into school curricula.

Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda, and Zambia were selected to implement the pilot phase. Till end-2005, Ghana Nigeria and Uganda, submitted proposals to NEPAD or were in the process of finalizing them. WFP continues to provide technical assistance together with UNICEF and FAO to the interested countries, notably Madagascar and Mozambique.

Regional school feeding initiatives:

- The Alliance for Action on School Feeding, Health and Basic Education was created in September 2003 when the declaration of commitment was endorsed in Dakar by the Ministers of Education of Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal. It aims at

cutting costs by sharing resources and information, while improving nutrition, health and basic education for school-age children in the Sahel region.

- The Latin American School Feeding Network was established by the initiative and support of WFP in March 2004. More than 800 people from 19 countries joined to launch this network. It is an independent membership organization aiming at bringing together the experience and knowledge of different regions to improve school meal programmes throughout the region.
- The Southern Africa Strategy was launched in September 2005 with the agreement that the leadership of this partnership rests with the national governments who have pledged their commitment to its success. It promotes health and nutrition education in the context of school feeding activities. However, given the increasing number of school-age orphans and vulnerable children in the region, the Strategy places strong focus on prevention education on HIV, life-skills training, psycho-social support, and malaria prevention and care.
- In the Middle East, Central Asia and Eastern Europe region, inter-country study visits on school feeding were carried out in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan Egypt and Yemen in order to exchange information on their school feeding programmes and to learn from one another.

COMMITMENT 5

- [Endeavour to prevent and be prepared for natural disasters and man-made emergencies and to meet transitory and emergency food requirements in ways that encourage recovery, rehabilitation, development and a capacity to satisfy future needs]

Objective 5.2

- [To establish as quickly as possible prevention and preparedness strategies for LIFDCs and other countries and regions vulnerable to emergencies]

According to WFP's Strategic Plan (2006-2009), WFP's operations focus on five strategic objectives, of which the fifth (SO5) is to strengthen the capacities of countries and regions to establish and manage food assistance and hunger reduction programmes. WFP has strengthened its policy framework and operational focus on mainstreaming capacity-building activities. In fact, the majority of WFP's country offices and regional bureaux have capacity-building activities in their work plans for 2005 and 2006 which include counterparts and partners. In this context, WFP is fully engaged in helping LIFDCs to develop preparedness strategies.

Corporate and regional initiatives include:

- In 2005, WFP organized a workshop in Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) for the African Union (AU) in their Addis Ababa Headquarters. As a follow-up, the AU and WFP will further strengthen their

collaboration in this area of early warning and the EPR through an **ALERT-AFRICA** project with the objective of enhancing the AU Commission's corporate preparedness and response capacity. This is yet to be funded.

- The Regional Bureau for West Africa in Dakar will work to further strengthen partnerships with UN agencies, implementing partners and governments at both the country and regional levels. Improving existing National Food Security Monitoring and Early Warning Systems to assist in the prevention and response to emergencies is one of its main objectives.
- The Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama is also actively working to establish an emergency response network in the region, to allow WFP to deliver food aid immediately and cost-effectively. WFP will also support an integrated regional EPR network for participating partner governments, United Nations agencies and NGOs in the region.
- WFP has developed and is currently managing the Humanitarian Early Warning Service web (HEWSweb) on behalf of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in Geneva. The HEWSweb is the first global "one-stop shop" for early warning information for all natural hazards and for socio-political developments, providing systematic, credible and real-time early warning information on-line. It also assists in analysing risk and anticipating new potential crises and, by so doing, in supporting decision-making processes and the prioritization and mobilization of appropriate and timely emergency preparedness actions. The HEWSweb site now draws more than 800 visitors a day and more than 100,000 pages are viewed per month.

Objective 5.3

- [To improve and, if necessary, develop efficient and effective emergency response mechanisms at international, regional, national and local levels]

WFP's Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) capacity was challenged to the maximum in 2005. Major emergency response requirements were met, including the Asian Tsunami, the continuing emergency in Sudan and the South Asia earthquake. From these emergency response operations, and the challenges associated with responding to the consequences of drought in Niger, lessons have been drawn and the Programme is now integrating these into its organizational framework procedures. For example, following the Tsunami Real-Time evaluation, a position for a Senior Emergency Manager was established in Rome in 2005 whose office is to ensure the rapid, efficient and effective deployment of corporate assets in a major emergency and to follow up on the implementation of actions derived from lessons learned.

WFP first committed its own resources to preparedness during the 2004-2005 biennium, through the establishment of an EPR Unit. This commitment continued as outlined in the new Management Plan (2006-2007) which focuses on emergency preparedness. It is stated that WFP, corporately, will maintain an appropriate global level of EPR capacity to manage and support multiple complex crises. Beyond the main responsible actor in WFP Headquarters (the Emergency Preparedness and

Response Branch or ODAP), the primary entities responsible for enhancing preparedness are the Country Officers (COs). Regional Bureaux are also recognizing the importance of “emergency preparedness” by developing specific regional strategies, dedicating staff and resources, outlining specific EPR activities in their work plans and supporting corporate initiatives. The above-mentioned efforts to enhance systems and procedures to support multiple complex emergencies are coordinated through a Corporate Rapid Response Working Group.

WFP is also fully engaged in preparing for the Avian and Human Influenza (AI/HI) threat. A Task Force chaired by the WFP Senior Deputy Executive Director has been established, a Special Operation has been funded and a contingency process is under way. The planning process focuses on four factors: staff safety; continuity of operations; new operational requirements; and the maximization of corporate capacity, assets, systems and tools to support UN System efforts.

Moreover, WFP is Co-Chairman of the IASC Sub-Working Group on Preparedness and Contingency Planning. This leadership is also reflected in the field, where WFP often leads crucial inter-agency preparedness initiatives and efforts.

Objective 5.4

[To strengthen linkages between relief operations and development programmes, along with demining activities where necessary, so that they are mutually supportive and facilitate the transition from relief to development]

The nature of WFP’s assistance portfolio makes transition a major area of interest: 90 percent of the countries in which WFP was engaged in EMOPs or protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs) in 2004 were countries in transition following a conflict or an economic or natural disaster. WFP is involved in discussions on transition at Board meetings and through the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA), the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and at joint meetings of the Executive Boards.

WFP contributed to and is benefiting from outputs of the UNDG/ECHA Working Group on Transition, for example the *Post-Conflict Needs Assessment (PCNA) Handbook*, the conflict-analysis framework and transitional results matrices. WFP works to ensure that decisions taken in these fora and new initiatives reflect its long experience and field presence in conflict-affected and transitional countries.

WFP strengthened its role in addressing transition at the 2005 Joint Meeting of the Executive Boards, at which it presented the item on transition, which it will also present in 2006. WFP led a panel discussion on transition from relief to development with a focus on recovery from natural disaster during ECOSOC 2005. WFP opened liaison offices at the AU and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in 2005 to enhance coordination between WFP and the AU, including post-conflict transitional strategy and response.

Innovative programme approaches in transition contexts in 2005 include the piloting of cash in lieu of food in Sri Lanka for most-vulnerable households affected by the Tsunami. A drought insurance pilot project in Ethiopia was submitted to the Board in November 2005, which aims to contribute to an ex-ante risk-management system to protect vulnerable people's livelihoods from severe and catastrophic weather events.

In January 2005 the WFP Executive Board approved a policy paper entitled "Exiting Emergencies, Programme Options for Transition from Emergency Response" which stresses that exit strategies are to be more systematically incorporated into WFP's emergency operations.