WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME
STRATEGY AND POLICY DIVISION

Summary of Staff Consultations in Preparation of the WFP Gender Policy 2003–2007


Rome, June 2002
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FOREWORD

WFP has long acknowledged the important role played by women in saving lives and enhancing food security, a role that is often endangered by the persistence of gender-related inequalities. Following the 1995 United Nations World Conference on Women in Beijing, WFP pledged to take practical steps to support and encourage women’s role in reducing hunger and poverty, by establishing its Commitments to Women (1996–2001). The five Commitments, which were subsequently extended to apply through 2002, seek to address and reduce gender-related inequalities that relate to saving lives and improving the food security of the poorest people. They focus on:

- providing women direct access to appropriate and adequate food;
- taking measures to ensure women’s equal access to, and full participation in, power structures and decision-making (as beneficiaries and in the organization itself);
- taking positive action to facilitate women’s equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade, (including the use of food aid as leverage to obtain additional resources for women);
- generating and disseminating gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation; and
- improving accountability on actions taken.

In June 2001, WFP began developing a Gender Strategy for the period 2003–2007 through a consultative process. The objective is to build on the existing Commitments, following a comprehensive review of experience with their operationalization. The review of experience and the consultation on recommendations for the Gender Strategy were managed by the WFP Strategy and Policy Division (SP) (focal point: Ms. Christa Räder, Policy Analyst) and comprised the following activities:

- a gender survey by the SP Technical Support Unit (focal point: Ms. Gretchen Bloom, Senior Gender Adviser) based on a self-assessment of all country offices;
- a desk review of relevant case studies and WFP evaluation documents;
- five SP country case studies: China, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Nicaragua and Sierra Leone;
- a paper summarizing the main lessons and recommendations from the desk review and the country case studies;
- two consultation workshops (in December 2001 and March 2002) with country directors, deputies, regional programme advisers, gender focal points, and other national and international staff from the regional bureaux, country offices, and headquarters; and
- consultations with host countries, UN agencies and NGOs.

The findings and recommendations from these activities, complemented by those from the Evaluation of the Commitments to Women (2002) managed by WFP’s Office of Evaluation and Monitoring (OEDE) will be considered for the Gender Strategy for 2003–2007, to be presented to the WFP Executive Board for approval at its Third Regular Session in October 2002.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOREWORD</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACRONYMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Selected Presentations</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Issues Raised During the Discussions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposed Enhanced Commitments to Women</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening Session: Summary of Presentations</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Working Sessions</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panel of Experts: Gender and Organizational Change to Build on and Move Beyond the Commitments to Women</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next Steps: Where Do We Go From Here? Reflections on Major Outputs From Working Sessions and Panel</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex I: List of Participants (December 2001)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex II: Overview of Workshop Programme (December 2001)</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex III: List of Participants (March 2002)</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex IV: Overview of Workshop Programme (March 2002)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### ACRONYMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EMOP</td>
<td>Emergency operation</td>
</tr>
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<td>FFT</td>
<td>Food for training</td>
</tr>
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<td>GFP</td>
<td>Gender focal point</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOU</td>
<td>Letter of understanding</td>
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<td>MAP</td>
<td>Management and appraisal of performance</td>
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<td>M&amp;E</td>
<td>Monitoring and evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>OEDE</td>
<td>Office of Evaluation and Monitoring (WFP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRRO</td>
<td>Protracted relief and recovery operation</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Strategy and Policy Division (WFP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDAF</td>
<td>United Nations Development Assistance Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<tr>
<td>VAM</td>
<td>Vulnerability analysis and mapping</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper summarizes the discussions and results of two extensive in-house consultations carried out in preparation of the WFP Gender Policy.

The first consultation, entitled “Consultation Workshop on the Operationalization of WFP’s Commitments to Women and the Development of the WFP Gender Strategy”, was held in Rome in December 2001. This event gathered 37 WFP staff, including country directors, deputy country directors, regional programme advisers, and other national and international staff from regional bureaux, country offices and Rome Headquarters. Participants also included nine independent consultants who had conducted country case studies on lessons from WFP’s Commitments to Women. The participants were expected to review the existing Commitments to Women and contribute to the preparation of WFP’s Gender Strategy and Enhanced Commitments to Women 2003–2007.

In March 2002, a seminar entitled “WFP’s Gender Strategy 2003–2007 and Organizational Change: Building on and Moving Beyond the Commitments to Women” took place in Rome and was attended by approximately 80 WFP senior staff members, with four external experts acting as facilitators. The overall objective of the seminar was to obtain input from senior staff by engaging them in a dialogue on areas for enhancing the Commitments to Women, as recommended by the December consultation workshop. In addition, participants were asked to propose gender-related organizational changes that would strengthen WFP’s capacity to fulfill its mandate to end hunger and improve food security.

The two consultations concluded that the focus of the Commitments to Women remained very relevant to WFP’s operations and should be carried over to the new Gender Policy, and that certain modifications, clarifications and simplifications of the Commitments would be desirable. The participants drafted WFP’s new Enhanced Commitments to Women 2003–2007 in the areas of programming, advocacy and human resources.

Participants agreed that in programming, WFP should continue to focus on recognizing the special role of women in ensuring household food security by providing special assistance to expectant and nursing mothers and girls’ education. It was also agreed that WFP should strengthen its support to girls’ and women’s engagement in life skills education in the form of food for training and should ensure both that food for work is suitable for women’s needs and priorities and that women derive benefits from the assets created. It was concluded that the strengthening of women’s participation in programme-related decision-making should remain a strong focus. The use of gender-disaggregated data remains relevant, as does the requirement that managers be held accountable for implementation of the Commitments. However, more work will be needed to mainstream gender concerns in humanitarian assistance operations. It also emerged that analysis of gender issues (e.g. the inclusion of gender concerns in food-security and vulnerability analysis) and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation are required in order to improve WFP’s operations.
For **advocacy**, WFP should focus its efforts on the principle of encouragement through policy dialogue and awareness-raising, rather than on using conditionality with governments and other partners.

With regards to **human resources**, it was agreed that gender balance in staffing remains the goal, both for international and national staff. Major concerns expressed included the development of career strategies for both women and men and the need to address work/life balance issues. It was also agreed that a gender focal team system should be created (with each team made up of male and female members) in order to involve male staff as key agents in closing the gender gap.

Finally, gender-sensitive **organizational change** requires commitment from the top and work on the “deep structure” of the organization. It means promoting female leadership and encouraging men to play a more active role in working towards gender equality. To achieve its gender goals, the organization will need to create a spirit of learning, openness, collaboration and transformation while respecting diversity and accepting accountability for commitments made.
INTRODUCTION

Development of the WFP Gender Strategy 2003–2007

In 1995, WFP made a series of commitments based on the Beijing Platform for Action that seek to strengthen the role of beneficiary women in food-assisted operations and to address gender inequalities within the organization itself. Institutionalized as the WFP Commitments to Women, they were intended to cover the period from 1996 to 2001 and have been extended to the end of 2002. The five Commitments focused on: (a) women’s access to appropriate and adequate food; (b) their participation in power structures and decision-making; (c) their access to resources, employment, markets and trade; (d) the collection and use of gender-disaggregated data; and (e) the improvement of accountability on actions taken. Since their adoption, various mechanisms have been put in place to implement the Commitments, which have been operationalized to varying degrees by the country offices.


Development of the Gender Strategy began with a review of WFP’s experiences with the Commitments to date in terms of institutional implementation mechanisms, the achievement of targets, and identification of good (and poor) practices and insights/lessons. These experiences have been identified by the WFP Strategy and Policy Division (SP) and the Office of Evaluation (OEDE) through the following activities:

- a gender survey (2001), based on a self-assessment by all country offices;
- a desk review of relevant documents (including the case studies from the OEDE Mid-Term Review of the Commitments to Women) and recent evaluation documents (2001);
- an e-mail survey of country office activities on gender-related leverage and advocacy (2001);
➢ five SP country case studies for China, DR Congo, Kenya, Nicaragua and Sierra Leone, detailing lessons from the Commitments to Women (2001)¹; and
➢ the OEDE Thematic Evaluation of the Commitments to Women, including five additional country case studies, for Colombia, Mali, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Sudan (2002).²

The development of the Gender Strategy involved extensive in-house consultation with WFP staff, with special emphasis on getting the input of both female and male staff members. Other partners (national governments, United Nations and other international and bilateral agencies, and NGOs) were also consulted on their gender-mainstreaming experiences and strategies and their views on the WFP Gender Strategy outline³.

Consultation workshop objectives and process

As part of the in-house consultation process, a workshop was held in Rome on December 10–13, 2001. Its main objectives were to obtain contributions from country directors, deputy country directors, regional advisers, GFPs and other national and international staff from the regional bureaux, country offices and headquarters⁴ on:

1. the preparation of WFP’s Gender Strategy and Enhanced Commitments to Women 2003–2007⁵, including required positive measures for women and measures for gender mainstreaming in the areas of programming, advocacy and human resources; and
2. the finalization of terms of reference for the Thematic Evaluation of the Commitments to Women.

To give the participants relevant background information, they were briefed on:
➢ the importance of closing the gender gap for improving household food security;
➢ the history, core areas and achievements of the Commitments to Women;
➢ the main findings of the desk review and the advocacy survey on good (or poor) practices and lessons from the operationalization of the Commitments;⁶

¹ Country case studies on good practices and insights from the operationalization of WFP’s Commitments to Women (1996–2001) as input to WFP’s Gender Strategy (2003–2007) and Enhanced Commitments to Women, World Food Programme, Strategy and Policy Division, Rome, January 2002, for the following five countries:
- People’s Republic of China, by James Fitch and Camillia Fawzi El-Solh
- Democratic Republic of the Congo, by Lioba Weingärtner, Omar A. M. Traboulsi and Charlotte Mwarabu
- Kenya, by Diana Cammack, Esther Mgabe and Christian Nwosu
- Nicaragua, by Isabel Peréz Chiriboga and José Peres Arenas
- Sierra Leone, by Nicholas Crawford and Christa Räder
⁴ Please refer to Annex I for the list of participants, and Annex II for an overview of the workshop programme.
⁵ At the time of the workshop, these were referred to as the “Commitments to Gender Equality”. This title was changed subsequently to reflect the importance WFP continues to place on the role of women in saving lives and improving food security.
the major results of five country case studies on the operationalization of the Commitments, including the most important insights/lessons and recommendations for the Gender Strategy and Enhanced Commitments to Women 2003–2007;

- the objectives, issues and methodology of the Thematic Evaluation of the Commitments to Women;

- the outline of the Gender Strategy 2003–2007 as endorsed by the Gender Task Force in August 2001;

- the current human resources situation with regard to gender balance among WFP staff; and

- the importance of building male–female partnerships for closing the gender gap.

The key points from a number of these presentations are summarized below. For a summary of the main results from the five SP country case studies, please refer to the overview report. They are not repeated here, as the main purpose of the workshop was to consult WFP staff on the issues to be reflected in the Gender Strategy.

Working group sessions were held to obtain the participants’ inputs to the workshop objectives based on the case studies and their own experiences. The main points from these discussions are summarized below. This provides an overview of the key issues relevant to the Gender Strategy and specific proposals for Enhanced Commitments to Women, respectively.

**SUMMARY OF SELECTED PRESENTATIONS**

*The importance of closing the gender gap to improving household food security*

**Allan Jury**, Officer-in-Charge, SP, noted that WFP has been a leader for women’s empowerment and will continue on this path with the Gender Strategy, “making women the centre of food security”. Closing the gender gap in terms of women’s education and development is widely acknowledged as a major factor in increasing food security, improving the nutritional situation of children and decreasing poverty. Also, there is evidence that households’ economic and nutritional benefits are higher when resources are provided directly to women rather than to men. For these reasons, the Commitments focus on placing more of WFP’s food aid directly in the hands of women, and on providing women at different levels with greater opportunities to take on management and decision-making roles in food-assistance programmes.

Overall, Mr. Jury stressed that the existing Commitments represent a solid base from which to move forward. The Gender Strategy should build on these Commitments and, where necessary, propose new approaches that will further the progress achieved to date. In particular, more effort is required to mainstream gender in all operations (including their budgets), making gender analysis routine and specifically integrating gender concerns into humanitarian assistance operations. He emphasized that WFP’s mandate to “save lives” should not be used as an excuse to avoid focusing on gender

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issues; instead, saving lives should integrate gender. Also, the new strategy should provide a clear definition of the term *advocacy* from the gender perspective and guidance on how such advocacy should be carried out. Another challenging area will be WFP’s human resources policies and procedures. Finally, the proposed strategy must be operationally feasible, taking into account the limited time and resources available to country offices.

**History and achievements of the Commitments to Women 1996–2001**

**Gretchen Bloom,** Senior Gender Adviser, SP, briefly reviewed the origin and core requirements of WFP’s Commitments to Women and highlighted the new target set for women’s equal access to and benefit from asset creation. She presented the main results of the gender survey report, which summarizes the quantitative and qualitative achievements of the Commitments by all country offices based on a self-assessment questionnaire sent out in October 2000. Overall, the survey results indicated that significant achievements have been made, although some of the targets have not been met. Future challenges include a greater focus on impacts – how women’s lives have improved through WFP’s activities – and increased incorporation of gender issues in emergency operations.

**Desk review of WFP’s experience with implementation of the Commitments**

**Alexis Hoskins,** Policy Analyst, SP, reviewed the main good (and poor) practices and related lessons/insights from WFP’s experience with implementation of the Commitments to Women, identified through a desk review of WFP documents from over 40 countries and an e-mail survey of country offices’ leverage and advocacy activities. A major lesson was the importance of innovation: identifying new approaches and activities that more closely “fit” women’s needs and constraints rather than trying to fit women into existing activities and approaches. Examples included selecting locations and providing conditions (flexible working hours, day care) that facilitate women’s participation in food-for-work and food-distribution activities. Increased transparency to all beneficiaries, WFP staff and partners regarding distribution procedures, work opportunities and efforts to target women was also found to be essential. Other major findings were that:

- gender issues tend to be assigned lower priority in emergency situations;
- field offices require guidance on the definitions and objectives of *advocacy* and *leverage*;
- more monitoring is needed of outcomes, e.g. on women’s food-security and nutritional status; and
- more men need to be involved to ensure effective implementation of gender activities.

**Thematic Evaluation of WFP’s Commitments to Women 1996–2001**

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Darlene Tymo, Evaluation Officer, OEDE, reviewed the objectives, key issues and methodology foreseen for OEDE’s Thematic Evaluation of WFP’s Commitments to Women in 2002. The main objectives were to assess the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the Commitments; provide recommendations to shape the new Gender Strategy; and provide accountability to the Executive Board. Among the key issues addressed are the relevance of the Commitments and the extent to which their aims were achieved, the impact on beneficiaries and staff (a difficult task) and how well the Commitments have been mainstreamed. The evaluation would be based on a number of country case studies, using teams of independent, international consultants paired with a national consultant in each country selected. Workshop participants were asked to suggest possible case study countries, identify major issues for analysis, and recommend appropriate ways for the evaluation teams to collect and validate data.

Outline of Gender Strategy 2003–2007

Christa Räder, Policy Analyst, SP, presented the outline of the Gender Strategy, including a conceptual framework linking improved food security with WFP’s efforts to empower women and mainstream gender. For example, she noted evidence from World Bank studies that countries with smaller gender gaps in employment, education and rights have lower mortality and faster economic growth rates than countries with larger gender gaps. This finding applied to food security as well. She explained that the Gender Strategy will be based on:

- WFP’s experience with the Commitments;
- the United Nations’ guidance on gender mainstreaming;
- continued positive measures in favour of women to close the gender gap; and
- greater involvement of men as well as women in closing this gap.

The three core areas of the strategy would be programming, advocacy and human resources. Workshop participants were asked to formulate suggested Enhanced Commitments to Women for all three core areas in terms of specific measurable outputs and related outcomes, in line with a results-based approach.

Gender balance and human resource issues

Michèle Pagé, Chief, Career Development and Training, HR, reviewed the situation regarding gender balance in WFP. At the international professional levels, women represented 37 percent of staff in 2001. Of the total staff at all levels (including holders of short-term contracts), gender balance has been achieved at Headquarters but not in the field, where only about 27 percent of locally recruited staff are female. Until 2001, gender-disaggregated data on locally recruited staff were not collected and monitored. In terms of hiring, nearly 50 percent of international professionals recruited over the past three years were women. These hiring achievements were attributed to proactive efforts to include 50 percent of females on the rosters and put hiring targets for women (50 percent) in managers’ management and appraisals of performance (MAPs).

However, a remaining concern is that women are underrepresented in upper professional and management positions in the field, especially in the ranks of deputy country directors, country directors and regional directors. Ms. Pagé suggested that hiring targets alone were not sufficient: Women need specific assistance with career
development and progression. This includes using reassignments strategically to provide exposure to different working and management situations, providing training and mentoring opportunities, and helping women to “network”. In closing, she mentioned other relevant issues such as the impact of human resource policies on the work/life balance.

**Building “male-female” partnerships**

**Kamran Ahmad**, Staff Counsellor, HR, noted that because gender concerns arose from the feminist movement, they are often perceived as anti-male. The result is that few men have accepted “gender,” yet without their involvement and support, lasting change will not take place. He pointed out that both men and women pay a personal price within traditional male/female power relations. Along with the empowerment of women, a change has to take place in the role of men. However, many men feel threatened by these changes and therefore try to resist them. Recognition of this dynamic allows those who seek to change power relations to identify benefits to men as well as women. This applies to WFP’s internal human resources situation as much as to programming. For example, in displacement or refugee situations, men have often lost their traditional role and need additional support, especially if the focus is on empowering women. Men will need to be given the opportunity to adjust to changing power relations and to develop a new sense of partnership with women.

Mr. Kamran concluded by noting that the commitment of senior management in an organization is fundamental to realizing a change in power relations towards greater gender equality. Senior managers need to create a “safe” environment for this type of change.

**KEY ISSUES RAISED DURING THE DISCUSSIONS**

**Crosscutting issues**

- The Enhanced Commitments to Women should be linked clearly with the overall corporate objectives of saving lives and improving food security. The basic approach should be to continue working to close the gender gap (as this remains a major constraint for women in many countries) while taking additional steps to mainstream gender.

- It is important to establish global targets for positive changes in women’s status, based on a sound gender-sensitive and -disaggregated situation analysis. However, these global targets should be allowed to vary according to local circumstances, as identified in the gender analysis done by individual country offices.

- WFP needs better information in order to be an effective agent of gender-related change and to implement gender mainstreaming successfully. Country offices need to develop, maintain and share a gender knowledge base that is based on an analysis of the symptoms and root causes of gender inequality and identifies opportunities for addressing them. This should be an integral part of problem

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10 A major concern is to validate assumptions and avoid stereotypes (e.g. of men as being irresponsible toward their families, or of women as being passive beneficiaries), as these are not based on empirical evidence.
analysis, and would include information on power structures and the specific vulnerabilities of both women and men. Current information from vulnerability analysis and mapping (VAM), needs assessments, monitoring and evaluation (M&E; such as baselines and indicators), and livelihoods and gender analysis should be combined for this purpose. Good practices from all regions should also be compiled and disseminated to ensure that regional bureaux are not isolated under decentralization, as well as to improve institutional memory.

- With regard to institutional implementation mechanisms, the question is to what extent special gender measures (such as gender advisors, gender action plans, gender trust funds, etc.) continue to be required and to what extent the organization has reached a stage of maturity in which gender is truly mainstreamed in all operations. New institutional mechanisms should be explored, such as gender learning networks for staff (e.g. using e-mail and exchange visits) and gender audits.

- Involvement of male staff is essential, but the actions required to mobilize their support need to be identified. One approach is to use male gender trainers and male gender consultants, as this provides male staff with good role models; another is to appoint both male and female GFPs in regional bureaux and country offices.

- WFP staff and partners need more guidance about how, and to what extent, to implement the Enhanced Commitments to Women in EMOPs and PRROs. This guidance should address the time and security factors, i.e. what achievements are realistically achievable in short-term emergencies, or in complex emergencies where there is little stability. Participants expressed concern that in humanitarian assistance operations with the goal of saving lives, it may not be appropriate to establish the same targets or set the same types of conditions as in development operations.

- In most refugee camps, UNHCR handles camp-management issues, so language reflecting the Enhanced Commitments to Women would need to be incorporated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with UNHCR. The existing MOU states that “the proposed food assistance programme will take into account all relevant factors, including . . . cultural practices.” This language may need to be changed, because allowing cultural factors to be taken into account fully may effectively block attempts to introduce positive measures for women in many countries.

- Transparency is essential in all operations. Providing both women and men with full information on ration sizes, activities, opportunities, services and potential benefits allows them to increase their participation in, and benefits from, food-assisted activities.

- Participation of partners and beneficiaries, if carried out in a gender-sensitive manner, is an equally important programme principle for mainstreaming a gender perspective.
- Adequate funding and resourcing flexibility need to be provided to ensure that the Enhanced Commitments to Women are implemented. Funds are required to hire staff, conduct analyses, and support gender-related capacity-building. Also, country offices require greater flexibility to shift funds between activities to reflect changing needs or circumstances identified through gender analysis and results monitoring.

- Any new commitments need to be clearly conveyed to implementing partners. This is not a matter of simply including reference to the Enhanced Commitments to Women in MOUs and letters of understanding (LOUs), but involves efforts to increase partners’ awareness of gender issues.

- Advocacy comprises not only media involvement and the raising of public awareness, but also policy dialogue, i.e. speaking out on behalf of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable people, often food-insecure women. An advocacy strategy should be defined for all levels of interaction: with other agencies, governments, NGOs, communities and beneficiaries. It must be linked to WFP’s mandate and core areas of competence in saving lives and improving household and individual food security, and must complement programming efforts. Advocacy efforts should be grounded in a sound knowledge base on the country/situation-specific environment, including the relationship between women’s access to and control over food and productive assets, their role in decision-making and food security. Special efforts should be made to target men, as well as to highlight specific issues (such as access to productive assets) that are essential for women’s empowerment and long-term household food security. However, WFP must be aware that advocacy efforts consume time and resources (e.g. for negotiations, workshops, awareness campaigns). Also, advocacy is constrained when WFP cannot meet its commitments to counterparts and beneficiaries due to pipeline or distribution problems.

**Issues raised by the Commitments**

**Commitment I: Access to appropriate and adequate food**

**Direct distribution to women**

- Receipt of food is not equal to control over it in the household. WFP rarely follows up on whether direct distribution to women actually translates into greater control over the food. More post-distribution monitoring is required to determine how much food actually reaches the household and how this food is used. Country offices require additional guidance in this area. In 2001, VAM conducted pilot studies that looked at the household level, and the additional cost for this exercise was not considered high.

- Also, in some cases (e.g. camps for refugees or internally displaced persons, where men may have little to do while women are busy cooking and caring for children, or in cases where security risks exist), asking women to collect the ration is an extra burden. In longer-lasting relief operations, it is best to ask women how they want food distribution handled, and/or to analyse the context to identify appropriate approaches to food distribution.
In most cases, putting the household ration card in women’s names gives them the possibility of collecting the food, and at a minimum prevents women from not knowing about the ration size. Transparency was viewed as essential to improving women’s control over food rations.

**Micronutrients/nutritional objectives**

- Baseline studies on micronutrient deficiencies should be carried out routinely. The MOU with UNHCR should reflect this.
- Where possible, local production of micronutrient-fortified food should be supported and local eating/cooking habits accommodated.

**Commitment II: Participation in power structures and decision-making; gender equality in staffing (HR issues)**

**Participation, decision-making and empowerment issues**

- A major concern is that it is not easy to define and accomplish “empowerment” of women. First, empowering women requires knowledge of the local power structures and how they work. Second, it is often problematic to translate this term into other languages and cultures. Finally, how can empowerment be measured?
- Sometimes empowerment may not be the main concern of women. For example, some women may not want to change, or may ultimately face other social problems like divorce if they are empowered (as in the Latin America region).

**Human resources issues**

- Career development of existing female staff should be a priority. The potential of existing staff, including national professional officers, should be assessed and suitable candidates groomed for management positions. Women should be consulted regarding the positions and functions (management or support/advisory) that they would seek, and whether they are willing to go to non-family duty stations. Lateral moves should be encouraged to allow staff to gain experience.
- Key indicators should be developed to assess the quality of the work environment in regard to gender, and to increase the commitment of senior management.
- A training inventory should be established indicating who has been trained to date and what the impact of the training has been.
- A training strategy should be implemented to mainstream gender in training courses. Training/sensitization of staff (especially of managers hired from outside WFP), counterparts and beneficiaries is needed to provide people with a common

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11 A variety of human resources issues were discussed, relating to the effects of WFP’s HR policies and procedures on women, men and their families. This section reflects only those that are related primarily to reaching gender equality in staffing.
understanding of WFP’s Commitments. However, each country office should decide what training or action planning they require, and training materials should be tailored to the different countries/regions. Instead of appointing regional gender advisers, it was suggested that advanced gender training be provided to all regional programme advisers.

➢ Gender responsibilities should be included in job descriptions and MAPs. Also, gender sensitivity and gender-related outputs should be one of the assessment criteria.

Commitment III: Women’s equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade

Education and training

➢ The current school feeding target groups should be expanded to include adolescent girls, as this is the age where the gender gap is greatest. This may require a change in the current school feeding guidelines.

➢ WFP’s basic objectives in school feeding need to be defined clearly: e.g. is the goal to support basic education or to seek an overall improvement in girls’ lives? Also, interventions should be limited to areas where minimum standards of educational quality can be met.

➢ Food-for-training activities that build human assets can be more easily targeted to women and adolescent girls. In food for training, it needs to be defined how far WFP should go to support functional literacy.

Asset creation

➢ Food-for-work/asset-creation activities need to be selected based on whether they meet women’s priorities and whether they are physically and culturally appropriate for women’s participation. This issue should be addressed by the initial analysis/appraisal of activities. To determine whether the assets created are “controlled by” and “benefit” women, these terms need to be further defined and clarified.

➢ Less emphasis should be placed on women as food-for-work labourers for asset creation, and more on their opportunities to benefit equally from the assets created.

Commitment IV: Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation

➢ A persistent problem for WFP is defining who is a food-aid beneficiary versus who collects the food, participates in activities or benefits from the assets created. Different projects count beneficiaries in different ways. This, and the fact that gender-disaggregated data are not provided systematically in all reports or by all implementing partners, raises questions about the accuracy of reported gender-disaggregated data.
Another remaining problem is that, to a large extent, gender-disaggregated data are collected and estimated for onward reporting to Headquarters, but not analysed and used for programme-management purposes.

Different M&E systems are required for different programme types (EMOPs, PRROs, country programmes, etc.). These should be developed through collaboration between SP, OEDE and the VAM Unit. Emphasis should be placed on identifying the data that needs to be collected, based on logframes at both project and country programme levels. (The current testing of the draft M&E guidelines will address the issues of which systems to use and what data are or should be collected.)

Commitment V: Accountability (staff and partners)

Managers should be held accountable for all the Commitments to Women. It was proposed that managers should be accountable not only for reflecting the Commitments in contractual agreements and implementation systems, but also for the impact achieved for each Commitment.

The role of the regional bureaux needs to be defined in regard to providing guidance, reviewing project and programme documents, helping to disseminate lessons vis-à-vis the Headquarters gender adviser and country office GFPs, etc.

To hold partners accountable, it is preferable to encourage their “ownership” of the Commitments rather than rely only on contractual requirements in the MOU. This requires advocacy and negotiation, and involving partners at an early stage in discussions on the Enhanced Commitments to Women. This task is facilitated in countries that have signed the Beijing and Beijing+5 declarations and United Nations resolutions on gender equality.

The issue of conditionality was considered problematic, as WFP is a humanitarian assistance organization. Some participants viewed conditionality as a “last resort”; others stated that they had no problem with the concept of imposing gender-related requirements.

PROPOSED ENHANCED COMMITMENTS TO WOMEN

One of the major workshop objectives was to identify required positive measures and measures for gender mainstreaming (outcomes and outputs) for Enhanced Commitments to Women in the core areas of the Gender Strategy: (1) programming; (2) advocacy; and (3) human resources.

The following proposals regarding outcomes and outputs for the Enhanced Commitments to Women (slightly reformulated, incorporating some of the concerns raised during and after the workshop) were made by four working groups. The workshop participants noted, however, that there was insufficient time to develop these proposals fully, so these should be considered as a starting point for a more complete set of commitments.
### Proposed Enhanced Commitments to Women 2003–2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1.1** Targeted food-insecure men and women benefit according to their need from WFP food and assets created, and are equally represented in related decisions | - The percentage of female/male food-aid beneficiaries reflects the results of the food-security analysis, and varies by operation  
- Participatory approaches with men and women are used (in the acute phase of an emergency, to the extent possible) for beneficiary identification, activity formulation and M&E system development  
- Half of the representatives on food-distribution and asset-creation committees are women/men |
| **1.2** Women play a central role in decisions regarding the use of food at household level | - In relief operations, all household food-ration cards are issued in the name of women (unless there is no adult woman in the household), and in polygamous households in each wife’s name  
- Food-distribution points are as close as possible to where women live (village, camp)  
- Information is provided to beneficiary men and women about food entitlements, distribution dates/modes, and related health and nutrition issues |
| **1.3** Women are empowered to play an equal role in the community | In development operations and, to the extent possible, in relief and rehabilitation operations:  
- Women are the main participants (> 70 percent) in food-assisted activities to build human assets:  
  - Life-skills education and vocational training  
  - Establishment of microenterprises  
  - Community leadership training  
- Women derive at least 50 percent of the benefits from all physical assets created. Emphasis is given to women’s use of and benefit from assets rather than to involving women as food-for-work labourers |
| **1.4** Girls/boys and adolescents are prepared for adult life through school attendance and retention | - School-feeding is provided for primary education and secondary to cover adolescents  
- Half of the education resources are given to girls/boys  
- Where there is a > 15 percent gender gap in school enrolment and/or attendance, additional incentives (take-home rations) are provided to the disadvantaged sex |

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sup12 The areas highlighted in the matrix illustrate the carry-over from the Commitments to Women 1996-2001.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.5</strong></td>
<td>All operations have gender-sensitive situation analysis and – to the extent possible – programme-specific baseline studies to measure achievements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All WFP staff mainstream gender when programming food assistance</td>
<td>Gender-disaggregated data is collected, analysed and used for gender planning/management, and is incorporated into mainstream workplans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Programme tools and guidelines are gender sensitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gender expenses are mainstreamed in all budgets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All operational contracts/MOU/LOAs with partners reflect the Commitments; partners are held accountable for their implementation as per contractual clauses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.1</strong></td>
<td>A country-level knowledge base on gender and food security is available and maintained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP staff apply improved knowledge and understanding of the link between women’s empowerment and household food security in policy dialogue with partners and in dealing with the media</td>
<td>Strategic partnerships and alliances are formed with other institutions (UN, governments, NGOs, donors, research institutions, civil society) that are pursuing this link as well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All WFP public relations and higher-level (&gt; P3) programming staff are trained in policy dialogue and media skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.2</strong></td>
<td>Programming staff identifies complementary non-food needs of food-aid beneficiaries, especially those who belong to the disadvantaged sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP staff use food aid as leverage to obtain complementary resources for gender programming</td>
<td>Higher-level (&gt; P3) programming staff is trained in negotiation skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.1</strong></td>
<td>50 percent of international and 75 percent of local recruits are women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved gender balance in staffing through career development, counselling, mentoring, recruitment and retention. Global percentage of female staff (by 2007): internationally recruited staff, 50 percent at all levels; locally recruited, 40 percent</td>
<td>Regular data analysis of male/female recruitment and retention is undertaken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A career-development strategy is created that specifies:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• how international men and women will be prepared to take on management functions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• how national male and female staff will be prepared for an international career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.2</strong></td>
<td>Special facilities are made available for staff who have become mothers and fathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working environment is gender sensitive and family friendly</td>
<td>A strategy is developed for a gender-sensitive reassignment system, which especially considers staffing in non-family/higher-hardship duty stations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>Outputs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **S 3.3** Male and female staff are involved as key agents in efforts to close the gender gap | ➢ There is at least one male member in every country office gender focal team  
➢ Half of the staff who provide advice on gender issues are men (regional bureaux and Headquarters)  
➢ All staff have received gender sensitization and all training courses have a gender perspective mainstreamed  
➢ All programming/advocacy, public information and human resources staff is trained on gender guidelines |
| **S 3.4** All staff responsible for implementing the Commitments and all managers are held accountable for efforts and achievements on the Commitments | ➢ Gender tasks are mainstreamed into the country office workplans and all individual workplans  
➢ **Managers are held accountable** through their individual MAPs for efforts and achievement on the Commitments |

**CONCLUSIONS**

The workshop concluded that the focus of the Commitments to Women remains very relevant to WFP’s operations and should be carried over to the Gender Strategy 2003–2007. This includes: giving women access to and control over the household food ration; giving women an important role in decision-making related to food distribution and food-assisted assets creation; and ensuring that they benefit equally from the assets created. The use of gender-disaggregated data as well as holding managers and partners accountable for implementation of the Commitments would also remain relevant. However, experience has shown that certain modifications, clarifications and simplifications of the Commitments are desirable in order to facilitate their implementation.
INTRODUCTION

Workshop purpose, objectives and methodology

A seminar entitled WFP’s Gender Strategy 2003–2007 and Organizational Change: Building on and Moving Beyond the Commitments to Women took place in Rome on 6 and 7 March 2002. It was attended by almost 80 WFP senior staff members from Headquarters, regional bureaux and country offices. All female senior staff of the organization were invited, as were some senior men.

The seminar comprised plenary sessions and working groups. The plenary sessions aimed at introducing to the participants the new elements of the Gender Strategy 2003–2007, the data compiled on human resources and the concept of advocacy. Four experts were invited to facilitate the working groups’ discussions and to present their work and research.

The overall objective of the seminar was to obtain the input of WFP male and female senior staff for the Gender Strategy for 2003–2007 by engaging them in a dialogue on recommended areas for enhancing the Commitments to Women. In addition, participants were asked to propose gender-related organizational changes that would strengthen WFP’s capacity to fulfill its mandate to end hunger and improve food security.

The specific objectives of the seminar were to:

1. identify ways to close the gender gap and thus contribute to improved food security in WFP-assisted countries;
2. outline WFP’s context and function as an advocate for women’s role in food security and as a supporter of broader UN-system efforts toward gender equality;
3. develop strategies for preparing female staff for future leadership and management roles within WFP;
4. sensitize staff on issues of work/life balance, including gender roles at work and at home; and
5. develop effective approaches for involving both male and female staff as decision-makers in implementing WFP’s Enhanced Commitments to Women.
OPENING SESSION: SUMMARY OF PRESENTATIONS

Gender Strategy 2003–2007


The objective of the Gender Strategy is to outline how WFP will contribute to saving lives and improving the food security of the most vulnerable through measures geared toward (a) improving women’s access to and control over food; (b) promoting gender equality in access to and decision-making power over productive assets; and (c) assuring women an equal share in benefits derived from those assets.

The WFP Gender Strategy 2003–2007 will be built on and will incorporate the lessons from the previous Commitments to Women 1996–2001. It will provide an overview of the link between empowering women and food security; describe the three core areas of programming, advocacy and human resources; outline the preparation process of the strategy; and present the Enhanced Commitments to Women along with the preliminary implementation plan. It was noted that the preparation process was still ongoing and that this seminar was an element in the consultation process, a follow-up to the Consultation Workshop held in December 2001.

Ms. Räder presented the major lessons and recommendations from the review of implementation of the Commitments to Women. These included the following.

- **Implementation of the Commitments to Women in emergency operations:** The Commitments to Women were implemented mainly in development activities, and only to a lesser extent in emergency and recovery operations. The major factors that hindered the implementation in emergencies were security, time constraints, lack of gender-sensitive implementation partners and the gender ratio of staff. The positive element in such operations is that generally more resources are made available for gender initiatives. WFP should define the minimum that is expected in each phase of an emergency, build staff capacity, review the reassignment process and improve the gender balance in staffing, especially at higher levels.

- **Global targets:** Global targets have been useful for negotiations and should thus be continued, but local circumstances need to be taken into account.

- **Implementing mechanisms:** Overall responsibility for implementation of the Enhanced Commitments to Women should rest with the regional and country directors as well as with gender focal teams comprising two or more GFPS (women and men, international and national staff). Gender activities should be mainstreamed in country office workplans rather than outlined in separate gender action plans, and additional gender training sessions and workshops should be held for staff, especially for emergency operations where staff turnover is high.

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• **Women's access to and control over food:** This concept remains central to food security. In relief food distribution, the household food ration cards should be issued in the woman's name. Also, transparency measures should be used to improve food distribution, especially regarding women's access to food.

• **Gender-disaggregated data:** Gender analysis should be incorporated into VAM, and gender-disaggregated data should be put to better use in planning and management.

• **Accountability of managers:** MAPs should be used to hold managers accountable for the implementation of all Commitments.

• **Resources for gender activities:** Gender activities need to be better incorporated into budgets.

• **Advocacy on gender and food security:** More guidance needs to be provided for the use of advocacy, leverage and conditionality.

**WFP’s commitments to gender equality: striving for gender balance in staffing**

Ms. **Diana Serrano**, Director of WFP's Human Resources Division, presented the gender-disaggregated staffing situation in WFP and discussed some relevant analyses, such as of the overall gender distribution of international staff since 1996; the separation rate; and staff promotion, retention and mobility trends. Measures to reach gender balance were noted.

In order to speed up the process of achieving gender balance through recruitment, WFP needs to:

• maintain and monitor recruitment targets both for locally recruited and internationally recruited staff;
• recruit women to P4 and P5 levels at a preferential rate (75 percent); and
• enlarge the recruitment pool in order to recruit more women to fill non-traditional jobs (logistics, etc.).

In order to develop competencies for emergencies, WFP needs to:

• develop a specific women’s induction programme for emergencies;
• ensure gender balance on the emergency response roster and in emergency response training;
• ensure that 50 percent of the emergency response training team leaders are women;
• fund women’s temporary assignments to EMOPs corporately; and
• develop a fast-track programme for women with proven performance records.

In order to achieve gender balance in managerial positions, WFP needs to:

• identify future leaders among junior female staff and train them for their future roles;
• treat leadership development and talent management as strategic issues;
• provide a degree of internal equality and transparency; and
• align individual development processes with the organization’s gender-equality agenda.

Ms. Serrano proposed to identify qualified candidates for managerial posts. The output of this assessment process should result in two categories: (a) candidates ready for assignment to managerial positions and (b) candidates requiring a specific development/management programme to gain required experience or build managerial or behavioral competencies.

Advocacy

Mr. Allan Jury, Officer-in-Charge of WFP’s Strategy and Policy Division, briefly presented the theme of advocacy. He noted that the WFP Commitments to Women 1996–2001 had a specific commitment on advocacy and that 57 percent of country offices had met this Commitment, according to the gender survey report (2001).

He mentioned that advocacy was an area in which WFP managers should be fully involved and held accountable. Advocacy can range from encouragement to leverage and conditionality. However, WFP staff should use conditionality only as a last resort.

Mr. Jury stated that WFP should focus its gender-advocacy efforts especially on issues of hunger and food security, through the media, with governments, with implementing partners and at the community level. As a member of the larger UN family, WFP can contribute to and support broader UN gender-advocacy efforts, but the leadership role should remain with other UN organizations. WFP needs to target its efforts on themes and issues most immediately related to its mandate and areas of expertise.

The Executive Director’s speech

Ms. Catherine Bertini, the Executive Director of WFP, began her speech by acknowledging how far WFP has come over the years with regard to the advancement of women. She then encouraged the senior staff to continue to focus on the work started with the Beijing Conference (1995), where the organization presented five concrete Commitments to Women. Ms. Bertini reiterated that, in order to achieve WFP's mission to end hunger, there is no better way than to put food in the hands of women, who are the best able to provide food security at the household level. She also emphasized the following points:

• There are challenges to be faced, however, with regard to programming. There is a need to rethink activities, focusing on the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries.

14 Commitment III-D “Use food aid as a leverage to obtain complementary national and international resources to improve the condition of women.”
The responsibility for ensuring a gender perspective in programming rests with country directors and regional directors. Gender specialists can be important as advisers.

Gender balance must be achieved through a proactive human resources policy. What has been achieved to date for international professional staff has been mainly due to the introduction of the MAP system. However, the organization is still far from reaching gender balance for locally recruited staff. Another area of intervention that needs to be improved is support to both women and men in finding an appropriate work/life balance.

Finally, Ms. Bertini announced that her successor, Mr. Morris, would continue to support gender issues and that it was to the responsibility of everyone in the room to work with him to keep the momentum going.

SUMMARY OF WORKING SESSIONS

Working Group I: Programme operations – closing the gender gap using positive measures for women (chaired by Ms. Georgia Shaver, Country Director, Ethiopia, and Mr. Felix Bamezon, Country Director, DR Congo, WFP)

The objective of this working group was to explore positive measures to empower women, with the specific purpose of strengthening women’s role in fulfilling WFP’s mandate to end hunger and improve food security. The working group was also expected to review the Enhanced Commitments to Women 2003–2007 proposed in December 2001’s Gender Consultation Workshop.

The working group reiterated the reasons why WFP should target women in aid interventions, emphasizing that women participate in food production, manage and distribute food, and ensure that family members are fed. Targeting women has a direct impact on their children, and a positive intergenerational effect overall.

In order to do a better job of addressing women’s practical and strategic needs in both development and emergency contexts, WFP should focus on the government context, i.e., on partnering with governments and following up to assure their accountability and adherence to agreement.

Participatory approaches should be used, but the way they are used needs to be based on a deep understanding of cultural sensitivities. For acute emergencies, qualitative assessments using participatory approaches are necessary, but the tools and techniques require advance-preparedness measures and additional time and resources.

A stronger emphasis should be placed on the role of women on committees (with a minimum 50 percent target for women) and the quality of their participation.
The working group agreed that the three outputs proposed by the December consultation workshop\(^\text{15}\) would be a better way to enhance women’s control over food.

It is both desirable and realistic to empower/engage local beneficiary groups (specifically women) to conduct their own monitoring/auditing of women’s control over food, but the way they would conduct these exercises needs to be examined.

Women should be encouraged to collect the household ration, provided that cultural, economic and security issues are reviewed and that there is action that will facilitate the collection (e.g. more adequate packaging, distribution points close to where women live etc). Men should be involved as well if ration collection provides an opportunity to carry out other programmes (e.g. nutrition education, HIV/AIDS awareness).

The working group agreed that in food-for-work activities, the emphasis should be placed on the type of activity designed to benefit women rather than on the percentage of women participating in the on-site work. Activities need to be designed for assets beneficial to women, but the percentage of benefit may not necessarily be immediately measurable.

WFP’s School Feeding Guidelines permit assistance beyond primary education only in exceptional circumstances. The December consultation workshop made a strong, unanimous recommendation for extending this to cover adolescents; however, the working group felt that implementing this change would not be as simple as it sounds, that its impact may not be as big for secondary schooling as it is for primary, that resources for supporting such a change are limited and that choices need to be made. Also, the initially proposed age-limit of 15 is not logical given that the Human Rights Law (Convention on the Rights of the Child) recognizes children as anyone up to the age of 18. In addition, the working group expressed its concern that pre-school needs are not mentioned in the guidelines.

**Working Group II: Programme operations – areas for gender mainstreaming**  
*chairled by Ms. Hettie Walters, Gender & Development Training Centre, Netherlands, and Mr. Patrick Buckley, Country Director, Eritrea, WFP*

The objective of this working group was to discuss how WFP could better integrate gender issues throughout its programme-planning, context-analysis, implementation and evaluation processes. Gender-mainstreaming activities should contribute to the goal of improving WFP’s efficiency and effectiveness in working toward its mandate of ending hunger. In addition, the working group was also expected to review the December consultation workshop’s proposed Enhanced Commitments to Women, examining their relevance and proposing modifications.

\(^{15}\) Proposed Enhanced Commitment I.2: Women play a central role in decisions regarding the use of food at household level. Outputs: (a) In relief operations, all household food ration cards are issued in the name of women (unless there is no adult woman in the household) and in polygamous households in each wife’s name; (b) food-distribution points are as close as possible to where women live (village, camp); (c) information is provided to beneficiary men and women about food entitlements, distribution dates/modes and related health and nutrition issues.
The working group felt that WFP, as part of the United Nations, must follow the existing requirements on gender mainstreaming. WFP would mainstream gender by taking up women’s and men’s concerns and interests at all levels of policy development, organizational change measures, analysis, design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

Promoting ownership of gender-sensitive policies and projects requires a participatory approach, cooperation with partners and linkage with existing UN processes such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

The members of the working group felt that there was insufficient time to comment in detail on the mainstreaming elements in the proposed Enhanced Commitments to Women. However, in general, they endorsed the proposals on gender mainstreaming with specific reference to the following areas.

- Gender should be mainstreamed by being integrated at the organizational and corporate-policy level.
- Mainstreaming gender means that WFP’s operations need to be based on analysis of gender issues – e.g. through inclusion of gender concerns into VAM analyses and/or a country gender analysis.
- Costs for gender work should be mainstreamed in the regular budget.
- Gender training is needed for staff because (a) the lack of staff with relevant analytical skills is a major constraint for conducting gender analysis, and (b) mainstreaming requires staff that are qualified, committed and sensitive to gender concerns.
- Gender issues and actions need to be integrated into staff MAPs to ensure accountability.

The working group also discussed the role of the Commitments in EMOPs and PRROs. Although the Commitments are relevant in general, it was felt that they should be tailored to suit different operations and that the final version of the Enhanced Commitments should place greater emphasis on addressing possible differences in approach. Key suggestions were as follows.

- The Gender Strategy framework stresses the link to improved food security, while WFP’s mandate in acute emergencies is to save lives.
- Gender analysis in acute emergencies does not have to be detailed; however, the initial food-needs assessment should be gender sensitive. The teams sent on these missions should be gender competent and balanced, with more women involved than currently. They should be asked to identify potential security issues and the preferred location of distribution points.
- The cost implications of logistical issues should be taken into account. Nevertheless alternatives that will facilitate the distribution of food to women should be considered, such as distributing food in smaller, lighter bags (25 kg) as opposed to those currently in use (which weight 50 kg).
**Working Group III: Using WFP's voice to advocate for women’s role in food security and for gender equality** (chaired by Ms. Lucia Echecopar, Country Director, Haiti, WFP, and Mr. Patrick Webb, Tufts University, USA)

The objective of this working group was to explore various approaches to advocacy, as it relates to promoting women’s role in food security and to encouraging gender equality, always within the context of WFP’s mandate to end hunger.

Regarding WFP’s advocacy role on behalf of women and gender equality, the following ideas emerged from the working group.

- WFP’s objective is food security and thus WFP’s advocacy should be aimed largely at increasing women’s access to food. Other WFP advocacy roles include engaging in policy dialogue with governments, setting conditionality, forming partnerships, supporting human rights efforts for increased gender equality.

- Advocacy efforts related to gender should be reflected in, and complementary to, programming.

- Forming partnerships with other organizations to deliver additional resources is a favorable synergy. However, often partners fail to uphold their side of the bargain, or WFP resources run out or do not arrive on time.

- Deciding who in WFP will advocate is difficult. GFPs, though often at junior staffing level, may be most familiar with the conditions requiring advocacy on behalf of women. However, the working group concluded that junior staff should not be negotiating with governments or speaking to the media.

- Since advocacy must start being performed before an emergency arises, it fits into both development and emergency programmes. However, the term still needs further definition.

- To give beneficiaries a voice in advocacy, WFP needs to establish a participatory approach to the process.

- Advocacy needs an indicator so that successes can be measured and then used in public-relations campaigning.

**Working Group IV: Gender perspectives in human resources at WFP – striving for gender balance at WFP** (chaired by Ms. Diana Serrano, Director, HR, and Ms. Lani Robbins, consultant to FAO)

The objective of this working group was to review the proposed human resources strategies and explore additional staffing and HR approaches that can help improve the gender balance at WFP. In the December consultation workshop, many other recommendations for achieving gender equality were presented to WFP’s Human Resources Division. The working group was expected to review those proposals for their relevance and feasibility, and recommend any additions or modifications.
The main concern of the working group was that the number of higher hardship duty stations is increasing. These kinds of posts can be difficult for women, especially those with minor dependants. Measures proposed to deal with this problem were (a) a better benefit package and (b) a proactive spouse-employment policy.

Staff must be aware and prepared for country assignments. They should receive an informal briefing, be given access to a country-profile database, and be made aware of clear competencies needed for the job and of positive incentives for the assignment. Furthermore, more systematic mentoring and career counselling should be developed, along with language-training initiatives.

The working group identified a lack of career development as the major reason why staff leave the organization. The reassignment process must also be more transparent and accessible. The group underlined the importance of understanding what tools are available to define and quantify competencies required for managerial positions, which should include (a) “sets” of experiences; (b) technical skills; (c) managerial skills; and (d) WFP knowledge. Finally, competencies should be included and rated in MAPs.

Staff should be given training or reassignment if they are deficient in one of the above-mentioned core areas. The initial step for the assessment process should be self-initiated by the individual. Basic supervisory training should be encouraged at sub-office level and for junior staff, since WFP needs to strengthen the management potential of its current staff.

Reflection on work/life balance and gender roles at work and at home

Mr. Kamran Ahmed, WFP Staff Counselor, HR, Islamabad, noted that, in addition to working with women, WFP should make an effort to understand men’s reactions to its efforts to close the gender gap. This includes men working in the organization as well as male beneficiaries. Among the reasons for men’s aversive reaction to gender efforts are:

- *Increased competition:* In the organization, men have been competing against each other, but now also with women because of the 50 percent target established to close the gender gap in staffing.

- *Western feminism:* Men in developing countries associate positive measures for women with the western feminist movement, which they often perceive as anti-male.

- *Patriarchal society:* In a patriarchal society, gender roles are well defined: Women prepare food, while men provide food and protect the family. Giving food directly to women changes the power relationship by taking away a typical male role.

While women are the key actors in WFP’s strategy, men’s views and feelings must at least be understood. Any abrupt change may be dangerous, not only in a society but also in the organization – for example, in the case of abrupt promotions. Transparency throughout the entire process is always necessary.
It is essential to focus on the organizational culture as well (e.g., the work behaviour of WFP staff, sensitivity to different cultures, work/life balance and family-friendly policies, working hours, rewards in the organization), bearing in mind that WFP is contributing to change in communities that have inherited thousands of years of tradition.

Mr. Ahmed recommended that the Human Resources Division be able to analyse the personal conduct of WFP staff, and that the "gender team" be strengthened through increasing its mobility and/or making a roster of gender experts available for conducting gender analysis in the field.

PANEL OF EXPERTS: GENDER AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE TO BUILD ON AND MOVE BEYOND THE COMMITMENTS TO WOMEN

The objective of this panel of experts was to provide WFP staff with new ideas for building on and moving beyond the Commitments to Women 1996–2001. Each expert was expected to help enrich the dialogue and provide a broader vision by adding a new perspective from outside WFP. The experts were also expected to recommend actions for organizational change that would make WFP more gender responsive.

Gender and organizational change: a troublesome couple (Ms. Hettie Walters, Gender and Development Training Centre, Netherlands)

Ms. Walters emphasized the link between gender and both individual and organizational change. This involves some important issues, such as collective ambition, structure, people and culture. Real gender-sensitive organizational change requires an active commitment from the top and clear policy formulation (both in terms of internal organizational structure and impact on beneficiaries). At the same time, human resources policies must be formulated that favour the promotion of female leadership while reconciling the work/life balance for both women and men. This will require willingness to change the corporate attitude and values in the organization, and to improve skills and knowledge.

The significance of gender for the corporate working culture (Ms Lani Robbins, consultant to FAO)

Ms. Robbins stressed the necessity of change and flexibility in corporate culture and management systems if gender is to be diversified in the workplace. These will open the organization to the benefits female staff can bring to the table, including higher levels of creativity, a greater spirit of innovation, better problem-solving skills and a greater willingness to work collaboratively (as opposed to men, who tend to prefer working separately and independently). Other key factors outlined by Ms Robbins were sharing different visions, holding staff accountable, and being committed from the top to creating supportive mechanisms for these changes.
**Gender and food security (Mr. Patrick Webb, Tufts University, USA)**

Using the findings of his research conducted in Bangladesh, Mr. Webb analysed the impact development interventions have on beneficiaries. In food-secure households, wives and husbands interviewed separately were in almost full agreement on a variety of issues; as food insecurity and hunger increased, however, the gap between men’s and women’s opinions widened. Furthermore, women were more interested in the quality of meals, while men were more concerned with the quantity of food.

Mr. Webb pointed out that development interventions lead generally to improvements in women’s lives (especially in education and life expectancy) but that it is still critically important to encourage women to take the lead economically and earn income. Unfortunately, income-generating activities proposed by some development actors were very limited in their impact, and female beneficiaries spoke of an aversion to debt (through credit), especially in an environment characterized by economic risks.

**NEXT STEPS: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? REFLECTIONS ON MAJOR OUTPUTS FROM WORKING SESSIONS AND PANEL**

**Major outputs from the working sessions**

The objective of this final session was to draw together all the ideas generated during the seminar and reach conclusions about the next steps WFP must take in striving to empower women and encourage gender equality in assisted countries.

Some of the major themes and recommendations that emerged from the working group discussions are summarized here.

**Working Group I: Programme operations – closing the gender gap using positive measures for women**

- Focus on the quality of women's participation, not just on numbers, and emphasize the type of activities selected.
- Focus on the government context: on partnering with governments, on adherence to agreements and on accountability.

**Working Group II: Programme operations – areas for gender mainstreaming**

- Integrate a gender perspective at the level of corporate policy and translate it appropriately into all types of WFP operations.
- Mainstream a gender perspective into all analysis, budgeting and staffing, by increasing staff competence (knowledge, skills and attitudes) on gender issues.
Working Group III: Using WFP's voice to advocate for women's role in food security and for gender equality

- Define the message for which WFP will be advocating, using a good knowledge base.
- Define limits for WFP’s advocacy, developing an advocacy strategy that falls within the context of WFP’s mandate and does not go beyond it.

Working Group IV: Gender perspectives in human resources at WFP – striving for gender balance at WFP

- Develop and support WFP staff who are mobile and deployable.
- Develop competent staff from which WFP can select managers.

Reflection: Work/life balance and gender roles at work and at home

- Revise WFP's organizational culture to create a healthier balance between work and private life.
- Become more aware of men's realities, both among staff and in communities, to understand their reactions to WFP's approach towards women (especially vis-à-vis the Commitments to Women).

CONCLUSIONS

The overall objective of the seminar was clearly met: to obtain the input of WFP male and female senior staff for the Gender Strategy 2003–2007 by engaging them in a dialogue on recommended areas for enhancing the Commitments to Women.

In addition, participants helped review the organizational changes that would be required in order to strengthen WFP’s capacity to fulfill its mandate to improve food security.

The main recommendations of the seminar included the following.

- In programming, participants agreed that women are strategic to achieving WFP’s primary goal of improving food security. Therefore, there was full consensus that WFP should carry on with the Commitments to Women. WFP has made progress toward meeting the Commitments’ targets, but more efforts are required to strengthen (a) women’s access to and benefits from food and human and physical assets and (b) their involvement in decision-making. An essential step to more gender-sensitive programming will be the integration of a gender perspective into situation analyses such as VAM.

- WFP should continue its process of advocacy, but in a modest way. Advocacy still lacks a clear definition, including how it links to WFP’s mandate and objectives. WFP needs a strategy with guidelines on how to advocate on gender and how to change the political, legal, social and economic environment.
With regard to **human resources**, participants agreed that WFP should continue to set targets/quotas to reach gender balance in staffing for both international and national staff, without sacrificing quality for quantity. Major concerns expressed include the need to address the work/life balance issue and to develop a career strategy for both women and men.

With regard to the specific objectives of the seminar, the following can be concluded.

1. **To identify ways to close the gender gap and thus contribute to improved food security in WFP-assisted countries:**
   - The Commitments to Women still outline the best path toward closing the gender gap. Targets still need to be fixed, especially with reference to food-aid management committees, where women should be at least equally represented. Having women express their voice in these committees will empower them and contribute to eliminating implementation weaknesses.
   - WFP needs to recognize that it is not always feasible to deliver 80 percent of relief food directly to women, since women are often already overburdened, and because they may face unacceptable security risks.
   - With regard to food-for-work, the best way to close the gender gap, improve the quality of women’s participation and enhance women’s benefits from activities is to have them actively select activities through equal membership on committees, rather than solely participating physically at work sites.

2. **To outline WFP's context and function as an advocate for women’s role in food security and as a supporter of broader UN-system efforts toward gender equality:**
   - WFP should define its own advocacy policy within its mandate and develop an advocacy strategy to implement the policy, leaving the leadership role on broader UN advocacy efforts to other organizations.
   - Advocacy related to gender issues must be complementary to programming.
   - In policy dialogue with governments and other partners, WFP should focus its advocacy on the principle of encouragement rather than conditionality.

3. **To develop strategies for preparing female staff for future leadership and management roles within WFP:**
   - Targets should continue to be set to achieve a gender balance in staffing, both at international and national levels.
   - WFP staff with the competencies to become managers should be identified for further capacity development.
4. To sensitize staff on issues of work/life balance, including gender roles at work and at home:

- A healthier balance between work and personal life will be required if WFP is to make maximum progress toward achieving its mandate.
- A change in organizational attitude and culture will be necessary if WFP is to achieve gender balance and gender mainstreaming.

5. To develop effective approaches for involving both male and female staff as decision-makers in implementing WFP’s Enhanced Commitments to Women:

- WFP needs to take up women’s and men’s concerns and interests at all levels in policy development, organizational change measures, analysis, design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.
- All types of WFP operations need to be based on an analysis of gender issues, e.g., through the integration of gender concerns into VAM.
- Gender training should be conducted to ensure that staff are qualified in gender skills, sensitive to gender issues and committed to gender mainstreaming.

**Conclusions on organizational change**

Real gender-sensitive organizational change requires commitment from the top. Fostering an appreciation of both feminine and masculine working styles and diverse cultures also requires work on the “deep structure” of the organization, including attitudes, skills and knowledge. This will mean:

- empowering women beneficiaries but also creating space for men to understand their new roles;
- listening to female voices and acknowledging women's different work styles in the bureaucracy;
- overcoming a still-existing bias toward masculine perspectives in the operations (especially in emergencies) and with regard to work/life balance issues;
- promoting female leadership and engaging men more in the work for gender equality;
- fostering a spirit of learning and openness, collaboration, teamwork and transformation;
- valuing diversity and being accountable; and
- focusing on quality as well as quantity.

If WFP succeeds in making these changes, the impact on beneficiaries should improve. WFP should then be better able to save lives and improve food security of men, women and children while at the same time creating a more balanced working environment for its staff.
ANNEX I
List of Participants

Consultation Workshop on the Operationalization of WFP’s Commitments to Women and the Development of the WFP Gender Strategy 2003–2007
Rome, 10–13 December 2001

Facilitators
Alan Greig, Consultant alangreig@earthlink.net
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Resource Persons
Allan Jury, Chief, SP
Christa Räder, Policy Analyst, SP
Gretchen Bloom, Senior Gender Adviser, SP
Alexis Hoskins, Policy Analyst, SP
Susanne Früh, Senior Evaluation Officer, OEDE
Darlene Tymo, Evaluation Officer, OEDE
Michèle Pagé, Chief, Career Development and Training, HR
Kamran Ahmad, Staff Counsellor, HR

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Regional Programme Advisers
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Joan Fleuren, ODB Bangkok
Anette Haller, ODB Bangkok
Judith Thimke, ODM Managua
Naila Sabra, ODC Cairo
Omar Bula Escobar, ODC Cairo
Beatrice Bonnaux, ODR Rome

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16 Christa Räder, Policy Analyst, SP, was also a member of the mission to Sierra Leone.
17 Omar Traboulsi was a member of the mission to DR Congo but could not participate in the workshop. His email address is: otraboulsi@crtd.org.
Country Office Staff
Richard Verbeeck, Country Director, Senegal, ODD
Niçaise Kponou, Programme Adviser, Burkina Faso, ODD
Giancarlo Stopponi, Programme Adviser, Angola, ODY
Jean-Pierre Cebron, Country Director,* Benin, ODY
Jessie Arthur, National Programme Officer,* Ghana, ODY
Lubna Alaman, Programme Adviser,* Somalia, ODK
Rikki Malik-Lali, Programme Adviser, Kenya, ODK
Wolfgang Herbinger, Deputy Country Director, India, ODB
Mei Yue, National Programme Officer,* China, ODB
Teresita Mosquera, Programme Coordinator,* Peru, ODM
Guy Gauvreau, Country Director, El Salvador, ODM
Shari Ajdari, National Programme Officer,* Iran, ODC
Justin Bagirishya, Country Director, Yemen, ODC
Bhim Udas, Emergency Coordinator, Russia, ODR

Headquarters Staff
Parvathy Ramaswami, Programme Officer, ODA
Stephen Anderson, Programme Officer, ODP
Jennifer Jacoby, Programme Officer, OHA
Marian Read, Senior Monitoring Officer, OEDE
Marloes van der Sande, Policy Analyst, SP
Giorgia Testolin, Junior Professional Officer, SP

*Also the GFP for the country office.
ANNEX II

Overview of Workshop Programme

Consultation Workshop on the Operationalization of WFP’s Commitments to Women and the Development of the WFP Gender Strategy 2003–2007

Rome, 10–13 December 2001

10 December 2001 – Day 1 (WFP staff and consultants)

Welcome of participants
Christa Räder, SP

Introduction of participants and discussion of participants’ expectations
Facilitators

Workshop
Christa Räder, SP

• Context
• Objectives
• Programme

Importance of closing the gender gap for improved household food security: gender focus in programming and advocacy
Allan Jury, SP

WFP’s Commitments to Women (history, core areas, achievements)
Gretchen Bloom, SP

Operationalization of WFP’s Commitments to Women: Results of desk reviews on good practices and lessons
Alexis Hoskins, SP

Debriefing: Insights from five country case studies and recommendations for the Gender Strategy and the Enhanced Commitments to Women:18

1. Kenya
Diana Cammack
Esther Mgale
Christian Nwosu

2. China
James Fitch
Camillia Fawzi El-Solh

3. Sierra Leone
Nicholas Crawford
Christa Räder

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18During the workshop, these were referred to as the Commitments to Gender Equality.
11 December 2001 – Day 2 (WFP staff and consultants)

Summary of Day 1 and overview of Day 2
Facilitators

Continued from Day 1: Insights from five country case studies and recommendations for the Gender Strategy and the Enhanced Commitments to Women:

4. Nicaragua
   Isabel Pérez Chiriboga
   Jose Peres Arenas

5. DR Congo
   Lioba Weingärtner
   Omar Traboulsi

Plenary:
Most important insights and recommendations from the country case studies and critical issues to be considered by the Thematic Evaluation of the Commitments to Women
Facilitators/participants

Four working groups:
By commitment: most important insights and recommendations from case studies and participants’ own experiences, and issues to be considered by the evaluation
Participants and case study consultants:
- Group I – Commitment I
- Group II – Commitment II
- Group III – Commitment III
- Group IV – Commitments IV and V

Working groups report back to plenary
Participants and case study consultants

12 December 2001 – Day 3 (WFP staff only)

Current human resources situation with regard to gender balance among staff
Michèle Pagé, HR

Progress on implementation of the Commitments to Women Mid-term Review recommendations
Gretchen Bloom, SP

Thematic Evaluation of WFP’s Commitments to Women: objectives, key issues and methodology
Susanne Früh, OEDE
Darlene Tymo, OEDE

Plenary discussion:
Draft Outline of Gender Strategy 2003–2007, including the conceptual framework
Christa Räder, SP

Importance of building male/female partnerships
Kamran Ahmad, HR
Staff Counsellor

Plenary discussion:
Planned results and related activities to be carried over from the Commitments to Women to the Gender Strategy 2003–2007
Facilitators/participants
**Four working groups:**

Groups I and II: Newly proposed *positive measures for women* (outputs and outcomes) in the areas of programming, advocacy and human resources

Groups III and IV: Newly proposed *gender-mainstreaming measures* (outputs and outcomes) in the areas of programming, advocacy and human resources

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**13 December 2001 – Day 4 (WFP staff only)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Day 3 and overview of Day 4</th>
<th>Facilitators</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Report and discussion of previous day’s group work:</td>
<td>Participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups I and II: Newly proposed <em>positive measures for women</em> (outputs and outcomes) in the areas of programming, advocacy and human resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Groups III and IV: Newly proposed <em>gender mainstreaming measures</em> (outputs and outcomes) in the areas of programming, advocacy and human resources</td>
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**Plenary discussion:**

Discussion and agreement on proposed Enhanced Commitments to Women

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectations, objectives and achievements of the workshop, remaining issues, next steps</th>
<th>Facilitators/participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Christa Räder</td>
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<tr>
<th>Workshop evaluation</th>
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<th>Closing remarks</th>
<th>Allan Jury</th>
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<td>Christa Räder</td>
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ANNEX III
List of Participants

WFP’s Gender Strategy 2003–2007 and Organizational Change: Building on and Moving Beyond the Commitments to Women
Rome, 6–7 March 2002

Facilitators/Experts

Kamran Ahmed, Staff Counsellor, HR, Islamabad, Pakistan
Lani Robbins, Consultant to FAO
Hettie Walters, Consultant, Gender and Development Training Centre, Haarlem, Netherlands
Patrick Webb, Consultant, Professor Tufts University, Boston, USA

Field Female Staff

Rosa Antolin, Managua, ODM
Brenda Barton, Kenya, ODK
Krystyna Bednarska, Nicaragua
Jeanne Boisclair, Yaounde, ODY
Trudy Bower, Ivory Cost
Pasqualina Di Sirio, Dominican Republic
Lucia Echecopar, Haiti
Dorte Ellehammer, Guatemala
Vitoria Ginja, Guinea-Bissau
Mona Hamman (on secondment)
Rebecca Hansen, Cambodia
Deborah Hines, Managua, ODM
Eva Hodell, Ghana
Merete Johansson (on secondment)
Judith Katona-Apte, Bangkok, ODB
Els Kocken, Colombia
Hannah Laufer, Ecuador
Judith Lewis, Kampala, ODK
Karen Manente, DPR Korea
Nicole Menage, Tanzania
Monika Midel (on secondment)
Sonsoles Ruedas, Cape Verde
Naila Sabra, Cairo, ODC
Deborah Saidy, Kampala, ODK
Georgia Shaver, Ethiopia
Yuriko Shoji, China
Nicole Steyer, Yaounde, ODY
Evelyne Togbe, Cameroon
Angela Van Rynbach, Mozambique
Claudia von Roehl, Honduras
Headquarters Female Staff

Rita Bhatia
Darlene Bisson
Gretchen Bloom
Rebecca Doyle
Remedios Dungca
Mary Fowler
Ruth Grove
Valerie Guarnieri
Gordana Jerger
Irene Lacy
Elsa Larsen
Jessie Mabutas
Zoraida Mesa
Arlene Mitchell
Peggy Nelson
Michèle Pagé
Enrica Porcari (on study leave)
Christa Räder
Susana Rico
Adelina Santos-Tankia
Guillermina Segura
Valerie Sequeira
Diana Serrano
Dianne Spearman
Cécile Sportis
Terri Toyota
Christine Van Nieuwenhuyse

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Patrick Buckley, Eritrea
Chris Czerwinski, Egypt
Werner Kiene, Washington
John Powell, Bangkok, ODB
Michael Usnick, New York

Headquarters Male Staff

Amir Abdulla
Torben Due
Neil Gallagher
Steven Giwa
Allan Jury
Kofi Owusu-Tieku
Kazuaki Sato
Suresh Sharma
Francesco Strippoli
Kees Tuinenberg
Jamie Wickens
Richard Wilcox
Mohamed Zejjari
ANNEX IV
Overview of Workshop Programme

WFP’s Gender Strategy (2003–2007) and Organizational Change: Building on and Moving Beyond the Commitments to Women
Rome, 6–7 March 2002

6 March 2002 – Day 1

Welcome, Gretchen Bloom, Senior Gender Adviser, SP

Opening Session: Presentations on draft Gender Strategy for 2003–2007:
Framework - Christa Räder, Policy Analyst, SP
HR issues in WFP – Diana Serrano, Director, HR
Advocacy – Allan Jury, Officer-in-Charge, SP

Special guest: Who are we? Why are we here?:
Catherine Bertini, Executive Director

Working sessions: Enhanced Commitments to Women:
Introduction: Allan Jury and Christa Räder
What will work and achieve results at WFP?

Group I: Programme operations – closing the gender gap using positive measures for women
Georgia Shaver, Country Director, Ethiopia
Felix Bamezon, Country Director, DR Congo

Group II: Programme operations – areas for gender mainstreaming
Hettie Walters, G & DTC, Netherlands
Patrick Buckley, Country Director, Eritrea

Group III: Using WFP’s voice to advocate for women’s role in food security and for gender equality
Lucia Echecopar, Country Director, Haiti
Patrick Webb, Tufts University, USA

Group IV: Gender perspective in human resources at WFP – striving for gender balance
Diana Serrano, Director, HR, WFP
Lani Robbins, consultant to FAO

Plenary feedback on working sessions:
Hettie Walters, G & DTC, Netherlands

Reflections on work/life balance and gender roles at work and at home
Kamran Ahmed, Staff Counselor, HR
7 March 2002 – Day 2

Panel of experts: Gender and organizational change to build on and move beyond the Commitments to Women
Allan Jury, SP, Chair
Patrick Webb, Tufts University, USA
Hettie Walters, G & DTC, Netherlands
Lani Robbins, consultant to FAO

Next steps: Where do we go from here?
Reflections on major outputs from working sessions and panel
Allan Jury and WFP staff co-chairs of working groups