

UNITED NATIONS

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/6149

8 December 1965

ENGLISH

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/FRENCH/
SPANISH

Twentieth session
Agenda item 52

WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General is transmitting herewith, for the information of the Members of the General Assembly, an extract from the provisional report of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, held in Rome from 20 November to 9 December 1965.

WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

1. The Conference considered the future of the World Food Programme on the basis of reports submitted by the Council (C 65/29 and C 65/LIM/32), the Intergovernmental Committee of the Programme (C 65/29), the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization jointly (C 65/10 and C 65/10 Corr.1) and the Executive Director of the Programme (C 65/10 Appendix). The Conference also had before it the text of resolution 1080 (XXXIX) on the continuation of the World Food Programme adopted by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. Copies of an amendment to the draft resolution recommended by the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly, which had been submitted by Argentina to the General Assembly of the United Nations for approval, were circulated at the request of the Argentine delegation for the information of the Conference.
2. The Conference considered that the experimental World Food Programme had proved to be a success. Multilateral food aid should become part of the regular activities of the United Nations family, complementing the other types of assistance already provided by established agencies and programmes.
3. While the World Food Programme had its origins both in the need for food aid and in various initiatives to find constructive uses for agricultural commodity surpluses, the Programme now involved much more than the mere utilization of surplus foods. While it was possible to discern a trend toward the reduction of world surpluses, the need for food aid on the contrary was increasing. The Programme had revealed new ways of using food as development capital, and had enabled Governments to start undertakings which might not otherwise have been feasible.
4. Some delegates suggested that food aid needs might be considered by the Governments of donor countries when they were setting their national production targets; this should not, however, encourage uneconomic production. It was suggested by several delegates that the effectiveness of WFP food aid could be enhanced by linking it with projects in the national development plans of recipient countries.
5. The Conference appreciated that the commodity composition so far available to the World Food Programme, while it included items not among the traditional surplus

products, nevertheless was still less than ideal for meeting the basic needs of many developing countries. Certain commodities, notably high-protein foods and rice, were not available in sufficient quantities to satisfy requirements. This was clearly a question which should receive increasing attention in the years ahead. One solution suggested by some delegations was the partial exchange of WFP commodities for other items needed by project beneficiaries.

6. The Conference noted that, in so far as the Programme in future had resources available for the purchase of foodstuffs to provide a more balanced diet, such purchases would be made as far as was possible and economic from those developing countries which were exporters of food and were seeking to expand food exports. The Programme would thus benefit both food-deficient developing countries and food-exporting developing countries as envisaged by recommendation A.II.6 of the Final Act of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

7. The Conference also recognized that one of the effects of the Programme's operations had been, and should continue to be, to increase consumption of food commodities in low-income countries.

8. Food aid was only an interim solution to the food problems of the developing areas; the basic answer to these problems lay in an increase in local food production. The Conference therefore emphasized the particular importance of WFP projects aimed at increasing agricultural productivity. In all projects, of whatever type, due safeguards - as provided by the FAO Principles of Surplus Disposal - must be applied to ensure that WFP aid does not discourage local producers in recipient countries, or disrupt international trade. The Conference also laid stress on the need for adequate attention to the physical arrangements for the handling, storage, transport and distribution of WFP commodities in recipient areas.

9. A number of delegates described the role of WFP emergency operations or development projects in their countries, and expressed the gratitude of their Governments to donor nations and to the World Food Programme. In some cases, WFP aid had led to the introduction of new ideas for integrating related schemes designed to increase food production.

10. The Conference recognized that most WFP projects had become operational only in the second half of the experimental period, so that evaluation in depth of the impact and effectiveness even of selected projects had not yet been possible; great importance was, however, attached by many delegations to such an appraisal being made at the earliest possible stage.
11. The Conference accepted the proposed targets of \$275 million for voluntary contributions for the period 1966-1968, and 33 per cent for the proportion in cash and services. Many delegations stated that their Governments would announce contributions at the forthcoming Pledging Conference, and in some cases gave advance indications of the level at which they would contribute. The Executive Director reported that the flow of requests for WFP assistance had already reached such proportions that, if the target were fully met, it was likely that all resources available for projects could be committed.
12. Many delegations referred to the Argentine proposal for amending the draft resolution on the continuation of the World Food Programme submitted by the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly of the United Nations. While sympathy was expressed by a number of delegations for the substance of the Argentine proposals, the Conference felt that the basic character of the Programme should be maintained and therefore it was of fundamental importance for the satisfactory conduct of the Programme that the same decisions be reached by its two parent organizations, the United Nations and FAO, which meant that the introduction of substantive changes at this point by either body should be avoided. The resolutions as recommended by the Economic and Social Council and the FAO Council to the General Assembly and the FAO Conference respectively had the same operative provisions, and it was highly desirable that this harmony should be maintained. The Argentine proposals had raised new issues, which, although admittedly important, went beyond the scope of the World Food Programme. These issues should form the subject matter of a separate study, for which indeed action had already been recommended by the Committee on Commodity Problems and requested of the Director-General by the FAO Council; those matters were being considered by the Conference under item 6 of its agenda.
13. The Conference felt that, although the experimental period in a formal sense was now coming to an end, further experimentation by the World Food Programme was

still desirable. As an example, sets of linked projects, or projects covering an entire economic sector or region of a country, was suggested. Reference was made by many delegations to the "programme approach" for the provision of food aid under over-all development plans. Most delegates felt that the present emphasis in the World Food Programme on using commodities to support projects should be maintained and that any decision by the Intergovernmental Committee on a programme approach should not be taken until a thorough study had been made of its implications. In this connexion, the Conference noted that the Intergovernmental Committee had requested the Executive Director to carry out a detailed factual study on the basis of full co-operation with a specific country, and that this study had already been initiated in Jamaica.

14. The Conference was gratified to learn of the support given to the Programme by other agencies as well as by non-governmental organizations, and expressed the hope that this co-operation would be strengthened still further.

15. The Conference adopted the following resolution:

RESOLUTION /65

Continuation of the World Food Programme

The Conference,

Conscious of the vast and growing needs of the peoples of the developing countries, of the pressing requirement for assistance in their economic and social development, and of the suffering caused by hunger and malnutrition,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 1496 (XV) of 27 October 1960 and 1714 (XVI) of 19 December 1961 and FAO Conference resolution 1/61 of 24 November 1961 concerning the establishment of an experimental World Food Programme,

Having considered the report of the Intergovernmental Committee on the future of the World Food Programme as transmitted by the Council,

Having studied the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization on the future development of the Programme (document C 65/10) as well as the report of the Executive Director of the World Food Programme (document C 65/10 Appendix),

Having considered the results obtained by the Programme during its initial phase and the contribution which it is making toward achieving the goals of the United Nations Development Decade and of the FAO Freedom from Hunger Campaign,

Taking note with satisfaction of the contributions of foodstuffs, money and services already made by Member States of the United Nations and member nations and associate members of FAO, as well as the co-operation of recipient countries in the elaboration and implementation of development projects, in which for the first time food aid is being utilized for development in a multilateral framework,

Recognizing the potentialities of this Programme, in which the United Nations and FAO have co-operated through the joint United Nations/FAO Administrative Unit,

Appreciating the co-operation and assistance extended to the Programme by the interested specialized agencies and operating programmes of the United Nations, and by a number of other inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, and

Having considered resolution 1080 (XXXIX) of the Economic and Social Council and resolution 5/44 of the FAO Council,

1. Decides to extend the United Nations/FAO World Food Programme, established in virtue of General Assembly resolution 1714 (XVI) and FAO Conference resolution 1/61, on a continuing basis for as long as multilateral food aid is found feasible and desirable, on the understanding that the Programme will be regularly reviewed before each pledging conference and that if circumstances so require it may be enlarged, curtailed or terminated at the end of any period for which resources have been pledged;
2. Establishes for the three years 1966, 1967 and 1968 a target for voluntary contributions of \$275 million, of which not less than 33 per cent should be in cash and services, and urges Member States of the United Nations and member nations and associate members of the Food and Agriculture Organization to make every effort to ensure the early attainment of the target;
3. Requests the Secretary-General in co-operation with the Director-General of FAO to convene a pledging conference at United Nations Headquarters as soon as feasible;
4. Decides that the next following pledging conference, subject to the review provided for in paragraph 1 above, should be convened in 1967, at which time Governments would be invited to pledge contributions for 1969 and 1970, with a view to reaching such target as may be recommended by the General Assembly and the FAO Conference;

5. Reaffirms its previous decision to the effect that the United Nations/FAO Intergovernmental Committee of the World Food Programme shall comprise twenty-four nations members of FAO or the United Nations, twelve of these members to be elected by the Economic and Social Council and twelve members by the FAO Council, it being understood that outgoing members shall be eligible for re-election;

6. Requests the Economic and Social Council and the FAO Council as soon as possible after the adoption of this resolution by the General Assembly and the FAO Conference to elect twelve members each, four members each for a term of one year, four members each for a term of two years, four members each for a term of three years;

7. Decides that thereafter all the members of the Intergovernmental Committee shall be elected for a term of three years and requests the Economic and Social Council and the FAO Council to make such provisions as will ensure that the terms of office of four members elected by the two Councils respectively shall expire in each calendar year;

8. Further requests the Economic and Social Council and the FAO Council when electing members of the Intergovernmental Committee to take into account the need for balanced representation of economically developed and developing countries and other relevant factors such as the representation of potential participating countries, both contributing and recipient, equitable geographical distribution and the representation of both developed and developing countries having commercial interests in international trade in foodstuffs, especially those highly dependent on such trade;

9. Requests a review of the General Regulations of the Programme in the light of the present resolution and calls upon the Economic and Social Council and the FAO Council to take appropriate action thereon.