

WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (WFP)

Support to NEPAD

Period of Report: August 2004 to April 2005

Activities undertaken

The MoU established between NEPAD and World Food Programme (WFP) on 19 November 2003 identified, *inter alia*, two priorities for early action, namely home-grown school feeding and food reserve systems.

Food reserve systems

In accordance with the decision taken by the Heads of State and Government at the AU Summit in Mozambique in July 2003, under the Maputo Declaration, and as a follow-up to the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), NEPAD launched a study on food reserve systems in Africa with the support of WFP.

The study, prepared in consultation with FAO, the World Bank, EU, IFPRI, other partners at country level, and interested Regional Economic Communities (RECs), was completed in early June 2004. The study involved the review of experiences and best practices in 8 pre-selected African countries: Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Sudan and Ethiopia. The corporate report was introduced at the 3rd Summit of the African Union through the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) on 5-7 July 2004 in Addis Ababa.

A high level seminar was organized by NEPAD on 30 November to 2 December 2004 to review the conclusions and recommendations of the study, to take stock of any progress by RECs and member countries in the implementation of the findings of the study, and to agree on concrete actions to be taken for better coordination and concrete implementation at the regional and national levels.

The seminar has come up with practical recommendations as well as an implementation plan and timetable. These recommendations will be submitted to RECs and individual countries on the occasion of the NEPAD CAADP implementation planning meetings, organized jointly by NEPAD, RECs (for specific region) and G-8, with the participation of other partners, private sector, civil society. The outcome would help identifying country and REC priorities, thus developing a concrete implementation plan. Capacity building related activities in the domain of emergency preparedness are already planned for May and June 2005 (in Nigeria and at the African Union HQ level); a high level consultation on hunger and malnutrition in the southern Africa region will be organized by SADC, in collaboration with NEPAD, with the co-sponsorship of USAID, WFP, UNICEF and Micro-Nutrient Initiative; some surveys on cross-border food trade are already taking place as well as a study on rice strategic reserve for Madagascar upon an official request.

Home-grown school feeding

(i) Background:

School feeding programmes in Africa such as those supported by national governments, the UN World Food Programme, NGOs and others with the objective to improve the quality of and access to education for children in food insecure regions may be considered as “the single, most important long-term investment towards the future reduction of poverty and food insecurity in the continent”.

In July 2003, the Hunger Task Force proposed that “in cooperation with NEPAD, WFP, FAO and UNICEF, school feeding programmes are started that will link school feeding with agricultural development through the purchase of locally/domestically produced food, school gardens and the incorporation of agriculture into school curricula. Demand for locally produced food will be stimulated and trigger market mechanisms, particularly when concentrated on marginal rural areas where such mechanisms do not exist yet”.

Criteria for selecting the pilot countries were jointly developed by WFP and NEPAD and sent to nine targeted countries. The most important criteria are that at least 50% of the cost of the programme should be met by the government; and effective participation of both the private sector and civil society and local communities.

Nine pilot countries: Senegal, Mali, Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria and Zambia, were targeted. Uganda subsequently expressed interest and was added on the list. WFP has since then been providing technical assistance and guidance to countries upon request to design their home grown school feeding programmes, namely Uganda, Ghana and Nigeria.

(ii) Progress to date:

Following several technical missions fielded by the school feeding staff to three countries (Uganda, Ghana and Nigeria), the results have been very positive and encouraging although more work needs to be done to ensure the successful design, sensitization of essential stakeholders and effective resource mobilization. Key actions supported by WFP have included: 1) An information note on the Ugandan Government’s Expanded School Feeding Programme presented to the WFP Executive Board session in October 2004; 2) Technical missions to Ghana which included joint briefing meetings by WFP and NEPAD officials to the Ministers and Task Force members during the design of the project proposal; 3) The full integration of the home grown school feeding programme in the WFP Country Programme in Ghana; 4) Two WFP technical missions to Nigeria to formulating a national home grown school feeding and health programme to be funded by Nigeria, with the support of the World Bank, UNICEF and FAO through their on-going programmes in the country.

While the Ugandan and Ghanaian governments have already completed and submitted their proposals to the NEPAD Secretariat for endorsement and eventual resource mobilization, the Nigerian team, with the WFP technical assistance, is in the process of finalizing its proposal drawing on the experiences of other models existing in the country. The strong commitment by the Government of Nigeria to ensure the effective start of the programme was manifested by the Universal Basic Education Act of 2004

making school feeding free and compulsory. In all the three countries, interest in the programme is manifested at the level of the Heads of State who are strong advocates of school feeding programmes linked to agriculture, health and nutrition interventions.

However, no external funds have been secured so far. In the meantime, the Government of Uganda has released funds for the first trimester of 2005 for WFP-Uganda to implement the programme. A MoU between the Government of Uganda and WFP was signed and a first cheque of \$1.5 million donated by the Government of Uganda to WFP in Kampala on 21 January 2005. The implementation of the programme was supposed to have started by the end of January 2005, but was postponed due to the need of further discussions and clarifications between the Government, the Bretton Woods Institutions and some European bilateral partners.

Through the NEPAD home grown school feeding, it is expected that partnerships will be forged between Governments, NGOs, the private sector and local communities. The schools will be used to promote health and nutrition interventions related to micronutrient supplementation, systematic de-worming, prevention education and awareness on HIV/AIDS, malaria prevention, adult/adolescent education and skills training among others. The result is an “essential package” of concerted efforts to develop an integrated approach for a healthy and food secure young generation.

(iii) Next Steps :

WFP will continue in 2005 to provide valuable support to the other pilot countries, such as Mozambique and Malawi. It is expected that the NEPAD Secretariat will play, with the support of Hunger Task Force, a lead role in sensitizing governments about the home grown school feeding and undertake joint missions with WFP to help countries develop realistic projects which will attract donor interest and support.

The NEPAD home grown school feeding programme, as well as the food reserve systems initiative have generated much interest and expectations. NEPAD should anticipate that other pilot countries may face similar problems as Uganda and would need NEPAD’s help to overcome them, including the marketing of country project proposals and the mobilization of required resources to fill the gap of the project budget.

WFP’s contribution to the above process (emergency food reserve system and home grown school feeding) for 2004 amounts to US\$ 275,000.

WFP’s assistance to Africa

WFP is the largest provider of grant assistance to sub-Saharan Africa within the UN system. In 2004, WFP:

- Provided 23 million metric tons of food aid, or 65 percent of its total food deliveries, to Sub-Saharan Africa;
- Spent 48 percent of its operational expenditures in Sub-Saharan Africa, amounting to US\$ 1,382 million; this compares with 34 percent of total ODA directed towards sub-Saharan Africa in 2003; and
- Was the largest provider of grant assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa within the United Nations System.

This trend continued into 2005, with 88 WFP ongoing operations in Sub-Saharan Africa, including: 13 development projects; 20 Country Programmes; 21 protracted relief and recovery operations (PRROs); 17 emergency operations (EMOPs); and 17 active special operations (SOs).

Moreover, WFP is the largest purchaser of goods and services in Sub-Saharan Africa within the United Nations System. In 2004, the programme purchased 813 thousand metric tons of food in Sub-Saharan Africa, for a total value of US\$ 187 million.

Further challenges

In addition to the above work in progress, NEPAD and WFP are planning to move ahead in 2005 on developing a programme of action for implementing a third MoU priority, in the area of emergency management. They will work together with other partners, including UN agencies, to build, develop and/or strengthen country and regional capacities related to issues of hunger and malnutrition, especially as they affect the poorest and most vulnerable individuals and communities.

Priority areas of collaboration in 2005 and 2006 include:

- Human resources development/basic education: follow-up to the implementation process of the home-grown school feeding, including malnutrition and hunger;
- Emergency preparedness and response: Implementation of the recommendations of the NEPAD seminar on the outcome of the study on food reserve systems ;
- Institutional capacity building to help RECs and individual countries monitor food security and address food crisis, hunger and malnutrition;
- Advocacy (at the highest political level) and public awareness on the issue of the extraordinary combination of HIV/AIDS, food insecurity, and weakened capacity for governance, on top of chronic poverty;
- Information-sharing and resource mobilization.

Further key issues

- Need for a more dynamic partnership with African Regional Institutions, which involves mutual accountability, a more coherent and better coordinated support from various partners, including the UN System;
- Partnership with NEPAD should be considered as a joint UN agency challenge which requires building up a strategic alliance at regional and country level. It requires developing a multi-partner approach, in particular within the UN system, analyzing synergy opportunities and using comparative advantage of each potential partner, avoiding overlapping and confusion;
- For sustainability purpose, leadership and ownership should remain with African stakeholders (NEPAD, AU, RECs, and African individual countries).