

## **Committee History of the World Food Program**

The World Food program was established at the 1960 Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) Conference as a proposition to establish a multilateral food aid program. WFP formally started in 1963 on an experimental basis and by 1965 became permanent. 36 member states govern WFP through the Executive Board overseeing humanitarian and development food aid activities. In 1994, the Executive Board adopted the WFP Mission Statement based on a fundamental review of policies, objectives and strategies that involved member states, NGO's, the UN and other agencies. WFP is the food aid arm of the United Nations system. WFP strives to promote food security, which it defines as the access of all people at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life.

The ultimate objective of food aid should be the elimination of the need for food aid. WFP commits itself to continue to use food aid to support economic and social development, meet refugee and other emergency food needs, and the associated logistics support, and promote world food security in accordance with recommendations of the United Nations and FAO. The core policies and strategies that govern WFP activities are to provide food aid to save lives in refugee and emergency situations, to improve the nutrition and quality of life of the most vulnerable people at critical times and to help build assets and promote the self- reliance of poor people and communities, particularly through labor- intensive works program.

In carrying out its mandate, WFP concentrates on what is best suited to do with resources available as cost-effectively as possible. It makes all necessary efforts to avoid negative effects on local food production, consumption patterns and dependency on food aid. On request, WFP will also provide bilateral services to donors, UN agencies and NGOs on the basis of full cost recovery. Such services will complement WFP's regular operations to the extent possible. To be truly effective, food aid should be fully integrated into the development plans and priorities of recipient countries and coordinated with other forms of assistance.

WFP's starting point is the national policies, plans and programs of developing countries; including their food security plans. The World Food Program has set out 5 strategic objectives in the Strategic Plan for 2008-2011. The objectives are 1. Save Lives and Protect Livelihoods in Emergencies, 2. Prevent Acute Hunger and Invest in Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation Measures, 3. Restore and Rebuild Lives and Livelihoods In Post- Conflict, Post- Disaster or Transition Situations, 4. Reduce Chronic Hunger and Under- Nutrition;, and 5. Strengthen The Capacities of Countries To Reduce Hunger, Including Through Hand-Over Strategies and Local Purchase. This plan lays the framework for potential action for WFP. The plan marks a shift from WFP as a food aid agency to a food assistance agency and reflects the changing nature of food aid and hunger and WFP's history and experience. The overarching goal is to reduce dependency and to support governmental and global efforts to ensure long- term solutions to the hunger challenge. The Strategic Plan reflects the real- world challenges, including the recent increased hunger caused by rising food prices and low supplies and the difficult choices the organization confronts. The implementation of this strategy will also guide discussion on WFP's funding mechanisms as it approaches the coming years and challenges ahead. It is estimated that the number of people going in hungry in 2009 will reach over 1 billion as WFP, governments, and NGOs worldwide try to find solutions.

## **Topic I: Ending Poverty through Eliminating Hunger**

### ***Background***

The World Food Program purchases more than 2 million metric tons of food every year, feeding over 102 million people in 2008. 17.6 million of those people were fed through development projects. Development food aid helps communities and families who are considered food insecure to break the cycle of poverty by having a resource to count on. Millennium Development Goal 1 is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, citing The World Bank estimate of 1.4 billion people living in extreme poverty in 2005. Many of these people live in areas frequently affected by natural disasters and communities vulnerable to food shortage. By investing in people and food security, WFP provides a chance for communities to invest in projects such as schools, clinics, and agricultural skills and technology that can help lift them out of poverty. Instead of devoting a day to finding food and keeping children from school to work to provide food, families can focus on sustainable harvests and education for themselves and their children. With over 20 programs this year in countries worldwide, WFP is targeting the cause of poverty and striving to provide a new future for those affected by hunger.

### ***Current Operations***

One of the World Food Program's main initiatives for ending poverty through eliminating hunger is through its Food for Assets projects. As was mentioned, many poor farmers and poverty stricken communities cannot devote time and energy to development projects when they must spend a day searching for food. The goal of the Food for Assets program is to provide food to individuals and communities for work on development of new infrastructure and time learning new skills to increase food security. Many operations are currently underway in communities worldwide, targeting communities who are most vulnerable to food insecurities. Projects vary, but include incentives for irrigation, soil and water conservation, building new schools, home gardening and even go so far as to offer assistance to ex-combatants to abandon weapons and learn new skills to rejoin society.

One of the largest groups of beneficiaries of assistance from WFP is children. In 2008 alone, 62.2 million were fed through different projects, over 20 million of them through WFP's School Meals project. When families have to worry about food for each meal many children are kept out of school to work to help provide for the family. School enrollment across the globe is substantially lower in areas stricken by poverty and food insecurity. WFP's School Meals program provides food at different levels for children who attend school. Most of WFP school feeding involves in-school meals. Providing food for a child even for just one meal a day puts the pressure off of a parent to provide that meal and also gives them an incentive to send their child to school. In some cases, WFP goes further to provide for the poorest families and give more incentive to send girls to school by providing take home rations to those girls who attend. These solutions contribute directly to ending poverty through hunger because children are not only provided the food they need, but are also gaining the education needed in the future to lift a community out of poverty.

Another initiative used by the World Food Program to help end the cycle of poverty is its Purchase for Progress program. Through its P4P program last year, WFP purchased 75.6 per cent of its food from farmers in developing countries who are closest to the communities in need. By providing a reliable purchasing source, farmers are able to grow more crops with confidence and sell them in a market for a fair price. P4P also gives farmers the information and tools to grow more crops and be competitive players in a market. This allows innovation for farming within smallholder and low- income communities as well as provides more cash directly to farmers to help lift them out of poverty. With over 10 different types of Food for Assets programs, some 68 countries involved in School Meals, and \$1.1 billion going into Purchase for Progress in 2008, The World Food Program is actively working to prevent hunger and provide for progress by investing directly in people worldwide.

### ***Things to Consider***

Even with the initiative taken already by WFP to provide food for the hungry, the UN Food and Agricultural Committee estimates that there will be over 1 billion people hungry in 2009, what can we do to prevent this from happening? How can WFP be more efficient with its current programs to reach more people? Are there other initiatives to be considered? In many cases where hunger creates poverty in a community, the problem is not a lack of food available but a lack of access to food. What can be done to solve these problems? What can countries promise to do individually so that security is never the reason food cannot be attained? Is there something your country can do to provide for its impoverished communities and prevent hunger from keeping them this way? According to MDG 1, many of the worlds population is still living below \$1 per day, how can achievements in this area affect those stricken by hunger? Consider what your country provides to WFP by way of financial support and popular support and what can still be done to help WFP end poverty by eliminating hunger. When writing resolutions for this topic in committee, please work together to come up with multiple ideas to address the different facets of problems WFP still faces. Focus on compromise for the same ideas and innovation for new ones.

## **Topic II: Providing Food in Times of Conflict**

### ***Background***

The largest portion of funds and effort put forth by the World Food Program involves responding to emergencies. Emergency Operations (EMOPS) use UN Emergency Assessment Teams to quickly analyze emergency situations and determine how much food is needed and the best way to deliver aid. WFP focuses and responds to three types of crises: sudden and natural disasters, slow-onset disasters, and complex emergencies. With the help of the WFP Country Director from the country affected it can borrow money from the WFP Immediate Response Account to cover assistance. In times of conflict it is important for WFP to immediately assess the amount of aid needed and to establish communication with field offices and headquarters. WFP uses ICT rapid response teams with the capabilities of establishing communication within 48 hours. To reach all those in need in emergencies, WFP works with a network of about 3,000 international and local non-governmental organizations to distribute food aid to refugee camps, therapeutic feeding

centers and emergency shelters. The coordination of communication, funding, and rapid response to emergencies and crises continues to require updating and assistance so WFP can provide food for the impacted hungry population.

### ***Current Operations***

The World Food Program has operations responding to emergencies (EMOPs) in nearly 50 countries worldwide. Operations assisting those affected by conflict range from Gaza to Ecuador. Current operations in the Orientale Province of the Democratic Republic of Congo provide food and nourishment to those displaced by over a decade of violence from armed rebel groups. As of late 2008, the intensification of the attacks has displaced more people than ever and prevented the population from harvesting and preparing for this year's crop. The violence has not only displaced the local people but puts workers of WFP and others in danger when trying to assist the displaced. To provide coordinated humanitarian response, the United Nations and NGOs have increased their presence and conducted rapid response assessments in accessible areas. Emergency operation objectives include improving the food consumption among IDPs, returnees and host communities, stabilizing acute malnutrition in children and pregnant women, and support for the return of IDPs and refugees through a 3- month resettlement food package. Similar EMOPs are currently in place in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas and North West Frontier Province in response to ongoing violence since August 2008. In this case, the UN and NGOs are working with the government to provide for the IDP population. Another important current operation to consider is the WFP response to the violence in Sudan. WFP operations in Sudan currently provide food for the most people in any one country and in 2008 was WFP's largest emergency operation due to the combination of conflict, population displacement and poverty. The objectives of the EMOP in Sudan are to save lives, reduce food insecurity and restore the livelihoods of conflict- affected populations. For the purpose of this topic in our committee, we will be focusing on the logistics of food supply during times of conflict. While the injustices of conflict are of great importance, please try to focus our work on the practical and logical side of providing for those affected by conflict across the world.

### ***Things to Consider***

In times of conflict, how can the WFP better insure the safety of its workforce and provide food to those in need? What has the international community already done to insure that the vulnerable be provided for in times of violence and what can we still do? Logistically, how can WFP improve its own communications and communications with governments and NGOs to better assist affected communities? Is there a way for WFP to assess areas prone to conflict prior to violence and meet the needs of the population so that they will be able to sustain during violence? How do these operations meet the Strategic Objectives of WFP and the Millennium Development Goals? Will improvement in these areas better help the international community meet these goals? How can we do this? Dig deep into WFP emergency operations and food assistance and find ways to improve any and all ways of transport and assistance to those affected by conflict. Once again, when writing resolutions for this topic, please come up with different ideas to address these issues and work together for compromise on similar ideas. In certain cases where specific countries are affected by conflict, resolutions may have a similar goal, but need to be specific to the country or

region. Work together with those around you who may be experiencing the same problems and build compromise.