

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.14/195
27 December 1962

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Fifth session
Leopoldville, February - March 1963
Provisional agenda item 7

WORLD FOOD PROGRAM
REPORT FOR THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

(Submitted by the World Food Program)

WORLD FOOD PROGRAM
REPORT FOR THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

1. The Economic Commission for Africa at its last year's session adopted a resolution on use of food surpluses [Res.54 (IV)]. This resolution congratulated the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director General of FAO "on the launching of the World Food Program, which is bound to make a practical and effective contribution to economic and social development in Africa." It requested the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its fifth session on the progress of the World Food Program.

2. During the year under review, the structure of the Program has been set up, resources have been pledged, prospective activities have been clarified and some projects have already started.

I. Structure of the WFP

3. The World Food Program is a joint organ of the United Nations and FAO. This exceptional feature reflects the basic interest of both organizations in the major aim of the Program - to stimulate economic and social development through aid in the form of food. The Program aims at using the food, which some countries are willing to offer, in such a way as to help the economic and social development of the recipient countries. The Program will also meet food needs in case of emergencies. Its central objective, however, is to eliminate the factors which make food aid necessary. It stands for development and not for charitable relief.

4. The structure of the Program has been defined by FAO and the United Nations in parallel and concurring resolutions. Under the resolution 1/61 of the FAO Conference of November 1961 and the resolution 1714 of the UN General Assembly of 19 December, 1961, an Intergovernmental Committee of 20 member nations was appointed, and met in Rome from 12 - 20 February, 1962. The Committee elaborated draft regulations and recommendations on arrangements and procedures for the operation of the World Food Program. These recommendations were approved respectively by the Council of FAO in its resolution 1/38 of 16/17 April 1962 and by the UN Economic and Social Council in its resolution 878 (XXXIII) of 18 April, 1962.

5. Under these basic rules, the governing body of the WFP is the Intergovernmental Committee, which is composed of twenty member states, ensuring a balanced representation of the various interests involved. One

half of them are appointed by FAO and one half by the United Nations. Four members of this Committee are from Africa, viz. Ghana, Morocco, Nigeria and the United Arab Republic. The FAO Council at its session of October 1963 recommended that the membership of the Committee should be raised from 20 to 24. This may be achieved late in 1963 if this recommendation is endorsed by the FAO Conference, and if the appropriate United Nations organs take parallel steps. The Intergovernmental Committee supervises the Program and provides general policy guidance to the WFP Secretariat. It reports both to the FAO Council and to the UN Economic and Social Council.

6. The Secretariat of the WFP consists of a small staff headed by an Executive Director who acts on behalf both of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director General of FAO. The Executive Director is Mr. A. H. Boerma, formerly Assistant Director General of FAO, a citizen of the Netherlands. He was appointed by the Secretary-General and the Director General after consultation with the Intergovernmental Committee in June 1962. In order to maintain the cost of management and administration of the Program to a minimum, the Secretariat has been kept small and, to the fullest extent possible, the World Food Program relies on the existing staff and facilities of FAO, the UN and other intergovernmental agencies.

II. Resources of the Program

7. Under its basic rules the Program is financed by contributions pledged, on a voluntary basis, by countries in the form of appropriate commodities, acceptable services and cash, "aiming in the aggregate at a cash component of at least one third of the total contributions". A Pledging Conference was accordingly held in New York on 5 September, 1962. Other pledges were announced later by a number of governments.

8. The interest in and support given to the Program by many countries was reflected in the results of this Pledging Conference, and later announcements of pledges. As at 20 November, 1962 thirty-eight countries had pledged contributions: a number of developing countries were among the countries which had offered a contribution, thereby emphasizing the multilateral character of the Program. No less than eight countries from the African region participated in the pledging: Cameroun, Ghana, Malagasy, Morocco, Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Somali, South Africa and the United Arab Republic.

9. The total of the pledged contributions, for the three year period for which the Program has been initially established, amounted to 87.5 million dollars divided as follows :

Commodities	64.0
Services (shipping and insurance)	7.4
Cash	16.1

This was little under the target which had been fixed at 100 million dollars. Some commodities, however, were not pledged in sufficient quantities for the requirements of the Program, that is, mainly rice and sugar. No cocoa, coffee, oilcake and mill offals were pledged either. Also the pledged cash was only about a half of the target. Steps are being taken to induce contributing countries to modify their contributions in such a way as to remedy these inadequacies.

10. The General Assembly of the United Nations in a resolution adopted in December 1962 noted "with appreciation that *39 States Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies have pledged more than *88.7 million in cash, services and commodities for the experimental three-year period of the World Food Program" and invited "other States Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies to give further consideration to making pledges to the Program in order to attain as soon as possible the goal of 100 million dollars."

11. The Intergovernmental Committee, on the basis of the results of the Pledging Conference, decided that the operations under the Program would formally commence from 1st January, 1963. Operations for meeting emergency food needs had already started. In its October 1962 Session, the Committee also reviewed financial and administrative regulations and clarified the type of activities to be undertaken under the Program and the procedures to be applied.

* The apparent discrepancy between these figures and those in paragraphs 8 and 9 may have stemmed from the inclusion, in the General Assembly Resolution, of Iran which had indicated its intention to pledge up to \$130,000 to the Program, Belgium, about \$1 million, and other countries.

III. Activities of the World Food Program

12. Under its basic rules the Program can bring food aid to three types of projects: using food as an aid to economic and social development, improving pre-school and school feeding and meeting emergency food needs. The Intergovernmental Committee, at its second session, authorized the Executive Director to approve and initiate various categories of projects in anticipation of the approval of the Intergovernmental Committee. The value of the food aid under WFP in each such project must not exceed 500,000 dollars. Other projects require the prior approval of the Intergovernmental Committee.

a) Projects using food as an aid to economic and social development :

13. The Intergovernmental Committee has put considerable emphasis on this type of project in each of the two sessions which it held in 1962. One of the first steps taken by the Executive Director was, therefore, to dispatch three exploratory teams to developing countries: one visited Indonesia, another Somali and Tanganyika and the third North East Brazil. In addition, he sent individual staff members to Morocco and to several Near Eastern countries. He himself visited Tunisia and a number of countries in Latin America. Other exploratory visits are underway. The purpose of these missions was to discuss possible projects with appropriate officials. In all cases, United Nations, FAO and other specialized agencies brought their full cooperation to the mission's work. In the case of Somali and Tanganyika, the Economic Commission for Africa provided one member of the exploratory team.

14. The teams recommended follow-up action by WFP on 14 projects; seven of these are in the two African countries visited. Comments on these projects have been submitted by the WFP to the governments concerned from whom official requests for food aid are expected. Apart from those recommended by the exploratory teams, the Program has received a number of preliminary requests for projects, which are being examined.

15. These first experiences, discussions with government officials, as well as the debates in the Intergovernmental Committee, have helped in clarifying the projects using food as an aid to development which can be undertaken. A few examples may be given here.

16. Migration and settlement projects can benefit from the provision of food to enable the migrants to devote their full time to the activities necessary to bring newly-occupied land under proper cultivation. The food aid will cease when the settlers have brought the land into adequate cultivation. During the early stages of land reform, gaps in food supplies may result from production dislocation. Food aid can be useful in bridging these temporary gaps.

Food aid can help in the introduction of new and more productive crops. It will supply physical sustenance to agrarian communities while they are, for example, switching from starch crops to grain legumes or putting under grass land which is more economical for grazing than for growing crops, or substituting crops for hemp and poppies now grown for the production of drugs.

Food aid can facilitate the promotion of livestock production through the introduction of compound feeding stuffs. Under the WFP feedstuffs can be supplied to complement local feedstuffs, which may now go partly to waste. Compound feedstuffs would be produced which, fed to cattle, poultry or pigs, should bring a rise in the cash income of farmers which will enable them to buy themselves the needed additional feedstuffs and components.

17. Community development projects can be promoted through the supply of food aid. The food aid can be made available, for example, as supplementary support and incentive to communities using their own labour and local materials to build schools, hospitals and roads and carry out other types of work beneficial to the community as a whole.

Housing projects, both rural and urban, can benefit from food aid, particularly in the promotion of low-income and self-help construction of new houses, improvement of existing houses, slum clearance and basic public services such as water supply and sewage. Such food aid may lead to the utilization of considerable domestic building materials and savings.

18. Road building and other public works, which are often highly labour-intensive, can be promoted by food aid, particularly in food deficit areas. Since the work involved is often heavy, the provision of supplemental food may also have a direct impact on productivity. Food aid can assist in drainage and irrigation projects by supplying a part of the wages of the labourers in the form of food.

Food aid can be used to constitute buffer stocks to prevent sharp fluctuations of prices in the local market, which are detrimental to the welfare of the community, and in the long run to its economic development.

b) Projects using food aid for pre-school and school feeding:

19. While pre-school and school feeding projects cannot be regarded as directly contributing to economic development, the improvement of children's feeding may be considered as an investment which doubtless has, in the long run, a bearing on the growth of the country.

Pro-school feeding aid concerns expectant mothers and children up to five years of age and operates mainly through maternal and child health centres. In most developing countries this approach does not reach more than a few per cent of mothers and pre-school children. Food aid, under WFP, aims at improving the diet of most or all pregnant women and young children in a limited sector, by utilizing community development programs and mothercraft/homecraft projects, in cooperation with WHO and UNICEF.

School feeding projects can range from kindergarten and primary school to the university level. UNICEF, private groups, such as CARE, and individual governments already operate a variety of projects in this range. Food aid will be planned with a view to experimenting with various types of food and food distribution, for instance, to clarify effects on school attendance and children's physical health. Projects designed to provide school feeding for middle grade and university students, such as food aid to student hostels, can also benefit by food aid. Such projects may permit governments to increase the number of students which they can afford to assist in educating.

A number of countries, including one in Africa, are at present considering submitting proposals for school feeding projects for assistance under the WFP.

c) Projects providing food aid in cases of emergency

20. Emergencies, for which food aid can be supplied, include shortages of food supplies arising from unforeseen or uncontrollable causes such as earthquakes, floods and droughts, as well as refugee migration. The World Food Program, on the other hand, cannot be regarded as a source for relieving conditions of scarcity which are not the result of unforeseen catastrophes. Chronic malnutrition can only be met by economic development in general and agricultural development in particular.

21. The World Food Program has already undertaken a number of operations in meeting emergency food needs. A total of about \$5 million worth of food has been earmarked for this purpose during the first year of operations of the Program. As of 1st December, 1962 the following operations had been initiated. The Program arranged the supply of 270 tons of sugar and 27 tons of tea to Iran after the earthquake. Moreover, local wheat meant for consumption had to be used as seed; to replace this wheat, the WFP has drawn from its stock of pledged wheat. When Thailand was struck by a hurricane, the Program arranged the supply of ten tons of condensed milk, fifty-five tons of canned mackerel and fifty-five tons of canned beef to the people in the damaged areas. For the emergency relief of refugees in Algeria, the Program has offered to supply a total of \$2 million worth of food.

d) Studies

22. At the same time as projects of the three categories described in the previous paragraphs, are implemented in the field, the Intergovernmental Committee has recognized that it is indispensable to carry out a program of research and studies on food aid. In the light of these studies, as well as of the experience gained in the field, the governments will be able to evaluate, at the end of the three year period for which the Program has been established, what are the prospects for food aid supplied on a multilateral basis, whether it is advisable to put the WFP on a broader scale, and if so, in what direction its activities should be intensified.

Accordingly, preliminary steps have been taken to carry out studies on the main aspects of multilateral food programs. These studies are being conducted with the help of the UN, the FAO and various intergovernmental organizations within and outside the UN system, as well as of individual consultants.

23. The first session of the Intergovernmental Committee listed a number of subjects on which further studies might concentrate. These included the scope and effectiveness of food as a component of foreign aid, the effect of food aid on national and international trade and its effect on agricultural development and policies in food-deficient as well as food surplus countries. The Committee at that time also expressed the hope that the concurrent Sessions of ECOSOC and the FAO Council of April 1962 would give further guidance on this subject. This, however, did not materialize and in the second session of the Intergovernmental Committee it was further agreed that the Executive Director would seek the advice of a number of selected consultants to evolve a broad framework within which specific studies would be undertaken. This process has now been initiated and it is expected that the next session of the Intergovernmental Committee to be held in May will receive the Executive Director's proposals regarding the topics on which special studies will be undertaken along with broad outlines of the ground intended to be covered in each case.

IV. Procedures

24. The Intergovernmental Committee, in its 1962 sessions, and the Secretariat, within the framework of the Committee's decisions, have elaborated a set of simple procedures to be applied for the World Food Program operations.

The request for food aid emanates from the government of the country where the project is to be implemented. It is sent to the Executive

Director of the World Food Program through the TAB Resident Representative, when there is such a Representative in the country, and directly to the Headquarters of the WFP when there is no such Representative. The request is accompanied by a "pro forma" which gives basic details of the project.

25. The preparation of the request is at the initiative and on the responsibility of the government. The Resident Representative of TAB and the FAO Country Representative, who are fully conversant with WFP procedures and machinery as well as field staff from ILO, WHO and other specialized agencies, will naturally give advice, if consulted. Help can also be given to the Government, if desired, in finding out sources from which the non-food cost of the project can be financed. It rests, however, with the government to locate sources of financing, and to decide on the substantive aspects of the proposed project. If the request is approved, an agreement is signed by the Executive Director with the government concerned. Detailed arrangements for the implementation of the project are described in the agreement.

26. The primary responsibility for project execution rests with the recipient country which takes charge of the storage, transport and distribution of the food once it has entered the country. The cost of freight, insurance, etc. up to the arrival of the food at the borders is covered by the WFP. As regards the transport and distribution of the food in the country, the Executive Director assists the Government and his local representative to make sure that the foodstuffs being supplied under WFP reach their ultimate destination and that waste and losses are restricted to a minimum.

27. Special emphasis has been put on the advisability for the World Food Program to work in close collaboration and liaison with the FAO Freedom from Hunger Campaign, the United Nations Expanded Program for Technical Assistance (EPTA), the United Nations Special Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund. A close relationship is also maintained with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the World Health Organization, UNESCO and other specialized agencies of the United Nations system, as well as with various intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. In most of the WFP undertakings, at least one, and usually several, of these organizations are actively associated.