



*executive committee of
the directing council*

PAN AMERICAN
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

*working party of
the regional committee*

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



61st Meeting
Washington, D. C.
June-July 1969

Provisional Agenda Item 19

CE61/17 Rev. 1 (Eng.)
21 June 1969
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

USE OF THE RESOURCES OF THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAM FOR HEALTH PROGRAMS -
PRELIMINARY REPORT

The World Food Program (WFP) is a new and important resource designed to contribute to the economic and social development of countries.

By December 1968, after six years of active life, the Program had approved 262 projects^{1/} representing a total outlay of somewhat more than US\$450,000,000. Of this sum only about US\$44,000,000 had been assigned to projects in Latin America and in the Caribbean.

The Program's contributions to development projects are made in the form of food and are regarded as an input to facilitate their initiation or accelerate their progress.

Among the very wide and varied range of development projects in which it is possible to utilize food as a resource, those in the health sector occupy an important place whether they are specific health sector projects or components of other projects in which the emphasis is on some other form of activity.

The specific health sector projects are included in the group of projects classified as projects for the Development of Human Resources. They total 59, of which 11 are in Latin America. They are subdivided into five groups. The groups, together with the numbers of projects in Latin America, are as follows:

- a) Food for expectant and nursing mothers and children of pre-school age 2
- b) Food for hospital patients and convalescents (outpatient treatment of patients with chronic diseases) 0
- c) Food for primary and secondary school pupils 3

^{1/} Each project and its subsequent extension or extensions are counted as a single project.

d) Food for professional and vocational training institutes and on-the-job training schemes	6
e) Food for literacy campaigns	0
	<hr/>
TOTAL	11

In the first group, the one most specifically associated with the health sector, there were at the end of 1968 only 4 projects throughout the world and in Latin America only two, one in Colombia involving somewhat more than \$2,000,000 and one in Mexico representing an outlay of some \$5,000,000.

The second group, "Food for hospital patients and convalescents" (the latter signifying in practice the outpatient treatment of chronic diseases such as tuberculosis and leprosy) did not include a single project in Latin America and only one project of this type existed in Africa.

The heaviest concentration is found in groups concerned with food for schools and other educational institutions.

In May of the present year the Inter-Governmental Committee of the WFP approved a project for nutritional education and supplementary feeding of vulnerable groups for Colombia, representing a total outlay of rather more than \$42,000,000.

These data vividly demonstrate that, whatever the reasons, the health sector in the majority of countries has made little use of this resource and that the importance of this input and the many ways, in addition to those already described, in which it can contribute to health programs, make it worthy of very close examination by Governments.

Later in this document it will be seen that participation by the health sector in other development programs is almost universal for the obvious reason that food and health form an inseparable whole, from whatever theoretical or practical standpoint they may be viewed. This criterion is not always very satisfactorily reflected in the programs in which the World Food Program participates.

A preliminary examination of the under-utilization of this resource that is apparent from the above outline, suggests that the Program has not received, within the health sector, the promotion it deserves.

It is the intention of the Bureau to intensify the promotion of this Program to make the information needed available to the Governments, through such mechanisms as are deemed appropriate and to collaborate with them in the preparation of plans and projects to add this source of resources to those they already employ in carrying out programs included in health plans.

The plans so far approved represent an annual contribution solely for specific health sector projects of some \$10,000,000. Very conservative estimates and the knowledge available to this Bureau of applications under processing or in course of preparation in various countries justify the view that there is scope for the conduct of programs that would represent a substantially higher level of investment. As an example, if such activities were to be doubled, it would raise the outlay on this resource to some \$20,000,000 per annum and make it one of the most important and worthy of the special attention of Member Governments and therefore of this Organization.

Attached to the present document is an Annex describing the World Food Program and providing details of its possibilities and of the mechanisms for utilizing it.

Annex

WORLD FOOD PROGRAM

The World Food Program is a multilateral fund, whose resources take the form of food provided by voluntary donations from participating countries.

These voluntary food donations from the contributing countries are accompanied by the necessary cash donations to pay transportation costs and the administrative and operational expenses of the Program.

The food is supplied to countries requesting it as an input in development programs that the World Food Program has agreed to support. Such food is regarded as an investment and may be used for any type of economic or social development project.

Food as a form of aid is indissolubly linked to the existence of food surpluses.

This principle is developed to the point of the deliberate production of food surpluses, an economic device that could form part of a cycle designed to provide a possible means of contributing to the development of the less favored countries, while permitting the parallel, progressive, and uninterrupted evolution of the processes of production in highly developed countries (i.e. by eliminating the need for subsidies to producers to prevent the accumulation of surpluses).

Origin and Administration of the Program

The United Nations resolutions that preceded the establishment of the World Food Program marked the final end, at least in theory, of the era of unplanned disposal of food surpluses and the beginning of one in which such surpluses would be used for economic and social development throughout the world.

This thinking has found expression in the form of multilateral aid through the establishment of the World Food Program.

This Program was brought into being by the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization, and its form and activities were defined in various resolutions adopted towards the end of 1961 and in the beginning of 1962. This body of joint UN/FAO origin has its head offices in Rome. Its activities are administered by an Executive Director appointed by the United Nations Secretary General and by the Director General of FAO, after consultation with the United Nations/FAO Inter-Governmental Committee (IGC).

The Program is supervised by an Inter-Governmental Committee composed of 24 country representatives, of which 12 are selected by ECOSOC and 12 by FAO's Council. The Inter-Governmental Committee meets twice a year to formulate the policy of the Program, determine the form of its administration and operations, and consider the approval of all projects involving food valued at more than US\$750,000. (Lesser amounts are approved by the Executive Director)

It also approves the program budget and reviews annual reports of progress on the projects. In its turn the Program submits annual reports to ECOSOC and to FAO's Council, which report to the United Nations General Assembly and to the Conference of FAO.

The WFP representatives in the countries are the UNDP Resident Representatives. The WFP project officers in the countries are attached to the Resident Representative's office.

Objectives

The Program's general objective is to promote economic and social development by furnishing food for projects that contribute to such development. After an experimental period and in the light of subsequent experience, the specific objectives of the Program have been formulated as follows:

The Program shall, on request, provide aid for:

- a) meeting urgent food needs and emergencies inherent in chronic malnutrition (this could include the establishment of food reserves);
- b) implementing projects, using food as an aid to economic and social development, particularly when related to pre-school and school feeding, increasing agricultural production, labor-intensive projects, and rural welfare.

Types of Projects

In the past, the various types of projects in which the World Food Program can participate have been classified in different ways. Basically, the considerable range of possibilities can be divided into three main categories:

- a) development of human resources
- b) economic and social infrastructure
- c) directly productive projects

This classification of the projects, put forward by the Program's Executive Director, takes into account whether the impact on the economic growth of the recipient countries is long, medium, or short term.

Development of Human Resources

These programs include projects for the improvement of the nutrition of vulnerable groups, and the development of education and training through:

- a) expectant mother and pre-school feeding
- b) feeding in primary and secondary schools
- c) feeding in professional and vocational training centers
- d) hospital and convalescent feeding
- e) literacy campaigns

Up to the end of 1968, the World Food Program had assigned 24.5 per cent of its resources to projects of this nature.

Economic and Social Infrastructure

In projects of this kind, the food is used as part payment of wages or to furnish an incentive for voluntary self-help in the building of physical installations and capital equipment and in the planning and organization of the exploitation of various kinds of resources. Such projects include:

- a) forestry and watershed management
- b) community development
- c) housing, building and area planning
- d) transportation, communications, and power works
- e) public health schemes

Up to December 1968 the Program had allocated 29% of its resources to activities of this kind.

Directly Productive Projects

These are projects, the short-term economic results of which can be precisely determined. They can be divided into the following types:

- a) land development and improvement
- b) land settlement and colonization, including refugee settlement
- c) crops diversification
- d) promotion of animal husbandry
- e) establishment of stocks for price stabilization
- f) industrial and mining projects

Of the resources employed by the World Food Program up to December 1968, 46.5 per cent have been devoted to activities of this kind.

It should not be forgotten that, in addition to all these programs, there are the emergency operations for the provision of assistance in the form of food in the case of natural disasters and other such emergencies.

Duration of Projects

The anticipated duration of most of the projects varies from 2 to 5 years. A few have been of shorter durations of up to two years, and certain projects have, in exceptional cases, exceeded five years, including approved extensions.

Save in special circumstances, three to five years appears the most acceptable and frequent term.

Procedures for Formulation of Programs

The first stage is the presentation by the Government of a request through the UNDP Resident Representative. In preparing a request, that is to say in the project planning stage, it is important that Governments should consult with the appropriate specialized international agencies, as these will be associated with the project in some form from its outset to its conclusion. The cooperation of experts from these agencies is extremely helpful and avoids unnecessary consultations and difficulties at a subsequent stage. The request is forwarded through the Resident Representative to the Executive Director with all necessary supporting documentation. A standard guide is available on how to formulate such requests, the main object of which is to avoid difficulties at a later stage by making sure that all the necessary information is contained in the initial request. The Executive Director of the World Food Program next arranges for the project to be evaluated. In some cases the Executive Director may decide that it is necessary to send out a survey team to make an "on the spot" study of the project and consult with the Government as required. Experts from international specialized agencies usually participate in these missions. Project appraisal is completed with the forwarding of the project to the head offices of the corresponding specialized agencies to obtain their views, and possibly their comments on and suggested adjustment in various parts of the project. This stage includes various economic consultations and discussions with FAO's Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposals.

It should, however, be pointed out that the World Food Program does not need the technical approval of any of the specialized agencies to carry out its projects. On the other hand, in the spirit of joint action by all United Nations agencies, it is clear that the review by each specialized agency of matters within its own field, must have an important bearing on the final form assumed by the project and on ensuring that this is consistent with the general policy of the United Nations and its agencies. When this procedure is completed, the project is submitted for approval by the Inter-Governmental Committee if

its cost exceeds US\$750,000, or by the Executive Director if it is less than this. As a general rule, the World Food Program has previously signed a basic agreement with the country covering all questions of a general nature likely to arise between the Government and the Program. Notwithstanding this, a special agreement is signed for each particular project.

Resources of the Program

Funds of the Program from the time in which it commenced its operations in 1963 until 31 December 1968 have amounted to US\$451,373,783, of which US\$310,779,629 have been in the form of food and US\$140,564,154 in cash and services.^{1/} At the last meeting of the Inter-Governmental Committee held in Rome in May 1969, a target of at least US\$300,000,000 in food and other resources for the 1971-72 period was recommended; this would provide for the maintenance of a level of operations consistent with the expenditure that would be incurred in each calendar year, averaging approximately US\$150,000,000 per annum for 1970-72. The Program provides for the possible approval during the years 1969 and 1970 of some US\$300,000,000 in projects in each of these years, which would involve the commitment at this stage, whatever the nature of the projects and the pace at which they were to be conducted, a substantial proportion of the funds expected to be available in the 1971-72 period. It is interesting to note the rapidly increasing pace of commitments. In 1967 a total sum of US\$81,000,000 had been approved. In 1968, this total rose to US\$203,000,000, and at the first meeting of the Inter-Governmental Committee held in May 1969, it approved projects of a total value of US\$180,000,000.

Scale of Projects

The trend has so far been upward. Up to December 1967, only one project exceeded US\$10,000,000 and three exceeded US\$6,000,000. In 1968, 11 projects exceeding US\$6,000,000 were approved and 7 of these exceeded US\$10,000,000.

At the first Annual Meeting of the Inter-Governmental Committee in 1969 (the Committee meets twice a year), 7 projects exceeding US\$6,000,000, in value were approved, of which 5 were for amounts in excess of 12, 15, 23, 42, and 45 million US dollars. In spite of this, it is emphasized that projects are approved on their merits and their magnitude is not necessarily a major criterion.

List of Food Supplied by the World Food Program

The range of foods the Program can supply depends on what countries themselves can make available. Past experience and a knowledge of probable world surpluses nevertheless indicate that quite a varied range of foods with a good protein content can be provided. The main types of food included in this range are as follows:

^{1/} Report of the Executive Director. Fifteenth Session of the IGC.

- a) wheat and wheat flour
- b) other cereals
- c) various pulses
- d) powdered skimmed milk
- e) cheese
- f) dehydrated eggs
- g) dried and canned fish
- h) canned meat
- i) butter and butterfat
- j) vegetable oil

In addition the list includes a wide variety of other items in small quantities, such as sugar, coffee and tea.

Significant, because of the world shortage, is the absence of rice, for which there is a heavy demand especially in the East. We should also draw attention to the absence of all foods that are perishable or difficult to keep. Such foods cannot be included in the Program because of the logistical difficulties to which they give rise and the lack of adequate facilities for their storage. Amounts and types of food to be included in each program are decided by joint agreement between the Government and the World Food Program in the light of needs, the food habits of each particular population-group, and the availabilities of the various types of food.

Collaboration of WHO/PAHO with the Governments

The assistance given by the Organization to Governments in connection with the utilization of resources provided by the World Food Program may take various forms. It should first be pointed out that the earlier such assistance is provided, the more valuable and effective it will be, and ideally it should begin at the preliminary stages when the project is being conceived and planned. Ordinarily, three types of situations are likely to arise:

1. A health sector project in which the Organization is cooperating or expects to cooperate and which can be improved, extended, or accelerated by the addition of World Food Program resources.
2. A Government program in the health sector with which the Organization is not specifically associated.

3. An economic or social development program in a sector other than that of health but in which the health aspects are of considerable importance or may assume considerable importance.

In the first of these cases, the Organization will, by definition, be directly associated with the preparation and development of the project.

In the second case, the Organization may assist the Government in preliminary studies, in project preparation, and, subsequently, in its evaluation.

In the third case, the Organization can cooperate in the same way as in the second, and can, in addition, assist in the definition of areas of health sector participation.

Officials of the Organization in each country are responsible for doing everything possible to keep the Government continuously informed of current prospects for World Food Program projects in the health sector, and of such new opportunities as may arise. In addition the Organization is prepared, subject to the availability of funds, to assist the Governments in programs using WFP resources in the various ways indicated, as well as in any other way deemed advisable.

REFERENCES

1. World Food Program Basic Documents.
Third edition revised, March 1966.

2. Documents of UN/FAO Inter-Governmental Committee Sessions.