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PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

1. The World Food Programme was established in 1961 by resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the FAO Council, and began its operations in January 1963. While there had been earlier occasions when consideration was given to the potentialities of food aid as capital for development, and continuing experience was being gained through bilateral programmes, the World Food Programme was to be the first multilateral action programme using food to promote economic and social development.
2. Exploratory missions to developing countries were carried out by the WFP late in 1962 and during the first months of 1963 to acquaint governments with the Programme's purpose and objectives and to develop specific projects in support of economic and social development which could be financed with food from the WFP. More than sixty countries in the major regions of the world were visited for this purpose.
3. After two years of operation, the WFP has acquired considerable experience, and the concept of using food aid on a multilateral scale to finance development has found general acceptance among developing as well as donor countries. To date, seventy Member Governments have pledged contributions to the Programme and total resources (commodities \$66.8 million), (cash \$19.7 million), (services \$5.4 million), now amount to \$92 million, or only 8 per cent less than the amount which was considered adequate by the United Nations and FAO for the three-year experiment. Over two-thirds of the contributing countries are

developing nations. Twenty countries in Africa have contributed a total of \$1,120,181 in cash and commodities.

4. On 30 November 1964, over 140 requests for assistance to economic and social development from fifty-eight countries were either under active consideration or had matured into approved projects. Commodities valued at \$38 million had been earmarked for ninety-five approved projects, including twenty-nine in Africa, which would require \$11.6 million in commodities from the WFP. At the same date, fifty-six projects were in operation, of which eighteen were in Africa.

5. In developing projects, attention was given to the need of covering a wide range of activities, so as to gain as broad an experience as possible in the utilization of food aid for economic and social development during the three-year experimental period. This objective has, to a large degree, been attained. However, because the WFP provides assistance exclusively on a project basis, where food requirements are calculated for each individual project and food must as a rule be distributed in kind, food aid as conceived by the WFP finds its widest application in labour-intensive projects where part of the wages of large numbers of workers are paid in kind. This applies particularly to rural areas where widespread underemployment and unemployment represent potential human resources which can be mobilized and improved through projects in which food supplied by the WFP is a significant source of financing economic and social development.

6. The ninety-five projects approved as at 30 November 1964 are a representative cross-section of the Programme's activities in support of economic and social development.

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Africa</u>
1. Feeding of students	9	5
2. Other feeding programmes	5	3
3. Colonization and land settlement	14	7
4. Land reform	1	-
5. Land reclamation and development	10	3
6. Irrigation and drainage	6	-

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Africa</u>
7. Afforestation	8	2
8. Diversification of crops	1	1
9. Animal husbandry	9	1
10. Price stabilization	2	2
11. Community development	8	4
12. Housing and building	3	-
13. Road construction	4	-
14. Other public works	6	-
15. Industry	7	1
16. Mining	2	-
	<u>95</u>	<u>29</u>

#### Projects in Africa

7. The major part of the WFP assistance to countries in Africa is to finance projects in the agricultural field. The three largest projects in terms of commodities are for agricultural settlement in Ghana, Sudan and the United Arab Republic. In Ghana, the power dam for the Volta river hydro-electric development scheme and, in Sudan, the waters stored up by the Aswan dam, necessitate the abandonment of entire villages which will be submerged and thus the planned resettlement of large numbers of people. The WFP assistance is to provide subsistence for these people during their resettlement until the new land becomes productive. In the United Arab Republic, WFP assistance is in support of the Government's long-range programme for the permanent settlement of nomadic Bedouins through improvement of sheep husbandry and encouragement of mixed farming and fruit growing in the coastal zones of the North Western desert.

8. The objectives of WFP assistance to other land settlement projects in Madagascar and Tanganyika are to open new land for cultivation and relieve unemployment in urban areas.

9. Projects for land reclamation and land development, mainly to improve and increase agricultural production, are in operation in Chad and in Morocco.

10. Food assistance to community development in Mali, Senegal, Sudan and Togo, is generally intended to serve as an incentive for villagers to contribute their labour to the development and improvement of community facilities. In Senegal, the purpose of WFP assistance is for the expansion of rural employment in the framework of community development programmes.

11. An example of the diversity in the use of food to finance development is the project for the improvement of agricultural production in Burundi, through distribution of improved seeds. Farmers who have grown improved seeds developed by the Agricultural Research Institute are given WFP supplied cornmeal in exchange for the improved seeds at established rates of exchange. As a first step towards a nationwide programme, the seeds thus collected are being distributed to 23,000 farm families for planting. It is expected that the nationwide distribution of the better seeds will result in a substantial increase in production, higher income for the farmers, and the possible establishment of food reserves with which to face periods of poor crops.

12. The Oxford Committee for Famine Relief has contributed to this project \$32,000 for the purchase of two trucks to be used for the inland transportation of the cornmeal supplied by the WFP. This contribution illustrates one of the major problems faced by the WFP - that of financing the non-food costs of development projects, which is the responsibility of recipient governments. Another difficulty is that of providing the local administrative machinery for the execution of projects. To assist governments in the handling and distribution of food supplies, the WFP has therefore assigned project officers to a substantial number of projects. This does not, however, eliminate the need for trained technical personnel, and the supervision of WFP assisted projects is a recurring problem, due to the general scarcity of trained technicians in developing countries. In this

respect, WFP assistance to education and training should prove of considerable long-range interest.

Future of multilateral food aid

13. The United Nations and FAO will decide, late in 1965, on the future course of multilateral food aid, on the basis of the experience gained during the three-year experimental programme. For this purpose, the projects assisted by the WFP are appraised as to the impact of food aid on economic and social development. To supplement the evaluation and appraisal of the practical experience, the WFP has carried out five expert studies on multilateral food aid and its relationship to bilateral programmes. This material will be considered by the UN/FAO Intergovernmental Committee at its Seventh Session in the spring of 1965, at which time the Committee will submit its recommendations on the future of the WFP to the United Nations and FAO.

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