

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



63570

Distr. GENERAL 
E/CN.14/266
13 December 1963
Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Sixth session
Addis Ababa, 19 February - 3 March 1964
Provisional agenda item 9

REPORT OF THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME
(Prepared by the United Nations/FAO World Food Programme)

UNITED NATIONS/FAO WORLD FOOD PROGRAMREPORT TO THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

The first report on the World Food Program to the Economic Commission for Africa submitted at the Fifth Session of the Commission in February 1963 was devoted mainly to the Program's structure, its resources and the activities which the Program has been called to undertake.

Only a few emergency operations had been completed at the time. Since then, the Program has been gradually moving from the stage of general preparation and determination of basic policy and procedure to the stage of actually initiating and operating concrete projects, particularly in its most important field of activity - that of food aid for economic and social development, for which requests are being submitted to the Program at an ever-increasing rate.

Support for the Program

The activities of the World Food Program have been discussed and reviewed during recent months in a considerable number of international and national meetings, such as the 12th Session of the FAO Conference, the 36th Session of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, the 40th Session of the Council of FAO, the World Food Congress, the 13th General Conference of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers and a number of meetings of national farm organizations. The interest in, and support for, the Program which almost invariably resulted from the discussions have been a most encouraging experience. There is, however, a common trend running through the various resolutions adopted by these bodies, namely, the concern that the original target of \$100 million set for the total resources of the experimental program should be reached as soon as possible and that the present shortfall in cash contributions, which greatly hampers the flexibility of the Program and consequently its experimental value, be remedied.

Resources

As of 30 November 1963, 57 Member Governments have pledged contributions to the Program, representing, since the last report to ECA, an increase of 19, including the following African countries:

CONGO (Leopoldville)	LIBYA
DAHOMEY	LIBERIA
ETHIOPIA	SIERRA LEONE
IVORY COAST	TUNISIA

The number of contributing countries in Africa has thus increased from seven to sixteen. The available resources have reached a total of \$90,940,000, an increase of \$3.5 million since the previous report.

Although total resources are thus not far from the target of \$100 million, the cash component remains at almost 13% below the minimum stipulated requirement, and the operational flexibility of the Program continues to be hampered. With increasing freight rates, it has become doubtful whether available cash resources will suffice to pay the expenses of the Program, particularly transport costs insofar as they are not covered by service pledges.

Commodities

The Program has at its disposal a wide variety of commodities. However, supplies of a good many of these commodities are diminishing rapidly. This is true, not only of such commodities as rice, sugar and beans which were pledged in small amounts to begin with, but also of commodities not usually in surplus, such as meat, dried whole milk and fish, which had been made available by several countries in appreciable quantities. Although many donor countries have been flexible in their commodity pledges and have accommodated the requirements of the Program by substituting much-needed commodities for those originally pledged, it is necessary for the Program to become increasingly cautious in allocating certain highly valued commodities for the various projects. This is particularly true for emergency projects, lest the latter category might absorb a disproportionate part of the available commodities, thus endangering that part of the Program intended for development projects.

Emergency operations

A succession of natural disasters and the migration of refugees from Rwanda have resulted in eight new requests for WFP emergency assistance. For the victims of the volcanic disaster in Bali, the Program supplied commodities valued at \$771,370, during the second and third stages of this emergency. Commodities valued at \$179,435, \$339,635, and \$310,000 have been made available for flood victims in Sarawak, Pakistan and Syria respectively. To complete its emergency operations in Iran, the Program supplied wheat valued at \$105,000 to replace wheat which had been reverted to seeding. The recent devastating hurricane "Flora" which hit the Caribbean area has necessitated the supply of emergency food aid of \$398,040 to the Island of Tobago and \$480,960 to Cuba. Thus, in the last six months, in fulfilment of its humanitarian objectives, the Program has used a total of \$2,256,840 of commodities, and \$680,726 for freight, insurance and superintendence.

For the eleven emergency operations carried out since its inception, the Program has supplied or committed 66,107 tons of commodities, bringing the total expenditures and commitments for emergency assistance to over \$7 and 3/4 million.

In two countries which also suffered from major natural disasters, WFP emergency assistance has not been required. In the case of Haiti, which was also struck by Hurricane Flora, the Government of the United States, in cooperation with private relief agencies and the League of Red Cross Societies, is providing the bulk of the food aid required, and assistance by the World Food Program may, therefore, not be necessary. In the case of Yugoslavia, where an earthquake destroyed the city of Skopje, similar conditions prevailed. Instead of emergency assistance, the World Food Program is, however, supplying food aid for a project of rehabilitation and reconstruction of Skopje, thus providing employment for a large number of workers.

Even so, however, it is almost a certainty that the requirements for WFP emergency food aid, even after a most careful scrutiny, will, in 1963, be in excess of the \$7 million funds earmarked for that year. Because of this situation and because, by their very nature, emergencies are difficult to predict, the Intergovernmental Committee, at its Fourth Session, authorized the Executive Director to draw in advance, late in 1963 and 1964, up to \$2 million on the funds earmarked for emergencies in the following year.

Special feeding programs

Requests for special feeding projects, especially from African countries, are being received lately at an increasing rate. The main reason for this is the growing desire on the part of the African governments to increase school attendance and to remedy imbalance between primary and secondary schools, as well as the wish to create equal educational opportunities for different regions within a given country.

In developing a general policy for special feeding programs, in consultation with UNICEF, WHO and FAO, the World Food Program has taken into consideration the activities carried out in the same field by other agencies, official as well as private, national as well as international. It is the Program's intention to cooperate fully with these agencies to avoid duplication.

In the choice of special feeding projects, the Program will give preference to those which are original in character and through which further experience in the utilization of food supplies for special feeding programs can be gathered.

As an example, WFP is exploring, in cooperation with UNICEF, WHO and FAO and the governments concerned, the possibility of starting in three countries in three different regions of the world projects for the introduction of special nutritious food for infants and school children. One of these countries is Senegal. It is the intention that UNICEF will provide equipment and assistance in financing technical advice, while the World Food Program will provide the whole or part of the necessary foodstuffs in the initial phase until the whole project can carry on on a commercial basis.

Economic and social development projects

The use of food aid as a contribution towards economic and social growth occupies a central position in the activities of the World Food Program. In developing projects for economic and social development, it has been the Program's policy to use food aid to promote specific development projects. This, among other needs, makes it possible to define objectives of projects more precisely and to carry through their complete evaluation. Judging from the large number of official requests which have been received for food aid for economic and social development, the project approach has found general acceptance. As of 30 November 1963, including special feeding projects, a total of 107 active official requests for food aid of non-emergency character were being considered, as follows: 27 in Africa, 24 in Asia, 16 in Europe, 21 in Latin America and 19 in the Near East. The total cost of food or feed for these projects is estimated at over \$46,000,000 or \$59,000,000, including transportation, insurance and superintendence. New requests are being received at a rate of approximately ten per month, and there is a strong likelihood that towards the middle of next year the Program's available resources will be fully committed with the exception of those to be set aside for emergency action.

As to the nature of the requests for projects received thus far, experience shows that rural development projects, under which agriculture and community development are included, constitute by far the largest number, accounting for as high as 68% of the total project requests. Special feeding projects account for 17% and non-agricultural projects for 15%. The rural development category includes projects for colonization and land settlement, land reclamation and development, irrigation and drainage, afforestation and promotion of animal husbandry. That the bulk of the project requests received thus far are for the development of the rural areas is not surprising, since it is the rural areas in developing countries which suffer most from unemployment and under-employment and consequently from poverty, hunger and malnutrition. Most WFP projects are designed to make a direct contribution to the solution of the problems of those parts of the developing countries which are most in need of help and which do not always benefit enough from other forms of foreign aid, especially financial aid.

In the preparation of projects for rural development, WFP is gradually developing new techniques designed to provide the workers and their families with adequate diets based on nutritional considerations, thus improving simultaneously their standards of health, their working capacity and their level of living in general. It is hoped that many of these projects will create permanent employment opportunities. A number of projects of this type which are now in process of being developed clearly indicate that there is an opportunity for the World Food Program to break entirely new ground in the vast domain of rural development.

However, the emphasis on rural development does not mean that other possibilities for using food for economic and social development can be neglected. That up till now the percentage of non-agricultural projects has been low is partly due to the fact that governments have not been sufficiently aware of the possibilities which food aid offers in the non-agricultural fields such as road building, housing, preparation of industrial estates, etc. Where necessary, it is intended to discuss these possibilities further with governments, more particularly by making full use of the assistance which the technical departments of the United Nations can offer. Since WFP is an experimental program, it is very desirable that experience is gained with as large a variety of projects as possible and a greater share of projects in the non-agricultural field is, therefore, of direct interest for the Program as a whole.

Approved projects for economic and social development

As of 30 November 1963, the Executive Director has approved fourteen projects for economic and social development and special feeding programs within his delegation of authority, where the total cost of WFP commodities does not exceed \$500,000. The UN/FAO Intergovernmental Committee, at its Third and Fourth Sessions respectively, has approved 12 projects, bringing the total of approved projects to 26.

Projects in Africa

Nine of the 26 approved projects are for economic and social development and special feeding programs in eight African countries. As is the case in the overall distribution of projects by categories, the bulk of WFP assistance to the economic and social development of African countries is in the field of agriculture. Of the nine approved projects, two are for special feeding programs, the others for land settlement and rural development.

Land settlement in Ghana, Sudan and Tanganyika

The creation of artificial lakes through the construction of the Aswan Dam in Egypt and the Volta River Dam in Ghana requires the resettlement of large numbers of people.

In Ghana, WFP assistance will provide food for six months to 80,000 people who are being resettled in 52 villages. Part of WFP food will be sold and the sales proceeds will be used to pay part of the wages of 2,000 workers engaged in the construction of 10,000 houses, roads, drainage systems and other public works. Through the development of cooperatives, diversification of crops and mechanized farming, as part of the project, it is expected that the present pattern of subsistence farming will change into improved methods of agricultural production and bring to the settlers a higher standard of living.

To this project, WFP will provide a total of 6,172 tons of food, including wheat, maize, canned fish and canned meat, dried skim milk, soya bean oil and butter, at a total value of \$1,185,960.

In the Sudan, 50,000 people in Wadi Halfa are being displaced by the waters of the Aswan Dam. In a vast program of resettlement and development of new land initiated by the Government, the displaced farmers will be settled in Khashm-El-Girba. WFP assistance, consisting of 5,290 tons of foodstuffs, valued at \$763,810, will be distributed to the settlers, free of charge, for their 800-mile journey and during the early stages of their settlement until they can harvest their first crops. The Government has undertaken the construction of new villages and irrigation canals in the resettlement area. The farmers will also receive from the Government agricultural tools, seeds and fertilizer as long-term loans, for the operation of their holdings in the early stages of their settlement.

In Tanganyika, to provide new opportunities for under-employed people now living in over-populated urban areas where employment opportunities are insufficient, the Government has undertaken settlement projects on hitherto uncultivated land. WFP will supply for this project 2,139 tons of commodities valued at \$258,000, which will provide food to the settlers during the early stages of their settlement. It is expected that this project, in addition to creating permanent employment for several thousand people, will make a modest contribution to the economic growth of Tanganyika through additional agricultural production.

Land reclamation and rural development in Chad and in Morocco

In Chad, the purpose of WFP assistance is to enable the Government to provide local food to farmers on Lake Chad who are reclaiming land for cultivation through the repair and construction of dykes. WFP will supply to the Government 5,880 tons of wheat, to be sold to a newly established mill at Fort Lamy. With the sales' proceeds, the Government will purchase local food to be distributed to the farmers engaged in land reclamation works.

In addition, local food purchased through the sales of WFP wheat will be used in a school feeding program in order to increase the very low school attendance and to improve dietary habits.

The objective of WFP assistance is to enable farmers to contribute their labour to reclamation of land and, through the establishment of new polders for intensive production, the Government expects the production of wheat to reach 8,000 tons per year.

To assist the Government of Morocco in improving rural life and agricultural production in the Western Rif area, WFP is supplying 6,000 tons of food, valued at \$478,000, which will be used as part payment of wages to farmers with small holdings, who are participating in labour

incentive projects for rural development during that part of the year when their own farms require little work to be done. In addition to contributing to rural improvement, the projects undertaken with WFP assistance are expected to demonstrate ways with which to achieve agrarian transformation.

Settlement of nomads and livestock husbandry in
the United Arab Republic and community development in Sudan

For the settlement of nomadic sheep owners in the coastal zone of UAR and to promote improved grazing habits, WFP will supply to the Government 40,000 tons of barley to be used as fodder reserve for sheep during the drought season and to reduce over-grazing of available pasture. To assist the nomads in establishing themselves permanently on reclaimed land made available by the Government, WFP will also supply 817 tons of food, including canned beef, dried fish, edible oils, cheese, dried fruit, tea and dried milk, to be distributed to the sheep owners and their families free of charge. The total cost of WFP commodities amounts to \$2,800,000.

The objective of the project for community development in Sudan is to increase agricultural production, especially of wheat and sugar, in the areas of Khartoum and Managil, by giving support to self-help efforts in 110 villages. WFP will supply 1,000 tons of various foodstuffs, valued at \$231,700, which will be distributed to farmers and their families who participate in projects of soil improvement, irrigation, construction of roads and other undertakings, which are to contribute to the economic development of the communities. WFP food, not to exceed 20% of the total assistance, may be sold for the purchase of tools and construction materials needed for the proposed improvements.

School feeding programs in Mauritania and Togo

In both programs, WFP assistance has as its primary objective the increase of school attendance.

In Mauritania, the facilities in secondary and vocational schools are insufficient and cannot absorb all the children who qualify for enrolment after leaving primary school. The purpose of WFP assistance is to enable the Government to increase enrolment capacity of boarding facilities in secondary and vocational schools. In addition to allowing a 25% increase in enrolment, WFP aid will make it possible for the school authorities to conduct courses for a full school year instead of ending them prematurely, due to lack of funds.

In Togo, WFP assistance will provide meals to 5,000 children in five villages in the northern and central part of the country where school attendance is low because schools are often too far for children to go home for the midday meal. Since the schools have, at present, no eating

facilities, part of the WFP food is intended for payment of wages in kind to workers who will construct 15 school canteens and the necessary storage facilities.

In both programs, WFP food aid, valued at \$376,000, will serve to teach better food patterns to the children, with the expectation that they will, in turn, introduce these better habits within their families.

Studies and evaluation

To date, the Program has had an effective operational life of less than one year. While this is too short a period on which to base even a provisional judgment of its achievements, arrangements for the Program's final evaluation and appraisal are being made now, to enable the General Assembly of the United Nations and the FAO Conference to decide on the Program's future before its experimental period comes to an end on 31 December 1965.

In addition, five WFP studies which are concerned with substantive questions relating to food aid and its administration will shortly be initiated, and will play an important role in the overall evaluation of the Program. To enable the UN and FAO, as well as the governments concerned, to consider the results achieved by the Program, as early as possible, it has been agreed that the Executive Director should submit a provisional report on the progress of the Program early in 1965. A group of experts, to be selected by the Secretary-General and the Director-General, will consider the report of the Executive Director, together with the WFP studies. Their findings, with the comments of the Secretary-General and the Director-General, will be submitted to the Intergovernmental Committee in March or April of 1965, and then the sessions of ECOSOC and the FAO Council in the same year. The recommendations of these two bodies and the final report of the Executive Director to be issued late in 1965 will give to the General Assembly and the FAO Council, at their 1965 sessions, the comprehensive information which they will require to decide on the future course and scope of the World Food Program.