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UPDATE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WFP GENDER POLICY: CORPORATE ACTION PLAN (2010–2011)

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for information

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal points indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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** Gender Service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper provides an update on the implementation of the WFP gender policy corporate action plan (2010–2011). It identifies the progress achieved in some areas and the main gaps, resulting primarily from inadequate funding.

WFP has made progress in establishing and strengthening partnerships, with the United Nations Rome-based agencies, academic institutions and others, to support its work in mainstreaming gender within the context of its mandate. A joint gender action plan is already being implemented with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Fund for Agricultural Development in the areas of advocacy, capacity development, research and coordination. WFP and the Institute of Development Studies are collaborating on an action research programme to support WFP in delivering effective, gender-equitable food security programmes while generating lessons that can provide globally relevant insights into gender and food security issues.

WFP has developed an accountability framework that will hold all staff, including senior management, accountable for mainstreaming gender in WFP. The establishment of the Gender Innovations Fund provides an incentive to design and implement context-led projects that are based on gender analysis.

Successful gender mainstreaming requires sustained investments in, for example, the developing of staff and partner capacities to carry out gender analysis and to integrate gender perspectives into every aspect of the work to achieve food and nutrition security. WFP will seek to address the funding gap of the action plan and implement fully the necessary institutional support measures, which include gender-related capacity development and the roll-out of the WFP Gender Mainstreaming Accountability Framework.

DRAFT DECISION*

The Board takes notes of “Update on the Implementation of the WFP Gender Policy: Corporate Action Plan (2010–2011)” (WFP/EB.A/2012/5-F).

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.

INTRODUCTION

1. In early 2009 the Board approved “WFP Gender Policy: Promoting Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women in Addressing Food and Nutrition Challenges” (WFP/EB.1/2009/5-A/Rev.1), which sets out the framework for the continued mainstreaming of gender into WFP’s policies, operational processes and programmes, at all levels. The policy outlines the institutional support measures that are essential to the mainstreaming of gender into WFP operations and consistent with the main elements of the United Nations system-wide policy on gender mainstreaming (CEB/2006/2).¹
2. In its decision, the Board also “invited the Secretariat to present a time-bound corporate action plan with realistic and measurable targets providing details of the institutional measures to support gender mainstreaming, including resource requirements”. At its Second Regular Session of 2009, the Board took note of “WFP Gender Policy: Corporate Action Plan (2010–2011)” (WFP/EB.2/2009/4-C). The action plan translates the gender policy into actions with measurable indicators and targets, assigns responsibilities and indicates resource requirements. The cost of implementing the action plan over a period of two years was estimated at US\$7 million.
3. This paper reports on the implementation of the action plan and outlines the next steps to be taken.

BACKGROUND

4. WFP’s long-standing focus on women through its “Commitments to Women”, subsequently replaced by the “Enhanced Commitments to Women”,² has increased the visibility and inclusion of women and laid strong foundations for gender mainstreaming.³ The current gender policy was built on this foundation, but also sought to address gaps and emerging challenges and identified the main institutional support measures required for the successful mainstreaming of gender in WFP.
5. The policy was developed in an environment of renewed focus on gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system: the United Nations gender policy approved in 2006 was followed by processes that led to the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) in 2010.
6. The corporate action plan for the WFP gender policy identified six priorities for the period 2010–2011:
 - i) increasing knowledge and capacity among staff to carry out gender analysis and incorporate a gender perspective into policies, programmes and projects;
 - ii) establishing an accountability framework to ensure adequate gender mainstreaming, supported by adequate corporate tracking and reporting mechanisms;

¹ United Nations System-Wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women: Focusing on Results and Impact (CEB/2006/2). New York. The main elements are: i) accountability; ii) results-based management; iii) oversight functions – monitoring and evaluation, audit and reporting; iv) human and financial resources; v) capacity development; and vi) coherence, coordination, and knowledge and information management.

² “WFP Gender Policy (2003–2007): Enhanced Commitments to Women to Ensure Food Security” (WFP/EB.3/2002/4-A).

³ “Summary Report of the End-of-Term Evaluation of WFP’s Gender Policy (2003–2007): Enhanced Commitments to Women to Ensure Food Security (WFP/EB.2/2008/6-B).

- iii) promoting and strengthening partnerships at all levels for implementation of the policy;
- iv) advocating for gender equality and the empowerment of women in the context of food and nutrition security, including the engagement of men and boys;
- v) continuing the implementation of targeted actions for women and girls, with country offices establishing targets based on gender analysis, and aiming for equitable participation, taking the local context into account; and
- vi) piloting the new programming priorities in WFP partner countries, in collaboration with partners, and measuring results, outcomes and impacts.

MAIN ACTIONS TO DATE

7. In 2011, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) conducted a gender equality institutional assessment of WFP. The assessment acknowledged WFP's strengths and highlighted areas for improvement, such as the reporting on WFP's results relating to gender equality issues and the integration of gender into WFP's policies, projects and guidance documents. The areas identified are consistent with the recommendations made in the end-of-term evaluation of the gender policy,³ the priorities of the new gender policy and those of the corporate action plan listed above.
8. The main institutional support measures required for gender mainstreaming in WFP are discussed below.

WFP Gender Mainstreaming Accountability Framework

9. The first step towards ensuring system-wide responsibility and accountability for mainstreaming gender in WFP was taken in December 2009 with the transformation of its gender focal points system⁴ into the WFP gender advocacy network.⁵ At present, the network has over 100 members globally; information and knowledge sharing is one of its main activities. A gender website⁶ was launched in 2011 to facilitate access to internal and external information and to resources for gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women.
10. The WFP gender mainstreaming accountability framework has been developed to promote the accountability of staff at all levels. The framework introduces three elements: i) self-rating by senior managers on accountability for gender mainstreaming; ii) a gender marker⁷ to track the attention given in programmes to gender equality and the empowerment of women; and iii) competencies in gender mainstreaming for all relevant staff, which will allow performance and capacity assessment of WFP staff.
11. WFP is a member of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and, as such, participated in the development of the United Nations system-wide action plan,

⁴ Gender focal points were regarded as being responsible for gender mainstreaming but lacked the authority to make decisions about the implementation of the WFP gender policy.

⁵ Summary Report of the Global Gender Meeting and Workshop, 1–3 December 2009, Cairo, Egypt.

⁶ The gender website is updated on a regular basis and is available on WFPgo under Quick Links.

⁷ WFP is adopting the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) gender marker to assess and rate all project documents and grant proposals for their gender sensitivity, which will include tracking of resources allocated to gender equality and to the empowerment of women. Staff will be trained in the use of the gender marker, which will be rolled out before end 2012.

including performance standards. This also provided an opportunity to align the WFP accountability framework with the system-wide framework.⁸

12. The Food for Peace programme of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID/FFP) is supporting WFP in the development of corporate gender indicators that reflect its shift from a food aid to a food assistance agency. The launch of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI)⁹ is expected to enhance WFP's work on corporate gender indicators, particularly in the context of the Purchase for Progress (P4P) initiative and other activities related to women and food security.
13. Still pending is the implementation of the work plan on the protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) of target populations, as outlined in the corporate action plan. WFP senior management recently designated a senior focal point with responsibility for PSEA activities in WFP.¹⁰ An internal PSEA Advisory Group provides guidance on PSEA issues.

WFP Gender Innovations Fund

14. In 2010, the Gender Innovations Fund was established to encourage and support innovation on the part of country offices in establishing partnerships and designing and implementing context-led projects based on gender analysis.
15. The objectives of the Fund are as follows: i) support initiatives and innovation in mainstreaming gender in WFP programmes and national policy and legislative frameworks, and encourage local, context-based approaches; and ii) foster partnerships at the country level, particularly with governments, local NGOs and communities, in designing and implementing interventions that contribute to positive gender relations and the empowerment of women to achieve food and nutrition security.
16. Proposals from country offices are approved for funding on the basis of gender analysis and other criteria. To date, projects from 30 country offices – accounting for 40 percent of all WFP country offices – and one regional bureau have been funded with a total of US\$2 million.
17. The projects include training of women and girls in agroprocessing for food and nutrition security in Sierra Leone; supporting small enterprises led by women to supply ready-made school meals in El Salvador; providing girls in food-insecure areas in Ghana with scholarships for secondary education; working with indigenous women in Colombia to promote food and nutrition security; supporting the Government of Indonesia in the mainstreaming of gender into its food and nutrition security action plan; preventing and mitigating gender-based violence in the southern Africa region; involving boys and men in responsibilities related to food and nutrition in Bolivia; integrating gender and HIV issues into the annual vulnerability assessment of the Government of Swaziland.

⁸ The system-wide action plan operationalizes the United Nations policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women and specifies the actions required to implement its six main elements, including indicators.

⁹ The WEAI was developed through a partnership between the United States Government's Feed the Future initiative, USAID, the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative and the International Food Policy Research Institute. The WEAI is the first measure to directly capture women's empowerment and inclusion levels in the agricultural sector.

¹⁰ This is in response to the commitment made by agencies at the IASC Principals Meeting of 13 December 2011 to designate by 20 January 2012 senior focal points for the prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse, and to share their respective work plans by 31 March 2012.

18. The Gender Innovations Fund has created opportunities for raising awareness and developing capacities of staff and partners; gender analysis is a requirement for support from the Fund. Partnerships to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women are also being reinforced through 24 projects implemented with national governments, 20 with NGOs, 14 with United Nations agencies and 9 with community-based organizations.
19. The projects contribute to the achievement of WFP Strategic Objectives: twenty-one contribute to Strategic Objective 4 and nineteen to Strategic Objective 5, while five are linked to Strategic Objective 3; three to Strategic Objective 2; and two to Strategic Objective 1. The Fund provides opportunities for innovation in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in the context of emergencies and transitions.

Capacity Development

20. Developing staff capacities to carry out gender analysis¹¹ is one of the priorities of the action plan. Resource constraints have limited the implementation of this priority. Only some staff members at Headquarters have been trained in the use of the InterAction gender audit tool and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) gender marker. Plans are underway to train staff globally in gender analysis and the IASC gender marker before the end of 2012, resources permitting.
21. WFP participated in an Expert Group Meeting organized by the United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) and UN Women on the development of a gender e-learning course. WFP will participate in the roll-out of the course, which is still pending.

Partnerships

22. A number of partnerships have been established or reinforced to support implementation of the corporate action plan. WFP hosted a Gender Partners Meeting¹² with the Board in 2010. Presentations were delivered on areas of potential collaboration with WFP. FAO outlined a joint gender action plan on behalf of the Rome-based agencies (RBAs) in the areas of advocacy, capacity development, research and coordination.
23. The collaboration among the RBAs has resulted in regular meetings of the gender focal points and in joint commemorations of International Women's Day, hosted first by WFP in 2010 and by FAO and IFAD the following years. FAO and WFP held a joint training session on the IASC gender marker for Headquarters staff. WFP invited FAO and IFAD to participate in training in the use of the InterAction gender audit tool.
24. Several other joint events have been held with the RBAs, World Bank and UN Women. For example, FAO, IFAD, UN Women and WFP hosted an expert group meeting on the economic empowerment of rural women that issued recommendations that fed into the 56th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2012. WFP and UN Women collaborated on a joint event on empowering rural women for food and nutrition security held during the 66th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, which included the

¹¹ The United Nations system-wide policy (CEB/2006/2) included capacity development as one of its priorities, noting that a "significant proportion of staff throughout the United Nations system, including senior management, have serious gaps in expertise in that area". The policy also noted that this "contributes to an inadequate and often negligible effort within the United Nations system to identify and address gender issues in many sectors".

¹² Attended by representatives of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), FARM-Africa, UNSSC, USAID/FFP, FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

announcement of joint actions to be taken. This collaboration has been extended to the RBAs, which are developing a joint field-level programme to empower rural women.

25. WFP has established a partnership with the IDS that has resulted in a proposal for a three-year “Research into Action” programme focusing on gender-related innovations from the field, results and impact. This was preceded by a study of WFP’s gender mainstreaming activities that produced five background research papers.¹³ A global gender strategy for the Purchase for Progress initiative has also been developed under this partnership.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

26. The cost of implementing the corporate action plan was estimated at US\$7 million. To date, funding amounts to US\$3 million.

Donor	Contribution US\$	Project
Germany	1 021 655.39	Gender Innovations Fund
Australia	962 439.16	Gender Innovations Fund
USAID/FFP	300 000.00	Corporate action plan
CIDA	436 800.00	Corporate action plan
Private sector	292 521.84	Gender Innovations Fund
Total funding received	3 013 416.39	
Total funding required	7 049 904.00	
Funding gap	4 036 487.61	

27. Resources from the Gender Innovations Fund are used exclusively for field support. The contributions from USAID/FFP and CIDA support WFP’s work on integrating gender into its operations and guidance documents and to improve project-level and corporate reporting on gender equality results.

THE WAY FORWARD

28. Resources are required to implement the corporate action plan and, most importantly, the activities that are essential to successful and sustained gender mainstreaming in WFP, including capacity development of staff and partners. Mobilization of resources will therefore continue to address the funding gap of the action plan.
29. One of the strong points of WFP is its routine collection of data disaggregated by sex. The systematic use of this data to inform the design of policies, programmes and projects remains a challenge. This will be addressed through the accountability measures being put in place and the capacity development of staff, which will include training in the collection, analysis and use of sex-disaggregated data. The roll-out of the WFP gender mainstreaming accountability framework is critical to continued progress in 2012, as is the partnership with IDS. In the context of the accountability framework, WFP will implement a work plan for the period 2012–2013 on the PSEA.

¹³ i) Maximizing benefits and minimizing risks of food entitlements for women; ii) Engaging men and boys in promoting gender equality; iii) Promoting effective collective action for women farmers; iv) Building secure, gender equitable futures for young men and women; and v) Addressing women’s unpaid care work.

30. It was noted in the evaluation report of the previous gender policy that the regular turnover of staff in WFP requires more than a single training session to build functional gender analysis capabilities. WFP is seeking to meet this challenge by integrating gender into corporate training programmes coordinated by the Human Resources Division. The implementation of the plan to develop staff capacity to carry out gender analysis and integrate gender into every stage of a project cycle is essential.
31. WFP will launch a gender-sensitive country office initiative to encourage shared responsibility and accountability for implementing the gender policy. The initiative will designate country offices as gender-sensitive based on criteria that measure, for example: i) the country director's championing of gender equality and the empowerment of women; ii) collection, analysis and use of sex-disaggregated data; iii) development of staff capacity on gender; iv) mainstreaming of gender into all projects; v) progress towards a gender balance in staffing; vi) budget for gender; and vii) compliance with food distribution guidelines to reduce the burden on women and improve their safety.
32. Gender audit training will help country offices to carry out self-assessments. A method for conducting assessments that lead to designation as gender-sensitive will be determined in consultation with regional bureaux and country offices.
33. WFP will continue working to reinforce partnerships for implementation of its gender policy corporate action plan. Collaboration with the RBAs, UN Women and others will continue, and partnerships with research institutions such as the IDS will be particularly important. The implementation of the joint WFP-IDS programme, "Innovations from the Field", will support WFP in successfully mainstreaming gender in its programming by learning from what already works and using that learning to change operational practice.

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
FFP	Food for Peace
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
NGO	non-governmental organization
P4P	Purchase for Progress
PSEA	protection from sexual exploitation and abuse
RBA	Rome-based agency
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNSSC	United Nations System Staff College
WEAI	Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index