UCBMUN XXI

FAO 2020:
Balancing Aid, Energy, and Security

Head Chair: Austin Smith

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Chair Welcome Letter

Delegates,

My name is Austin Smith and it is my pleasure to be your chair for UCBMUN XXI. I am excited to head one of the most important agencies in the United Nations: the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). This year's committee is one that finds itself on the crossroads of prosperity and poverty. It will push delegates to internalize the issues at hand and come up with innovative, unique, and pragmatic solutions. I come into this committee with high expectations, given the magnitude of these issues, and I encourage delegates to think critically, openly, and rationally about the problems at hand.

As for me, I am a second year intending to major in Political Science with a concentration in Comparative Politics and History. Born and raised in Southern California, I hail from the warm and sunny city of Huntington Beach. This is my sixth year in MUN and my second year serving as a dias member. Additionally, I am serving my second term as IRC representative of UCBMUN. Outside of MUN, I assist my high school in Speech and Debate activities and coach a boy & girls' basketball team in the summer. In my spare time, I religiously follow basketball, baseball, and football (I am a passionate Lakers, Angels, and Chargers fan who yes, knows it is a terrible time to be a fan of these teams), read political and historical books, and watch political documentaries. I enjoy traveling, working out, meeting new people, debating, and learning new things.

I am excited to meet all of you in committee and I look forward to a fun and enjoyable conference. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me.

Warm regards,

Austin Smith, Head Chair

Topic 1: Food and Energy Security

Overview

Food Security:

The most commonly accepted definition of food security came from the 1996 World Summit on Food security where member nations came to the conclusion that "food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (FAO 1996). From this definition, there are four main components to food security - availability, access, utilization, and stability. Food availability looks at the amount of food obtainable and accessible in a given region. In order to quantify food availability, applicable organizations look at food production, stock levels and net trade to determine the amount of food available in a country. Food access considers the economic and physical limitations prohibiting people from getting food. To measure food access, organizations delve into individual incomes, access to welfare, market prices, spatial constraints accessing food, and government expenditures towards food. Food utilization looks at whether or not people are consuming sufficient energy and nutrient intake. In essence, food utilization is trying to determine the nutritional status of each individual. To evaluate food utilization, organizations look at good care and feeding practices, food preparation, and diversity of the diet and intra-household distribution of food. Food stability considers access to food on a periodic basis. Adverse weather conditions, political instability, or economic factors such as unemployment and rising food prices may have a negative impact on the food security status of each person (FAO 2008).

Food Insecurity:

Though there is lower consensus on the definition of food insecurity, two apt definitions have developed. Firstly, food insecurity "exists whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain." Similarly, another concise and accepted definition of food insecurity comes from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): according to them, food insecurity is "a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food." From these definitions, food security analysts have defined two types of food insecurity: chronic food insecurity and transitory food insecurity. Chronic food insecurity occurs when people aren't able to make their minimum nutritional requirement over a

persistent or long term basis. Chronic food insecurity is the result of a lack of access to financial resources, to job opportunities, inadequate welfare, lack of access to welfare, lack of access to education, lack of access to financial institutions, and government turmoil. According to the FAO, Chronic food insecurity can be overcome with development policies such as providing more access to food, water, employment assistance, education, and healthcare. Conversely, transitory food insecurity is a sudden or temporary drop in the ability to access food and nutritionally necessities. Transitory food insecurity comes from year to year variations in food production, food prices, household incomes, and the world economy. According to the FAO, transitory food insecurity can be overcome by creating institutions to manage fluctuations in the economy and by creating safety net programs to help in times of distress (FAO 2008).

The Food Crisis:

A History of Food Regimes:

For a large portion of human history, humans didn't travel far to find food; humans generally grew, hunted, or scavenged to fill their stomachs. In rare instances in our early documented history, humans did orchestrate long distance food exchanges though. For instance, Islamic farmers carried sugar to the Mediterranean around 600AD, and the Spanish, along with other European powers like the English, brought it to the new world, establishing plantation complexes that formed a long-distance food system. Besides these recognizable yet uncommon instances of food systems sprouting up, it wasn't until the early modern period (late 15th to late 18th century) that distinctive and complex food systems or food regimes became prominent. These food regimes, as defined by Professor McMichael of Cornell University, are rule-governed structures of production and consumption of food on a world scale and they set the foundation for understanding the origins of the current food crisis (McMichael). The early modern period saw the rise of the mercantile system where many 'exotic' foods were shipped from European colonies to Europe. This system was dismantled in the mid-19th century giving rise to the first global food regime resulting from settler colonialism.

Global Food Regimes:

To be clear, "regime" is not referring to an authoritarian government; it is referring to an arrangement or system. And in essence, a food regime is an analytical lens on how the global economy was/is organized. Historically, there have been three global food regimes. The first global

food regime (1870s - 1930s) fueled the industrialization of Europe, as tropical and temperate settler colonies provided the necessary food and raw materials. Furthermore, white settler colonies like the US and Canada emerged producing food for the working class in Europe. The second global food regime (1950s - 1970s) was characterized as the global spread of industrial agriculture form the developed world to the developing world through the Green Revolution. The development of industrial Agriculture in the Global South (developing countries) destroyed peasant agriculture, reduced the power of unions, and increased the power of large corporations. The consolidation of peasant farm lands pushed peasants more and more out into the margins, forcing them to endure constant exploitation and a lower quality of life. As a result, peasant movements across the globe grew and flourished trying to fight against corporate consolidation and unfair labor practices. Most notably, in Pakistan in 1969, a mass movement of students, workers, and peasants forced the president, Mohammad Ayub Khan, to resign. In general, peasant movements during the second global food regime fought for broad-based land redistribution, production credit, fair markets, and the right to dignified rural livelihoods. The third food regime, commonly referred to as the corporate food regime, emerged out of economic shocks in the 1970s and 1980s setting the foundation for neoliberal capitalist expansion. During the 1980s, Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) broke down tariffs, dismantled national marketing boards and destroyed national agricultural research and extension systems in the Global South. SAPs were created through bilateral and international Free Trade Agreements. Moreover, the establishment of the World Trade Organization in 1995, and its agreement on agriculture, institutionalized the process of agricultural liberalization on a global scale by restricting the rights of sovereign states to regulate food and agriculture. The current corporate food regime is characterized by extreme corporate control and market consolidation, along with a strong opposition to peasant movements and an overuse of natural resources (Shattuck and Gimenez 2011).

Current Food Crisis:

The 2007-2008 food crisis spread throughout the news, spreading fears about the inability to feed the planet. The FAO reported a 45% increase in food prices in just 9 months. At the height of the crisis, Low Income Food Deficit Countries' import bills mounted to over $38 billion for basic cereal grains. Luckily though, the major corporations in the food system not only

survived, but thrived. In the last quarter of the crisis, bumper profits were 20% for ADM, 45% for Monsanto, 86% for Cargill, and 61% for General Foods.

Though the food crisis is ostensibly over due to the fact that food prices have leveled out, the world still faces worldwide food shortages. According to the World Food Programme (WFP), about 795 million people do not have enough food to live an active lifestyle (WFP 2016). This glaring fact is made more troubling by reports that underscore how this problem almost exclusively affects the developing world. In Asia, for example, two-thirds of the undernourished people in the world come from this region. In total, 98% of malnourished people live in developing countries (The Hunger Project 2016).

Throughout the international community, there is a growing consensus that global warming is at least in some part responsible for the present food shortages. Their argument is simple and concise: rising global temperatures from greenhouse emissions are disrupting the homeostasis of the environment causing more droughts, water shortages, and famines throughout the world. Relevant evidence helps to back up this argument. According to the FAO, 2015 maize production in Malawi declined 27% due to adverse weather conditions resulting from changing global temperatures (FAO 2015). They further add that regional harvests will likely to decline with increased climate calamities and sporadic global temperatures. Global warming will only continue to make Malawi and other affected countries worse off by disrupting established weather patterns causing less rainwater and depleting groundwater supplies. In fact, some 2.8 billion people will live in water scarce areas by 2025 (FAO 2015). By not having enough water to give to crops, farmers will have lower outputs and make less of a profit. Not only will farmers be pushed further into starvation and exploitation, lower outputs will increase prices causing less people to be able to meet their basic necessities and force more people into food insecurity.

Other academics, notably Eric Holt-Giménez, blame structural factors in the corporate food regime as reasons for the present food crisis. Their argument is also simple and concise: the current food regime is being monopolized by a series of transnational agribusiness interests that place their own economic concerns above the good of the public and the community. As Giménez puts it, “the development policies driven by developed nations such as the United States from the 1960s onwards have led to the destruction of food systems” (Shattuck and Gimenez 2011). He cites the Green Revolution, free trade

agreements, agricultural subsidies given to farmers in the developed world and the World Trade Organization as development policies that have done more harm than good to developing food systems. The Green Revolution has had particularly negative consequences for peasant farmers in the developing world. By proliferating the use of agricultural technology, the Green Revolution forced out peasant farmers who couldn't afford the new technology and in turn consolidated the market in the hands of a few transnational corporations who could afford the new technology. As Rosset, Collins and Moore Lappé put it: "the increase in production which was at the center of the green revolution was not enough to relieve hunger because it does not alter the concentration of economic power, access to land or purchasing power... the number of people who are hungry can be reduced only by redistributing purchasing power and resources among those who are malnourished... if the poor [farmers] have no money to buy food, increased production will solve nothing" (Vivas 2010). Like the Green Revolution, other policies did not decrease the concentration of economic power; they increased the concentration of economic power. By doing this, peasants were/are forced to work longer hours for lower wages increasing stress, lowering their quality of life, and increasing food insecurity for him/her and his/her family.

Though both rationales for the current crisis are compelling, they are still contested in circles throughout the world. For instance, in the United States, about half of the population doesn't believe in climate change and a good amount of conservative politicians believe it is a myth. Similarly, many transnational organizations and corporations like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Walmart vehemently contest and deny structural causes leading to the present food crisis. In spite of a sizable minority who claim the food crisis is inevitable, there are four camps that provide ways of conceptualizing and solving the present food crisis.

Food Enterprise - Neoliberal

One of main trends within the corporate food regime is the food enterprise trend. Food enterprise is grounded in the intellectual tradition of economic liberalism, driven by large agribusiness and managed by large institutions such as the World Trade Organization and the International Monetary Fund. The neoliberal trend accepts the status quo corporate food regime and doesn't think changes should be made. In fact, this trend believes that the food crisis will be solved by continuing the use of neoliberal policies. The food

enterprise trend has its power base rooted in the ruling, affluent classes like in developed governments, transnational corporations, and big philanthropy. According Gimenez and Shattuck, “the food enterprise discourse advocates expanding global markets and increasing output through corporate-led technological innovation, and pushing peasant producers out of agriculture to make way for more efficient ‘entrepreneurial’ farmers.” Not only this, the neoliberal model is based on overproduction, a faith in the continual expansion of global markets, and a strong acceptance of philanthropy. In sum, the neoliberal trend rejects the methods of solving the food crisis by the public sector and civil society and endorses methods used by the business sector.

Food Security - Reformist

The other main trend within the corporate food regime is the food security trend. Food security is based on wants to reduce the environmental and social externalities of transnational corporations. Like the neoliberal trend, the reformist trend has power rooted in developed governments, transnational corporations, and large philanthropic organizations. Unlike the neoliberal trend, Reformists advocate for basic reforms to the current food regime, for example through an increase of social safety nets, consumer-driven niche markets, and voluntary, corporate responsibility mechanisms. Reformists’ advocacy and positions hope to alter industrial behaviors through consumer choice and the power of persuasion. The reformist trend is similar to the neoliberal trend in that it relies on the same documents as its counterpart, but are different because reformists want to address sustainability, poor equity, investment in agricultural development, and advocate the establishment of safety nets.

Food Justice - Progressive

The food justice trend is a global food movement that advocates for the right to food and food justice to marginalized groups. They call for alternatives to the agri food industry and alternative political frameworks. Currently, it is the largest grassroots expression of the food movement. The progressive movement hopes for higher representation from urban agriculture. Moreover, the focus on mobilizing local communities to solve local problems constitutes both a strength and a weakness of progressive food justice movements. On the one hand, it energizes communities and improves innovations, but on the flip side, their models have done little to challenge the corporate food regime. This trend is quite common in the United States

and Canada. For instance, The emergence of dozens of Food Policy Councils throughout the US and Canada reflect increasing local resistance to the corporate food regime and growing grassroots support for the progressive movements.

Food Sovereignty -

According to Gimenez and Shattuck, "the Radical trend also calls for food systems change on the basis of rights, but focuses much more on entitlements, structural reforms to markets and property regimes, and class-based, redistributive demands for land, water and resources, as captured in the notion of food sovereignty, a concept advanced by Via Campesina, the global peasant, fisher, pastoralist Federation." So essentially, while the Radical trend, like the progressive trend, advocates for food justice for marginalized groups, it is also calls for structural changes to food and agriculture. Additionally, the Radical discourse is focused around this concept called food sovereignty, which basically means that communities can determine and establish their own food and agriculture. The Radical discourse is focused on liberating groups from the food they are forced to consume currently and allowing them to define to their own food.

The organization most commonly associated with the radical trend is Via Campesina. Via Campesina originally coined the term food sovereignty at the 1996 World Food Summit. From 1996, countless other peasant farmers, civil society organizations, and NGOs have helped to raise up the issue of food sovereignty. Furthermore, the issue of food sovereignty has been brought up in multiple constitutions created in the twenty-first century such as Venezuela in 2008 and Nepal in 2007.

In terms of the food crisis, the Radical trend affirms the need for food sovereignty and also the need for governments to strengthen food production and make the food system more equitable (Shattuck and Gimenez 2011).

Energy Security:

Bioenergy:

Bioenergy can be used to describe any energy source from biological matter including plant materials and animal waste (UC Davis 2015). The term biofuel and bioenergy come up quite often together. Often, the two terms are used interchangeably, though academic journals are likely to distinguish between the two. Biofuel is commonly used to describe liquid bioenergy fuels such as biodiesel and bioethanol. Biodiesel is fuel source coming from vegetable oil or animal fats and bioethanol refers to ethanol produced from

plants such as corn. For the purposes of this committee, the two terms will be used interchangeably.

Generally speaking, there are three main criticisms of bioenergy. First, critics claim that using plants for energy puts extra pressure on land use causing increased deforestation and land degradation. Second, biofuels have done more environmental harm to the planet than good. For example, according to the Guardian, "making ethanol from corn can generate large quantities of greenhouse gases through the use of tractors, fertilizers and processing plants. Similarly, biodiesel made from palm oil can have a massive carbon footprint – as well as serious negative consequences for biodiversity – if virgin rainforest is cleared to make way for the palm oil plantations" (Guardian 2011). Third, critics claim that using plants for energy takes away vital food that could be used to feed starving populations. Not only this, by reducing the amount of food available, the use of bioenergy raises food prices and inhibits more people from meeting their basic necessities. In sum, critics claim that biofuels degrade the land, emit more greenhouse gases, and force more people to starve.

In general, supporters of bioenergy point to four areas to elucidate its benefits. First, in spite of contested evidence, supporters claim that biofuels reduce greenhouse emissions. Some supporters support the notion that even though they don't reduce greenhouse emissions overall, they emit lower greenhouse gases relative to fossil fuels. Second, bioenergy helps to stimulate economic development and employment opportunities. The rapid production of biofuels is providing more opportunities expansion and increased employment. Third, supporters say that biofuels are a cost saving measure compared to fossil fuels. In the right situation, they are be dramatically less expensive than fossil fuels. Fourth, supporters claim there are local and social benefits to investing in bioenergy. For example, by allowing the proliferation of bioenergy farms in rural areas, the money made by employees can help to stimulate economic development and revitalize local areas. Moreover, it reduces the energy bill for local households allowing them to have more money to spend in the local economy.

History of Biofuels:

During the early stages of the industrial revolution, biofuels powered the first lamps and powered the first internal combustion engines. Additionally, the first cars were made to function on bioenergy, rather than fossil fuels. The first internal combustion engine created in 1826 in the

United States was designed to run on a blend of ethanol and turpentine. The shift from biofuels to fossil fuels such as gasoline began for many products in the 1860s. For instance, in the 1860s oil lamps switched from running on biofuels to running on petroleum products. For other products, the shift began in the early 20th century. For example, cars went from running on biofuels to running on fossil fuels in the early 20th century (Webb).

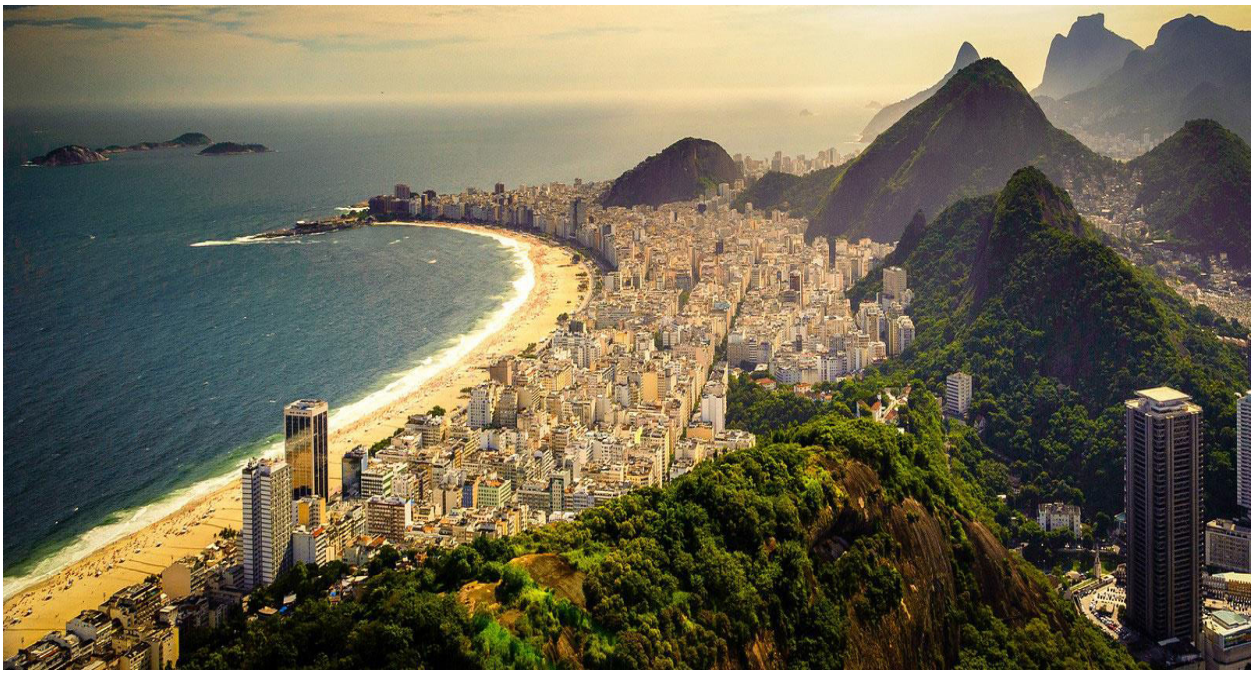
During the late 19th and early 20th century, biofuels were used less, but were still often used. In fact, they were often used blended with petroleum products for fuel and spark ignition engines. This underscores how even when there wasn't a shortage of fossil fuels, biofuels were still considered valuable and were kept in use.

Starting with WWI, biofuels started to become more popular. The Great War caused oil shortages forcing perspective countries to look for other fuel sources to fight the war. Without hesitation, world leaders choose ethanol, a relatively cheap fuel source that could be mixed with gasoline. After the war, biofuel usage went down setting the way for fossil fuels to regain their lead as the number one fuel source in the world. The preeminent status of fossil fuels began to change due to several fossil fuel crises starting in the 1970s. In 1973, OAPEC oil embargo drastically raised oil prices forcing countries such as the United States to begin more research into biofuels. Furthermore, the 1979 Oil Crisis due to the Iranian Revolution again raised oil prices and prompted renewed interest in bioenergy. In 1990, the price shocks due to the Gulf War was another instance that made countries feel unsafe about continuing to use fossils. As a result of these three events, countries such as Brazil began large scale production of biofuels (Kolb 2014).

Brazil - Case Study:

Around 500 years ago, when the Portuguese controlled Brazil, they introduced sugarcane into the region. Today, sugarcane is an essential part of the Brazilian economy. Sugarcane is valuable to the Brazilian economy because it can be transformed into ethanol, allowing it to be a crucial transportation fuel. Sugarcane ethanol is a renewable fuel source that is particularly important for the Brazilian economy because Brazil is the largest sugarcane ethanol producer in the world. In Brazil, no light vehicle runs on pure gasoline. All vehicles in Brazil run on some blend of ethanol and gasoline. This huge ethanol market has direct effects on the people living in Brazil. The sugarcane sector currently employs over 70,000 sugarcane farmers and has an annual economic output

of about $50 billion. As a result, the sugarcane sector provides 1.34 million direct jobs and accounts for 16 percent of the domestic supply energy. Currently though, Brazil is a crossroads with its sugarcane sector. Dwindling investment from the Brazilian government is starting to take its toile. Because of the current issues surrounding the sugarcane industry, it is important to look to the past in order to assess the best way forward for this industry.



Since the beginning, ethanol has helped to fuel transportation in Brazil. In 1903, Brazil's National Congress recommended the development of infrastructure to produce automotive ethanol. In 1931, Brazil took an important step by implementing a compulsory blend of at least 5% sugarcane ethanol in gasoline. The move had two goals. First, the Brazilian government tried to lessen dependence on petroleum based fuels. Second, Brazil hoped to take advantage of excess production in the sugar industry. Over the next forty years, there were marginal gains in ethanol usage but real gains started happening due to oil shocks. In 1973, an oil shock badly affected brazil; it spiked inflation and raised their foreign debt. In an effort to protect against future oil shocks, Brazil began to more substantially reduce its dependency on foreign oil by stimulating ethanol production. Benefiting from government support, ethanol production increased from 580 million liters in 1975 to 3.676 billion liters in 1979. In 1979, with the oil crisis intensifying, the ethanol program gained even more leverage and ethanol

played an increasingly important role as a transportation fuel. At that time, imported oil was a large burden to the national economy, accounting for 32 percent of all Brazilian imports. Because of this, the Brazilian government oversaw and implemented new organizations to increase ethanol production. The Brazilian government hoped to reach 10.7 billion liters of Ethanol production by 1985, but productive organizations like the National Alcohol Council and the National Executive Commission for Alcohol helped exceed this mark by 8%. After 1985, oil prices leveled out and sugar prices began to rise, causing the Brazilian government to reduce investment into the ethanol sector. Because of reduced investment, ethanol production plummeted causing a reduced supply and causing the government to look to other sources such as gasoline for fuel. This lack of investment was particularly noticed in the car industry. Sales of ethanol-based vehicles represented 11.4% of new car sales in 1990, constituting a 73.6% drop off in car sales compared since 1985. For the car industry, this was the first of more than a decade of low car sales for ethanol based vehicles. This decline began to change in 2003 with the advent of the flex-fuel engine in the Brazilian market. The new line of cars with flex-fuel engines quickly won customer acclaim causing a resurgence in ethanol based vehicles. This promising trend didn't last long as the government lowered the price of gasoline, making gasoline more competitive and ethanol less competitive. Taxes have predominantly kept the prices of gasoline high, but the government has artificially lowered taxes in recent years. For instance, in 2012, the main Federal tax on gasoline was set to zero. The Brazilian government has ostensibly tried to increased taxes in the last three years. In 2015, the Brazilian government announced two new taxes on gasoline that went effect in February of 2015. Though this was a step in the right direction according to the Ethanol industry, the taxes were marginal at best. Consequently, in 2016, the sugar and ethanol industry requested a more substantial tax on gasoline. Their plea has not led to any substantial results. As of June 27, 2016, the Brazilian government has no plans of raising taxes on gasoline.

It's worth noting that ethanol isn't the only sugar based fuel in Brazil. Renewable electricity in Brazil comes from the combustion of bagasse, the excess plant material left over from sugar extraction. Currently, this renewable form of electricity generates 7.2% of the nation's electricity (Goldemberg 2014).

By every measure, the ethanol sector in Brazil has grown immensely. It has come a long way since being introduced by

the Portuguese 500 years ago and still has room to grow. The use of sugarcane for fuel can still grow by having more favorable public policy, precision agriculture, and increased efficiency. In spite of the potential for ethanol and bagasse to make Brazil energy secure, critics wonder about the looming issue of food insecurity in the region.

Though Brazil has implemented a number of development programs like Bolsa Familia, there is still 35% of the population that lives on less than 2 dollars a day. Not only this, but in rural areas, the percentage of the population living on less than 2 dollars increases to 51%, this means that Brazil has 18 million rural citizens living at or below subsistence (Food Security Portal 2012). With this huge inequality in Brazil, it is rational to question investments towards food for fuel.

Before finishing, there are a few guiding questions that delegates should consider when looking at the Brazil situation: 1) Is it ethical for the Brazilian government to use potential food for fuel when such a large percentage of the population goes hungry? 2) Would it be more harmful or more beneficial for the Brazilian government to use tax dollars towards ethanol instead of towards poverty reduction programs? 3) Can ethanol investment be a part of the solution for eradicating malnutrition and poverty in Brazil?

Contemporary Issues:

Debate around the definition of food security

Food security addresses one of humankind's most basic and fundamental needs - access to a nutritious and adequate diet. With almost a billion-people malnourished in the world, it is pivotal to debate whether or not the current definition addresses the needs of the disadvantaged. Furthermore, there are over 200 definitions of food security in the archive and there have also been shifts in thinking since the 1996 definition.

<u>Redefine Food Security back to its 1996 definition:</u>

The food security definition addresses people's risk of not having access to needed food. It goes beyond and allows for four components - availability, access, utilization, and stability - which permit for a concise, yet complex definition. In essence, the definition allows policy makers to compartmentalize issues of food insecurity and tackle them. The definition helps to create benchmarks for would be policy makers in order to see if their policies are working or not.

<u>A new definition of food security altogether:</u>

While the current definition of food security addresses some important problems, it misses out on a number of essential issues. The environmentalists and food security movement both have notable objections. The environmentalists claim that the current definition doesn't address how our food is produced. The food sovereignty movement claims that it fails to address issues of power, control, distribution and equity. Another notable objection that doesn't come from either the environmentalists or from the food sovereignty movement says that the current definition misses out on dimensions of living in fear of going hungry.

Moving beyond food security thinking:

Proponents of this definition believe the term food security is inadequate. The term is linked to a regional or national way of thinking that is insufficient to meet the challenges we face as a world. Scholars and academics who are in this camp are fundamentally saying that conceptualizing food security as it is is not enough to ensure a well fed world - we must think beyond the label of food security. Geoff Tansey points out four challenges that he believes the label food security will inhibit humankind from solving. First, by thinking in a nationalistic sense, it has and will continue to be extraordinarily difficult to have all countries abide by a plan that helps to curb climate destabilization. Historically, certain countries have chosen fuels such as fossil fuels based on financial gain, instead of thinking of the environmental costs. Second, the poor continue to get poorer and, while the rich continue to get richer: in the past decade, this troubling trend has only gotten worse. According to Tansey, continuing to think in a nationalistic approach will only continue to foster policies that benefit the wealthy at the expense of the impoverished. Third, thinking in terms of food security is inadequate to deal with competition over resources such as land, water, and food. The current nationalistic way of thinking will only further degrade our current resources and impede a well fed world. Fourth, using so much human ingenuity for war and militarization is wasteful and hurts solve the above challenges. Society should think beyond the nationalistic sense in order to address the waste of resources towards militarization (Tansey 2013).

Update 1:

CFS Approves a New Definition of Food Security

Douglas Martin

American Correspondent, WSJ

16 October, 2018

History has been made in the realm of food and agriculture. For the first time in

22 years, there is a new definition of food security. At its meeting in Rome, the CFS Committee considered and agreed on a new definition of food security:

"Food and nutrition security exists when all people at all times have physical social and economic access to food which is safe and consumed in sufficient quantity and quality to meet their dietary needs and food preferences and is supported by an environment of adequate sanitation health services, and care, allowing for a healthy and active life."

This was the same definition of food security that was considered by the UN Committee on Food Security but was not agreed to in 2012.

While there is now a new definition, many member nations are in disagreement over this definition. Many member nations want to take this issue to the FAO and debate the particulars of the new definition. Only time will tell if the FAO will move to a new food security definition all together, move back to the old definition, keep the current definition, or create a hybrid definition between the past and current definition of food security.

Fighting the Food Crisis:

Food Prices:

While food prices declined in previous decades, they increased exponentially since 2004.The FAO index of food prices rose by 9% in 2006, 23% in 2007 and surged by 54% in 2008 (GRIDA 2014). From 2009 to 2015 though, there was a decline in food prices. Notably, in 2014, food prices fell 28.5% marking its lowest since 2009. In spite of this promising period, prices are still rising and a lot higher than in 2004. Moreover, food prices posted their biggest monthly rise in over four years in June 2016. This occurred as a result of rising sugar prices and rising prices for edible foods such as meat, dairy, and cereal. Rising food prices have political implications (Dey 2015). In 2008, higher prices for wheat and rice sparked riots in Egypt and Haiti. Egypt and Haiti were just two of thirty countries that erupted in food riots due to rising food prices in 2008. Clearly, continued rising food prices have the potential to spark more riots and political unrest throughout the world.

Natural Disasters

Climate calamities such as droughts, earthquakes, floods, and hurricanes have a strong impact on people and infrastructure. According to the FAO, "between 2003 and 2013, natural hazards and disasters in developing countries affected more than 1.9 billion people and caused over USD 494 billion in estimated damage." Not only do natural disasters destroy lives and

infrastructure, but natural disasters also reduce the production of crops and livestock. The FAO reports that between 2003 and 2013, there was 70 billion dollars in crop and livestock production losses in 67 developing countries due to natural hazards and disasters (FAO 2015). The persistence of natural disasters only figures to get worse as climate change continues to alter the landscape of the world. With the homeostasis of the planet being altered, it will take substantial change to fix the current climate crisis.

Disease:

Diseases are a contributing factor to food shortages. For example, the 2014 Ebola Crisis put pressure on food supplies in West Africa as NGOs and other organizations were more hesitant to deliver to affected areas. Furthermore, the HIV/AIDs epidemic in South Africa contributed to food shortages by impeding farmers from working, killing farmers, and forcing farmers off their land as they fell into debt due to medical bills. Though the UN has made positive steps to combat disease like urging greater government action against a particular disease, providing medicines to combat a disease, or providing personal to effectively treat a disease, there needs to be more comprehensive action to prevent the spread of disease to new areas and effectively treat those affected.

Food Monopolies:

The food and agricultural industry is controlled by a few large corporations. In 2011 four retailers controlled 85% of the German national food market, and three retailers controlled 90% of the food market in Portugal. Additionally, in 2009, five retailers controlled 70% of the market in Spain (Chandrasekaran 2015). This is problematic because the lack of competition allows corporations to reduce the wages of farmworkers in order to increase their profits. Lower wages force more workers into poverty and food insecurity. Because these companies have unchecked power, they are able to shape the food system in order to make the highest profits. Besides increased food insecurity, unchecked power has meant more processed foods and more ecologically damaging farming practices. The UN has been slow to act on resolutions against corporate control, so it is crucial for member nations in the FAO to take a stand against this domination.

Divisiveness between the food movements:

The four food movements - neoliberal, reformist, progressive, and radical - have disagreements between them. The neoliberal and reformist are

relatively similar as are the progressive and radical, but these two differing camps are strongly divided. With this division, it is difficult to pull resources together in order to have a united front against the food crisis. Because of that, it is imperative for the FAO to encourage dialogue between these differing camps in order to make better use of resources.

Main institutions:

Neoliberal: World Bank, IMF, USDA, USAID, GAFSP, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Cargill, Monsanto, Tyson, and Walmart

Reformist: Oxfam - America, CARE, Fair Trade, Slow Food, most food banks and food aid programs

Progressive: Alternative Fair Trade and many Slow food chapters, many youth food and justice movements, coalition of Immokalee Workers and other farmworker and labor organizations

Radical: Via Campesina and other agrarian-based farmers' movements, World March of Women (Shattuck and Gimenez 2011).

Update 2:

World food prices post biggest annual rise in 15 years: FAO

By Austen Rich Smith, Reuters Correspondent

19 January, 2019

World food prices posted their biggest yearly rise in fifteen years, pushed up by strengthening sugar prices and increases for most other edible commodities, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations said on Wednesday.

An index of 55 food commodities tracked by the Food and Agriculture Organization gained for a sixth month to 314.7 points, a record high. Sugar and meat prices also advanced to new records.

Sugar climbed for the third year in a row and Meat climbed for its fourth year in a row.

The FAO's forecast for 10 years of unstable prices, released on Monday, reinforced the view that agricultural commodities are entering an era of intense volatility unleashed by price spikes and supply tensions.

Food vs. Fuel

The United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals place a high priority on food and energy security. Because of this, it is critical to delve in and see if bioenergy can contribute to food and energy security.

Biofuels and Food Security:

The degree to which biofuel production affects food production depends on a number of factors such as natural resource availability, choice of feedstocks, the relative efficiencies of different feedstocks, and technologies adopted. Concern over whether biofuel production will inhibit our ability to feed the planet has grown more intense as biofuel production has increased. In less than one decade, world biofuel production has increased five times, from less than 20 billion liters in 2001 to 100 billion liters in 2011 (FAO 2014). Because of the complexity of this issue, it is important to go region by region or even country by country to assess the impact of biofuel production on food security.

Biofuels and Energy Security:

Energy security, the ability for a nation to secure sufficient, affordable and consistent energy supplies for its domestic, industrial, transport and military requirements, is an issue that has gained prominence with the recent oil crises and

the growing consensus that fossil fuels are unsustainable. Biofuels present a viable option to get to energy security. In spite of the optimism surrounding it, there are a number of factors such as economic impediments, conflict, resource availability, and technological innovation that cloud whether or not biofuel can make member nations or even the world energy secure. When gaging this topic, it is important to look at a few factors. First, Delegates should look at what technologies have allowed biofuel production to increase drastically and then consider if these technologies can be further utilized in other regions. Second, Delegates should research other technologies and innovations in biofuels that can be utilized on a large scale for biofuel production. Third, it is critical to look at the economic and social hindrances stopping countries from using biofuels.

Biofuels and the Environment:

The environmental impacts of biofuels are hotly contested. In terms of greenhouse gas emissions, deforestation, pollution, and biodegradation, there is academic literature that say biofuels help reduce these environmental problems whereas other studies say biofuels contribute to these environmental problems. For this issue, it will be crucial to look at who conducted the study and what their methodology was. Additionally, delegates should be mindful of the differences between biodiesel and ethanol and how each fuel affects the environment.

In early 2016, the UN did a study on second generation biofuels that deemed them a reality and a positive that developing nations should invest in. This study has been slammed by many environmental groups calling the study “inaccurate” and “misleading.” The harsh criticisms only further degrade the image of the United Nations in the minds of people: with this bad press, it is important that the FAO does more research and reaches a consensus on the effects of second generation biofuels.

Biofuels and Socioeconomic Development:

For many communities, growth in biofuels represents a new opportunity for employment and income. For other communities though, biofuels only fuel problems with the current food system. More and more, land and resources for biofuels are being concentrated on large-scale farming operations. This issue is contentious and has valid arguments on both sides. Delegates should look at this topic on a region by region basis in order to more accurately see biofuels effects on socioeconomic development.

Update 3:

India and China Follow the EU's lead on Biofuels

By Jack Dickson

17 November 2017

The European Union has been trying to push the development of second generation biofuels throughout the world and finally got the news they have been hoping for. The EU is a supporter of second generation biofuels because they believe they will help to curb greenhouse emissions in the coming years. The European Union has been trying to promote second generation biofuel development by establishing a 7% blending cap for first-generation biofuels and a 0.5% blending target for second-generation biofuels in 2020. After not convincing any countries, the EU can now count two countries, India and China, on board with their plan.

The support of China and India may have far reaching consequences. The budding superpowers have a lot of weight in their respective zones of influence and are sure to push member countries in the direction of second generation biofuels.

Now, the importance is one convincing the United States in favor of this plan. The support of the US would have a drastic impact on the application of second generation biofuels on a worldwide scale.

Topic #2: Food Aid

Food Aid Overview:

Food Aid Definition:

Food aid is the provision of food and related assistance to tackle hunger.

Types of Food Aid:

Generally speaking, there are three types of food aid: program food aid, relief food aid, and project food aid.

Program Food Aid:

Program food aid is aid supplied on a government to government basis. Rather than being distributed to specific beneficiary groups, it is sold on the market and may be provided as a grant or as a loan.

i. Monetization of in-kind food aid:

Monetization of in-kind food aid is a type of program food aid where food is grown in a donor country and is then shipped to a recipient country. So, for instance, if the United States grows corn in Iowa and then ships it to Burkina Faso, the United States would be the donor country and Burkina Faso would be the recipient country. Virtually all monetized aid is sold on local markets to generate revenue.

The United States is virtually the only country to have the monetization of food aid. The US sells food aid to recipient countries through concessional financing or through export credit guarantees. Though

concessional financing is occasionally used by other donor countries when providing aid, the US is the only country to make significant use of export credits. Export credits basically means extending loans to recipient countries so they can buy food aid from a donor country.

:

Relief, or emergency food aid is free aid provided to areas affected by crises such as war, natural disaster, or famine. Relief aid is generally administered by intergovernmental organizations, the World Food Program (WFP), and by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

The emergency response to Haiti after their catastrophic 7.0 mw earthquake in 2010 presents an example of multiple intersecting organizations working side by side to help provide relief food aid to an insecure region. In this instance, Intergovernmental organizations such as the EU and Union of South American Nations played a crucial role. The EU, for example, provided 122 million euros worth of support right after the crisis began. The EU's support was efficiently used by international NGOs such as CARE who used the money to fund responders and buy essential food. Additionally, the WFP provided over 200 staff members who helped expedite the relief effort and save more people from starvation (European Commission 2015).

Project Food Aid:

With this kind of aid, countries donate to support specific activities that can help develop a whole host of activities from agricultural development, economic development, and food security. Project food aid is mainly administered by NGOs and the WFP.

One example of project food aid is the Food Assistance for Assets Programme. Based within the WFP, this program helps meet the current and essential food needs of vulnerable people by having them build or boost assets that will benefit the whole community. As of 2016, Food Assistance for Assets has benefited more than 12.7 million people in 52 countries (WFP 2016).

History of food aid: Donors

Overview:

Food aid donations are increasingly given bilaterally by a handful of developed nations and multilaterally through the WFP. The US and EU lead the way accounting for more than 50% of donations, while Japan, Brazil, China, Canada, UN agencies, and Australia provide most of the remaining 50% of donations. The following section will provide a general history of the development of food

aid programs in donor countries and the WFP.

Bilateral Assistance:

USA:

For almost seven decades, the United States has been a leading donor of international food aid. Since 2006, the US has averaged 2.5 billion dollars of food aid per year. In total, between 2003 and 2012, the US spent $17.9 billion dollars on food aid. Though the US has played a large in international aid, their support has garnered support and criticism from both donor and recipient country.

Current US food aid programs have their origins in 1954 with Public Law 83-480, commonly referred to as P.L. 480, which has been amended and renamed the Food for Peace Act (FFPA). Originally, P.L. 480 had a dual purpose: it aimed to dump excess crops that had piled up from the USDA commodity price support program and wanted to address humanitarian crises, economic underdevelopment, and geopolitical instability in foreign countries. The focus though was on providing surplus agricultural crops to 'friendly' nations and less towards helping developing countries. Furthermore, P.L. 480 was only intended to be a short term solution to the food surplus and humanitarian issues (US Food aid and Security 2013).

During the 1960s, the US increasingly used food aid as a diplomatic tool to subvert communist insurrections. Under the Kennedy and Johnson system, donations of food supplies and commodities was used to force countries to modernize their agricultural system. At the time, the US felt traditional agricultural systems had a higher chance of communist revolution and these fears were made more obvious by China's revolution a decade earlier and Cuba's revolution in 1959. The US claimed that aid given during this period was also used to help spur economic development and create self-sufficiency. While these two goals may have resulted as a byproduct, the main use was as a diplomatic tool. For instance, as India was going through a major famine in 1965, the US only agreed to send food aid based on agreement by India that they would adopt Western-style agricultural practices and support Western style foreign policy examples.

Under the Carter Administration (1977-1981), US food policy had a greater emphasis on humanitarian issues. When Carter ran for election, he stressed human rights as a centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy. After elected, he applied his human rights emphasis to food aid: US food aid increasingly went to war torn and economic underdeveloped regions.

The Reagan administration (1981-1989) once more placed a greater priority on food aid as a diplomatic tool, though they did address some humanitarian issues. Food aid as a diplomatic tool was no more obvious than in Central America. For example, the Reagan Administration stopped all food aid to Nicaragua when they refused to abide by Western government practices. Additionally, the US increased food aid to Honduras and Costa Rica in order to gain their support against the Nicaraguan government at the time. On the other hand, the Reagan Administration made a point to help certain countries in need. For instance, The Food Security Act of 1985 authorized the donation of USDA commodities by the Secretary of Agriculture in order to provide food aid to countries in need. This piece of legislation helped to address food crises in Africa. It was particularly important with the Ethiopian food crisis.

During the 2000s, the Bush Administration pushed for 25 percent of Food for Peace resources to go towards local and regional purchase in the 2008 Farm bill: this ultimately failed, but set the foundation for more food aid to go towards LRP (Local Regional Procurement of food aid) plans. Overall, besides George W. Bush's work on trying to increase LRP programs, the Bush administration kept a similar policy as the Clinton Administration and the H.W. administration. This policy was to use food aid as means of dumping extra amounts of food and as a means to increase productivity for large scale farms (US Department of State 2016).

Currently, countries throughout the world take aim at the US food aid policy. For starters, under current law, US food aid must be purchased in the United States. US aid agencies, like USAID, are required to buy 100% of the food they distribute from the US, even when it's more inexpensive to buy it from other countries. Additionally, buying and selling food from the US takes four to six months to reach its destination. This is incredibly ineffective in emergencies like famines or earthquakes. This issue was particularly noticeable during the Haitian earthquake crisis, when badly timed US food aid led more people to die of starvation. Moreover, aid agencies are *required* to ship at least 50% of food aid using US flagged ships. Having to rely on these vessels is more time consuming and expensive than it would be to use a more inexpensive or efficient ship. In fact, it's estimated that only 51% of the $9.2 billion spent on food aid from 2003-2012 was spent on getting food to those who needed it most. The rest of the money was spent on shipping overseas, overhead, and markup for shipping regulations. Critics also point

out that the monetization of aid is a draconian policy. They say that selling donated food for cash undercuts farmers, destroys local markets, and prices families out of their basic necessities (Oxfam 2015).

In 2015, the Obama Administration proposed two major reforms to the food aid system. First, the administration called for as much as 25 percent of emergency food aid to be spent locally or using alternatives, such as food vouchers and cash transfers. Second, they called for the end of the monetization of aid. Though these solutions were lobbied by the administration, they didn't end up getting any of their reforms in for 2016. The Obama Administration is currently continuing to advocate for similar reforms in the 2017 Fiscal Year (FY) budget. They aim to have a $1.35 billion dollar increase in funding for emergency food aid and have up to 25 percent of emergency food aid be spent locally or used by food vouchers and cash transfers. As of now, there has not been a resolution to Obama's wants in terms of food aid (Board 2016).

EU:

The EU is the second largest donor of international food aid in the world, behind the US. The EU has been the largest donor since the 1970s and accounts for more than 50% of European food contributions. Though the EU and US combine to provide a substantial sum of food aid, the EU has a different policy in terms of how food aid is purchased and distributed (European Commission 2015).

The EU became a major actor in international food aid through the establishment of the European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Created in 1962, CAP is geared towards increasing agricultural productivity and food self-sufficiency. Through a combination of farm price supports and barriers to food imports, the CAP was able to generate enormous surpluses, especially with wheat and animal products. As a result, the EU became a major player in food aid in order to dump the excess food that had accumulated from CAP policies. Like the US, the EU said their formal reasoning for entering into food aid was to reduce the agricultural surplus that had developed, to pursue humanitarian concerns, and to pursue foreign policy interests.

The EU has been considered a progressive in terms of food aid because of their policy support of the local procurement of food aid. Starting in 1996, the EU officially adopted local and triangular purchases of food aid through a progressive increase in cash assistance. The policy was officially enacted when the EU adopted regulation 1292/96. In this year, the EU focused more food through nonfood interventions. As a result of this policy shift, a significant amount of EU food aid began to be procured in local countries. In 2004, 90% of EU food aid was procured in developing countries. As of today, they are the main leader pushing for more LRP programs throughout the world. They support LRP programs and triangular transactions because they reduce delivery lags, ensure that food aid is distributed is suited for local tastes and dietary habits, achieve great cost efficiency, and benefit developing country farmers (Barrett 2005).

In spite of positives with the EUs LRP policy, critics still have reservations. For instance, according to the Oakland Institute, LRP EU policy has still not been adopted by individual member states such as France and Italy, which still use in-kind food aid for 70% of all food aid distributed. Additionally, Member countries are calling the EU to push the US harder on switching from in-kind food aid to LRP food aid. Besides these qualms, the EU is credited for overhauling the programming and budgeting of its food aid (Mousseau 2005).

The EU has also strengthened its position on helping victims of humanitarian crises. Almost one third of the EU annual humanitarian aid budget is used to provide emergency food assistance, making the EU one of the largest donors of humanitarian food assistance in the world. Since 2010, the European Commission on Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) has been unveiling its new humanitarian food assistance policy which has supported

over 100 million people lacking access to sufficient amounts of nutritious, safe, and adequate food.

Japan:

Originally, Japan was a major recipient of food aid. After WW2, Japan relied on the US for food aid to help feed its population. After two decades of support, Japan emerged as a strong power and started to become a generous donor. They were one of the original signers of the 1967 Food Aid convention which was agreed to during the conclusion of the Kennedy Round (KR) of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Japanese food aid is often termed KR aid because of its origins with the Kennedy Round.

Japan's food aid program is considered unique in the international community. This is because most of Japan's food aid is oriented towards multilateral distribution. In fact, currently Japan provides most of its aid in cash to the WFP. The reason for multilateral distribution stems from the fact that Japan is a net importer of food. Because they aren't able to produce that much food as an aggregate, they choose to use UN agencies to grow and distribute the food desired.

Unlike the US, Japan provides its food aid as donations and does not sell the aid in local markets. Moreover, Japan is in support of LRP food aid as evidenced by their continued funding of the WFP, an agency in support of triangular transactions and local purchases.

Australia:

In the 1950s and early 1960s, Australia was the third largest food aid donor, behind the US and Canada. Their preeminent status slipped as the EU became a major player in 1967. In spite of this, Australia has remained a large donor of food aid. Unlike Japan, Australia has always shipped its surplus food, making very little use of local purchases and triangular transactions. Furthermore, the Australian government has never faced surplus disposal pressures, so its aid has mainly gone to humanitarian issues and countries in need (Barrett 2005).

Canada:

Beginning in 1951, the Canadian food program has been one of the largest food aid programs in the world. In fact, Canada was the second largest distributor of food aid in the world until the EU became a major player in 1967. Still, Canada remains a large donor of aid. Currently, they provided 6% of world food aid flows.

Unlike the US, all Canadian food has been provided via a grant through the Canadian International Development

Agency (CIDA) from the nation's domestic surplus, rather than as concessional sales. Because of this, food aid has never played a major role in agricultural exports. Historically, food aid has almost always comprised less than 4% of total grain exports each year.

Like the US though, the Canadians make very little use of triangular transactions and local purchases. This is very unique among international donors because most food aid has flowed through multilateral channels, primarily WTF and occasionally NGOs. Currently, Canadian donations are almost exclusively in kind donations. Canada's lack of funding towards LRP programs stems from Canadian agricultural and foreign policy interests that have been reluctant to lose the good will and visibility that comes from distributing food aid clearly marked as originating in Canada (Barrett 2005).

Brazil:

Brazil has developed into a generous food aid policy over the years after coming from food crises and food insecurity. Decades ago, Brazil had a young and rapidly growing population that was unsustainable due to food insecurity; thanks in part to donations from the west and fiscally smart government policies, Brazil has been able to become the largest donor of food aid in South America.

Brazil has made headlines for defying what it means to be a developing country. For instance, in 1996, Brazil became the first developing country to begin large scale production and distribution of antiviral drugs. Additionally, Brazil implemented a very successful anti-poverty program known as Bolsa Familia. Bolsa Familia is a conditional cash transfer program where poor families are given funds for investing in their children's health and education. As a consequence of this program, attendance in school among impoverished boys and girls rose 4%. Moreover, in the realm of food aid, they made headlines in 2008 for being the first South American countries to make substantial contributions to the WFP when they provided 1 million dollars in donations. They followed this up by providing 16 million dollars in 2009, 13 million dollars in 2010, and 27 million dollars in 2011. The donations provided have gone towards LRP programs predominantly in Africa. Overall, Brazil is developing country that has acted more like a powerful industrialized nations. With continued growth in agriculture, technology, education, and health, Brazil projects to become even more powerful and have more agency in organizations like the WFP (Barrett).

China**:**

In spite of being a developing country with high rates of food insecurity in rural areas, China has emerged as a large and generous donor of food aid. China has notably sent large amounts of emergency aid, adopted several measures to address food security, and invested a lot of commodities and other resources into Africa.

China has sent emergency aid to another of countries. Most notably, in 2006, China rose to be the third largest donor of food aid when their annual donations rose 260% (Ang). China made donations to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with small quantities donated to Liberia, Guinea Bissau, Sri Lanka and a dozen other countries. Besides these nations, China has made substantial food aid donations to Middle Eastern nations such as Afghanistan (Spegele). China has also made addressing food security a prominent issue in their food aid policy. For example, at the UN High-Level Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals in 2010, China pledged to create thirty demonstration centers for agricultural technologies in other developing countries, dispatch 3,000 agricultural experts and technicians to these thirty nations, and invite 5,000 agricultural personnel from these countries to China for developmental training. Moreover, China has made investment in Africa a high priority. From 2000 to 2011, China donated seventy five billion dollars' worth of unrecorded developmental assistance to fifty African countries (Food Policy Research). In sum, China is an emerging nation that is becoming a global powerhouse in international food aid donations.

Multilateral Assistance:

World Food Programme (WFP)

Multilateral assistance has grown rapidly in the last half century as a result of crises like the World Food Crisis of 1973-1974. The agency central towards multilateral efforts to prevent famine is the WFP. Since the World Food Conference in the 1974, the WFP has been a central part of combating food insecurity and famine.

WFP was established by two resolutions created in the UN energy assembly and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) in 1961. From this point, the WFP spent three years as an experimental agency before becoming a permanent organization in 1965. Starting in the mid-1970s, the WFP gained prominence as most multilateral aid was distributed by them. Through the 80s, 90s, 00s, and up till today, the WFP has a large budget to spend

on developmental projects and environmental operations.

Today, the WFP is responsible for more than 95% of all multilateral food aid allocated and 35% of food aid worldwide. The WFP is unique among UN agencies in the fact that most of its executive board representatives come from developing countries. This helps to depoliticize aid and make it more about the issue at hand. The WFP provides food aid in order to support economic and social development, meet emergency food needs, promote global food security, and associated logistical support. Overall, the WFP is a dominant multilateral food aid organization that hold a lot of agency and control over the aid that's distributed in the world (Barrett 2005).

Effects of food aid:

Ethiopia - Case Study

History of food aid in Ethiopia:

In the status quo, millions of Ethiopians require exceptional amounts of food aid just to survive. Despite having forty years' worth of food aid, Ethiopia's food crisis continues to worsen. Because of this, it is only logical to ask: is food aid a part of the problem or part of the solution to Ethiopia's food crisis? This questions will examined by looking at Ethiopia's history of food aid and looking at the effects of food aid on the Ethiopian people.

Ethiopia has been through a rough fifty year period starting in the 1970s. In 1973-1974, an estimated 250,000 people died as a result of persistent food

shortages. Additionally, Ethiopia experienced another catastrophic famine in 1984-1985, where around one million people died due to starvation (Clay). While the 1973-1974 and the 1984-1985 were the most glaring instances of starvation, Ethiopia has faced famine to a lesser degree throughout the last quarter of the century. For instance, in 2000, Ethiopia experienced a famine in which about six million people were at risk for starvation. Clearly, famine has been a huge issue in Ethiopia's history.

In the early 1980s, the WFP began to provide project food aid to Ethiopia after the conclusion of a UN Ethiopian Highlands Reclamation Study. This study concluded that soil erosion had reached crisis proportions and recommended the creation of a soil and water conservation program to stimulate employment and improve food production. At first, the project was successful, but the project was impeded by civil war and political unrest. The civil war became so bad that survival from starvation became the most pressing issue. All the money that was supposed to go to towards development projects like the soil conservation program was redistributed for emergency food aid. Eventually, the volumes of relief food aid dwarfed the amount of project food aid in the region.

In 1991, the government was overthrown, which led donor nations to introduce changes to relief and development aid programs. In terms of development aid, local community planning was incorporated, and investment in technical and community skills was increased. In terms of relief aid, the new government and donor nations recognized that the large flows of food aid needed to be better utilized. As a result, in 1993, the Ethiopian government implemented the 'Employment Generation Scheme', which replaced free food distributions with food for work to rebuild productive assets. Though the program had the making of success, there were fatal flaws that led to its failure. For instance, the relief was unreliable, often coming too late and too little. Additionally, essential tools, equipment, and supplies were largely unavailable and faulty when they arrived (Kehler 2004).

These problems continued into the 2000s. From 1989 to 2004, Ethiopia received an average of 700,000 tons of food aid per year. Though being the largest recipient of food aid, this aid failed to break the cycle of extreme food insecurity. There are two main reasons why this aid failed to result in any significantly positive results. First, the Ethiopian government had a problems with corruption and was slammed in the international community for reportedly

embezzling a significant amount of donated food aid. Second, though Ethiopia receives the most relief aid in the region, they received the least investment in project in aid in Africa from the 1990s to the early 2000s. While relief aid was visible and did saved lives, it did not halt the decline in assets or help to improve malnutrition levels (Kehler 2004).

Though large amounts of food aid continue to come into the region, the issue of food crisis continues to remain paramount. From 2012 to 2016, over $1.3 billion dollars of US food aid was sent to Ethiopia (USAID 2016). The US is just one of many countries and international organizations that continues to give food to a food crisis that has shown that food hasn't helped the situation. Right now, food aid is having multiple problems in the country stemming from the monetization of aid and corruption from the government.

The monetization of aid is an increasingly disliked way to provide food aid and the problems with this form of aid in Ethiopia are substantiating this claim. For starters, dumping excess surpluses of food aid on local markets hurts the food insecure farmers who are trying to compete against lower prices. In the end, this system favors the aid crops coming from subsidized farmers because their goods can be sold at cheaper prices. As a consequence, small farmers make a lower share of revenue and have an even harder time providing themselves with basic necessities. In the case of Ethiopia, the monetization of aid is particularly destructive because more than 80% of Ethiopian workers rely on agriculture to meet subsistence. Not only has the monetization of aid priced out farmers, it has also contributed to shrinking agricultural and livestock productivity. According to Poverty Action Network Ethiopia (PANE), food aid has not contributed to improving agriculture or livestock production activities.

Furthermore, a lot of vital food aid dollars are being embezzled and mismanaged by the government. According to BBC in 2011, the government was using development aid as a tool for political oppression, which included denying villagers and communities from having access to donated seeds, credit, food and fertilizers. Additionally, in 2008, only 12% of the food aid intended for Ethiopian citizens actually made it to its citizens.

While it is tempting to conclude that food aid erodes all livelihoods in Ethiopia, there are food aid projects that are hugely beneficial in the region. For instance, The MERET programme (Managing Environmental Resources to Enable Transitions to more sustainable livelihoods) has had a tangible net benefit on food security for the poorest communities in

Ethiopia. Essentially, MERET gives money to food insecure communities so they can undertake environmentally-focused public works and receive 3 kilograms of wheat per day in return. Annually, the project assists 648,000 chronically hungry and More than 400,000 acres of degraded land have been rehabilitated. Notably, this program has been efficient and has had very little embezzlement (MERET Ethiopia 2016).

Ethiopia is in a tumultuous position and the status quo delivery and distribution of aid has done little to improve the situation. With high rates of malnutrition and insecurity, substantial changes are needed to mitigate this chronic problem. The MERET programme presents hope for the future because it shows that food aid applied with innovation and transparency can make a palpable contribution to simultaneously reduce vulnerability and improve food security. Clearly though, the lack of developmental assistance, the monetization of aid, and corruption are inhibiting factors that are hampering a good food aid program in Ethiopia.

Contemporary Issues:

Not Enough Food Aid

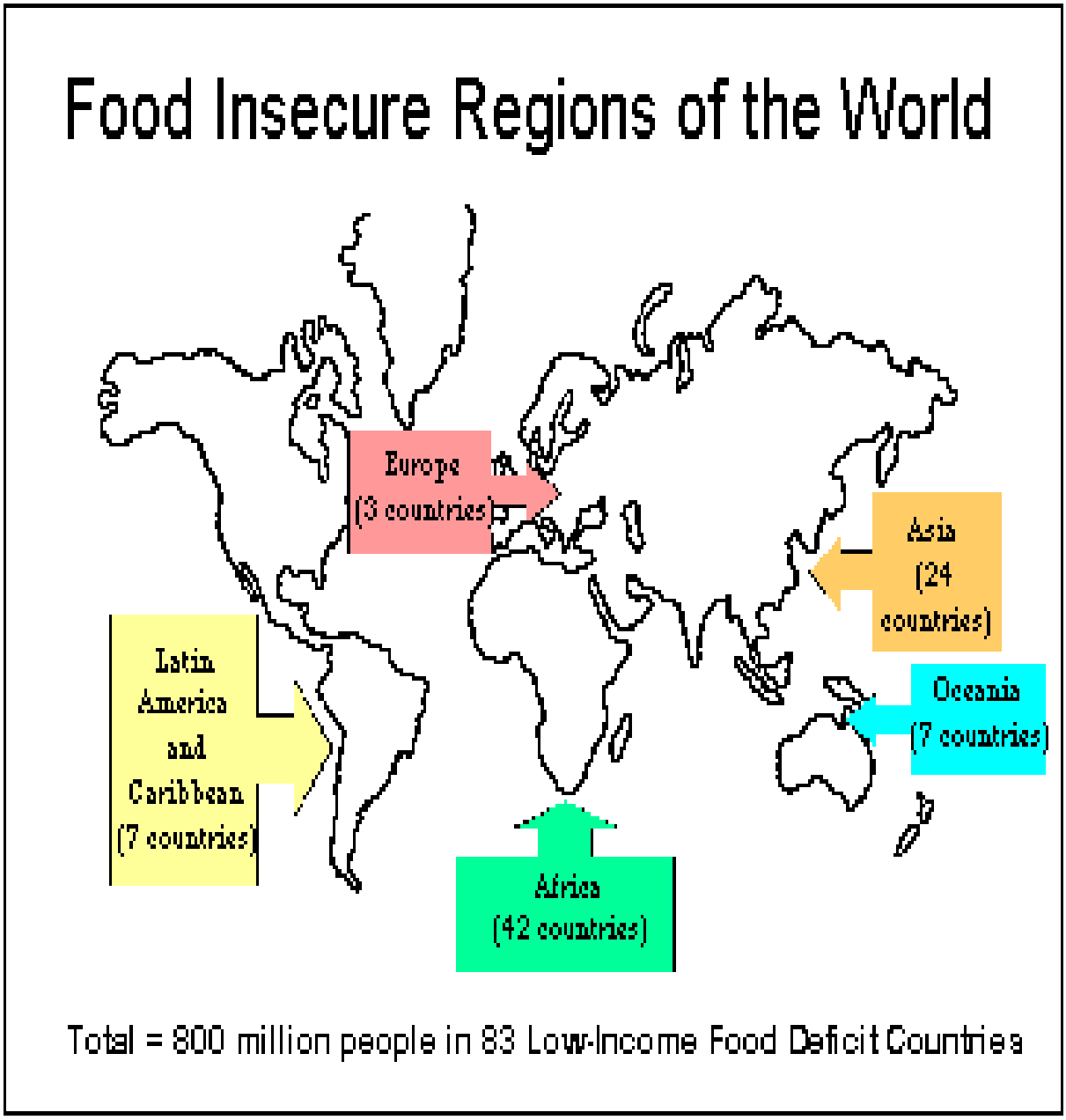
Currently in the status quo, 34 countries do not have enough food to feed their people (NY Time 2016). These countries face conflicts, floods, droughts and most importantly a lack of aid from bilateral and multilateral sources. The aid shortage is no more apparent than in the Syrian refugee crisis.

In December of 2014, a funding crisis in the WFP left 1.7 million Syrian refugees without food. The slashed program provided electronic vouchers for Syrian refugees in neighboring Middle Eastern countries in order to buy food in local grocery stores. The program was largely successful at reducing famine, but was cut due to a $64 million dollar shortfall that the WFP associated with a lack of donor funding. Again in September in 2015, the WFP had to halve assistance to more than 1.3 refugees in the region due to a lack of donor contributions. Many of these refugees live on less than .50 cents a day. EU countries, for instance, have slashed contributions to the WFP, which has been a large reason why Syrian refugees have less food aid. According to the EU observer, “Every member state, except the Netherlands, has slashed contributions to the World Food Progamme (WFP) in 2015” (Nielsen 2015). Certain countries like Austria, Estonia, Greece, Portugal, and Slovakia reduced donations by a 100% compared to the previous year.

Like Syria, many other developing countries face severe conflicts that have

increased food insecurity. For example, agricultural production decreased substantially in Iraq, Central African Republic, Somalia, and Yemen due to worsening and sustained conflict.

In total, the issue of inadequate food and inadequate aid is most prevalent in Africa with 27 nations facing famine. Countries like Zimbabwe, Burundi, Cameroon, and Ethiopia all lack the necessary amount of aid to feed their people. With growing food insecurity and growing populations, it is imperative to look for solutions that increase donor support and increase agricultural productivity in developing nations (NY Times 2016).



Update 4

Drought and Rising Temperatures leave 45 Million People across Africa Facing Hunger

By James Smith, Guardian Correspondent

19 March 2019

More than 45 million people face severe hunger in Southern and Eastern Africa, the United Nations has warned, as Africa grapples with its worst drought in decades.

Based on these circumstances, there are fears that the long-term impacts of climate change are also undermining the region's ability to endure extremes in weather, leaving huge numbers of people vulnerable to hunger and disease. The countries worst hit are Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya, and Sudan.

Leaders from these respective nations are calling on developed nations like the United States and China to increase food aid and provide more funds for sustainable agricultural projects and sustainable technologies in general. China and the US have agreed to these ideas in principle, but have yet to agree on specifics.

Not only this, aid workers in the region say the drought has served as reminder that communities vulnerable to changing weather patterns need longer-term help adapting. According to Beatrice Mwangi, resilience and livelihoods director, Southern Africa region, World Vision, "In the past it was one big drought every 10 years, then it came to one drought every five years, and now the trends are showing that it will be one every three to five years. So we are in a crisis alright, that is true."

Clearly, solutions are needed to address this problem. It will be up to the FAO to present reasonable and sustainable solutions to the present crisis.

Corruption in the World Food Programme

The World Food Programme has come under fire in recent years for misusing large amounts of funds. In 2010, the UN monitoring group on Somalia wrote a scathing evaluation of the WFP Somalia relief program. The body, created by the UN Security Council, alleges that three Somali businessmen who had more than $160 million in WFP transport contracts were involved in arms trading while diverting the agency's food aid away from the hungry. A New York Times report also claimed food was being siphoned off by radical Islamic militants and local UN workers. Though the WFP eventually suspended the contracts of these three businessmen, they deny there were any serious problems. "These estimates of diversion are not apparently based on any documentation, but rather on hearsay and commonly held perception," the UN's aid chief in Somalia, Mark Bowden, wrote in the letter to the monitoring body (Gettlemen 2010).

The Somalia controversy isn't the WFP's only problem, it's only the most recent and most public of a plethora of scandals. In Ethiopia, the food aid program

is constantly in disarray with the country's authoritarian government at the center of the controversy. According to the U.S. State Department, in 2008 only 12 percent of food aid (most of it overseen by the WFP) made it to its intended recipients in the poverty-stricken eastern region. The WFP has also admitted to wrongdoing in North Korea. The WFP has admitted that it inflated its shipping costs in North Korea by funneling business through Dictator Kim Jong Il's government.

In all three of the cases highlighted, the WFP has denied the magnitude of the corruption. Certainly an organization as large as the WFP is bound to be problems, but issue remains that repeated instances of corruptions hurt the image of the WFP as a transparent organization. When the very organization tasked with feeding the hungry and weak fall short of achieving accountability, it is hard to expect change.

Corruption within Recipient Countries

Misuse of food aid by recipient countries is a pressing issue in the realm of food aid. Notably, Somalia, Ethiopia, and Zimbabwe are the worst violators. In Somalia, food aid constantly bypasses the needy. In fact, as much as half of the food aid sent to Somalia is diverted to corrupt contractors, radical islamists, and local UN staff members. As a consequence, more than 1.2 million people don't have access to essential food aid. Additionally, Zimbabwe has rampant rates of embezzlement of food aid dollars. Corruption by social welfare officers in the distribution of food aid is pulling down the growing number of vulnerable people waiting to be fed following constants droughts. As a result of this lost aid, more people are starving than is conceivably necessary (Gettlemen 2010). Furthermore, in Ethiopia, officials use food aid as ways to control politics and enact political repression against dissidents. People who disagree with the tenants of the ruling party are excluded from receiving vitally needed food aid dollars (Zehler 2012).

Corruption from recipient countries is a constant problem that has not been adequately addressed. Member countries need to come together to discuss ways to ensure transparency and reduce the harmful effects of corrupt regimes.

Food Aid and Local Diets

Consumption patterns of recipient countries are strongly reliant on western food that isn't a part of their diet and culture. Western countries like the US aren't importing foods that are accustomed to local citizens, they are importing Western crops like wheat, corn, etc to be eaten. According to the International Covenant on Economic,

Social and Cultural Rights, the right to food implies food "free from adverse substances, and acceptable within a given culture." There are ways to avoid these consumptive pattern changes through LRP aid. By procuring the food locally, donor countries can avoid changing the consumption patterns of developing countries (Oxfam 2015).

The Place of GM Crops in Food Aid

Today, there is a contentious debate over whether or not food aid should be genetically modified. This issue goes back to 2002 and is still a debate between donor and recipient nations.

In 2002, Zambia and three other countries shocked the United States when they refused food aid during a regional famine. These countries rejected the food aid because it was genetically modified and unmilled, which meant that it could potentially be planted to grow GM crops. Immediately after their bold statement, they contacted the United States to change its policy regarding food aid. The US responded shortly after saying no and citing costs as the reason. Soon after, South Africa stepped in to mill the aid, allowing the aid to only be used for consumption and not cultivation. When South Africa stepped in, three of the countries, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe accepted. Only Zambia still refused, citing its genetic modification, which then-President Levy Mwanawasa called “poison” (Stieber 2013).

In spite of severe famine, Zambia continued its strict anti GM food aid stance for three more years. In 2005, Zambia reversed its ban and allowed GM food aid into the country. Still, as of today, Zambia has an importation ban on all GMOs, with the exception of GM food aid (Stieber 2013).

Additionally, in April 2016, Zimbabwe has made a bold statement to the international community, refusing all GM food aid. This decision comes on the heels of a huge famine the region that plaques 2.44 million Zimbabweans, or one quarter of the population (Yates 2016). This decision has the potential to compel other African nations to follow suit and reject food aid. Clearly, the issue of GM food must be resolved quickly so that developing nations can take advantage of all the aid they are offered. In sum, certain African nations, notably Zimbabwe, have a ban on GM food aid raising questions about the health and effectiveness of GM crops.

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