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UNICEF/WFP Memorandum of Understanding in emergency and rehabilitation interventions

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted for information to the Executive Board.

Pursuant to the decisions taken on the methods of work by the Executive Board at its First Regular Session of 1996, the documentation prepared by the Secretariat for the Board has been kept brief and decision-oriented. The meetings of the Executive Board are to be conducted in a business-like manner, with increased dialogue and exchanges between delegations and the Secretariat. Efforts to promote these guiding principles will continue to be pursued by the Secretariat.

The Secretariat therefore invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document, to contact the WFP staff member(s) listed below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting. This procedure is designed to facilitate the Board's consideration of the document in the plenary.

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1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations to advocate for the protection of children's rights and the fulfillment of their needs and opportunities. UNICEF responds in emergencies to protect the rights of children and to relieve their suffering and that of their families. WFP provides food aid to save lives in emergency situations, to improve the nutrition and quality of life of the most vulnerable people at critical times in their lives, and to help build assets and promote the self-reliance of poor people and communities. Both agencies are committed to the principles articulated in the Declaration and Plan of Action of the International Conference on Nutrition, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention to End All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.
- 1.2 In emergencies, WFP and UNICEF are committed to strengthening and sustaining the capacity of households to meet their basic needs for food, care of children and women, health services, water and sanitation. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between UNICEF and WFP aims to encourage and facilitate systematic, predictable and cooperative action between the two organizations in achieving the above objectives. It is a management tool which seeks to build on the recognized comparative advantages of each organization and to establish operational modalities to maximize the benefits of collaboration.
- 1.3 UNICEF and WFP share a common commitment to actions in emergencies that help ensure relief, recovery and rehabilitation. WFP, in particular, will ensure that families have adequate access to food through the provision of external assistance as required. UNICEF's priority activities in emergencies are in ensuring care and protection of children and those who care for them, and social and family reintegration of children and women who are victims of violence. UNICEF also supports the delivery of services in the areas of child and maternal health, primary education, and water and environmental sanitation.
- 1.4 Close and fruitful collaboration has existed between UNICEF and WFP for many years both in emergency relief and rehabilitation and in long term development programmes. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the two organizations in 1976, covering the aspects of consultation and exchange of information, joint action in assistance programmes, collaboration in development and nutrition policies, and policies and programmes for emergency preparedness. In 1985, joint consultation resulted in additional complementary parameters for cooperation on the planning and implementation of emergency responses. Given the recent increase in the number and complexity of emergencies to which the UN system has been called upon to respond, the two organizations have agreed that clarifying the role and responsibilities of each organization could strengthen collaborative arrangements and lead to further improvements in addressing emergency situations.
- 1.5 The present MOU builds on the previous agreements and experience, and provides an operational framework for programmes in which WFP and UNICEF agree to work together. UNICEF and WFP will collaborate in assessing the needs of the affected population as early as possible in the development of a crisis, addressing food and non food needs of the population, and in implementing water and sanitation, health and nutrition programmes and rehabilitation activities.



2. CONSENSUS PRINCIPLES ON WHICH COLLABORATION IS BASED

- 2.1 WFP and UNICEF share a commitment to prevent and mitigate emergencies and their worst human consequences, to eliminate famine-related deaths, to end starvation and nutritional deficiency diseases in communities affected by emergencies, and to promote early recovery and rehabilitation of affected populations.
- 2.2 UNICEF and WFP recognize that adequate nutrition is an outcome of intake of food that is adequate in quantity and quality as well as access to health services, potable water and sanitation facilities, and of adequate capacity to provide special necessary care for young children and women. These needs, especially child care, food preparation and feeding, are best met by families. Both Organizations are committed to strengthening the capacity of the family as a unit to meet the basic needs of all members for food, health, water and sanitation, and special care.
- 2.3 WFP and UNICEF recognize the importance of early and rapid assessment with appropriate methodologies to identify and take account of the factors which contribute to malnutrition, including the vulnerability of the household with regard to food security, access to health services and sanitation, appropriate coping mechanisms, care practices and gender issues.
- 2.4 Both organizations seek to ensure that, in cases where assessment has demonstrated that food and other assistance are needed, all families affected by the emergency receive a supply of food adequate to meet the nutritional needs of all family members and other requirements as assessed. Particular attention will be paid to children (including unaccompanied children) and women (including pregnant and nursing women and heads of households). This will be best achieved by ensuring an adequate basic ration, together with sufficient attention to the provision of health care, special care of young children and women, and adequate water and sanitation.
- 2.5 UNICEF and WFP recognize that situations can occur in which the basic rations provided are not adequate to address malnutrition or prevent deterioration of the nutritional status. In such cases, supplementary feeding programmes will be implemented for targeted beneficiaries as a temporary intervention to meet the food needs of identified vulnerable groups until such time that an adequate basic ration can be provided. Both organizations will seek to minimize the need for supplementary feeding by ensuring that the basic food ration is adequate, that water and sanitation facilities are available and that families have the capacity to provide adequate care for young children.
- 2.6 Both organizations support the establishment of therapeutic feeding programmes, for the rehabilitation of severely malnourished people. Such programmes will require special food as well as intensive medical care by well trained staff.



3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This MOU provides the framework for WFP/UNICEF cooperation and is to be applied where both organizations have agreed to work as partners in emergency and/or rehabilitation activities.
- 3.2 The MOU covers the activities of the two organizations in situations caused by natural or man-made disasters, in which people affected by the emergency remain in their country of origin, including the internally displaced, and covers both relief and rehabilitation activities.
- 3.3 This MOU is particularly important in situations in which the lives and well-being of people are at such risk that extraordinary action, i.e. urgently required action beyond that routinely provided, must be mobilized to ensure the survival, protection and well-being of the most vulnerable groups in the population.
- 3.4 Both organizations will follow their respective policy and operational guidelines as may be relevant especially with regards to their commitments to women.
- 3.5 In pursuit of cooperation and efficiency in specialized fields, such as telecommunications and logistics, the organizations may sign sub-agreements.
- 3.6 Both UNICEF and WFP expect to enter into contractual arrangements or other agreements with third party organizations, such as Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), to help them implement assistance in emergency situations. A formal subagreement will be designed for this purpose. This subagreement will include a copy of this MOU and the organization concerned will be required to adhere to the contents of the MOU as it implements emergency activities on behalf of the UN agency concerned.

4. OBJECTIVES OF UNICEF/WFP COOPERATION

- 4.1 In order to achieve most effectively UNICEF's and WFP's common goal to strengthen and sustain the ability of households to meet their basic needs, the two organizations must institute the necessary operational procedures to ensure close collaboration as soon as possible in the development of a crisis.
 - The specific common operational objectives that WFP and UNICEF are pursuing in emergency operations are the following:
 - to prevent famine-related deaths and malnutrition including micronutrient deficiencies;
 - to reduce malnutrition and protect the nutritional status of the population under consideration, including the provision of a food basket that meets the assessed requirement and is nutritionally balanced and culturally acceptable;
 - to restore/provide access to health services, water supply, sanitation and other basic services for families, and in particular unaccompanied children and others with special needs, with the overall objective of reducing the vulnerability of the affected population to future crisis and increasing its capacity to cope with and recover from foreseeable crisis;
 - to improve the conditions of women on the premise that strengthening opportunities for women is a major factor in overcoming hunger and poverty.



5. AREAS OF COLLABORATION

5.1 Needs Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation

5.1.1 WFP and UNICEF will collaborate in assessing the needs of the population affected by the emergency, in identifying ways in which these needs can be best met, and in determining how the resources of the two organizations can best complement each other. This will usually be carried out through joint assessment missions which involve the staff of both organizations. WFP and UNICEF will work together with other relevant partners in overall needs assessment, for example FAO in the case of natural disasters such as drought.

5.1.2 Assessment will be made of family access to food, family capacity to provide necessary care for young children and women, prevalence of malnutrition and needs for health care, water and sanitation and other social services.

5.1.3 Efforts will be made to ensure the active participation of the affected population and community, especially women, in the assessment. Special consideration will be given to:

- coping mechanisms for acquiring food and income and how these might be strengthened;
- ways in which affected people can help implement emergency assistance;
- ways in which the capacities and resources of the affected population can be harnessed to improve longer term food security and development.

5.1.4 Where appropriate, opportunities for the utilization of WFP food resources in support of UNICEF-assisted actions in training and rehabilitation activities and in the re-establishment of basic health services, water supply, sanitation, education and other social services will be identified by UNICEF. Similarly, opportunities for the utilization of UNICEF resources in support of WFP-assisted actions will be identified by WFP.

5.1.5 On the basis of the joint assessment, WFP, in consultation with UNICEF, will identify requirements for food aid. UNICEF, in consultation with WFP, will identify requirements for strengthening caring capacity, access to water, sanitation, health services, education and other social services and resources needed in these areas. The two organizations will develop a joint plan of action.

5.1.6 UNICEF and WFP will collaborate in establishing routine monitoring mechanisms and in making periodic re-assessments, paying particular attention to monitoring:

- the effectiveness of inputs of the two organizations, complementarity and unmet needs;
- changes in nutritional status and household food security.

5.1.7 Results of the monitoring and evaluation of programme implementation will be used to propose improved approaches to maximize their effectiveness in achieving agreed objectives.

5.1.8 In the initial assessment, reassessment and routine monitoring, WFP will take the lead in assessing overall food needs and logistics. UNICEF will take the



lead in assessing prevalence of malnutrition, the special needs of young children and women, including the need for care and facilities for food preparation, and the needs for fuel, water, sanitation, health care, education and other social services. The two organizations will establish mechanisms for the sharing of all assessment information.

- 5.1.9 UNICEF and WFP will jointly develop a basic methodology for undertaking the assessment and monitoring outlined above.

5.2 Addressing Needs of the Affected Population

- 5.2.1 Programmes will be implemented based on assessment and analysis of problems and needs and established criteria of eligibility.

- 5.2.2 WFP will be responsible for addressing food aid requirements and non-food items relating to transport, storage and distribution of food commodities.

- 5.2.3 UNICEF will be responsible for addressing requirements of water supply and sanitation, health services, care and protection of children. It will also be responsible for providing therapeutic preparations, and non-food items related to food preparation and consumption, emergency shelter, nutrition monitoring and selective feeding operations.

5.3 Food

- 5.3.1 WFP is the food aid arm of the United Nations system. WFP's overall mission in providing food aid is to eradicate hunger and poverty through the following strategies:

- saving lives in refugee and other emergency situations;
- improving the nutrition and quality of life of the most vulnerable people at critical times of their lives;
- building assets and promoting self-reliance of poor people and communities, particularly through labour-intensive public works programmes.

- 5.3.2 WFP concentrates its efforts and resources on the neediest people and countries. Hunger and poverty affect women disproportionately. WFP is committed to improve the condition of women on the basis of the fundamental premise that strengthening opportunities and options for women is the key solution of the problems of hunger and poverty.

- 5.3.3 WFP is fully engaged in advocacy on behalf of respect for humanitarian principles and access to populations placed at risk as a consequence of the emergency as well as efforts to ensure that steps are taken to reduce vulnerability and hence encourage local coping mechanisms and move towards sustainable food sufficiency.

- 5.3.4 When general food distributions are implemented, food baskets will be designed by WFP, based on the indicative energy, protein and micronutrient requirements established by FAO and WHO, adjusted as necessary by the specific situation of the beneficiary population, demography, food habits, access to other food resources, workload of women and logistic/security constraints. Guidelines for the design of foodbaskets will be developed by WFP in consultation with UNICEF.



- 5.3.5 To the extent possible, food commodities will be appropriately fortified. WFP and UNICEF will work together on advocacy with donor nations in favour of appropriately fortified foods. They will also work together to increase capacity for local milling and fortification of donated cereal products.
- 5.3.6 When the assessment indicates a significant risk of micronutrient deficiencies in a population, WFP will seek to address this through the inclusion of a fortified blended food or other fortified commodity in the general ration. UNICEF will be responsible for covering any unmet micronutrient needs through other measures (such as supplement distribution or provision of vitamin/mineral mixes).
- 5.3.7 Both organizations will promote, protect and support breastfeeding in emergencies to the extent possible. UNICEF will ensure the availability of generically labeled breastmilk substitutes for infants who cannot be breastfed.
- 5.3.8 WFP will mobilize resources for foods and related costs for general, selective (supplementary and therapeutic) and other feeding programmes, including programmes for unaccompanied children. Such foods will include cereals, pulses, cooking oil, sugar, iodized salt, fortified blended food, dried skimmed milk (DSM), high-energy biscuits and other commodities.
- 5.3.9 UNICEF will mobilize resources and ensure the availability of ready-made therapeutic milk for use in supervised therapeutic feeding of severely malnourished people, oral rehydration salts and breastmilk substitutes and vitamin/mineral preparations where the assessment indicates these are necessary.
- 5.3.10 WFP will be responsible for the overall management of the general ration distribution programme.
- 5.3.11 In general WFP will coordinate the organization of supplementary feeding programmes, except in situations, agreed upon by both organizations, where UNICEF is in a better position to carry out this responsibility.
- 5.3.12 UNICEF will support and coordinate the organization of therapeutic feeding programmes for severely malnourished people, programmes to provide care, protection and feeding of unaccompanied children and the distribution of micronutrient supplements.

5.4 Non-food Items

- 5.4.1 Based on the assessed priority needs for non-food items:
- WFP will be responsible for mobilizing and providing all non-food items necessary for the transport, storage and distribution of all food commodities (vehicles, warehousing, monitoring equipment) required for the joint operations;
 - UNICEF will be responsible to mobilize and provide other non food items, related to food preparation and consumption (water storage containers and food cooking equipment), for other needs of the population (emergency shelter materials, soap), for nutrition and health monitoring (scales), for selective feeding operations (kitchen equipment).

5.5 Water Supply and Sanitation



- 5.5.1 To ensure that populations affected by emergencies have access to at least the minimum required amount of safe water and to prevent or control water or sanitation related diseases, UNICEF seeks to ensure the rapid availability of potable water supplies and facilitates the safe disposal of excreta.
- 5.5.2 Where needed, UNICEF ensures the delivery of emergency water supplies, establishes sanitation facilities and supports hygiene education. UNICEF facilitates the repair and restoration of water sources and, in urban areas, water and sewerage systems.
- 5.5.3 At the request of UNICEF, WFP will seek to assist and augment these efforts in appropriate ways including the provision of food for work for construction and maintenance of water and sanitation facilities.

5.6 Health Services

- 5.6.1 In emergency situations, UNICEF strives to ensure that the basic health needs of children are met. UNICEF gives particular emphasis to ensuring that children have access to basic health services, are protected from vaccine-preventable childhood diseases and benefit from prevention and treatment of diarrhoeal diseases.
- 5.6.2 Where needed, UNICEF provides essential drugs and supports the rehabilitation and revitalization of primary health services.
- 5.6.3 UNICEF gives high priority to the reproductive health needs of women and adolescent girls, including prenatal and post-natal care, safe delivery practices, the prevention of HIV infection and recovery from the traumatic effects of exposure to extreme violence.
- 5.6.4 Special efforts are also made by UNICEF to ensure that the health and rehabilitation needs of children with disabilities are met.
- 5.6.5 At the request of UNICEF, WFP will seek to assist and augment these efforts in appropriate ways including the provision of food for work for construction and maintenance of health facilities, for the support of health workers and will assist with delivery of health related drugs and supplies.

5.7 Children in Need of Special Protection

- 5.7.1 In emergencies, UNICEF actively promotes respect for children's rights as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other applicable international human rights and humanitarian law instruments. UNICEF advocates respect for humanitarian principles, collaborates in the identification of children at risk and in the mobilization of assistance for women and children. In situations of armed conflict, UNICEF advocates with parties to the conflict to respect international humanitarian principles, to not target children and other civilians, and to allow humanitarian access to civilian victims of the conflict. UNICEF gives priority in emergencies to ensuring the well-being and recovery of children who require special protection and care, because of displacement, separation from families, neglect, exploitation, abuse, violence and discrimination.
- 5.7.2 UNICEF supports a range of remedial services to ensure recovery and to enhance the care, protection and the social reintegration of such children. Priority is given to helping families to avoid separation and to reuniting



separated children with their families. UNICEF supports efforts to meet the special physical, psychosocial and social needs of affected children and to facilitate their social reintegration.

- 5.7.4 Where the well-being of children is critically at risk because of acute family destitution, UNICEF supports emergency efforts to enhance the coping skills of the most vulnerable families. UNICEF assistance is usually in support of the mobilization of community efforts on behalf of vulnerable families; participatory social and economic actions to meet essential needs, particularly food sufficiency; and, if necessary, works projects.

5.8 Education

- 5.8.1 UNICEF supports the rapid re-establishment of basic education facilities as an essential emergency service for children.
- 5.8.2 UNICEF supports emergency education services both to ensure that children do not miss essential educational opportunities and because of the critically important role educational activities have on the psychosocial well-being of children through the normalization of routines that it brings. In emergencies, UNICEF supports community and parental efforts to rapidly restart educational activities, to rebuild and refurbish essential school facilities, to develop education materials and to train education leaders and teachers.
- 5.8.3 At the request of UNICEF, WFP will assist and augment such activities, through, for example, the provision of nourishing meals or snacks for children, and the provision of food as partial payment for the services of emergency teachers.

5.9 Rehabilitation Activities

- 5.9.1 UNICEF and WFP share a common commitment to assist affected populations in the post-emergency period. Both organizations will promote rehabilitation and development uses of food aid in emergency operations, and self-reliance in the post-emergency phase, through livelihood/income generating activities, with special consideration for the needs and opportunities for women and children.
- 5.9.2 In activities which specifically target women and children, including special vulnerable group feeding, school feeding, health and nutrition education, and food for work, where possible, WFP will provide food and UNICEF will provide complementary assistance in the form of non-food items, including for example micronutrient supplements, medicines and school supplies.

6. LOGISTICS

- 6.1 Each organization will take care of the arrangements for international and in-country transportation, storage and handling of food and non-food items for which it is responsible.
- 6.2 Both organizations will collaborate in establishing operational arrangements with a view to expedite deliveries in the most cost-efficient manner. When required, and on the request of UNICEF, WFP will arrange international and in-country transportation and storage of UNICEF provided supplies, up to an agreed delivery point at UNICEF's expense.



- 6.3 Charges, related to the services of one organization to another, as implied in the previous paragraph, will consist of the direct cost of these services, plus a surcharge for overhead costs. The surcharge will be related to the service charges according to the established surcharge rate of each organization and not to the value of the transported goods.
- 6.4 There will be regular contacts and exchanges of information between the transport sections of WFP and UNICEF at the HQ/country level, with a view to identifying opportunities for savings in international freight costs through combined shipments.

7. COORDINATION

- 7.1 Each organization shall keep the other informed of developments in its emergency response and will ensure that there is a regular exchange of information, including exchanges on policies and guidelines, meetings between the two organizations in the field and regular communication between headquarters locations.
- 7.2 In complex emergencies, the two organizations agree to cooperate fully within the broader framework of inter-agency agreements and decisions relevant to in-country coordination, advocacy and resource mobilization.

8. STOCK PREPOSITIONING

- 8.1 UNICEF and WFP will collaborate in the use of their respective emergency stockpile facilities. Greater awareness and use of the UNICEF facilities in Copenhagen will be encouraged. The WFP stock of high nutritional value food in Italy may be drawn upon on short notice when required and the WFP non-food stocks in Nairobi will also be at the disposal of joint relief operations when so agreed by both organizations.

9. FUNDS FOR EMERGENCY/REHABILITATION RESPONSE

- 9.1 Each organization will ensure that the other is consulted in the formulation of appeals to donors either as part of the inter-agency consolidated appeal process, or as special appeals generated by one of the organizations.
- 9.2 WFP and UNICEF will urge donors to pledge commodities and cash for all general food requirements and related costs (as specified in 5.2.2 above) under this MOU through WFP.
- 9.3 UNICEF and WFP will urge donors to pledge commodities and cash for all other requirements pertaining to the responsibility of UNICEF (as specified in 5.2.3) under this MOU through UNICEF.

10. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY

- 10.1 WFP and UNICEF will collaborate in public information activities to promote awareness of the needs of beneficiaries, the understanding of each organization's role, and support for the work of each organization to address these needs. In situations where they work together, WFP and UNICEF will each acknowledge the role of the other to both the media



and the general public in order to ensure the common goal of donor and host government support. At the field level, there should be adequate visibility for each organization.

11. JOINT STAFF TRAINING

- 11.1 The effective implementation of collaborative activities at the recipient country level will be determined by the management and technical capability of the field staff of each organization.
- 11.2 When appropriate, UNICEF and WFP will invite their respective staff to participate in each others' emergency training sessions. Other organizations involved in similar activities, will be encouraged to include the terms of this MOU in their emergency-related staff training.

12. OPERATIONAL RESEARCH TO IMPROVE PROGRAMME EFFECTIVENESS

- 12.1 WFP and UNICEF will seek opportunities to work together to develop innovative ways to maximize the effectiveness of their support in meeting emergency needs. Priority areas for such work include: effectiveness of selective feeding programmes vs alternative approaches, mechanisms for targeting food to individuals in families, improved assessment methodologies, methods for the local fortification and processing of food aid commodities.

13. PERIODIC REVIEW OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

- 13.1 UNICEF and WFP will meet periodically, and no less than once annually, to review this joint Memorandum of Understanding, to assess its application and impact on collaboration and to revise it as appropriate.

(signed)
Catherine Bertini
Executive Director
WFP

(signed)
Carol Bellamy
Executive Director
UNICEF

New York, 3 February 1998

