Making a Meal of It: The World Food Programme and Legitimacy in Global Politics

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ABSTRACT

The world faces many complex and difficult problems at the global level – problems that are increasingly recognised as requiring political as much as technical solutions. While such issues are often taken to concern, in broad terms, global governance, more specifically, the political aspects of such governance are fundamentally linked to interactions between the United Nations system and the power exercised by the United States of America (US). One important and distinctive arena within which these interactions can be viewed is the international food aid regime, and its central organisation, the World Food Programme (WFP) - an area lacking in concerted political science study in recent years. This thesis is concerned with the role of the US in shaping the legitimacy of the WFP within the institutional context of the international food aid regime. Legitimacy is defined as deriving from the three elements of inclusion, accountability and effectiveness. The WFP and international regime are, it is argued, well respected, relatively effective, and enjoy high levels of legitimacy. At a micro level there are many specific historical and localised factors resulting in this legitimacy; at the macro level many of these factors can be linked to the interaction of norms and interests between the US and the regime. In particular, the regime’s development and success has been closely related to both a congruence between the US domestic feed-the-hungry norm and the regime’s international feed-the-hungry norm, and a process of divergence between those norms. It is this normative interplay that has enabled US power to be deployed and constrained in a manner resulting in high levels of legitimacy for the WFP. While in many respects this has limited WFP’s capacity to do more with the problem of global hunger than merely ameliorate it, the nature of the problem is much bigger than the capacities of any single operational agency of the United Nations.
DECLARATION

I declare that

i. the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD;
ii. due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used;
iii. the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Signed:

Date:
I have many people to thank for their assistance in the writing of this thesis. Firstly, my supervisor, Derek McDougall, who has been unstinting in his support. My associate supervisor, Robyn Eckersely, has given me crucial feedback and gone beyond the call of duty to help me establish an argument of (I hope) theoretical adequacy.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFA  Alliance for Food Aid (US)
APEC  Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
AUSAID  Australian Agency for International Development
CCC  Commodity Credit Corporation (US)
CCP  Committee on Commodity Problems (FAO)
CFA  Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes
      (replaced IGC in 1976, replaced by EB in 1996)
CFB  Combined Food Board
CIDA  Canadian International Development Agency
CSD  Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal (FAO CCP; renamed CSSD in 1995)
CSSD  Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal (FAO CCP; CSD prior to 1995)
D-G  Director-General (FAO)
DAC  Development Assistance Committee (OECD)
DFID  Department for International Development (UK)
DSC  Direct Support Costs (WFP)
EB  Executive Board (WFP)
EC  European Commission
ECOSOC  United Nations Economic and Social Council
ED  Executive Director (WFP)
EMOPS  Emergency Operations (WFP)
EU  European Union
FAC  Food Aid Convention
FAO  Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FAS  Foreign Agricultural Service (US Department of Agriculture)
FCR  Full Cost Recovery (WFP)
FD  Fundraising and communications department (WFP)
FFHC  Freedom from Hunger Campaign (FAO)
FFP  Food for Peace (US)
FMIP/WINGS  Financial Management Improvement Programme/WFP Information Network Global System (WFP)
FoWFP  Friends of WFP (US)
FY  Fiscal Year (US, October – September)
G77  Group of 77 (developing country UN member-states)
GATT  General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GNI  Gross National Income
HIV/AIDS  Human immuno-deficiency virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HQ  Headquarters (WFP)
ICCH  International Commodity Clearing House
IEFC  International Emergency Food Council (later Committee)
IEFR  International Emergency Food Reserve
IFAD  International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFAR  International food aid regime
ILO  International Labor Organisation
IGC  InterGovernmental Committee
      (governing body of World Food Programme, replaced by CFA in 1976)
IGO  Intergovernmental Organisation
### Abbreviations (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tr>
<td>IR</td>
<td>International Relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISC</td>
<td>Indirect Support Costs (WFP)</td>
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<td>IIA</td>
<td>International Institute of Agriculture</td>
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<td>LTSH</td>
<td>Landside transport, storage and handling (WFP)</td>
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<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goal</td>
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<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding (WFP)</td>
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<td>MSF</td>
<td>Medecins sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders)</td>
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<td>NAFTA</td>
<td>North American Free Trade Agreement</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental Organisation</td>
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<td>NIEO</td>
<td>New International Economic Order</td>
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<td>ODA</td>
<td>Official Development Assistance</td>
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<td>ODOC</td>
<td>Other Direct Operational Costs (WFP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<td>OPEC</td>
<td>Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries</td>
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<td>P5</td>
<td>Permanent Five members of the UN Security Council</td>
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<td>PL480</td>
<td>Public Law 480 (US)</td>
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<td>PRRO</td>
<td>Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation (WFP)</td>
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<td>PSA</td>
<td>Programme Support and Administration (WFP)</td>
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<td>PVO</td>
<td>Private Voluntary Organization (US)</td>
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<td>SARS</td>
<td>Severe acute respiratory syndrome</td>
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<td>SDDP</td>
<td>Special Dairy Distribution Program (US)</td>
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<td>TEFAP</td>
<td>Temporary (later The) Emergency Food Assistance Program (US)</td>
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<td>TNC</td>
<td>Transnational corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
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<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Fund for Population Activities</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<td>UNHRC</td>
<td>United Nations Human Rights Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children’s Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>US</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<td>USDA</td>
<td>United States Department of Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</td>
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<td>VAM</td>
<td>Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (WFP)</td>
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<td>WFB</td>
<td>World Food Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme (NB ‘Programme’ adopted instead of ‘Program’ in 1967 – see Shaw 2001, xxv)</td>
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INTRODUCTION

International relations since 1945 has been dominated by the evolution of a (surprisingly) robust international institutional architecture centred on the United Nations (UN) system, in which almost all nations, big and small, participate. These levels of participation implicitly accord that system some degree of legitimacy. Yet at the centre of this system lies a paradox. The United States of America (US) has been the pre-eminent power amongst nations since 1945, a position reflected both in its role in the founding and viability of the UN system (building significant aspects of its legitimacy), and in its capacity to operate beyond the bounds of that, purportedly universal, system (undermining its legitimacy).

In other words, the US/UN relationship involves many tensions between, on the one hand, the universality of the UN system, and on the other hand, the key role of the US in establishing the UN system and its ongoing material importance to that system.

In recent years, these tensions have intensified as the US has taken policy decisions emphasising unilateralist views of its world role, and, at the same time, global interdependence has increased, and transnational problems, from existential threats such as climate change, to various types of humanitarian crises have come to the fore. The problem of global hunger is one such (ongoing) crisis that threatens to intensify as food prices rise. Yet there has been no systematic examination in recent times of the global political institutions that bear the burden of emergency food relief. This thesis seeks to rectify this gap by examining the relationship between the US and the World Food Programme (WFP), in the institutional context of the international food aid regime. In particular, the thesis seeks to understand the role played by the US in shaping the legitimacy (understood in this thesis to include the effectiveness) of the WFP and the broader food aid regime. The study also provides a window into aspects of the paradox of US power in the UN system.

The case study involves both an international regime and an international organisation in which the US has a dominant role, traditionally explained with reference to the use of food aid to serve its agricultural interests, albeit with a normative gloss. Given this, it might appear to be a strong case for a neoliberal institutionalist analysis, emphasising the role of state interests in international cooperation. However, this study demonstrates the importance of avoiding overly simple depictions of state motivations or behaviour. Rather, it shows the complex ways in which regime legitimacy relates to the dominant role of the United States. In turn, this points to the interplay of norms and interests within the regime and between the regime and the US polity.

The thesis is in two parts. In the first part, the argument is situated in relevant theoretical debates in international relations and regime theory literature, and there is an explication of how and why the WFP can shed light on these debates. In the second part (Chapters Three to Six), the empirical core of the thesis sets out the history and evolution of the international food aid regime and the WFP, and evaluates the WFP’s legitimacy.

Chapter One begins by situating regime theory within the wider field of international relations and proceeds to explore the two key debates within regime theory literature. These debates concern, firstly, the roles of norms and interests in regimes; and secondly, the extent to which American power is operating hegemonically, and its impacts on regime legitimacy.
While neoliberal institutionalist literature argues, or assumes, the central role of interests in explaining the behaviour of states and non-state actors in regimes, the constructivist turn has highlighted the centrality of norms in the construction of identities, interests and ultimately regimes. The constructivist critique of the neoliberal assumption that interests are pre-eminent in regimes has been an important development, requiring a deeper consideration of where interests come from and how they are constructed or perceived.

However, constructivist approaches themselves risk paralleling the problem of an a priori construction of interests by doing the same thing with norms – assuming that norms sit somehow behind interests in a linear relationship. An empirical examination of WFP shows the significance of norms and interests lies in their interrelationship. Norms and interests are the chicken and egg of regime theory. They are entwined together, and while analytically distinguishable, impossible to put into a linear progression. They are in a mutually constitutive relationship, with each influencing the other.

The second debate in regime theory, which concerns the operation of power in regimes, takes us from the ‘back-end’ issues of norms and interests to the front-end of what the regime actually does and how it functions politically to mediate, transmute and demonstrate power – both its own institutional power, and that of state and non-state actors within it. Power in international regimes calls up the role of the United States, especially debates about whether it should be construed as a hegemonic actor, and the impacts of its dominance in relation to the legitimacy of international regimes.

These two debates need to be informed by empirical case studies. A case study can provide an opportunity for a close examination of the interactions between norms and interests in a specific international institutional setting. Also, a regime case study can provide an opportunity for a detailed consideration of the interactions between American power and an international regime, and the extent to which the US, on the one hand, projects power through the regime, and on the other hand, is itself constrained by the regime.

Adopting a case study approach raises two methodological issues. First, the insights of complexity theory suggest a holistic, interpretive approach to analysis is important in understanding complex systems such as international regimes. As is suggested by the view of the international realm as a social one involving institutions and norms, an interpretive approach is necessary to grasp all the facets of the social relationships which lie at the core of the institution. Specifically, this approach leads to an anthropological and historical method, using historical and qualitative research techniques. The roles of norms and interests within the regime are not static and can only be understood through an historical account of the regime’s evolution. In turn, this account is necessary in order to develop a deep and rich context for the application of an evaluative framework focusing on aspects of legitimacy.

Second, regimes come in many forms, not all with clear organisational elements. However, where regimes have an organisational core or centre, it is possible to focus enquiry in a particularly fruitful way on the debates in regime theory over norms, interests and the role of the US. For example, an organisation provides some concrete rendition of the regime through its role as an intergovernmental actor, and it enables
specification of the material resources which various states contribute to regime functioning.

In the case of the international food aid regime, the empirical approach is clarified to some degree by focusing on the regime’s organisational core – the WFP. Also, in the case of the WFP and the international food aid regime, the US has clearly been the most significant and central state actor, discharging a dominant role in the establishment of the regime, the setting up of the WFP, and its continued functioning. Conducting an empirical assessment of the international food aid regime and the WFP promises to shed light on these important debates about the nature of American power and its impacts on the legitimacy of international regimes and organisations.

Given this organisational focus, Chapter One concludes by considering how to frame the evaluative aspects of the case study. Legitimacy and effectiveness are interrelated concepts – each implies the other. In this context, it is important to establish an evaluative framework that does not overplay a dichotomy between the two, while enabling some broad evaluation of the political functioning of WFP and the international food aid regime. To that end, legitimacy is taken to include effectiveness (in the sense of ‘output legitimacy’). The framework proposed is based on two groups of two distinctions. The first two relate to mainly procedural elements of legitimacy – proposed here as inclusion and accountability. The second two relate more to the outcome end of the spectrum, defined in terms of relative effectiveness and absolute effectiveness.

Chapter Two considers the nature of the case study in more detail. Firstly, the case for the existence of an international food aid regime is considered, noting its emergence in international relations literature from the late 1980s. Despite some interest in positing an international food regime in the late 1970s, by the early 1990s, the existence of an international food aid regime was well accepted, reflecting structural changes in the international political economy of agriculture. Secondly, a survey of the literature on the WFP indicates no significant attempts to analyse the WFP or its regime from an international relations perspective in the last 15 years, despite some evidence that it is a significant and successful United Nations (UN) Agency. This takes us to three particular features of the WFP which suggest it, and the regime in which it is embedded, provide a case study of interest to international relations scholars.

These features relate firstly to its structural typicality as a UN agency, suggesting some broader relevance to the UN system of a detailed examination of the WFP. Secondly, its material significance as the largest and one of the most successful of the UN operational agencies suggest the WFP matters in the wider context of international organisations, and in relation to issues concerning global justice and international order. Thirdly, the WFP’s normative uniqueness is identified as crucial to understanding the nature of its relationship with the United States, and underpinning an evaluation of its legitimacy. In particular, this feature is defined through positing a central, unique ‘feed-the-hungry’ norm as underpinning the international food aid regime. Indeed, all three features of the WFP ultimately derive from the centrality of American power and the feed-the-hungry norm to the international food aid regime.

The final section of Chapter Two is concerned with exploring this normative feature of the regime. This is because to understand the WFP and the operation of the international food aid regime, it is important to grasp the nature, provenance and evolution of the feed-the-hungry norm, and both its relationship to a congruent domestic
Introduction

American political norm, and its ‘soft power’ nature. This nature stems from the centrality of moral claims (as distinct from rights and other quasi-legal concepts) to the norm, as well as its self-definition as transcending politics.

Chapters Three (1945–1980) and Four (1980–2002) trace the historical evolution of the regime and the WFP. This evolution shows the complexity of the interaction between international and domestic US norms, and the interrelationship between these norms and the interests of the US that have tended to be central to most historical analysis of the regime. It also shows the US role in the WFP has been of great importance without being monolithically dominant, as the US did not consistently engage in a leadership role in the WFP until the 1990s. This historical analysis emphasises the highly complex and contingent nature of US power in the international food aid regime, despite the superficial appearance of dominance in pursuit of material interests.

Chapters Five and Six apply the evaluative categories proposed in Chapter One to the WFP.

Chapter Five considers first how state and non-state actors participate in the WFP (i.e. the extent of their inclusion). This analysis concludes that non-state actors tend to be aligned with states within the regime, and that states must be seen as the pre-eminent regime actors. Inclusion in the WFP is reasonably open and broad, supported by the ‘transcending politics’ aspect of the feed-the-hungry norm, albeit limited by the usual disparities in wealth and power, and the functioning of the moral claims of donor countries. However, the growing presence of ‘transitional’ states (recipient states becoming donor states) suggests some shifts in the governance of the WFP are occurring.

Following the examination of inclusion, Chapter Five turns to a consideration of accountability in the sense of processes which constrain power. It does this through a focus on three different forms of accountability: Organisational (accountability of the WFP Secretariat to the Executive Board and UN Secretary-General); Functional (accountability of the WFP to beneficiaries); and, Donor (accountability of donor states to the international community through the WFP). This discussion teases out the complexities of power, and the centrality of the Secretariat and WFP Executive Board in the functioning of the regime, and both the extent of and limits to US power in the WFP.

Chapter Six considers the effectiveness of the WFP in two forms – relative effectiveness and absolute effectiveness. Relative effectiveness refers to the role of the WFP in getting food to starving people rapidly and efficiently. Absolute effectiveness refers to the ultimate goals of reducing and eliminating world hunger. Considering these two different types of effectiveness highlights the complex problems related to the various uses of food aid for emergency relief and development, and the political constraints imposed on the WFP by the interaction of the feed-the-hungry norm with US norms/interests, given its material reliance on US donations. The Chapter argues that WFP is undoubtedly effective in the relative sense; however, it struggles to be effective in the absolute sense, partly as the price it pays for relative effectiveness, but partly also because eliminating global hunger requires multilevel governance, involving other international organisations and regimes along with state and non-state actors.

Chapter Six concludes with a consideration of future developments and risks to the legitimacy of the international food aid regime and the WFP. While political and
organisational change may undermine or weaken these qualities, the normative congruence between the regime and the domestic US polity that underpins the legitimacy of the regime has survived the George W. Bush administration’s unilateralist approach to the international realm without any discernible weakening, unlike many other international regimes.

Thus, in the case of food aid, this empirical study leads to the superficial appearance of US hegemony in pursuit of material interests giving way to a more complex picture of the US playing a dominant role within a regime and organisation, both of which are nevertheless legitimate and, at least relatively, effective. This can be attributed to the complex interconnections between American and institutional power: on the one hand, reliance on American material resources, and on the other hand, the functioning of a regime norm increasingly differentiated from its origins in an American domestic norm, along with real, though subtle, multilateral constraints on American power.
CHAPTER ONE
International Regimes: An Entrée

Introduction

This thesis is an empirical examination of how legitimacy is constructed in the international food aid regime, given the context of its normative and organisational evolution, and as judged by the concepts of inclusion, accountability, and effectiveness. This Chapter is concerned with articulating the conceptual and theoretical implications of this research project.

In the first section, this inquiry is situated within the field of international relations (IR) scholarship, and, in particular, the field of regime study and theory. Since John Ruggie (Ruggie 1975, 568ff) coined the term ‘regime’ to describe international institutions,¹ the argument for approaching IR scholarship through regime theory has strengthened due to a range of changes. These include the end of the Cold War, the shifts in world politics fuelled by and feeding into processes of globalisation, the continued development and institutionalisation of the UN system, and the increasing significance of global, transnational crises such as terrorism or climate change.

One consequence of these changes has been a shift from presuming the centrality of the state in international relations, with more attention to non-state actors and their interactions with states in complex transnational political processes. Another consequence has been a shift towards a research interest in global political processes, increasingly referred to as global governance. However, questions of concern to regime theorists have remained largely unchanged, focused on the existence and nature of cooperation in the context of an anarchical international realm. Assuming the international realm is still largely dominated by state actors, and especially in the post-Cold War period, the United States, how do we understand the interactions between powerful state actors such as the US and international institutions? To what extent do such institutions operate to constrain powerful state actors, or empower international organisations as actors in their own right vis-à-vis states?

In answering these questions, two sets of debates are of central importance. First, the debate over the respective roles played by norms and interests in motivating and explaining the actions of states (and other actors) in the international realm. Second, the debate over the location of power and legitimacy in the international realm, in particular, how power is legitimised by and within international institutions.

Following some elucidation of these debates and their parameters, the second section of the chapter turns to look at how empirical research can further illuminate these issues and contribute to further developing regime theory. Research design raises epistemological as well as methodological issues: How should the international realm, and international regimes, be conceived? Should they be modelled as a rational system, or regarded as complex, socially constructed and irreducible to rationalist models? Given this thesis

¹ The concept of regimes was developed, in particular, to distinguish international institutions from international organisations (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986, 754-9).
adopts the latter view, it follows that interpretive – principally historical and ethnographic – methods are most appropriate in application to an idiographic case study. In the case of the international food aid regime, this study is operationalised by a focus on the WFP.

The final section of the chapter considers how analysis of the politics of the international food aid regime and the WFP can be framed to contribute to the key debates in regime theory. Given the origins and evolution of the regime are defined through an historically contextualised analysis (as they are in Chapters Three and Four), the key political analysis can be undertaken through a focus on legitimacy as a political concept linking norms, interests and power. Legitimacy is a complex concept that, for the purposes of this inquiry, can be broken into various elements based on procedures of governance and governance outcomes. The procedural elements of legitimacy can be defined in terms of inclusion and accountability; the outcomes element is generally defined in terms of effectiveness, though for the purposes of this evaluative framework, a further distinction is also proposed between relative and absolute effectiveness. Chapters Five and Six apply this framework to the WFP and the international food aid regime.

1. Regime theory: norms and interests; power and legitimacy

Since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 until very recently, as Lawson points out, ‘it is a commonplace assumption that theories of international political order have been predicated on the sovereign state system’ (Lawson 2002, 204). Although the significance of states in the system has tended to lead to an emphasis on analysing individualised state behaviour, much IR scholarship has been concerned with the wider global political canvas created by collective behaviour and structures. This wider context is most convincingly conceived of as social in nature, whether by the English School’s framework of international society (Bull 1977; Buzan 2002; Clark 2005), or by constructivist approaches such as Wendt or Ruggie (Ruggie 1998; Wendt 1999).

The social conception of the international realm has been traditionally contrasted with the realist view of anarchy (Carr 1939; Morgenthau 1973). However, this contrast has arguably been overstated as even anarchy can be said to have an underlying social ontology: that is it is a type of social system. In fact, as Ruggie argues in his discussion of Morgenthau (Ruggie 1998, 4-9), classical realist anarchy often accepts the existence of ‘social texture’ in the international realm. Realist anarchy at its most convincing is arguably posited as a sort of best-fit generalisable description (or even metaphor) rather than an objectively true and exclusive ontological statement. Similarly, neo-realist (Waltz 1979) and neoliberal analyses, presupposing anarchy and using rationalist assumptions about atomistic, egoist actors in a materialist universe, are nevertheless engaged in a process of modelling. That is, they are using a particular kind of epistemology influenced by positivism applied in economics in particular, which attempts to simplify a complex reality for the purpose of analysis and prediction. Wendt points out the dangers of such a methodology tending to trap its users within a set of assumptions, which go from being part of their model to establishing an ontology (Wendt 1999, 115), but the rationalist project in IR is not necessarily and inherently antithetical to a social ontology, though its utility may be disputed on epistemological grounds.
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Given the international realm is a social realm, the study in IR of international (social) institutions becomes important. This has traditionally focused on various forms and processes; for example, treaties, conferences, international organisations, or the development of international law. More recently in the constructivist turn in IR (Reus-Smit 2001), such study has been based on a concern with the norms and principles underlying collective social structures in the international realm and how they translate into regulation, rules, and related constraints on, or enabling of (Kratochwil 1989, 61), behaviour by actors.

Over the latter part of the twentieth century, materialist strands of IR (realist and Marxist) critiqued the ascription of too great a significance to international institutions, as opposed to the motives or capacities of nation-states or transnational economic actors in IR (Strange 1983). However, the ongoing development and expansion of collective international structures such as the United Nations system has led IR scholars to accept the importance of such phenomena to politics in the international realm (Ruggie 1998, 4-11). The increased significance of institutional architecture in the international realm in turn is closely linked to those processes of change generically termed globalisation.

Globalisation and unipolarity

Held, McGrew, Goldblatt and Perraton provide one of the more comprehensive definitions of globalisation, as

> a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions - assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact - generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power. (Held, McGrew et al. 1999, 16)

Held et al. make a strong case that globalisation involves a complex array of trends and changes. Taking their definition as a starting point, four interrelated processes of change are particularly important in contemporary globalisation when considering its implications for the study of international relations.

Firstly, there is the increasing number of non-state actors with a capacity to act transnationally. Such non-state actors can include organisations and networks with widely varying levels of formal structure and widely divergent relationships to nation-states at domestic and international level. Broadly, they can be grouped as:

- Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs). These are increasing in number and size and include not only the UN system bodies, but a range of regional level organisations.
- Nongovernmental Organisations (NGOs). These include a widening range of organisations across such issue areas as environmental, labour, development and humanitarian assistance; religious; scientific/professional; and cultural.
- Transnational Corporations (TNCs).
- Non-organisational non-state actors. This category includes a range of groups and/or individuals socially constituted, or organised to act jointly. Epistemic communities (Haas 1992) are one example; others include issue networks (Held 2004) or social movements (O’Brien, Goertz et al. 2000).

The second process of change is the development of problems and challenges that, to some degree, transcend nation-state boundaries. These include environmental problems such as
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climate change (Flannery 2005), management of global commons (Vogler 1995), health issues such as HIV/AIDS, SARS, tuberculosis and malaria (Doyle 2006; McKee, Garner et al. 2001), and terrorism (Cortright and Lopez 2007; Enders and Sandler 2006).

Thirdly, the development of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies (ICT) such as mobile telephony, television, film and internet (Held, McGrew et al. 1999; Hoffman 2004).

Lastly, development of an increasingly integrated global economic system involving elements such as freer global capital flows; globally integrated production processes, such as in agri-food (Coleman, Grant et al. 2004; George 1979; Wagenhofer 2005); development of global markets in commodities and complex financial instruments which impact on currencies and nation-state economies (Haggard 1996; Held, McGrew et al. 1999, Ch3-4; Stiglitz 2003, Ch9); and the movements of people (Held, McGrew et al. 1999, Ch6).

While it is useful to distinguish these four areas analytically, it is principally their interrelationships which constitute the processes of globalisation to which Held et al. refer. For example, both the origin and the capacity of various non-state actors to organise themselves at the global level has been heavily influenced by the developments in information and communication technology. In the case of TNCs, these technologies have assisted both their campaigning to liberalise flows of capital and goods between states, and the logistics of those flows, leading to both an expanded significance for TNCs as global non-state actors, and feeding processes of global economic system changes (Held, McGrew et al. 1999).

Another example is the way technological developments have helped lead to the expansion of the air transport industry as a means of rapid, mass transport. In turn this has led to changes in disease transmission, contributing to the definition of many health issues as global problems (Kimball 2006), linked also to the ongoing development of non-state actors in the international health regimes, including the World Health Organisation (WHO) and related epistemic communities.

None of these processes occurs in a vacuum away from states. Nation-state interactions at various levels add another layer of complexity to these processes too. However, as Held points out (Held 2004), an important debate about globalisation concerns the extent to which it presages the end of the role of the sovereign state as the dominant political actor in international affairs. The exponential growth in International Organisations, both governmental and nongovernmental, in recent decades is well established (Archer 2001; Bennett and Oliver 2002; Diehl 2001; Held, McGrew et al. 1999; Jacobson 1984). Putting this together with technological, economic and regulatory change, globalists such as Rosenau (2002) and Cerny (1995) argue new kinds of political relationships are emerging which do not require states as actors at their centre.\(^2\)

\(^2\) In order to articulate the apparently growing importance of non-state actors in global politics, a range of approaches have emerged. There is the ‘world polity’ approach (see Boli and Thomas 1999), which generally emphasises the role of social movements and activists. Many scholars use the concept of a ‘global civil society’ (Keane 2003; Lipschutz 1992; Ruggie 2003; Wapner 1995) as a means of making sense of the role non-state actors – NGOs in particular – play or could play in global governance. Networks are also proving a popular global governance concept, (e.g. Keck and Sikkink 1998; Slaughter 2004a). All emphasise a pluralist view of global polity.
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Such globalist arguments are not always supported by empirical examination of international politics, however, as Chapter Five of this thesis demonstrates. While non-state actors have undoubtedly increased in importance in recent decades, international politics for all its pluralism is still predominantly a system of states first and foremost (Hirst 2005). This pluralism does suggest the need for analysis of international politics below the systemic level, though. As the array of actors and their interactions expands and intensifies, the ‘institutional density’ of international politics has increased (Reus-Smit 2004, Ch3) together with the political significance of international institutions (Diehl 2001; Karns and Mingst 2004), making such institutions themselves a natural focus for inquiry.

Unipolarity

Another important characteristic of late twentieth century international politics distinct from globalisation is unipolarity. Since at least the end of the Cold War, and arguably even during its latter stages, the United States has been the sole superpower, possessing overwhelming military and economic might (Cox 2007; Reus-Smit 2004). In this unipolar context, a key issue of interest for IR scholars is how the US interacts with international society. To what extent does its material pre-eminence translate into achievement of policy goals? To what extent do other state or non-state actors, either in bilateral or multilateral processes, including through international institutions, influence the construction of those goals and their achievement? Much has been written about the unilateralist nature of American foreign policy in the Bush administration, along with propositions from both supporters and critics of that policy that it has undermined, weakened or otherwise trumped international institutions in various issue areas such as security (Cox 2007; Newman, Thakur et al. 2006; Reus-Smit 2004), or the environment (Eckersley 2007a) to name just two.

However, the importance of the US to international institutions does not derive solely from present-day US primacy, or even unilateralism in American foreign policy. The international order can be regarded as largely an American creation in its last period of primacy immediately following the Second World War (Diehl 2001; Evans 1996; Ikenberry and Kupchan 1990; Karns and Mingst 1990b; Reus-Smit 2004; Urquhart 1998; Washburn 2001). The nature of America’s relationship with that order is of central importance to understanding how that order is likely to change and evolve into the future in a contemporary political environment very different from that of 60 years ago.

In summary, assessing the relative significance of state and non-state actors, and the nature of their interactions cannot be done without understanding the institutional context of those interactions. Institutions also have significance in their potential to constrain and mould the actions of powerful state actors such as the US, as well as to empower international organisations as actors in their own right. Thus, the study of international relations, in particular in the context of globalisation and unipolarity, needs to be informed by the study of international institutions.3

3 There is an important argument that they would be worth studying even if such conditions did not pertain. Indeed, regime theory arose in part from seeking to explain the converse of unipolarity, i.e. a decline in US power (Keohane 1984; Kratochwil 1989, 14).
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International regimes

While international regimes are international institutions, not all such institutions are regimes. Some institutions are posited at the systemic level as providing ‘deep constitutional values’ such as the principle of sovereignty (Reus-Smit 2004, 62), or establishing the ‘constitutive’ rules of the game (Klotz 1995, 22-5; Ruggie 1998, 28-9; Vogler 2003, 16-8), such as the institutions of international law and multilateralism (Reus-Smit 2004, 62). The subset of international institutions comprising international regimes is generally defined as *subsystemic* (made coherent via the concept of issue areas), and based on an interacting combination of rules and norms.

The international institutions referred to as regimes are posited as mid-level concepts to capture the notion that social structures exist beyond the formal extent of intergovernmental organisations, but below the system level (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986, 760). Evans and Wilson emphasise the sub-systemic nature of regime theory when comparing it to the different form of Grotianism adopted by the English school of IR:

> with respect to the scope of the international social realm, regime theorists do not talk in terms of a universal international society but rather in terms of issue-areas where cooperation, rule-making and regime creation may generate what amount to specific, and perhaps temporary, societal realms. The English school, on the other hand, associates the idea of international society with the state system as a whole, though they tend to see universality as an historical development rather than a normative claim. (Evans and Wilson 1992, 336)

Similarly, Reus-Smit suggests regimes involve ‘the realm of substantive international rules, rules that define rights and obligations, lay down standards of behaviour, and specify decision-making procedures and modes of enforcement in distinct domains of international life.’(Reus-Smit 2004, 63). Krasner’s well known and widely accepted definition states that regimes exist where actors’ expectations ‘converge in a given issue-area’ constituted by ‘principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures,’ (Krasner 1983b, 1).

However, these definitions suggest some significant problems with which regime theory as subsystemic theory must contend, reflected in two major types of critique which have been applied to regime theory as an approach to IR. These can be characterised respectively as *imprecision* and *methodological statism*.

Imprecision

Strange in her well known critique of regime theory condemned the very concept of regime for being, amongst other faults, ‘imprecise’ and ‘woolly’ (Strange 1983, 342-4) – a charge with some merit. One of the most significant problems for regime theory is the sheer diversity of non-systemic social institutions in the international realm, along with vagueness when it comes to defining ‘issue areas’ (Hasenclever, Mayer et al. 1997, 59-61). For example, having argued with some force against inappropriate conflation of regimes with organisations, Kratochwil submits that only ‘when a “consensual knowledge” in a particular issue area has developed and agreement exists as to the links between goals and means can the boundaries of a regime be considered to be unequivocal.’ (Kratochwil 1989, 14). This suggests that regimes exist with clear boundaries when there is sufficient ‘agreement’, but prior to that may in some sense exist with fuzzy boundaries – all the while remembering that regimes are ‘largely analytical constructs and not concrete entities of the outer world’ (Kratochwil 1989, 60).
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This is entirely consistent with the concept of social institutions that are generated by social interaction over time and whose existence is, at least some of the time, indicated by but not coterminous with, organisations and/or formal rules. However, such consistency does nothing to obviate the lack of precision in the concept of regime. The problems posed by regime theory’s concern with an imprecise object impact at the epistemological and empirical levels.

At the epistemological level, imprecision is most significantly a problem when using a positivist epistemology. This is because such an approach aims to, ultimately, generalise at the systemic level about the role of regimes: what kind of variable are they within the international realm? A positivist approach requires analytical clarity about the status of actors and institutions as variables in a causal schema. Where the phenomenon being examined is not easily quantifiable or observable, its consequent ‘imprecision’ creates significant difficulties for such an approach. Post-positivist approaches are less affected by the problem of imprecision because they are less dominated by causal questions, and more interested in constitutive questions (Wendt 1999, 77ff) – questions often inspired by (apparent) imprecision in the first place.4

From a post-positivist perspective, the problem of imprecision is to some extent inherent in any examination of complex social and political phenomena (Ruggie 1998, 37). It is precisely the exploration of the ‘imprecision’ generated by such complexity (as opposed to the attempt to simplify through the use of mechanisms such as modelling and the construction of theory via the hypothetico-deductive method) that lies at the heart of the post-positivist research agenda. As is discussed further below, reflecting these differences there is considerable debate within regime theory over epistemology between rationalists (who tend to be positivists) and interpretivists (who tend to be post-positivists).

At the empirical level, the problem of imprecision can lead to the tendency to conflate regimes with formal organisations (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986), or formal rules (Vogler 2003, 26-7) in an attempt to construct precision. Such a conflation risks a failure to grasp the more informal and subtle aspects of regime functioning. In turn this leads to problems with comprehending important political characteristics of regimes related to their legitimacy, such as norms, which are, at best, only partially captured with reference to formal rules and structures.

It is in trying to get around the problem of imprecision that empirical work on regimes can fall into the errors identified by the other major critique of regime theory – methodological statism.

Methodological statism
Methodological statism as a critique of regime theory derives from two different approaches. The first is the globalist critique of the biases in political analysis which make the nation-state central while largely ignoring other important elements of world politics, such as transnational corporations and non-governmental organisations (Cerny 1995; Rosenau 2002). Secondly, neo-Marxists, dependency theorists and neo-Gramscians critique the way in which a focus on states obscures systemic factors in the global system,

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4 The differences between causal and constitutive theorising is discussed in more detail in the next section of the Chapter.
such as capitalism, markets, and Western or Northern economic and cultural dominance (Gill 2003; Hutchings 2006; Strange 1983).

An important question posed by these critiques is the extent to which states should remain the sole or primary focus of research and political analysis in international relations. This has particular resonance in the deployment of regime theory in relation to analysis of aspects of the UN system because of the centrality of the member-states to the UN system. Research and analysis of the UN system often leads to a focus on the member-states as unitary actors who, at least apparently, control the system. While the secretariats of international organisations are often also seen as important players separate from the member-states, the formal power of member-states is difficult to look past when looking at the role of intergovernmental organisations.

A related problem with regime analysis involving the UN system is the tendency of Grotian paradigms such as regime theory to lean towards functionalist and ultimately teleological assumptions about the inevitability of world government as a corollary of the evolution of international society. Strange put this problem succinctly: ‘regime analysis risks overvaluing the positive and undervaluing the negative aspects of international cooperation... [It] gives the false impression (always argued by the neofunctionalists) that international regimes are indeed slowly advancing against the forces of disorder and anarchy.’ (Strange 1983, 349). The ever-lurking temptation to regard the UN and its agencies as a sort of world-government-in-waiting stems from the power of analogising state-level politics to the global level – another form of methodological statism.

The problems of imprecision and statist methodology are inherent in the regime research project, no matter how much we might wish them resolvable or of no consequence. However, they can also be seen as providing opportunities to regime scholars, and they point to some key issues with which the empirical study of regimes must contend. These issues can be summarised in the form of three insights applicable to the study of international regimes:

1. the importance of clarifying the roles of both state and non-state actors within regimes, while avoiding teleological or functionalist assumptions;
2. achieving an analytical balance between the formal rules and organisational elements on the one hand, and their relationship with the less formal, more ideational aspects of regimes on the other; and,
3. in view of the complexity and diversity of regimes, adopting an epistemology which avoids reductionist or oversimplified analysis in (premature) pursuit of generalisable statements.

This thesis seeks to apply these insights to its empirical approach to the international food aid regime and the WFP; their implications are taken up further in the section on epistemology and methodology.

**Different approaches to regime theory**

Up to now the argument has been concerned in general terms with establishing the relevance and significance of regime theory within the wider IR field. Regime theory itself is a broad church, however, characterised in particular by controversies between (and amongst) rationalist and interpretivist epistemological schools. These controversies are
being played out in debates over the relative significance of power, interests and ideational factors such as norms to regime strength, robustness, effectiveness, or legitimacy.

Hasenclever, Mayer and Rittberger’s influential survey of regime literature (Hasenclever, Mayer et al. 1997) argues that there are three schools of thought about regimes. Interest-based analyses are the ‘mainstream’ (Hasenclever, Mayer et al. 1997, 4) of regime theory and derive from the neoliberal theoretical position, concerned with how regimes are founded and operate to coordinate between rational, utility-maximizing state actors. Power-based analyses of regimes fit into the realist tradition, with an emphasis on nation-states as power-maximisers, along with scepticism about the robustness and independent power of social institutions in the international realm. The third school of thought is knowledge-based, or cognitivist analysis. This school is concerned with knowledge and identity, ideas, communication and interest formation, seeing ideas/norms as contiguous with, if not prior to, interests in regime formation and operation.\(^5\)

The power- and interest-based positions are rationalist; the cognitivists, however, are divided into weak and strong schools, depending on the extent to which they propose that an interpretive epistemology is required (Hasenclever, Mayer et al. 1997, Ch5). The weak cognitivists work with a rationalist rather than interpretive epistemology, where knowledge and ideas join power and interests as a ‘variable’ of relevance in explaining regimes. In the rationalist frame, individual, atomistic state actors act rationally to maximise their utility, be it in terms of interest or power, with some argument from weak cognitivists as to the role of knowledge and ideas in these processes. Underlying this frame tends to be an implicit assumption that world politics is an anarchy in which regime phenomena are exceptional and require explanation for their initial and then continuing existence.

Hasenclever et al.’s category of strong cognitivism, on the other hand, is based on a different kind of epistemology, built on a critique of rationalism, and preferring instead an interpretivist approach. The section below on epistemology and methodology will discuss these differences and their methodological implications in more detail. At this point, it is worth noting simply that strong cognitivism emphasises the need for understanding how regimes are constituted by the interrelationships between actors, norms and rules. Rather than adding ideational factors like norms as variables into theoretical modelling of regimes, interpretivists focus on the interlinkages between ideational and material factors as mutually constituted parts of a whole, constructed through human language and reasoning, and thence requiring interpretation for analysis (Kratochwil 1989).

Unlike Hasenclever et al., others define regime theory in terms which limit it to those adopting a rationalist approach. For example, Klotz defines regime theory in terms only of a rationalist epistemology and contrasts it with ‘interpretive theory’ (Klotz 1995). Similarly, Wendt characterises regime theory as merely a ‘forerunner of what became known as Neoliberalism’ (Wendt 1999, 137). Making such a distinction signals the extent to which regime theory has been dominated since the 1980s by rationalists (Ruggie 1998), but there is a difference between dominating a field and constituting it. There has always been an interpretivist strand to regime theory, starting with Ruggie who, as noted above,

\(^5\) This typology echoes Krasner’s list of causal factors behind regime development: interests; power; values (norms and principles), though Krasner added the two ‘supplementary’ factors of knowledge; and, usage and custom (Krasner 1983b, 10-20).
coined the term ‘regime’ in 1975. In view of the usefulness of grouping together scholars who share an interest in social institutions in the international realm, the approach here adopts Hasenclever et al.’s more broadly inclusive definition of regime theory.

Having resolved to make regime theory a big enough tent to include both rationalist and interpretivist versions, does not resolve the significant differences between the two approaches, however. The conclusion in Hasenclever et al. suggests that in regime theory it is this division which is of the most significance. Neoliberal, realist (neo and classical versions) and weak cognitivist positions are all capable of synthesis with each other (Hasenclever, Mayer et al. 1997, 216) – indeed the main debate between neoliberals and realists seems to be over who is subsuming whom (Hasenclever, Mayer et al. 1997, 212; see also Baldwin 1993; Wendt 1999, 137). But the epistemological differences between strong cognitivism and the other, rationalist, approaches are too deep and the positions too incommensurable to allow a synthesis to occur between them; in the alternative there is only hope for a ‘fruitful dialogue’ (Hasenclever, Mayer et al. 1997, 219ff).

The extent to which this divide is unbridgeable is a matter of some debate (see e.g. Wendt 1999, 38-40; Reus-Smit 2001; Ruggie 1998, 36-9); a debate which, as with most discussion of disciplinary divides, tends to end with a call for further empirical work to assist in assessing the merits of each side and finding ways or means to synthesise the two sides. I am sceptical about this, as the divide is embedded in the design of empirical approaches and cannot be eliminated by recourse to a commonly accepted evidentiary assessment; however, resolving or bridging the epistemological divide is not necessary for fruitful regime research to be conducted (on both sides). This brings us to the more substantive controversies within regime theory to which empirical research can contribute and which form some of the central research questions for this thesis.

**Power versus coherence in regime theory**

A longstanding interest of regime theorists is understanding when and how a regime will develop and become significant in the international realm (Krasner 1983a). An initial focus by regime theorists on processes of regime change and evolution tended to posit two sources of regime strength (Kratochwil 1989, 61): coherence, and hegemonic power, relating respectively to the interest-based and power-based schools in regime theory.

The first approach attributes the strength of a regime to the coherence between Krasner’s elements of principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures (Krasner 1983b, 5). This model of regime strength is linked in particular to neoliberal institutionalism in as much as coherence relates to the extent to which the regime lends itself to the rational expression and pursuit of actor interests (e.g. Stein 1983). However, as Kratochwil and Ruggie point out, this focus on coherence and rationality is based on an undesirably instrumentalist separation of goals and means (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986, 770ff), whereas regimes are ‘usually the result of accretion and incremental choices’ rather than the outcome of ‘deliberate design.’ Also, ‘most explicitly negotiated regimes serve not only one, but several purposes’ (Kratochwil 1989, 59). The tendency for the coherence argument to drift into instrumentalism is a significant weakness, but there is some value in the concept of coherence when taken as referring to the importance of the interrelationships between regime elements, though it is probably more useful to think of this in terms of institutionalisation rather than coherence per se.
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The second approach argues for the centrality of hegemonic power in supporting the creation and development of regimes. This approach has taken its best known form as hegemonic stability theory, which posits regime formation as dependent on a predominant power (hegemon) to provide leadership and resources in order to overcome the problems of collective action that tend to obstruct the creation of public goods (Keohane 1983; 1984; Hasenclever, Mayer et al. 1997, 86-104; Krasner 1983b, 13-6). In placing power at the centre of the analysis, this model of regime strength is linked in particular to neo-realism. Hegemonic stability theory has arguably struggled to account for the persistence and robustness of regimes in the context of hegemonic decline (Kratochwil 1989, 61), though Keohane confronts this problem by focusing on the significance of the hegemon’s role in initiating and establishing regimes, and contemplating how regimes can continue to function and ultimately supersede hegemonic origins (Keohane 1984). As is clear from the dominant, central role of the United States in the international food aid regime, there is a need to comprehend hegemonic power as a factor of some importance in the construction of this particular regime. However, this is not necessarily an applicable generalisation for all regimes, and it is important to note the limits of an analysis of regimes focused solely on hegemonic power.

Kratochwil notes that such power-based approaches to regimes do not take adequate account of the complexity of the interaction between actors and structures of rules and norms. He points out the need to go beyond an assumption that rules and norms simply act as constraints on the exercise of power:

> many legal prescriptions are rather enabling rules that set actors free to pursue their own goals. Rule-following is therefore not a passive process in which the impact of rules can be ascertained analogously to Newtonian laws governing the collision of two bodies: it is, rather, intensely dynamic. Actors are not only programmed by rules and norms, but they reproduce and change by their practice the normative structures by which they are able to act, share meanings, communicate intentions, criticize claims, and justify choices. (Kratochwil 1989, 61).

In more recent years the cognitivist-based, or constructivist, regime theorists have sought to place ideational sources at the centre of regime evolution and strength, with particular attention to norms and legitimacy. These two interrelated concepts lie at the heart of the most significant contemporary debates in regime theory, with each playing an integral role in constituting regimes. Legitimacy to a large degree tends to presume the existence of normative structures, so before coming to a discussion of legitimacy debates it is useful first to look at ways of understanding norms in the international realm.

**Regime norms and actor interests**

Constructivist literature commonly considers norms in an abstract, ‘pre-empirical’ sense without necessarily referring to a regime or institutional context. While this is generally a convenient and appropriate analytical strategy, as noted below, it can also risk reifying norms in a manner problematic to empirical enquiry. In this context, it is useful to preface this discussion with some basic assumptions about the relationship between norms and regimes. Norms are taken to be the ideational core of regimes, underlying the formal rules and processes in international affairs, but this is not meant to attribute a simple causal relationship between the two levels. To say norms underlie formal rules and processes is not to imply that they cause or produce them, rather they can be conceived of as a deeper structure in sociological terms. Norms are often formalised in rules and processes; but also
derive from and evolve through the operation of rules and procedures in a social context involving ideas, discourse and agent actions.

Finnemore and Sikkink suggest a basic, generally agreed ‘definition of a norm as a standard of appropriate behavior for actors with a given identity’ (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 891). That is, norms are shared or collective understandings of appropriate behaviour (Eckersley 2007b, 14; Legro 1997, 33; Florini 1996, 364; Checkel 1999, 83). This consensus definition needs to be interpreted carefully, though, to avoid an implicit bias toward assessing norms in terms of behaviour. As Kratochwil points out, norms go beyond being ‘guidance mechanisms’; they are also ‘the means which allow people to pursue goals, share meanings, communicate with each other, criticize assertions, and justify actions.’ (Kratochwil 1989, 11; Steffek 2003).

The existence of a social institution connotes the existence of one or more norms which create the intersubjective social understandings necessary to render that institution coherent and meaningful. Indeed, the very process of institutionalisation can be taken as referring to the embedding of shared understandings into a web of rules and expectations. Given the diversity of international institutions, and within that category, of regimes, it is only to be expected that norms are themselves highly diverse and difficult to generalise about. Finnemore and Sikkink note that various categories for norms have been developed, most commonly with a distinction between ‘regulative norms, which order and constrain behavior, and constitutive norms, which create new actors, interests, or categories of action’ (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 891). However, such a distinction is potentially at odds with an understanding of the discursive and, fundamentally, constitutive role of all norms – that is, that norms are part of a set of social understandings which play a central role in constructing identities and interests, (while at the same time themselves developing from social interactions around identities and interests). Thus Ruggie applies the regulative/constitutive distinction to rules, without reference to norms (Ruggie 1998, 22-5).

Another, more productive way of typologising norms is via their institutional setting. For example, Reus-Smit’s distinctions between constitutive institutions (sovereignty), fundamental institutions (international law and multilateralism), and regimes (Reus-Smit 2007, 159) imply different types of norms behind those institutions, in a way suggestive of the constitutive/regulative distinction. The deeper, more fundamental the institution is, the more diffuse – that is, embedded and implicit in social practices – its norms are. Regimes as subsystemic institutions with narrower scope arguably tend to be more regulative (within an issue area) than broadly constitutive in the way systemic institutions are. However, this distinction is more accurately described as systemic/subsystemic than constitutive/regulative.

Such a differentiation between systemic and subsystemic institutions/norms is called up by Puchala and Hopkins’ identification of a regime superstructure (Puchala and Hopkins 1983, 64-5), referring ‘to general and diffuse principles and norms that condition the principles and norms operative in a specific issue-area’ (Krasner 1983b, 17). Another example is Elliott’s distinction between regime norms deriving from the institution of sovereignty (‘sovereignty norms’) and regime norms deriving from the institution of multilateralism (‘interdependence norms’), which suggests various regime norms differ depending on their derivation from deeper institutions and hence more fundamental or systemic-level norms (Elliott 1994, 11-2).
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These distinctions point to regime norms, in part, developing from other pre-existing systemic level norms. But this relationship is constitutive rather than causal – systemic norms do not ‘cause’ regime norms, they help to constitute them given a particular context of issues and actors with identities and interests. This is not the only inter-norm relationship of interest, though.

A growing literature is concerned with the relationship between international (mainly regime level) norms and domestic level norms (Checkel 1997; 1999; Cortell and Davis 1996; 2005; Klotz 1995; Risse 1999). The focus is on how one affects the other, from providing an originating source, to enhancing the ‘transmission’ (Checkel 1997), ‘diffusion’ (Cortell and Davis 2005) or adoption of the less established of the two.

The empirical examination of the evolution of the international food aid regime in this thesis demonstrates the complexity of the interrelationships between the international feed-the-hungry norm and the domestic US feed-the-hungry norm, but also points to the importance of the interrelationship between these norms and US power and interests (in both material and idealist senses). As will be argued in more detail in the next section of this chapter, the complex nature of international social institutions requires an approach to their analysis that is cautious about abstracting individual elements such as norms from their institutional context. In turn, this suggests the importance of the long running debate about the nature of the relationship between norms and interests.

Norms and interests
By and large, two schools of thought dominate the norms/interests debate. Neoliberal institutionalists argue from the premises of a rationalist model assuming the pursuit of interests by atomised egoist state actors (Hay 2002; Reus-Smit 2001). When norms are introduced to this model, they appear as intervening variables analytically independent from and caused by the prior structure of interests which is assumed as lying beneath the functioning of the international realm (Keohane 1984; Klotz 1995; Stein 1983, 14).

Constructivism evolved in part out of a dissatisfaction with the rationalist materialism implied in this approach (Ruggie 1998, 3-4). Constructivists such as Wendt point out that it is important to ask where interests come from, rather than simply assume them to be the basis for all actions (Wendt 1999, 33ff). In answering this question it becomes necessary to abandon the rationalist model of atomistic actors and adopt a social (Wendt 1999) or relational (Ruggie 1998) ontology which sees actors in a social context. Actor identities and ultimately actor perceptions of their interests derive from this context in which norms operate as significant ideational structures. However, this approach tends to result in an inversion of the neoliberal paradigm by suggesting that as norms are constitutive of identity and interests derive from identity, ultimately interests derive from norms: an emphasis on norms can lead to attributing to them a prior, constitutive relationship to interests. Thus Checkel notes that constructivists can fall into the trap of giving norms a structural role and struggle with the agency of actors vis a vis norms (Checkel 1999).

Arguably, over time the various subsystemic norms will, in turn, have had impacts on the systemic level norms as well.
Rather than seeing interests as prior to and the cause of norms, or conversely, norms as preceding and constructing interests, this thesis argues that interests and norms must be seen as mutually constituted (Klotz 1995, 27). The evolution of the international food aid regime demonstrates the interrelationships between material/ideational interests and the norms that they help construct – at both international and domestic US levels. These norms help construct actor perceptions of their interests, even as those interests contribute to the construction and evolution of the norms. This norm/interest interrelationship argument is developed in some detail in Chapter Two with reference to the international and US domestic variants of the feed-the-hungry norm.

Legitimacy, power and regimes

So far, I have argued that regime norms emerge in a social context in which actor interests and other norms operate. Other norms can be above (systemic), or below (domestic). This process of emergence is not a one-way causal path, but involves iteration between norms and interests. However, norms should be understood as political phenomena in more ways than just in relation to other norms and actor interests. After all, norms are of particular relevance to political analysis because of their political implications. In creating a shared understanding of ‘oughtness’, and through their relationship with the processes of power, norms also play a significant role in constructing legitimacy.

In other words, an analysis of the development of the international food aid regime via a focus on norms and interests, emphasising the significance of the US as the dominant state actor, would only tell half the story of the regime. The other half of the story must focus on the political functioning of the regime, as seen through the interactions of power and legitimacy in the World Food Programme. This is the focus of Chapters Five and Six. Section three of this chapter will discuss in more detail the analytical framework used to guide this analysis; at this point I need to clarify the concept of legitimacy in international relations.

Legitimacy is generally considered of political significance because of its implications for the effective operation of power – legitimate power, it is argued, is power which has a significantly reduced need for coercion to engender compliance (Beetham 1991; Clark 2007; Reus-Smit 2007; Steffek 2003). That is, legitimacy connotes consent on the part of the governed, exemplified in voluntary compliance (Hurd 1999). For those exercising power such compliance is inherently more sustainable in the long-term than reliance, for example, on bribery or brute-force coercion which requires costly material resources, and may engender resistance and the possibility of loss of authority (Reus-Smit 2007; Steffek 2003, 254-5).

But defining legitimacy in terms of this distinction between compliance due to coercion or bribery and freely chosen compliance based on the accepted legitimacy of authority is problematic. The distinction fails to appreciate the subtleties of the interplay between different forms and levels of coercion inherent in power, which Gramsci articulated in his conception of hegemony (Gramsci 1988). Take, for example, the Stockholm syndrome, in

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7 Arguably the norms associated with other regimes – i.e. at the subsystemic level – also play an influencing role, but the phenomenon of interaction between regimes requires research well beyond the scope of this inquiry.
which hostages begin to identify and side with their captors (that is, accord legitimacy to their authority). While an extreme case, this example points to the way in which brute-force coercion can, over time, give way to an (apparently) voluntary form of acceptance of authority. Of course, not all processes of internalising the acceptance of authority derive from such explicitly coercive contexts. Reflecting this, they are often described as the process of socialisation (Ikenberry and Kupchan 1990), echoing the process by which norms become accepted.

The relationship between compliance and legitimacy is far from clear, as the form of consent is closely linked to the kinds of power exercised in maintaining an institution, which tend to be multifarious (Barnett and Duvall 2005a; 2005b). Forms of coercion and bribery may operate historically or contemporaneously to varying degrees to supplement or push the institutionalisation of norms that produce compliance in the absence of explicit compulsion – i.e. in ‘voluntary’ form.8

In addition, the voluntary compliance model of legitimacy assumes a one way operation of authority and power, but legitimacy involves a good deal more than a type of linear transmission of authority to ‘voluntary subjects’. Those actors in a powerful position generally themselves desire legitimacy – in the form of acknowledgement and consent to their authority – as much in the normative sense (that is, seeing themselves as legitimately exercising power) as in the material reality of compliance. Legitimacy is often itself, in a deeper, social sense, a normative understanding shared by authority and subjects alike. This then relates back to the concept of a constitutional order (Ikenberry 2001a, Ch2) by which both weak and powerful are bound. As Clark puts it,

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\text{[e]ven if [legitimate] institutions have their origins in the exercise of power by the strong, the paradox is that they remain 'constitutional' even for those leading powers that politically crafted them in the first place. (Clark 2005, 19).}
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In a sense, then, legitimacy can be seen as stemming from the interaction of power with norms. Beetham conveys some of the subtle normative elements of legitimated power as follows:

If power is one person's ability to achieve their purposes through others, then it cannot be a matter of capacities and resources alone, but also depends on the degree of the others' willingness to cooperate. And that willingness cannot be sufficiently created by incentives and sanctions on their own; it depends on the normative status of the power holder, and on normative considerations that engage us as moral agents. (Beetham 1991, 38).

However, there is more to legitimacy as a political concept than just normative considerations interacting with the exercise of power. It also involves the existence of belief and ideas. The concept of legitimacy is complicated because of its contrasting prescriptive (normative) and descriptive (empirical) aspects (Beetham 1991; Steffek 2003, 253; Clark 2005, 18). While philosophers are concerned with the normative aspect of legitimacy – the basis for it in morality or justice – social scientists starting with Weber have tended to focus on measuring the extent to which a given rule or institution is accepted as legitimate in terms of the beliefs of people within its orbit (Beetham 1991). Beetham suggests the importance of reconciling these two elements by considering further, not just a

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8 The failure to acknowledge this problem is partly why Steffek’s attempt to distinguish coerced compliance from compliance due to legitimacy ends up with the circularity that legitimacy (via voluntary compliance) exists when actors consider the power exercised by authority ‘binding’ (Steffek 2003, 255). ‘Binding’ is surely little more than a synonym for ‘legitimate’.
measurement of people’s beliefs in the legitimacy of power structures, but also why they hold those beliefs. This leads us to consider the sources of legitimacy (rather than the form of compliance) as providing a basis for grasping its political functioning and significance in a given context.

Sources of legitimacy
Reus-Smit comments that ‘when we speak of an institution commanding legitimacy…we are saying that there is a generalized perception that its normative precepts are rightful, that they warrant respect and compliance for more than self-interested reasons, for reasons of their normative standing’ (Reus-Smit 2007, 159). The suggestion of circularity in this statement (norms are rightful by dint of their ‘normativeness’) is linked to the close relationship between norms and legitimacy. Finnemore and Sikkink reverse the direction taken around the circle by Reus-Smit when they explain the adoption of norms, in part, in terms of legitimisation via socialisation (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 902-3). That is, rather than explaining legitimacy in terms of norms – which Steffek describes as a standard approach for IR theorists (Steffek 2003, 252) – they explain norms, at least partially, in terms of legitimacy.

As various scholars have argued (Checkel 1999; Cortell and Davis 1996; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Kratochwil 1989), norms do not magically appear fully formed as expressions of legitimacy. Rather they must be understood as evolving from social processes. Yet, at the point at which a norm becomes widely accepted (or institutionalised), as a shared understanding of the rightfulness or oughtness of a standard of behaviour, a norm also becomes in some sense an expression of legitimacy. That is, an illegitimate norm is a contradiction in terms – if it is lacking legitimacy, it can scarcely be a norm.

If a focus on norms as the source of legitimacy tends to end up in circularity, how then can we assess the legitimacy of an institution? Two dimensions are involved.

Firstly, while an institution’s norms give expression to the dimensions of its legitimacy in terms of the issue area, it is its political functionality expressed in its rules and decision-making processes and the extent to which they are inclusive and accountable, and its perceived effectiveness that construct the degree of its legitimacy in the international realm.

When considering legitimacy as a function of all these regime elements, the arguments concerning the importance of their coherence to the strength or robustness of a regime again come to the fore. According to the coherence argument, a regime will increase its legitimacy the more its rules and decision-making processes are in accord with its normative precepts. However, missing from this view of legitimacy as deriving from the interaction of regime elements is the exercise of power by actors within a regime that must surely be at the core of any consideration of legitimacy. It is through the operation of power – both in the material and social senses – that inclusion, accountability and effectiveness are rendered as pragmatic political realities constructing both the normative and descriptive aspects of legitimacy.

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[9] Norms nonetheless help establish the boundaries of legitimacy in a given institutional context.
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In the case of the international food aid regime, this brings us to the nature of the US as the sole great power within the regime. The status of the US as the sole superpower is frequently confirmed with reference to the fact that it spends more than the rest of the world put together on its military. Similarly, its dominant position in the international food aid regime is illustrated by the fact that it has dominated multilateral, bilateral and NGO food aid donations in the post-war period and continues to be the largest donor to the WFP (see Appendix 9). It is important, however, to supplement such material definitions of US power with the (interconnected, though more limited) social power exercised by the US in the institutional context. It is the ways in which the food aid regime mediates these various forms of material and social US power – primarily viewed through the governance processes of the World Food Programme – which lie at the heart of understanding the relationship between power and legitimacy in that international institution.

Conclusion

So far, I have critically explored the concept of institutions in the international realm, and in particular, of regimes as subsystemic institutions. Analysis of the political functioning of regimes is an important part of IR scholarship, especially in the context of globalisation and unipolarity; moreover, the focus of such analysis must involve empirical examination of norms, interests, power and legitimacy.

The balance of this chapter is concerned with how to operationalise such enquiry. The next section situates this thesis in the main epistemological debates by way of introducing the methodological approach taken, including the details of the research methods chosen and used. The final section then defines the evaluative framework used to assess the legitimacy of the international food aid regime and the WFP.

2. Epistemology, methodology and regimes

Empirical approaches to the central debates in regime theory reflect the key epistemological and broader theoretical divisions in IR. In other words, the methodological approach used will vary depending on the theoretical framework from which it derives (and which it informs). In turn, this will reflect ontological views of the realm and structures under examination, together with an epistemology appropriate to them.

A significant theoretical issue affecting epistemology and consequently methodology concerns the truth claims of researchers (Reus-Smit 2001, 214; also Finlayson, Bevir et al. 2004; Marsh and Furlong 2002; Ruggie 1998, Ch1). That is, whether an objective reality external to any individual exists, and if it does, whether it is ‘knowable’. Typically this debate is cast between two extremes. The positivist enterprise is predicated on a foundationalist position in which the pursuit of objectively defined and knowable Truth is the aim of research. In contrast with this is the anti- (or post-) foundationalist view derived from post-modernism and post-structuralism, in which reality is regarded as inevitably a
product of social construction via discourses and their interpretation. All knowledge, in the anti-foundationalist view, is contingent, linked to social processes. It can be subjected to analytical techniques such as deconstruction or discourse analysis, but there will never be a single truth, only many perspectives about how to understand and interpret reality.

The anti-foundationalist position has complex normative implications. For its critics in particular, it leads to relativism, in which no set of knowledge claims can have pre-eminence over others, and therefore denies any legitimate differentiation between good and bad (King, Keohane et al. 1994; Ruggie 1998; Wendt 1999). In turn, this calls into question how anti-foundationalists can themselves decide what is better or worse, not only normatively, but also in terms of research design, methodology and analysis. For others, such as critical theorists, anti-foundationalism derives from a strong normative concern with dominance and coercion, in which the very act of claiming Truth is problematised for its potential to subjugate (Cox 1987; also Reus-Smit 2001, 214). This critical theory stream of anti-foundationalism explicitly valorises research design concerned with issues of power.

At the same time both foundationalist and anti-foundationalist positions are capable of agreeing that there is a realm of social interaction denoted as international relations, for example. The interactions of people do generate shared understandings, and even much of the anti-foundationalist enterprise is predicated on the existence of intersubjective comprehension of some forms of knowledge and agreement on its meaning. Thus, it is through such shared understandings of global politics that representation and meaning (and, indeed, governance) become possible (Kratochwil 1989). The very act of writing a thesis is predicated on the existence of such understandings.

A detailed discussion of these issues is well beyond the scope of this thesis, but it is important to be clear and explicit on my own position in relation to the foundationalism debate, given this provides the logic of the methodology used in this research. I incline to the view that an objective reality does exist, but our capacity to know and comprehend it is limited, and absolute claims predicated on knowledge of reality, or assumptions about its nature must be treated with scepticism. The process of attempting to understand, let alone know that reality (in particular in relation to complex social systems), while important, tends to come up against fundamental interpretive limits. Thus, at its most productive the pursuit of knowledge (or Truth) takes account of those limits, while seeking to test them.

**Epistemology and regime study**

As discussed above, research interest in international regimes derives from a social or relational ontology of the international realm. Implicit in regime study is a view that social structures matter, and exist as more than a mere sum of their participant actors. In turn, this implies the salience of complexity theory when considering epistemological issues.

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10 This debate involves different dimensions, depending on whether it is referring to the natural world, the social world, or critiquing the distinction between them. For my purposes here, reference to the foundationalist debate over reality refer to the social world.
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Complexity and regimes

Complexity as a defining analytical characteristic of systems (in which the whole is greater than the sum of its parts) is examined and drawn out in some detail by Cilliers (1998). He argues that complex systems are open, rather than closed, and evolve and change through time through a mix of internal and external interactions – ‘their past is co-responsible for their present behaviour’ (Cilliers 1998, 4). Complex system characteristics include rich and dynamic interactions between system elements, non-linearity (small causes can have large results and vice versa), and recurrency (negative and positive feedback loops) (Cilliers 1998, 3-4). Such systems are also self-organising (autopoietic) (Cilliers 1998, 10-2).

These characteristics render inadequate the use of the sort of modelling and simplification traditionally used in science to analyse systems: ‘A complex system is not constituted merely by the sum of its components, but also by the intricate relationships between these components. In “cutting up” a system, the analytical method destroys what it seeks to understand.’ (Cilliers 1998, 2). If, as proposed here, international regimes are seen as complex systems in Cilliers’ sense, this has important implications for the epistemological approach taken.

In the first section of this chapter I put forward three propositions about the nature of regime study with epistemological implications. These were to:

1. clarify the roles of both state and non-state actors within regimes, while avoiding teleological or functionalist assumptions;
2. achieve an analytical balance between the formal rules and organisational elements on the one hand, and their relationship with the less formal, more ideational aspects of regimes on the other; and,
3. in view of the complexity and diversity of regimes, adopt an epistemology which avoids reductionist or oversimplified analysis in (premature) pursuit of generalisable statements.

These propositions are echoed in Cilliers’ arguments about the characteristics of complex systems. First, regimes involve multiple, non-comparable actors (state and non-state) in relationships which are recurrent and non-linear, involving rich and dynamic interactions. These relationships can be neither explained nor understood by modelling on the basis of teleological or functionalist assumptions. Second, important aspects of the regime as a complex system lie not only in its formal rules and organisations, but also in its history, and the role of ideational factors in its (autopoietic) process of evolution, meaning all are important to its analysis. Lastly, the global system of politics involving regimes as units is itself complex. This means apparently generalisable statements about the nature of regimes based on isolating one or more from its system context rely on a faulty epistemology that fails to grasp important aspects of the wider system.

In a parallel form of Cilliers’ argument about the inadequacy of modelling to comprehend complex systems, Kratochwil and Ruggie mount an important critique of the rationalist approach to regime theory as involving a conflict between ontology and epistemology. In this critique, they point out that to engage in the study of regimes is to begin with ontological assumptions about the existence and importance of social institutions. Yet

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11 While autopoietic literally means self-producing, Cilliers refers to it as self-organising. Cilliers writes as a philosopher of science, and focuses on natural language and the human brain as examples of complex systems.
rationalism uses a positivist epistemology based on assumptions that actors are pre-social, with interests exogenous to their social context (Reus-Smit 2001, 213; also Hasenclever, Mayer et al. 1997, 158ff). These assumptions are necessary in order to isolate and theorise variables and their causal relationships – a process required by positivist epistemology – but they also deny the significance if not the existence of social interactions grouped together into institutional frameworks. It follows, they argue, that there is a fundamental incompatibility between rationalism’s use of positivist epistemology and the social ontology on which regime theory is predicated (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986, 764-5).

Rationalist approaches to regime theory use modelling and simplification techniques derived from traditional positivist epistemology and place particular emphasis on causal relationships. Positivism assumes a Cartesian dichotomy between the objective, material world and the subjective, ideational world (Fierke 2002, 134), seeking to distil the former and exclude the latter in the pursuit of scientifically rigorous objective knowledge. As is common in the study of economics from which rationalist IR derives (Hasenclever, Mayer et al. 1997, 4; Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986), an objective, material world is made possible to analyse through the use of a model in which atomistic, egoist actors engage in the rational pursuit of interests in a strategic realm. This model is assumed to approximate reality sufficiently to be adopted as a model universe amenable to the generation of testable hypotheses that can explain reality.

However, following the reasoning of Kratochwil and Ruggie, a social ontology requires an interpretivist or post-positivist rather than positivist epistemology. Interpretivism derives from a view that the political and social world is socially constructed rather than existing in an objective sense. Hence, processes of analysing and understanding these worlds require interpretation of the ideas and language or discourse involved in their construction (Marsh and Furlong 2002, 26). In the context of regime theory, the interpretivist approach is linked to the constructivist turn in IR (Checkel 1998), concerned with understanding how actors’ identities and interests are constituted in the context of historical change and social structures, rather than with an explanatory model of causal relationships in which variables are (artificially) isolated from other factors. Rather than exclude context by modelling, interpretivism makes it central to analysis, in order to acknowledge the role ideas (and language) play in constructing reality.  

Before going on to consider how this translates into methodology, it is important to clarify how the proposed interpretive approach relates to the contrast commonly drawn between constitutive theorising (understanding) and causal theorising (explanation), in which interpretivism is often taken to be based on constitutive theorising.

Understanding and explanation
Wendt argues there are distinct, but complementary, roles for causal and constitutive theorising (Wendt 1999, 77-89). Causal theorising is concerned with answering ‘why’ and

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12 Not all constructivists accept such a necessary relationship between social ontology and an interpretivist epistemology. For example, Wendt emphasises the difference between his social ontology and the materialist ontology of rationalism, while attempting to maintain a positivist epistemology, albeit with some methodological changes from the usual approach (Wendt 1999). See also a recent discussion in International Studies Review on methodology between positivist and post-positivist constructivists (Checkel 2006; Dunn 2006; Klotz and Lynch 2006).
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some ‘how’ questions (explanation); constitutive theorising is concerned with ‘how-possible’ and ‘what’ questions (understanding):

Rather than asking how or why a temporally prior X produced an independently existing Y, how-possible and what-questions are requests for explications of the structures that constitute X and Y in the first place. (Wendt 1999, 83).

Wendt is careful not to oppose constitutive theorising to causal theorising – indeed central to his argument is a critique of the tendency for interpretivists to line up with constitutive thinking, and positivists with causal thinking, when both are needed and both are interconnected. Even in natural science (let alone social science) both causal and constitutive approaches are important – Wendt cites the double helix theory of DNA structure as an example of such natural science constitutive theorising (Wendt 1999, 85). Hence, he argues, ‘there is no fundamental epistemological difference between Explanation and Understanding’ (Wendt 1999, 85; see also King, Keohane et al. 1994; Klotz and Lynch 2006). As in the example of DNA structure, a sophisticated kind of analytical understanding in social science may contribute to explanation, or carry with it explanatory power.

Cilliers argues in a similar vein that explanation and understanding are both necessary parts of the analysis of complex systems (Cilliers 1998, 13). It is important to note that the use of modelling to simplify complex systems or phenomena in economics and political science can be as much about understanding them as to explain them (though the emphasis on causality in positivistic political science does lead to an emphasis on the explanatory end of the scale). The significance of Cilliers’ critique of applying standard positivist modelling to complex systems does not lie in a victory to the importance of understanding over explanation. It lies in the inherent limitations of such modelling as a route to both.

Understanding the role and significance of the US in establishing and supporting the international food aid regime, and how this has in turn impacted on US norms and interests, amounts to a causal as much as a constitutive conceptualisation of that regime and the nature of hegemonic interaction with it. Such understandings derive from an interpretivist epistemology, which comprehends that actors and structures, as much as norms and interests, do not have a linear relationship but are mutually constituted (Klotz and Lynch 2006, 356; Reus-Smit 2001, 218). Mutual constitution relates to an explanatory form of theorising which shows how they can be both cause and effect at the same time – but this can only be grasped with a deep understanding of that interrelationship. Ultimately, understanding and explanation are entwined together as goals of political analysis; the epistemological approach adopted here assumes that it is impossible to achieve one without the other.

Research design: a case study approach

Given the heterogeneous and complex nature of international regimes there is a need for detailed empirical work at the individual case study level to build a store of knowledge and understanding that will help inform future study of regimes and further develop our understanding of politics at the global level. In fact, consistent with Kratochwil and Ruggie’s argument about aligning the social ontology of regime theory with an interpretive epistemology, an interpretive case study approach is well-established as a commonly practised approach to regime study (Elliott 1994; Evans 1996; Hopkins 1992; Klotz 1995;
Ruggie 1998; Uvin 1994). This thesis is part of this well-established research tradition, in which study of a regime contributes to theory building about politics at the global level.

The use of an interpretive approach also implies a different logic to the choice of case study than that deriving from a causal-explanatory, positivist approach. In the latter, one or more case studies need to be justified in terms of their capacity to prove or disprove theoretical propositions or hypotheses. It is then necessary to justify the choice of a case in terms of its relationship to a larger sample (or population), based on the particular variables of interest. An interpretive approach, however, runs more along the lines of an idiographic approach to case study (or, in Gerring’s terminology, a single-outcome study), in which the focus is not what the case can contribute to a broader theory, but what it can provide in and of itself (Gerring 2007, 187-210). Following this logic, the case study approach being taken is best defined as idiographic and illustrative, rather than necessarily typical and definitive.

The appropriateness of such an approach stems from two characteristics of regimes in the international realm. First, regimes are so heterogeneous as to be non-comparable (rendering the notion of a ‘population’ or sample of regimes deeply problematic). At the same time, regimes do not exist ‘independently’; many are interrelated – for example, as later chapters show, there is considerable interplay between the food aid and agricultural trade regimes – and hence collectively they form parts of a complex system of international politics. As Cilliers points out, such a system ‘cannot be reduced to a collection of its basic constituents, not because the system is not constituted by them, but because too much of the relational information gets lost in the process’ (Cilliers 1998, 10).

The main implication of taking an idiographic approach to the case study is that it does not provide a strong basis on which to generalise about regimes or international politics. It does, however, have a capacity to improve our understanding of a particular institution in international politics – an understanding that includes causal as well as other relationships – and hence contribute to a deepening of our understanding of such institutions more broadly.

Choice of case
This thesis is focused on examining the construction of legitimacy in the international food aid regime as a means to pursuing research questions concerning the nature of US hegemony and its impacts on legitimacy in an international organisation and hence global governance. But it is important to clarify on what basis the WFP, and by extension, the international food aid regime were made the case at hand. (It is worth noting that a centrally embedded organisation in a regime can help to operationalise research into a regime by providing a focus for the application of research methods – in this study, given an interpretive approach is being used, these methods are generally historical and ethnographic).

In light of the research questions at the heart of this study, the choice of case requires a regime and organisation in which the US plays a clearly dominant or hegemonic role, and which is concerned with a globally defined problem, and which has been under-examined.

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13 Though there is the possibility of groupings of similar regimes forming mini-populations which are comparable. Such taxonomisation of regimes is outside the scope of this thesis.
14 Given the argument about complexity and heterogeneity posed above, however, any approach which claims a capacity to generalise on the basis of a causal-explanatory case study will suffer from epistemological problems at least as large as this methodological constraint.
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in recent years. Chapter Two discusses in more detail the characteristics of the WFP that make it (and consequently the international food aid regime) a case of interest and importance in relation to the research questions.

Methodology and methods

In the analysis of institutions, interconnections and influences are of great importance, in particular the interaction between ideational concepts such as perspective, perception and norms, and the more physical realities such as people, place, hunger, transport, money and food. Ideas matter, but can never be disconnected from the lived experiences they both derive from and structure or influence. An organisational locus in regime research provides relatively well and concretely defined rules and decision-making processes, and a place where the regime principles and norms are not only articulated, but, through social interaction, developed and interpreted.

The research questions suggest two foci for the empirical work: (1) the WFP’s processes of governing and governance; and, (2) the role of the US as the predominant actor, within the context of the development and evolution of both the regime and the WFP.

In light of the theoretical and epistemological discussions above, historical and ethnographic methods were adopted as the means for conducting this research. The qualitative methods involved have some echoes in the causal-explanatory method known as process-tracing (Checkel 2006, 365; Gerring 2007, Ch7). Process-tracing is characterised by the use of multiple types of evidence involving non-comparable data to build narratives, analogous to detective work (Gerring 2007). However, process tracing attempts to fit qualitative methods associated with interpretive methodology such as interviews and observations into a positivist research agenda associated with theory testing. The interpretive approach taken here uses such qualitative methods for development of knowledge, understanding and explanation without requiring a pre-existing falsifiable hypothesis derived from a more general theory.

Apart from secondary materials, generally there are three potential primary sources of information in undertaking interpretive organisational research – documents, individual people (via interviews and observation), and group processes (via observation). Using all three provides the benefits of triangulation (Patton 2002, 247-8; also Stake 1995, Ch7) which strengthens the validity of research through combining methods and testing the data or information gathered by increasing the range of sources and perspectives from which the information is derived.

Relevant documents include official Government and WFP documents, such as resolutions, reviews and reports, surveys, policy documents and statistical information. However, the version of governance that emerges from such documents will tend to be two dimensional. For example, the minutes of a meeting cannot always convey all the nuances of organisational governance in the way that directly observing a meeting can. Also relevant are perspectives from other participants in the food aid regime and the wider UN system – for example, from other intergovernmental organisations, and non-state actors. These

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15 See (Checkel 2006, 365) on use of triangulation in process tracing; see (Gerring 2007, 184-5) on triangulation by use of process tracing with other research methods.
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perspectives can be garnered from individual interviews, and observation of collective interactions.

In view of the global nature of the research question, there are significant pragmatic issues concerned with the potentially enormous territory to cover, and the physical availability of interview participants and documents. The most practicable means of dealing with this was to target a particular time, place and process of significance to WFP – that is, a WFP Executive Board meeting. Apart from such pragmatic considerations, it was also relevant to observe as much as possible the wider context for such a decision-making forum – the inevitable informal, off-the-table interactions that were inaccessible through solely observing the meeting in formal session. WFP generously granted me permission to attend its annual Executive Board meeting, held in Rome, Italy, from 6-10 June, 2005 as an observer. In the course of being based in the library at WFP Headquarters from 1-28 June, 2005, I consequently had the opportunity to observe the operations of the WFP Executive Board at first hand, along with conducting formal interviews and an array of informal conversations with staff and delegates over a longer period than just the formal meeting.

Formal interviews were conducted with 24 people currently or previously involved with the WFP in Australia, the United States, Italy and Switzerland. These interviews provided an important supplement to the observational and documentary evidence. Interviewing methodology varies widely. Some is quantitative, and aims to be systematic and replicable in terms of the participant group and the structure of interviews, or through the use of a survey. The in-depth form of interviewing, in contrast to this, derives from the social rather than natural sciences and is a method used in interpretive research (Minichiello, Aroni et al. 1990, 94; Sennett 2003, 37-47). Such methodology is consistent with the ontological and epistemological assumptions of this thesis. It is linked to theory-building as opposed to theory-testing (Minichiello, Aroni et al. 1990, 101), and to the symbolic interactionist position which presumes that as

social reality exists as meaningful interaction between individuals then it can only be known through understanding others' points of view, interpretations and meanings...In-depth interviewing is an appropriate method to gain access to the individual's words and interpretations. (Minichiello, Aroni et al. 1990, 100).

In-depth interviewing in this case specifically refers to a semi-structured process in which participants were selected on the basis of the potential information or perspective they could provide (as well as the usual prosaic requirement that they be available to interview). Formal semi-structured interviews were held with a range of current and former WFP officers, various NGO representatives, country representatives, and officers from one other intergovernmental organisation. The interviews were not designed to be strictly replicable, but were conducted around a single interview guide (Appendix 1), though the ordering of questions and emphasis given varied between interviews, and additional issues were explored where they seemed relevant. The interview guide was structured with regard to the evaluative framework discussed in the following section.

Limitations of interpretive methodology and related methods

Neither people nor documents should be taken at face value; interpretation of primary sources is integral to the research process. In addition, it is important to recognise that the framing of the questions - what is relevant and what is not - has already introduced powerful filters on the reading and understanding of the information provided. In the
methodological context, the earlier parts of this chapter seek to make explicit as much as possible the conceptual and interpretive filters operating in this research project. It is important, however, to acknowledge some additional problems posed by the methods used in this research.

Firstly, in the course of my research I frequently encountered people who presumed (they told me) that the purpose of the work in which I was engaged was ultimately to obtain a position working for the WFP. Although in each case I stated my view that such a purpose was improper for a researcher to adopt and not a motive, career ambition on the part of a researcher is clearly a potential bias when examining UN organisations. As expertise develops in the course of the research, those organisations may become a potential employer – offering attractive career possibilities. This goes beyond a single organisation given the networking with the UN system. If one hopes to work for the UN in the future there is a consequent temptation to minimise criticisms of the UN system in the writing up of research. In the context of this thesis presenting a view of the WFP which is largely positive, while the reader cannot ultimately know what is in my mind, it is doubly important to at least acknowledge the issue as existing.

A similar issue concerning potential subjective bias, which features prominently in critiques of interpretive research is the reliance on interview subjects who may be, if not self-serving, then less than honest or clear in what they say (Finlayson, Bevir et al. 2004, 136-42). Applying the questions of who is saying what to which audience and for what purpose (with which historians interrogate primary sources), helps cast some degree of interpretive caution over interviews which protects the researcher from being ‘deceived’. However, to leave it there ignores the fact that this critique of interpretive research does not really work generically, but depends on the substantive focus of the interviews.

For example, asking people about their history of criminality may well result in false or misleading answers. In contrast with this, asking people (implicitly) about the ideational sources of their actions is less likely to be subject to such filters. Interviews provide important sources of information about how and why people think the way they do, which is a vital source of information in researching ideas and norms. While it might be argued that interviewees will tend to underplay self-interest as a motivation, that scarcely impinges on the way they apply ideas to establish rationalisations for their actions (debates about self-interest as a motivator really concern the extent to which it operates alone underneath such rationalisations). Moreover, articulating systems of ideas and values, elements of which are often already public through statements and documents, is scarcely likely to be subject to the elaborate artifice which would be required to provide deliberately ‘false’ or misleading information to an interviewer.

Perhaps of more significance as a methodological problem are the biases apparent in the range of formal interview participants. Arguably there was too narrow a focus on current and former senior WFP staff and US perspectives. While various NGO perspectives were also included in the research, the absence of perspectives from food aid recipient states is probably the most significant problem with the empirical basis of the research. This is particularly the case when considering that this exclusion duplicates, echoes and reinforces the tendency of developing countries to be excluded from the governance of international regimes.
On the other hand, seeking out those perspectives in all their complexity and heterogeneity (as opposed to a handful of interviews with members of the diplomatic elite) would have required a large and pragmatically complex research exercise resulting in a different kind of thesis. Ultimately, the focus on WFP and US perspectives is consistent with the research questions, where it is argued that the key exercises of power in the international food aid regime take place.

One further criticism that can be made is that the interpretive research process has inherent weaknesses limiting replicability or reducing its validity. This is because the method relies on the researcher building a perception of the politics of the organisation or institution being examined through internalised processes of synthesis of a range of information. This process of synthesis, if only because it reflects the intimacy of the researcher with a wide range of material, not all of which lends itself to transparent documentation, is not always easy to explicate consciously. Though such criticisms tend to come from a positivist perspective, even from an interpretivist viewpoint the nature of this synthesis process should be seen more as a necessary evil than something desirable. Ultimately, however, it is up to the reader to judge how convincing the analysis provided is, given the articulated evidentiary sources and processes of reasoning. Undue reliance on undocumented and implicit reasoning will undermine the credibility of the arguments presented, and is a problem that I have attempted to avoid as much as possible.

**Conclusion**
In an empirical research project, ultimately it is important to articulate a methodology that is coherent in conjunction with theory and epistemology on the one hand, and methods on the other.

In the context of the wider literature on regimes to which this thesis seeks to contribute, a social ontology interconnects with an interpretive epistemology, in particular due to the complexity of the system of global politics, the heterogeneity of regimes, and the complexity of individual regimes.

This complexity is reflected in a research design concerned with a single, intrinsically interesting case of the international food aid regime, which may shed some light on the research questions concerning the interaction of the US, international regimes and norms, and international organisations. The design is operationalised through the use of qualitative methods, including observation and in-depth interviews focused on the WFP as the organisational heart of the international food aid regime, as well as the use of documentary sources.

The insights of complexity theory (consistent with common constructivist methodology in IR) point to the importance of the historical evolution of the regime and organisation, as well as their contemporaneous functioning with respect to legitimacy. Consequently, the approach to this empirical case study is undertaken in two stages. The first stage is an historical and anthropological study of the evolution of the international food aid regime, and of the WFP. This leads into and informs a second stage that evaluates the legitimacy of the regime based upon the functioning and governance of the WFP. The final section of this chapter to which we now come, outlines a framework for undertaking this evaluation.
3. An evaluative framework for legitimacy

Making evaluative judgements about an institution promises to shed light on the political implications of that institution – its impacts for good or ill on its wider political and social context. The need for institutional (and related organisational) evaluation lies implicitly in the research questions with which this thesis is concerned.

Assessing or evaluating international regimes can be done using a range of overlapping concepts – robustness, strength, effectiveness, coherence and legitimacy are all terms used in regime theory literature relating to some notion of evaluation. Of these, legitimacy has come to the fore in contemporary constructivist IR (Clark 2005), perhaps because, more than the others, it is capable of comprehending the range of normative, political and ideational issues involved in institutional and organisational functioning.

The legitimacy of the international food aid regime can be most readily analysed through an examination of the governance processes of the World Food Programme – in particular its inclusion, accountability and effectiveness. This section is principally concerned with clarifying these three concepts as elements of an analytical framework for evaluating the legitimacy of the WFP and (implicitly) the international food aid regime. The three concepts reflect various constitutive, procedural, and substantive aspects of institutional politics; they are not stand alone notions, but overlap in their content. However, it is analytically useful to examine them separately, while put together they cover most of the significant political aspects of legitimacy qua governance.

The other important element of legitimacy in the international food aid regime, also noted earlier, is the interaction of the regime with US power. Consideration of this issue runs as a constant thread through the application of the analytical framework provided by inclusion, accountability and effectiveness, reflecting the fact that the US plays a hegemonic role within the regime.

The section will conclude with a brief discussion of the normative implications of the analytical framework being proposed.

Inclusion
The first aspect of legitimacy is concerned with membership of the polity in which the institution functions. In the case of the international food aid regime, this functioning can be understood most directly through the form of the WFP’s governance structures.

Polity membership has two facets – that of governing and that of being governed. While the latter suggests that those subject to governance are thereby part of the polity, the former suggests that the polity is made up of those participating in decision-making, whether directly or through representative processes. There is a long normative tradition linking these two senses of polity membership. That is, those affected by decision-making should be represented in the decision-making process. This normative agenda is an important part of Held’s arguments concerning the need for democratic reforms to global governance,
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based on the ‘principle of inclusiveness and subsidiarity’ which, properly understood,
should be taken to entail that decision-making should be decentralized as much as possible,
maximizing each person’s opportunity to influence the social conditions that shape his or
her life. Concomitantly, centralization is favoured if, and only if, it is the necessary basis for
avoiding the exclusion of persons who are significantly affected by a political decision or
outcome. (Held 2004, 375)

Apart from the normative perspective, in empirical approaches more generally, who is
included (or excluded) from participation and representation in governance and how such
inclusion and exclusion operates in turn have a direct bearing on organisational and
institutional political legitimacy. As Scharpf argues in relation to input-oriented legitimacy,
under modern conditions, the legitimacy of political systems has come to depend entirely on
the belief in, and the practice of, democratic self-determination which must assure that
government of the people must also be government by the people and for the people.
(Scharpf 1999, 1)

The campaign for reform of the UN Security Council, for example, is partly linked to
inclusion-related legitimacy problems deriving from the small, non-representative group of
nations constituting its permanent membership (Knight 2002).

In global-level politics, concerns with inclusion operate broadly at two levels – inter- and
intra- state.

At the inter-state level, the significant differences in wealth and power between nation-
states lead to concerns about differing capacities for involvement. For example, as I argue
in Chapter Five, the relative sizes of delegations to the World Food Programme Executive
Board at least partly reflect different levels of state wealth and power, and have some
impact on the capacity to participate.  

At the intra-state level, inclusion concerns the problem of formal state representation
sufficing to represent the views of large groups of people within that state. Sometimes this
is framed as a particularist issue because of the effective exclusion from international
decision making of domestically disenfranchised ethnic groups. At other times, it can be
set more as a majoritarian issue due to the exclusion of the views of the citizenry who voted
for different candidates and policies to the elected government, or as a democratic issue,
where the state’s authority is based on repression and itself lacks democratic legitimacy.

The inter- and intra-state levels are not independent from each other, but frequently interact
in international institutions. Domestic groups excluded from equitable participation in the
state (for example, non-whites in Apartheid South Africa; democracy activists in Burma)
see their state’s exclusion from international fora as an important means of delegitimising
that (non-legitimate) state. Conversely, acceptance of despotic regimes in international fora
is perceived as granting them (unwarranted) legitimacy. The criticisms, and eventual
dissolution of the UN Human Rights Commission exemplified the extent to which the two
levels of inter- and intra-state legitimacy interact in international politics (Economist 2008).

16 Slaughter, following Chayes and Chayes (Chayes and Chayes 1998), argues for a ‘new sovereignty’ based
on “the capacity to participate in cooperative regimes in the collective interest of all states” (Slaughter 2004b,
327). Slaughter’s new sovereignty here echoes T.H. Marshall’s proposition of an expanded concept of
citizenship, based on the capacity to participate in society (Marshall 1965; see also Sen 1999, 10 on the
centrality of political participation to the intrinsic value of democracy).
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Non-state actors become important in relation to inclusion primarily as a means to compensate for inter- and intra-state shortcomings. That is, the role of groups, from Armed Non-State Actors (Glaser 2005) to humanitarian NGOs is often depicted as at least partly compensating for these exclusions. In this context, NGOs are seen as making up for the deficiencies of state representation in international fora, or giving a voice to the unrepresented; as Keck and Sikkink put it, they ‘multiply the channels of access’ (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 1).

If important actors, whether state or, increasingly, non-state, are not included in governance processes, there is likely to be an impact on the legitimacy of that institution, and issues of inclusion are often, if not always, problematic in global intergovernmental organisations. However, the mere fact of inclusion, even if married to some basic assurance of capacity to contribute to decision making, is only the first part of building legitimacy.

Accountability
Where a process of governance is perceived to be insufficiently inclusive it begins to confront problems with legitimacy in two senses. First, as argued above, problems with inclusion diminish legitimacy directly. Secondly, problems with inclusion lead to problems with accountability, and hence diminish legitimacy, a problem conjured up by the critique of international bodies having a ‘democratic deficit’ (Held 2004; Moravcsik 2004).

In other words, accountability and inclusion overlap; however, inclusion is only tangentially part of the legitimacy issues invoked by accountability. That is because accountability specifically relates to the constraint of power and hence its legitimation. Following on from Hindess’ distinction (Hindess 1996) between power as capacity and power as right (based on the consent of the governed), accountability creates ‘power as right through establishing (the appearance of) legitimising constraints on power as capacity. Accountability implies power as right; (because) it constrains power as capacity.’ (Ross 2000, 7).

I have argued elsewhere that there are three conceptions of accountability: accountability as sanction, as judgement, and as participation (Ross 2000, 70ff), which suggests a broader range of political issues invoked by accountability than just those related to inclusion.

Accountability as sanction relates to the notion of accountability as something that should occur after something bad happens, and tends to be bottom-up in perspective. It is articulated in statements in the form of:

\[ S1: \text{‘Action X resulted in bad outcomes for certain people (us or fellow persons). Actor Y who was responsible for this should be held accountable.’} \]

Accountability as sanction is bottom-up in the sense that S1 is typically made by those actually (or potentially) subject to the exercise of power by Actor Y. It implicitly refers to some form of abuse of power recognised after the fact, though it is also implicitly about then demonstrating that sanctions will occur in such events, and thereby reducing the likelihood of their recurrence. In contrast to this, accountability as judgement is linked
more to a managerial perspective, connoting potential reward as well as punishment, and suggests more of a top down perspective. It is articulated in statements in the form of:

\[ S2: \text{‘You will be held accountable for your performance in this role.’} \]

Accountability as judgement tends to be top-down in the sense that S2 presumes the capacity to judge (hold the actor accountable) in a manner suggesting the actor is subject to the power of the person making the statement.

In both the case of sanction and judgement, the accountability lies as much in the knowledge that x will happen if an actor does/fails to do y, as in the actual doing of it. In contrast with these conceptions that separate actions and outcomes, accountability as participation is procedural, not outcome-based. That is, it is based on the idea that accountability can be constructed through a more inclusive process of power by involving potentially affected people in decision making at the outset, for example, through consultation or other more explicitly deliberative processes. Accountability as participation implies inclusion but does not equate to it, as it also concerns the forms which inclusion takes in relation to the constraint and exercise of authority, as opposed to a simple in or out test.

In liberal-democratic states these concepts are connected to an array of accountability mechanisms. The more formal ones include laws and regulation, institutional checks and balances, processes of inquiry and oversight, and the electoral process. Less formally, professional norms, social expectations, public approbation and so on are also important.

In the international realm, these conceptions of accountability relate back to structural and procedural constraints on state, intergovernmental, or non-state actors (Keohane 2003). For example, the Global Compact (GC) can be seen as an attempt by then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to move the regulatory debate about constraining the power of transnational corporations away from the notion of accountability as sanction based on strong regulation and effective sanctions for breaching regulations (Ruggie 2003). Rather, the GC sets out to propose ‘softer’ constraining mechanisms based on rewarding good performance at least as much as punishing bad (accountability as judgement), and engaging the corporations themselves in the creation of standards of behaviour (accountability as participation).

However, intergovernmental organisations are not analogous to government in a state when it comes to these issues (Nye, International Monetary Fund et al. 2003; Steffek 2003). Probably the most significant long standing concern with the concept of a world government has been with the difficulty of constructing meaningful constraints on such a body analogous to domestic level constraints on government. This concern is reflected in the literature on lack of UN accountability (Coultan 2006; Hancock 1989) and has played a part in entrenching what are arguably dysfunctional levels of state control and intervention in UN administration (Alger 2001; Evans 2006; Kennedy and Russett 1995; Urquhart 2006).

Also, the distress about American unilateralism undermining the UN system (Judt 2007) at least partly derives from its confronting demonstration of the incapacity of that system to constrain (i.e. render accountable) the most powerful state actor. There is also an
increasing level of concern about accountability in relation to nongovernment organisations as they get larger, and their political capacities get more institutionalised (Mallaby 2004; Maren 1997; Townsend and Townsend 2004).

If inclusion relates to membership of the polity defined by the capacity to participate, accountability relates to the modes and means of constraining the operation of governance power structures themselves. Inclusion and accountability clearly overlap as issues, but the distinction is important. Inclusion implies accountability and legitimisation, but there are other processes and mechanisms potentially involved in accountability. Similarly, inclusion raises many more issues than just accountability and legitimisation, for example, about how it can be broadened, or why it should be limited. In both cases, the specific nature of the issues derives from the organisational and institutional context, but both are crucial components of organisational and institutional legitimacy. Chapter Five considers these issues as they apply to governance in the WFP.

Effectiveness
Legitimacy and effectiveness can be approached in two different ways. In one take, effectiveness is, at least partly, a result of legitimacy. In this version, a legitimate organisation is, if not axiomatically effective, thereby given the chance to be effective; legitimacy is the means and effectiveness the end. For example, some advocates of Security Council reform believe that a lack of legitimacy (as a result of failures of inclusion and accountability due to restricted membership and the use of veto power) compromises its effectiveness (Malone 2007, 280).

In the second approach, rather than being outside of and separate from legitimacy, effectiveness is an element of legitimacy – sometimes termed ‘output legitimacy’ (Scharpf 1999), or substantive legitimacy (Barnett and Finnemore 2004, 166). In this version, legitimacy is a result, in part, of the effectiveness of an institution or organisation. This latter approach is being used here because an expansive and comprehensive version of legitimacy is being used as the basis for evaluation of an international regime. In the context of intergovernmental organisations having their legitimacy questioned or placed on a crisis footing (Clark and Reus-Smit 2007; Reus-Smit 2007) due in part to queries over effectiveness, it seems appropriate to render effectiveness as a subordinate element of legitimacy, rather than the other way around.

Effectiveness can be assessed in strong (absolute) or weak (relative) terms, depending on the criteria by which it is judged.

Effectiveness in relative terms suggests an assessment based on comparison with parallel or similar forms of governance. In the case of the WFP, as it is part of the UN system, it implies a rating of it against other organisations and agencies in the UN system in terms of effectiveness – that is in terms of its capacity to achieve its mandate. This type of effectiveness is political in as much as it derives from perceptions and credibility. In other words, an argument that WFP is relatively effective might refer more to perception than substantive fact, but when considering effectiveness in relative terms such perceptions in themselves are a substantive (political) fact.
Absolute effectiveness refers to a desirable impact on the global problems in a given issue area. Since 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs – UN General Assembly 2000) have provided a reasonable approximation of what can be regarded as constituting absolute effectiveness – basically in the context of the international food aid regime this amounts to a goal of halving global hunger and poverty by the year 2015. While in a complex global system it is impossible to construct a linear relationship between such aggregate measures and the effectiveness of a specific organisation, it is possible to consider the extent to which WFP contributes to such goals and can thence be seen as effective in the absolute sense.

What makes for effectiveness in global governance – and what does not – are important political questions which are linked to inclusion and accountability (who decides on aims and goals, who judges whether they are being met and how), as well as related operational and managerial factors. Chapter Six considers the effectiveness of WFP in both the relative and absolute senses, and how this relates to the other aspects of the legitimacy of the international food aid regime.

Legitimacy and normative theory

When proposing an analytical framework such as the one proposed here for analysing legitimacy, it is important not to lose sight of the normative implications and assumptions related to it.

Political analysis is both normative and positive – the intertwined questions of what is, what can be and what should be ultimately lie at its heart. However, IR scholarship frequently seems concerned, at least superficially, with the mechanics of the system, rather than deeper normative questions concerned with what constitutes the good.

There are good reasons for avoiding such questions. They tend to be polarising, and all too often normative polarisation is implicated in the enormous destruction of war. The rhetoric on values in the ‘Global War On Terror’ is a powerful reminder of this. Nevertheless, inattention to, or avoidance of, normative theory can obscure important aspects of political analysis. For example, the more one believes in radically changing the world, the more critical one’s description of its current state will tend to be; the more one believes in maintaining the status quo the more implicitly content one is with it. All such views hinge on a perception of what the ‘good’ is.

Therefore, it is important to acknowledge explicitly the normative threads within the weave of the overall argument being made about legitimacy in the international food aid regime. These threads involve two types of good – political (system) good and societal (global) good.

The idea of the political good adopted here is based on a reformist, liberal-democratic theory of governance. This presumes that better governance implies greater inclusion, and greater accountability (especially of the most powerful), both as an inherent societal good, and in order to achieve other societal goods more effectively. This preference for a liberal-democratic approach to global governance lies beneath the focus on evaluating legitimacy. A reform perspective assumes that evolutionary change in global politics is possible and desirable – that systemic political processes can, and should be, improved, and that this
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improvement takes the best form when done at the low cost to stability implied by evolution.

The idea of the societal or global good is perhaps most easily linked to effectiveness of the regime as an aspect of its legitimacy. On the face of it, the nature of the good in the international food aid regime seems self-evident: the relief of hunger and related suffering, and the improvement of quality of life of the most desperate and needy people. This idea of the good is underpinned by cosmopolitan presumptions about the value and worth of individual human beings no matter where they live. As will be shown in the discussion of the feed-the-hungry norm in Chapter Two, the simple and uncontroversial nature of the good in this area has underpinned a distinctively ‘soft’ normative power in the international food aid regime. Yet how to define and achieve the good – effectiveness – in relation to food aid is not quite so clear-cut on closer examination.

For example, significant political implications come with the feeding of the hungry as an immediate, immanent task. Poppendieck notes the constant struggle to get past the immediacy of demands in domestic US food aid, the unifying ‘non-political’ character of such work, and the impetus for food aid organisations to pursue growth. These factors all tend to work against advocacy for structural or political change which would diminish the need for charitable organisations giving food aid to exist at all (Poppendieck 1998). How much has been gained if people are saved from starvation only to become dependent on the charity of others, or to live in constant food insecurity, while new people are constantly added to their ranks?

At the global level, the failings of the international political economy that result in chronic and acute malnutrition affecting hundreds of millions of people are even more diffuse and complex to address. This means that defining the societal, global good beyond cosmopolitan sentiment about food for the starving is also a complicated exercise. These issues are addressed in more detail in the final part of Chapter Six.

**Conclusion**

This thesis makes an empirical (and normative) evaluation of legitimacy in the international food aid regime as means of further developing our understanding of the role and impact of the US as a hegemonic actor in global governance. This chapter has established the theoretical, methodological and conceptual basis of the inquiry.

In the first instance, the approach taken is positioned within constructivist regime theory, based on the assumption that the international realm is a complex social arena in which social institutions, or international regimes, play an important sub-systemic role.

The methodology used in this research combines primary and secondary literature research with both historical and ethnographic techniques – semi-structured in-depth interviewing and observation of a WFP Executive Board meeting. This methodology is consistent with an interpretive epistemology based on a view of global politics as complex, of regimes as
heterogeneous and historically constituted, and the relationship of ideational and material factors in politics as mutually constituting rather than causal.

As regimes themselves are conceptual constructs, their ideational definition is crucial. Regimes are traditionally circumscribed in terms of issue area definitions, but norms provide scholars with an important conceptual basis for defining their ideational boundaries. Norms need to be understood as having two aspects: an element of behavioural guidance; and, a discursive element that creates shared understandings and meanings, enabling social and collective action. When defined in such terms, the very existence of a norm implies some form of legitimacy: the interaction of power and norms in social institutions constructs legitimate behaviour and legitimate terms for debate and discussion.

Legitimacy is operationalised as a research focus through an analytical framework made up of three elements – inclusion, accountability and effectiveness – applied to the WFP as the main expression of international food aid regime governance.

Such analytical techniques, while useful in organising the research, are ultimately most useful in illustrating a central theme of power in the regime – the crucial role of US power within the international food aid regime. In turn, this will enable some empirical assessment of the relationship between hegemony and legitimacy in the international food aid regime.

In the next chapter I will turn to considering the specific characteristics of the international food aid regime and the WFP which render them of particular interest as a focus of study.
CHAPTER TWO
The WFP and the International Food Aid Regime

Introduction

This chapter establishes the relevance and significance of the international food aid regime (IFAR) and the WFP as a focus of IR study.

The first section examines the emergence of the concept of an IFAR from the late 1980s, though before that the dominant regime concept in the issue area was of a food regime. This regime concept was, and remains, closely linked to the central role of the WFP in global food aid, but exists in the form of a range of actions, policy debates, norms and principles not all of which are bounded by that organisation, despite its centrality to the regime. Earlier theorising about the IFAR was influenced by the development focus of the WFP; thus, it tended to view the IFAR normative architecture in terms of principles of development and multilateralism. In the last 15 years or so, change in the WFP focus from development to emergency relief, and renewed American leadership in the regime suggest two different characteristics provide a more appropriate framework for analysing the regime. These are US hegemony, and the operation of the international feed-the-hungry norm.

The discussion in the first section points to the centrality of the WFP to any consideration of the IFAR. Although the WFP is not only the largest, but also arguably the most successful of the UN’s agencies at present, there has not been any systematic examination of it from a regime perspective since the early 1990s. Following a brief discussion of the WFP literature, the second section identifies three features of the WFP as an organisation that in combination make it a case of particular interest to IR scholars. The three features are structural typicality, material significance and normative uniqueness.

These features, in turn, are linked to the two central characteristics of the IFAR noted above: the hegemonic role of the United States, and a multilateral, ‘feed-the-hungry’ norm. The WFP’s structural typicality reflects its position within the UN system, which itself derives from US leadership and resources. The WFPs material significance stems directly from the preponderance of American resources in its work, and the hegemonic role of the US in the regime, which in turn are related to the congruence between regime and domestic US norms. Both US hegemony and the feed-the-hungry norm underpinning the IFAR are central to the WFPs normative uniqueness.

The final section of the chapter examines this normative feature in more detail, analysing the feed-the-hungry norm and its relationship to a parallel domestic US feed-the-hungry norm.

The issues in this chapter introduce the central concepts used to organise the empirical discussion in Chapters Three, Four, Five and Six. It is in those chapters that a more detailed picture emerges of how and why the US enabled the establishment of the IFAR, the terms under which the regime functions through the WFP, and how it has managed to build legitimacy in conjunction with a hegemonic role for the US.
1. Constructing an international regime – from food to food aid

Early regime literature in the late 1970s and early 1980s suggested a global food regime either existed or was at least in the process of formation (Hopkins 1977; Hopkins and Puchala 1979; Puchala and Hopkins 1983, 75-85). Following the 1960s ‘Green Revolution’ in which agricultural production became transformed (Fore 2007; George 1979; Gilpin 1987; Patel 2007; Sen 1981), the food crisis of 1972–74 and the associated UN World Food Conference in November 1974, there seemed to be a coherence to the idea of an international issue area around ‘food’. At this time, the WFP was a minor player, largely seen almost as a division of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

Thompson, on the other hand, critiqued the idea of the food-related international organisations demonstrating the existence of an international food regime (Thompson 1981). He argued that the various international organisations had only a marginal impact on state sovereignty and food distribution, and therefore could not be said to be engaged in ‘governance’. He did conclude, however, that the organisations were worth maintaining as an arena for dialogue, information and intelligence sharing, and suggested that their influence may increase in importance in the future. Thompson’s realist critique of the concept of a food regime had little discernible impact, with the concept seeming to last, if only implicitly, as late as 1990 in Talbot (Talbot 1990).

However, the concept of an international food regime became unviable during the latter half of the 1980s due to the interaction of two factors: the concept’s relative lack of analytical clarity, given its extremely broad dimensions; and shifts in the political economy of food and agriculture.

The notional international food regime incorporated agricultural production and trade, scientific and technological research, food aid, and agricultural and rural development involving a number of international organisations, though the FAO was the most significant of these. The problems such breadth created for a coherent concept of a food regime were heightened by changes in the global political economy of agriculture.

The structure of agricultural economics in developed countries went through major changes in the post-war period. Industrialisation, vertical integration, the decline in the family farm and the rise of intensive production and agribusiness all occurred increasingly during the 1970s (though these processes had started earlier – see e.g. Coleman, Grant et al. 2004; George 1979). These changes to the economics of agriculture met with other political shifts in the early 1980s, resulting in the agricultural trade regime shifting from a ‘dependent paradigm’ in which agricultural sectors were characterised as depending on state subsidies, to a neoliberal ‘competitive paradigm’ during the 1980s (Coleman, Grant et al. 2004, Ch4-5).

Thus Coleman, Grant and Josling argue that in the 1980s domestic economy-based traditional supply, control, and surplus disposal policies became increasingly problematic in a more open world economy and a less regulated domestic market... Farm output responded to the policy signals rather than to consumer demand, making agriculture ever more dependent upon further government assistance to dispose of surpluses. Policy-makers face difficult fiscal choices as spending on the farm sector clashed with other economic policy objectives. In line with a general economic paradigm shift toward neo-liberalism, finance ministers raised penetrating questions about farm programme spending. (Coleman, Grant et al. 2004, 90).
Chapter Two

These shifts led to the ending of exemptions for agricultural commodities from international trade regimes that dated back to the commencement of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in the late 1940s (Coleman, Grant et al. 2004, 113ff). In the competitive paradigm, agricultural produce was, at least theoretically, to become just one more lot of trade commodities. It was formally brought into the international trade regime at the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of the GATT with the 1994 Agreement on Agriculture (Clapp 2004; FAO 2006a).

Agricultural trade has remained the most significant obstacle to the completion of the Doha Round of international trade negotiations, and there seems little doubt that, despite the Agreement on Agriculture, agricultural trade remains in a separate political category from other international trade to some degree. However, the connection of agricultural trade to a food regime is no longer tenable. Agricultural trade had always involved more products than just food – for example, cotton, jute, rubber, and inputs to food such as seed. Therefore, it had never been an entirely easy fit into a food regime. This fact, along with the shift to the competitive paradigm in the 1980s, effectively ended agricultural trade tenure as an element within a notional international food regime.

Without trading elements, the concept of an international food regime lost a significant plank. At least since the FAO had proposed a World Food Bank in 1946 (Hambidge 1955, 59), a goal of international coordination or governance in food had been present in the minds of many liberal internationalists. In turn this implied that a specialist integration of agricultural production processes, trade, and distribution (including food aid) would be required. Such notions had enjoyed an Indian summer in the context of the food crisis in the early 1970s (see Chapter Three for detailed discussion of the crisis), but by the 1980s they were off the table. Without agricultural trade as the issue area linking production and distribution of food, intergovernmental organisations in what had been the food issue-area were left to work on food aid and agricultural development. Even then, in the latter area their role during the 1980s became increasingly technical and secondary to the Bretton Woods institution domination of aid and development financing (Bird 2001; Woods 2006).

Food aid refers to the deployment of food resources as aid. Until the 1980s, multilateral food aid had been largely secondary to bilateral food aid and used principally for development projects. However, during the 1980s, multilateral food aid grew significantly as a proportion of overall food aid (see Appendix 7), and changed its emphasis to emergency relief (Chapter Five discusses this in more detail). This increasingly delimited it from the other, agricultural development, elements of the putative international food regime.

The concept of a specific international food aid regime became increasingly relevant during the 1980s and early 1990s in the context of the removal of trade from the purview of food related global governance, and the growth in importance of WFP and multilateralism in food aid, linked to the growth of emergency relief as the focus for food aid. The prominent mid-1980s famine crises in Africa were one factor in this; food aid to the former Eastern bloc nations in the early 1990s was another. A further relevant factor was the existence of an ‘epistemic community’ (Haas 1992) in the food aid area, formed by a group of technical specialists with intersubjective understandings of a range of technical issues related to the operation of food aid programs and projects.
By the early 1990s, both Hopkins and Uvin were positing an international food aid regime (Hopkins 1992; Uvin 1992). Linked in part to the resilience and effectiveness of the WFP (Clay 2003), which has given the food aid regime an organisational core, but also to its analytical clarity, the concept of an international food aid regime has lasted since then as a useful tool for IR scholars (see e.g. (Clapp 2005).

**International food aid regime characteristics**

As noted above, Hopkins and Uvin have been the main sources of explicit regime analysis in relation to the food aid regime. Both can be described in Hasenclever et al.’s terms as ‘strong cognitivists’ in that their analyses give weight to the constitutive role of ideas and norms. They both argue that analysing the food aid regime in terms of narrow ideas of state self-interest is inadequate, though such analysis was relevant in its early years (Hopkins 1992, 229; Uvin 1992, 301).

Hopkins argued the regime had come to reflect incremental change led by an epistemic community of agricultural economists, development experts and food aid policy experts (Hopkins 1992, 264). Due to the work of this epistemic community, new principles became ‘embedded in the institutional practices of multilateral agencies, particularly the WFP, and of bilateral agencies as well’ (Hopkins 1992, 246). These principles concern the optimal functioning of food aid in order to achieve development. Hopkins’ argument can be seen as implicitly assuming the regime functions in accordance with a norm of supporting development through multilateralism rather than unilateral state actions.

Uvin, like Hopkins, implicitly linked increasing multilateralism in the regime with a normative shift away from the realist paradigm of states pursuing their material interests. He emphasised the inadequacy of the standard realist argument explaining the regime in terms of economic interests (getting rid of surplus produce to advantage), strategic interests (using aid to further strategic interests) and, to a lesser extent, humanitarian preferences (desire to act on humanitarian need) (Uvin 1992, 297). Rather, in Uvin’s analysis, the international food aid regime is described as a ‘developmental’ regime, meaning a regime ‘which is predominantly non-self-interested in nature’, and influences state behaviour (Uvin 1992, 300). In this account, the classical realist framework is inadequate as it relegates humanitarian motivations to ‘a background role, creating conditions that render food aid “popular” ’ while assuming that food aid fundamentally serves economic and strategic self-interests (Uvin 1992, 297).

Economic state-level interests in the realist analysis were served by food aid being given to build markets and to offload surpluses (Uvin 1992, 296). American food aid has long been linked to domestic rhetoric and arguments, on display in the very title of its founding legislation, Public Law 480 (*The Agriculture Trade Development and Assistance Act, 1954*), that food aid would build a taste for, or even dependence on, American grains, and hence export markets. However there is little empirical evidence

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17 Though Uvin also argued the food aid regime is connected with the international hunger regime (Uvin 1994) on which his book is focused.
that it has such trade impacts (Uvin 1992, 298; see also Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 78, 181-2). The use of such arguments prominently in the US Congress (see e.g. Rothschild 1993, 87-8) can be ascribed to their propensity to garner domestic support for food aid policies rather than as telling evidence of its actual contribution to economic interests of the US (Uvin 1992, 299). Also, after the 1960s, surplus disposal became a significantly smaller economic issue for the US (Ruttan 1993a; Uvin 1992). Barrett and Maxwell demonstrate that the operation of self-interest in US food aid policy benefits a very small group of well-organised domestic interests, and benefits to American farmers or a broader sense of the national interest are largely illusory (Barrett and Maxwell 2005).

Strategic (or what Uvin describes as ‘political’) interests refer to the idea that food aid ‘serves both as carrot and stick in inducing recipient countries to comply with the foreign policy objectives of the donor.’ (Uvin 1992, 297). However, Uvin found little evidence that food aid policy actually worked as a tool for inducing strategic cooperation, and much evidence to the contrary (Uvin 1992, 299ff). There is a surprisingly long list of states that have received US food aid with little or no change to their strategic relationship to the US (including Ethiopia in the 1970s and 1980s, and North Korea from 1995 - Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 39-42; Uvin 1992, 309). Uvin found one case of attempted use of emergency aid as a tool or lever of foreign policy, when in 1974, ‘[d]espite obvious famine, the U.S. delayed food aid shipments in order to force Bangladesh to end its export of jute to Cuba’. However it is not even clear that this proved successful (Uvin 1992, 300; see also Sen 1981, 135-6; McHenry and Bird 1977, 82).

In the absence of food aid actually serving donor interests, Uvin argued, an international food aid regime can provide an explanation of the observed outcomes. It is through the creation of institutional constraints that the regime influences the definition of state interests, helping to explain why states do things that do not make sense when analysed in terms of economic or strategic interests. Thus Uvin posited the existence of ‘a generally shared international norm against famine and acute starvation’ compelling countries to donate and constraining their use of emergency food aid for furthering their strategic interests (Uvin 1992, 300).

Hopkins proposed a more technical set of norms in operation in the food aid regime, as follows:

Today a set of widely shared norms exist for the appropriate use of food aid. According to these norms, resource transfers should take into account the effects of the aid on the food system and the economy of the recipient country...food aid without sound management can have negative effects but that food aid with ‘appropriate’ design can be extremely useful. (Hopkins 1992, 263).

However, food aid can only be described as ‘extremely useful’ if it is useful for something – this is where the multilateral development norm emerged in Hopkins’ argument. In other words, food aid is useful for international development (that is, deployment as a resource to underpin development projects), which should result in

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18 Another form of trade development from food aid could be said to derive from its tied nature; that is, the benefits of many of the significant expenditures go directly to donor nation companies and interests, e.g. shipping and freight businesses; NGOs and field experts. Uvin notes there is some evidence to suggest attempts by certain companies to manipulate access to counterpart funds generated from the sale of food aid (Uvin 1992, 299). Tying of aid is a well-known problem with most types of aid (OECD 2006), though in the case of food aid, the benefits go to relatively small vested interest groups and are difficult to demonstrate empirically as benefits to the donor state (Barrett and Maxwell 2005).
poorer people and nations becoming healthier and wealthier. Both Uvin and Hopkins showed that analysis of the food aid regime needs to be historical to explain how the regime has evolved from an early emphasis on state self-interest to something driven by a multilateral norm. This shift is illustrated at a practical level by changes in donor practices and policies, which in turn both have contributed to and reflected shifts in regime norms. The evolving regime and the diffuse multilateral norm are mutually constitutive, feeding into each other.

Thus, both these analyses were strengthened by avoiding narrowly causal epistemology and excessively instrumentalist understandings of regime elements. However, in the fifteen or so years since Hopkins and Uvin published their analyses of the international food aid regime, the role of development in the WFP has been largely displaced by emergency relief and recovery operations. This poses some problems with a normative script in which the development ethos is integrated with a multilateral norm. As will be argued in the last section of this chapter, a different normative script from the proposition of a multilateral development norm provides a more productive understanding of the relationship between the regime and the United States as the hegemonic state actor in it. This central regime norm I am terming the feed-the-hungry norm.

The two defining characteristics of the IFAR are this norm and the hegemonic role of the US within the regime, as will become clearer in the last section of this chapter. However, before discussing these regime characteristics in more detail it is first necessary to look at the WFP itself more closely.

2. Introducing the WFP

At first glance, the IFAR has many dimensions to it not involving the WFP. While the WFP dominates multilateral food aid, it has played a marginal (though arguably increasing) role as a service provider in relation to bilateral food aid. Clapp (2004) demonstrates the way in which events in agricultural trade negotiations are connected to food aid; this connection has also been an explicit source of tension between the US and the European Union at the WFP Executive Board. Yet the WFP itself has remained at most peripheral to these debates. Moreover, the WFP has lacked sufficient resources to develop the capacity to have a significant impact on food aid policy by itself (*177 2005; Bertini 2005b; Ingram 2005a). Significant policy inputs on food aid come from governmental agencies in the development field, NGOs such as Oxfam, CARE or Bread for the World Institute, or other multilateral actors such as the European Union (EU), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), or the World Bank.

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19 Under influence of this trend and the views of the epistemic food aid community on best practice use of food aid, the wider regime, including bilateral food aid arrangements, has trended in the same direction (see discussion in Chapters Four and Six; also Appendix 8).

20 The most significant include the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and the US Agency for International Development (USAID). Two significant evaluations of WFP have been undertaken under the direction of loose consortia of various such Western government agencies (Chr. Michelsen Institute 1994; Russo, Luzot et al. 2005).
Nevertheless, the WFP is central to the operation of international food aid politics. It is the venue within which the key elites meet, negotiate, coordinate, and attempt to generate and define good practice. The principal practitioners in food relief almost all have worked for or in partnership with WFP at some stage; all policy players regard it as central to capability, practice and reform in the sector.

WFP Literature
Writing in the early 1990s, Uvin noted the paucity of international relations literature on the international food aid regime compared with specialist literature in the development studies field (Uvin 1992, 293). This observation is still applicable in the 2000s to WFP-specific literature as well as to the broader food aid regime literature. Since a spate of publications in the early part of the 1990s (Charlton 1992; Hopkins 1990; 1992; Ruttan 1993b; Talbot 1990; Uvin 1992; 1994), there has been little significant examination of either WFP or the international food aid regime from a regime perspective.

Of the more recent WFP-specific literature, most is a subset of the mainly descriptive literature on the UN system, or from the specialist fields of aid and development studies, and agricultural economics. There are only two recent major texts on WFP. One is a thorough history by D. John Shaw (Shaw 2001), but this is an insider account reflecting a specialist bias towards agricultural and development economics and the role of food aid as opposed to an interest in world politics. The other is James Ingram’s book *Bread and Stones* (Ingram 2006) based on his experiences as WFP Executive Director (1982–1992). This provides a fascinating and detailed insider depiction of intergovernmental organisation leadership and seeks to articulate arguments about UN reform in that light. Given this provenance, Ingram’s focus is on the role of leadership and elites within the UN system, which differs from the broader regime perspective of this thesis. In addition, his experiences largely predate the last thirteen years.

Another recent publication of note is by Clay (2003), who makes some important arguments about WFP adaptability and effectiveness. However, Clay has a similar specialist background in agricultural and development economics and the role of food aid to Shaw (with whom he has co-edited two books), leaving a contemporary regime analysis of the international food aid regime yet to be explored.

Clay was also lead author of the recent OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) report on food aid (OECD 2006) that focused on substantive policy issues in food aid, rather than a regime perspective. Similarly, Barrett and Maxwell (Barrett and Maxwell 2005) write primarily on US food aid rather than the WFP and touch on the WFP only tangentially and not from an international relations perspective. Although they do not use the concept of an international food aid regime, their illuminating book provides an excellent overview of many of the substantive policy issues and demonstrates the continued significant role of the US in that regime. Lastly, in recent literature, Clapp has published significant articles on the political interactions between food aid and trade (Clapp 2004), and biotechnology, food aid and trade (Clapp 2005). Unlike Barrett and Maxwell, these are more about the politics of food aid than the more technical policy issues focused on by much of the food aid literature, but are still only tangentially concerned with the WFP.

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21 Shaw worked for WFP from 1963 to 1994.
Three features of the WFP

The WFP is an organisation of particular analytical interest due to its three key features – structural typicality, material significance, and normative uniqueness. These features, involving a mix of typicality and uniqueness, combine to make the WFP an organisation of particular interest in relation to governance and international regimes.

The following sub-sections are concerned with the first two of these features and how they relate to a regime characterised by US hegemony. Following a brief outline of the UN system organisationally, the WFP’s position within that system is discussed in more detail. The WFP is generally typical of UN operational agencies in terms of its formal governance and reporting lines within the UN system – hence the appellation of structural typicality. Two differences are worth noting, however. Firstly, it has an unusual joint parentage (of the UN and the FAO). The significance of this parentage is largely historical as will become evident in Chapters Three and Four where it is discussed in more detail. Secondly, unlike other UN agencies, its funding is both entirely voluntary and gives it operational control over significant resources. These characteristics are linked to the WFP’s current standing as one of the most successful and respected of the UN agencies, and, along with the role of the US as predominant donor, provide the basis of the second feature of interest – material significance.

The WFP and the UN system

Two approaches are generally taken when describing the UN system – the issue area analysis and the organisational type analysis.

Given its size and complexity, most general texts categorise the UN system as it has developed since World War II in terms of a number of issue areas within which various international institutions and related organisations can be grouped. The following five categories are generally the most common:

- Security (peace, dispute settlement)
- Economic (developmental/trade)
- Environment
- Social (human development, social welfare)

However, using the category of issues areas to examine the UN system brings with it some problems. The boundaries between such areas – for example, economic development, human development, human rights – can be exceedingly fuzzy, and the interconnections between them can be more important than the distinctions. Therefore, the issue area approach, while a means to manage broad descriptive analysis of the UN system by grouping different elements of it together thematically, does not offer sufficient analytical power to compensate for its descriptive reductionism when it comes to a detailed analysis of specific UN organisations.

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22 For example: Diehl: peace and security; economics; social and humanitarian (Diehl 2001); Jacobson: security; growth and distribution of world product; social welfare and human rights (Jacobson 1984); Karns and Mingst: peace and security; human development/economic well being; protecting human rights; and, protecting the environment (Karns and Mingst 2004, 499); Pease: international security; regional security; trade; development; environment; and social and humanitarian (Pease 2003); Bennett and Oliver: settlement of disputes; collective security and alternatives; justice under law; controlling arms; regionalism; promoting economic welfare; global resource management; social progress; human rights/struggle for self-government (Bennett and Oliver 2002).
The organisational type analysis of the UN system is of more obvious relevance when considering the WFP in terms of its structural and material features.

Beyond the General Assembly of member states, and the UN Security Council, the UN system is a sort of ‘confederation of...essentially autonomous inter-governmental organisations’ (Ingram 2006, 8). These global intergovernmental organisations comprise, in the first instance, the various UN specialised agencies, established like the UN itself by intergovernmental treaty (Table 2.1). These organisations differ from other international intergovernmental organisations such as the European Union (EU) or Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) which can more accurately be termed regional rather than global and are not part of the UN system.23

Held et al. define the UN specialised agencies as follows:

Legally separate organizations, many of which predate the UN, with their own membership, budgets, and programmes. Nominally, the specialized agencies are subject to coordination by the UN via its Economic and Social Council, and an annual heads of agencies meeting... (Held, McGrew et al. 1999, 66).

### Table 2.1: The UN Specialised Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Founded/HQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ITU</td>
<td>International Telecommunications Union</td>
<td>1865 Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMO</td>
<td>World Meteorological Organisation</td>
<td>1873 Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPU</td>
<td>Universal Postal Union</td>
<td>1874 Bern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
<td>1919 Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICAO</td>
<td>International Civil Aviation Organisation</td>
<td>1944 Montreal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
<td>1944 Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBRD†</td>
<td>World Bank (International Bank for...</td>
<td>1944 Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reconciliation and Development)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organisation</td>
<td>1945 Rome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Org.</td>
<td>1945 Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organisation</td>
<td>1946 Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMO</td>
<td>International Maritime Organisation</td>
<td>1948 London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIDO</td>
<td>UN Industrial Development Organisation</td>
<td>1967 Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNWTO</td>
<td>World Tourism Organisation</td>
<td>1975 Madrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFAD</td>
<td>International Fund for Agricultural Development</td>
<td>1977 Rome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Held, McGrew et al. 1999, 66; UN 2006).25

The specialised agencies are legally separate organisations because they have been established in their own right by intergovernmental treaties in parallel to the UN. This distinguishes them from the UN operational agencies which are Programs or Funds created by resolution of the General Assembly. Consequently, UN operational agencies have intergovernmental governing councils, but cannot change their own constitutions.

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23 Note that all intergovernmental organisations are not purely and solely governmental in character. The International Labor Organisation (ILO), for example, has representatives of employer and labor organisations as well as governments in its governing structure. In practice such exceptions have a marginal effect on the intergovernmental character of UN bodies.

24 The World Bank also includes several subsidiary organs – the International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

25 Not included in this list are what the UN terms ‘related organisations’, which are also legally separate entities with autonomous constitutions. The two most significant of these are the World Trade Organisation (WTO, formerly the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade – GATT), and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (UN 2006).
The heads of these organisations are formally appointed by the UN Secretary-General, so have lower status than the heads of specialised agencies who are elected directly by governments.

While the UN and the specialised agencies are funded by compulsory ‘assessed’ member-state contributions, the UN operational agencies, apart from UN resources they may be allocated, are funded by voluntary contributions from member states and publicly solicited donations (Ingram 2006, 9). Nevertheless, many of the operational agencies (see Table 2.2) have larger budgets and higher public profiles than the specialised agencies (Ingram 2006, 9).

Table 2.2: UN Operational Agencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>HQ</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNCTAD</td>
<td>UN Conference on Trade and Development</td>
<td>Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDCP</td>
<td>UN Drug Control Program</td>
<td>Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>UN Development Programme</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNEP</td>
<td>UN Environment Programme</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>UN Fund for Population Activities</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN-Habitat</td>
<td>UN Human Settlement Programme</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>UN High Commission for Refugees</td>
<td>Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>UN International Children’s Fund</td>
<td>New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNRWA</td>
<td>UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East</td>
<td>Gaza, Amman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
<td>Rome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Held, McGrew et al. 1999, 66; UN 2006).

WFP is unlike the other UN operational agencies in two respects. WFP was created by joint resolutions of the UN General Assembly and of the Conference of a specialised agency, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), and is, formally, jointly governed by FAO and the UN. Its intergovernmental executive board is elected half by the FAO Conference and half by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); the WFP Executive Director is formally appointed jointly by the UN Secretary-General and the FAO Director-General. Also, unlike other UN operational agencies, WFP receives no funding from the UN budget, but relies wholly on voluntary contributions. (Chapters Three and Four consider the historical background to this parentage and Chapter Five discusses contemporary WFP governance arrangements in more detail).

The UN system: quasi-state versus the hegemon?
The UN system is generally conceived of from two different perspectives. The first sees it as merely a creature of its member states, limited in its capacities by their wilful pursuit of national self-interest; the second as something which holds the promise of international solidarism, transcending states (Kennedy 2006). Any understanding of the UN system must comprehend the tensions between and within these two perspectives.

The key organisational aspects of the UN system convey some degree of collective and institutional solidity. For example, there is an International Civil Service, covering all

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26 The UNDP Administrator is also responsible for various entities such as the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF).
the significant agencies and organisations except for the IMF and World Bank (Ingram 2006, 8). This creates a consistent set of job classifications and hierarchies, and to a limited degree, a system-wide work culture which can transcend organisational as well as nation-state boundaries.

The various parts of the UN system all have some reporting link to the UN’s ECOSOC, and the UN Secretary-General has a ‘cabinet’ or senior management group comprising the heads of UN operational agencies and other senior members of the Secretariat staff. In addition, the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB, formerly the Administrative Committee on Coordination – ACC) is an annual meeting of heads of all agencies – both specialised and operational. While there are long-standing problems with coordination between different organisations, there have been some basic structures put into place designed to enhance the operation of the UN as a system. In addition, there is a large and growing literature on improving the management and coordination of the system (see e.g. Alger 2001; Annan 2005; 2006; Bertini 2005a; Evans 2006; Ingram 2006; Kennedy and Russett 1995; Klingebiel 1999; Knight 2002; Mendez 2001; Pease 2003; Timms 2006; Urquhart 2006; 2008; Washburn 2001).

The UN Secretariat, and the secretariats of organisations in the UN System are players and, to some extent agenda setters, in their own right in international politics (Barnett and Finnemore 2004; Ingram 2006; Murphy 2006; Pease 2003; Woods 2006). This is possible not only or always because of the existence of a reasonably coherent normative basis for these organisations, but also because of the power deriving from control of significant resources, agenda setting and defining capacity, and their membership of a global leadership elite. Of course, as critics point out, such bureaucracy can generate its own interests which do not always derive from the purity of the norms which officially provide it with its raison d’être (Hancock 1989).

Role of the hegemon

Against such examples of the UN becoming a powerful bureaucracy if not a quasi-state in its own right are the countervailing processes of state resistance to its norms and centrality. The United States is often seen as the classic example of a powerful state determined to limit or deny the application of multilateralism ahead of its own interests. Most notoriously in recent times this analysis has attached significance to the initiation of the war in Iraq by the US and the ‘Coalition of the Willing’ in the face of a refusal by the UN Security Council to authorise the action (Malone 2007; Reus-Smit 2004). There is an argument that the efforts made by the US to secure international legitimacy for its actions from the UN Security Council beforehand demonstrated the inherent power of the UN system as a legitimating force. However, the literally brutal reality is the US proceeded to invade Iraq without UN authorisation, and some argue that in the process it substantially weakened the UN (Urquhart 2008). At the same time, even while US unilateralism appears to demonstrate the weakness and ‘irrelevance’ of the UN, its perceived attacks on the UN drive a sort of defensive unity across the system that arguably strengthens it.27

It is important, though, not to reduce the relationship of the US and the UN to a simple competition between multilateralism and unilateralism. That competition takes place

27 In the course of the research for this thesis, during 2004-05, I observed a cross-agency UN discourse about the US suggesting a widespread attitude of fearful concern about how the US government (then apparently dominated by UN sceptics and critics, and unilateralists) was treating the UN. This ran across UN organisational boundaries, and involved staff of US background as much as staff with other national backgrounds.
within a paradigm of world order in which the role of the US as leader in and founder of the post-1945 international system based around the UN is central. Rather than simply regarding the US as a powerful state actor apart from, and in conflict with, the UN, it is important to emphasise the extent to which the UN itself is a creature of the US (Evans 1996; Ikenberry 2001a; 2001b; Urquhart 1998). In this context, the US needs to be understood, in part, as the hegemonic power in the international system, deploying its power beyond crude material exercise into particular patterns of institution building and legitimisation (Ikenberry 2001a; 2001b; Reus-Smit 2004).

To see the United States as the hegemonic power is to look beyond its status as a member-state of the UN that is most capable of unilateral action, to emphasising its role as the driving force behind the UN’s establishment, providing not only the most significant material resources to the UN, but also a crucial leadership role in world politics. This latter role operates ideationally as much as materially, with impacts on norm-setting and rule-making which in turn define the boundaries of legitimate world order.

That is not to say this leadership role involves simple, unchallenged exercise of power, as noted above in the context of conflict between multilateralism and unilateralism. The double edged nature of the US relationship to the UN, whereby its support is essential for UN viability, and yet the UN often threatens to constrain US power, is commonly referred to as the paradox of hegemony (Cronin 2001; Reus-Smit 2004). As Cronin puts it, hegemonic powers have an interest in maintaining an international or regional order in which law and multilateral institutions provide for a set of stable expectations and constraints. This legitimizes the distribution of power and system rules and helps to prevent the rise of revisionist challenges. However, having socialized the key states into accepting the assumptions and norms underlying the order, the hegemon is placed in a position where it must follow the rules and institutions it had helped to establish, even when it is not in its interest to do so. To do otherwise would undermine the very order it created. (Cronin 2001, 105).

This brief discussion of the US as hegemon demonstrates the complex relationship between the US and the UN system. Yet, as I argued in Chapter One there are limitations to generalising at the systemic level given the complexity and heterogeneity of the system. At the subsystemic, regime level, the role of the US – indeed, the extent to which it can be regarded as hegemonic varies in different contexts.

**Complexity and heterogeneity**

A large problem for the management of UN organisations lies with the lack of policy coherence from the US as it struggles to coordinate various domestic political influences (e.g. Ingram 2006, 312). Indeed, this latter point is a reminder that the attempts at coordination in the UN system are both necessary and limited in their impact because of the complex, fragmented and heterogeneous nature of the system. Member-state politics cuts across governing bodies in just about all organisations and agencies, but that politics itself is not necessarily coherent. For example, in agencies such as FAO, agriculture departments in member-states have tended to dominate representation and policy making, despite what are usually significant differences from, even direct conflicts with, the same member-state’s foreign affairs bureaucracy (Charlton 1992; Hopkins 1990; Ingram 2006).

In this context there is a range of literature calling for reform in selecting heads of UN system organisations and agencies (Bertini 2005a; Cameron 2005; Ingram 2006). Typically reformists argue for merit-based processes because of the perception that such
important roles are still being filled on the basis of patronage and political favour, with a consequent variability in competence and motivation – a transition emphasised in the literature on the evolution of modern public administration in developed countries, (e.g. Goldsmith 2007). Arguably, that variability poses a considerable constraint on the capacity of the UN system to develop greater coherence and consistency in its governance, reflecting both practically and symbolically the ultimate centrality in the system of member-states and their varying, sometimes contradictory, motives and interests.

Structural typicality
WFP is structurally typical in that it is subject to these tensions between the behaviour of member states, member state representatives, and wider system politics, through its governance structures and position within the UN system. Following a UN General Assembly resolution in 1993 (UN General Assembly 1993), WFP has had an Executive Board structure identical to that of the UN Development Program (UNDP), UN International Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and the UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA). The formal power distribution on WFP Board is also in structural terms typical of UN agencies. The US undoubtedly plays a dominant role, with other developed countries also contributing actively to governance and resources. NGOs based in developed countries also play an at times influential role, along with a secretariat staffed by many nationalities, albeit with strong western and especially American representation at senior levels. There is movement of staff from and to other UN agencies, and engagement with UN coordination activities along with other agencies such as the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Like all other UN operational agencies, WFP is established by resolution of the UN General Assembly (Appendix 5). As noted above, it is a little different from other UN agencies in that its establishment was not by the General Assembly alone, but by joint resolutions of the General Assembly and the FAO Conference, and its funding is purely voluntary. As will emerge in later chapters, these differences have had largely historical effects (albeit of ongoing significance), rather than creating a contemporarily significant difference in structure. Indeed, all of the UN operational agencies have complex histories, involving multiple parentage, considerable variations in leadership, structure and function over time (see e.g. Barnett and Finnemore 2004; Murphy 2006). In the context of that variability, WFP does not stand out as structurally unique in any significant way.

Material significance
While WFP may be structurally typical within the UN system, the resources it controls and deploys are far from typical. WFP has become the largest and most significant of the UN operational agencies (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 220) in terms of the resources it deploys. It has emerged as the second largest source (globally) of development funds after the World Bank. (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 15). In 2004, WFP had a staff of 8,829 and operational expenditures of $US3.1 billion (WFP 2006d).

This material significance is closely linked to two factors. First, the WFP is also currently widely regarded as one of the most successful and respected of the UN agencies (Clay 2003) – the reasons for which will be discussed further in Chapter Six. Without such strongly positive perceptions it is doubtful that a voluntarily funded
agency would be able to command the level of resources at the WFP’s disposal. Secondly, easily the most significant donor to the WFP is the US, which has historically never provided less than a third of its resources, and on average provided half of the donations to it in the decade to 2006 (Hanrahan and Canada 2006). This strong support from the US can be traced in part to the US role in its founding, and the use of food aid to pursue US interests; however, its continuation and evolution can only be understood with reference to the unique norm that underpins the WFP and the international food aid regime – the feed-the-hungry norm.

The following section expands on the normative uniqueness that provides the most significant distinguishing feature of the WFP, linked to the second defining characteristic of the IFAR. As part of the IFAR, the WFP is governed by that regime’s feed-the-hungry norm. As the central part of the regime in which substantive political actions – decision-making, operations and negotiations – take place, the WFP is the key node in the regime where the norm is reflected in and modified by governance processes. A careful analysis of the feed-the-hungry norm shows it has two aspects that generate its unique character. Firstly, there is a congruence with an equivalent domestic norm in the United States, reflecting the historical development of the regime, and helping to generate the hegemonic relationship of the US to WFP in a distinctively constructive form. Secondly, the norm is not based on a contractual or rule-based logic, but on the humanitarian impulse connected to the moral claim of the hungry. In this it provides an example of what can be termed ‘soft’ normative power, in contrast to the ‘hard’ normative power of those international regime norms calling up international law as an underpinning.

3. Normative uniqueness

As noted in Chapter One, there has been a growth in literature concerned with norms, as the interest in ideational issues in international relations has grown following the constructivist turn (Checkel 1998; Finnemore 1996; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Ruggie 1998; Wendt 1999). Much of this literature is concerned with identifying with more precision the nature of norms and their role in international relations. Where do international norms come from and how do they evolve (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Florini 1996)? How, if at all, do they act on states at the domestic level (Cortell and Davis 1996; 2005)? What effects do norms have on the international relations system, and on the actors within that system? What is the relationship between international and domestic level norms (Checkel 1999)? In the process of asking these questions, much of this literature tends to reify norms as somehow separable, independent phenomena that act as a variable of change through the application of causal theorising.

Yet the constitutive nature of norms suggests it is very difficult if not unwise to attempt to analyse norms apart from their institutional settings. This problem requires empirical examination of the relationship between norms and regimes in situ, as it were, in order to tease out the significance of the interrelationships between a given norm and its institutional context, given they are mutually constituting concepts. Such empirical work can then help guide judgements of the extent to which norms may be amenable to causal theorising without reification in terms that gut them of their constitutive meanings.
In this context, before commencing my specific empirical examination of the IFAR normative environment, it is perhaps useful to note that what follows about the feed-the-hungry norm is substantively consistent with Keck and Sikkink’s (1998) empirically based argument implicitly concerning transnationally resonant norms. Keck and Sikkink propose that transnational advocacy networks have been particularly effective around ‘issue characteristics’ concerning bodily integrity and the prevention of bodily harm to vulnerable or innocent groups involving a short causal chain (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 27). As Finnemore and Sikkink point out, this amounts to an argument that norms based on such criteria have a particular ‘transnational resonance’ leading to their successful diffusion (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998, 907).

In arguing this, Keck and Sikkink distinguish the bodily harm issue characteristic with its ‘normative logic’ from the ‘juridical and institutional logic’ of issues characterised by arguments concerning legal equality of opportunity (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 27). This argument echoes the distinction I propose below between the ‘soft normative’ power of the feed-the-hungry norm and the ‘hard normative’ power associated with other norms based more explicitly on international law.

Characteristics of the feed-the-hungry norm

The ‘feed-the-hungry’ norm is a powerful ‘interdependence norm’ (Elliott 1994, 11), providing important motivational coherence, and a shared paradigm through which different interests can be conceived, defined and acted on within the international food aid regime.

This norm is both a belief in the rectitude of feeding hungry people, and an implicit statement of rights and obligations – that hungry people have a right to be fed, and those with food have an obligation to feed them. Precisely what this norm means or implies is complex and subject to change, but it has generated important political stability for the WFP by providing a unifying logic with quite powerful expression in fora such as the WFP Executive Board.

In other words, the WFP is embedded within an international food aid regime which has a distinctive normative base – the feed-the-hungry norm. This gives the WFP a normative uniqueness due to the combination of two interrelated factors – soft normative power, and congruence with a domestic US norm.

‘Soft normative power’

Most international norms are ultimately defined in legal terms, categorising obligations in terms of rights and responsibilities codified by international law, conventions and treaties. The feed-the-hungry norm, in contrast involves minimal use of such legal frameworks, and even avoids reliance on a discourse of rights. Instead, the norm is based on moral claims (primarily of the hungry) rather than rights or obligations. While it might be argued that moral claims and rights amount to the same thing, moral claims connote humanitarian (soft) more than legal (hard) normative power. That is, one responds to a moral claim out of a moral sense of rightness – to refer to this as humanitarian means such a sense of rightness is based on a common bond of humanity.

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28 Krasner’s regime elements distinguish between principles (statements of belief), and norms (statements of rights and obligations) (Krasner 1983b, 1), but this is not a tenable or useful distinction at the normative level.

29 The right to food discourse and its absence from the WFP is discussed in detail in Chapter Six.
In contrast, response to a rights claim could be said to come as much from a sense of legal obligation implied by the existence of a ‘right’, as from a substantive sense of rightness. The sense of rightness in the case of a rights claim brings to bear an important procedural norm – that a set of rules ought to be commonly adopted and applied consistently as a basis for collective security – as well as relying on a common bond of humanity.

The development of the UN system has been largely modelled on a modernising liberal democratic state, one of the most significant effects of which has been a culture of articulating the work of the system largely in terms of the formulation and application of consistent sets of rules, governed principally through the concept of international law. These processes are referred to by Boli and Thomas as demonstrating the cultural principles of ‘rationalizing progress’, and of ‘world citizenship’ which is ‘codified’ in UN instruments (Boli and Thomas 1999, 38-40). The norms and principles underpinning much of the regime and organisational structure in the UN system draw from assumptions about the centrality of laws and rules as a code for rights – whether state or human (Evans 1996). Many of the norms in international regimes ultimately call up the sense of being part of a system of rules or contracts linked to the notion that the rule of law is what can overcome a Hobbesian state of nature, acquiring legitimacy through its consistent, fair application. The treaties, agreements and protocols formally defining the terrain of much of the system are legal documents, and often the language of international regime norms is the language of law. Many of these rules are reflections of underlying norms pertaining to such things as fair treatment, respect for autonomy, protection from abuse or torture, for example. The codifying signals the shared acceptance and legitimacy of those norms, but it also creates a normative procedural overlay on top of those substantive norms. As a result of this overlay, conforming to the rules could mean respect for the underlying norm, but this is entwined with a signal of respect for the norm of following the rules (or fear of sanctions or loss of reputation for breaching the rules).

In making this argument, I am positing a difference between a norm and the legal mechanisms that claim to express the norm. The difference is analogous to the distinction between an international regime and an international organisation. In both cases, the latter may be important, even central to the former, but it does not cover all aspects of it. Norms (regimes) do not constitute laws (organisations), but frame their establishment, and in turn are influenced by their operation (Kratochwil 1989).

Fundamental to rule-based codification of norms is the notion of sanctions for breaching the law/norm, linked to the notion that the threat of sanctions will help compel adherence, even where it is viewed as against the short-run interest of a state. For example, the problem with the US refusals to ratify the Kyoto Protocol on carbon emissions, or to be party to the International Criminal Court, is often portrayed in terms of the incapacity of the system to compel the most powerful state to adhere to important norms (Newman, Thakur et al. 2006). Conversely, from the perspective of US policy makers, the problem with such instruments seems to be with their very compulsion which threatens their sovereign power (Eckersley 2007b). In this context, it seems appropriate to think of the related regime norms as based on a central presumption of ‘hard’ legal power. Thus hard normative power is implied when international regime norms take a form, for example relating to ‘progress’, ‘development’, ‘security’, ‘peace and welfare’; ‘sovereignty’ or ‘human rights’, which is then codified in quasi-legal terms, expressed in terms of rules or rights.
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In contrast, the proposition that hungry people should be fed does not necessarily involve rules or rights in this sense; that is, the rights and obligations that the norm implies have remained implicit and relatively uncodified in the IFAR. Uvin hints at the distinctive nature of this norm when he describes the international food aid regime as ‘developmental’ or ‘humanitarian’, meaning ‘not-self-interested’ (Uvin 1992), but this difference goes deeper than merely representing ideas such as humanitarianism. The feed-the-hungry norm appears to have a humanitarian moral ontology different to many other regime norms, meaning it has less connection to rights-based discourses, and frames the politics of the regime differently.

This difference is illustrated by the WFP’s voluntary funding. One important historical impact of its joint UN-FAO genesis was that from its inception the WFP was not given access to UN funding derived from assessed contributions to the UN by member-states. Consequently, unlike the other operational agencies, the WFP has always relied on voluntary donations for its funding. This reliance on voluntary funding also points to the absence of quasi-legal compulsion as an implicit underpinning of the food aid regime norm.

Congruence with the US
The fact that the WFP has largely absented itself from the discourse within the UN system on the Right to Food (see Chapter Six for a more detailed discussion of this) can be interpreted not only as a reflection of US hostility to such discourses, but also as consistent with the soft normative power context in the regime. That is, the rights-based discourse on hunger can be interpreted as conflicting with the voluntarist donor ethos within the WFP. This ethos echoes the initial domestic US response to hunger in the Depression (cf Poppendieck 1986), and the early post-war policy responses by the US to international hunger (cf Bentley 1994) and is just one of many aspects of the norm which demonstrate the close normative relationship between the regime and US politics.

In other words, the characteristics of the feed-the-hungry norm that render it as a form of soft normative power are entwined with the second factor that makes the WFP normatively unique – its congruence with a domestic US feed-the-hungry norm. That is, the international norm has a counterpart norm at the domestic US level which occupies a strong place in domestic politics, enjoying reliable bipartisan support (Zeigler 2005). The domestic political strength of this norm in the US is arguably unique amongst norms underpinning international regimes, avoiding as it does, a reliance on international legal norms and tapping into a strong domestic political constituency. This normative congruence is an important factor in explaining the extraordinarily strong support for the WFP within and from the US since its inception. In turn it helps explain how the WFP has achieved its material significance, even while being structurally typical within the UN system. In combination these factors amount to a compelling depiction of the centrality to the regime of both the feed-the-hungry norm and US hegemony.

In order to explicate this argument further, it is important to explore what is meant by the ‘feed-the-hungry norm’, in both the US and in the international regime.

30 Though the right to food has been codified within the international human rights regime.
31 It is not the only regime norm of this type; for example, there is arguably a different, though connected, disaster relief regime with similar characteristics. Also, while arguing the importance of the distinction, this should not be mistaken for a normative argument against legalising the expression of norms, which is important and desirable in many cases.
**A normative analysis of US food aid**
The standard depiction of how and why the WFP was established calls up an 'interest-based' analysis. In this analysis, the multilateral food aid program, with the US as by far the dominant donor, is portrayed as an exercise to help legitimise the much larger US bilateral food aid program, which in turn was focused on getting rid of troublesome agricultural surpluses and contributing to US export market development and strategic aims. At the domestic level within the US these aims were linked to a transfer of resources to an electorally powerful agricultural sector. However, such an analysis is too narrow to adequately explain the ways in which the WFP, the IFAR and US domestic politics have entwined and influenced each other into the 21st Century. It also begs the question of how those interests have been constructed, and why their pursuit has taken the form it has.

Though most policy can be described in terms of a mix of normative and interest-based motives, what is interesting about food aid policy is its particularly explicit rendering of this mixture. Any examination of American actions and motives in relation to food aid must take into account the interlinked normative, strategic and economic interests involved. For example, Chapter Three argues that, due to their entwining with agricultural protection interests since the 1930s, by the 1950s food aid norms became ranked ahead of trade liberalisation norms in the US domestic values hierarchy. This is an example not only of a norm constructing interests, but of interests contributing to the political significance of a norm.

At the normative level, the US food aid program, while in part related to and driven by economic interests, is also about a moral imperative to do good with abundance. The complex interrelationship between ‘interests and morality’ creates tensions between the notion that doing good should run counter to self-interest (it should be a ‘burden’), and the notion that the best policy aligns the two.

George McGovern told his staff at the Office of Food for Peace after his appointment as Director in early 1961:

> There had been enough complaining about farm surpluses. There was no such thing as a 'burdensome farm surplus' as long as there were hungry children in the world. So, I said, let's praise our farmers for their skill, hard work, and productivity and tell them that they make it possible for us to have the great privilege of feeding our fellow humans. (McGovern 2001, 52).

Such normative imperatives had been embedded in American public policy since at least the Depression era, as Poppendieck documents (Poppendieck 1986). Early in the Depression years, a popular, powerful and enduring depiction of the injustice of hunger and malnutrition in the context of large surpluses of food commodities was that of a ‘paradox of want amidst plenty’ (Bentley 1994; Counihan 2002; Levenstein 2003; Poppendieck 1986). Widespread reports in 1930–32 of simultaneous starvation in

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32 There is considerable literature on the phenomenon of the electoral power of the agriculture sector in liberal democracies (e.g. Coleman, Grant et al. 2004). Uvin argues it has been the price of peace between urban and rural sectors (Uvin 1994); Brett and Craig & Phillips argue the importance of agrarian ideology to this phenomenon (Brett 2007; Craig and Phillips 1983; Flinn and Johnson 1974).

33 Poppendieck points out that this was not really a paradox – it was the entirely logical result of a given economic and social system that separated human needs from systemic production capacities via market processes (Poppendieck 1986, xiii). Following this to its logical conclusion, the real paradox may instead have been in the contradiction between the idea of capitalism as the most effective and normatively desirable economic system compatible with democracy, and ways in which that system results in large scale human suffering.
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depressed areas and destruction of a range of agricultural produce rendered worthless by price fluctuations (examples cited included pigs, milk, and oranges), caused public scandal and played a role in the election of the new Roosevelt administration on the basis of a ‘New Deal’ (Poppendieck 1986).

Political debates have occurred in America periodically about the best means to address hunger – whether by government action or by volunteerism. These debates were framed as Hoover’s voluntarism versus Roosevelt’s New Deal in the 1932 election. Poppendieck cites a public statement by President Hoover in 1931 regarding the debate over Federal relief for the poor in the Depression, articulating the voluntarist view:

‘My own conviction,’ he [Hoover] asserted, ‘is strongly that if we break down this sense of responsibility, of individual generosity to individual, and mutual self-help in the country in times of national difficulty and if we start appropriations of this character we have not only impaired something infinitely valuable in the life of the American people but have struck at the roots of self-government.’ Local and voluntary efforts were ‘the American way of relieving distress among our own people,’ he contended, ‘and the country is successfully meeting its problem in the American way today.’ (Poppendieck 1986, 51).

Bentley argues similar debates over rationing and post-war food aid policy were cut short by President Truman appointing Hoover to run the post-war food relief efforts in Europe:

Hoover’s intense compassion for and sense of obligation toward famine victims fuelled his lifelong involvement with international famine relief. But his equally passionate belief in limited government and the ideology of voluntarism persuaded him that famine relief be conducted strictly outside government controls...By appointing Hoover as head of the administration's newly-formed Famine Emergency Committee, Truman was helping to reintroduce the pre-Depression ideology of voluntarism and limited government intervention – the same ideology that had been rejected as deficient and an ideological failure by the New Dealers. That Hoover was again in the government forefront, shaping American food relief programs and goals, suggests a retreat to a more limited theory of government in the immediate post-WWII world. (Bentley 1994, 6).

Poppendieck, Brown and others document the replaying of these debates in response to the US domestic hunger crisis of the early to mid 1980s, in which the Reagan administration, apart from disputing the existence of a crisis, insisted on the importance of a voluntarist response (Berry 1984; Brown and Pizer 1987; Poppendieck 1997; 1998). The feed-the-hungry norm provides the backdrop to this political debate about ways and means – reflected in the presumption embedded in these debates which places the goal of feeding the hungry beyond question.

Also, notwithstanding political debates about the place of voluntarism, Truman’s appointment of Hoover amounted to a framing of food aid as bipartisan – beyond the Democrat/Republican divide. This bipartisan framing was echoed again in the 1970s when Democrat Senator George McGovern and Republican Senator Bob Dole teamed as Chair and Deputy Chair of the Senate Committee on Nutrition.

The US feed-the-hungry norm acquired much of its political significance in domestic policy terms from the New Deal and can be seen as deeply embedded in the development and expansion of a domestic food stamps system during the 1950s and

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34 Hoover had undertaken a similar role in the aftermath of WWI, and in the early 1920s as Commerce Secretary running the American Relief Administration, helping create a national political profile which would lead him to the White House (Zieger 1976).

35 The close relationship is commemorated in the name of the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education Program established in 2002 (see Chapter Five).
1960s (e.g. Berry 1984). Such post-war developments paralleled the foreign food aid developments of the same period, which in their own ways had stemmed from policy responses to the Second World War.

President Roosevelt’s State of the Union speech to Congress in 1941 became famous for its enumeration of the ‘Four Freedoms’:

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way—everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want—which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants—everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear—which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world.

That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation. That kind of world is the very antithesis of the so-called new order of tyranny which the dictators seek to create with the crash of a bomb.

To that new order we oppose the greater conception—the moral order. A good society is able to face schemes of world domination and foreign revolutions alike without fear. (Woolley and Peters).

This speech was made 11 months before Pearl Harbor brought America into the war, but focused on placing the nation on a war footing to fight the spread of fascism (Dallek 1979). No mention was made of hunger in it. However, the ‘Third Freedom’ (from Want) was to become reified by and for the feed-the-hungry norm. Norman Rockwell made a series of pictorial representations of Roosevelt’s Four Freedoms for the Saturday Evening Post in 1943. 36 Bentley describes their significance, in particular that of the third freedom:

The public immediately embraced the series of paintings, to such an extent that it seemed as if the paintings had inspired the themes they were intended to illustrate. These paintings, reproduced by the millions, conveyed what was at stake for American families in this global battle against fascism. Freedom from Want, for example, gathers up images of domesticity and material plenty. An older man, presumably the patriarch of this extended, Euro-American family, sits at the head of the table, dressed in his Sunday best, and gazes down in obvious pleasure at the oversized, succulent turkey his aproned wife has placed in front of him...Yet Freedom from Want was controversial as well as popular. Some, particularly U.S. allies, found the lavishly dressed turkey an inappropriate symbol during a global war which left so many hungry and undernourished. Most Americans, however, identified with the scene...[which] seemed to embody the best of what the United States stood for – stable and extended families, abundant material wealth, familiar rituals, non-denominational and patriotic celebration. (Bentley 2002, 171).

In keeping with this reification, McGovern entitled his memoir, written while US Ambassador to the UN food agencies in Rome, The Third Freedom: Ending Hunger in our Time, placing the relevant excerpt from Roosevelt’s speech before the Preface (McGovern 2001, 9), before going on to outline the significance of his experience of

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36 On my first visit to the US Consulate in Melbourne I was struck by the four large prints of this Rockwell series hanging on a corridor wall on the way to a seminar room.
hunger and desperation amongst farmers as a boy during the Depression to his interest in the issue.

The power of the Depression experience is important in its demonstration of the apparent alternatives to food aid – if the surplus stocks were not being given in aid, they would be being destroyed, or stored at large cost until no longer edible. If they were to be destroyed, in the context of global hunger such actions would create a ‘paradox’ counter both to morality, and in a narrower sense interests: what kind of nation destroys food when there are hungry people, how can it serve US interests to be such a nation? Such a construction of (self)-interest in relation to food aid forms an important part of American identity, based on the feed-the-hungry norm.

Before looking at the dimensions of the norm itself in more detail, it is useful to clarify the different normative dimensions of food aid policy – as burden and as virtuous self-interest.

By the 1960s, in the context of the founding of the WFP, one important element of the shift to supporting multilateral food aid came from the burden-sharing argument. This proposed that while the contribution of food aid had been pre-eminently American, given that it involved ‘doing good’, other countries needed to do their bit too, and a multilateral program was needed to enable such ‘burden sharing’. As is noted in Chapter Three, burden sharing was to be cited as the reason for initiating the Food Aid Convention as well (Hopkins 1987). This concept of food aid and feeding the hungry as a burden had a pedigree dating from at least the end of World War II, in a context of wartime rationing having been linked to the allocation of food aid:

> President Truman took to the airwaves to alert Americans that something must be done. 'For the world as a whole, a food crisis has developed which may prove to be the worst in modern times,' Truman told the nation in a special February 1946 broadcast. 'Under these circumstances,' he continued, 'it is apparent that only through superhuman efforts can mass starvation be prevented…I am sure that the American people are in favor of carrying their share of the burden...Truman then outlined his plan to reduce wheat and fats consumption in the United States so as to donate as much as possible to needy countries. (Bentley 1994, 5, emphasis added).

Bentley criticises the refusal of Truman and his post-war food aid administrator Hoover to continue with a rationing regime. Rather, in the administration of post-war food relief, food aid was completely delinked from any immediate requirement for the sort of consumer sacrifices created through wartime rationing. Food aid was designed to support agricultural interests and created consumer sacrifice only in the sense that commodity prices were being maintained at high levels through government purchase of agricultural commodities. Nevertheless, there is a strongly embedded sense of food aid being in some sense burdensome dating from at least the war.

If food aid were simply an exercise in economic and strategic self-interest this would imply that characterising it as a burden was no more than rhetoric or ‘spin’. However, such a depiction of the burden-sharing discourse does not grasp the extent to which both domestic and foreign audiences accepted it as having some validity, despite awareness of the self-interest arguments. Rather, characterising food aid as a ‘burden’ demonstrates the complex interaction between norms and interests.

Food aid is a burden partly because it represents a tangible, voluntary transfer of resources – on the face of it, a transfer burdensome to the donor. The characterisation of food aid as generous gift giving and hence in some sense ‘burdensome’ to the giver helps undercut accusations of purely self-interested motives and reassures Americans
that there really is a normative basis for their food aid programs. After all, if it was not burdensome, where was the generosity inherent in the action?

However, the notion of the food aid program as a burden, reflecting its limits, has never been overplayed. Rather, and using a different kind of normative logic, a virtue has been made of its service of economic interests. McGovern explicitly refers to the strength of US food aid policy deriving from its unique mix of humanitarianism and service of economic interests –

I have been in public life for most of my adulthood. During those years I have never seen a government program that was a better blend of self-interest and moral purpose than Food for Peace. (McGovern 2001, 57).

McGovern attributes a normative quality to this blending in itself – it is ‘better’. This normative quality relates to the capacity of such a blend of motivations to generate policy on a consensual basis in the complex, pluralistic political environment of the US. Thus the normative virtue of food aid policy is partly that everyone fits inside the tent. Such inclusion is a function of a norm that is widely held and deeply embedded in the national polity.

**Defining the feed-the-hungry norm**

Instead of dropping bombs in Europe, we were now distributing nutritious food. In some instances American food went to hungry Germans who a few days earlier had been trying their best to shoot us out of the skies. I will wager that no European who was fed by this first American airlift after the war will ever forget it. I am even more certain that my fellow pilots and our crews will not forget the pride we felt in converting our bombers to angels of mercy at a terrible time in the life of the world.

This was the spirit that later shaped the great Marshall Plan, Food for Peace, the Peace Corps, America's ongoing foreign assistance, the United Nations, and the religious and philanthropic outreach of the American people. Americans have saved the lives of countless human beings since World War II. And now we will play our part in reaching the 800 million who still hunger and thirst. (McGovern 2001, 68).

In an echo of this half a century later, writing four weeks after the terrorist attack of 9 September 2001, Counihan noted that ‘U.S. fighter planes are dropping bombs and U.S. C-17 cargo planes are air-dropping food packets over Afghanistan’ (Counihan 2002, 11).

These are examples of what seems almost an American reflex to respond to crises at a public policy level with food assistance. In the course of an interview with Catherine Bertini, (WFP Executive Director 1992–2002), this was raised with her, leading her to

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37 McGovern similarly refers to the legislation underpinning American food aid (Public Law 480) as involving a ‘blend of economic self-interest and humanitarian reaction’ (McGovern 2001 47).

38 Counihan cites from the *Intelligencer Journal* (Lancaster, Pa, 10 August 2001) the following description of the 37,500 food packets dropped: ‘The airdrops are delivering "humanitarian daily rations," plastic pouches enriched with vitamins and minerals...The food, wrapped so that one packet has enough for one person for one day, does not contain any animal products so as not to violate any religious or cultural practices. Muslims, for example, do not eat pork...The yellow plastic packets are about the size and weight of a hardcover book. They have a picture of a smiling person eating from a pouch, a stencil of an American flag, a notation that they were made by Rightaway Foods of McAllen Texas, and this greeting in English: "This food is a gift from the United States of America.” Inside are several smaller packets with food such as peanut butter, strawberry jam, crackers, a fruit pastry, and entrees such as beans with tomato sauce and bean and potato vinaigrette. The packets provide at least 2,200 calories per day. The packets are also designed to flutter to the ground rather than drop straight down to minimize the possibility that they could hit and injure someone.’ (Counihan 2002, 11).
respond that, in America, there is a strong view that ‘we ought to feed everybody’ (Bertini 2005b). When Bertini was an Assistant Secretary at the US Department of Agriculture (1989–1991) she was in charge of domestic food aid expenditures of $US40 billion, (compared with, at most, $US4 billion as WFP Executive Director) (Bertini 2005b). Notwithstanding the still large Federal food aid expenditures (Nestle 2002; Usborne 2008), Poppendieck documents the massive food assistance voluntary sector that has grown since 1980 in the US (Poppendieck 1997; 1998), and in doing so sheds further light on the place of the feed-the-hungry norm in American society. The enormous bureaucratic and civil society apparatus in the US built around this norm is not duplicated in other Anglophone liberal democracies, such as the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand, though Canada may be a partial exception to this (Davis and Tarasuk 1994; Riches 1997a).

In other words, there is in the US a domestic feed-the-hungry norm. This norm can be described largely in terms of two characteristics – its definition, and its link to a distinctive set of moral claims, reflecting the interests involved in policy making in the area.

**Moral claims**

Poppendieck, in explaining the embrace of domestic food assistance programs by anti-poverty campaigners in America in the 1960s, describes the distinctive virtues of food as aid (in the domestic context) as follows:

> Anti-poverty activists made a strategic decision to pursue the reform and expansion of food programmes, rather than the more adequate cash assistance that might have made such programmes unnecessary...advocates for the poor identified hunger ‘as the one problem to which the public might respond. They reasoned that “hunger” made a higher moral claim than any of the other problems of poverty. Federally supported housing and jobs programs could wait; but no one should go hungry in affluent America.’ [citing (Kotz 1984)] (Poppendieck 1997, 135).

The ‘moral claim’ of the hungry suffuses most texts concerned with food aid. However, McGovern implicitly aligns it with another moral claim – that of the farmers who produce the food through honest toil (McGovern 2001, 16, 21). This claim runs deep within the American polity – as Shklar notes, ‘When the founders of the American Republic equated the upright citizen with the man who works, they had a particular kind of worker in mind, the sturdy yeoman tilling his own soil or the independent craftsman’ (cited in Sennett 2003, 107).

Paralleling the way in which there is more to American food aid policy than narrow pursuit of national strategic or economic interest, it is not possible to reduce the moral claims of producers to being merely a function of their rationally-based economic interests. Barrett and Maxwell in their survey of the economic literature on food aid show how little evidence there is of economic benefit to producers from food aid policies – ‘the benefits to American farmers come purely through image and the “warm glow” of knowing that their crops are being shipped to poor countries and peoples, even if the food aid largely displaces commercial imports of the same commodities’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 37). Ultimately, the role played by ‘economic interests’ cannot be understood in isolation from the norms which help construct the perception of those interests and related policy.

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39 Though Barrett and Maxwell make clear there are a small number of sectional interests in the American polity which do very well out of food aid policy and procedure (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, Ch5).
The other side of the coin from the moral claim is moral hazard. Moral hazard is a term primarily used in insurance economics (Dufwenberg and Lundholmz 1998, 2) and game theory (Dutta and Radner 1994), referring to the disincentive effects of economic support; for example, unemployment insurance removing the incentive for unemployed individuals to look for or accept work. Moral hazard is also referred to as a potential cost in connection with bail-outs of failed banks (Bovens 1998), funds or, in the case of the IMF, defaulting countries. In such contexts the benefits of systemic stability are put ahead of the moral hazard resulting from the perceived elimination of penalty or risk from failure.

While there is a considerable specialist economic literature on moral hazard, the concept derives from very old concerns with the moral implications of assistance to the poor. Since the Reformation such concerns have been prominently linked to the capitalist work ethic (Weber 1976), based on concern that excessive assistance for the poor will undermine or displace any incentives for self-sufficiency and self-responsibility, and thence undermine moral qualities essential for proper individual behaviour and effective social and political structures – concerns echoed in the citation above from Hoover. If people think they will be looked after by society, why would they, indeed anyone, choose to work? In more recent years, this reasoning has in part been applied in the neoliberal critique of ‘welfare dependency’ and the campaign for welfare reform (King 1999; Nestle 2002; Riches 1997a).

Moral hazard arguments help explain the enthusiasm for food assistance in Depression era America. Giving individuals or groups of people money was replete with risks of moral hazard, even if they were starving. For example it could lead to indolence, or the money being wasted on vices such as drinking and gambling. Food however, is not fungible in the way money was (that is, it is not easily substituted for other things). The directed nature of the assistance reduced problems of moral hazard, while doing something practical to assist poor and starving people.

Conversely, applying such moral hazard reasoning to the plight of farmers required support from government linked to their production. Farmers were hard working and productive – the more so, the more they were innocent victims of ‘market forces’ in the context of extremely low commodity prices. To fail to support such farmers financially through the purchase of produce at guaranteed prices would be morally hazardous, as it would send a signal that hard productive work would not be rewarded. In this context, food aid was in a unique normative position – it answered moral claims (of both starving people and farmers) while avoiding moral hazard more convincingly than financial assistance could.

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40 Moral hazard is also conjured up in IR with reference to the free-rider problem posed by collective public goods (Ostrom 2003, 6) – if all benefit without reference to their contributions, at least some will choose to take the benefits without contributing; yet if all do that the goods evaporate. The risk of free-riding requires constraints (exclusions) or penalties to apply to free-riders to deter that course of action, both pragmatically to make the creation of the goods possible, and normatively, to create a system which is seen to be fair and just.

41 This is not to suggest that moral hazard concerns have not been applied to food aid as well – they have provoked much discussion. From the mid-1970s moral hazard style welfare dependence criticism began of the American domestic food stamps program, leading to cuts to it under Reagan (Berry 1984; Brown and Pizer 1987). In recent years the relevance of this issue in the IFAR is likely to increase given the exploration of insurance-type approaches to food insecurity by WFP staff (WFP 2006f), and consequent increasing relevance of the insurance economics literature noted above.
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A third moral claim, in addition to the claims of the hungry and the producers is that of a nation which both produces food efficiently enough to have surplus and distributes it to the needy. Farm surpluses, McGovern noted in 1961,

> testified to the efficiency of our farmers, who comprised only 4 per cent of the American populace and yet produced enough food to feed the other 96 per cent plus millions of people abroad. By contrast, the Soviet Union, our cold war competitor, with half of its population engaged in farming, was unable to feed the other half.’ (McGovern 2001, 52).

President George W Bush updated these sentiments in 2001, when he told the Future Farmers of America:

> It’s important for our nation to build – to grow foodstuffs, to feed our people. Can you imagine a country that was unable to grow enough food to feed the people? It would be a nation subject to international pressure. It would be a nation at risk. And so when we’re talking about American agriculture, we’re really talking about a national security issue. (U.S. President George W. Bush in remarks to the Future Farmers of America, July 27, 2001, Washington, DC, (cited in Suppan 2002, 1).

In light of this national moral claim, American food aid is seen as contributing to as well as reflecting a national self-image as a nation which is productive and generous. The greeting on the food aid packages airdropped into Afghanistan can be seen as another form of this national moral claim.42

**Definitional elements of the norm**

While the feed-the-hungry norm is largely based on these moral claims, its definition involves two important elements that require some explication – its construction as transcending politics, and its distinction from financial aid.

Hunger is something which is arguably universal to human experience (who has never been hungry?), and also universally regarded as a thing which can be changed with the provision of food. This is an issue on which people across a broad political spectrum can apparently agree (Poppendieck 1998, Ch9), though politics starts to intrude if, rather than just getting food to the hungry, questions are raised about why people are starving. Such questions are awkward for power structures in US domestic politics (Poppendieck 1997), and awkward for nation-state sovereignty in the international regime, so the operation of the norm tends to avoid the problems raised by such issues. This means certain boundaries around the moral claims of the hungry, which tend to limit their claim to an immediate alleviation of suffering through access to food. Such limits focus organisational work and attention on practical and logistical issues – getting food to the hungry.

Another aspect of this politically transcendent definition is the use of the qualifier ‘children’ to define the hungry to which the norm refers. This is reflected in the emphasis given children in US domestic food aid programs, such as school feeding, and the WIC (Women and Infant Children) program. It has also been evident in WFP (and more broadly in aid) rhetoric for some time. Catherine Bertini when arguing for US

42 Congress requires all food aid donations to be clearly labelled as ‘a gift of the people of the United States’. In the case of donations to North Korea in the mid-1990s the prominence of the American flag on the commodity bags initially caused some consternation on the part of the local authorities – concerns were resolved by a decision to describe the aid donations as ‘war reparations’ (Anon. 2005). Noland notes the the long dependence of North Korea on outside assistance, and argues that the North Koreans ‘have compensated for this dependency by ferociously denouncing it, portraying aid as tribute paid to the ideologically pure North Korean state … and trying to play patrons off against each other’ (Noland 2003, 4).
support for the WFP providing famine relief to North Korea in 1997 cited Ronald Reagan to a sceptical Administration: ‘a hungry child knows no politics’ (Bertini 2005b; McGovern 2001, 60). Public statements from the WFP frequently make a point of mentioning hungry children in particular (e.g. Morris 2006). Uvin noted a long established ‘exceptionalism’ for children in the measurement of hunger, in which children are assessed on baseline for full growth and development based on small sample of rich country children, while the adult minimum threshold is defined at a body mass ration ‘just enough to stay alive without doing any physical activity’ (Uvin 1994, 69). He suggests this “‘exceptionalism’ for children seems to be linked to the powerful emotional appeal of children, and the clever way in which UNICEF has been able to push through its agenda with its sister organizations.’ (Uvin 1994, 69).

On the other hand, the emphasis on children is not simply a matter of spin or emotional manipulation. For those working in food aid, there is a constant awareness that adequate nutrition at early ages can make the difference, not only between life and death, but between normal or adequate development, and stunted growth, and a physically and mentally shortened and constrained life. For example, as one senior WFP official noted, there must be real concern as to where the next generation of leaders in North Korea will come from, given the endemic and widespread malnutrition of children in that country (*172 2005).

Nevertheless, whether it is seen as part of a media-friendly strategy, or done for sound humanitarian reasons, the emphasis on children fits with feed-the -hungry norms (both in the US and internationally) which transcend politics (*172 2005).

Since at least the Depression, food as aid has been, for the most part, carefully distinguished from financial forms of aid, though both could take the form of grants or soft loans. To some degree the distinction can be explained in terms of pragmatics and differing backgrounds, in particular the link between food aid and surplus disposal, but this does not capture the normative dimension of the distinction. Poppendieck’s suggestion of a ‘double halo’ effect - where food aid achieves both relief for the hungry and avoidance of waste (Poppendieck 1998, 150-2) – can seem to put it on a different normative plane from financial aid. The distinctive nature of food as a tangible, concrete resource repeatedly comes to the fore in food aid discourse (Byers 2005; Poppendieck 1997; 1998) in a manner that implies a subtle positive contrast to monetary assistance.44

In this normative context, as food aid developed in the United States, it is not surprising that the food aid allocations in the budget before Congress in the 1950s were alone in

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43 Note de Waal points out such emphasis on children also occurs in other (non-food) aid discourses with similar logic (de Waal 1997, 74, 82-5).
44 Wiener notes the work of Tim Breen on the importance of commodities as a tangible, unifying element of revolutionary America: “The reason why Americans displayed such marked political solidarity beginning in 1773, writes Breen, a solidarity not evident during the Townshend protest, was that the Tea Act ‘affected an item of popular consumption found in almost every colonial household.’ an item very much like Coca-Cola which “appear[ed] on the tables of the wealthiest merchants and the poorest labourers.” In creating a material commonality among Americans, tea became an ideal medium through which “to transmit perceptions of liberty and rights,” and a way in which ideological abstractions “acquired concrete meaning.” Breen's analysis suggests that commodities generally can provide “a shared framework of consumer experience” that allows individuals to “reach out to distant strangers, to perceive, however dimly, the existence of an ‘imagined community’” and then to take political action when the liberties and rights of that community are infringed.’ Breen, Timothy “‘Baubles of Britain': The American and Consumer Revolutions of the Eighteenth Century”, *Past and Present* 119 (May 1988): 73-104 cited in (Weiner 2002, 136).
aid allocations in never being cut back (Shaw 2001, 33). This different treatment was echoed 40 years later by the exemption of the Federal food stamps program from radical changes to ‘dollar-based welfare’ under the Congressional welfare reform program ‘Contract with America’ (King 1999). These examples do not just illustrate the political strength of the agricultural interests involved. Food aid is in a unique normative position – it answers moral claims (both of starving people and of farmers), and creates a kind of national moral claim on the part of a nation ‘blessed with surplus’, while avoiding the normatively suspect abstraction of financial assistance.

The international regime version of the feed-the-hungry norm

…when the US Secretary of State speaks at the UN General Assembly about food aid to the Third World, he will stress the humanitarian and development objectives of the aid. The same man, or his colleague from USDA, speaking before Congress in order to get the food aid bill passed, or before the Chamber of Commerce of an agricultural region, will refer to the foreign policy and/or market creating role of food aid. This indicates that the norms applying to food aid are different on the international level than on the national US level. (Uvin 1994, 22-3).

The distinction between food aid and financial aid is also apparent in the context of the international regime, albeit with an inverse normative implication, making food aid a ‘second best’ to financial aid.

Before the formal establishment of the WFP important decisions had been made that established particular boundaries and hierarchies around the development issue area. In 1960, before serving on the expert panel advising the FAO Director-General on the establishment of a multilateral food agency, the economist Hans Singer had acted as an adviser to UN Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld. In that role he drafted a proposal for the World Bank to deploy food aid as an integrated component of reconstruction and development projects it supported. Hammarskjöld contacted World Bank president Eugene Black ‘proposing that the Bank establish a separate management division to undertake multilateral food aid’ but Black declined the proposal (Shaw 2001, 27-8). Shaw comments on these events as follows:

The schism between multilateral soft financing and food aid, with the former going to the World Bank and the latter to WFP, was to have lasting negative repercussions. It was to result in a lower level of co-ordination of financial and food aid than might have otherwise occurred, to the mutual detriment of both types of assistance. It was also to result in different methods of appraisal, operational procedures and evaluation, even mind-sets, and odious comparisons, in which food aid came to be regarded as a ‘second class’ resource. This also reflected the state of affairs in bilateral aid programmes where food aid was handled differently from other forms of assistance, by separate administrative units, and with special legislative, financial and operating procedures, inhibiting the fusion of the different forms of aid. On the other hand, the birth of WFP might be seen as part of a wider compromise in which food aid and pre-investment financing were given to the United Nations as ‘consolation prizes’ for the loss of a soft financing facility to the World Bank. (Shaw 2001, 28).

Shaw in the citation above sees the embedded distinction between food and financial aid as a mistake based largely on a preference of the World Bank President (and former Governor of the US Federal Reserve) Eugene Black, and reflecting some specific UN/World Bank trade offs. He suggests that from this decision point some sort of normative divide between the different forms of aid sprang up, but could have been avoided if a different path had been taken. This view underestimates the importance and depth of a normative divide between food aid and financial aid already in play in American domestic politics, reflected in the existence of a specific food aid lobby closely linked to the farm lobby in Congress since at least the early stages of the
Eisenhower administration. For advocates of food aid, and for many involved with the distribution of financial forms of aid, it was important to keep them separate. In a sense, each saw the other form as a potential ‘contaminant’ of the different arguments for what they were doing.

This example shows the importance of differentiating between the American domestic feed-the-hungry norm and the feed-the-hungry norm in the international food aid regime. While literature such as Shaw’s, written with the international regime perspective exhibits a sense of food aid as being regarded as a ‘second class’ resource, such a view is difficult to discern in literature written more from an American perspective. Comparing the two norms with reference to the moral claims they render highlights the complex interaction between interests and norms and between the US and the WFP.

Moral claims and local purchasing

There are important differences between the moral claims of the hungry poor in the two normative environments. The hungry poor in the US include both domestic and international populations. For the WFP the hungry poor are solely in developing countries. This difference reflects the fact that, unlike in the US domestic context, in the international regime the hungry poor are being viewed through the prism of the inter-governmental Executive Board of the WFP where the other two moral claims – of producers and of countries with agricultural surpluses – are operating in ways that have limited correlation with US domestic politics.

As a result, the international regime norm places the moral claims of developing country producers in a prominent position just behind the claims of the hungry poor (there is, after all, considerable overlap between the two) through the established WFP policy of preferring local purchasing of food aid. Local purchasing involves the food aid being purchased by WFP using donated cash in the recipient country where possible, or alternatively a nearby developing country. It is in a similar category to other aid purchasing modalities such as triangular transactions. In such transactions the donor countries purchase agricultural produce for donation from developing nations close to the recipient nation and send it as food aid to the recipient, thereby improving agricultural development in a third country as well as enabling the aid to arrive in a more timely fashion (Shaw and Clay 1993, 3). These modalities of aid purchasing are grouped together under the heading of procurement in developing countries (see Appendices 7 and 8).

In its early phase, donor domination of the international regime was such that the claims of producers existed largely amongst competing agricultural exporters – normatively speaking, the various moral claims of US, Canadian, Australian and Argentinian farmers. This had started to change by the time of the World Food Conference of 1974:

Food procurement from developing countries was first promoted at the World Food Conference in 1974, which called for “improved policy for food aid” and urged donor countries to provide cash resources for commodity purchases in developing countries. In 1979, the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes (CFA) adopted Guidelines and Criteria for Food Aid Programmes, which recommended triangular purchases with a view to diversifying food aid to suit beneficiary consumption habits. (WFP 2006e, 8).

45 For detailed discussion of the operation of such modalities see (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 159-65).
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The WFP’s capacity to use local purchasing was limited by the preference of donors for giving commodities rather than cash donations. Notwithstanding this, WFP first used local and triangular purchases on a large scale ‘in Asia in the seventies as a result of the influx of Cambodian refugees into Thailand’, and from the early eighties introduced local and triangular purchasing practices in Africa with ‘the purchase of maize surpluses from Zimbabwe’ (WFP 2001a, 4).

As the international food aid regime evolved, and a consensus generating epistemic community emerged (Hopkins 1992), three overlapping characteristics of global hunger became accepted. These were, first, the prevalence of rural poverty in connection with hunger and food insecurity in developing countries (Shaw and Clay 1993; Whiteford and Ferguson 1991); second, related to this, the importance of establishing and encouraging localised agricultural production and markets in preventing hunger (Barrett and Maxwell 2005). Lastly, much economic and development research emerged on the market disruption and dependency generated by donor food aid (Bovard 1993; George 1991; Schultz 1993; Singer 1993). In this context, the pre-eminent moral claim of producers in the IFAR shifted to being that of farmers in developing countries. This normative shift was reflected in the shifts in policy in the WFP to placing an emphasis on local purchasing, and more broadly procurement in developing countries, facilitated by a shift from in-kind donations to monetary donations (WFP 2006e). The data in Appendices 7 and 8 show the extent to which developing country procurement has been established in multilateral food aid practices, and has spread into other channels of food aid.

Though donor control through tying of food aid is still a significant issue (OECD 2006), this has been a long-term normative shift in the IFAR of great significance. The differences between IFAR and domestic US food aid norms, along with the interrelated political power of vested interests, are at least partially connected to the delays in the US shifting more of its contributions from in-kind to monetary donations, though almost all other donors have done so (Barrett and Maxwell 2005). Attempts by the George W. Bush administration to shift a proportion of food aid appropriations from commodities to cash have been frustrated in recent years by Congress in connection with vigorous lobbying by the US food aid lobby (Hammink 2007; Levinson 2007; Ozer 2008).

However, the shift in the IFAR from in-kind to monetary donation has also been associated with a decline in overall resources. For example, when EU nations changed to cash from in-kind contributions there was a significant drop in the overall level of contribution (*177 2005 see also Appendix 9). This is a point strongly emphasised by US interests opposed to these changes. In 2005 then US Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator Andrew Natsios gave a speech to US food aid lobbyists flagging a move to increase the proportion of cash contribution in the food aid budget – it ‘went down like a lead balloon’ with his audience (Zeigler 2005). Signalling the link between trade negotiations and domestic US food aid, Clapp cites a letter to then US Trade Representative Zoellick from the National Wheat Growers Association advising ".‘...producers across the nation are strong supporters of humanitarian programs, but will not be willing to support cash-only programs’ “ (Clapp 2004, 1444).

Of course, it is not surprising that those groups in the US which actually receive or at least perceive a benefit from maintaining in-kind American donations would take such a position. There has been a long tradition of criticism of food aid because of its benefits to such groups (George 1991; Patel 2007), though such criticisms have had little obvious effect on US policies. They have had more effect at the multilateral level and
contributed to the normative shift in which the moral claims of developing nation producers began receiving emphasis. It is this well-established normative shift in the IFAR, interconnected with other pressures such as WTO agricultural trade negotiations, and OECD policy contributions (OECD 2006) which seem to be contributing to signs of a shift in domestic US agricultural and food aid politics, as the Natsios speech signalled.

This shift has not evaporated since the ‘lead balloon’ of 2005. Domestic US food aid policy is based on the periodic passage of the Farm Bill, most recently adopted in 2008 (Farm Bill 2008). In that context, debate emerged over the Bush Administration proposal that $350 million (approximately 25 percent) of the PL 480 Title II budget administered by USAID, which involves the bulk of US donations to the WFP, be allocated as cash rather than commodities (Murphy and Suppan 2008, 2). This could then be used in local purchasing, rather than effectively requiring that food aid take the form of US produced commodities which are required by legislation to be at least 50 percent bagged, and 75 percent processed and shipped by US companies (USAID 2006, 34).

The Director of the USAID Office of Food for Peace noted in April 2007 the array of influences on this policy:

> As a lead-up to the re-authorization of the Farm Bill, food aid reform is being analyzed and discussed by academics and think tanks, at the World Trade Organization, with UN organizations such as FAO and WFP and with a broad spectrum of Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs). (Hammink 2007, 1).

Such proposals continue to founder in the face of Congressional hostility, organised through food aid lobby groups such as the Alliance for Food Aid (AFA). Although the most recent Farm Bill did not approve the President’s proposal for a proportion of food aid to shift to cash from commodities (Murphy and Suppan 2008), research and pressure from critics of the tying of food aid by the US are having an influence. The Doha Round trade reform negotiations have seen American agricultural sector policies linked to food aid put on the table as potentially requiring regulation (Clapp 2004), if only as a bargaining chip for other agricultural trade reforms. Meanwhile, there is some evidence that the US food aid lobby is starting to fragment. It is difficult to maintain a status quo position of US providing in-kind donations of food aid when this is seen to, if not actively harm the poor in developing countries, fail to help them effectively – for example, as seen in the recent desertion of the lobby by CARE (Doyle 2007; Dugger 2007).

**State moral claims**

With regard to the moral claims of states, by and large the IFAR norm still implicitly accepts as of greatest import the claims of donor nations. Of course, without donations of food aid, the WFP could not function, but it reflects more than simple dependence on resources. One might posit the existence of subtle judgements amongst the donor nations that assume that a failure to feed their own people undermines any moral claim on the part of recipient nations – though not all recipient nations would be regarded as directly culpable to the extent of, for example, contemporary Zimbabwe, or Burma in the wake of Cyclone Nargis. In those latter cases, the explicit refusal to allow the WFP (or NGOs) to mount effective relief operations in the face of famine created or exacerbated by government incompetence and brutality has rendered the authorities in Burma and Zimbabwe international pariahs.
Apart from the possibility of such judgements, recipient nations are categorised differently from donor nations in other ways. Nations might be efficient producers, and generous donors, but nations do not starve, people starve. This perspective is reflected by the WFP’s focus on project rather than programme food aid – the beneficiaries are not countries, but starving people at the project level – though the central mechanism for projects to be funded is through Country Programmes. It is also implicit in the desire of the WFP to break down the barriers between donor and recipient countries by encouraging as many states as possible to become donors (*172 2005), while at the same time acknowledging important differences between ‘traditional donors’ and ‘non-traditional donors’.

70. WFP will accept contributions from traditional donors on the basis of full-cost recovery, which requires such donors to cover the cost of moving, managing and monitoring contributions...

71. WFP may accept contributions of commodities or services from non-traditional donors that are unable to provide cash to cover the associated costs. It will do so when such action is deemed in its interests and those of the beneficiary group(s) and does not involve a disproportionate or administrative burden on WFP. In such cases, WFP will seek to cover associated costs by inviting contributions from traditional donors or, for commodity contributions, monetizing part of the contribution where appropriate and cost-effective. In exceptional cases, the Executive Director may resort to the General Fund to cover associated costs.

(WFP 2006c, 26).

The differentiation of recipient countries operates in a complex way. Countervailing the project focus is the fact that the WFP works with recipient country governments, coordinating projects within a country program. Also, the WFP has long emphasised targeting of the poorest countries (the UN defined Least Developed Countries, with significant net food import needs), which implicitly acknowledges structural, as opposed to solely governmental reasons for hunger. Formally, recipient countries are a majority of the WFP Executive Board as well, as Chapter Five discusses. However, there is only one group of states that exercises a moral claim sufficient to generate regular expressions of gratitude from the WFP, and it is not the recipient countries.

**A unique normative environment?**

Norms do not exist in a vacuum – they both reflect and influence the perception of food aid related interests. The traditional focus in international relations on material economic and strategic interests needs to be widened to incorporate the complex interactions between norms and such material factors.

It is possible to mount a serious argument that the WFP’s standing in the domestic US polity is explicable solely with reference to WFP service of US strategic or economic interests. Indeed, as Hopkins and Uvin both acknowledge (Hopkins 1992; Uvin 1992), such an argument is highly plausible when looking at the food aid regime formation, and the WFP’s establishment. However, over time such an explanation would founder on two problems. Firstly, the continuing absence of benefit to US state interests from its food aid policies documented both by Uvin and more recently by Barrett and

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46 Traditional donors are contributors to the WFP included in lists D or E of the United Nations/FAO Member States Listings for Elections for the WFP Executive Board (unless also recognized as a country in transition), the European Community and Saudi Arabia (WFP 2006c, 26).

47 Non-traditional donors are those not defined by the Board as traditional donors; thus this category includes countries in transition, developing countries eligible for assistance from the International Development Association (IDA), private corporations, public or private foundations, NGOs and individuals (WFP 2006c, 26).
Maxwell (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; Uvin 1992). The second problem, related to the first, is the relatively small impact the close relationship with the US has had on wider WFP international legitimacy.

These problems for a more standard interest-based analysis are explicable with reference to the posited normative congruence between international and domestic US feed-the-hungry norms. This congruence is an important part of explaining the strong American support for the WFP in recent decades, though, as is argued in Chapter Four, the relationship has also been hampered by a less than monolithic approach to the WFP by the US. At the same time, the WFP’s undoubted international legitimacy can be explained as due to a sufficiently complex and ambiguous relationship between the norms, and a sufficiently universal appeal from a feed-the-hungry norm. This has enabled it to avoid the more obvious legitimacy problems resulting from US dominance undermining its credibility with other state and non-state actors. It is this combination of dominance and legitimacy that suggest the US role can be seen as hegemonic in the IFAR.

Also, the normative congruence both reflects and has influenced the soft normative power exhibited by the feed-the-hungry norm in the international food aid regime, whereby the moral claims of the hungry are made without the connotations of compulsion generated with reference to justice, rights and international law.

Conclusion

The characteristic of structural typicality assures us that the WFP is reasonably comparable with other parts of the UN system. Its merits and successes are, perhaps, potentially useful indicators as to how other parts of the system can evolve in ways that result in improved global governance. WFP’s material significance, on the other hand, suggests its importance to the UN system, to the states involved with it, and to the hungry poor it serves. What it does, and how well it does it, do matter, perhaps more so than many other intergovernmental organisations.

Yet it is the WFP’s normative uniqueness that is its most striking characteristic. This suggests that straight comparisons of the WFP to other UN agencies are difficult; it also points to the importance of the impact of its institutional environment on its capacities. This is consistent with the argument made in Chapter One that organisations must be understood within an institutional context.

These three features of the WFP, while important in and of themselves, ultimately point at a deeper level to the central, interrelated characteristics of the IFAR – US hegemony and the feed-the-hungry norm. They are interrelated because the norm itself is congruent with a domestic US feed-the-hungry norm. This congruence both reflects and contributes to the ‘soft’ power of the international norm.

The WFP has evolved considerably over the forty years of its existence, and its well-regarded status within the UN system is relatively new – probably not much more than a decade old. If this suggests other parts of the UN system may be capable of becoming more legitimate actors in global governance than they are at present, it also suggests the converse – that the legitimacy of particular agencies can decline. More broadly, however, the unique circumstances of the IFAR and the WFP suggest strongly that the


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examination of detailed case studies is a sturdier route to understanding the processes of
global governance than attempts to generalise across the relatively small numbers of
international regimes.

If legitimacy is a product of evolution, then the history of the IFAR and the WFP within
it are important. Also, as argued in Chapter One, complex social institutions such as
regimes can only be understood as products of their history. The following two
chapters now turn in more detail to tracing the evolution of the IFAR and the WFP.
CHAPTER THREE
Developing an International Food Aid Regime

Introduction

The international food aid regime (IFAR) has evolved largely since World War II in connection with agricultural production and trade patterns as well as periodic famine crises and chronic developmental, poverty and malnutrition problems. It is this evolution, in particular its early stages up to the early 1980s with which this chapter is concerned.

The first section examines the first stages of the emergence of the IFAR from the end of World War II. Important processes contributing to this included the evolution of food aid as a tool of US policy, and the emergence of food related international organisations, in particular, the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).

While establishing multilateral food aid had been on the international agenda since at least the mid 1940s, it was not until the early 1960s that the WFP was founded. The second section turns to the specific changes and events, in particular the actions of the US and the UN and FAO Secretariats that led to the founding of the WFP in 1961.

The foundation of the WFP represented a new role for multilateralism in food aid, and was the clearest harbinger of an international food aid regime, giving it an organisational basis. The third section considers the development of the IFAR through to the late 1970s, in particular, the world food crisis of the early 1970s and the World Food Conference of 1974. This period was characterised by geopolitical conflicts within the UN – the Cold War, the conflicts over oil precipitated by OPEC activism, and the debates over the New International Economic Order precipitated by G77 activism – and uncertain levels of engagement from the US. This context tended to obstruct the coalescence of the regime, but as Chapter Four will show, further shifts in global politics in the 1980s entrenched and increasingly legitimised the WFP and the IFAR.

1. Emergence of an international food aid regime

Modern state deployment of aid in pursuit of a mix of foreign and domestic policy objectives – not always without charitable motivation – predates the advent of the UN system by many decades, if not centuries. Hjertholm and White, for example, speculate that gifts between kings in mediaeval times could be seen, in at least some cases, as analogous to aid. However, they adopt a definition of aid requiring a normative component of support for the populace of a different country which effectively limits the idea of aid to a modern concept (Hjertholm and White 2000, 4).

Food aid, as was discussed in Chapter Two, has tended to be categorised as different from other monetary forms of aid. The United States has had, and retains, a dominant role globally in the provision of food aid. Even though its share of international food aid (both bilateral and multilateral) has fallen from the 1950s levels of over 90 percent,
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the US still donates more in food aid than the rest of the world put together (see Appendix 9; Hanrahan and Canada 2006).

Deployment of food as aid by the United States is generally traced back to the passage of the Act for the Relief of Citizens of Venezuela following an earthquake in 1812 (Hjertholm and White 2000, 4-7; Kanbur 2003, 3; Ruttan 1993a, 4, 229-30), though George argues that this was no simple act of charity, but was connected to a desire to support a revolt against Spain (George 1991, 192). In nineteenth century America, ‘the Congress and the President generally adhered to a view that the use of public funds for charity was unconstitutional. Even the bulk of post-World War I food relief to Belgium and Russia,…came primarily from private sources’ (Ruttan 1993a, 229). However, no matter how private the sourcing of the aid, administration of food aid relief both during and after World War I, and again after World War II (each time by Herbert Hoover), had a clearly strategic dimension (Bentley 1994; George 1991, 193-6).

There has long been a bifurcation of food aid between emergency aid, generally conceived of as charity (even if its distribution was affected by strategic considerations), and other forms of ‘assistance’ explicitly deriving from economic self-interest. Hjertholm and White note that as early as 1896 the US was consciously using food surpluses as a tool for market development in Latin America (Hjertholm and White 2000, 4), while in the 1920s the British Colonial Office had an explicit policy linking assistance to the colonies with the use of colonies as export markets to support British employment (Kanbur 2003, 3).

With substantial US agricultural surpluses in the 1930s coinciding with the Depression, the Hoover administration (1929–1933) and, more significantly, the Roosevelt administration established a food aid apparatus deploying surplus commodities for the domestic relief of hunger (Poppendieck 1986; 1998, 142-7). This apparatus eventually came to operate through the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) (Poppendieck 1998, 146) linked to a policy emphasis on providing price support to producers (Poppendieck 1997, 135), an emphasis which lasted 30 years.

Government underwriting of agricultural production was also deployed in the provision of foreign food aid in this period. During the 1930s, the Export-Import Bank was established, introducing the systematic use of state-supported concessional loans for the purchase of American agricultural products (Ruttan 1993a, 4). This remains a feature of American agricultural trade policy into the 21st century, as Clapp describes:

Some agricultural products are sold with export credits which give long periods for repayment or with credit guarantees, meaning that if the borrower defaults, the export credit agency (usually a government agency) will ensure repayment. These export credit sales are not technically 'food aid', but are perceived by the selling countries to be a form of assistance to food deficit countries. (Clapp 2004, 1440).

During the 1930s, US international aid was directed primarily to the Latin American region under the Roosevelt administration’s ‘Good Neighbor’ foreign policy (Dallek 1979). This was largely in keeping with the tendency of significant international ‘aid’ – food or financial – prior to World War II to flow from colonial powers to their colonies, or to places deemed as within their sphere of influence. One of the key disjunctions with the pre-1945 period created by the post-war geopolitical context and system of international regimes is the advent of aid flows in wider global and multilateral frameworks (Kanbur 2003).
Establishment of the FAO, 1945–1950

US foreign aid, including food aid, ‘crystallized’ (Kanbur 2003, 4) as an important feature of the international political economy after the end of World War II, initially linked to the rebuilding of Europe, but by the late 1940s focusing on the underdeveloped world. The first step in the building of an international regime concerned with food aid was taken before the end of World War II, however. President Roosevelt convened an international conference at Hot Springs, Virginia in 1943 to commence planning for post-war food and agricultural problems.\(^{48}\) The Conference set up an Interim Commission which spent two years drafting a constitution for what became the ‘Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations’ (FAO).\(^{49}\) The FAO held a signatory meeting and inaugural conference in Quebec in October 1945 by the end of which 44 states had signed up as members (Talbot 1990, 17-8).

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) had participated at Hot Springs and in the Interim Commission. It sent delegates to Quebec, along with two of its satellite Socialist Republics, Byelo-Russia and Ukraine. However, by the conclusion of the Quebec conference the USSR had decided to remain as an observer only (Hambidge 1955, 59). Though other Eastern bloc countries joined the FAO, the USSR was to remain an observer until its collapse at the end of the Cold War (Saouma 1993), and the Russian Federation only joined the FAO in 2006. This relative lack of Soviet interest is indicative of the limited impact of Cold War politics on the FAO compared with the debates between the two blocs in the UN General Assembly and Security Council.

The FAO was initially headquartered in Washington with a British national, Sir John Boyd Orr (later Lord Boyd Orr) as its first Director-General. It was designed as a primarily technical agency to advise and coordinate between governments on agricultural reconstruction and development post-War, both in the context of fears of a repeat of the problems of famine at the end of World War I, and a desire to harness advances in agricultural and nutrition science effectively at the global level to advance human development (Hambidge 1955, Ch4).

Specifically, the FAO’s aims are to

Contribute towards an expanding world economy and ensure humanity’s freedom from hunger by: raising the level of nutrition and standard of living of people in member countries; securing improvement in the efficiency of production and distribution of all food and agricultural products; bettering the living conditions of rural populations.

(Associations 2005, 1104).

(See also Appendix 2 – Article 1 of FAO Constitution)

In its early days, the FAO saw debates over empowerment of intergovernmental organisations versus prohibitions on infringing nation-state sovereignty. Similar debates were to be central to the development of the international human rights regime in the UN General Assembly during the formulation and adoption of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (Evans 1996, Ch2-3).

\(^{48}\) Hambidge documents the antecedents of this Conference in the development of nutrition and food work in the League of Nations led by former Australian Prime Minister Stanley Bruce, and his economic adviser, F. L. McDougall. McDougall was in Washington in the early 1940s and influenced President Roosevelt’s decision to call the Hot Springs conference. McDougall was also to chair the important Reviewing Panel of the Interim Commission. (Hambidge 1955, 44ff, 54).

\(^{49}\) Note that the FAO was established before the UN itself – see Hambidge for explanation of how this precise name was adopted. (Hambidge 1955, 53-4).
In 1946 Boyd Orr proposed the creation of a World Food Board (WFB) which was to be an international organization with power to hold, buy, and sell important agricultural commodities entering world trade, and to set maximum and minimum prices for these commodities in the international market. (Hambidge 1955, 66; see also Talbot 1990, 18).

The FAO Conference in September 1946 rejected the WFB proposal, though it set up a Preparatory Commission to examine the elements of the proposal (Hambidge 1955, 68). Reflecting the influence of producer groups and food exporting nations, the Commission recommended that ‘the member-states retain their sovereign authority over agricultural and food-policy decisions’ (Talbot 1990, 18), in particular via a separation of production (which the FAO was to stimulate) and trade, which was to be managed by separate commodity organisations (Hambidge 1955, 69). The Commission also recommended setting up a World Food Council – which in being accepted by the 3rd FAO Conference of September 1947 became the FAO Council.

What is interesting about the WFB proposal is not the predictably quick and effective defence by member-states of their sovereign powers against suggestions that power over agricultural trade and commerce be ceded to a multilateral organisation. Rather, it is how the political atmosphere, fluidity about the role of the FAO, and evolving norms about food governance generated a serious proposition for significant economic powers to accrue to an intergovernmental organisation.

John Boyd Orr’s speech following his election as Director-General of FAO illuminates some of these issues:

Here we have in this Organization a most valuable means of bringing about some degree of world unity…If nations will not agree on a food policy which will benefit them all, they will agree on nothing. At an early date therefore we should go before them and say, ‘Here is a food policy; here is a thing you can agree upon and on which action can be taken immediately.’ And we can prophesy that if action is taken immediately it will begin to solve some of the apparently unsolvable economic problems of the world of the present day…Then I think you will begin to develop…a technique of co-operation in getting this policy applied on a world scale. It should be easier then to develop international cooperation in other fields. (Hambidge 1955, 59-60).

These statements demonstrate a perception of the FAO as an actor independent of its member states – the ‘we’ which plans to ‘go before’ the nations. They also demonstrate the concept of international food policy, related to the alleviation of hunger, as a norm capable of generating genuine international cooperation, which in turn will serve as a model for effective international institutions in other areas. The FAO secretariat from the start established itself as an actor independent of the states, prepared to portray food and agricultural problems as not only related to improving production and distribution in a technical sense, but also to market failure requiring multilateral governance intervention.

It is important to contextualize these propositions. The exigencies of wartime had placed such a premium on the management of food resources that the Allies had instituted supranational cooperation via the Combined Food Board (CFB) – the US, the UK and Canada were its members. The CFB was seen as a useful and effective mechanism for ensuring the feeding of populations that were at risk of starvation due to wartime pressures on supply and markets. Hambidge notes that the overall nutritional status of the UK population actually improved during the war, due to the systematic improvement of the nutrition of poor people under the rationing system (Hambidge 1955, 48).
After World War II ended, the US was the only country with higher agricultural production than pre-war levels, and there were significant food shortages in Europe and Asia (Bentley 1994). The CFB was replaced, post-war, with the International Emergency Food Council (IEFC, later IEF Committee), run by the FAO. The IEFC was much larger than the CFB, with 34 member states. It made recommendations about how to distribute scarce commodities which were almost all accepted by member countries during the period of operation – for example, out of 475 recommendations on allocations between September 1947 and August 1948, only 13 were not concurred with by member states (Hambidge 1955, 62-4). This suggests the extent to which norms of international cooperation were emerging around the food distribution issue area.

Hambidge was heavily involved as a staff member of the Interim Commission that planned the FAO, then as a senior staff member of the FAO – one of the first three staff appointed to the FAO following the Quebec conference. His account of the establishment of the FAO conveys the sense of opportunity, prevailing in the mid to late 1940s. This was created by the unusual fluidity of relationship and cooperation between the Allies in the face of wartime mobilisation; as well as the widely held belief that the world needed to be ordered differently in face of the conflagration and the Depression and world war which preceded it. However, he notes a debate about ‘the fundamental nature of the proposed agency’:

One group favored establishing a strong food and agriculture organization which could take positive steps to foster economic expansion and help prevent disastrous crises, the recent depression still being much in men’s minds. The other group wanted a rather narrowly limited fact-gathering and advisory agency which would be carefully insulated from positive action. (Hambidge 1955, 53).

Hambidge characterises the eventual FAO outcome as a compromise, albeit leaning towards the latter group perspective. This was reflected in the annual budget allocation of $5 million (between the activist $10m and the advisory $1m propositions), though it was left open for the organisation to expand its operations more into the activist direction in the future (Hambidge 1955, 53). Notwithstanding Boyd Orr’s activist inclinations, the view of the member-states was decidedly at the non-activist end of the spectrum.

At the end of the early contretemps over the WFB proposal, the FAO Secretariat was given the ‘power’ to merely circulate recommendations (Talbot 1990, 19) and Boyd Orr decided not to seek re-election as Director-General (Hambidge 1955, 70). In 1949 under new Director-General Norris E. Dodd (former US Under Secretary of Agriculture), FAO tried again to give itself a concrete management role over agricultural production and trade with a proposal for an International Commodity Clearing House (ICCH). Again the FAO member-states at its governing conference declined such a proposition, establishing instead a Committee of member-states on Commodity Problems (CCP) (Hambidge 1955, 71-2; Talbot 1990, 19). A pattern was emerging of FAO Secretariat attempts to expand an activist view of the organisation’s role in relation to agricultural trade as well as production, while member-states insisted on constraining such ambitions.

50 Member states at July 1947 were: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Philippine Republic, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand (Siam), Turkey, Union of South Africa, UK, USA (Hambidge 1955, 250).
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Also in 1949, a vote was held on the permanent location of FAO headquarters, which saw a narrow ratification of its establishment in Rome ahead of Washington (30 votes to 28) (Hambidge 1955, 79-80; Talbot 1990, 20). This decision in turn led to the establishment of all the newer major UN food agencies in Rome, a location that has had some relevance to WFP governance and reform as will be discussed in Chapter Six.

Food surpluses and food aid debates in the 1950s

In the early 1950s, as Europe’s recovery from the war proceeded and the Marshall Plan wound down, the fact that American agricultural production kept going at a massive pace was becoming a significant economic and political problem for the US Government. At the same time, conflicts, slow reconstruction and underdevelopment contributed to starvation in many countries.

Following the end of the Korean War, in the latter part of 1953, there was a collapse in agricultural commodity prices (Ruttan 1993a, 3). This compounded a growing problem with surplus agricultural produce in the US. McGovern gives the following description:

> Seeking to prevent surplus grain production from destroying market prices for farmers, the government agreed to help individual farmers by granting them loans against their stored surplus grain until it could be sold at a fair price, at which time the loans would be repaid. But as the surpluses grew, they depressed farm prices even as they lay in storage. Beyond this, the cost to the government of holding the grain off the market soon reached $1 billion annually. Also, some of the grain began to deteriorate, having been held too long. (McGovern 2001, 47).

Thus in 1953, the newly elected Eisenhower administration confronted an increasingly significant political problem managing conflicts between farmer constituent expectations of government support for agricultural prices through government purchase of surplus stocks, a massive and growing surplus stockpile with increasing storage costs, and a foreign policy based on liberalisation of trade (Ruttan 1993a, 7). In accordance with the prevailing paradigm of agricultural trade policy (Coleman, Grant et al. 2004, 20), conflict between policy makers concerned with trade liberalisation and agricultural producers concerned to maintain price supports and protection was resolved in favour of the agricultural interests. By 1954 these interests had evolved into ‘a political constituency for food aid – consisting of farm commodity groups, shippers and handlers, and private relief agencies’ (Ruttan 1993a, 5). Demonstrating its institutional strength, fifty years later this constituency continues to operate, being referred to by insiders as the ‘Iron Triangle’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 87).

A number of Government agencies and departments were involved in devising and implementing the relevant policy instruments for food aid. Considerable bureaucratic conflict continued in this area between the Department of Agriculture (USDA), representing the farming interests, the State Department, representing the foreign policy view, and the Bureau of the Budget, representing the Treasury (Ruttan 1993a, 6-9). There is a long history of tension between the USDA and the State Department, with both departments running foreign services.

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51 Rome derived an argument to be the hosting city from the location there of the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA), an intergovernmental organisation established in 1905 after the King of Italy hosted an international conference on agricultural issues. IIA was concerned primarily with data collection and sharing of agricultural production information, and was subsumed into the FAO when it was established (Hobson 1931; 1932; Hodgson 1932).
The link between US agriculture and diplomacy has a provenance going back to the birth of the American state, with the first agricultural representative role in US foreign missions being held by Thomas Jefferson in France during the Revolutionary period (Mustard 2003). The USDA, established in 1862 by President Lincoln, began sending its own staff overseas from 1905, with its Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) being established in 1930. While Roosevelt shrank and downgraded the FAS during the Depression, it was re-established in March 1953 by the new Eisenhower administration (Mustard 2003), reflecting the need for measures to improve its capacity to deal with the agricultural surplus issue.

Demonstrating the political confusion of the new Eisenhower administration around this complex issue,

[a]t the urging of the Bureau of the Budget, the White House brought Charles Francis, chairman of General Foods, into the White House to serve as surplus disposal coordinator. The incredibly naive Francis assured the President that if he was given a free hand to "get rid of surpluses" the burdensome stocks could be reduced in about ninety days. Francis attempted to move aggressively to dump surpluses onto the world market with little of [Senator Hubert] Humphrey's sensibilities about trading with the Soviet bloc or [Secretary of State] Dulles's concerns about relations with our trading partners. (Ruttan 1993a, 7).

In this context it became increasingly a point of political consensus that the management of agricultural surpluses would need to be done at least partially through a structured foreign food assistance program. Hubert Humphrey, Democrat Senator from Minnesota and future Vice President and Presidential candidate, was prominent in proposing a surplus disposal package in the Senate, keeping pressure on the Republican administration to develop a legislative package of its own (Ruttan 1993a, 7, 230).

Also prominent in proposing a link between surplus disposal and foreign assistance was a Marshall Plan veteran, Gwynn Garnett (Mustard 2003; Swanson 2003):

While working to implement Marshall’s vision, Garnett, then a young army officer, suggested an idea that would change U.S. farming forever. Garnett’s plan had an appealing simplicity: use the U.S. agricultural surplus to feed a hungry Europe. In fiscal terms, Garnett proposed that the United States accept local currencies, many of which were virtually worth-less outside their own borders after the war, in exchange for agricultural products. These local funds could then in turn be used to rebuild foreign markets. Garnett presented his plan to officials of the Eisenhower Administration and to members of Congress when he returned from Germany to serve as a Farm Bureau official. The plan rapidly found support because it allowed Congress to help U.S. farmers, feed hungry nations and foster future markets. (Swanson 2003, 5).

By mid-1954 the Eisenhower administration had negotiated legislation through Congress establishing authority for a range of food aid activities. On 10 July 1954 the President signed into law the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (Public Law 480) (Ruttan 1993a, 7; Shaw 2001, 31-2). The Act, best known as PL 480, though amended and revised several times, continues to form the legislative basis for US food aid policy more than fifty years later (Barrett and Maxwell 2005).

*International agricultural trade and food aid*

US trading partner concern with the surplus disposal issue combined with the long-standing interest at the FAO in international food assistance led the FAO Committee on
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Commodity Problems to propose in the early 1950s the establishment of an Emergency Food Reserve to deploy surpluses for the relief of famine through an international mechanism. However, this proposal was rejected by the FAO Conference in 1953. (Hambidge 1955, 72; Talbot 1990, 19). This rejection reflected the fact that the US and other major industrialised countries ‘were adamantly opposed to any centralized and multilateral world food management arrangement’ (Shaw 2001, 20).

This opposition was not surprising given the highly politicised interrelationship between surplus disposal and agricultural trade and foreign policy. While a potential relationship between surplus disposal and famine relief was well recognised, in the values hierarchy of developed countries generalised famine relief seemed to rate well below trade and foreign policy objectives. In spite, or perhaps because of this, the issue of surplus disposal was a source of conflict between the US and its Cold War allies, especially Australia and Canada who were the other major agricultural exporters during the 1950s. The need to manage this conflict led to the use of the FAO as a forum for negotiating differences through establishing a Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal (CSD) in 1954. The CSD was (and remains) based in Washington, reporting to the FAO Committee on Commodity Problems. The CSD established Principles of Surplus Disposal, mainly to constrain dumping of agricultural surpluses onto world markets. The FAO describes the principles as:

A code of international conduct adopted by the FAO Council in 1954 which encourages the constructive use of surplus agricultural commodities and at the same time safeguards the interest of commercial exporters and local producers. (FAO, 2001, iii).

Thus, through the CSD a multilateral mechanism was being used to manage conflicts over global agricultural markets, though it is important to note that this mechanism was set up through the FAO, and not the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that had emerged out of the Havana Charter of 1948. As discussed in Chapter Two, agriculture was to effectively be quarantined from the international trade regime until the Uruguay Round of the GATT resulted in the Agreement on Agriculture in 1994 (FAO 2006a). The Agreement itself explicitly mandates the application of the principles of surplus disposal to food aid (FAO 2006a, 1; Clapp 2004, 1441).

Three basic principles of surplus disposal were agreed: It should increase consumption rather than reduce production (‘additionality’); it should be orderly to avoid sharp price falls; and it should occur while maintaining normal patterns of trade (Shaw 2001, 21; FAO, 2001, 33–41). The Principles (see Appendix 3) have since provided the basis for ‘an effective international code for monitoring food and agricultural commodity assistance programmes’ (FAO, 2001, 2).

The Principles remain central to the relationship between food aid and trade in formal terms, with explicit reference to them in the Agreement on Agriculture established by the Uruguay Round of the GATT, and as a consequence the CSD (now known as the CSSD) continues to meet and report on food aid transactions. However, its significance has been in long-term decline. Even before 1994, Hopkins was noting that as food aid became increasingly concerned with emergency relief from the early 1970s, the CSD was becoming less relevant to food aid and trade –

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53 Though there were various commodity agreements (Coleman, Grant et al. 2004, 113ff) – e.g. wheat and sugar – arguably these agreements formed part of an international agricultural trade regime separate from the international trade regime.

54 In 1995 the subcommittee changed its acronym to CSSD – Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal – to ‘avoid conflict with a sister organization in the UN family’ (FAO 2001, 2).
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In this period, when Bangladesh was desperately short of cash and famine threatened the lives of an estimated one million people there, adherence to the additionality principle seemed onerous, irrelevant, and even perverse. Consequently, since the mid-1970s, the number of food aid proposals questioned by the CSD has dropped...Although the CSD continues to meet every two weeks in Washington, it deals with few issues of any substance. (Hopkins 1992, 253).

As was discussed in Chapter Two, the advent of the Agreement on Agriculture resulted in the shift of the international agricultural trade regime into a closer connection with the international trade regime, see (Coleman, Grant et al. 2004). This led in 1997 to revision of the post-Uruguay Round CSSD arrangements (FAO Committee on Commodity Problems 2005), with a significant drop in notifications of food aid transactions and a move to quarterly meetings (FAO Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal 2005). Then in 2000, the proportion of global food aid transactions notified to the CSSD dropped from 50 percent to 5 percent (FAO Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal 2003, Table 2), a drop noted in CSSD reports to the FAO Committee on Commodity Problems ever since as an issue of concern. The following excerpt from the CSSD report to the April 2007 Committee meeting illustrates the extent to which the CSSD has been sidelined from both international agricultural trade and food aid regimes –

Following previous discussions where members raised the drop in food aid notifications since 2000 as a matter of considerable concern, the CSSD sent letters in 2005 inviting members to join the CSSD. Countries invited to join the CSSD included major donors (China and South Korea), various major recipients, key players in agricultural trade, and potential observers. Unfortunately, none of the countries approached accepted the invitation. (FAO Committee on Commodity Problems 2007, 4).

The decline of the CSSD implies that the food aid and agricultural trade nexus is no longer as strong as it used to be. This is due to further increases in the use of food aid in emergency relief since Hopkins noted the trend, and changes in the agricultural trade regime in the context of the Agreement on Agriculture and Doha Round negotiations. Nevertheless, there are still significant tensions between agricultural exporting nations over trade, and concern that US food aid practices still amount to forms of protection (Clapp 2004; FAO Committee on Commodity Problems 2007; FAO Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal 2005) – tensions evident at the WFP Executive Board, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

Looking back to its original establishment, however, the CSD/CSSD was the first discrete element of an intergovernmental body focused on food aid related matters. However, at that point, the international food aid regime is probably best thought of as existing at the cusp of the dual international regimes of agricultural trade and agricultural development, rather than having its own discrete existence. It is only with the benefit of hindsight that the beginnings of an international food aid regime can be read back into the setting up of the CSD. At this point, the modern multilateral system was barely ten years old, and in the midst of what Hopkins argues was a first wave of post-World War II regime building – ‘the liberal wave of 1944–1960 that aimed at harmonisation of commercial interests and the coordination of information standards and research’ (Hopkins 1990, 178).

The CSD highlights the heterogeneous nature of intergovernmental organisations with multiple roles such as FAO, and the complexity of interaction between organisations, regimes and issue areas. Coleman et al. argue that reasonably clear delineations between issue areas and related international regimes have become complicated since the 1980s with processes of fragmentation and integration arising from globalisation
While this is true to some extent, international regimes have always had fuzzy boundaries and, in some areas, complex interrelationships between actors and other regimes. The case of CSD and FAO shows how such complexity existed within the first post-war period of multilateral institutions, before the acceleration of globalisation.

Although theoretically the surplus disposal principles are concerned as much with the effects of surplus disposal on developing country markets as with their effects on competing exporter countries, in effect the latter concern has always been the primary focus of the CSD. Along with the practicalities and symbolism of CSD being based in Washington DC, while the FAO Council, Conference and CCP to which it reports are in Rome, its membership reflects the dominance of developed countries in establishing and operating multilateral agricultural trade institutions.

For example, of the membership of CSSD at November 2000 the only African nations listed were Ghana and Malawi; with no other African countries listed even as observers (FAO Consultative Subcommittee on Surplus Disposal 2003). The only objections and concerns about notified food aid transactions (almost all of which involve the US as donor) come from export competitors such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand or the European Commission. They do not come from recipient states, who presumably would either not accept food aid donations if they agreed that they disrupted domestic agricultural markets, or would not want to draw attention to the fact that they did. Thus the CSD has an entrenched focus on competing exporters as interested parties, ahead of the poorest countries in which surplus disposal actually takes place, despite the risks to markets in recipient countries from inappropriate food aid.

Given 90–95 per cent of global food aid was from America in the 1950s, CSD information sharing was primarily concerned with the operation of PL 480 (Talbot 1990, 19). Hence the agreement of the US to establishing the CSD in 1954 was crucial, yet it involved a policy shift from previous opposition to any multilateral constraints on its actions in relation to food and agriculture. This shift can be explained as reflecting a combination of two different agendas. Firstly, it reflected the fact that all significant agricultural exporters were aligned with the West in the Cold War context, and that potential agricultural trade conflicts needed to be managed in order to protect the security relationships. Secondly, the CSD provided a mechanism that could help manage the domestic policy tensions between trade liberalisation on the one hand, and surplus disposal on the other. The US lacked a domestic capacity to resolve this tension, while also acknowledging concerns on the part of a number of ‘friendly’ countries with its surplus disposal activities. The FAO created another policy option for the US to manage these problems.

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55 In response, Coleman et al. have developed the concept of the transnational policy space to grasp the complexity and interdependence of supranational governance processes (Coleman, Grant et al. 2004, 164).

56 Coleman et. al. note it was the developed OECD and GATT member nation-states which shaped the ‘transnational agricultural policy space’ during the 1970s and 1980s (Coleman, Grant et al. 2004, 165).

57 Refusal of food aid is a rare occurrence, though there are isolated examples such as Zambia’s refusal to accept Genetically Modified maize from the US in 2002 (Clapp 2005, 467).
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The (agricultural trade) hegemon

PL 480 was important in its setting apart of food aid from other forms of aid and its institutional linking of food aid to farm legislation and the USDA (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; Shaw 2001). Shaw describes the distinctiveness of food aid in American policy as follows:

Strikingly, while the US Congress never refused a food aid budget below the president’s requests, other economic assistance budgets always received a mauling. Since the time PL 480 was enacted in 1954, food aid has traditionally been treated separately from other forms of US aid, and as an inextricable part of an omnibus farm bill which has been passed at periodic intervals of four to five years, financed out of US Department of Agriculture appropriations. This, in turn, has led to marked differences in responsibility for policy, programming and operations between food aid and other forms of US assistance, and a lack of coordination among the different types of aid in country assistance programmes. (Shaw 2001, 33).

PL 480 created three categories or titles for provision of food aid. Title I authorized concessional bulk sales of surplus commodities for foreign currency to ‘friendly’ governments; Title II authorised government to government grant aid for famine and other urgent relief assistance, both for friendly nations and ‘friendly but needy populations without regard to the friendliness of their government’ (Ruttan 1993a, 7). Title III authorised donations to private voluntary organisations (PVOs) for distribution in domestic US food relief programs as well as projects in foreign countries; it also provided for barter of the food aid commodities ‘for strategic materials and goods not produced in the United States’ (Shaw, 2001, 32).

Ruttan details how bureaucratic conflicts over food aid continued to dog the operation of PL 480. Ultimately the ‘concern by [US Department of] Agriculture that food aid not displace commercial sales and by [Department of] State that it not obstruct State's efforts to negotiate a more liberal international economic order gave way to pressure from Congress and its agricultural constituencies’ (Ruttan 1993a, 8). Even non-food surplus commodities were brought into the ambit of a program focused almost entirely on surplus disposal:

Some of the recipient countries began to see it as simply an American dumping operation to get rid of costly storages. This attitude was encouraged when the administrators forced Greece to accept unwanted tobacco while India was required to accept cotton, in each case as a condition for obtaining American food. The Greeks had their own sources of tobacco and the Indians had local supplies of cotton. (McGovern 2001, 48; see also Ruttan 1993a, 8).

The significance of PL 480 can be seen in the fact that by the late 1950s it accounted for approximately one third of US grain exports, and more than one fifth of US foreign aid expenditures (Ruttan 1993a, 9), but the problems created by its sheer size extended past commodities to currency issues arising from Title I sales.
Ruttan gives a detailed description of how such sales worked:

The first step was for the U.S. government and the foreign government to reach an agreement that enabled the latter to pay for some farm product imports with its own currency rather than with dollars. The agreement specified the quantity of the product involved, the price, and, usually, the uses that could be made of the foreign currency acquired by the United States. The farm products were usually sold to the foreign government by a private exporter who was paid in dollars by the U.S. government. The foreign government in turn usually sold the imported commodities in its domestic market to recoup the funds paid to the United States for the imported commodities. Under PL 480, the United States was authorized to lend the funds back to the country for use in its development program. In effect this meant that the foreign government found itself borrowing its own currency, and paying interest on it, when it could just as easily have printed additional money. The primary reason the U.S. government engaged in such fictional transactions is that they appeared more acceptable to Congress and the American people than outright grants of food or of dollar aid. The primary reason the importing countries were willing to engage in the fictional transactions is that they realized it was unlikely they would be forced to repay the loans or the United States would ever find a way to use for its own purposes a significant share of the countries' currency that it controlled. (Ruttan 1993a, 231, fn18).

Title I sales proceeds could be used for a range of purposes, including development of markets for US agricultural commodities; purchase of strategic materials or military equipment; financing goods and services from ‘friendly’ countries; and promotion of economic development and trade (Shaw 2001, 32). However, use of proceeds was not always easy to agree on with the recipient countries, and these ‘soft’ currencies ‘continued to accumulate to the point where concern was expressed that the United States had control over too much of the money supply in recipient countries’ (Ruttan 1993a, 9). Barrett and Maxwell note that Title I programs ‘are explicitly targeted at promoting American agricultural export markets and at advancing US strategic interests. In the fifty years of… [PL 480’s] history, there has rarely been any serious pretence of Title I serving development objectives’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 21).

Despite the importance of PL480 in aligning US strategic and domestic farm policy and getting rid of agricultural surplus commodities, still the surpluses continued to mount, with four year’s annual production of cereals in storage by 1960 (Cathie 1982, 8). Also, European agricultural production was starting to recover from the depredations of the war, and the development needs of the poorer nations were coming to the fore. In the late 1950s, policy debates about food were acquiring more intensity within the US and the UN.

2. The founding of the WFP

By 1958, prominent Democrat critics of PL 480 operation including Senator Hubert Humphrey and Congressman George McGovern, were criticising its excessively narrow focus on surplus disposal. The solution they advocated was to boost the humanitarian focus of the program, renaming it the ‘Food for Peace’ (FFP) program, and linking it more strongly to the US strategic interest in development of poor countries. The solution to ongoing bureaucratic struggles for control (and implicitly the narrow focus of USDA, which ran most of the PL 480 program) was to locate a Director for the FFP in the White House (Ruttan 1993a).
This was in the context of increasing Australian and Canadian objections to American use of commodity bartering as part of its surplus disposal program, in particular with Europe (Cathie 1982, 6).

Also in the late 1950s, it was becoming clear to US policy makers that agricultural surpluses were not merely a short-term problem but were assuming a structural character that would require an approach based on a longer-term strategic frame (Ruttan 1993a, 12). US development aid at this time was closely related to its Cold War security agenda, but the opportunities for deploying food aid as part of a non-securitised strategic framework were beginning to develop a higher profile.

In 1959, legislation influenced by Hubert Humphrey extended PL 480 for two years and established the Food for Peace Administrator position (Ruttan 1993a, 10-2); and during the 1960 election campaign both presidential candidates – Republican Vice President Richard Nixon and Democrat Senator John F. Kennedy – proposed the establishment of a multilateral organisation for food aid (Shaw 2001, 13). Two months before the election, in September 1960, President Eisenhower addressed the UN General Assembly and called for the establishment of a committee by the FAO to examine proposals for co-ordinating food aid multilaterally:

The United States is already carrying out substantial programs to make its surpluses available to countries in greatest need. My country is also ready to join with other Members of the United Nations in devising a workable scheme to provide to Member States through the United Nations system relying on the advice and assistance of the Food and Agriculture Organization. I hope the Assembly, at this session, will seriously consider a specific program for carrying forward the promising food for peace program. (President Eisenhower address to UN General Assembly. Fifteenth Session, 868th Plenary Meeting, 22 September 1960, cited in Shaw 2001, 13–14).

This speech articulated a crucial policy shift in US politics that had emerged from the critiques of surplus disposal policy in the late 1950s. From the start of the surplus disposal problem in the early part of the 1950s, implicit in resistance to multilateral food aid mechanisms was an opposition between bilateral and multilateral programs. The understanding was that one or the other had to be chosen, and that the bilateral option was more clearly and reliably attuned to advancing the national interest than the alternative. With both presidential candidates advocating the use of a multilateral organisation for food aid, a new bipartisan consensus based on an assumed complementary relationship between multilateral and bilateral food aid had emerged. In a report to President Kennedy in March 1961, following a review of the Food for Peace program, McGovern stated

we should support an expanded role for the FAO – a role where it will have responsibility for developing and executing a multi-lateral food distribution program. There should not be fear that a multi-lateral approach will conflict with the US Food For Peace Program. On the contrary, world food needs are so great that there is need for both approaches. (Cited in Shaw 2001, 6–7).

Shaw notes Nixon was the first to present such a proposal publicly, and suggests part of the motivation was to ‘out-innovate’ his opponent (Shaw 2001, 13). This is consistent with an otherwise ascendant Eisenhower administration in the 1950s finding itself constantly on the back foot in Congress against Humphrey, and later McGovern too, on surplus disposal and food aid issues, as attested by their effective agenda setting of

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58 ‘Between 1952 and 1956 military assistance, primarily to Greece, Turkey, and [Republic of] China accounted for over 50 per cent of all U.S. aid. Much of the economic assistance budget was justified as defense support’ (Ruttan 1993a, 232, fn20).

59 For example, Ruttan notes the issue of food aid to Poland in 1956–57 (Ruttan 1993a, 231-2, fn19).
legislative approaches on the issue. In turn this can be linked to some extent with the agricultural interests bloc in Congress and its role in US electoral politics (Hansen 1991). However, apart from this domestic political dynamic, Shaw also suggests another relevant motivation for Nixon’s policy: ‘It would not be subjected to criticism directed against US unilateral aid as it would be administered through the UN. It would project a positive international image for the United States.’ (Shaw 2001, 13).

This suggests the toll taken on US foreign policy interests by criticisms of its relatively naked self-interested disposal of surplus commodities during the 1950s, but such an instrumental analysis does not entirely capture the nuances of domestic US political debate over the appropriate balance between self-interest and humanitarian motivations for food aid policy – McGovern’s ‘better mix’ cited in Chapter Two. This balance issue in food aid policy points to the distinctive relationship that the evolving IFAR had with American interests at both political and normative levels. From its earliest beginnings, the regime has been characterised by a significant level of US control, not only as the most significant donor, but as the leading norm-maker. In other words, a crucial aspect of the US role in the regime involved its capacity to mesh the international regime with its own bilateral aid programs via the imperatives of both its domestic and an emergent international feed-the-hungry norm.

UN role in the foundation of WFP

In 1956, B. R. Sen of India was elected the first person from the developing world to head the FAO as its Director-General. In fact the American nominee had sufficient support to be elected ahead of him in a later ballot, but withdrew due to a policy desiring solid majority support for the position (Talbot 1990, 20). Sen’s election reflected the steadily increasing prominence of developing countries in the UN, in the context of a growing interest in the potential role the UN could play in assisting their development.

A former student of John Maynard Keynes, Dr (later Professor Sir) Hans Singer, had begun working for the UN in 1947. Working independently from each other, in 1950 he and Argentine economist Raul Prebisch developed what became known as the Singer-Prebisch hypothesis. This hypothesis predicted an ongoing decline in the terms of trade between the developing and developed world due to the dependence of the former on raw commodity exports and the latter’s dominance of processed exports (Murphy 2001; Telegraph 2006). This structural problem with the world’s economy necessitated, in Singer’s view, a compensatory shift of resources to the developing world in the form of aid from developed countries, something which also accorded with the Keynesian belief in stimulating demand as a tool of macro-economic management (Shaw 2001, 27-9).

These views had impacts on the development of various UN programs, such as the Expanded Program of Technical Assistance (EPTA), and the proposal for a multilateral development financing facility, the Special UN Fund for Economic Development (SUNFED). SUNFED was opposed by the US and not approved as a UN Agency, though the idea of a soft-loan multilateral finance facility was later adopted by the World Bank, in the form of its soft lending window, the International Development Association (Kanbur 2003, 6; Shaw 2001, 27). Shaw suggests US

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60 EPTA was to merge with the UN Special Fund to become the UN Development Program (UNDP) in 1966 (Murphy 2006).
61 It was Singer’s suggestion to add ‘Special’ to a name which otherwise would have resulted in the acronym ‘UNFED’ (Telegraph 2006).
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concurrency with this latter move reflected their greater voting power in the World Bank compared to the UN (Shaw 2001, 27).

Singer himself attested to the links between this work and food aid as follows:

It was also in casting around for possible financing for SUNFED that I became very interested in 1954 in the establishment, under Public Law 480, of the US food aid program and in the possibility of an international food aid program which had begun to emerge in Rome…This interest led me to my involvement in laying the ground for the UN/FAO World Food Programme. (Cited in Shaw 2001, 27).

The FAO’s attempts to develop a multilateral approach to food distribution began to be influenced by this wider context of deployment of aid for economic development. The FAO sponsored a number of studies from the mid-1950s designed to make the case for deploying agricultural surpluses, both as emergency relief and as a form of income transfer for development (Shaw 2001, 21-2). One was based on a pilot investigation in India and ‘showed in detail how the large amounts of capital represented by food surpluses could be used to finance a general expansion of investment programmes in developing countries’ (FAO 1955). Others were focused on the case for international food reserves in the absence of national food reserves in many developing countries (FAO 1956). These studies derived from the FAO tradition of proposing practical interventions to relieve hunger and deploy agricultural surpluses via multilateral mechanisms, though to this point such proposals had come to very little due to obstruction from developed nations. Yet the ongoing surplus production in developed countries along with significant development needs in other nations was increasingly making such opposition difficult to maintain.

On 27 October 1960 the UN General Assembly resolved to invite FAO to undertake a study into multilateral procedures for deploying surplus food to alleviate hunger.62 This decision reflected both the long-term efforts by the FAO to put multilateral food aid on the agenda, crystallised in its Freedom from Hunger Campaign (FFHC, adopted in October 1960), and the shift in the US position articulated by President Eisenhower’s speech, cited above.

The FAO set up an Intergovernmental Advisory Committee to do this task, along with an expert panel which assisted the Director-General to prepare a study to inform the Committee’s work (FAO 1961). The five panel members included Professor Singer, along with another two former students of Keynes, and two other Keynesian style economists (Shaw 2001, 22). Consistent with the principles of surplus disposal and reflecting the Keynesian consensus of the time, the study placed emphasis on stimulating demand rather than restricting production to deal with surpluses. Demand stimulation was to be accomplished by income transfers from the developed world, with food surpluses forming an important part of the resource transfers. The panel estimated that about $12,500 million of agricultural commodities would become available as ‘surpluses’ over a five-year period for use outside normal commercial market channels, either bilaterally or through the United Nations system. It recommended that about two-thirds of these resources should be used in economic development programmes and one-third for social development (Shaw 2001, 23).

Economic development programs would use food aid as a capital resource to deploy, for example in feeding workers involved in building infrastructure and/or to free up scarce financial resources. In turn this development would assist in overcoming poverty which

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62 “Provision of food surpluses to food-deficient peoples through the United Nations system”, UN General Assembly resolution 1496(XV) adopted at the 908th Plenary Meeting, 27 October 1960 (Shaw 2001, 6).
was the only means to achieve freedom from hunger. Social development programs would deploy food aid to offset temporary effects on food production from land reform programs, or via school feeding or other relief and welfare programs. In addition, the panel recommended the deployment of a small proportion of food aid (6 percent) into the establishment of an international emergency food reserve, and a further 8 percent to assist the establishment of national food reserves (Shaw 2001, 23–5).

George McGovern, who had lost a bid for the Senate in the 1960 US elections, was appointed Director of the Office of Food for Peace by President Kennedy in one of his first executive actions on taking office in January 1961. In April 1961 McGovern went to Rome to attend a meeting of the FAO Intergovernmental Advisory Committee. After realising the main stumbling block to establishing something concrete was the lack of member-state willingness to commit resources, McGovern took advantage of his political seniority and the newness of the Kennedy administration, which meant a relatively fluid process for obtaining finance outside of the budget process. After some intensive lobbying via phone from Rome over a weekend, McGovern secured Presidential authorisation to make a concrete proposal for establishing a World Food Program with a commitment of US$40 million, so long as it was matched by other countries up to a starting stake of US$100 million.

This proposal was put to the committee meeting on Monday 10 April, 1961. After a brief adjournment to allow FAO officials and member-state representatives to recover from their ‘visible shock’ at the sudden concrete proposal, the proposal was adopted, and went forward for approval by the FAO Conference and UN General Assembly in parallel resolutions on 24 November and 19 December 1961 respectively. (McGovern 2001, 57-9; Shaw 2001, 6-9). Those parallel resolutions established the World Food Programme. (See Appendix 4 for McGovern’s proposal; Appendix 5 for the UN resolution, including at Annex 1 the relevant FAO resolution text).

**Historiography of the founding of WFP**

The title of the relevant chapter in Shaw’s book is “The Birth of WFP: One Man’s Inspiration”, though this is really a reference to McGovern’s decisive role in making something happen in April 1961 rather than crediting him with having the idea of such an agency. Indeed, Shaw cites B. R. Sen stating in his autobiography that “This bold initiative by Senator McGovern…finally got my proposal off the ground…” (Shaw 2001, 9; emphasis added). Leaving aside the compelling individual stories, however, the story of the founding of the WFP needs to be understood from (at least) two broader perspectives.

From the first perspective, the WFP originates in the cosmopolitan ideals of activists and believers in international institutions. Since at least the founding of the FAO there had been many attempts to manage the distribution of food and reduction of global hunger multilaterally, but they had always been frustrated by the narrower national interests given priority by food exporting nation-states. The work of the FAO Directors-General and staff, and others in the UN system was crucial in developing, advancing and persisting with the arguments for multilateral food assistance that were eventually successful in 1961.

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63 Additional research would be needed to comment meaningfully on the perspectives of other nation-states on the founding of the WFP. The perspectives given here are, in my view, the most significant for understanding the international food aid regime. (See Charlton 1993 for the Canadian perspective).
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This version of the genesis of the WFP suffers from lack of reference to the crucial role of the US – in first blocking such an organisation, then catalysing it. Thus, from the second perspective, the United States is the driving force behind the WFP; the source of inspiration and resources for it, motivated largely by self-interest.

Within this perspective there are some differences about the extent to which that self-interest could be said to be ‘enlightened’ by normative considerations, or complicated by bureaucratic turf wars, or the significance of the election of Kennedy. McGovern and Shaw in particular emphasise the importance of Kennedy’s presidency as opposed to the Republican administration he replaced, with Shaw even mentioning the counterfactual of a Nixon administration (Shaw 2001, 16). McGovern’s approach is not surprising given he was a member of the Kennedy administration and a Democrat legislator and, later, a presidential candidate himself (unsuccessfully opposing Nixon in 1972).

However, McGovern also emphasizes the bipartisan nature of American political support for food aid (McGovern 2001, e.g. Ch3), and it is important not to overstate the relative importance of changes in US Administration. That issue is relatively peripheral to the analyses of Cathie, Ruttan and Talbot (Cathie 1982; Ruttan 1993a; Talbot 1990), who (along with Shaw and McGovern) all emphasize the political economy of surplus disposal during the 1950s, the role of agricultural constituencies and Congress, and the adoption of PL 480 as important to the founding of the WFP. From this perspective, the WFP could be said to have effectively extended American food aid policy into an international regime in order to give it both additional legitimacy, and an additional operational arm for delivery. Consistent with this argument, Hopkins adds a desire for burden sharing by other developed nations (Hopkins 1990, 180), in the context of emerging European agricultural surpluses and a desire to divert the Europeans from establishing their own bilateral programs (Shaw 2001, 64).

Most of those adopting the US perspective draw on Wallerstein, who gives the definitive history of US food aid up to the late 1970s (Wallerstein 1980), and the central role of the US in establishing the WFP is emphasised in this thesis. However, it is important not to miss the UN perspective on the WFP’s foundation. In fact, the different perspectives on the establishment of the WFP point to the complexity of how such organisations get established – not just in the range of actors, interests and institutional contexts, but in the layers of politics interacting between national and international arenas.

An innovatively cautious intergovernmental organisation?

Three months before formally passing the resolution to establish the WFP, the UN General Assembly adopted a proposal from President Kennedy to officially designate ‘the decade of the 1960s as the United Nations Decade of Development’ (Kennedy cited in Shaw 2001, 28). What Hopkins refers to as the second wave of post-war regime building – ‘the development wave of 1960-1973 that sought to accelerate the expansion of economic modernization, especially in non-industrial, poorer states’ (Hopkins 1990, 181) – was underway with the WFP in the vanguard. Meanwhile, McGovern suggests that the WFP ‘is not only the UN’s major food arm, but also the single largest humanitarian project of the U.S. government.’ (McGovern 2001, 62). It is the intertwining of internationalist and hegemonic norms and interests which characterised these decisions and continues to characterise the WFP.
Chapter Three

Reflecting the slow transition within the US towards accepting a multilateral approach to food aid, and then only as a supplement to its bilateral programs, the propositions from McGovern took a cautious and limited form, proposing the WFP as a trial program.\(^{64}\) This gave his own government and others the option of backing out if the new organisation proved to be too expensive or in other ways problematic for their national interests. Also reflecting this caution was the WFP’s complex parentage – it was to be a creature equally of the FAO and the UN, with each organisation nominating half the member-states on its governing body, called the World Food Programme Intergovernmental Committee (IGC). In line with this parentage, the appointment of the WFP Executive Director (ED) was to be decided jointly by the FAO Director-General and the UN Secretary-General. The ED was to be responsible for reporting, not only to the IGC, but to the FAO Conference and the ECOSOC. Also, the FAO was to house and provide administrative systems and support to the WFP. Such arrangements had the virtue of drawing from existing UN systems and organisations, and implicitly encouraging if not requiring cooperation amongst them whilst simultaneously creating a distinctive check and balance element to WFP governance.

One other innovatively cautious (or cautiously innovative) characteristic should be noted at this point – the adoption of what is today still referred to as the dual mandate. This refers to the WFP’s mission to use food aid both for development work and emergency relief. As will be discussed in more detail in later chapters, the tension between those roles remains prominent in the WFP today, although the balance between them has changed significantly over time. Establishing a dual mandate from the outset reflected the ambiguity in the international norm towards the uses for food aid (an ambiguity which continues to the present day as will be discussed further in Chapter Six). However, the initial emphasis was on food aid’s potential capacity to substitute for financial aid.

3. IFAR as inchoate regime, 1961–1981

The establishment of an intergovernmental organisation dedicated to multilateral food aid was a significant step in the development of the nascent international food aid regime. However, the nature of the WFP, at least initially, placed some important constraints on the development of the regime. The characteristics of the WFP as temporary, experimental, and marginal come to the fore as relevant to these constraints. However, after its initial trial period, while the WFP became more securely established, the global food crisis of the early 1970s attested to the fragility of global food security. The subsequent World Food Conference led to more changes which, in limited ways, assisted the development of an international food aid regime, though the IFAR was not to solidify as an institution until at least the 1980s.

Early WFP and IFAR developments

The WFP’s initial establishment was to be on a trial basis for three years (1963–65), subject to assessment of operations and some UN mandated studies on aspects of the Programme at the end of 1965 (Shaw 2001, 37). This reflected a general view of the Programme as experimental, partly given its focus on development projects based on

\(^{64}\) Though this was not the first time a trial period was used in setting up a UN operational agency; The UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) was also set up on a trial basis (Barnett and Finnemore 2004, 73).
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food aid, in contrast to the standard form of bilateral food aid as *program*, or government to government in form. The FAO research into food aid in the 1950s referred to above was aimed at assessing whether multilateral, project food aid could credibly contribute to rural development in poor nations, but the WFP was the first serious test of the prospects for project food aid as the basis for serious multilateral development work.

Standard technical categorisations of food aid are based on a tripartite categorisation – *program*, *project*, and *emergency* (Shaw and Clay 1993, 1). The apparently neat functional distinction between bilateral, program food aid and multilateral, project aid (reflecting the different Titles within PL 480), left some uncertainty about where the operation of multilateral emergency relief fitted. While the WFP’s first operations commenced with responses to emergencies in September 1962 (Shaw 2001, 38), it soon became apparent that the WFP lacked the ready access to both food and cash resources which would enable it to respond rapidly to emergencies. All food aid resources were pledged by donor countries and only actually supplied in response to WFP decisions to allocate them; the WFP had no stockpiled reserves of its own and was also perennially short of the cash reserves necessary to fund the transport and distribution of emergency food supplies (Shaw 2001, 148ff). As a result, in his evaluation of the WFP’s emergency operations at the conclusion of the trial period, the Executive Director commented as follows:

> The conclusion is reluctantly reached that it is important to make clear to countries suffering disasters the inevitable limitations to which the supply of World Food Program emergency food aid is subjected, in order to avoid the raising of hopes which cannot be fulfilled. (Cited in Shaw 2001, 148).

These problems led to the IGC placing constraints on the proportion of WFP resources allocated to emergency relief, albeit with ongoing debate as to ways to either improve the WFP’s capacity to respond to emergency needs, or to shift responsibility more effectively to bilateral aid and NGOs (Shaw 2001, 149). Despite these problems, and the WFP’s focus on development as its primary role, Shaw interestingly notes that a role in emergency aid was never eliminated from the WFP mandate in an implicit reference to the feed-the-hungry norm – WFP ‘could not stand aside and not move to help countries and people stricken by disasters. The humanitarian impulse of food aid was too strong’ (Shaw 2001, 149).

Another issue constraining the formation of the international food aid regime distinct from the WFP’s experimental nature was what was seen to be its temporary nature (Charlton 1992, 635). This reflected a view, deriving from the successful processes of post-war reconstruction and the generation of large agricultural surpluses, that the issue of countries with lagging economic development was a temporary problem amenable to technical solutions. This view was present in the 1960–61 study led by Singer, linked to the notion that a Marshall Plan-type approach to development assistance could accomplish development objectives over approximately 15 years (an initial five years of transfers, and a decade of reduced transfers) (FAO 1961; Shaw 2001, 22). In this context, one of the WFP’s key characteristics, according to Charlton, was its ‘lean structure which could be easily dismantled once the need for multilateral food aid disappeared’ (Charlton 1992, 635). This leaness links to the WFP’s status as the only UN organisation with no mandated or specific allocation from the UN budget, relying totally on voluntary contributions.

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65 For example, in its first year of operations ‘up to 25 per cent of the commodities pledged to the Programme were earmarked for use in emergencies, including the establishment of national food reserves’ (Shaw 2001, 147).
Chapter Three

The advent of the world food crisis of the early 1970s saw the end of such optimistic thinking, to the extent that the conception of hunger as a temporary problem at the global level is now barely discernible. These ideological shifts concerning the nature of the problem of global hunger are discussed in more detail below and in Chapter Six.

Consistent with its temporary and experimental nature, the WFP had only marginal significance in terms of the wider global movement of food aid in its early years. Charlton describes the WFP in its first decade as remaining ‘a largely marginal actor in the global food aid system’, handling only ‘about 4 per cent of the food aid provided world wide’ by 1971 (Charlton 1992, 8). Instead, the vast bulk of food aid was bilateral, program food aid based on government to government bulk grants or concessional sales of food commodities.

If the initial trial set-up of WFP was based on a view of multilateral food aid as experimental, temporary and marginal, this view was to evolve, along with a range of developments in the latter part of the 1960s and early 1970s. In the first instance the WFP was accorded an indefinitely extended existence following the end of its initial trial period in 1965. This was followed by the signing of the first Food Aid Convention in 1967; the global food crisis (1972–74), and the World Food Congress in 1974, resulting in changes to WFP governance and the establishment of the International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR). These developments, detailed below, all contributed to the consolidation of the IFAR, though the regime was not to fully develop until the WFP achieved substantial organisational autonomy from the FAO – a process which took most of the 1980s – and the US re-assumed a clear leadership role in the WFP in the early 1990s.

The Food Aid Convention

It was not under the auspices of the WFP, but within the context of the Kennedy Round of the GATT that the US (and to a lesser extent Canada) successfully moved to link food aid with the International Wheat Agreement in 1967 (Shaw 2001, 72–4; Talbot 1990, 51). They did this by establishing the Food Aid Convention (FAC), reflecting the centrality of bilateralism and trade to food aid. The motivation for initiating the FAC is generally described as a desire for ‘burden sharing’ amongst other wealthy nations, given the US and Canada dominated food aid donations; the GATT context enabled trade concession carrots and sticks to be used to cajole the other states into signing the Convention (Shaw 2001, 73; also Uvin 1992, 303).

The FAC, periodically reviewed and still in operation, commits the signatories to ‘provide guaranteed aid in the form of cereals or cash to purchase grains for shipment as aid. Each member agreed to provide a minimum quantity of food aid in physical terms irrespective of fluctuations in production, stocks and prices’. The first aggregate minimum was set at 4.5 million tons (Shaw 2001, 73); the current aggregate is 4.9 million metric tons (Hanrahan and Canada 2006; International Grains Council 2007). Despite some encouragement in the FAC to use multilateral channels (i.e. donating through the WFP), ‘only 5 to 6 per cent of the aggregate shipments of FAC grains were channelled annually through WFP during the three years of the 1967 FAC, which mirrored the proportion of food aid handled globally by WFP’ (Shaw 2001, 73-4). FAC requirements have been well below the actual levels of food aid being donated, and are

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66 The original signatories of the 1967 FAC were ‘Argentina, Australia, Canada, Denmark, the Commission of the European Communities (for EEC community aid), Finland, Japan, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States’ (Shaw 2001, 259, fn2).
generally regarded as providing a very low floor for food aid donations, rather than pushing higher levels of donation. The real purpose of the FAC was to make as many agricultural exporting nations as possible part of a global food aid system, but, as Ruttan notes, the ‘U.S. interest in burden sharing stopped short of letting multilateral programs become large enough to interfere with the political leverage of the bilateral program’. (Ruttan 1993a, 17).

*The 1974 World Food Conference*

The early 1970s saw a transformation in the post-war system of large developed country surpluses contributing to a mix of bilateral and multilateral food aid. A sudden, if temporary, disappearance of agricultural surpluses and consequent price increases led to a ‘food crisis’, a UN sponsored World Food Conference in 1974, and changes to the UN system in relation to food.

Global food shortages emerged as a problem, commonly referred to as a ‘world food crisis’ in the period 1972–74 (Talbot 1990, 11) due to a complex array of factors both reducing supply and affecting demand. US food surpluses had fallen from a peak of 1 billion bushels in 1962 to less than 20 million bushels at the end of 1973 (Ruttan 1993a, 22). This drop was partly due to the adoption of policies in the latter part of the 1960s to discourage production through incentives to reduce the amount of land under cultivation (George 1991, 29; Shaw 2001, 80). However, the importance of this factor should not be overemphasised given, as Friedman notes, the structural biases towards overproduction and US agricultural surpluses returned fairly rapidly as a concerned USDA introduced new production incentives in the context of the shortages (Friedman 2002, 333). Other factors affecting global production included production cost increases – in particular fertiliser costs and the oil price increases implemented by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), though George points out the importance of separating those two issues:

- during 1970–74, the cost of energy necessary to produce one hundred pounds of anhydrous ammonia went from 47c to 70c. The price for the same quantity of fertilizer during the same period rose from $3.79 to $9.15...Prices for all types of fertilizers had already increased 100 per cent between June 1972 and September 1973, or well before the December 1973 oil increase. (George 1991, 143; emphasis in original).

Also important were harvest failures due to climactic events. In the context of the détente period thaw in US relations with the USSR, harvest failures in 1972 in the Soviet Union led to the US supplying grain (at concessional prices) to the USSR for the first time. The Soviet Union received more than 17 million metric tons of (largely US) grain in 1972–73 (Shaw 2001, 80).

This led to a record level of world trade in cereals, which could only be achieved by drawing on food stocks, which were reduced to their lowest level in over two decades. Prices, triggered off by Soviet Union purchases, rose abruptly to four times their previous level. (Shaw 2001, 80).

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67 Given the emphasis on use of fertilisers in the changes to production from the ‘Green Revolution’, it is likely that the increase in demand would have contributed to these price increases.

68 Friedman puts the figure at 30 million metric tons of grain, ‘which amounted to three-quarters of all commercially traded grain in the world’ (Friedman 2002, 333). (For details of US/USSR grain trade in this period see Balaam and Carey 1981, Ch4). The sales to the USSR were made secretly in circumstances which allowed private interests involved to make large sums of money on the inevitable price increases which followed when the scale became public. The subsequent scandal in the US, referred to as the ‘great Soviet grain robbery’, led to grain embargoes on the USSR from July 1973 through 1975 (Friedman 2002, 333).

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In the early 1970s, there were devastating famines in Bangladesh (de Waal 1997, 17-8; Sen 1981, Ch9) and the Sahel region of Africa, which suffered drought from 1968–1973 (Meredith 2005, 290; Sen 1981, Ch8). At the same time, a sudden drop in supply led to rapid food price increases, and a greater demand for food aid together with a simultaneous and related loss of available food aid (Cathie 1982, Ch1).

The crisis eloquently demonstrated the problem of food aid’s pro-cyclical nature. At the same time that production failures created the need for access to surplus stocks, those failures meant that surpluses were not available as food aid. Also, when the price of commodities increased significantly, this meant much less food aid could be purchased for a given budget allocation (Rothschild 1993, 91), even as price increases also triggered starvation and an increased need for food aid as the poor were priced out of access to food.

Food aid flows dropped from a peak of 16.8 million tons of cereals in 1964–65 to less than seven million tons in 1973–74, shrinking “at a time when they were most needed.” (Shaw 2001, 80). Steady falls in PL 480 food aid from a high of 18 million tons in 1966 to 11 million tons in 1970 (Rothschild 1993, 90) suddenly accelerated and between 1972 and 1974 US food aid fell from 12 million to 3 million metric tons (Hopkins 1992, 241). In the face of direct competition between food aid and commercial transactions the US froze its food aid in the Northern spring-summer of 1974 (Ruttan 1993a, 22).

Apart from the grim realities of food market failures at the global level, three other developments in the period are relevant to the context of the international response to the food crisis.

Firstly, the late 1960s and early 1970s had seen a growth in NGO interest in and campaigning on humanitarian relief following the Biafra airlift of 1968 (de Waal 1997, 72ff). Consequently, in rich countries public awareness of ‘Third World famines’ grew.

Secondly, along with this heightened world public interest came certain systemic kinds of analysis of hunger which saw it as a global issue requiring a global level response. For example, the well known Club of Rome Report The Limits to Growth (Meadows, Meadows et al. 1972) argued, on the basis of computer modelling, that without change to human behaviour growth in the Earth’s human population would outstrip food production capacities limited by pollution and industrialisation (see also Uvin 1994, Ch6). Also Hardin (1974) suggested a metaphor of the earth being a lifeboat into which the starving masses of the Third World not only would not fit, but in their desperate efforts to climb aboard placed everyone else in jeopardy of drowning. This led to debates within moral philosophy about the nature of global hunger and the response it required from wealthy countries (see Singer 1993).

Thirdly, the devaluation of the US dollar led to a breakdown in the Bretton Woods post-war international financial arrangements in the early 1970s (Gilpin 1987). This exacerbated the price increases in agricultural produce, but also stimulated a slow-

69 It is not entirely appropriate to describe The Limits to Growth as neo-Malthusian – it is as much concerned with environmental consequences of growth as with simple metrics of people and food (Suter 1999). Uvin, however, makes clear the extent to which neo-Malthusian assumptions about the limits to population growth stemming from finite food production capacity have remained important in international food and population regimes (Uvin 1994). At the same time such thinking has been largely discredited by food production increases which have more than outstripped global population growth, and more sophisticated analyses of the political causes of famine (cf Sen 1981).
burning debate about the nature of the international economic system. The developing, ‘Third World’ nations overcame internal differences and solidified an alliance begun a decade earlier in the UN as the Group of 77 (G77), based on articulating the New International Economic Order (NIEO) in opposition to developed country economic interests (Murphy 2001, 270; Traub 2006, 19–21). The NIEO analysis drew on Marxism and the work of economist Raul Prebisch arguing that the world economy was divided into rich, ‘core’ states, and poorer, peripheral ones (Hobden and Wyn Jones 2001, 205–6), in which the latter were structurally disadvantaged. Prominent in the NIEO argument was a claim for aid as reparation for historical colonial exploitation, linked to continuing unfair advantages for the centre compared to the periphery in the global economy (Murphy 2001, 269). Hopkins characterises the period 1973–1981 for the UN as ‘the structural conflict wave … in which coalitions of southern or G77 states sought to control issues, agendas, and budgets in [intergovernmental organisations]… in order to exercise power and extract resources from industrialized states.’ (Hopkins 1990, 178). In the context of this North-South divide within the UN, the FAO was seen as under the control of the G77, and became increasingly distrusted by the developed nations (Hopkins 1990, 182).

These three developments along with the food crisis led many member-states to question ‘the utility and relevance of the FAO itself’ (Thompson 1981, 195) while considering how to improve international institutions concerned with food. In particular, a perception on the part of the developed world that the FAO had failed to achieve its mandate in realising and warning of the impending crisis placed the FAO ‘under shadow of opprobrium’ (Talbot 1990, 10). Given the FAO’s lack of control over world food markets and their role in the crisis such views do not seem to have had an entirely reasonable basis. As with most ‘blame the UN’ rhetorical moves, whatever elements of truth in the accusation that FAO had been negligent, it was also a convenient distraction from any suggestions that member-state government policies had played a role in generating the crisis.

A World Food Conference was convened by the UN Secretary-General in November 1974 following a proposal by the US Secretary of State Kissinger in his first address to the UN General Assembly in September 1973 (UN General Assembly 1973). That it was convened by the UN Secretariat rather than the FAO highlighted the extent to which the FAO was being held culpable for the food crisis, though the Conference was held in Rome.

Within the US, the Soviet grain deals of 1972 had been driven by the State Department under the rubric of State’s détente policy. The early 1970s saw a renewed period of competition between the Departments of State (under Secretary Kissinger) and Agriculture (under Secretary Butz) over control of international food policy (Friedman 2002, 333). The Department of State saw food aid as a key bargaining chip in Middle East strategy, while the USDA opposed food aid in a climate of strong commercial sales and high prices. Meanwhile church activists were pushing for more to be done to relieve hunger (Ruttan 1993a, 22ff).

These internal US conflicts led to a ‘disorganized’ (Ruttan 1993a, 25) US delegation at the World Food Conference.

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70 Ruttan notes evidence that Senator Humphrey required Kissinger to commit to supporting a World Food Conference as the price of his confirmation as Secretary of State getting through the Senate (Ruttan 1993a, 235, fn60).
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Butz chaired the delegation but Kissinger gave the keynote address.

At the Conference itself delegates from developing countries took turns blistering the U.S. government and the Soviet Union for ‘rationing’ the world’s food supply. The U.S. delegation, including members of the World Hunger Action Coalition and the Inter-religious Task Force on U.S. Food Policy, and Senators Richard Clark (D-Iowa) and Humphrey, pressured Secretary Butz to cable the President to approve a minimum volume increase in food aid of one million tons for 1975. Bolstered by his budget and treasury officials, Ford...refused. (Ruttan 1993a, 24-5).

Apart from its pro-cyclical nature, another problematic feature of food aid is its volatility (OECD 2006). This was classically demonstrated by the decline in food prices during the Northern hemisphere 1974–75 winter. Within three months of the Conference at which any increase in US food aid had been rejected, in February 1975, USDA Secretary Butz was announcing the biggest food aid budget since the late 1960s of $1.6 billion (Ruttan 1993a, 25).

There were four principal outcomes of the World Food Conference, all endorsed by the UN Economic and Social Council and General Assembly (UN General Assembly 1974). Firstly, it adopted a Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition. In this it declared, inter alia, that

> every man, woman and child has the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition...It is a fundamental responsibility of Governments to work together for higher food production and a more equitable and efficient distribution of food between countries and within countries...

> ...within a decade no child will go to bed hungry, no family will fear for its next day’s bread, and no human being’s future and capacities will be stunted by malnutrition. (cited in Uvin 1994, p60).

Secondly, it resolved to restructure the WFP ruling body, the IGC, renaming it the Committee for Food Aid Policies and Programs (CFA) and expanding its remit to deal with all food aid policy issues, not just those associated with the work of the WFP. The WFP secretariat did not have the resources to engage in much effective policy work on food aid, and member states had no interest in multilateral interference in their bilateral food aid programs. However, the concept of a broader mandate in the policy realm helped inspire efforts to broaden the WFP’s work (Ingram 2006), which can still be seen in some of its contemporary advocacy work. This broadening also provided an important conceptual mandate for the IFAR, with the WFP governing body at its heart.

Thirdly, the World Food Conference resolved, despite Kissinger’s view prior to the Conference that no new bodies would be agreed to (Talbot 1990, 103), to create two new bodies. One was the ministerial level World Food Council to maintain high level commitment to dealing with hunger issues (Talbot 1990, Ch4) while avoiding FAO control by working through ECOSOC (Hopkins 1990, 182). This Council struggled with articulating a relevant role on top of the other food agencies and lack of member-state support (Ingram 2006, 56-7). The second new body was the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), set up principally as a mechanism for bringing in OPEC nations as a source of development funds in a multilateral setting (Talbot 1990, Ch5). IFAD continues to operate, based in Rome; in 2006 it distributed US$556.8m in grants and loans (International Fund for Agricultural Development 2008).

Lastly, the Conference resolved to recommend ‘measures for meeting international food emergency requirements particularly in order to enhance WFP’s capacity to render

71 The eventual winding up of the World Food Council in 1996 could be portrayed as the final nail in the coffin of a putative world food regime.
speedy assistance in emergencies’ (FAO Committee on Commodity Problems 2005, 4). This led to the UN General Assembly establishing an International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR) in September 1975. The IEFR had ‘a minimum target of 500,000 tonnes of cereals, placed at the disposal of WFP, in addition to regular WFP pledges, and subject to the existing WFP procedures for approval of emergency requests. The CFA approved modalities for the operation of the IEFR at its First Session in 1976’ (FAO Committee on Commodity Problems 2005, 4). However, there were a number of obstacles to its operation reflected in the fact that the necessary pledges for the IEFR did not get made until 1979 (Ingram 2006; Shaw 2001).

The FAO was largely absent from these principal outcomes of the Conference, though it did also establish an FAO Committee on World Food Security (FAO Committee on Commodity Problems 2005, 4). Its absence from a role in these new developments was a glaring indication of the perception that it had become a partisan player in the NIEO debate and failed to prevent the world food crisis. However, given the dominance of developed countries in food production, and the role of market inequities in the food crisis, the NIEO analysis strongly suggested that the blame did not lie with the FAO. Thus the FAO was to become more and more identified with the G77. The new FAO Director-General, Lebanese national Edouard Saouma, fostered this relationship skilfully following his election in 1975.

Another important absence from these developments was clear leadership from the US, reflecting domestic policy uncertainty and disarray in the context of Nixon’s resignation as President earlier in 1974, and conflicts between the hunger lobby, Congressional Democrats and the Departments of State, Agriculture and Treasury. The World Food Conference marked the beginning of a period of relative policy neglect of multilateral institutions by the US (Hopkins 1990, 178-81, 197-9), which increasingly were seen as tools of the G-77 and other critics of US power. This period, during which the US withdrew from various UN organisations such as the International Labor Organisation (ILO) and UNESCO was to last until the end of the Cold War in the late 1980s.

The developments arising from the World Food Conference provided significant impetus to the formation of the IFAR, not least demonstrated by the assumption lying behind the Conference itself that the nature of the food crisis required a global, multilateral response. In hindsight, the events of the 1970s had contributed to a divergence of the IFAR feed-the-hungry norm from its domestic American counterpart. However, by the early 1980s, with little consistent leadership by the US, and the WFP still very much a subordinate division of the FAO, the IFAR had only developed some limited institutional solidity, mainly in the evolved technical understandings of more effective deployment of food aid.
CHAPTER FOUR
Evolution of the WFP and the International Food Aid Regime

Introduction

In the short history of the international food aid regime there have been substantial changes in the use and direction of multilateral food aid. This chapter analyses these changes by considering the evolution of the WFP and IFAR since the 1980s, concluding the historical analysis of the IFAR begun in the last chapter.

The first section examines the period when James Ingram was WFP Executive Director (1982-1992). During this period the WFP’s relationship with the FAO became a significant focus of controversy, while, as was noted at the end of the previous chapter, the US, though remaining the largest donor, stepped back from a leadership role of significance. The reasons for this stepping back are complex, but are at least partly linked to significant changes to the political economy of US food aid.

When the WFP was founded, food aid was a relatively significant proportion of overall aid, predominantly in the form of bilateral program (government to government) aid, and largely driven by the surplus disposal needs of agricultural producers. By the late 1990s, food aid had become a much smaller part of overall aid, but now a much larger share was multilateral in modes at least partially separated from donor country surplus disposal. However, multilateral food aid itself had changed from predominantly developmental to an emergency relief focus. These shifts both reflected and contributed to the evolution of the IFAR feed-the-hungry norm, and its changing relationships with perceived state economic and strategic interests, and the domestic US feed-the-hungry norm. The second section details the early stages of this process of shifting away from development and into humanitarian assistance, in the context of other important changes in the international regime.

The final section of the chapter considers WFP development under Executive Director Catherine Bertini (1992-2002). Like Ingram, Bertini served two five year terms in the role, during which period there were important managerial reforms to, and growth in, the organisation as it emerged as the largest and one of the best regarded of the UN operational agencies. Of particular interest are the continued depoliticisation of WFP operations, the continued intensification of the emergency relief focus, the shifting and complex relationship between WFP and US food aid policy, and attempts to reconcile the dual development/emergency relief mandate. Understanding the historical development of these changes is an important part of explaining the legitimacy of the WFP and the IFAR, as Chapter Six shows.
1. The WFP under James Ingram

James Ingram was appointed WFP Executive Director (ED) in 1982, after a career in Australia’s foreign service. His was the first ED appointment in some years that was not on a short-term or acting basis. The main factor in that instability was the increasingly problematic relationship the WFP had with the FAO. The eventual establishment of the WFP as an autonomous UN agency occurred only at the end of Ingram’s second five-year term as ED, and the struggle between the FAO and the WFP over control or autonomy was one of two major issues defining his tenure. That it took ten years to resolve reflected an uncertain and partial engagement of the US with the WFP for much of the 1980s, though the appointment of American Catherine Bertini as Ingram’s successor presaged an important transition in the US relationship. The second issue of Ingram’s tenure was the defined shift into emergency aid, which will be discussed further in the following section.

Ingram was undoubtedly successful as ED, as reflected by his successful campaign for reappointment in 1986–87 despite attempts by the FAO Director-General (D-G) Saouma to end his tenure. This success resulted from a combination of management and political skills. While the former was important to ensuring the WFP was able to deliver food aid in an efficient manner, the latter refers to his ability to manage the politics of donor and recipient nations on the CFA, based on a hard-headed assessment of the nature of CFA politics:

> Despite their rhetoric, developing countries were realistic enough to recognize that the donors wrote the basic music to which all must dance if contributions to the Programme were not to decline precipitately. Because WFP’s funding was provided by the donors on a voluntary basis, the Executive Director could not afford to alienate them. For their part the donors, including the United States, at bottom recognized that the Executive Director must strike a balance between their interests and those of developing countries. With a reasonable amount of political skill it was not that difficult to find an acceptable balance. (Ingram 2006, 96).

Ingram would not have survived his battle with Saouma without some fundamental credibility of his own with both donor and recipient countries. To this end, Ingram worked hard to cultivate his own image as a UN honest broker between the two groups:

> The best way to make this clear to all was to continue as I had begun, by bringing forward projects for any deserving country even if they were out of political favour with the United States. This I did. The result was that I always had the positive support of some developing countries and never lost the confidence of the G77 as a whole. (Ingram 2006, 95).

Thus under Ingram CFA decision making managed to maintain and enhance its consensual tradition which helped reinforce the politically transcendent aspects of the feed-the-hungry norm. In the face of a serious political struggle with the FAO this was no small feat.

The WFP – FAO relationship

As outlined in Chapter Three, the FAO was the principal UN organisation responsible for the establishment of the WFP. Formally, the FAO is one of the WFP’s parent organisations, and it housed and administratively supported the fledgling program from its establishment. The first WFP Executive Director, Dutch national A.H. Boerma (ED 1962–67), came from the FAO to the WFP, and returned to the FAO as Director-General in 1968 (Shaw 2001, 291). Boerma’s successor as WFP ED, El Salvadorian
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Francisco Aquino (ED 1968–1976) attempted to take the same path to the FAO D-G position, but lost an election for that position to Edouard Saouma in 1975 (Shaw 2001, 291). Saouma’s election came at a critical time for the FAO and for food aid, in the context of the 1974 World Food Conference, and the emerging North-South conflict within the UN.

Saouma was to win three six-year terms as FAO D-G (1976–1994), a feat requiring strong ambition and political skills. Saouma’s power base lay in the G77 (Ingram 2006, 95), which, as discussed in Chapter Two, had become the most electorally powerful group within the UN during the 1970s (Murphy 2001). The G77 defined itself increasingly in opposition to the developed nations who were members of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Ingram 2006, 95). During the 1970s and early 1980s, as ‘Third World states sought to capture control of international organizations and to channel a greater share of these organizations' budgets to developing countries' needs’, conflict between G77 and developed countries ‘was manifested in every food organization, particularly in efforts to control organizational resources, policies and personnel.’ (Hopkins 1990, 181).

Saouma’s behaviour towards the WFP suggests that he saw it as a potential source of rivals for his position and threats to his authority, as well as a useful source of development largesse which could help maintain his electoral support in the FAO Conference. A less pejorative analysis might argue he saw it as important to keep control of the WFP in order to integrate the UN’s food and agriculture related development resources in the service of the world’s poorest countries. Whatever the motivations, Saouma kept in place a series of acting and short-term ED appointments: four in less than six years from May 1976 until Ingram’s appointment in March 1982. One such appointee ‘left the WFP in frustration, having served his entire term on a series of three-month contracts approved by Saouma.’ (Charlton 1992, 639). While formally the WFP ED was appointed jointly by the UN Secretary-General and the FAO D-G, Saouma had ensured that in practice he controlled the position by dint of his organisation’s considerable financial and administrative dominance of WFP, and his support from the G77.

In the early 1980s, under the General Regulations and evolved organisational practice, the WFP’s status was equivalent to an FAO Department, with the Executive Director equal in rank to an Assistant Director-General, and the WFP was still housed within the FAO building in Rome. As Charlton noted,

All general financial and administrative services were to be provided by the FAO on a reimbursable basis. This meant that, although the executive director was responsible to the CFA for administration of the WFP, the director-general of the FAO would be responsible for the maintenance of accounts and records, the preparation of financial reports, and the custodianship of the WFP's Trust Fund. (Charlton 1992, 635).

When put together with reliance on FAO for technical advice, WFP had a relationship with the FAO which Charlton characterised as ‘dependent’. In 1987, ‘approximately one-third of the WFP's annual administrative budget’ was transferred to the FAO for these services (Charlton 1992, 636). The WFP was also, in staffing terms, a much smaller organisation. In 1986, the FAO had 6,594 professional and general staff in Rome and the field, compared with 650 HQ and 207 field staff for WFP (Charlton 1992, 636).

The WFP General Regulations had been designed for a temporary, experimental program, mostly without its own organisational infrastructure (Charlton 1992).
However, by the early 1980s the gradual expansion in WFP resources, and its now clearly ongoing nature had rendered some of these aspects of WFP formal governance out of date. Despite its much smaller staff, by 1987 program operations for WFP were budgeted at US$900m, while the FAO program budget for 1986/7 was less than half that figure at US$437m (Charlton 1992, 636). The disparity between budget and staff sizes points, not only to how ‘lean’ WFP was, but to the difference between its mandate to disburse food resources compared to the FAO’s as a service organisation collecting information and disbursing policy and technical advice.

Saouma’s determination to interpret the General Regulations as giving him effective control over the WFP had, for Ingram, brought into question whether he had any meaningful independent authority as WFP ED. This was important to Ingram as he was determined to use his position at WFP as a career capstone, and to lead the organisation in a manner which would result in real achievements (Ingram 2005b) –

An important reason why I had sought the post at WFP was my view that, legally speaking, the head of WFP was more ‘independent’ than the heads of other UN programmes. (Ingram 2006, 88).

One of Ingram’s first actions as ED was to request a legal opinion from the UN on his powers (Ingram 2006, 86ff). The opinion confirmed his perception of the WFP as being more autonomous from the UN than other programs such as UNDP or UNICEF, as the Executive Director was not a part of the UN Secretariat, thanks to its mixed FAO/UN parentage (Ingram 2006, 88). Despite this opinion, Ingram found he had no control over any senior appointments in the WFP (D1 level and above) all of which had to be approved by the FAO D-G (Charlton 1992, 641). This limited his capacity even to develop a minimal policy function in the WFP (Ingram 2005b). His first public battle with Saouma was over his capacity to submit policy papers to his own governing body (the CFA) without first getting them approved by Saouma (Charlton 1992, 642; also Ingram 2006).

The story of the battle led by Ingram for WFP autonomy from FAO is covered in great detail by Ingram (Ingram 2006; see also Charlton 1992; Shaw 2001, Ch8). It ended with the adoption of new General Regulations by the CFA, and the UN and FAO parent bodies in 1991 as Ingram’s second term as Executive Director drew to a close. This clarified the WFP’s autonomy, and establishing a new, enlarged CFA. Given Saouma’s efforts to cast the WFP autonomy struggle in terms of the North (WFP donors) – South (WFP recipients) conflict, its eventual resolution in revised General Regulations for WFP involved an expansion in developing country representation on the CFA. Out of an overall increase of 12 positions (from 30 to 42), most were allocated to developing countries, which had a total of 27 positions in the new structure (Ingram 2006, 290). As noted in Chapter Two, the CFA was later transformed into the smaller, 36 member Executive Board by UN General Assembly resolution in 1993 which harmonised the governance arrangements for WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP.

Saouma’s backing for Ingram’s appointment essentially made it possible (Ingram 2006, 40–50), but given subsequent events it seems relevant to ask why Saouma supported his candidacy. The two had met when Ingram was contemplating becoming a candidate and got on well (Ingram 2006, 40) – indeed even now Ingram retains some respect for Saouma as epitomising the sort of strong leader the UN needs if it is to overcome member-state timidity and lack of interest (Ingram 2005b). Undoubtedly, Saouma was concerned that the appointee not come from a country, such as the United States, which had sufficient power to potentially challenge him, and an Australian appeared a relatively safe choice. Other candidates, especially Brazilian Bernardo Brito, who was
Acting WFP ED at the time, were seen as operating from a G77 power base and likely future challengers for Saouma’s job if they were made ED. Ingram speculates that important factors were that he would clearly owe his position to Saouma and, as an Australian, lacked an obvious power base of his own (Ingram 2006, 50). Whatever logic had led Saouma to support Ingram’s appointment, from Saouma’s perspective it proved flawed as Ingram set out to articulate a role for the WFP that did not subordinate it to FAO.

Throughout the battle, Saouma attempted to portray the WFP and Ingram as American pawns attacking and undermining the FAO’s attempts to maximise resources for developing nations (Ingram 2006; see also Saouma 1993). In contrast with this, Ingram suggests that the most problematic member-state relationship he had as ED was with the United States (Ingram 2006, 164ff).

**Role of the United States**

The United States was an ambivalent and unclearly positioned player in the food agencies during the period of conflict between the WFP and the FAO, reflecting both a broader US disengagement from multilateralism over the decade before the end of the Cold War (Karns and Mingst 1990a), and policy confusion in the food issue area (Hopkins 1990). During the 1970s, US perceptions grew that the UN had gone from being a venue for US global leadership to a venue for condemnation of the US by the developing world, egged on by the Soviet bloc. In comparison with its earlier role in the UN,

...the United States found itself increasingly on the defensive. Its control over agendas slipped; its ability to mobilize votes across all issues eroded; its close ties and influence within secretariats were reduced by the assertion of greater autonomy. U.S. support for international organizations was tested by programs and activities regarded as detrimental to American interests. (Karns and Mingst 1990a, 6).

The late 1970s saw US withdrawal from significant UN agencies such as UNESCO and the International Labor Organisation (ILO). The Reagan administration elected in late 1980 had relatively little interest in multilateralism which reinforced this trend in disengagement (Traub 2006, 21). Since 1961 Congress had mandated the US proportion of ‘assessed’ UN budgets (that is, budgets which required member-state contributions at an assessed amount) not exceed 25 percent. Concerns that some of the budgets during the 1970s appeared ‘both retributive and redistributive’ resulted in 1985 in the passage of the Kassebaum Amendment (Talbot 1990, 36). This amendment stipulated that as of 1 October 1986 the United States could be assessed no more than 20%, unless the United Nations instituted a system of weighted voting, which would give larger contributors more voting power in how the funds were spent. (Talbot 1990, 28–9).

Meanwhile, in the food issue area concerning both the FAO and the WFP, policy conflicts within the US continued to cause some policy confusion. Hopkins notes a number of differences between USDA and State Department interests at this time (Hopkins 1990); Ingram’s account of his re-appointment campaign in 1986 also

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72 This portrayal of the WFP/FAO dispute may appear overly one-sided and imply an over-reliance on Ingram’s account. In turn this could suggest my ‘capture’ by Ingram as an interviewer. In fact there is little or no literature that credibly refutes or rebuts Ingram and Charlton. Saouma’s own book (Saouma 1993) barely mentions the WFP, and its overall argument is entirely consistent with Ingram’s portrayal of Saouma’s perspectives. Talbot referred to the dispute as a case of WFP attempting to obtain autonomy, with an implication of empire building behaviour. He also argued that Saouma had been unfairly vilified as corrupt by a regressive American campaign in the media due to ideological opposition (Talbot 1990).
Evolution of the WFP and IFAR

highlights the complexity of different personal and institutional positions within the US establishment (Ingram 2006, Ch8).

Saouma’s campaign in 1986–87 for a third term as FAO D-G involved a serious challenge from OECD member states, led by the Canadians, disgusted with what they saw as his divisive and self-serving administration that bordered on corrupt. The reformists were backing an alternative candidate from Benin (a G77 country), Moise Mensah. However, the US only belatedly and uncertainly decided to support Mensah’s candidature (Hopkins 1990), due at least in part to suggestions from Saouma that in return for US support he would back an American candidate to replace Ingram at the end of his first term as ED in 1987 (Ingram 2006, 172, 178). Ultimately the manoeuvring over Ingram’s re-appointment campaign resulted in an understanding that the US would nominate Ingram’s successor, presaging a greater and clearer commitment to differentiating WFP governance from the FAO on the part of America.

Meanwhile, during this period as in others, US food aid flows and donations closely tracked the varying levels of surplus stocks without reference to any of these political debates over governance reform or nomination of the ED (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 28). The apparent imperviousness of American multilateral food aid flows to the contingencies of policy conflict over WFP reforms is usually taken to point to the power of the material agricultural and business interests involved. However, as will be outlined in more detail below, the configuration of these interests in American politics was changing during the 1980s, both with reference to domestic policy and foreign food aid. These changes must be comprehended in normative terms as well as with reference to the material interests that, quite literally, the feed-the-hungry norm made a virtue of.

US domestic federal food aid in the 1980s

Soon after taking office in January 1981, the Reagan administration was faced with a surplus problem involving large stocks of dairy produce held by the Federal government, especially cheese, which was unable to be stored for long without deteriorating. In late 1981 the Reagan administration initiated the Special Dairy Distribution Program (SDDP) which was mainly concerned with giving away cheese to Americans (Poppendieck 1998, 88–91).

Following anecdotal evidence of increasing malnutrition in the Boston region and requests from groups working with the poor, Professor Larry Brown of Harvard University public health school put together teams of physicians who, over the two years (1983–85), travelled extensively in four regions of the US – New England, the South, the South West, and the Mid-West (Brown and Pizer 1987). Their research found there were significant and increasing numbers of hungry people in America, concluding that at least once each month some 20 million Americans went hungry (Brown and Pizer 1987, 161). This signalled the public re-emergence of domestic malnutrition as a social problem, though concerted government action from the late 1960s, in particular through expansion of the Food Stamps Program, had been seen as largely effective in eliminating it (Berry 1984; Brown and Pizer 1987; Nestle 2002).

Hunger advocates explained this re-emergence as due to the combined effects of the early 1980s recession and significant cuts to the Federal Food Stamp program by Congress over the period 1982–85, just as the need for access to it increased (Berry 1984).

73 And thus was not a viable commodity for use in bilateral or multilateral food aid. Federal cheese inventories were to peak in 1983 at 933 million pounds, though USDA policies to reduce production brought this down to 83 million pounds by 1988 (Poppendieck 1998, 149).
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1984). The cuts to Food Stamps came within a wider context of neoliberal hostility to government from the Reagan administration (Krugman 2007; Stiglitz 2003). Apart from the context of a Republican Congress and Presidency committed to ‘small government’ at least in relation to non-defense related areas, there had been some years of sustained attack on the Food Stamps Program as an example of excessively generous welfare allowing widespread cheating and fraud. Attacks on food stamps began in the period 1974–76 (Berry 1984, 77), at just the same time as surplus stocks had disappeared and the price of food (and hence the costs of the program) had shot up, and the need for surplus disposal it represented had shrunk (Bowers, Rasmussen et al. 1985). These attacks functioned to partially separate the Food Stamps Program from the feed-the-hungry norm and redefine it as part of a more suspect ‘welfare state norm’.

The Federal government engaged in considerable criticism of the methodology and accuracy of measuring the number of hungry people. Edwin Meese was appointed by President Reagan to examine hunger in the US and sparked outrage when he claimed there was ‘no real evidence’ that it existed (Poppendieck 1998, 103). Another infamous example of the incumbent administration refusing to accept hunger as a public policy problem was President Reagan telling a schoolboy that hungry people were just too ignorant to know where the food was (Brown and Pizer 1987, 179). Underlying these rhetorical gambits was a normative shift of domestic food aid programs from being an important instrument of the welfare state back to having a voluntarist response to food related emergency relief, echoing a return to the debates of the early 1930s between Hoover Republicans and the Roosevelt New Deal. In 1983 the SDDP was broadened to include other commodities and was replaced by the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) with an expanded role for the burgeoning number of private voluntary relief organizations (PVOs, otherwise known as NGOs) (Berry 1984; Poppendieck 1998). The late 1980s saw an increasing institutionalisation of non-government food relief organisations (Poppendieck 1998).

Domestic hunger in the US had become a sort of permanently institutionalised emergency by the end of the 1980s (Poppendieck 1998). In 2005, according to the USDA, 35 million Americans were exposed to food insecurity, down from 38 million in 2004, but the first such decline for six years (Associated Press 2006b). Since the early 1980s crisis, the proportion of the American population actually hungry, or at such risk of hunger they can be defined as food insecure has remained consistently at or over 10% - currently around 30 million people (Hotakainen 2007; Usborne 2008). The domestic Food Stamp program remains the main government funded response to this, and the largest of the food and nutrition programs, with expenditure in 2004 of $28.6 billion, despite significant cuts in the 1996 welfare reform bill (Nestle 2002). However, recent studies estimate it reaches only half of those eligible to access the assistance (Hotakainen 2007), with the voluntary sector still playing a major role in assisting the food insecure in America. Other liberal democracies have problems with poverty (and implicitly, hunger). None has a comparable discourse and policy apparatus focused on hunger.

Such food aid controversies at the domestic level seem to have little direct impact on US food aid policy at the international level. Yet it is difficult not to see a certain dovetailing of the emphasis on emergency relief that was coming to the fore in both arenas, and an increasingly important role for NGOs – points that are explored further below.
US industry structure and lobbying

Barrett and Maxwell show in some detail just how small the number of domestic beneficiaries of US foreign food aid policy have been in recent decades (Barrett and Maxwell 2005). This stems from changes linked to and reinforcing the continuing decline in the proportion of small family farms (Ritchie and Ristau 1987; Wise 2005), and increasing vertical integration of the food production industries (Coleman, Grant et al. 2004; George 1979; Patel 2007; Wagenhofer 2005; Ziegler 2005).

By the early 1980s, there had been a shift in lobbying access to Congress, with a decline in the importance of the traditional generic farmer organisations such as the American Farm Bureau Federation, and the growth in importance of the processor dominated specialist commodity organisations (Hansen 1991). Thus, structural change in the political economy of US agriculture was considerably more complicated than simply the size and frequency of surpluses.

In the early 1980s as noted above, there was a significant political shift towards market-based and small government policy on the part of the Reagan Administration and the Republican dominated Congress. Following the 1980 elections not only was Ronald Reagan elected president, but Republicans took control of the Senate Agriculture Committee for the first time since 1955 (Bowers, Rasmussen et al. 1985, 37). In the arena of agricultural policy, this resulted in the 1981 Farm Bill being subordinated to budget policy - the first time this had happened (Bowers, Rasmussen et al. 1985, 36). This is generally taken as reflecting a loss of influence on the part of the farm lobby, linked to the long term decline in the proportion of the population engaged in farming, which by 1980 had fallen below 4 percent (Hansen 1991, 167). As a result, agricultural subsidies and the food stamps program were cut, and the importance of exports was emphasised – which added importance to PL 480 –

A revolving export credit fund was set up for CCC [Commodity Credit Corporation] use in developing and expanding markets. The Secretary was required to provide for standby export subsidies to meet the export subsidies of foreign governments. The Public Law 480 program had the ceiling on its donations abroad raised from $750 million to $1 billion. (Bowers, Rasmussen et al. 1985, 40).

Consistent with free market ideology, there was a shift from surplus disposal (in which USDA purchased, stored and made available surplus stocks for food aid), to open market purchasing of food aid. This was partly linked with a trend started in 1973 to move agricultural policy away from a mixture of price support through government purchase of surplus stocks, and incentives to reduce production, to more direct income support for farmers via ‘deficiency payments’ (Ritchie and Ristau 1987, 6; Bowers, Rasmussen et al. 1985, 29). These trends were also connected to structural economic changes in agriculture that saw increasing dominance of large farms, and vertical integration of production and processing. By the 1980s, while the influence of the farm lobby in Washington was well past its peak (Hansen 1991), agribusiness – business which involved and often integrated inputs, production and processing of agricultural commodities – was increasingly influential.

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74 Hansen notes there was deep-seated hostility towards processor groups from farm organisations originating in the Depression era.
In relation to food aid, large-scale processors have consistently pressed for increased levels of procurement of bagged, processed, or fortified commodities...and agricultural producer groups have often opposed these demands, favoring bulk commodity purchases that might more directly benefit farmers. (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 89).

Reflecting the success of agribusiness lobbying, the 1985 Farm Bill required at least 75 percent of non-emergency minimum tonnage be ‘fortified, bagged or processed’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 89).

Another example of the interaction between agribusiness and food aid policy dating from this period is the establishment of the Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust. The Trust acts primarily as a grain reserve for increasing food aid available for Congress to deploy when demand is high (Landis 2005; Zeigler 2005). In 1980, the placing of a trade embargo on the USSR because of its invasion of Afghanistan led to the US government purchasing the wheat from the contracts that the embargo had abrogated. Private agribusiness was paid to store the resulting reserves, which were then sold back to industry at a ‘sharp discount’. Industry, impressed with the profitability of this process, then lobbied to create an ongoing wheat reserve, operating on the basis that the more in storage, the greater the profits – ‘the agribusinesses that benefit from the Emerson Trust have historically been very successful in minimizing releases from this facility.’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 92).

A change allowing processed products to be held by the Trust rather than only bulk grain, shifted benefits to processors in the late 1990s. Now, sub-coalitions of agribusinesses jockey for the greatest spoils from this system, lobbying for relatively minor rule changes that effectively redistribute the profits within a relatively small group of corporations that make handsome profits out of what is intended to be a humanitarian mechanism. (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 92).

The advent of the agribusiness lobby both reflected and intensified the practical displacement of the traditional service of farmer interests in US food aid policy. However, shipping interests were not displaced; indeed they managed to expand their entitlements in the same period. The Cargo Preference Act was enacted alongside PL 480 in the 1950s. This Act required that a minimum 50 percent of gross food aid tonnage ‘be shipped on privately owned, registered US-flag commercial vessels.’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 93). The 1985 Farm Bill increased this minimum to 75 percent over opposition from USDA, USAID and farm groups. Also, the maritime industry is a strong supporter of bagged/processed food use as there are bigger profits from ships transporting such product than from bulk containers.

The US Government Accountability Office (GAO) estimated in 1994 that the average annual cost of preference in food aid shipping (i.e. the addition to what it would have cost without the preference requirement) was US$200 million. From 2000 to 2002, ‘nearly 40 per cent of total costs of US food aid programs were paid to US shipping companies.’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 95). Moreover, limits on the availability of US-flagged ships constrain the location of commodity purchases, again often increasing the price paid. Barrett and Maxwell argue that these subsidies have not stopped the decline of the US maritime industry, just padded the bottom lines of a few shipping lines (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 97).

The way the American feed-the-hungry norm incorporated a link between morality and self-interest – making a virtue out of food aid’s service to both the hungry and producers has contributed to an expectation in US Congress that such profiteering is
merely consistent with moral policy settings, smoothing the path for the effective lobbying by food aid interests. Barrett and Maxwell’s critique comes from the standpoint of the international regime norm which focuses more strongly on the hungry poor and turns a critical eye to the self-serving policy settings of wealthy interests in rich countries. I will discuss the monetisation policy debate further below as another illustration of the role of US interests in food aid policy.

2. Evolution of the IFAR

From development to emergency assistance

The process of WFP/FAO disentanglement reflected a wider shift within the frontline UN agencies from a focus on development in the 1960s to the 1990s focus on humanitarian assistance in the context of ‘complex emergencies’ (Natsios 2001). If the FAO-dominated WFP cast itself as a development agency, it is no coincidence that the expansion of the WFP’s emergency assistance role occurred at the same time as its struggle for autonomy from the FAO.

Ingram notes the FAO’s lack of interest in the problems with food aid, compared with WFP concern to improve technical design of projects. Poorly designed food aid assistance could do more harm than good (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; Ingram 2006; Maren 1993; Shaw 2001; Shaw and Clay 1993; Singer 2001), and the WFP acknowledged this required engagement with critics of food aid and endeavours to improve its operation. Meanwhile the FAO conflated the championing of the interests of the poor with demanding more food aid and applying it (largely uncritically) mainly to agricultural development projects, even when it demonstrably did more good in social development projects such as maternal and infant nutrition and school feeding (Ingram 2006, 283–4). Saouma demonstrates the relatively narrow FAO perspective emphasising quantity, donor obligations and logistical arrangements as means to enhance food aid effectiveness in his memoir:

I had on several occasions, without great success, proposed to the WFP and FAO Governing Bodies that measures should be taken to make multilateral food aid more effective, for example by making IEFR legally binding for the countries that participated in it, doubling the level of that reserve (unchanged since its establishment in 1975), prepositioning reserve security food stocks at certain strategic points (such as Dakar for the Sahel countries) in order to be able to deliver food aid rapidly in the event of emergencies. (Saouma 1993, 82).

Saouma’s record of his time at the FAO indicates the extent to which FAO thinking was defined by the NIEO and pursuit of resources for development, even in the face of developed nation indifference and hostility (Saouma 1993). These differences, as well as the political conflicts between Saouma and Ingram were displayed when in 1984 the WFP and FAO submitted conflicting policy papers to the CFA on reforming emergency food aid processes. The FAO expressed a view that, simply, more aid was needed. The WFP argued for clear criteria to target such aid to the most needy, given the need to ration insufficient resources (Ingram 2006, 129–31).

Emergency relief in the WFP

As noted in Chapter Three, typically food aid is categorised in three ways – as program aid, as project aid, and as emergency aid (Shaw and Clay 1993, 1). The WFP defines these categories as follows:
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Emergency food aid is destined to victims of natural or man-made disasters. It is freely distributed to targeted beneficiary groups, and is usually provided on a grant basis. It is channelled multilaterally, through NGOs, or, sometimes, bilaterally.

Project food aid aims at supporting specific poverty-reduction and disaster-prevention activities. It is usually freely distributed to targeted beneficiary groups, but may also be sold on the open market and is then referred to as ‘monetized’ food aid. Project food aid is provided on a grant basis and is channelled multilaterally, through NGOs, or bilaterally.

Programme food aid is usually supplied as a resource transfer for balance of payments or budgetary support activities. Unlike most of the food aid provided for project or emergency purposes, it is not targeted at specific beneficiary groups. It is sold on the open market, and provided either as a grant, or as a loan.

(INTERFAIS/WFP 2005, vi).

While a role in emergency assistance had always been seen as an important part of the WFP mandate, and indeed McGovern’s original proposals had emphasised this, in the context of the Development Decade and UN priorities in the 1960s the WFP had developed as first and foremost a development agency (Charlton 1992, 636). In other words, the WFP deployed food aid as a resource to assist development through projects. This meant using food aid in two broad categories: agricultural and rural development (for example, as part or full payment for work, usually involving infrastructure building such as roads and bridges – ‘food-for-work’), or for human resource development (for example, to improve nutrition for mothers and infants through feeding projects) (see Shaw 2001, 89ff).

Effective delivery of emergency aid requires quick access to nearby food resources and cash to pay for transport and distribution. Especially in its early years, along with a desire to focus on development, WFP had no capacity to access food rapidly enough to be effective in much emergency relief, and little or no cash to fund hard transport and distribution costs (Shaw 2001, 148). In its first year of operations, no more than 25 percent of WFP resources were used for emergency relief. Between 1963 and 1975, the total value of WFP development aid commitments was US$1.822m (Shaw 2001, 84), while in the same period emergency aid commitments totalled only US$209.1m (Shaw 2001, 155) – that is just over 10 percent of the total.

Despite the fundamental barriers to WFP acting on emergency aid, however, ‘it was recognized that a multilateral organization administering food aid could not stand aside and not move to help countries and people stricken by disasters’ (Shaw 2001, 149). Shaw makes his comment on the overwhelming strength of the ‘humanitarian impulse of food aid’ (cited in Chapter Three above) as an explanation of this. In fact, rather than imbuing food aid with such powers it seems more appropriate to explain WFP emergency relief as a demonstration of the power of the moral claim of the hungry in the feed-the-hungry norm.

The main barrier to WFP engagement in emergency relief was seen as lack of prompt access to food stocks, and various attempts were made in the 1960s to establish a world food bank or reserve (Shaw 2001, Ch3). The decision of the World Food Conference in 1974 to establish an International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR), managed by WFP, finally broke the impasse.\(^75\) WFP emergency aid increased at more than triple the rate

\(^75\) Though the operation of the IEFR was complicated by a requirement for FAO D-G approval of emergency relief operations – a requirement which WFP fought against unsuccessfully in 1976 (Charlton 1992, 637–8). Charlton notes an alleged example of the politicisation of such powers, where ‘the director-general of the FAO was accused of delaying approval of emergency food aid requests from Ethiopia as a lever to force the dismissal of Ethiopia’s representative to the FAO.’ (Charlton 1992, 643).
of increases to its development assistance in the 1970s (Shaw 2001, 154). This increase, however, came from a low base, and up to the late 1980s relief assistance accounted for no more than one-third of WFP operational expenditures. The truly significant proportional increases occurred between 1982 and 1994, when emergency relief and development aid swapped positions as the dominant mode of WFP food aid (see Appendix 8).

In the early 1990s emergency relief accounted for two-thirds of WFP resources (Shaw 2001, 154). By 2004, the WFP estimated it spent 91 per cent of its operational budget on relief aid (including recovery) and only 9 per cent on development aid (WFP 2006d). There were many factors implicated in this shift (Clay 2003), but three stand out as important.

Firstly, the creation of the IEFR established an accessible and larger resource base for emergency relief, albeit at some cost to development assistance donations (Talbot 1990, 70). Secondly, the heightened NGO activism around and media awareness of famine crises which had helped play a role in the World Food Conference continued. This was boosted enormously by the publicity over the Ethiopian famine of 1984 (de Waal 1997, 121–4). These things both led to increased recognition of needs for emergency assistance, and public pressure in the donor countries to act, leading to strong donor interest in emergency relief work. This was one factor in the evolution of policy settings by the US in the 1990s, which happily accommodated the WFP within its larger food aid policy arrangements as primarily an emergency relief agency (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; Landis 2005). However, as noted earlier, an American assumption of a strong role in emergency relief for the WFP had been evident since McGovern’s original proposal. Also, as noted above, the domestic US hunger situation became institutionalised as an emergency, which dovetailed with the increasing emphasis on multilateral (voluntary) food aid as most appropriately donated in response to emergency needs.

Thirdly, critiques of the use of food aid for development (see Chapter Six) had had an impact on the WFP. This was, perhaps, assisted by Ingram’s newness to food aid (Ingram 2005b), which meant he was not locked into long established positions defending food aid as a development tool from its critics. Ingram observes that by 1984 he held the view ‘that food aid found its clearest justification in emergency feeding’ (Ingram 2006, 129). Emergency relief work played to the WFP’s undoubted strengths in logistics, and in a virtuous cycle, helped strengthen its logistical expertise more and more. Emergency relief operations also had the virtue of creating a role for the organisation more clearly distinct from the FAO than agricultural and rural development assistance, which tended to be more closely connected to the work of the FAO. In the context of attempts to free the WFP from the FAO’s close oversight, Ingram was also able to use the emergency food aid issue ‘to argue for more rapid and flexible decision making’ (Charlton 1992, 643).

These factors came together during the 1980s to create an organisational logic or a ‘path of increasing returns’ (Pierson 2000) for the WFP to change from a development organisation to a relief organisation. From the late 1980s, there has been a significant expansion in refugee numbers and camps (Barnett and Finnemore 2004, 74; Shaw 2001, 225; Terry 2000). Together with the advent of ‘complex emergencies’ this phenomenon has tended to involve an increasing array of emergency responses from UN agencies, and attempts to develop much more effective coordination of responses (Natsios 2001). WFP logistics and infrastructure have become important parts of such a response.
Moreover, emergency food aid donations have both increased and largely displaced development food aid donations. This has made it difficult for the WFP to maintain capacity in development aid.

**Changes in IFAR norms and principles**

Hopkins suggested that the international food aid regime had originally been based on a ‘package’ of four original principles, which had then evolved, under the influence of an epistemic community of food aid experts, into a new set of regime principles.

Hopkins’ proposed four original regime principles were that food aid should:

1. be provided from donor surplus stocks;
2. supplement the usual commercial imports in the recipient country;
3. be given under short-term commitments sensitive to political and economic goals of donors; and
4. directly feed hungry people.

(See Hopkins 1992, 229).

Similarly, Uvin proposed that the IFAR was originally based on two basic norms. First, that food aid ‘was to reflect only the changing political and economic goals of the donor’; second, that the additionality principle applied to food aid in order that it did not displace US farmers’ exports (Uvin 1992, 302).

Chapter Two noted the centrality of surplus disposal, especially for the US, to the early IFAR. Uvin’s and Hopkins’ posited norms and principles also emphasise the centrality of donor interests to the early regime; only the fourth of Hopkins’ principles refers specifically to the moral claim of the hungry. The early form of the feed-the-hungry norm provided an underpinning normative logic to these principles, linking the moral claims of donor producers, donor nations and the hungry together.

The early regime version of the feed-the-hungry norm was very close to the domestic US version, reflecting the dominant role of the US in the regime. However, the changes of the 1970s and 1980s discussed above diminished that dominance, making the regime ‘more multilateral’ (Hopkins 1992, 230; also Uvin 1994, 142). Reflecting this, and the growing importance of an epistemic community of food aid experts, Hopkins argued in 1992 that the original regime principles had changed, and proposed the following as now applying:

Food aid should

1. be supplied in the most efficient manner possible;
2. substitute for usual commercial food imports;
3. be given under long-term commitments;
4. ‘serve as the basis for the recipient’s economic development aimed at addressing long-term food security problems, rather than merely serving as a vehicle to alleviate immediate food shortages.’

(Hopkins 1992, 246).

These renovated principles were more oriented to the interests of recipients and creating stability and efficiency for multilateral food aid (i.e., in effect, the WFP). This reflected reforms to food aid both in technical literature, and in the IFAR/WFP, which by the late 1980s had ‘become the major arena in which new norms for all food aid were being articulated’ (Hopkins 1992, 230). Yet thirteen years after Hopkins proposed these renovated regime principles, Barrett and Maxwell were talking merely of food aid (and
implicitly the international food aid regime) ‘edging slowly toward a more recipient-oriented system’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 107). This reflects the fact that there have always been significant gaps between the expert consensus on optimal food aid practices and policies, and the behaviour of states, in particular the US, within the IFAR (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; OECD 2006).

At least with hindsight, the third and fourth of Hopkins’ ‘new’ principles seem to have misread the trend to an emphasis on short-term emergency relief ahead of development assistance on the part of donors to the WFP.76 However, the principles do correctly identify the shift of the IFAR feed-the-hungry norm away from the domestic US version of the norm, and towards a more recipient-oriented version. Barrett and Maxwell acknowledge the extent to which the WFP in its strategic planning articulates an approach to food aid consistent with their recommendations, while focusing their attention on the US policy settings which they see as lagging behind best practice in which the WFP and most other donors are already engaged (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, Ch6).

Uvin, while agreeing that the regime changed substantially in the 1970s and 1980s, was sceptical about Hopkins’ claim for the role of ‘consensual knowledge’ in the food aid regime, arguing it was more appropriate to think in terms of ‘dominant knowledge’, as there was still too much debate to be able to claim any consensus. (Uvin 1994, 174). Rather, Uvin argued, change to the regime had been triggered by the world food crisis and the watershed of the 1974 World Food Conference (Uvin 1992, 302). These events, along with domestic US political shifts meant that ‘food aid donation is increasingly governed by multilateral institutions, norms and procedures. The objectives the regime now promotes changed from economic and foreign policy interests to developmental/humanitarian preferences’ (Uvin 1992, 303).

Uvin pointed to the influence of thinking on food aid policy within the international regime on domestic US policy making. For example, it has long been clear that many of the negative effects of food aid, such as its depressing of local commodity prices, come from its supply to people who do not really need it (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; OECD 2006; Schultz 1993). Such arguments had particular relevance in the context of concern that the Nixon and Ford administrations were using food aid to get around Congressional constraints on funding the war in Vietnam (Ruttan 1993a; Uvin 1992). They were deployed in Congress in 1975, resulting in legislation to require that food aid be closely targeted to the poorest countries, and to cut off counterpart funds (i.e., funds generated from the sale of donated food, generally granted or concessionally lent to the recipient government) from military uses (Uvin 1992, 302).

Another American legislative change reflecting the influence of international policy thinking on food aid was the 1979 Bellmon Amendment to PL 480. The Bellmon Amendment requires an assessment be made to ensure there will be no negative impacts from American food aid on the food markets of the recipient country (OECD 2006; Ruttan 1993a; Uvin 1992; Zeigler 2005). The operation of the Bellmon amendment has little contemporary credibility – Barrett and Maxwell cite a private remark of a ‘senior US government official’ that ‘Bellmon Analyses are sheer fraud… no one believes them’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 190). However, in formal terms at least, the Amendment suggests constraints on the operation of US interests in food aid, acknowledging potential adverse impacts on recipients. For Uvin, these changes in the

76 Though the relationship between emergency and development food aid is more complex than a simple either/or, as will be discussed further in Chapter Six.
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seventies signaled more of a humanitarian focus to US food aid policy (Uvin 1992, 302).

Such changes to US policy on food aid during the 1970s and 1980s undoubtedly point, amongst other factors, to the influence of the international regime. At the same time, given the WFP’s history, its reliance on donors for resources, and the pre-eminence of the US amongst the donors, the WFP and the regime itself remained largely dependent on US policy.

The significance of the US to the regime was only to increase with the appointment of, effectively, the first American Executive Director of WFP, Catherine Bertini.

3. The WFP under Catherine Bertini

As noted above, in the context of reappointment manoeuvring by Ingram and Saouma, an understanding had been reached that the US would nominate the next ED on conclusion of Ingram’s second term. The American nominee was Catherine Bertini.

Catherine Bertini’s career began as a New York state Republican activist in the mid-1970s, who went on to a business career in the Mid-West state of Illinois, before going into government service. She was a nominee of the Reagan administration as Director of the Office of Family Assistance, then in the George H.W. Bush administration she held a senior appointment as an assistant secretary in the Department of Health and Human Services. This was followed by two years as assistant secretary for Food and Consumer Services of the USDA (Bertini 2005b; Shaw 2001, 293). In the latter role she was responsible for administering the American federal (domestic) food aid program.

Bertini was the first woman to head the WFP, and at 41, by far the youngest appointee. She was also the first ED to be born after World War II. Her appointment began at the same time as the commencement of WFP’s newly established autonomy, meaning that WFP was to some extent about to be remade as an entity within the UN system, creating a unique situation for organisational change and reform. This context saw a new emphasis on managerialism as both a driver of reform and a generator of political consensus, while continuing to base credibility with both donors and recipients

77 US citizen Thomas C. M. Robinson became Acting ED May 1976–July 1977, and was appointed ED briefly from July 1977–September 1977. However his limited and stop-gap tenure and Saouma’s then dominance over the WFP make it impossible to meaningfully describe him as ‘running’ the WFP in the same sense that Bertini did as ED. (See Shaw 2001, 212).

78 Bertini did not regard her appointment as at all straightforward, attributing considerable credit to then Assistant Secretary of State for International Organisations, John Bolton for shepherding her candidacy through both domestic and international obstacles (Bertini 2005b). Bolton was to be a controversial appointment to the post of US Ambassador to the United Nations by President George W. Bush in 2005. Bolton is a neo-conservative, widely regarded as antagonistic to the UN, and abrasive in his assertion of US interests ahead of any potential collaborative approach to its reform (Judt 2007; Traub 2006; Urquhart 2008). His appointment was made under a temporary recess arrangement after problems with his Senate confirmation and ended when it became clear he would not be confirmed by the Senate in January 2007. During his bid for appointment in 2005 Bertini wrote an op-ed piece in the Wall Street Journal supporting his nomination (Bertini 2005c) – something which invariably shocked various UN personnel who knew her when I pointed it out to them. Bertini’s support for Bolton’s appointment reflected not only a friendship going back 30 years, but a frustration with stalled UN reform after two years at the UN in New York as Under-Secretary General for Management, and a hope that he could force change (Bertini 2005b; 2005c).
on continued operational effectiveness and efficiency. This reform agenda was closely
tied together with skilful management of the politics of the US relationship to the food
aid regime.

Bertini placed WFP at the forefront of UN management reform, for example making it
the first agency to adopt a four year strategic and financial planning (WFP 1996, 25).
However, managerial reform was linked to two rather more significant changes - the
intensification of American dominance in the management and donor processes; and an
acceleration of the shift in operations to almost a complete focus on emergency relief.
This latter change can be linked to a struggle which continues within the WFP to
articulate a credible place for development work in its role (Clay 2003).

These two changes can be portrayed as merely exhibiting continuities with long-
standing trends in WFP: the shift to emergency relief as described above had begun as
long ago as the 1970s, and gathered pace under Ingram. Also, while US dominance had
waxed and waned to some degree over the years, it had been embedded in WFP since its
foundation, as discussed previously. Nevertheless, the changes to these things during
the 1990s were of great importance to the evolution of global governance in the IFAR
and WFP.

Before looking in more detail at the accelerated shift from development to emergency
aid and the intensified role of the US in the WFP, it is important to set the context for
them with a brief examination of Bertini’s focus on management systems and
governance reforms, and the implications for the feed-the-hungry norm in the IFAR.

*Bertini’s reform agenda*

In 2002 the WFP secretariat produced a paper for the Executive Board documenting 10
years of reform under Bertini. This document told a story of reform focused on how the
WFP ‘built its capacity to deliver programmes for the hungry poor, not its achievements
in serving them.’ (WFP 2002, 4, emphasis in original). As this implies, the focus of
much reform was in the development of effective management systems and a strategic
approach to running WFP. Management consultants were deployed to assist in these
processes (Bertini 2005b), as the prominence of generic management language and
concepts suggests.

For example, in the period 1992–95, this involved ‘early change initiatives’ in seven
areas, only the first of which could be said to be specific to WFP’s mandate:

- targeting the hungry poor;
- delivering integrated and more effective programmes;
- mobilizing resources;
- building a more robust management culture;
- matching the organization to its operations;
- establishing financial controls; and
- strengthening accountability and oversight.

(WFP 2002, 5).

In 1994 the WFP undertook a review of its ‘Policies, Objectives and Strategies’ (WFP
1994). This in part reflected the impacts of a comprehensive assessment of the WFP by
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Norway, Canada and the Netherlands, known as the Tripartite Evaluation (Chr. Michelsen Institute 1994) which had run over the previous two years (WFP 1994, para 2). These reviews contributed further to the reduced emphasis on development projects and an increased emphasis on emergency relief, albeit with an agenda to integrate the various stages of relief, rehabilitation and development into a more integrated approach (Shaw 2001). The outcomes of these reviews, combined with an ED review of progress in reform, resulted in an announcement in July 1996 by Bertini of

A new vision for the organization. WFP was to become a much more strategic organization, capable of responding flexibly and rapidly to the situations of greatest need and integrating emergency, recovery and development programmes. (WFP 2002, 5).

This new vision focused on a number of ‘organizational themes’ consistent with a managerial agenda. As with the early change initiatives, the themes listed were all, bar one, generic concepts deriving from mid-1990s managerial thinking: ‘strategic thinking’; ‘letting managers manage’; ‘teamwork’; ‘leadership’; ‘communication’; ‘flexibility and adaptability’ (WFP 2002, 5). The one exception to these generic managerial themes was ‘keeping the field at the centre’ (WFP 2002, 5). This latter theme illustrated three important characteristics of the Bertini reform agenda.

First, keeping the field at the centre grasped an important element of WFP’s effectiveness during previous periods – its logistical competence and field expertise – and the need to organizationally support this strength, rather than succumb to the bureaucratic tendency to centralise. A key mechanism for this was a strictly enforced staff mobility policy requiring all staff to rotate into the field if they had been based in Rome for more than a couple of years as a condition of advancement (WFP 2002, 34).

Second, making the field central to WFP functioning was one of a series of decentralisation reforms, begun under Ingram (Ingram 2005b; 2006), which had a political as well as managerial aspect. This political aspect involved the building of political capital for the WFP (and its ED) with both recipient and donor countries by ensuring competent operation and responsiveness to real beneficiary needs. The WFP made an apposite comment about a later step in this process (decentralising regional bureaux):

One of the key objectives of the change process was to bring senior managers, programme and administrative staff closer to the beneficiaries so that decisions would be better informed and programmes more effective. (WFP 2002, 45).

Third, the nature of ‘the field’ appears objective and timeless in this managerial discourse. In turn this relates back to the way the reform focus on ‘capacity’ begs the rather more political question of what the capacity is for. It is here that the managerial reform agenda can be seen as functioning politically to ‘depoliticise’ WFP operations as much as possible.

Such depoliticisation was not new. For example, Ingram details various efforts to avoid the derailment of worthy projects by political objections in the context of his work to build a consensus culture noted above. Bertini certainly shared Ingram’s political skills when it came to building on the consensus culture on the governing body.

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80 Though the genesis of this policy, like many in the 1990s, can be traced back to the Ingram period (Ingram 2006, 67–9).
Nevertheless, the techniques of making project proposals as politically uncontroversial as possible through embedding the decisions within strategic and policy frameworks already agreed on by the CFA (from 1996, the Executive Board) were a new development.

The latter stages of Bertini’s second term saw a shift from management to governance as a focus for reform – meaning, in particular, the functioning of the EB and its interactions with the secretariat. In 1999 the EB adopted Bertini’s proposal to set up a Governance Steering Committee (WFP Governance Group 2005), chaired by then EB President, Anthony Beattie of the United Kingdom.

The origin of the project lay in informal discussions between the then Executive Director, Ms Catherine Bertini, and members of the Board as to the best way of governing a changing organization. The challenge was to develop ideas to make the Board more strategic, more effective and more efficient. It was suggested that a successful project might offer lessons for other parts of the United Nations. (WFP Governance Group 2005, 5).

The Governance Group made a report to the Board in 2000 with 23 recommendations for improving or streamlining the functioning of the Board. These were focused on enabling the EB to have a clearer strategic, policy, oversight and accountability focus, reducing its meeting times and volume of paper flow, planning leadership succession, induction, and increasing both delegations to the ED and the use of informal consultations to prepare the ground for formal meetings. The only one of the recommendations not adopted was to redraft the WFP Mission statement, as, tellingly, ‘some members felt that this might expose unproductive differences of view about WFP’s role...’ (WFP Governance Group 2005, 7).

Such a sentiment of concern about exposure of differences points again to the centrepiece of the WFP’s particular depoliticised style of governance – what the Governance Group describes as the ‘tradition of consensus decision making’ by the Board. The nature and political implications of this style of governance will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five.

Tensions in the dual mandate

The benefits from and limits to these managerial techniques come to the fore in the case of the tensions between development and emergency relief aspects of WFP’s dual mandate. The 2002 Secretariat paper on ten years of reform hinted at some of the issues at stake when it posed the question ‘What would have happened if WFP had not engaged in its process of change?’:

The answers are fairly clear. First, the pressure of the massive emergencies during the decade has been enormous. A less resilient, less effective organization would have buckled under the strain. Its attractiveness to donors for emergency programmes would have been diminished and its emergency funding would have decreased significantly. Since WFP is a voluntarily funded organization, the implications would have been serious. Second, it would probably have lost even more of its development programmes, which might have threatened its dual mandate of development and emergencies. (WFP 2002, 44).

The advent of ‘complex humanitarian emergencies’, and significant growth in refugee numbers since the 1980s were noted above. This meant that emergency relief needs were perceived to have increased at a rate outpacing the resources available for assistance. These needs, which by their urgent and imminent nature tend to take

81 See Decision 1999/EB.1/18 for original establishment.
organisational and logistical precedence, also generated public concern and interest in donor countries. This concern was propitious for increasing donations (‘mobilizing resources’ in the language of the time) to fund WFP operations. Also, as the WFP has endeavoured to develop its corporate identity (and concomitant public image), such work had particularly important resonances.

The issue of what the WFP should be doing lay at the heart of considerable debate focused on the tensions between emergency and development aid – indeed Bertini describes the WFP as having to be dragged ‘kicking and screaming’ into emergency aid (Bertini 2005b). This statement suggests that the increasing role for the WFP in emergency relief was not merely the continuation of a trend already established in the 1980s, as noted above. Under Ingram this process had involved an extension of its emergency work mainly through access to the IEFR, albeit with the funding arrangements indirectly displacing funding for development work. Under Bertini this process accelerated to involve a more active redistribution of resources away from development assistance (see Appendix 8; also Clay 2003, 701, Table 1). In a very real sense, WFP was publicly reinvented during the 1990s as a relief agency (Clay 2003).

Apart from the US, most other donors shifted away from in-kind donations to cash donations during the 1990s – but this shift also brought reductions in the aggregate amount of resources going to WFP, and increasing pressure to allocate larger proportions of this resource to emergency priorities. It also increased the relative proportion of resources coming from the US. At the same time, US food aid policy changes also contributed to these changes in the WFP. These changes require some explication before going on to consider the normative implications of the dual mandate tensions within WFP.

**US food aid policy from 1990**

The 1990 Farm Bill had formally shifted the focus of PL 480 food aid away from export development to ‘enhancing food security in the developing world’ (USAID Office of Food for Peace 2005, 7; see also Barrett and Maxwell 2005; Hopkins 1992). This was consistent with and reinforced a long term decline in Title I food aid – government to government concessionary sales, managed by the USDA - which had been historically the largest component of US food aid from the 1950s (see Table 4.1 below; also Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 23). By the early 21st Century, grants and donations of food aid for emergency relief and development projects, administered by USAID under Title II, represented the bulk of US international food assistance – over 80 percent in Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 (see Appendix 11).
Table 4.1 Average Annual Expenditures in US Food Aid under PL 480 Authorisation per decade, 1960-2006 (nominal US$ million)

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<td>Title I</td>
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<td>$800.29</td>
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<td>$711.83</td>
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<td>Title III</td>
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Sources: Based on data from the US Agency for International Development Greenbook (http://qesdb.usaid.gov/gbk/index.html); US Department of Agriculture.

NB – The PL 480 Title III program represents government to government donations of commodities, with their sale by recipient governments generating funds for development programs. Title III has had no allocations since 1999, being effectively privatised into the Title II development food aid program, with US NGOs acting as the recipients who monetise and deploy the consequent resources for development projects.

From the mid-1990s, the USAID Office of Food for Peace has organised food aid resources around the emergency/development distinction (USAID Office of Food for Peace 2005). Emergency food aid is now the primary source of US resources allocated to the WFP while development food aid is now allocated primarily to the NGOs (or in USAID terminology, Private Voluntary Organizations or PVOs). As the figures in Appendix 11 show, Title II food aid in FY 2006 amounted to just under 84 percent of the value of all US food aid while 65 percent of Title II food aid was allocated to emergency projects. Of the Title II allocations to emergency projects, 79 percent went to the WFP as a Coordinating Sponsor. This separation of emergency/non-emergency function reflected a mix of pressures from US NGOs concerned that the WFP was competing with them in development work (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 63), but also reflected a direction of change within WFP itself – it was congruent with the operation of both international and domestic US food aid regimes.

NGOs had long had involvement with US food aid distribution, but the advent of monetisation policy changes had structural effects, linking them with the domestic US groups with an economic interest in maximising in-kind American food aid (agribusiness food processors and shipping).

Together with USAID focusing on NGOs as service organisations for its development food aid resources (while the WFP was given the bulk of emergency relief food aid), US NGOs were increasingly allowed to monetise the food aid received from USAID – that is, sell it on the market in recipient countries, and deploy the resultant funds in their development projects. Monetisation had been introduced initially into the Title II program in the 1985 Farm Bill ‘as a means of making additional cash available for transporting and handling commodities.’ Subsequent Farm Bills in 1990 and 1996 introduced further increases in the monetisation minimum to 10 percent, then 15 percent of the total value of non-emergency commodities and ‘expanded the uses of these proceeds to include income generation, health, nutrition and agricultural activities.’ (USAID Office of Food for Peace 2005, 15). The actual rates of monetisation remained low until 1996 when they went to 20 percent, and by 2001 the rate had reached a peak of 70% (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 101, Fig.5.4). In 2006, of $US342 million in Title II non-emergency food aid, approximately $180 million (53 percent) was monetised (Alliance for Food Aid 2007b).
Chapter Four

The practice of monetisation has created considerable controversy (USAID Office of Food for Peace 2005, 14). Barrett and Maxwell provide an important critique of the potentially destructive nature of monetisation practices on recipient country producers, through displacement and depression of prices (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 133-8); they are particularly concerned with the way in which US NGOs have apparently become dependent on the revenue it generates (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 98-105). In turn this dependency has helped lock the NGOs into a lobbying alliance with producer and shipping interests in the US, bolstering the commercial self interest of the latter two groups with their capacity to, in the words of former President Jimmy Carter, ‘speak from the standpoint of angels’ (cited in Dugger 2007). As discussed in Chapter Two, these interactions are central to the functioning of the American food aid ‘iron triangle’, which has been the key lobby group alliance maintaining US food aid as primarily in-kind, despite trends away from that mode in the international regime. The integration of these NGOs in the food aid lobby would not have been possible without the underpinning normative logic provided by the feed-the-hungry norm. It is through drawing on the notion that food aid serves both the moral claims of the hungry and the moral claims of the small scale family farmer, while creating a strategically important national moral claim that such sectional interests have been able to profit to the extent they have.

In August 2007 one of the major NGOs involved in the system, CARE, announced its phased withdrawal from the use of US government commodities by 2009 (Doyle 2007; Dugger 2007). This decision was influenced by Barrett and Maxwell (Dugger 2007), and came after a Government Accountability Office (GAO) Review criticising the operation of food aid monetisation by NGOs in April 2007. However, other NGOs in the system insist that in-kind food aid and monetisation remain appropriate through their lobby Alliance for Food Aid (Alliance for Food Aid 2007a; 2007b; Doyle 2007; Dugger 2007; Shaw and McKay 2006; USDA Foreign Agricultural Service 2001).

In the WFP there had been debate over monetisation policy since the mid-1980s. However, the issue was put to rest when in 1997 the WFP resolved not to engage in monetisation outside of exceptional circumstances (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 263, fn41; Russo, Luzot et al. 2005, 6; WFP 2006c, 23–4). This resolution reflected the divergence of the IFAR feed-the-hungry norm from the US domestic norm; it also points to the significance of the WFP as a policy space that has helped enable concerns with monetisation within the US to be legitimised and advanced. In turn this suggests the importance of developments in the US/WFP relationship during Bertini’s tenure.

US/WFP relationship in the 1990s

The primary and most obvious impact on the WFP from Bertini’s US background came with the use of her political skills and connections to build more effective links with the US political system – as she puts it, ‘I knew how to work the system’ (Bertini 2005b). This began when then Assistant Secretary of State for International Organizations John Bolton organised cash contributions from the US to the WFP on her commencement to ‘help out’ (Bertini 2005b). Until then, the US had provided almost no cash to the WFP (Bertini 2005b), despite General Rule XIII.4 requiring donors to ‘provide sufficient cash, acceptable services, or acceptable non-food items to cover the full operational and support costs related to their commodity contribution’ (WFP 2004a). WFP had been subjected to periodic cash crises due to the absence of sufficient cash to go along with large commodity donations to pay for its logistical and administrative infrastructure needs (WFP 2000, 12–13).
In the 1996 Farm Bill, USAID was authorised to make additional cash donations to the WFP to assist with administrative and support costs for the first time, with the 2002 Farm Bill increasing the amounts available for this considerably (USAID Office of Food for Peace 2005, 15). Bertini’s working of the US system involved knowledge of when surplus resources, cash as well as commodities, were around and available to be accessed; as well as how to get such resources sent the way of the WFP through relationships with the food aid lobby, Congress, the USDA and other parts of the executive branch. She also recruited staff to the WFP who had Washington backgrounds and could help build important relationships (Bertini 2005b).

In the mid 1990s Bertini set up a new organisation – *Friends of WFP* (FoWFP) – based in Washington DC (WFP 2000, 13). This was done primarily to provide a mechanism enabling private and corporate donations to the WFP that would attract domestic tax concessions. In 1997 a lawyer, lobbyist and consultant, Rick Leach, was employed as Executive Director of FoWFP. His remit was not only to funnel donations to WFP, but also to do some lobbying work that the WFP, as a non-domestic entity, could not do, and to pull together a leadership group of US supporters as the FoWFP Board. Leach’s position was funded by grants from WFP (Leach 2005).

In recent years, FoWFP has expanded in size and significance. Revenue (in US$) grew from $674,871 in 1999 to around $1.5 million in 2000 and 2001, just under $5 million in 2004, and $8,958,894 in 2005 (Friends of WFP Inc. 2006). Of the 2005 revenue, $7,041,685 was donated to the WFP (Friends of WFP Inc. 2006, 17). From having just two employees in 2004, FoWFP has expanded to a staff of eleven (Friends of WFP 2007).

The Board of FoWFP demonstrates blue chip, bipartisan credentials, including two former Agriculture Secretaries (one each from Republican and Democrat administrations), former Senators and Congressional representatives from both major parties, a former Clinton speech writer, and a former Republican Governor of Illinois (Friends of WFP 2007).

As Murphy shows in relation to UNDP, the fact that a UN agency is being led by an American neither predicts the direction in which the organisation will go, nor its relationship with the United States (Murphy 2006). These are ultimately contingent on factors such as the US domestic political situation, the historical relationship with the agency, and the aptitude and political skills of the leader. Like Ingram before her, Bertini’s largest problem with re-appointment to a second term as ED came from the US, where elements within the Democrat Clinton Administration saw her links with the previous Republican Bush Administration as requiring her replacement with one of their own (Bertini 2005b). As with Ingram, Bertini’s credibility as a capable and progressive administrator, and respect from both an array of member-states and a broad spectrum of US domestic players made the difference. The seriousness of this political struggle is reflected in the fact that her re-appointment was not formally confirmed until a very late stage – February 1997 – only weeks before the expiry of her first term, although she had clear G77 support from early 1996 (Bertini 2005b).

The interaction of the depoliticised operation of the WFP, and Bertini’s management of the US relationship came to the fore when she successfully lobbied the US in early 1997

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82 Other UN Agencies made similar arrangements, e.g. UNHCR (WFP 2000, 33).
to contribute to an humanitarian aid package for North Korea. American support was vital in the capacity of the WFP to become the first and most significant intergovernmental organisation to mount a humanitarian operation in that notoriously isolated and paranoid country. As noted in Chapter Two, getting US participation derived first and foremost from the politically transcendent appeals on behalf of starving children. It is a good example of the WFP’s strengths as simultaneously influential with the US and credible in the wider international community in a way which is capable of overcoming deep-seated political hostility.

**Norms and the operation of the dual mandate**

Clay suggests that as a result of the shift to emergency relief a problematic gap has emerged between a reality of negligible development operations, and rhetoric referring to a development mandate (Clay 2003, 702). Similarly, Hopkins noted a debate between those who assign top priority to emergency food aid, which has less clear long-term development value, and the members of the [IFAR] epistemic community, who favor an early transition from emergency feeding to development activities among refugee and famine victims. (Hopkins 1992, 260).

As discussed above, Hopkins argued that under the influence of an epistemic community of food aid experts, the principles governing the international food aid regime had evolved. New principles were now ‘embedded in the institutional practices of multilateral agencies, particularly the WFP, and of bilateral agencies as well’ (Hopkins 1992, 246). According to these principles food aid should, *inter alia*

serve as the basis for the recipient’s economic development aimed at addressing long-term food security problems, rather than merely serving as a vehicle to alleviate immediate food shortages. (Hopkins 1992, 246).

Both Hopkins’ depiction of the epistemic community’s emphasis on development, and Clay’s argument point to the way in which development norms have strongly influenced WFP. These norms valorise as more legitimate and desirable aid (through structured projects) which empowers the recipients and enables them to reduce and eliminate their need for it. The norm assumes a hierarchy of types of assistance, with ‘assistance’ that fails to address structural forces causing poverty and hunger of questionable worth. When considered through the lens of development norms, emergency relief tends to be problematic as it is reactive and has little capacity to change the conditions which generate its necessity in the first place, though it is generally acknowledged as necessary in some circumstances (Isenman and Singer 1993, 244, fn1).

On the other hand, emergencies are generally simpler and easier to manage in terms of measurable outcomes; unlike development aid they are almost universally perceived as legitimate and important. Most literature on food aid suggests they are less problematic.

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83 North Korean food production failures result from a number of factors, in particular heavy reliance on industrial inputs which were severely disrupted by the cessation of support from the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. By the mid-1990s North Korea was suffering from chronic famine affecting a significant proportion of the population (Noland 2003). WFP assistance to North Korea continues to be significant (*172 2005; Anon 2005; Associated Press 2006a; Bertini, 1998; Bertini 2005b; Bourn 2007; Toy, 2006 #606; WFP 2006g).

84 Though there have been considerable problems with WFP operating in North Korea posed by the regime there – see (Bourn 2007). Medicins Sans Frontière (MSF) became the first of several NGOs to withdraw from North Korea in 1998, condemning the regime’s control over food aid resources and criticising WFP for continuing to work there (see Chapter Six for further discussion; Noland 2003, 11).

85 Other more critical analysis suggests that aid itself, even while claiming to empower and undermine poverty inducing circumstances, often is fundamentally connected to the exercise of donor power in ways which make it part of the problem (Maren 1993; 1997).
than development projects as a means of using food as aid (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; OECD 2006). Importantly, they are much more effective as a motivator for public support and donations. Intuitively, they fit the bill for a feed-the-hungry norm, while requiring a more immediate response than other forms of aid.

Bertini cites WFP’s norms as twofold:

‘nobody should be hungry’; and ‘nobody should be dependent - except children’ (Bertini 2005b).

The relationship of these two norm-statements is complex. While the first seems like a straightforward paraphrase of the feed-the-hungry norm, the second has at least two meanings which can be read as either adding to or qualifying the first.

‘Nobody should be dependent…’ can be interpreted first as a call to deploy assistance in aid for longer-term development - the notion of assistance that empowers and therefore eliminates dependency. On this reading, the twofold norms seem to equate respectively to the two elements of the emergency-development dual mandate. A second reading, however sees ‘nobody should be dependent…’ as qualifying the operation of the array of emergency and development uses to which the first statement might lead.

It is this second reading that is reflected in the record of WFP policy since the 1990s, and demonstrates how the emergency/development issue was normatively delimited and removed from being a significant political problem for WFP. First and foremost, the feed-the-hungry norm did not mean a constant competition between short-term emergency demands and longer-term more strategically desirable development work. It meant doing both, subject to the test of not creating dependency. Signifying the centrality of this approach, one senior WFP officer interviewed argued that the distinction between emergency and development work is deeply problematic, and only formally exists as part of the construction of differentiated operational categories designed to help maximise contributions from donors (*172 2005). (USAID has also identified this problem with its use of the emergency/non-emergency distinction for funding purposes - see USAID Office of Food for Peace 2005, 13–4).

In applying these norms, WFP took two approaches. First, there was an attempt to shift from an ‘either/or’ depiction of emergency relief and development. Echoing critiques of such distinctions in development literature , and in the context of refugee camps operating for extended periods, WFP sought to develop ‘an integrated approach to prevention, preparedness, relief, recovery and development’. This was done through the policy document From Crisis to Recovery (WFP 1998) and the associated development of the aid category of protracted relief and recovery operations (PRRO) (Shaw 2001, 175-6; WFP 2002, 30).

This approach was, however, largely confined to medium-term refugee situations and did not deal with other non-emergency operations. Here the problem was defined as a lack of resources for development programs. Initial attempts to narrow allocation of development resources to the poorest countries were not sufficient to alleviate concern for the future of the WFP development mandate:

86 The bulk of USAID Title II emergency funding for WFP went to PRRO designated operations in 2006 (see Appendix 11).
During the 1990s, resources for development programmes continued to decline, and there were major concerns that WFP’s dual mandate – emergencies and development – could be threatened. This was despite the fact that the CFA set targets for the development resources that at least 50 percent should be spent in LDCs [least developed countries], at least 90 percent in LIFDCs [low-income food-deficit countries] and no more than 10 percent in countries outside these categories. (WFP 2002, 29).

This led to the second approach, which was based on further focusing and narrowing the circumstances in which development work could take place. In 1999 the Executive Board adopted an ‘Enabling Development’ policy ‘designed to revitalize WFP’s development programme’ (WFP 2002, 29). The policy (at paragraphs 31-33) explained the role of WFP food aid in relation to development as follows:

31. Families facing chronic food insecurity are caught in a hunger trap. The very inadequacy and uncertainty of their food supply make it difficult for them to improve their situation. Development opportunities may exist, but poor families often cannot take advantage of them. For them, there is no long-term solution without a short-term solution.

32. This is where food aid can help. Assisting a poor household with food consumption in the short term can enable it to invest time or resources in a better future. Food aided projects should give poor people scope for their ingenuity and efforts, leveraging their access to the benefits of development. This should be the special niche of WFP food aid.

33. By some definitions, this is not “development”. Certainly, it differs from the kind of contribution that capital projects, technical assistance or structural adjustment lending can make to mainstream development. WFP food aid should play a different role, which is not to promote development in the same ways as other organizations but to enable marginalized people to be a part of it, and share in its benefits. Food aid is an enabler, a pre-investment which can free people to take up development opportunities which increase human capital or acquire assets. Whether this is called “development”, “pre-development”, “pre-investment” or something else, it fulfils a vital role in enabling millions of families to escape their hunger trap. (WFP 1999, 7).

In order to better define the ‘niche’ of WFP food aid, the policy proposed to ‘limit’ WFP development activities to five objectives:

- Enable young children and expectant and nursing mothers to meet their special nutritional and nutrition-related health needs;
- Enable poor households to invest in human capital through education and training;
- Make it possible for poor families to gain and preserve assets;
- Mitigate the effects of natural disasters, in areas vulnerable to recurring crises of this kind;
- Enable households which depend on degraded natural resources for their food security to make a shift to more sustainable livelihoods.

(WFP 1999, 16).

The evidence was clear that the WFP needs to focus on the neediest – the hungry poor – both in response to emergencies and to avoid considerable problems with displacement and economic disruption caused by poorly targeted development food aid. Two things followed from this. One was that its systems, for identifying who and where the neediest are, needed to be state-of-the-art. This led to considerable investment in a system known as Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM), linked with the Financial Management Improvement Programme and WFP Information Network Global System (FMIP/WINGS) – investment only partially covered by specific donor contributions (WFP 2002, 44). The other implication was that the WFP would not only
need to develop new projects each time a new emergency occurred, it would have to stop some existing projects, even in the face of beneficiary and recipient state protests.

This occurred most significantly in relation to Latin American and Caribbean nations. Clay notes that the number of WFP country programs in the Americas shrank in the ten years to 2001 from 24 to 11, with regional expenditure down by 39 percent (Clay 2003, 702). That this shift occurred relatively smoothly - though not without some controversy (Bertini 2005b) - suggests amongst other things the effectiveness of the managerial strategies in depoliticising reforms, and the political culture of consensus underpinned by the feed-the-hungry norm.

**Conclusion**

At the end of Bertini’s tenure, Clay argues that despite the WFP’s undoubted organisational success two important tensions had emerged. The almost complete displacement of development work with relief work led to disjunction with the WFP’s mandate which still assumed a considerable role in development work; and an increase in American donations and a decline in EU contributions were contributing to an erosion of the WFP’s ‘multilateral character’ (Clay 2003). These points are of central importance in Chapter Six which considers effectiveness as an aspect of the legitimacy of the WFP and IFAR. Before turning to effectiveness, however, we need first to consider the aspects of legitimacy concerning state and non-state actor interaction – inclusion and accountability.
CHAPTER FIVE
Inclusion and Accountability

Introduction

In the framework for analysing legitimacy proposed in Chapter One, three analytical features were proposed – inclusion, accountability and effectiveness. Having established the historical and organisational underpinnings of the international food aid regime in earlier chapters, I turn now to examining the first two of these features within the governance processes of the WFP.

The first section outlines the WFP in its contemporary form, covering its functions, organisational characteristics and the formal structuring of its rules and regulations. While in some respects the WFP may appear like an NGO in its service functions, as the following sections show, it must be understood first and foremost as an intergovernmental organisation – that is, it is state actors which are central.

The feature of inclusion is the focus of the second section. When examining inclusion as an aspect of legitimacy, it is necessary to ask to what extent and under what terms actors are included or excluded. This is addressed in terms of three groups of actors. First, the state actors represented or potentially represented on the Executive Board, and, less formally, through such processes as staff recruitment. Second, the NGOs engaged in humanitarian relief and development work with whom the WFP works, and against whom the WFP competes at times. Lastly, the beneficiaries – those at risk of hunger and malnutrition in whose interests the WFP works.

While disparities in wealth and power interfere with inclusion in predictable ways, there is little evidence that the WFP suffers from egregious exclusionary practices in a manner that poses serious problems for IFAR or the WFP’s legitimacy. However, the structuring of member-state representation through the Lists is starting to lag behind the shifting of some states into a transitional category between recipient and donor status. Non-state actors – primarily NGOs – have significant operational involvement with the WFP. However, NGO relationships, while extensive, are complex and heterogeneous. Where political differences exist between the WFP and NGOs they tend to be mediated through the member states more than by independent civil society style processes.

Inclusion of beneficiaries is more problematic due partly to their vulnerability, and partly to their lack of definition as actors (rather than subjects of aid or states) within the IFAR polity. This also raises problems for accountability —as noted in Chapter One, accountability and inclusion overlap as inclusion itself renders accountability through participation.

However, accountability involves more than just inclusion; it concerns more broadly the processes for constraining power, which connect to legitimising that power. The third section focuses on the feature of accountability, examined through three different facets. Firstly, the accountability of the secretariat to the EB (organisational accountability). Secondly, the accountability of the WFP to the beneficiaries (functional accountability). Thirdly, the accountability of the donor states within the IFAR (donor accountability).

As with the analysis of inclusion, there are no discernible egregious failures of accountability in WFP, subject to the limitations inherent to intergovernmental organisations. Indeed, the institutional constraints the IFAR imposes through the feed-
the-hungry norm provide some important accountability mechanisms in relation to the way in which wealthy states respond to the facet of global inequity represented by hunger.

1. **WFP organisational characteristics**

As noted in Chapter Two, since the start of the 1990s the WFP has been the largest of the UN operational agencies (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 220), being the second largest source (globally) of development resources after the World Bank (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 15) since 1983 (Charlton 1992, 637; WFP 2000, 12). In 2006 WFP total staff on contracts of one year or longer numbered 10,587 and ‘direct’ (operational) expenditures were US$2.9 billion (WFP 2007d). WFP presently accounts for 95 percent of multilateral food aid, and around 60 per cent of all food aid (WFP 2007d, 39).

**WFP functions and operations**

Estimates of the number of people in the world who can be classed as suffering from hunger, both in its acute form and from chronic malnutrition, vary, and change over time. The FAO is generally regarded as the most authoritative source of such estimates, and in its 2006 report State of Food Insecurity in the World gave an estimate of 854 million hungry over the period 2001-03 (FAO 2006c, 8). The WFP aims to feed these ‘hungry poor’ primarily through identifying and responding to famines and food crises with food aid – that is, aid in the form of food commodities. It provides a multilateral forum for obtaining and distributing food resources and related donations, both cash and in-kind, and logistical operational capacity to identify needs and send food resources to feed the hungry poor, mainly in emergency situations such as famines and refugee crises.

During 2006, WFP press releases began to add a paragraph at the bottom describing the organisation. The precise form of description varies a little, with some versions having the WFP feeding 61 million hungry children each year (Al-Bawaba Reporters 2006b), others putting the figure at 58 million (Al-Bawaba Reporters 2006a). The following is the most detailed of such descriptions:

> ABOUT THE WFP

The World Food Programme is the United Nations' frontline agency in the fight against hunger. As the largest humanitarian organization in the world, it feeds an average of 90 million people -- including 61 million hungry children -- every year in more than 80 countries. Working in the poorest, most remote regions of the world, WFP helps people whose lives have been affected by natural disaster and conflict as well as those, especially women and children, who suffer from hunger due to extreme poverty. WFP is funded entirely by voluntary contributions and when disaster strikes, WFP is among the first on the scene. Its food aid is often the only difference between life and death. (Giarraputo 2006)

The WFP’s regional and country-based offices and information systems help it work with both recipient and donor countries, and over its 43 years of operations it has probably been able to prevent the imminent deaths from starvation of millions. In 2003 the WFP estimated during its first forty years in operation that its food had reached 1.2 billion poor people (WFP 2006d). In particular, the WFP has made a significant reputation in logistical expertise in the context of significant relief operations in complex emergencies (Clay 2003).
Chapter Five

As noted in earlier chapters, the WFP was established with what it refers to as the ‘dual mandate’ involving development work as well as emergency relief, though there has been a significant shift in balance between those two activities since the 1980s. Food aid for development is based on using food aid as a resource for development projects. This can include, for example, school feeding programs, or using food as payment for work on infrastructure such as roads and irrigation systems (‘food for work’). In many such projects WFP works with or through relief and development NGOs (Ingram 2006; Shaw 2001; Westendorf 2006).

Apart from development projects and emergency operations (EMOPS), the WFP has two other kinds of activity. As refugee camps have developed into medium term institutions rather than purely emergency operations, the WFP has also developed Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRROs) which sit between development work and emergency relief (OECD 2006, 22). However, they are often grouped with EMOPS for the purpose of categorising the aid involved – both are defined as ‘relief’ as opposed to development (WFP 2007d, 16, Table 4). Lastly, there are Special Operations, which involve generating transport and storage infrastructure (e.g. building roads and bridges, airfields) necessary to enable the delivery of food aid.

As the figures in Appendix 8 show, the distribution of resources between these different kinds of operations has seen the relief category (emergency operations and PRRO) dominate, albeit with considerable volatility, while development project expenditures have remained relatively stable in dollar terms. The proportion of resources devoted to development projects has varied given the volatility of relief resources from a low of 7.5 percent in 2003 (when relief resources spiked in connection with the Iraq war) to a high of 13.3 percent in 2004. The most significant part of development projects in recent years has been school feeding programs, accounting for approximately half of development project expenditures.

Strategic and management objectives
Since the mid-1990s WFP has used a Strategic Planning process to order and focus its work, in particular as a management tool. Each Plan is for four years, but reviewed and revised every two years. Thus, the Strategic Plan (2004–2007) adopted in 2003 was reviewed in 2005 and became the Strategic Plan (2006–2009). In adopting the Strategic Plan in 2005, the EB

... decided that WFP should focus its operations on achieving the five Strategic Objectives:

- saving lives in crisis situations;
- protecting livelihoods in crisis situations and enhancing resilience to shocks;
- supporting improved nutritional health status of children, mothers and other vulnerable people;
- supporting access to education and reducing gender disparity in access to education and skills training; and
- strengthening the capacities of countries and regions to establish and manage food-assistance and hunger-reduction programmes;

... noted that these Strategic Objectives and the longer-term strategic direction will enable WFP to contribute to global efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and that they are within WFP’s mandate and existing policy framework;

... emphasized the importance of working in close and complementary partnership with other agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; and
... encouraged the Secretariat to work towards the following Management Objectives in order to help achieve the Strategic Objectives:

- build strong partnerships with national governments, the United Nations, bilateral donors, other organizations, particularly NGOs, and the private sector;
- be the employer of choice for competent staff committed to ending hunger;
- achieve excellence in implementing efficient and effective programmes;
- build and share knowledge on hunger to inform combined efforts to end hunger;
- provide technical and operational infrastructure services to support effective operations;
- be transparent, accountable and manage risk; and
- raise resources to meet needs.

(WFP 2005, 1–2).

These strategic and management objectives make clear some important contemporary characteristics of the WFP. It has a primary emphasis on emergency relief; an ongoing emphasis on vulnerable children and women; and, implicitly on development through school feeding programs. Interestingly there is no explicit mention of a ‘development’ objective outside the ‘Millennium Development Goals’ (MDG) appellation, where its importance seems primarily to be linked to coordination with other parts of the UN. Lastly, there is the emphasis on ‘partnerships’ with both states and non-state actors. The WFP has been typical of UN agencies in recent times in being part of two countervailing developments. On the one hand, there have been a number of attempts at improved coordination between different development and emergency relief organisations. Attempts by the UNDP in the mid-1990s to resurrect its old role as the coordinating agency for development and aid activities were resisted by UNICEF and the WFP (Murphy 2006, 290–5). New attempts to pilot better coordination structures in Africa (Natsios 2001), and in handling the Asian Tsunami through the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Jan Egeland (Egeland 2008) have been prominent in recent years, and the WFP has been involved in all such processes along with other relevant agencies.

On the other hand, various UN agencies have been working hard to establish their ‘brands’. Given their reliance on donor funding, and the need for brand recognition to underpin fundraising – whether directly from individuals and corporations, or through public support for government funding, there has been a perception that the agency brand needs to be both linked to the UN and differentiated from it. This flows through a range of levels. At the simplest is Bertini’s concern on taking over the WFP that the organization did not even have its own T-shirts or means of enabling its field staff to be easily identified (Bertini 2005b). More recently has been the hunt for celebrity ‘ambassadors’, and the care with which Hollywood films are cultivated as promotional tools (e.g. The Constant Gardener, 2005 and Blood Diamond, 2006 featured WFP promotional trailers, and prominent displays of the WFP logo on planes, trucks and other supplies within the film itself). Such branding exercises are related to the fundraising/advocacy nexus discussed further below.

**WFP Finances**

WFP operational expenditures do not all equate to cash resources. In 2005 and 2006 only 28 percent and 26.9 percent respectively of direct operational expenditures were spent on food purchases, totalling approximately half the tonnage of food aid distributed; the other half of the tonnage was made up of in-kind donations (WFP 2007d). Apart from procurement of food, the WFP spends cash on operational costs – direct and indirect. Indirect Support Costs (ISC) are used to fund its programme support and related head office operations, as distinct from Direct Support Costs (DSC), related to transport, freight, logistics, storage and distribution costs.
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The food aid resource base is notoriously uncertain, depending on commodity prices and the related variable of surplus availability, leading to a lot of volatility in resources for the WFP, and a strategic emphasis on trying to generate longer-term resource stability (WFP 2000).

The move away from a development to an emergency relief role has changed the relevance of resource stability in some ways, but in general there has been an ongoing shortage of cash with two significant effects. Firstly, a relatively small and unstable cash base has led to a longstanding leanness of HQ operations compared to other UN agencies with a basic guaranteed income from assessed state contributions (Bertini 2005b).

For example, in January 2007 the Secretariat forecast contributions of US$5.6 billion for the 2006-2007 biennium (ie, averaging US$2.8 billion per annum in each of the years), ‘split between US$5.248 billion for operational costs and US$352 million for ISC’. For the same period, the budget for Programme Support and Administration (PSA – roughly equivalent to the ISC) was US$372 million (WFP 2007c, 10). Those figures put the PSA/ISC cost ratio at approximately 6.6 percent of overall resource contributions.

On the one hand this leanness has prevented the WFP from getting beyond basic operations into policy development and forms of advocacy. On the other hand, it has helped generate considerable respect for its operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Secondly, together with the volatility of food donations and reliance on the US as principal donor, the shortage of cash has led increasingly to attempts not only to increase funding, but to diversify the sources of funding. This has led the WFP to place greater emphasis on fundraising, along with what at times can appear a problematic link between fundraising and advocacy. Consequently there has been some recent political conflict with European NGOs over competition for private sector donations. Chapter Six will explore some of the consequences of this in more detail.

The FAO Resolution establishing the WFP called for a ‘cash component of at least one-third of the total contributions’ (see Appendix 5, ‘Annex’, para 2). Accordingly, the General Regulations of the WFP since its inception have required all donations to be accompanied with sufficient cash contributions to cover the (DSC and ISC) ancillary costs (Shaw 2001, 193) – what is now termed by the WFP as Full Cost Recovery (FCR):

…FCR means that public and private donors are required to meet their contribution’s share of all associated costs, including external transport, landside transport, storage and handling (LTSH), other direct operational costs (ODOC) and indirect support costs (ISC).

…Some donors have the capacity to meet FCR; others do not. To determine whether a member state that cannot provide for FCR is eligible for special efforts and to ensure that objective criteria are applied, WFP proposes to use per capita gross national income (GNI) as the criterion. Countries eligible for assistance in meeting FCR will be least-developed countries, low-income and lower-middle income countries defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) as having a per capita GNI of US$2,975 or less …(WFP 2004c, 7).

This definition comes from a policy document adopted by the EB in 2004, which moved away from assuming donors were member-states, defined as either traditional or non-
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traditional. The policy proposed to bring all member state donations together under the public donor category, albeit with allowance for different FCR arrangements for donations from poorer countries, while establishing the new category of ‘private donor for individuals and corporations (WFP 2004c, 5). The policy stated that:

WFP aspires to raise 10 percent of its resources from private donors by 2007, with modest growth beginning in 2003–2004, seeking cash and in-kind contributions from private donors that are aligned with its priority needs and can best serve its beneficiaries. Private contributions will not be a substitute for Member State funding. (WFP 2004c, 4).

This ambitious target (equating to around US$300 million per annum) signalled the start of concerted attempts by the WFP to increase its private sector fundraising, and increased the importance of branding and associated marketing efforts.

Fundraising and Advocacy

As noted in Chapter Four, both Ingram and Bertini were suspicious of the tendency for UN organisations to construct HQ empires out of touch with the field, and introduced policies which would encourage staff mobility between the field and HQ. Under ED James Morris (2002–2007), the strict staff mobility policy of Bertini appears to have been relaxed somewhat, and there has been some growth of HQ, especially in the fundraising area, with high level staff being employed to fundraise. Budget reprioritisations in early 2007 cut operational budgets across the board by 3.5 percent and staff travel and reassignments (i.e. the funds for staff mobility) by 20 percent, largely to fund an increase of more than US$6 million (15.6 percent) to the fundraising and communications department (FD) budget. On receiving this increase, which amounted to more than 70 percent of the reallocated money, the FD became easily the largest department in Rome after the Administration Department (that is, larger than the Operations Department and the Policy and External Affairs Department). (WFP 2007c, p6-7, Table 2).

The expansion of WFP fundraising has been closely linked to its ‘advocacy’, which it sees as equating to raising awareness (implicitly in wealthy countries) of the issue of global hunger, in order to motivate and organise the fight against hunger. There is a significant gap between the number of people who as the hungry poor need assistance (852 million), and the number of people the WFP has sufficient resources to assist each year (approximately 90 million). In this context it is often difficult to separate out WFP advocacy on the issue of hunger from its concern with ‘resource mobilisation’ (or fundraising) to cover this gap. At the same time, members of the Secretariat have endeavoured to separate the two things to avoid charges of advocacy being in the interests of the WFP organisationally, rather than for the hungry poor (*177 2005).

WFP advocacy generally follows a script along the following lines:
– We need to tell the (First) World about the problem of world hunger: The phrase ‘raise awareness’ is commonly used in WFP campaigns;
– This problem is defined largely in terms of the numbers of starving people (emphasising especially numbers of children), juxtaposed with the work of the WFP in assisting them;
– When people have had their awareness of the issue of world hunger raised, they will be motivated to do something about it. Not only does the WFP raise awareness, it offers a concrete means of addressing the issue; hence one of a number of concrete

87 In 2006 private donations equated to approximately 2.1 percent of total contributions (not counting extraordinary gifts in-kind) - US$55.5m out of US$2.7b (WFP 2007d, 58).
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straightforward actions open to people concerned about hunger is to assist us in our work by donating to us.

One example of this script is the Tackle Hunger campaign linked to the 2007 Rugby World Cup, and endorsed by the International Rugby Board. On the WFP website, the Tackle Hunger homepage is headlined “RAISING AWARENESS OF WORLD HUNGER DURING THE RUGBY WORLD CUP 2007” (WFP 2007b), immediately followed by the subheading “Click to Donate Now”.

Such a script with its emphasis on garnering donations echoes the operation of many international NGOs. In this context it is not surprising that Barrett and Maxwell group the WFP with NGOs as a service organisation in their analysis of food aid (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 219ff). As will be discussed further below, the relationship of the WFP to NGOs is a complex mixture of collaboration and competition. The competitive element of the relationship hints at the WFP being akin to an NGO in some respects, which is partly why the WFP Secretariat produced a study in 2003 explaining the differences between it and NGOs when it came to the efficiency of its indirect support costs:

The study found that most donor decisions that were related to the apportionment of food aid resources between WFP and NGOs, and among NGOs, were made on programmatic and policy grounds rather than being based on a comparison of support costs. One reason for this is that WFP and NGOs are very different types of institutions—they are structured differently and therefore operate in different ways. (WFP 2003a, 3).

As the formal constitution of the WFP shows, for all the hints of an NGO style to its work, it is first and foremost an intergovernmental organisation.

WFP General Regulations and Rules

Formal governance of the WFP is codified in a single document containing the General Regulations and General Rules, along with WFP Financial Regulations and the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board (WFP 2004a). These make clear the WFP’s legal status as ‘an autonomous joint subsidiary programme of the United Nations and FAO’ (WFP 2004a, Article VIII.1, 13). It is these parent organisations through the UN General Assembly and FAO Conference respectively that made and can amend the General Regulations (WFP 2004a, Article XV, 26), though the WFP Executive Board may recommend amendments to the General Regulations ‘through the Economic and Social Council and the Council of FAO’ (WFP 2004a, 26). This process of the WFP governing body making recommendations for changes was followed in 1991 when the last major organisational changes were made.

While the Executive Board must operate within General Regulations as set by the UN and FAO, it approves its own General Rules, though they must be submitted ‘for information’ to the Economic and Social Council and the Council of FAO. (WFP 2004a, General Rule XV.1, 26). Articles VI and XIV of the General Regulations provide respectively for the EB to adopt its own Rules of Procedure, and to establish Financial Regulations. Article V of the General Regulations states that the Executive Board and the Secretariat comprise the ‘organs of WFP’ (WFP 2004a, 7). As such, they form the critical governance structures of the WFP.

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88 Each General Rule corresponds to a General Regulation, with the Rule bearing the same Roman numeral as the Regulation to which it corresponds.
Since 1996, the WFP has been governed by an Executive Board (EB), comprising 36 member-states, half elected by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and half elected by the FAO Council (WFP 2004a, Article V, 7). Article VI of the General Regulations sets out the powers and functions of the Board, broadly summarised in paragraph 1:

The Board shall, within the framework of these General Regulations, be responsible for providing intergovernmental support and specific policy direction to and supervision of the activities of WFP in accordance with the overall policy guidance of the General Assembly of the United Nations, the FAO Conference, the Economic and Social Council and the Council of FAO, and for ensuring that WFP is responsive to the needs and priorities of recipient countries. The Board will be subject to the general authority of the Economic and Social Council and the Council of FAO. (WFP 2004a, 8).

A recent review of WFP Governance articulated the EB role in terms of four interrelated frameworks: Strategy, Policy, Accountability and Oversight (WFP Governance Group 2005).

The EB meets formally three times per year for between three and five days, with many non-member states, the European Commission, and various NGOs attending as observers. In addition, the Board undertakes field trips to observe WFP operations, and engages increasingly in ‘informal consultations’ out-of-session (WFP Governance Group 2005, 13, 19, Annex IV, 31).

At its first session each year the Board elects a Bureau comprising a President, Vice-President and three other members (WFP 2004a, Rule IV, 60). The Bureau has the primary function of facilitating ‘the effective and efficient functioning of the Board’ through planning, preparation and organisation of Board meetings and ‘the promotion of dialogue’ (WFP 2004a, 61). The Vice-President position has been regarded as an important innovation, 89 created to groom the next President for a year before taking that position, and thereby assisting with succession planning.

Article VII of the General Regulations describes the ‘organization and functions’ of the Secretariat which ‘shall be headed by an Executive Director, who shall be responsible and accountable to the Board for the administration of WFP and for the implementation of WFP program, projects and other activities’ (WFP 2004a, 11). Apart from management and administration of WFP, and servicing the Board, the Executive Director (ED) is delegated specific authorities under General Rule VI.2 with regard to approving emergency and special operations under a certain size, and the revision of budgets and reallocation of resources within certain limits for other projects. Country Programs (in the form of agreements between WFP and a specific nation allocating funding and responsibilities across one or more specific projects) require EB approval. In any case, all exercise of delegated authority is reported to the EB as part of the extensive reporting it requires of the Secretariat through the ED.

89 ‘…one of the features of WFP governance admired by the secretaries of the UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA Boards when they came to Rome to observe WFP’s Board in October 2003’ (WFP Governance Group 2005, 20).
2. **Inclusion as a feature of WFP Governance**

WFP has no formal membership, although countries that participate in its various activities are often informally referred to as “Member States”. Participation in the governance of the Programme is open to any State Member of the United Nations, or Member Nation of the FAO. Any member of these organizations wishing to be elected to a seat on the governing body—the Executive Board—needs to be listed by the United Nations or FAO in one of the five, essentially geographic, electoral lists A-E … (WFP Governance Group 2005, Annex II, 22).

**Relationship of state members to the WFP**

The most important of the structures linking states to the WFP is the EB. The states which are members of the EB include a mix of donor and recipient nations, with representation defined under a distribution of seats in Appendix B to the WFP General Regulations (WFP 2004a, 30). This governance structure is based on a UN General Assembly resolution in 1993 to establish identical Executive Boards for WFP, the UN Development Program (UNDP), the UN International Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA).

Appendix A to the General Regulations (WFP 2004a, 27–9) groups the states members of the United Nations and FAO into five regional and economic ‘Lists’.

Lists A, B and C are termed ‘Developing Countries’: List A is composed of 53 African nations from which eight are elected to the EB. List B includes 54 Asian, Middle Eastern and Pacific nations from which seven are elected to the EB. List C comprises 33 Caribbean, Central and South American nations from which five are elected to the Board. There is one additional EB position rotated on a cycle of four terms through List A, List B, List A again, and List C (WFP 2004a, 30). Thus 21 of the 36 EB positions are allocated to developing countries.

Lists D and E are termed ‘Economically Developed Countries.’ List D contains 31 nations, including the richest and most developed economies, from which twelve are elected to the Board. List E contains 22 nations from central and Eastern Europe from which three are elected to the EB.

This distribution of representation was established in 1999 by resolutions of the FAO Conference (Res 6/99 of 13 November 1999) and UN General Assembly (Res. 53/223 of 23 April 1999), and is to be reviewed in 2010 (WFP 2004a, 30). Half of each List’s representation is drawn from FAO Council and half from ECOSOC, with uneven numbered List representations splitting evenly in aggregate between them.

EB members are elected for three-year terms on a staggered basis, with one-third of the Board starting their term in 1 January each year. As a result, each year there are six EB member positions up for election in ECOSOC, usually in May, and six EB member positions up for election in FAO Council, usually in November. These elections usually result in a mix of newly-elected members and re-elected members via the complex politics of such intergovernmental processes (see below).

The significance of achieving or retaining EB membership for states cannot be articulated without reference to the specific nature of the state’s relationship with the WFP. Formally, these relationships tend to be mediated through the Lists. For example, List meetings are held with the Secretariat to consult on policy issues (*172
However, the structure of the Lists does not entirely capture the three different state perspectives towards EB membership – donor, recipient and transitional.

**Donor Nations**

For the major ‘traditional’ donor nations (all of which are in List D), given the dependence of the WFP on their voluntary donations and their historical dominance of WFP governance, EB membership is an important means of, as it were, safeguarding their investment. As would seem logical, the largest and most significant IFAR donors historically (US, Canada, Japan, and Australia) have tended to maintain an EB representative position continuously. The position of many significant European donors is complicated by food aid donations being made through both national and European Union (EU) structures; within List D, the EU creates a sub-list layer of politics regarding Board representation.

The position of the UK in 2005 helps demonstrate some of the complexities of donor state representation on the EB. At the June 2005 EB Annual Session the UK was one of more than 60 member states to attend the EB Annual Session in observer capacity, as at that time it was not a member of the Board. Indeed, the UK was the only one of the P5 (five permanent members of the UN Security Council) not to be an EB member continuously in recent years. Nevertheless, at the time of the June session the UK had already been elected by ECOSOC in April 2005 to its next term as a Board representative starting from 1 January 2006 (UN Economic and Social Council 2005, 12).

Even in an observer capacity, the UK representative participated more vigorously and effectively than many Board members, reflecting the real power of being a large donor with some of the strongest policy capacity through its Department for International Development (DFID), and involvement in the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC). In addition, at that same meeting, a former EB President, and UK permanent representative to the UN agencies in Rome, Anthony Beattie was present in his capacity as chair of the WFP Governance Steering Committee. UK involvement seemed little constrained by not having the formal status of Board membership during the meeting, and would seem to demonstrate the importance of the effects of wealth and capacity together with history and organisational culture on the significance of formal EB membership.

Twenty-eight of the member states attending had between two and five in their delegations. The two largest delegations in attendance at this meeting came from List D members - the United States (16 persons) and Switzerland (8 persons). However assessing the numbers from EU members is complicated by the presence of the third largest delegation - the European Commission (7 persons) – as observers in addition to national delegations. The European Commission has an interesting status as the first ranked amongst all observers in the speaking order, and both represents a significant bloc of donors (the various European Union member states, several of which are EB members in their own right), as well as the EU which is a donor in its own right.

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90 These factors should not be overplayed as an element in decisions on which states go onto the EB; typically such decisions will be made in the form of strategic calculations by states in which WFP EB membership is used as a bargaining chip for other positions or issues in the UN system and beyond. I am not privy to the decision-making and tactics lying behind the UK’s period of non-membership of the EB, but it would seem a fair assumption that it resulted from bargaining amongst EU member states.
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The size of the American delegation was commensurate with the dominance of America in WFP funding and history. The delegation was led formally by the US Ambassador to the UN food agencies, Ambassador Tony Hall, but also playing a prominent role was the Director of the USAID Office of Food for Peace (Lauren Landis, formerly a senior executive of the NGO, Save the Children Fund).

Recipient states

Recipient states are generally keen to have a close relationship with the WFP in order to get the Secretariat’s support for extending or creating new projects that will benefit them; EB membership is seen as an important form of access and influence that facilitates this. Also, as Board membership means the WFP funds Board attendance, for poorer nations this can be of great importance in enabling access.

Some of these points are shown in a press report concerning the first-time election of a developing country to the WFP EB at the November 2006 FAO Council:

Zambia was elected to the World Food Program (WFP) executive board for the first time ever at the 131st session of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) council in Italy last week, local media reported on Friday.

This was disclosed by WFP Zambia country director David Stevenson during a press briefing here on Thursday.

Stevenson was cited by Zambia Daily Mail as saying Zambia would be at the WFP top leadership position along with 35 other countries from 2007 to 2009 following its election to the executive board.

"This is a reflection of the government of Zambia's support to WFP projects not only in Zambia but globally," he said.

The country director said Zambia would now be coordinating the functions of WFP short and long term food aid policies and providing governmental supervision and direction to the WFP management.

(Xinhua General News Service 2006)

This is not to say that complex regional, List or bilateral politics do not play a role amongst recipient countries as they do amongst donors. For example, EB positions at times are effectively ‘traded’ in the context of bilateral negotiations, as the text of this letter shows:

The Embassy of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria in Italy presents its compliments to the Embassy of the Gabonese Republic in its capacity as Chair of the Candidatures Committee for the Africa Region and has the honour to refer to the 131st Session of the Council of FAO from 20 to 25 November 2006, which will be called upon to elect six members of the WFP Executive Board for a term of office of three years.

The Embassy recalls that, at the 130th Session of the Council of FAO held in November 2005, Algeria was elected to the WFP Executive Board for a period of three years from 2006 to 2008. However, following an agreement with the Sudan, it has undertaken to resign its seat in favour of that country for the remaining period of office, that is 2007-2008. Algeria accordingly stands down in favour of the Sudan for the years 2007 and 2008.

The Embassy of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria kindly requests the Embassy of the Gabonese Republic to inform the Secretary-General of the Council of this matter and avails itself of this opportunity to renew the assurance of its highest consideration.

(FAO 2006b, 3).
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_Transitional states_

In the last decade or so a number of nations have shifted from being recipients to also being donors. This reflects various interrelated factors. First, the real advances in reducing poverty by countries such as India and China (FAO 2006c; Ravallion 2004), and shifts in agricultural production and trade diversification (FAO 2007, 129). Second, a WFP policy desire to break down the donor/recipient barrier by trying to encourage this transition (*172 2005). Third, a culture of development in which ‘graduating’ to donating food is seen as a sign of national success. For nations in this transitional category, acknowledgement of their development into donors becomes an important part of their EB membership, along with a desire to maximize agricultural export opportunities through WFP purchasing contracts.

For example, after his country won election to the WFP EB for the first time in November 2006, the Philippine Ambassador to Italy and Permanent Representative to the Food and Agriculture Organization, Philippe J. Lhuillier, saw two benefits to the Philippines from EB membership. One was participation in UN reform efforts, the other was the potential use of EB membership to generate commercial opportunities. It was the latter that attracted the most repeated, specific and concrete public explication:

“This is a significant milestone for us for two reasons. We have never been a member of the WFP Executive Board and this gives us an opportunity to sell to the WFP rather than get aid form (sic) them and the WFP Executive Board will have a strategic role to play in the ongoing reforms of the United Nations,” Lhuillier said in a report to Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo.

"Whenever people hear of WFP, they only think of emergency assistance. They never realize that it is also the world's biggest food buyer. Our Filipino food exporters can have this opportunity of selling to the WFP, products like canned sardines, dried fish, mungbeans, and even bottled water - items that are needed during an emergency,” Lhuillier noted.

…

He added that the Embassy campaigned hard for this election so that the Philippines can sell to the WFP rather than receive aid from it. (Asia Pulse 2006).

Lhuillier also stated this success was only after a four way battle for the two available List B positions in which Pakistan (30 votes) and the Philippines (29 votes) easily outpolled Iraq (12 votes) and incumbent Bangladesh (17 votes) (Asia Pulse 2006). This example demonstrates the diversity of recipient and transitional states within the developing country Lists, and how this can lead to vigorous electoral competition as well as horse-trading over EB positions.

A further example of this transitional perspective can be seen in the speech the President of Nigeria (and then Chairman of the African Union) Chief Olusegun Obasanjo gave to the EB on 10 June 2005. Chief Obasanjo commented that until recently the WFP had ‘very limited contact’ with the Nigerian government. This changed in 2004 with the visit of a High-Level WFP Mission to look at possible collaboration:

The discussion centred on the prospects for increased purchase of food commodities, technical assistance to the Nigerian Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), collaboration with the National Special Programme for Food Security (NSPSF) and technical assistance to the Federal Ministry of Education on the design of a School Feeding Programme in Nigeria. (Obasanjo 2005, 1, emphasis added).

Chief Obasanjo went on to make clear the importance to Nigeria of the WFP as a purchaser of food, noting that the ‘present disposition of WFP to source food to be used
as aid in the African region from within the region is a welcome development’ (Obasanjo 2005, 2).

Nigeria will continue to support the World Food Programme either as a donor or as supplier of agricultural produce at very attractive and competitive prices.

Let me therefore use this opportunity to urge the WFP to establish a befitting office that would drive its project in Nigeria rather than operate by proxy. We are ready to provide all possible support in this area. (Obasanjo 2005, 5).

While Nigeria has still not been elected to the Executive Board, it seems likely that it would be interested in attaining a position on it in the near future for the same reasons as the Philippines.

In terms of the feed-the-hungry norm, transitional countries are able to start exercising the moral claim of surplus production countries; the alacrity and emphasis with which they do so is a powerful testament to the projection of power associated with that particular moral claim, as much as concern for commercial benefit. For example, in the speech cited from above, President Obasanjo of Nigeria also made a strong reference to the national moral claim of food surplus countries:

I am pleased to state at this juncture that the World Food Programme (WFP) is among the few multilateral/donor agencies that have painted a good picture of Nigeria. It recognizes the efforts of the present civilian administration in providing food security and has objectively assessed and excluded Nigeria from the category of countries suffering from food deficits. In other words, Nigeria is confirmed to be producing enough basic food to meet local demand as well as producing surplus which can be sold or donated to food-deficit countries in other parts of the world. (Obasanjo 2005, 1).

A further example of the importance of this moral claim as an element in power projection is China. China in recent years has gone from being a recipient country to become the third largest global donor of food aid, though the bulk of this aid is given bilaterally (and mainly to North Korea) rather than through the WFP (Sui 2006; World Food Programme 2006).

To summarise what has been a largely structural analysis of the EB so far, the following points have been made. Against the structural majority of the developing nations, there is the dependence on the donations from the wealthiest nations; participation in the EB is easier and more effective for the wealthier states with greater policy and personnel capacity. Donor, recipient and transitional states have different kinds of interests involved in Executive Board membership; though all engage in the usual horse trading for positions, such trading does not exclude out and out competitive votes; the Lists, reflecting the donor/recipient divide, largely structure and contain political conflicts amongst states.

The structural trade-off between the financial power of the donors and the numerical power of developing nations is also reflected in the long-standing tradition of the EB operating by consensus, noted in Chapter Four. This tradition means contentious

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91 It is not, perhaps, surprising that the advent of Nigeria as a potential commercial provider of food commodities to WFP coincides with its adoption of agricultural subsidies typical of the major donor nations. ‘On assumption of office, we introduced the Buyer of Last Resort Programme to ensure that there is a guaranteed market for agricultural produce for farmers if the traditional market failed to absorb their produce. This was to eliminate market disruptions that might lead to lower income from agricultural enterprise’ (Obasanjo 2005, 5).

92 China’s use of aid is closely connected with its growing projection of power through aid assistance and trade (e.g. Zafar 2007), though its food assistance to North Korea is probably also concerned with reducing refugee flows, and other more immediate strategic concerns.
decisions are generally deferred and either dropped or modified to find broad enough support to enable consensus adoption rather than put to a vote. Nevertheless, the transitional states do not fit within the current structure of the Lists which is based on a donor/recipient bifurcation; hence the next reforms to EB structure may well try and address the issue of transitional state representation.

*The roles of people and culture*

Up to this point, the explication of WFP governance through Executive Board members has been largely structural and state-centric; a further three points concerning the interaction of structures with people and culture need to be made to round out this analysis of state inclusion.

First, Ingram, writing of the 1980s notes that WFP’s constituency was spread across several ministries in member states. In developed countries they were the overseas development department, the agriculture ministry and in some instances also the trade ministry, and foreign ministries which had oversight of UN system matters. Such a dispersed constituency was inherently weak but, worse still, the constituency was divided within itself. (Ingram 2006, 314).

While the sort of political conflicts involving the WFP that concerned Ingram have, to some extent, been left behind, there is still some relevance to his point about the diversity of the constituency when it comes to those involved in EB meetings. It does result in a particular complexity of domestic state policy making in relation to the WFP, with agricultural interests in donor countries having particular influence. Also, the mix of diplomatic, development and agricultural expertise has contributed to maintaining a culture which valorises the technical along with the political.

Second, representatives on the Board are individuals, not states. As noted above, many of these representatives may well have stronger links with their country’s agricultural ministry than with its foreign service. Ingram notes the repetition of debates on the EB resulting from a reasonably frequent turnover in delegates (Ingram 2006, 60). At the same time, these individuals typically hold a specific Permanent Representative or Ambassadorial rank position to the UN agencies in Rome, including FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) as well as the WFP. This results in a different role from jetting in from elsewhere three times a year for EB meetings (though many members of the larger delegations do so). Rather, such representatives have an opportunity to develop ongoing relationship with each other, especially those in the same List, and with members of the WFP Secretariat. Also, they will tend to interconnect the WFP with the FAO and IFAD, rather than seeing it in isolation.

The impact of such things tends to be subtle. For example, Australia is the only significant member state without a Rome-based permanent representative to the UN food agencies. On the one hand, Bertini suggests that this has meant Australia is ‘out of the loop’ to some degree (Bertini 2005b). On the other hand, the active engagement and effectiveness of the Australian representative to the OECD, based in Paris, who attended the June 2005 EB meeting as her country’s representative seemed little constrained, though perhaps limited to the most significant issues. However, it is difficult from such limited observation to assess the deeper implications of not having a Permanent Representative for building relationships with the Secretariat or other country representatives outside of List D.
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Inclusion and staffing
The third point about people and culture concerns the operation of staffing decisions. Within the UN system, the sharing of staff positions around the member states has long been seen as a proxy measure of inclusion. Periodically, states have demanded detailed reports on WFP staffing and their share of representation in it. Unlike organisations funded solely by assessments of members, voluntarily funded UN agencies do not apply quotas to staff recruitment to ensure equitable representation of member states. However they do pay some regard to such issues, as the WFP noted in a 2004 policy on the subject of staff recruitment and geographic representation (WFP 2004e, 6–7).

In the WFP, Bertini devised a methodology to manage this issue in 1998:

The need to develop and apply an objective methodology was recognized in response to concerns expressed by members of the Executive Board. The purpose of the WFP methodology is to guide the Executive Director in establishing equitable levels of representation that reflect the contributions made to the Programme and the need for diversity among international professional staff … [The ED’s methodology] is tailored to the circumstances of WFP, taking into account the major sources of funding and endeavouring to ensure that all countries receive some level of representation.

… The methodology is referred to as the “WFP Informal Formula”. It must be stressed that it is used only as guidance on staffing targets rather than to establish quotas to be filled.

… The Executive Director uses reports based on the methodology to review staffing trends and to make adjustments to maintain equitable geographical distribution and gender balance among international professional staff. The reports are not made public because to do so might imply the imposition of a quota system, which could discourage applications from the best qualified candidates, irrespective of nationality. Representatives of missions are welcome to inquire about the status of their countries in terms of the level of representation, and regularly do so.

(WFP 2004e, 4).

In summary, the Informal WFP Formula:
• provided for 60 percent of the number of international professional staff to be allocated to major donor countries and the remaining 40 percent to all other countries;
• the target number of staff per major donor country is based on their contribution percentage calculated exclusive of US contributions;
• placed a ceiling of 20 percent on the total number of international staff for the United States, regardless of its proportion of the 60 percent allocated to major donor countries; and,
• no targets are set for the remaining countries; a country is considered to be adequately represented if at least three of its nationals are members of the staff.
(WFP 2004e, 7-8).

The formula was applied to the elite international professional staff grades, rather than across total staffing, including contractors and locally appointed staff working on particular operations in the field. The international professional staff constituted approximately 9 percent of the total staff of WFP – at 31 December 2003, 979 positions (WFP 2004e) out of 10,790 (WFP 2004b, 3). Based on the formula, the US was under-represented, other major donors had a mix of over-representation, fair representation and under-representation (WFP 2004e, 12), though overall, other major donors were overrepresented. Developing countries had 39.1 percent of international professional staff, just below the 40% target (WFP 2004e, 9).
Consistent with UN policy, which relates staffing representation to contributions (assessed or donated) the focus of the formula was on donors. No explicit reference was made to recipient countries, although arguably the particular perspectives of nationals of states receiving WFP food aid would enhance the diversity of staffing in accordance with the avowed UN principles. This is in contrast to the detailed accounting for relative amounts of donation and the creation of finely tuned staff number goals for donor countries. The disparity points to the donor bias in important mechanisms for inclusion such as staffing policy – although the bias derives largely out of the political reality that the WFP depends on donations for its operation.

Since 2004, there have not been any further reports on the operation of the Informal Formula to the EB, implying its use has declined in importance or ceased. Rather, a broad-brush approach simply groups countries in their Lists rather than in terms of the amounts of donations. Lists A, B and C are assumed to represent ‘economically developing’ countries for the purpose of the UN system goal of at least 40% of international professional staff appointments for nationals of such states (WFP 2006a; 2006b; 2007a).

Staff data from 31 December 2006 suggests an increase of more than 32 percent in international professional staff employed by WFP since three years earlier, to 1,295 (WFP 2007a, 3). Staff employment distributions amongst Lists since 2000 have not changed greatly, and developing country representation was sitting at 40.4 percent (WFP 2007a, 3).

At 15.3 percent of international professional staff (WFP 2007a, 16), the US would still seem under-represented in terms of the informal formula, though still the largest single national constituency amongst staff. However, the Executive Director position has considerable more significance than any others, and this is clearly defined as American.

The Executive Director position
The US is undoubtedly a special case amongst member states due to its dominance of donations, and this is reflected most prominently in its now entrenched control of the ED position. The ED position is the most significant and powerful position in the WFP; a two-term incumbent will run the organisation for a decade.

The Executive Director is jointly appointed by the UN Secretary-General and the FAO Director-General, for a five year term. Bertini was replaced as ED by James Morris, an American national and former businessman, (2002–07). On 7 November 2006, the appointment of a new ED, Josette Sheeran, was announced, with effect from the expiry of the term of James Morris in March 2007. According to the announcement,

Kofi Annan, secretary-general of the United Nations, and Jacques Diouf, director-general of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), chose Sheeran in consultation with the WFP Executive Board.

…

Sheeran was selected from a field of nearly 80 candidates, according to a letter from Annan to WFP Executive Board President Mirza Qamar Beg of Pakistan. (McConnell 2006)

Ms Sheeran is an American, who prior to her appointment served as US Under-Secretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs. By the end of her five-year term, the ED position will have been occupied by American citizens consecutively for 20 years. There now appears to be a widespread assumption that it is on the list of UN organisations to which the US has the presumptive right to nominate
the head, though as noted in Chapter Four, Bertini was effectively the first American to run the WFP.

Sheeran’s appointment generated some controversy with critics regarding it as an example of the Bush Administration obdurately insisting on the installation of ‘their nominee’ without regard to the merit or quality of alternatives, and despite concerns about Sheeran’s past links with the controversial sect known as the Unitarian Church. Criticism was prominent in Canada and Switzerland (there were front-running alternative candidates from both countries). Some critics also noted that the leading internal WFP candidate, an American, was apparently discounted because of perceived past connections to the Clinton Administration. The State Department, on the other hand, emphasised the rigorous interviewing process and Sheeran’s breadth of experience, including recent involvement on a UN review panel. State also highlighted the fact that the appointment had been made and announced by FAO D-G Jacques Diouf and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, after consultation with incoming Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and the WFP EB (Lederer 2006; Lynch 2006; McConnell 2006; Pisik 2006; Turner 2006). Nevertheless, it would clearly be difficult for the two formal decision-makers to appoint someone other than the person nominated by the US President. It is extremely unlikely that the EB would advise them that the nominee was not appropriate in view of the importance of American and allied donations to the viability of the WFP.  

**NGOs and inclusion**

The WFP has extensive and complex relationships with NGOs. In the mid 1990s the WFP began working to more actively manage its relationship with NGOs. In 1995 Bertini instituted an annual round table meeting between the WFP and NGOs (WFP 1996), and formulated a model Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalise WFP/NGO relationships (Bertini 2005b). By 2001 at least 16 MOUs with NGOs were in place (WFP 2001b, 3).

In both 1995 and 1998 the WFP/NGO field relationships were surveyed (Borione and Comergnat 1998, 3). The 1998 survey showed a large amount of collaboration between WFP country offices and NGOs — whether local, national or international. It found that more than 1,000 NGOs were involved with WFP field activities, across a range of functions, including distribution, data collection, needs assessment, project preparation and monitoring (Borione and Comergnat 1998, 4–6). A 2001 report to the EB proposing a partnership framework for NGO relationships noted approximately 1,100 NGO collaborations (WFP 2001b). This report was generated with considerable input from NGOs, reflected in recommendations to the EB ‘put forward for consideration by WFP and its NGO partners’ (WFP 2001b, 16).

The heterogeneity of NGOs in size, scope of activity and type of collaboration with WFP makes it difficult to generalise about the nature of their participation in the polity of the IFAR, and suggests that some sort of generalised analysis based on NGOs

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93 One story I encountered in Washington in the course of my research suggested that James Morris, a significant campaign contributor for George W. Bush in 2000, had been originally slated for appointment as American Ambassador to the UN Rome agencies. According to this story, his appointment was switched with former Ohio Democrat Congressional representative Tony Hall when the UN Secretary General refused to agree to the latter’s appointment as WFP ED in view of his strong anti-abortion views. Hall’s appointment was allegedly designed to open up a Congressional Democrat vacancy in the swing state of Ohio which duly fell to the Republicans in the 2002 elections. If true, such scuttlebutt suggests there are some constraints on who the US nominee can be.
representing ‘international civil society’ is not viable. Moreover, there is some evidence that many NGOs ultimately regard their representation as stakeholders as occurring at least partly through their home states.

For example, in recent times there has been considerable criticism by European NGOs of the WFP’s move to expand its fundraising from government donations to corporate and private individual sources (WFP 2004c). European NGOs see the WFP as competing (unfairly) with them by engaging in private sector fundraising (*170 2005; *173 2005; Bredholt 2005; European Food Security Group 2005; Schenkenberg 2005), rather than sticking to governmental funding. European NGOs are also critical of the WFP’s excessive reliance on in-kind donations, and support its pursuit of broader objectives than emergency relief (European Food Security Group 2005). At the same time, as noted in Chapter Four, US NGOs are largely integrated in the domestic US food aid iron triangle. As a result, they largely favour status quo on these fronts, due to perceived risks of loss of resources if US in-kind donations were to decline, and desire to maintain their dominance over USAID development assistance.

The clear differences between European and US NGOs reflect (and contribute to) differences between the positions taken by their respective states (and trading blocs) in the IFAR and agricultural trade regime. NGOs in the IFAR polity are better understood as aligned with their states of origin, rather than joined together in a non-state actor collective. As was suggested by comments from a German NGO at the 2005 EB Annual meeting, where they disagree with actions of the WFP they ultimately expect to exert influence through political pressure on their government to withhold or constrain WFP donations (European Food Security Group 2005).

Nevertheless, it would not be accurate to view NGOs as mere ciphers of states. Some NGOs do attend EB meetings as observers; the annual roundtable meetings remain well attended (approximately 25 attended in 2004 for example (Schenkenberg 2005), and as noted above, there are attempts by the WFP to include them as partners – for example in consulting them about proposed strategic planning (European Food Security Group 2005). One of the key ways in which NGO partners are of importance to the WFP is in providing mechanisms for including beneficiaries in project design and delivery (WFP 2001b; 2003a).

**Beneficiaries and inclusion**

The beneficiaries of the WFP are generally defined as the hungry poor who benefit from food aid and are the focus of the WFP’s mission. Their inclusion in the IFAR polity generally works formally through states acting in a representational role. This is informally supplemented by NGOs and at times some other UN agencies such as UNICEF and UNHCR also playing a de facto representational role, together with the WFP’s own operational processes.

Given the primary beneficiaries are an ever-changing group, varying between regions and countries over time, and defined by their vulnerability, and a position at the end of the supply chain, direct inclusion in a political sense is difficult and hindered by technical decision making. For example, it is widely agreed that targeting of the most needy is required for effective food aid policy. But this can lead to a difference in given locales between those who subjectively wish to get food aid (i.e., be accorded beneficiary status), and the generally smaller group which, from a technical point of a view, would be appropriate beneficiaries. Also, inadequate resources constantly plague
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WFP operations, meaning there is often insufficient food aid to go to all potentially eligible beneficiaries. In that context, targeting is also linked to the rationing of scarce resources, and the WFP also announces periodic ration cuts to cope with inadequate resources. In these situations, inclusion of the hungry poor in IFAR governance, occurs largely via NGO, WFP and recipient government pleas for increased donations.

The role of recipient states is not always linked to inclusion through representation of beneficiaries. State interests in control of food aid resources can sometimes actively obstruct beneficiary inclusion in the sense of IFAR definitions. For example, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea has had a poor track record in its dealings with the WFP, consistently obstructing independent monitoring of food distribution and allocation. An External Auditor’s Report to the EB in 2007 noted that:

In 2005, we found evidence of the inadequacy of monitoring operations because of limitations imposed by DPRK authorities on WFP’s access to beneficiaries. Audit observation of two food monitoring visits at a sub-office identified procedures that adversely affect the level of assurance available over the integrity of the monitoring operation:

• The DPRK Government required advance notice of planned food monitoring visits;
• WFP monitors were not provided with unrestricted access to field operations, limiting the assurance obtained over the type of beneficiary and the quantities of food consumed; and
• Interviews were conducted by non-Korean speaking WFP staff through an interpreter in the presence of government officials.

(Bourn 2007, 15; see 16 for history of problems with monitoring going back to 1995; also Noland 2003).

As is suggested by the WFP’s awareness and work on such problems, it has provided an organisational capacity to at least partially overcome problems of beneficiary inclusion posed by state actions. The WFP has demonstrated a capacity to push and cajole governments to step back enough from sectional interests to allow it to focus assistance on appropriate beneficiaries. The EB provides an important public forum within which such problems are regularly reported, and the IFAR feed-the-hungry norm can operate to constrain the more problematic behaviours of recipient states. Ultimately, however, beneficiary inclusion occurs most significantly through institutional means – that is, through the moral claim of the hungry within the feed-the-hungry norm.

Conclusion

The above discussion on inclusion did not include all stakeholders. One group of growing importance is the Transnational Corporations (TNCs), with whom WFP is seeking increasingly to partner (Giarraputo 2006; WFP 2004c). However, as the discussion above shows, the WFP is best understood in governance terms as an intergovernmental body – the most significant constituents that form its polity are states. The variations in capacity and interest that differentiate states are probably the most significant aspects of inclusion-related legitimacy in the IFAR. Additional stakeholder relationships with non-state actors - NGOs, beneficiaries, and TNCs – are secondary to and often mediated through WFP state-members.
Examining the governance feature of accountability reveals more facets of the interrelationships of the WFP and its stakeholders. Accountability here refers to processes which constrain power, though this requires some more specific framing through definition of the attributional element of accountability (who is accountable to whom and for what – (Ross 2000, Ch3). Three accountability scenarios are framed in Table 5.1. Organisational accountability refers principally to the EB’s role in relation to accountability and oversight. Specifically this means the accountability relationship of the Secretariat (and in particular the ED) to the EB and through it, to member states of the UN and FAO. Functional accountability refers to the relationship of the WFP to beneficiaries, though this also raises a crucial question about where producers and potential beneficiaries fit into accountability. Lastly, the most powerful actors within the IFAR remain the traditional donors; any consideration of accountability within the IFAR and the WFP must consider the constraints that operate on them. Donor accountability is largely constructed through the processes of the EB and Secretariat via the operation of the feed-the-hungry norm.

<table>
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**Organisational accountability**

The Executive Board is composed of member state representatives elected by the governing bodies of the WFP’s parent organisations, the UN and the FAO. It provides the main focus of accountability for the WFP organisation – the place in which the ED reports on the work of the secretariat, and its performance in implementing the organisational mandate and achieving its mission. In practice, displeasure on the part of a donor with any particular WFP project proposal is likely to be expressed through a refusal to support it, while directing donations to other areas deemed more worthy of support (Landis 2005). In Hirschman’s well known formulation, the EB provides member states with many viable options to use voice and at least partial exit strategies (Hirschman 1970). However seeing the EB in terms of its accountability function requires consideration of structural, social and cultural factors beyond this formal description.

In structural terms, the different interests of different state members affect what they see as significant issues in the WFP’s operation, and at times leads to political conflicts on the Board. These conflicts can distract from or distort the emphases placed on
accountability of different aspects of the WFP’s operations. For example, hostility between a donor member and a recipient state member may well affect the rigour applied to oversight of project proposals and reports. Ingram cites the case of a proposal for a project in Vietnam in the 1980s which encountered considerable hostility from the US, forcing delays and modification to the original proposal before something was eventually approved (Ingram 2006, 61–4). Such structural factors complicate the operation of organisational accountability, and are an important reminder that the consensual tradition does not equate to an absence of political conflict.

Apart from such structural conflicts, other social and cultural factors also have effects on the way in which the EB constrains the ED and Secretariat. The WFP is part of a broader UN culture which, at times problematically, blurs the boundary between governing bodies and secretariats. This is because of the not uncommon transition of government EB representatives into Secretariat staff roles. At first blush, such transitions might appear logical – after all, many governing body representatives are talented and well connected in their government. They can assist in building links between the Secretariat and its member-states, and from time on the body have valuable knowledge and understanding of the organisation and its operations. On the other hand, such transitions create potential problems for accountability and pose conflicts of interest. How much is governing body oversight of the secretariat limited by the fact that some members on it are hoping to get (appropriately senior) positions in the secretariat when their term as representative is up? If you are hoping to be employed by an Executive Director, how likely are you to ask hard questions of that person about their discharge of duties?

From the other side of the coin, there has been much debate about dealing with the conflict between the political and merit principles of recruitment which has been an endemic problem for the UN: the merit principle within the UN tends to be undermined by the pressures from member states for appointing their nationals (Ingram 2006, 328–9). For example, Bertini tells of encountering several years of criticisms from a European country on the Executive Board which she ascribed to her refusal to renew the contract of a national from that country on WFP staff (Bertini 2005b). Such problems appeared to stem more from his political connections than from a generalised concern that she was doing down the member state, but again would seem to work to valorise personal or political interests over the merit principle. Also, Ingram testifies to the at times petty and personalised politics encountered from individuals who happened to represent state members (Ingram 2006).

These factors all complicate the operation of organisational accountability, though arguably none of them is unique to the WFP amongst UN agencies. Indeed, overall it is important not to overstate the extent to which accountability is reduced or compromised by such factors in the WFP. The strength of the feed-the-hungry norm as a unifying force plays a role in enabling the EB to discharge a relatively focused accountability function.

**Functional accountability**

There are three groups of interest in relation to functional accountability. The first and most significant is the individual people defined as the hungry poor to whom WFP food aid is being directed. Apart from these primary beneficiaries, there is a secondary group
of beneficiaries – those from whom the WFP procures food. The last group can be termed the potential beneficiaries. Potential beneficiaries are not currently beneficiaries, but nevertheless are at sufficient risk of malnutrition and hunger that they would have some moral claim to becoming beneficiaries if WFP had sufficient resources, either now or in the near future.

When it comes to accountability in IFAR governance, primary beneficiaries are in a different position from member states. These differences were noted above with respect to inclusion – in broad terms, beneficiaries generally depend on indirect representation through member states, together with NGO advocacy and WFP operational processes.

Unlike states, primary beneficiaries are not a fixed and legally defined group of entities. They are a mutable, changing and complex array of people sustained or assisted in varying degrees by emergency, protracted relief, and development operations in a wide number of countries and regions. On the other hand, for all this apparent nebulousness, beneficiaries are consistently described by the WFP staff as the focus of its work (*165 2005; *172 2005; *173 2005; *175 2005; *177 2005; *178 2005; *180 2005). To draw an analogy to corporations and ‘customer focus’ does not capture the strong moral element of this focus. Thus it is probably most accurate to describe functional accountability as operating through the organisation’s culture and norms – the imperative of the moral claim of the hungry is what holds WFP to its mission, and drives its operations to genuinely assist beneficiaries, albeit within terms set by the donor nations on the EB.

Secondary beneficiaries

Currently, food procured in developing countries accounts for approximately 20 percent of global food aid. WFP has historically been the largest single procurer of food aid on a global scale. From 2001 to 2004, WFP bought an average of 1.25 million [metric tonnes] of food per annum (US$263 million) in developing countries. WFP’s local purchases have also risen significantly, although they still account for only a third of its total food procurement and usually less than half of its procurement from developing countries. (WFP 2006e, 4).

Secondary beneficiaries are primarily those exercising the moral claim the IFAR feed-the-hungry norm grants producers from developing countries. However, the WFP policy on food procurement highlights the complexity of distinguishing this group from other primary and potential beneficiaries. This is because purchasing decisions by the WFP can disrupt and be damaging to agricultural markets in developing countries, due to irregular and inconsistent demands; also the driving up of prices from demand generated by WFP purchasing can lead to loss of access to food by poor people in the area (WFP 2006e, 15).

WFP notes potential trade offs between the needs of primary beneficiaries and the interests of secondary beneficiaries. This is because it is in the interests of primary beneficiaries that the quantity and quality of procured food is maximised and supply is reliable, yet local procurement may involve paying a premium or risking reduced quality or reliability of supply. If local procurement requires a price premium, for example due to seasonal variations in price, it reduces the amount that can be bought, and effectively shifts resource benefits from primary beneficiaries to secondary beneficiaries.

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94 There are also those from whom WFP purchases services, however they do not have the political significance of the food providers.
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For example, attempting to purchase directly from farmers or farm associations is logistically difficult and has proven unreliable when tried. Case studies on Burkina Faso and Uganda found that WFP’s experience of supporting farmers and farmers’ groups has had mixed results. Farmers participating in groups have benefited from higher incomes, which many have invested in improving agricultural production. In addition, some of the groups were able to invest in storage and cleaning equipment, improving their food quality and thus the returns from traders. For WFP, however, the experience has generally been negative, resulting in higher prices paid, higher administrative costs because of having more contracts to monitor, and greater risk of default. As a result of higher prices paid, direct contracting has usually led to a transfer from WFP’s beneficiaries to farmers supplying WFP, who are normally better off than WFP’s beneficiaries. (WFP 2006e, 24).

It is perhaps a measure of clarity in functional accountability that the WFP has engaged in open analysis of these problems, and states a clear ranking of primary beneficiaries ahead of secondary beneficiaries in terms of to whom it owes accountability –

WFP’s current policy is to procure food in a manner that is cost-efficient, timely and appropriate to beneficiary needs, encouraging procurement from developing countries to the extent possible. When procuring from developing country food markets, WFP’s procurement procedures aim to avoid causing negative effects on those markets, including price rises that would harm the food security of the poor. (WFP 2006e, 4).

It is in the interaction of these different objectives regarding primary and secondary beneficiaries that the interests of potential beneficiaries come into play. First, in seeking to maximise purchases through cost-efficient and timely processes, the WFP is attempting to maximise the resources it has to distribute, and thereby reach primary beneficiaries who would otherwise be relegated to potential beneficiary status. Second, in seeking to have constructive impacts on developing countries through procurement, while recognising the potential for negative impacts, the WFP is seeking to support development in ways that reduce the generation of more hunger amongst the poor, and thereby meet the needs of other potential beneficiaries.

This is not to suggest that the WFP is exempt from criticism in these areas. NGO staff sometimes argue that in the field the WFP generates dependency, and works against development by displacing local agricultural produce with imported food aid (Anon. 2005). However, to the extent they exist, such problems are often linked to the constraints on WFP operation posed by donor requirements, which brings us to the third facet of accountability under examination.

Donor state accountability

The operation of power in the IFAR has always fundamentally hinged around the traditional donor states, in particular the United States. Reflecting this, as one informant commented when asked about WFP accountability, it is perhaps too often equated as accountability to the donors (*165 2005) – an issue looked at above in the discussion on operational accountability. Yet what accountability mechanisms operate to constrain donor power?

Within the IFAR, donor power is expressed in complex ways. Most obviously, it comes in the form of control of the resources. This is reflected not only in the possibility that any actions from the WFP which threaten donor interests will result in their walking away; it is also in the form of ‘directed’ donations which effectively pick and choose which WFP work to support, and in the use of restrictions on donations (WFP 2000). These restrictions can take many forms. For example, the provision by the US of in-
kind donations mostly shipped by American flagged ships is one form; another is the Canadian requirement that a proportion of its cash donations be used to procure food from the Canadian producers (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 264, fn6). Restrictions have often been placed on donations from the European Community (OECD 2006), including, for example, a requirement to use local purchasing of commodities. While requirements for local purchasing may appear progressive, even here the exercise of power is problematic.

The WFP’s experience has shown

the importance of flexible cash resources to optimize food procurement efficiency. WFP cannot always decide where to buy. Some cash donations are accompanied by a donor’s conditions on procuring in a certain manner or area or for a particular destination, and this obligates the commodities to be procured as requested. In 2004, 23 percent of WFP purchases were made in developed countries because this was considered the best and most cost-effective procurement option. However, a further 8 percent of WFP’s total purchases were made in developed countries because the donations were tied by donors to purchases in their own countries.

Restrictions on the use of cash can lead to delays in the provision of food, and lower cost-efficiency. This can be especially true when cash is restricted exclusively to local purchases, as surpluses are not always available on local markets and procurement could lead to food price inflation, thereby reducing food access for poor households. WFP may therefore have to wait until new supplies appear on the market.

The provision of untied donor resources gives WFP the flexibility to procure food locally, regionally or internationally, in a way that optimizes cost-efficiency, timeliness and appropriateness for beneficiary needs. (WFP 2006e, 17).

Through case studies, policy debate, and sometimes pressure from NGOs or other member states, some accountability is placed on donor country behaviour. Donor states occasionally criticise each other over the problems with pursuit of their interests where it appears they conflict with the interests of beneficiaries, though this is usually in the context of conflict or competition between such states outside the IFAR. For example, the DAC Report on food aid (OECD 2006) was used to frame criticism of US in-kind donation policy at the June 2005 EB meeting by European states in the context of debates over agricultural trade policy in the Doha Round process.

Such criticism occurs as much or more within the CSSD as it does in the EB or WFP context. For example, in its 2007 report to the FAO, the CSSD reported the following exchange on cash-based versus monetised in-kind donations:

A recurring point of discussion was the issue of donations of domestically produced commodities from a government to a government of an importing country, or an intergovernmental organization or a private institution for distribution, by means of sale on the open market of the importing country (Type 2 transactions). In 2005 and 2006, all donations by the United States, except one, took this form. Several delegates repeatedly expressed concerns over this type of transaction. At the 458th meeting, the Australian delegate expressed concern about the mechanism by which a donation of 25 000 metric tonnes of wheat from the United States to Indonesia was to be monetized. He expressed the view it raised the prospect of displacing normal commercial activity within Indonesia. At the 458th and 460th meetings, the Canadian delegate responded to donations by the United States to the Philippines and Mauritania, respectively, for monetization by expressing Canada’s view that monetized food aid often displaces local agricultural production and viable commercial trade, and rarely addresses genuine

95 See also WFP (2006e, 17): ’In some countries, particularly in Africa, infrastructure weaknesses and insecurity result in trading patterns being regional rather than internally integrated. For example, sorghum in northern Ethiopia can competitively supply southern Sudan, but would be too costly to move into southern Ethiopia. Thus, regional linkages are sometimes more important to market development and food security than local food market development.’
humanitarian need. At the 458th meeting, the delegate from Canada noted that on 22 September 2005 the government of Canada increased the amount of Canadian food aid that can be purchased (i.e. cash-based food aid) in least-developed and low-income developing countries from 10 to 50 percent. The United States delegate responded that for all proposed donations, the United States conducts its usual market assessment and for all donations, a food gap has been identified. The United States agreed that efficiency is important, but that what is more important is that the food actually gets there. At the 457th meeting, he noted that as the EC has moved from in-kind to cash-based donations its total level of donations has declined. Discussions were also held over comments made by United States Trade Representative Robert Portman at a Senate Agriculture Committee hearing (21 September 2005) that there was plenty of evidence that cash-based food aid donations were prone to corruption. (FAO Committee on Commodity Problems 2007, 3-4).

In the WFP context, the most significant mechanism for donor accountability is probably the way the WFP Secretariat pushes the EB (in particular the donor and potential donor nations) to see itself as responsible to beneficiaries. At the heart of such efforts lies the feed-the-hungry norm. The WFP interest in expanding its donor base (WFP 2004c) is also a form of generating donor accountability in two senses. Firstly, if WFP dependence on the small number of traditional donors is reduced and spread amongst other nations, corporations and individuals, then this will in turn constrain the power of the traditional (and other) donors. Secondly, the call for more donors can be seen as an attempt to hold potential donors accountable for their capacity to donate.

The limits of these various ad hoc mechanisms for donor accountability are a testament to the power of donors in the IFAR. The most powerful are, by definition, the least constrained by accountability. Nevertheless, as discussed in earlier chapters, the international food aid regime has exerted some influence on American policy-making. Reform in multilateral food aid since its early days and the credibility of WFP in food aid policy circles suggest it is far more than a mere cipher for American interests, and in turn that donor power is subtly constrained and redirected institutionally through the IFAR.

Conclusion

This analysis of inclusion and accountability in the WFP and IFAR seems a little inconclusive. This is partly because these features are not absolute or simple concrete things, they are contextual and relational. Nevertheless using them to focus an analysis of the WFP has helped build a partial picture of the operation of power and legitimacy in that organisation and the wider IFAR. The picture is incomplete largely because I have not yet considered the third analytical feature of effectiveness.

Nevertheless, for all that it is incomplete, the picture so far does illustrate how the member states effectively form the polity of the WFP/IFAR, mainly through complex interactions with each other and the WFP Secretariat. Important political conflicts, for example over private fundraising, or procurement decision making are largely dealt with by state actors on the EB. NGOs are more closely aligned to their national governments than with each other in a global alliance of civil society or non-state actors. While the European NGOs do tend to operate transnationally as a bloc, this can be seen as reflecting the quasi-state existence of the European Union, demonstrated by the role of the European Commission as the one (technically) non-state actor on the EB capable of acting as a mini-polity in its own right. More convincingly, it reflects the European logic of US – European differences on agricultural trade that flow over into the food aid
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regime. Here, the European NGOs share interests and perspectives with their national governments, which happen to be grouped in a bloc contra the US.  

Engagement in partnership with the WFP by transnational corporations is a relatively new development. As with the NGOs, the path for TNCs to take when there are problems with the relationship is most likely through the most relevant member state representatives on the EB. This is because the TNC national level political relationships are much stronger and deeper than anything on offer through the WFP or UN system, within which responsiveness is built around a member state polity.

This brings us to the other important part of any picture of WFP governance – the hegemonic role of the US. On the one hand, processes of inclusion can be seen as according appropriate weight to the role of the US, for example through giving it the right to nominate the ED, and through the presence of the largest of the EB delegations. On the other hand, the collective operation of the EB, through its strong tradition of consensus decision-making does dilute American power on that body, as does the functioning of the WFP Secretariat as a powerful player within the WFP, largely independent of particular member states. The main form in which this power is exercised is over the definition and operational meanings given to the feed-the-hungry norm. As we have seen, the international regime version of this norm is for all their congruence, both different from and influential on, the American domestic variant.

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96 The impacts of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on Mexico and Canada with respect to agricultural trade and food aid have not demonstrated the potential for an equivalent North American bloc so far. This is probably due to factors such as the US dominance of that grouping, which makes comparison to Europe difficult.
CHAPTER SIX
Effectiveness

Introduction

Effectiveness as much as accountability and inclusion brings with it a connotation of legitimacy – an effective organisation is surely as much to be welcomed as an inclusive and accountable one. As noted in Chapter One, effectiveness is being treated here as a form of ‘output legitimacy’, to use Scharpf’s categorisation (Scharpf 1999). This Chapter considers the extent to which the WFP and, by extension, the IFAR can be considered effective, and hence attaining legitimacy, at least in the output sense.

As effectiveness speaks to ends more than means, embedded within the idea of effectiveness are the inherently political notions of intentions, aims and goals. Section one considers criteria against which the effectiveness of WFP can be judged, and proposes two forms of effectiveness against which it can be assessed. Relative effectiveness takes account of the nature of the organisation and its institutional context as a UN agency, and the year by year work of the WFP under its mandate. Absolute effectiveness refers to more absolute standards with reference to the problems of global hunger and poverty.

As with inclusion and accountability, the most pertinent analytical question about effectiveness is best framed as how effective, rather than simply whether effective. ‘How effective?’ has some ambiguity as a question. It can be read either as ‘to what extent effective?’, or ‘by what means effective?’ In approaching these questions, firstly, Section two considers the counter-evidence for an argument that the WFP is an effective agency in both relative and absolute senses. Specifically, this involves considering the types of criticism to which the WFP is subject, and the extent to which such criticism has substance. There has been surprisingly little direct criticism of the organisation itself, though debates over the merits of food aid do involve indirect criticism of its mandate. This implies that, in broad terms, the WFP is relatively effective as a UN agency. The latter part of this section then considers the characteristics of the WFP that have helped it to become one of the most effective UN agencies. These include the advantages of US support, its physical location, voluntary funding base, logistical expertise and use of depoliticised management strategies. These characteristics are integrated via the feed-the-hungry norm.

Section three considers the ways in which the very strengths of the WFP that have enabled it to evolve into such a respected organisation, also make it incapable of being effective in a more absolute sense. After considering conceptual approaches to the causes of global hunger, the section focuses on the WFP’s development operations and advocacy as areas in which it could potentially address global hunger more at the causal level, and details the limitations of its operations in that regard. Although it is difficult to argue that the WFP is effective in the absolute sense, it is not entirely fair to judge the WFP in such terms. When it comes to output legitimacy, the WFP’s relative effectiveness is of greatest significance.

The final section of the chapter considers the future direction of global governance in the IFAR. The continuing evolution of organisational and normative aspects of this governance will provide many opportunities for its quality to decline, and relatively few for its quality to increase. However, although there is a risk that institutional analysis of
the kind undertaken here will overstate normative and governance stability, it seems more likely than not that the characteristics of the IFAR which have led to its relative effectiveness and constrained its absolute effectiveness will remain in place for some time to come.

The issues raised in the discussion about absolute effectiveness suggest only a wider, supra-IFAR form of global governance will be capable of changing the conditions which lead to global hunger and poverty. While the aims of such broader global governance have been defined in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the achievement of effectiveness in such absolute terms continues to be elusive. The normative basis of the IFAR has been the key to its constructive engagement with the US, and ultimately its legitimacy – these aspects of the regime do not translate readily or easily to a supra-regime version of global governance that might move the MDGs beyond the aspirational to the achievable. Because of this, a gap is likely to continue between the aspirations of the MDGs and grim reality for many millions of malnourished people.

1. Effectiveness in the international food aid regime

In order to consider the effectiveness of the WFP as a feature of its form of global governance, it is necessary to first define the criteria against which its effectiveness can be assessed. In some regards, this is where effectiveness overlaps with the other analytical features of legitimacy: inclusiveness and accountability are themselves potentially criteria for effectiveness. Given that terrain has been covered already in Chapter Five, effectiveness for the purposes of this chapter is framed by considering the extent to which the WFP achieves what it has been established for.

During its life, the conception of what the WFP is for has changed. From the 1950s and 1960s, there was a view that the deployment of development resources would enable the poorer countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East to grow sufficiently to raise the living standards of their populations towards those of the developed countries. In that context, there was a view of hunger as a problem based on inadequate production of food, and resolvable through technical advice and technological development. This view accorded the FAO a prominent role in dealing with the agricultural development that was the crucial means for combating hunger.

As we have seen in Chapter Three, the FAO view that food aid had some role to play in development dovetailed with the problem of agricultural surpluses in the US, leading to the establishment of the WFP. This recognised that the Green Revolution had led to an imbalance in production in the technologically advanced Western nations, albeit with the promise that the technology worked: given appropriate development the poorer nations would themselves be able to produce sufficient food to feed their hungry. As a testament to this confidence, the WFP was established on an implicitly temporary basis – it was a necessary means to help redistribute some of the badly apportioned global food supply in the service of development; but the development itself would eliminate the need for food aid within a decade or so (FAO 1961).

There are echoes of this conceptual frame in the explosion of domestic emergency food relief organisations in the United States from the early 1980s noted in Chapter Four. A quarter of a century later, these organisations are thoroughly institutionalised, but at the
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time were seen as purely temporary responses to an ‘emergency’ situation (Poppendieck 1998, 102ff). Congress established the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) in 1983; in 1990 the T in TEFAP was changed from standing for ‘Temporary’ to standing for ‘The’ (Poppendieck 1998, 141).

The world food crisis came just over 10 years after President Kennedy had announced the ‘Decade of Development’, and was an undeniable signal that existing development approaches were insufficient or inadequate to dealing with the problem of hunger. Part of the response was to establish IFAD, as a mechanism for getting some of the OPEC wealth deployed into agricultural development. Other changes such as the creation of the IEFR and the establishment of a new WFP governing body – the CFA – with broad responsibility for food aid issues are best summed up as an increasing institutionalisation of international food aid, and important steps in the evolution of an international food aid regime.

The 1980s saw increased importance in the roles of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank in supplying finance for development (or even just state viability), albeit in return for the implementation of ‘Washington Consensus’ reforms in developing countries via ‘structural adjustment’ (Woods 2006, 47-64). It was at this point, as discussed in Chapter Four, that the WFP began to shift its organisational model from a development to a relief focus. While the 1990s saw the GATT/WTO join the other Bretton Woods institutions in establishing global neoliberal policy settings (Stiglitz 2003, Ch9), some backlash against the (by now) clear failures of 1980s policy also saw a shift into a stronger focus for the UN system on development. These shifts came together by the end of the 20th Century in the adoption by the UN of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The eight MDGs are summarised as follows:

GOAL 1 - Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger*
GOAL 2 - Achieve universal primary education
GOAL 3 - Promote gender equality and empower women
GOAL 4 - Reduce child mortality
GOAL 5 - Improve maternal health
GOAL 6 - Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
GOAL 7 - Ensure environmental sustainability
GOAL 8 - Develop a global partnership for development
(UN 2000).

*Specifically this translates to: ‘By 2015: Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day. Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger’ (UN 2000).

The MDGs originated in commitments made at the World Food Summit of 1996. However, the original Summit goal of halving global poverty and hunger by 2015 was significantly modified in 2000 by adjusting it to refer only to the proportion of the global population affected by hunger and poverty, and backdating the starting reference point from 1996 to 1990 (FAO 2006c, 8). These changes had the effect of including a period of significant growth in China, and lowered the bar a long way from the original commitments made in 1996 (Pogge 2007). As the FAO notes, thanks to population growth, the raw number of people suffering from hunger may stay the same or even increase, while the proportion of the population who are hungry declines (FAO 2006c, 8).
The WFP is most clearly connected to the first of these MDGs, though it has some explicit program emphasis on many of the others, for example through designing projects to target women in general, pregnant women, mothers and children as beneficiaries. This is documented in the WFP Mission Statement.

The WFP Mission Statement (see Appendix 6 for full statement) is a product of the Bertini period, originating in 1994. It expresses a consensual EB view of what the WFP is setting out to achieve both strategically and tactically. As noted in Chapter Five, a recommendation of the WFP Governance Group in 2000 that the Mission Statement be revised was rejected due to the conflicts this would raise in the EB.

The Statement is rather long - more than 1,000 words in full. Much of its content is concerned with articulating what constitutes effective multilateral food aid. A pertinent overview of the WFP mission, however, is expressed in the opening paragraph:

WFP is the food aid arm of the United Nations system. Food aid is one of the many instruments that can help to promote food security, which is defined as access of all people at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life. The policies governing the use of World Food Programme food aid must be oriented towards the objective of eradicating hunger and poverty. The ultimate objective of food aid should be the elimination of the need for food aid.

(WFP 2007e; for the full Mission Statement see Appendix 6).

The two halves of this paragraph neatly encapsulate the two versions of effectiveness which can be applied to the WFP – relative and absolute.

**Relative effectiveness**

The WFP is ‘the food aid arm of the UN system’ and food aid is ‘one of…many instruments’ for promoting food security. These characteristics indicate a wider institutional context within which the WFP operates, and its role as just one part of a system working for food security. In this context, its effectiveness must be understood as a relative concept. If the WFP is effective, this refers to the specific work it does within that larger context, and in relation to its own particular role. It means, implicitly, relatively effective within the UN system. As is noted later in the mission statement,

No single agency has either the resources or the capacity to deal with all the problems of hunger and underdevelopment. Hence the importance WFP attaches to collaboration with other agencies, particularly with its parent bodies, the United Nations and FAO…(WFP 2007e).

Assessment of this effectiveness occurs primarily with reference to the WFP’s operations. Thus relative effectiveness refers to the targeting of food aid, the garnering, transportation and delivery of it to (mainly) emergencies; the supplementing of this with deployment of food aid in a manner which aids social and economic development, maintaining asset bases and other important elements of improving food security. It is to such elements of operational effectiveness that much of the Mission Statement speaks. It is to such operational effectiveness that Barrett and Maxwell or Clay (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; Clay 2003) refer when they speak of the WFP as a respected and successful agency.

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97 Barrett and Maxwell list four activities of the WFP linked to the MDGs (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 129–33).
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Not all the goals of the WFP referred to in the Mission Statement are purely operational in the narrow sense of identifying the hungry poor and getting food to them in a manner consistent with a mix of short- (emergency) and long- (sustainable development) term goals of the recipient country. The Mission Statement also refers to some more broadly stated aims which legitimise functions indirectly associated with the immediate feeding of the hungry such as advocacy and fundraising:

WFP will play its part as an active member of the United Nations system to bring the issue of hunger to the centre of the international agenda. In its dialogue with recipient governments and the aid community, WFP will advocate policies, strategies and operations that directly benefit the poor and hungry. (WFP 2007e).

Apart from referring to the broader institutional context within which the WFP operates, this statement makes reference to all the analytical features of legitimacy. The dialogue referred to speaks to the inclusion of donor state aid bureaucracies, NGOs and recipient states. The aim to advocate for ‘policies, strategies and operations that directly benefit the poor and hungry speaks to the functional form of accountability (to primary and potential beneficiaries); direct benefit to the poor and hungry is implied as a concrete basis for assessing effectiveness.

Yet there are limits to the focus on the poor and hungry in the phrasing of this statement. Rather, ‘the issue of hunger’ seems itself to be the focus. This is consistent with the forms of ‘advocacy’ in which the WFP engages. Rather than seeing advocacy directly for the poor and hungry as part of its mission, the WFP tends to view advocacy in a more abstract way – here it is referred to as advocacy for ‘policies, strategies and operations’; elsewhere as ‘raising awareness of hunger’. In light of this, it could be said that the problem on which WFP advocacy is focused is cast as a normative one - the lack of attention paid by wealthy countries to the existence of ‘hunger’, rather than the hungry themselves.

As with the WFP’s avoidance of the Right to Food debate (discussed further below), this tendency to advocate for abstractions rather than people reflects the compromises necessary to maintain EB consensus. It is important not to confuse such rhetorical manoeuvres with a lack of real focus on directly benefiting the hungry poor which is strongly part of the WFP culture. Nevertheless, such a focus can itself run the risk of being too narrow. If the fundamental measure of effectiveness is limited to the provision of direct benefits to the poor and hungry this could imply a co-dependence with their ongoing presence. The second half of the Mission Statement’s opening paragraph addresses this problem.

**Absolute effectiveness**

The statement that ‘The ultimate objective of food aid should be the elimination of the need for food aid’ is first and foremost a reflection on the trap of institutionalisation embedded in too narrow a focus on relative effectiveness. Poppendieck points to the problems posed for domestic US food aid organisations, which by dint of the processes of institutionalisation have come to rely on the hungry as a part of their reason for existing (Poppendieck 1998; Riches 1997b). An important means of avoiding this trap of institutionalisation lies in not losing sight of an absolute measure of effectiveness – ‘the objective of eradicating hunger and poverty’. The first MDG reiterates this objective with a target of halving the proportion of the global population who are hungry by 2015.
Looking at effectiveness in such absolute terms can redirect our attention to some degree away from the specifics of WFP food aid operations towards the things it does to prevent hunger from remaining as a systemic global problem. Traditionally, this role has been seen as part of the WFP’s development mandate, through which the WFP seeks to attack the underdevelopment which is seen as the root cause of hunger and poverty. Although an advocacy role which highlighted and criticised the global economic systems which maintain and intensify hunger and poverty could also be defined as relevant to absolute effectiveness, and indeed is undertaken by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food (see e.g. Ziegler 2005), the WFP’s definition of advocacy is cut from a much narrower cloth as noted above.

The ways in which the WFP attempts to be effective in the wider, absolute sense are subject to significant limits which point to the compromises and constraints posed by the nature of legitimacy in the IFAR. This point will be developed in more detail in section four below.

Conclusion
The absolute/relative effectiveness distinction has tended to be codified in food aid by the development/emergency dichotomy. To use the well known rhetorical questions – is it better to give a fish to a starving man, or teach him how to fish; is it better to run an ambulance to the bottom of a cliff or build a fence? The answer from the WFP is, given that many are too hungry to lift a fishing rod, or are well past the bounds of any future fence, that the WFP must try and do both.

The development/emergency relief dichotomy both calls up real differences, for example when it is used to differentiate different kinds of WFP operations, and simplifies a more complex reality. The aid community and practitioners within the WFP, NGOs and government agencies are constantly attempting to blur the differences – to make emergency assistance as congruent with and similar to development assistance as possible; to organise operations so that they shift seamlessly from one mode to another, as noted in Chapter Four. Barrett and Maxwell argue that the greatest potential for innovative use of food aid is probably in the ‘blurry’ area between project and emergency use (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 122; also Singer 2001). Indeed, they critique an argument for the WFP to become the lead UN agency on all emergency response as such a proposal does not deal with the fuzzy boundaries and linkages between emergency operations and development projects (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 220).

Similarly, the distinction between relative and absolute effectiveness is analytically useful, but it is important not to lose sight of the complex interconnections between the two. Both are implicit elements of the WFP Mission Statement, which in its structure attempts to incorporate them in a single approach. While it might be possible to distinguish between absolute and relative efficiency analytically, they are not opposed to each other. It is their interrelationship that ultimately constructs an overall sense of the WFP’s legitimacy as it relates to its effectiveness in achieving its mission.
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2. Assessing the relative effectiveness of the WFP

We turn now to look at criticisms of the WFP and what they suggest about its effectiveness.

On the whole, the WFP seems in remarkably good standing for a UN organisation. Good standing is certainly implied by donor behaviour - as Webb notes, ‘from 1994 to 2001 the donor response to WFP’s food aid request within the United Nations consolidated appeals process was on average 85 percent, compared with only 58 percent for all other sectors combined’ (Webb 2003, 10, fn8). The leading food aid expert Edward Clay describes WFP as ‘unquestionably a success story with the UN system’ (Clay 2003, 707); a claim echoed by a range of others (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; Bertini 2005a; Clay 2003; Singer 2001), even including such UN critics as former Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer (Smiles 2008).

Nevertheless, to argue that the WFP is a relatively effective intergovernmental organisation is to suggest, if only implicitly, some comparison with other such organisations. The research undertaken for this thesis can make no legitimate claim to have undertaken serious comparative examination of agencies and organisations in the UN system. In the absence of systematic comparative study which can demonstrate an argument for relative effectiveness in positive terms, a weaker, negative demonstration of the argument is possible, based on a consideration of the extent to which there is evidence of the converse proposition – that the WFP is unsuccessful or ineffective.

In the context of extensive criticisms of the UN system, its agencies and operational failings (Bolton 2008; Esty 2002; Hancock 1989; Judt 2007; Klingebiel 1999; Maren 1997), the relative lack of serious and significant criticism of the WFP in recent years at least implies relative effectiveness. Taken together with the existence of various positive claims for effectiveness, such as Clay’s above (echoed in comments from a number of non-WFP individuals interviewed), an argument for the WFP’s relative effectiveness as a UN agency can be sustained.

The following subsection focuses on the criticisms that are or have been made of WFP, both directly and indirectly, and considering the extent to which they may invalidate any claims of its relative effectiveness.

Critique of the WFP

Criticism of the WFP can be loosely grouped into four different categories – indirect via critique of food aid; direct through failings of specific projects or field activities; that it is too close to member states (donor or recipient); or, that it competes inappropriately for funds.

The first category is implicit or indirect criticism based on a broader critique of food aid. This has taken various forms relating to the alleged benefits for rich nations, the costs to poor nations, and depending on whether it refers to development or emergency relief forms of aid.

Food aid has long been criticised for its links with disposal of rich nation surplus agricultural produce (Cathie 1982; George 1991; Rothschild 1993) and the potential for disrupting local agricultural markets and creating food aid dependency in recipients.
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(Schultz 1993; Shaw and Clay 1993, 1). These criticisms largely refer to the development uses of food aid, regarding it as an inherently limited or flawed form of development aid that is more about serving donor interests than recipient interests or the interests of hungry people. These critiques highlight the problems with food aid due to the marginal and uncertain nature of the resources involved. Food aid has been notoriously volatile (OECD 2006) and pro-cyclical - least available when stocks are low and commodity prices high, which is just when it is most needed (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; Clay 2003; OECD 2006). These characteristics tend to work against the interests of recipients and for the interests of donors, implying food aid is inherently regressive. However, these problems are most significant in relation to bilateral and development forms of food aid, and tend to be minimised by multilateral and emergency relief modes (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; OECD 2006).

Another critique of food aid is that it changes consumption patterns and increases dependency – for example by beneficiaries developing a taste for the aid commodities instead of their indigenous foods. Uvin argues that food aid forms only a small part of the systems which create tastes and consumption patterns (Uvin 1994, 171-2), and notes that the main indication that food aid has this effect comes from donor rhetoric pitched to domestic interests about the development of markets (Uvin 1992). Barrett and Maxwell discuss the record of food aid and changes in recipient consumption behaviours and conclude there is some evidence that poorly targeted food aid can have deleterious impacts by disrupting or changing local consumption patterns (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 181-2), though poor targeting again tends to be minimised by multilateral and emergency relief modes.

The view of a legitimate role for food aid in development expressed by Hopkins and Uvin in the early 1990s (Hopkins 1992; Uvin 1994) has been echoed more recently by Barrett and Maxwell and the OECD DAC. This work seems relatively convincing in that it has drawn on considerable empirical research and not hesitated to criticise food aid as problematic when not used appropriately (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; OECD 2006). In any event, the shift from development food aid to a focus on emergency relief by the WFP has largely neutralised the application of these indirect criticisms to it. In such debates on food aid, the WFP benefits both from its multilateral status in a context where criticisms tend to focus on problematic bilateral food aid programs (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 63), and from its status as an operational agency, which tends to get it put into the same category as operational relief NGOs (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 219ff).  

The use of food aid in emergency relief has generally been acknowledged as beneficial (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; OECD 2006; Uvin 1994, 172), provided that it is appropriately targeted and controlled. However, the use of food aid for emergency relief, though less controversial, has still been the subject of some criticism. Such food aid can be vulnerable to a number of problems, such as donor delays, corruption and misuse (Uvin 1994, 158–60). George, for example, argued that food aid (both development and emergency) helps ‘shore up repressive client states’ (George 1991, xiv). Similarly, de Waal argues that the development of UN relief work had led to the internationalisation of responsibility for famines, resulting in a ‘retreat from domestic accountability in famine-vulnerable countries’ (de Waal 1997, 70).

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98 The example of monetisation noted in Chapter Four shows how WFP has avoided falling into basic misuse of food aid, and hence being caught too much by generic critique of food aid practices.
Although, as Uvin argues, there might not be much clear evidence of such a structural impact of food aid on state accountability, there is considerable evidence of recipient governments using food aid to buy-off groups, such as the military or urban middle class in Bangladesh (Sen 1981, Ch9) or Sudan (Uvin 1994, 165–71; also de Waal 1997, Ch5). In the case of North Korea, Jean Ziegler and various NGOs have accused the WFP and other agencies of effective complicity with the regime by allowing food aid to be controlled and used to the benefit of the military and elite, rather than those at most risk of disease and death from starvation (Noland 2003, 7, 11).

Similarly, there is evidence of emergency relief food aid, along with other types of aid (Terry 2000), becoming a resource which is deployed by belligerents in armed conflict. For example, Maren interviewed a leader in the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), Mohamed Abshir Waldo in Nairobi in 1995. In the interview, Waldo explained why 'SSDF had turned down food aid from the UN' when they were offered it in 1992, (despite being in a region not affected by famine):

'It if 10,000 tons of food arrives it will be sold on the black market and the proceeds used to buy arms,' he said. 'It becomes an arms race. It means war. If food comes we lose our ability to control the peace and the stability of the region. Everybody will want to have a share, but that's not possible. It's been three years since there was any food aid and three years since there was the hijacking of a truck. The only trucks that are hijacked are the ones carrying food aid. No private truck with private cargo has been hijacked.' (Maren 1997, 103).

Waldo also noted the regional economy was functioning with trade and production, but food aid would have disrupted all this – for example through the nomads leaving their animals to get it. However, commenting on why, in the end food aid was accepted, he depicted a situation far removed from the normal evaluations of food aid projects:

'On the other hand, we could not say we did not want food. We wanted the food to buy arms. The donors were giving food to our enemies and they were buying arms. We did not even dare not to protest very loudly for aid because otherwise the population would say, why are we not getting our share of the food? And secondly, what do you do about the liquidity that the food will bring in, the selling of the food, realizing money, and then buying arms?

'It's like a mini arms race fueled with food. If your enemy does not buy arms you don't have to be armed yourself. Or if they rearm and get the finance and so on, then you need to rearm also, to balance. Just like the big powers were doing.'

'So we decided to minimize the damage. What we actually did - why we had peace - was to give 90 percent of the food straight to the militias. That was not what the donors intended, but the donors were giving it to our enemy. What would you do?' (Maren 1997, 104).

Maren provides further comment on the potential for negative impacts from emergency food aid on the people to whom it is distributed:

Food aid attracts people to refugee camps, where they die from dysentery or measles or other diseases they wouldn't have contracted in the bush....

...Twenty-five years ago most of the countries in Africa had indigenous methods for dealing with food shortages. Somalia in particular had a well-established system for dealing with regular cycles of drought and famine. Farmers in the river valleys built secure underground vaults where grain was stored during the fat years. When drought threatened the nomads, animals that might die anyway were exchanged for grains. Though nomads showed very little respect for farmers, they were aware that their lives might one day depend on these sedentary clans. They were therefore generous with the bounty of their herds when times were good. The result was a mutual insurance system and a truce of necessity across the land. (Maren 1997, 21).

Maren documents ways in which the application of food aid to an ‘emergency’ can expand and intensify that emergency and institutionalise conflict and dependency. He
also documents the biases within the system against recognising and mitigating these impacts. His critique applies broadly to NGOs, government and UN agencies, all of whom ignored evidence of problems:

Document after document said that the entire [Somali relief] operation was a wasteful fraud. I’d sat on a cold cement floor [at UNHCR] for two days searching through thousands of papers and not one of them was a positive independent report about people's lives being saved or of children being provided with a brighter future. Every document and confidential memo over a nine-year period concerned the politics of the relief operation, showing that everyone involved at every level knew it was a politically driven fiasco pushing Somalia to the edge of anarchy.

Yet through all of this, the UN agencies, CARE, and other NGOs stayed in Somalia. They stayed for the contracts. They stayed for the money. They were, in every sense of the word, mercenaries. (Maren 1997, 135).

This amounts to one of the most powerful indictments of the work of the WFP to be found, though it is framed only in an indirect manner, by including WFP in a wide list of culpable actors. Maren’s critique is echoed by de Waal (de Waal 1997, 159-78), who bluntly states that ‘the UN specialized agencies failed in Somalia throughout’ (de Waal 1997, 172). De Waal documents in particular the relative failures of the WFP and CARE compared to a more successful food aid operation by the International Committee of the Red Cross (de Waal 1997, 169, 174-5, 182).

The situation in Somalia in the 1980s and 1990s was complex, and it is not clear that the problems Maren and de Waal document are necessarily typical of or broadly applicable to WFP operations. The NGO criticisms of WFP’s complicity with oppressive regimes or belligerents are also made more broadly of other UN agencies and some NGOs (Terry 2000), as part of a wider debate about engagement or withdrawal characterised by complex moral and political considerations. Similarly, de Waal’s critique is part of a larger argument querying the institutionalisation of humanitarian work and its failings in terms of absolute effectiveness (relative effectiveness is less relevant to his argument as it relates to the ways in which NGOs, governments and intergovernmental organisations all operate systemically to perpetuate famines). As such, it will be considered in more detail in the next section.

These criticisms of the WFP in Somalia, while forming part of a wider critique of institutionalised emergency food aid, also fall in the second category of criticism – that of the failings of specific WFP projects or field actions. This category of criticism largely takes the form of anecdotes from the field, implying that the WFP is variously overly bureaucratic, insufficiently responsive to recipient needs, overly responsive to rich donors, unable to address the political or economic bases of malnutrition, and destructive of fragile agricultural markets or social systems in recipient countries (Anon. 2005; de Waal 1997, 174–5). Also in this category, in 1994 an evaluation sponsored by three WFP EB member-states – Canada, the Netherlands and Norway (Chr. Michelsen Institute 1994) – contributed to the shift away from development projects with criticisms of the effectiveness of a number of WFP projects (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 62; Clay 2003, 700; Shaw 2001, 245–6). Leaving aside this internal critique, it is, perhaps, only to be expected that an organisation such as the WFP will suffer from bureaucracy, insensitivity and similar faults leading to such criticism. Perhaps of more interest in the context of its relative efficiency is whether such criticisms occur frequently and with such vehemence as to suggest fundamental operational problems. They do not appear to.

The third category of criticisms relates to the WFP’s multilateral character. On the one hand, the WFP’s closeness to, even dependence on, the US as by far its most significant
donor also leads to concern about its multilateral credentials at times (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 220; Clay 2003). The IFAR is a regime in which the US has been the hegemon, though US dominance has waxed and waned to some degree since the early years of the international food aid regime in the early 1960s when the US share of world food aid was in the order of 95 percent (Hopkins 1992, 231). More generally, the WFP is criticised for being excessively oriented towards its donors, rather than its intended beneficiaries, through the control they exercise in volunteering and directing donations. While this criticism is in many ways accurate, it relates to structural characteristics of power in the IFAR, and more broadly within the global system. These structural issues relate most significantly to the systems which maintain global hunger as a problem, and hence to the WFP’s absolute effectiveness. The implications of the role of donors for WFP’s relative effectiveness are discussed further below.

On the other hand, recipient governments can be complicit in creating problems of conflict, displacement and hunger amongst their populations; well documented examples have included Ethiopia and Sudan (Clay and Holcomb 1986; de Waal 1997; Meredith 2005), North Korea (Noland 2003) or more recently Zimbabwe (Commonweal 2007). As an intergovernmental organisation and part of the UN system, the WFP works through governments and must do so ahead of concerns with actions or inaction which led to the hunger crisis, though there are some limits placed on involvements where imminent death from starvation is no longer a likelihood in accordance with wider UN policy (Bertini 2005b). As a consequence, at times NGOs have accused it of being too close to such regimes (*170 2005). Such criticisms reflect the structural difference between NGOs and intergovernmental organisations, and are of more significance to absolute rather than relative effectiveness.

The last category of criticism is that the WFP is competing inappropriately for funds. As noted in Chapter Five, this criticism has come from European NGOs who see the WFP as competing (unfairly) with them by engaging in private sector fundraising (*170 2005; *173 2005; Bredholt 2005; Schenkenberg 2005). While the fear of the NGOs is that the WFP may prove too effective in its pursuit of private sector support (and thereby crowd them out), the other side of the private fundraising coin is its distorting effect on WFP’s operations, and the prospect that the costs may outweigh the benefits. For example, the following anecdote suggests some problems with the branding and competitive aspects of fundraising:

'At 3 p.m. the first relief flight appeared over the newly-liberated airport. It was a UN World Food Programme flight: the first for weeks to arrive at Mogadishu international airport. It circled for over half an hour to give Mitchell, the WFP man on the ground, time to ensure that all the television cameras were trained on the aircraft's WFP insignia. It landed. It slowly edged its way along the tarmac. It taxied for 20 minutes. It usually takes five minutes to maneuver from the runway to the airport apron but the UN had to get its publicity just like everybody else. Mr Mitchell was heard saying with elation how he had secured more live television broadcasts for WFP than his "rival" UN agency, UNICEF.' (Mark Huband reporting for The Guardian cited in Maren 1997, 203).

More recently, in February 2005 the WFP instituted a Walk the World fundraising (and awareness raising) event, establishing a Division to organise the event. In Walk the World, on a specified day local supporters in cities around the world undertake a publicly organised walk, led by associated celebrities and ambassadors. A review in January 2007 noted that the WFP Management Plan for 2006-07 had allocated US$2.6 million to fund the costs of the 2006 Walk, ‘as an advance in the expectation that it
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would be recovered from sponsorship and the proceeds of the walk’. However, receipts
directly attributable to the 2006 walk and related events were US$1.872 million -
US$1.7 million in donations to WFP child hunger projects and US$172,000 in
sponsorship income…

… More than 60 private companies contributed cash in support of one or more local
walks, but only US$10,000 was received from corporate sponsors for overheads. (WFP
2007c, 8).

As a result of this shortfall, the WFP was forced to cover the Walk the World income
deficit of US$2.6 million from its General Fund. (WFP 2007c, 8). In other words, the
WFP spent $2.6 million to raise $1.7 million for child hunger projects, along with some
(unquantifiable) awareness. In the context of a Program Support biennial budget of
some $370 million, and overall resource deployment of $5.6 billion these amounts of
money are negligible, but it is not good for their credibility when service organisations
spend more money on fundraising than they actually raise. A critic might point to an
uncomfortable statistic not provided to the people donating whereby for every 17 cents
donated, the WFP had notionally spent 26 cents generating the donation.

In such matters, the WFP is not very different from UNICEF (which established the
model for UN private fundraising), or from many NGOs, which perceive a need to play
to a donor audience and invest in their brand so that they can garner donations. For
critics such as Maren and de Waal, the distortions to the actual humanitarian work
necessitated by these processes too often come at the cost of those meant to be
beneficiaries from the aid. On the other hand, the WFP would argue that by publicising
its work it is informing the audiences (predominantly in Western countries) about the
problem of hunger, motivating those people to do something about a problem that it
would otherwise be very easy for them to ignore. This means that the actual direct
raising of money is not necessarily the primary aim of such work. It can, for example,
help build and maintain a constituency of support for government donations to the
WFP, or government allocations to aid more generally, and may increase contributions
to or involvement with NGOs working to address the problem of hunger. Moreover,
while other UN agencies and NGOs are promoting their work and actively seeking
donations, the WFP must compete in such activities or risk losing any capacity to
broaden its funding base, which is already heavily reliant on one country.

Conclusion
Clearly the WFP is potentially or actually subject to a range of criticisms. However
many such criticisms are not unique to the organisation, but tend to be generic to other
humanitarian organisations, or other intergovernmental organisations. Also, specific
criticisms of food aid tend to be less applicable to the WFP than to other state or NGO
actors. While no organisation as big and complex as the WFP is without faults, poor
practice and error, an argument that the WFP is generally regarded with respect as a
relatively effective UN agency can be sustained. In the following subsection the
reasons for this are examined in more detail.

Factors in WFP (relative) effectiveness
To argue that the WFP is, in relative terms, successful and effective as an
intergovernmental organisation is to say that it manages and uses its resources
responsibly and accountably in attempting to achieve its mandate, and is regarded as a
credible, (and ultimately legitimate) organisation by member states and their citizenry.

99 Maren is particularly critical of Save the Children Fund (Maren 1997, Ch8).
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The following discussion examines five interrelated organisational and structural factors contributing to this effectiveness - leadership, location, focus, donor processes, and hegemonic support. The feed-the-hungry norm provides a normative core enabling these factors to interact in a fashion which ameliorates the risks to legitimacy posed by the double-edged nature of many of them.

Leadership

The role of leadership in the WFP’s effectiveness has been discussed to some extent already in Chapters Four and Five. Ingram and Bertini were both capable Executive Directors who reformed and renewed the WFP and built on its strengths. While different in many ways, each had a combination of administrative and political skills that enabled them both to oversee effective operational management, and the building of a constructive intergovernmental governance culture around the IFAR feed-the-hungry norm. Having survived a bruising struggle over FAO control under Ingram’s leadership, under Catherine Bertini the WFP became seen as an exemplar for managerial reform within the UN system. Reflecting the respect for her leadership of the WFP, Bertini was appointed Under Secretary-General for Management in the UN on completion of her second term as WFP ED in 2002. 100

Central to the effectiveness of this leadership model was its entwining of the political and administrative around the feed-the-hungry norm in a manner that emphasised technical competence, minimised corruption and, lastly, depoliticised governance. Of course, governance is a fundamentally political process; here ‘depoliticised’ refers to the absence of a layer of conflict over different state interests with only tangential relevance to the WFP mandate. Such conflict (such as competition between Cold War superpowers, or Middle Eastern states) has all too often complicated the governance of intergovernmental organisations (Talbot 1990).

The effective management of WFP governance politics, together with competent management of operational systems and an organisational focus on technical and logistical problems contributed to creating a self-image from the EB down of the WFP as that classically depoliticised entity: the service organisation.

Focus

A number of interviewees made comments on the way in which feeding hungry people is not political and lends itself to clear measurement and accountability (Bertini 2005b; *173 2005). These advantages derive much more from emergency relief than from development projects, emphasising the way in which a shift to an emergency relief emphasis fitted closely with managerial reform. The shift to an emergency relief emphasis arguably has simplified operational and management tasks, enabling them to be discharged efficiently and effectively. Also, other UN leaders apparently regard WFP as advantaged by its ‘focus’ on food and emergency relief (Bertini 2005b).

It should be noted, however, that this focus is not necessarily all advantageous. The other side of the coin to this focus is the narrowness of the resource base – food. This has also led to problems with resourcing of the work of the WFP, and limits to its attempts to maintain a development aspect to its mandate.

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100 Her tenure in that role was for only three years, and ended with Bertini expressing some frustration with the obstacles to UN reform built into its politico-bureaucratic structures (Bertini 2005a).
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*Location*

A further factor in WFP effectiveness is the location of its headquarters in Rome. A number of informants commented on the advantage the WFP has in being located in Rome, rather than New York. In their view this removed a layer of politicking from its governance which tends to be a problem for New York based UN organisations (*165 2005; *173 2005; Bertini 2005a; Bertini 2005b). In turn, this has assisted considerably in its managerial reforms and distanced the WFP from some of the morale problems afflicting other parts of the UN. The Rome location also seems to have a subtle effect undercutting expectations or perceptions of American dominance and control both on the part of the US itself, and on the part of other state and non-state actors.

Rome has not always been an advantageous location. Arguably during its battle for autonomy from FAO during the 1980s, the geographic closeness to FAO and distance from the UN in New York weakened the WFP’s position at times; however, since the resolution of that issue in 1992 the WFP has been organisationally advantaged by distance from New York.

*Donor Processes*

The donation process by which WFP garners its funding allows effective tying and directing of aid by the donors.

Tied aid can be meant in different senses. Commonly it refers to aid which requires something of the recipient agency or country to the benefit of the donor (Kanbur 2003, 6) – for example, the employment or use of donor national companies to provide aid related services (OECD 2006). A notorious example in food aid is the legislated requirement to use US national ships to transport at least 75 percent of US food aid (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, Ch5).

In a multilateral context tying can also be taken to refer to what Barrett and Maxwell call ‘earmarking’, or directing – where the precise recipient and purpose for the aid are specified when (and if) it is donated. This means donors can pick and choose to some degree which emergencies (or development projects) they will donate to and under what circumstances. The WFP’s ‘genuine’ multilateral aid – aid that is donated to it to use as a multilateral organisation without specific member-state strings attached – is relatively small. Barrett and Maxwell estimate that the proportion of WFP resources not earmarked has now fallen to 20 percent (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 64, Fig.3.2), although this ‘bilateralisation’ through WFP has operated in some form for many years (Ingram 2005b; Uvin 1994).

Assessing the extent to which donations are directed is complicated by the difference between pledged amounts of aid and actual amounts when adding in additional emergency aid provision. For example, US pledges amounted to $200 million in 2005, of which an estimated $40 million was not directed, but the actual provision was in the region of $1 billion when other emergency funding (all directed, in the sense that it is allocated for a specific purpose) is added in (Landis 2005).

While bilateralisation is seen as a problem by the WFP, and would appear to undermine its multilateral nature and capacity, it also results in relatively high levels of donor satisfaction with the WFP, and arguably could be said to strengthen its capacity in other ways. For example, the wealthy donor nations (grouped in List D) are generally positive about the WFP, regard it as relatively accountable, and are not engaged in power struggles with the numerically larger numbers of recipient nations on the EB.
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The significance of this can be seen in the centrality Bertini gives to instituting donations as the basis for UN resources as an essential element of UN reform (Bertini 2005a), though, as noted in Chapter Five, it also leads to some criticism of the WFP as being more oriented to accountability to donors than to recipients.

Also, it should be noted that the dynamics of donor control are complicated by the capacity of the WFP secretariat to work up proposals for projects with one or more recipient countries, lobby for support amongst EB member-states (and NGOs who it may well contract with to deliver the aid), and put forward a proposal at the Board. The Board dynamics are such that donors are usually reluctant to be seen to be opposing well-prepared project proposals, and it would be a mistake to equate donor power with control over WFP activities.

These comments on donor processes illustrate the interactions between the posited legitimacy features of accountability, inclusion and effectiveness, and underline the need for care in assuming the distinctions between them are of more than limited analytical use.

Hegemonic support

Pre-eminent amongst the wealthy donor countries is the US, which has never provided less than one third of WFP resources, and in recent years has provided around half – that is, as much as the rest of the world put together (Refer Appendix 9). The convention of the US nominating the Executive Director has been noted in Chapter Five. Strong US support has been crucial to resourcing the WFP at levels that have enabled it to be effective. Simply put, without this support, the WFP would be a shadow of itself – a relatively insignificant organisation whose worth would almost certainly be under question.

Clay and the WFP itself (Clay 2003; WFP 2004c) suggest that this American dominance poses risks for the WFP by diminishing its multilateral credentials. Also, though more within the international trade regime than the IFAR, there is considerable criticism of US agricultural protection and links with its food aid policies (Clapp 2004). At the 2005 EB Annual meeting these criticisms spilled over into the most significant debate and controversy of the meeting.

In the draft strategic plan under discussion at this meeting, the WFP Secretariat flagged the Doha Round agricultural trade reform debate as potentially involving a risk to food aid resources. From an EU perspective (Clapp 2004), US bilateral concessional grants and export credits (which the US classifies as food aid) are disruptive to free trade in agriculture. From the US perspective, the EU position on reducing US agricultural trade protections amounted to an attack on food aid and therefore ultimately on the world’s hungry poor. This reflects the view of the domestic US food aid lobby which sees the whole food aid apparatus as built on a coalition of interests and support, and being placed at risk if any part of it – such as export credits, or the use predominantly of in-kind aid, or monetisation – is removed (Zeigler 2005). At the meeting, the EU response was a blunt rejection of any strategic plan containing a statement that agricultural trade reform posed a risk to food aid. In turn, the US delegation insisted that it was a true statement of a risk and could not be deleted. The compromise outcome brokered by the (Danish) EB President was to acknowledge it simply as the view of the Executive Director.
The complexity of the US relationship with the WFP is reflected in decision making about projects involving recipients about which there are US sensitivities. Thus, one the one hand Uvin noted a tendency of ‘[c]ertain donors, and especially the US’ to use the pledging process to ‘delay or block food aid for particular countries or projects - even if they have formally approved these uses of food aid in the CFA’. Yet Uvin also noted ‘on the other hand, all through the 1980s, the WFP has given food aid to countries such as Cuba, Vietnam, Nicaragua and Iran, against explicit US desires’ (Uvin 1994, 149).

Consistent with the expression of such desires, there has been a history of periodic American criticism, at least within the EB, over WFP emphasis and direction undercutting any charge of WFP being a mere client of or cipher for the US (Bertini 2005b; Hopkins 1990, 186ff; Ingram 2005b; Landis 2005). The experiences of Bertini and Ingram also suggest that it is important not to overestimate the coherence and co-ordination of American policy in relation to food aid, beyond a strong Congressional constituency for it in domestic, bilateral and multilateral forms. On balance, notwithstanding concerns about the potential for American dominance to undermine its multilateral credentials, there is a general perception that the WFP does good work and helps deploy US resources constructively.

**Conclusion**

Many of the factors that contribute to the WFP’s relative effectiveness are double edged. The WFP’s focus can also be viewed as a narrow and limited approach; its strong US support can also be seen as dependence on a single resource; donor direction of resources can be seen as further display of donor power and politicisation of multilateral assistance. Its location can be isolating as well as insulating. The WFP’s relative effectiveness can therefore appear as occurring almost in spite of its organisational characteristics, as well as because of them. The most significant criticisms of the WFP point to precisely the negative implications of these characteristics.

Given this, the WFP’s relative effectiveness must be seen as contingent and historical; more a conjunction of circumstances than the result of a careful plan originating in the early 1960s. Consistent with this, Clay attributes WFP success primarily to its adaptability and piecemeal and ad hoc reforms rather than to any ‘grand design’ (Clay 2003, 707).

Nevertheless, Clay emphasises the risks posed to the organisation by two important tensions: an increase in American donations and decline in EU contributions leading to an erosion of WFP’s ‘multilateral character’; and the almost complete displacement of development work with relief work leading to a disjunction with WFP’s mandate which still assumes a considerable role in development work. It is to the implications of these tensions as the source of significant limits to WFP effectiveness in a more absolute sense that we now turn.
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3. Limitations of WFP effectiveness

...Worldwide 850 million people around the world continue to suffer from chronic hunger and the number is actually rising by 4 million a year. That is hard to understand, especially when our planet is wealthier than ever, and produces more than enough food to feed everyone.

James Morris, WFP Executive Director, 2 November 2006 (World Food Programme 2006).

The WFP enjoys relatively high levels of legitimacy in its exercise of global governance. It is respected as capably undertaking worthwhile work. There is no doubt that the WFP has fed starving people facing death and disease in their millions over the course of its history. If US food aid policy has been regressive in many instances, and remains so in some of its uses, the WFP has given at least a proportion of it a more progressive role. Critiques of the WFP being dominated by the US or providing food aid in ways which sometimes undermine development, for all that they have elements of truth to them, tend to be rendered carping by its achievements.

Yet, while the proportion of the global population suffering hunger or malnutrition has declined from 20 percent to 17 percent in the last twenty years (FAO 2006c, 8), in raw numbers the trend in that time has not been encouraging:

The number of undernourished people in the developing world declined from 960 million in 1969–71 to 830 million in 2002–04, but almost all of the decline occurred before 1990–92, and, in fact, the number rose from 1995–97 to 2002–04... In the period 1990–92 to 2001–03, the only significant progress towards reducing the number of undernourished people was concentrated in very few, but populous, countries and subregions: China, Southeast Asia and South America... (FAO 2007, 130).

Indeed, the FAO has estimated that the severe increases in food prices from 2007 are likely to add 50 million to the global aggregate of the hungry poor (FAO 2008). As with the related issue of global poverty, much of the decrease in proportional terms of the hungry poor can be attributed to economic growth and development in Asia, in particular India and China. Africa, and in particular sub-Saharan Africa, has seen increases in hunger and poverty during the period since the 1980s (FAO 2007; Meredith 2005).

On current measures, it is difficult to point with any confidence to any significant improvement in the numbers of people suffering chronic or acute hunger at the global level, even before adding in the growing impact of climate change (Pauchari 2007). Thus, apart from the substantive work the WFP does in alleviating human suffering, and its valiant attempts to keep operating with some longer term development projects despite the overwhelming demand for emergency relief, questions remain over the extent to which it is providing more than stop-gap assistance.

Barrett and Maxwell comment that ‘[f]ood aid, almost by definition, addresses acute symptoms of poverty and food insecurity, it rarely tackles underlying causes. Indeed, food aid may, in some cases, contribute to them’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 114). As this implies, any consideration of WFP effectiveness in the absolute sense must start with clarifying how to conceptualise the nature of global hunger (and poverty) and their underlying causes.
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**Conceptualising global hunger**
The most well known and influential mode of thinking about hunger and starvation until the 1980s was Malthusianism (Barrett and Maxwell 2005; de Waal 1997; George 1979; Sen 1981; Uvin 1994) derived from the works of the late 18th and early 19th Century English economist Malthus (Malthus 1992). Malthus argued that hunger and famine resulted when the human population exceeded the food production capacity of a society’s agriculture, and predicted periodic famines as inevitable processes which would cull the numbers of people when they became excessive. In a Malthusian analysis, hunger is principally a problem of insufficient supply of food, generally linked to failures in production, or possibly failure to control population growth. In its simplest and most compelling form, the neo-Malthusian conceptualisation of hunger is based on the proposition that people starve when there is not enough food.

In the period following the Second World War, this conceptualisation, linked to undeniable differences in national agricultural production capacities, led to the technical focus of the FAO on addressing hunger through focusing on improvements in agriculture. Uvin (1994, 75ff) points out the co-existence of neo-Malthusian thinking with a more political notion linking hunger to poverty in much of the proceedings of the Hot Springs Conference in 1943 and the 1974 World Food Conference (see also Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 108).

The Green Revolution of the 1960s in agricultural production (Fogel 2004; George 1979; Sen 1981) was inspired by the prospect of resolving such supply problems more or less permanently, and indeed it is generally taken as having succeeded. Since at least the 1960s, the global food supply has exceeded the food needs of the planet’s population, and increases in production have more than kept pace with growth in population (Fogel 2004). However, there is some debate over the environmental sustainability of Green Revolution technologies given their reliance on fertilisation and pesticides (George 1979; Patel 2007). Also, the capital intensive nature of the technologies has played a role in generating debt amongst poor farmers, contributing to poverty and other poverty-and-hunger-linked shifts such as urban migration and changes from subsistence and domestic food production to growth of export crops (Patel 2007).

Neo-Malthusianism continues to be influential in food aid policy because of the temptation to view hunger and starvation as related to global level distribution failures linked to problems with regional level supply of food – a view implicit in much emergency food relief, if only reflecting operational experiences.

Sen describes this neo-Malthusian mode of thinking deployed to analyse famine as *food availability decline* (FAD), and regards it as dangerously misleading and narrow in the analysis and explanation of famines. As he shows, ‘some of the worst famines have taken place with no significant decline in food availability per head’ (Sen 1981, 7). This is because a sudden collapse of access can occur for a section of a community, even against a rising trend for the community overall (Sen 1981, 43). Sen’s studies of famines in Bengal (1943), Ethiopia (1974), the Sahel region of Africa (1972), and Bangladesh (1974) showed the insufficiency of the FAD analysis:

> Even in those cases in which a famine is accompanied by a reduction in the amount of food available per head, the causal mechanism precipitating starvation has to bring in many variables other than the general availability of food...The FAD approach gives little clue to the causal mechanism of starvation, since it does not go into the *relationship* of people to food.” (Sen 1981, p154, emphasis in original).
Sen’s 1981 essay, which ‘revolutionized’ the analysis of hunger and food insecurity (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 108), proposes that rather than FAD, analysis be based on the concept of exchange entitlement. This could be applied to individuals and groups (such as occupational categories, e.g. rural labourers), and focuses on analysing the resources, whether in the form of capital, assets or labour that given subjects control, and their capacity to exchange them for access to food (Sen 1981, Ch5).

Sen is careful to distinguish the entitlement approach from a focus on income. Income gives only a partial picture of entitlements:

People died because they didn't have the income to buy food, but how come they didn't have the income? What they can earn depends on what they can sell and at what price, and starting off with incomes leaves out that part of the entitlement picture. (Sen 1981, 155–6).

Also, Sen notes examples of food being exported from an affected region in famine, such as the 19th Century Irish famine, and the Wollo (Ethiopia) and Bangladesh famines of the 1970s (Sen 1981, 161). These examples are echoed more recently in people dying of starvation in Brazil while soy beans grown locally are exported to feed intensively farmed poultry in Europe (Uvin 1994, 91, fn103; Wagenhofer 2005). McGovern notes another example from Peru –

…although large numbers of Peruvians suffer from protein deficiencies, much of the fish caught in Peru's rich Pacific waters goes to North America for pet food. Why? Because American pet owners can pay higher prices to feed their dogs and cats than Peruvian parents can pay to feed their children. (McGovern 2001, 150–1).

These are not examples of market failure, they are examples of market functioning:

Viewed from the entitlement angle, there is nothing extraordinary in the market mechanism taking food away from famine-stricken areas to elsewhere. Market demands are not reflections of biological needs or psychological desires, but choices based on exchange entitlement relations. If one doesn't have much to exchange, one can't demand very much, and may thus lose out in competition with others whose needs may be a good deal less acute, but whose entitlements are stronger. (Sen 1981, 161).

Echoing this analysis, Poppendieck notes that in the 1930s Depression in America the ‘contrast of overproduction and underconsumption was given a name: It was called “the paradox of want amid plenty” or “the paradox of scarcity and abundance” or simply “the paradox”’ (Poppendieck 1986, xii). But Poppendieck questions the appropriateness of the term:

Technically, a paradox is a statement that contains a contradiction or a statement that seems false but is in fact true. In common usage, it carries connotations of absurdity and abnormality. But the so-called paradox that evoked federal food assistance was not, in fact, a paradox; it was the normal, predictable working of the economy rendered extreme by the Depression. The American economy regularly has the capacity to produce goods and services that poor people cannot afford to buy but need or would like to own. Goods are distributed on the basis of purchasing power, not on the basis of need, and many human needs and desires go unfulfilled not because society is unable to produce the goods and services to satisfy them, but because the distribution of income does not permit those in need to purchase what they could use. (Poppendieck 1986, xiii).

It is only through neo-Malthusian assumptions that starvation amidst plenty seems paradoxical. An exchange entitlement analysis shows it to be, unfortunately, quite unsurprising.

Poppendieck documents how the responses to ‘the paradox’ in 1930s America resulted in a focus on dealing with the overproduction part of the paradox, and left in place the political economy that allowed widespread hunger to continue to occur. Implicitly, if
production was controlled and prices stabilised so that no further destruction of surplus commodities was required, this would resolve the paradox, even while large numbers of hungry people remained a part of the society. Thus the food assistance programs of both the Hoover and Roosevelt administrations were addressed ‘to the paradox, rather than to the simple hunger of the poor people or the nutritional inadequacy of their diets’ (Poppendieck 1986, xiii). This example suggests that food aid is limited to symptomatic relief when constructed with as much an eye on the moral claim of producers as the moral claims of the hungry. More than that, though, it raises the possibility that food aid is a political strategy that props up a fundamentally inequitable system of economic relations that makes hunger an inevitable function of inequality.

The problem in the IFAR context, as Uvin poses it, is that linking hunger to poverty is a political proposition difficult for intergovernmental organisations to pursue:

The Malthusian principle, on the other hand, is easy to understand to [sic] most of the experts that man the development community: engineers, agronomists, economists, medical doctors and the like. It allows them and the institutions they work for to do research and consulting funded by the many international development agencies, while being politically neutral, not offending the sensibilities of elites and governments in donor or recipient countries. (Uvin 1994, 79).

These comments suggest a particular context for the WFP strategy of technical, non-political management. It may have brought relatively high organisational effectiveness, and even in some senses enhanced inclusion and accountability, but has it been at the cost of effectiveness in more absolute terms? After all, although the WFP now has a heavy emphasis on emergency relief and recovery operations, some 90 percent of global hunger is chronic rather than stemming from emergency situations such as war or famine (WFP 2004d, 4). To answer this question it is necessary to examine the efforts of the WFP to address global hunger at a causal rather than symptomatic level.

The WFP and the causes of global hunger

Two aspects of WFP work could be said to create some opportunity to try to take on the problem of global hunger and poverty at a causal, rather than symptomatic level: the development part of the dual mandate; and the role of advocacy. Both these elements of WFP’s work are delimited by practical and political boundaries to the point that it is probably not capable of having a wider impact on the absolute measures of the number of hungry poor at the global level. In fact, even if boosting the development or advocacy elements of WFP operations were possible, such change would most probably be counterproductive in terms of its relative effectiveness, as the discussion below outlines. This reflects the fact that these limitations are inherent to the normative underpinnings of global governance in the IFAR.

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101 This argument is made at some risk of oversimplifying complex developments in the conceptualising of chronic hunger and malnutrition (which is far from being only about famine). Barrett and Maxwell note the centrality of ‘food security’ as a means of addressing the problem, which combines elements of availability and access, while ‘[f]urther refinements in the late 1980s and 1990s added the issue of utilization of food as well, creating the availability-access-utilization triad most popularly used today in policy discussions of food aid.” (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 110); see also USAID Office of Food for Peace 2005). Also, concepts such as risk, vulnerability, and coping mechanisms are now prominent in literature on food and livelihood security (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 110). Interestingly, Poppendieck suggests that in the late 1980s, domestic food aid advocates in the US adopted the food security concept from the international discourse (Poppendieck 1998, 79).
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The WFP development mandate

As noted earlier, the proportion of WFP operations devoted to development rather than emergency work is now very small, albeit with the proviso that the distinctions between the two are blurred as much as possible (Russo, Luzot et al. 2005, 5). The blurring of the distinctions largely refers to the operation of the WFP Enabling Development Policy (Russo, Luzot et al. 2005; WFP 1999; 2002) on emergency assistance which requires it to be structured as much as possible to, if not support development, at least to minimise negative longer-term effects such as dependency and loss of self-supporting skills or assets. A two year external evaluation of the EDP\(^{102}\) found that it had succeeded in making the WFP’s emergency and recovery operations more relevant to beneficiaries (Russo, Luzot et al. 2005, 40), largely achieving the overarching goal of the policy – to enable ‘marginalised people to take part in the development process and to benefit from it’ (Russo, Luzot et al. 2005, 44).

The philosophy underpinning the EDP draws on much deeper appreciation of the humanity of the beneficiaries than a simple FAD, technocratic approach would suggest. Its adoption resulted, in part, from the Tripartite Evaluation of the WFP in the early 1990s (Chr. Michelsen Institute 1994). This report, in criticising WFP effectiveness in development projects had implicitly raised a question about the dual mandate. However, far from concluding that development activities should be phased out from WFP activities, the Tripartite Evaluation was of the opinion that, for compelling equity reasons, WFP was to “maintain some level of development activities if it improves its performance”. Though an external document to the WFP system, the Tripartite Evaluation Report was taken very seriously by WFP’s Executive Board and its management endeavoured to implement its recommendations, amongst others through the Country Programme system and in large measure through the EDP. (Russo, Luzot et al. 2005, 7, emphasis in original).

The WFP development mandate refers to the use of food aid not just to feed hungry people in an immediate sense, but as a resource to help development which will enable the beneficiaries to improve their chances of avoiding hunger and malnutrition in the future. This can be done through human resource development projects such as maternal and child nutrition, or school feeding; alternatively there are projects which aim to provide a safety net protecting assets (for example, enabling poor rural families to avoid having to sell livestock to get money for food), or food for work projects supporting the building of public infrastructure such as roads through providing food in return for labour.

The evidence is mixed on the efficacy of using food aid in such projects to achieve longer-term development aims which could be said to contribute to longer-term systemic reductions in poverty and hunger.

Barrett and Maxwell comment that, in general, food-based safety nets ‘really only protect food security and nutritional status (or other assets) in the short term... safety nets are not themselves investments in households’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 128). On the other hand, there is some evidentiary support for maternal and child health supplementary feeding programs resulting in ‘long-term investment in human capital accumulation’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 129). With specific reference to WFP

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\(^{102}\) Sponsored by seven different donor states – US, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Italy – and conducted by a consortium of NGO research organisations 2003–05 (Russo, Luzot et al. 2005).
projects, the EDP Evaluation found that the

Evidence on results for strategic objective 1 (*to enable young children and expectant and nursing mothers to meet their special nutritional and nutrition-related health needs*) was less convincing. In practice, food seems to have played a more important role as an incentive to attend health services than as food in its own right. (Russo, Luzot et al. 2005, 40).

This finding hints at the complexity of assessing and evaluating the effects of such projects.

When it comes to food for education (as school feeding projects are described), there is some evidence of positive outcomes, but

school feeding may not always address the limiting factors, especially the quality of education. There are also questions about whether food is the appropriate resource. Similar cash-based programs in Latin America have achieved the same goals, with recipients expressing a preference for cash over food resources (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 130-1).

Again, the EDP Evaluation of WFP projects in this area was not unequivocally positive. On the one hand,

Results were particularly positive for school feeding projects which consistently showed an increased level of attendance, whilst lower repetition rates and increased attention during lessons were also reported. Particularly encouraging are the increased school enrolments by girls... (Russo, Luzot et al. 2005, 40).

On the other hand,

Increased school attendance levels have rarely reflected increased quality of the education systems, and the potential benefits of food aid assistance in school feeding projects have therefore not always been fully exploited. (Russo, Luzot et al. 2005, 41).

This latter point raises a significant problem for the WFP in development work. As Barrett and Maxwell note, it is ‘the only UN agency with both humanitarian and developmental mandates but essentially a single resource: food’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 220). It is this narrowness in its resource base that appears to be the most significant impediment to the WFP’s capacity to run larger scale, credible development projects. Most credible evaluations of food aid consistently point to its problematic nature when used for development work outside of relatively narrow boundaries, while regarding it as genuinely positive when used for emergency relief. Barrett and Maxwell thoroughly survey empirical studies of food aid and conclude that ‘food aid is probably overused as a tool for development, although there are some roles in which food aid can be a useful resource to support development efforts’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 129).

The evaluation of the EDP, while pointing to some successes with development projects, also consistently referred to chronic problems with the level and reliability of cash resourcing to support projects, noting that cash resources needed to be proportionally greater in development projects than in emergency or recovery operations (Russo, Luzot et al. 2005, 36, 39).

In view of the mixed and uncertain outcomes documented in evaluation of development food aid, it is difficult to see how any significant expansion of the WFP’s development work would actually enhance its effectiveness in an absolute sense, even if it were possible in the face of donor non-interest. This raises the question of why the WFP persists in attempting to maintain the development part of its dual mandate, given ‘some degree of reluctance on the use of food aid in a development context is common to a large number of donors’ (Russo, Luzot et al. 2005, 7), and the strategic benefits of a simpler focus on emergency relief operations.
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Politics of the WFP dual mandate
The building of political consensus between the Member states in the EB and the Secretariat has revolved around the construction of a compromise over different ways of interpreting the feed-the-hungry norm. The delicacy of this compromise is hinted at by the concerns noted in Chapter Five that if the EB adopted the Governance Group recommendation to revise the Mission Statement it would create dissension and conflict in the EB. It is in the Mission Statement that the compromises in how to interpret the feed-the-hungry norm are apparent.

Two interpretations of the norm are held in tension via the dual mandate. The first is a literal reading – feeding hungry people in an immediate sense. The second is a more symbolic reading of doing what can be done to attack the systemic causes of hunger – this is the reading on which the agenda for development food aid is largely based.\(^{103}\)

The political support for the symbolic reading stems from a mix of different sources.

Partly it can be ascribed to recipient nations and some NGOs, seeking to maximise the amount of resources in aid, if only through maximising the routes by which the aid can arrive. Partly it derives from WFP’s history as a development agency and institutional inertia. Partly it derives from human motivation to get beyond bandaid solutions: a theme which emerged from interviews with organisational personnel was a suspicion that too narrow a focus on emergencies would deprive it of important opportunities to work for change to the very mechanisms which create those emergencies, and condemn the WFP to a reactive role. Hence to ‘give up on’ development is perceived as likely to lead to a debilitating effect on the confidence and forward looking capacity of the organisation and Secretariat. There is also a respectable argument that the very tension in the dual mandate is itself productive, for example through the EDP being applied to making emergency relief operations look beyond the immediate future and take a more active account of beneficiary interests.

Adding weight to the sympathy for development projects is the fact that, despite the problems with using food aid in development, there are some successes and worthwhile projects.\(^{104}\) Thus the WFP continues to maintain at least some development operations, while attempting to generate as much longer-term thinking as possible about its relief operations.

The WFP and advocacy
As discussed earlier in the chapter, the WFP tends to strategically interpret advocacy in abstract terms – against hunger rather than for the hungry – even while its specific advocacy tactics seek to humanise the brutality of hunger, both as an ethical necessity

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\(^{103}\) In the wider IFAR, the dual mandate is referred to as the ‘twin track’ approach – as the Deputy Director-General of FAO put it in 2007: ‘FAO, IFAD and WFP advocate a twin track approach to reducing hunger. The first track focuses on policies and investment in rural areas and agriculture to improve the productivity of smallholders and to create employment opportunities for the rural poor. The second is the direct and immediate access to food for the most vulnerable groups.’ (FAO Committee on World Food Security 2007, 15).

\(^{104}\) Assessing this is complicated by the existence of strong incentives for proponents to claim success for development projects to justify the investments in them, even where such claims may not be reliable. Such claims of success are made all the easier by the difficulties of measuring the effects of development work. For example, the defence of food aid monetisation by US NGOs (Alliance for Food Aid 2007a; 2007b; Shaw and McKay 2006) illustrates how easily and convincingly a case can be made for development food aid, even in circumstances where the most credible independent analyses demonstrate regressive overall effects.
and to mobilise support. This derives mainly from two interrelated processes. Firstly, the need to have a politically neutral approach to advocacy which will not offend the donor nations, in particular the United States; secondly the focus on emergency relief, which tends to render less relevant broader causal factors underlying chronic hunger and food insecurity. Also important in the political calculus on advocacy are the agribusinesses, with strong political connections in the US in particular, which are the main beneficiaries of global systems of production and markets that help create endemic global hunger, and important commercial stakeholders in the food aid system (Patel 2007; Ziegler 2005). Raising awareness of hunger is an aim with impeccable credentials to keep happy the powerful actors who benefit from the systems that help create and maintain large-scale malnutrition.

In contrast to the interpretation of advocacy as the raising of awareness is rights-based advocacy. Rights-based advocacy ‘means holding other actors (often, but not necessarily, state actors) accountable to their obligations to respect, protect, and fulfil human rights’ (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 113). In this, it poses a fundamentally political analysis of problems, as opposed to the tendency of what de Waal describes as a technocratic food policy/famine elite to work on the basis of hunger as a technical problem (de Waal 1997, 24-5).

The Right to Food

‘If hunger is a moral issue, what about WFP's position on the Right to Food?’

- question raised by WFP staff in 2004 Global (WFP Staff) Meeting (WFP 2004d, 20).

In terms of the feed-the-hungry norm, rights-based advocacy reifies the moral claim of the hungry into a quasi-legal claim of a right – the Right to Food. Yet, echoing the distinguishing of food aid from financial assistance, the IFAR feed-the-hungry norm has also been sharply distinguished from rights-based norms.

The Right to Food has long been established as a principle in international legal instruments (see for example, Article 25 in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 111). Consistent with these instruments, the 1974 World Food Conference report included a Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition (UN General Assembly 1974 cited in Chapter Three above). In the context of the 1996 World Food Summit, and developments in the international human rights regime, in 1997 the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) adopted the first of a series of resolutions on the Right to Food (UN Commission on Human Rights 1997). In 2000 the UNCHR resolved to appoint a Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food (UN Commission on Human Rights 2000), and similar resolutions on the right to food have since been adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2001 (UN General Assembly 2001) and more recently in 2005. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Jean Ziegler has been a prominent advocate for the 850 million hungry in the world, pointing to the role of globalisation in agricultural production as a significant contributing factor to global hunger (Accardo and O’Neall 2005; Leahy 2007; Wagenhofer 2005; Ziegler 2005).

Rights-based advocacy also impinges on WFP in relation to the principles used in responding to humanitarian emergencies (see Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 114-6 for details of various codes of conduct and principles). For the most part these principles have not been deeply problematic for WFP, but have contributed to its relative effectiveness.
Despite what would seem to be an obvious relationship between the UN Right to Food campaign and its fight against hunger, the WFP has no presence in the UN right to food discourse, although the FAO does (see e.g. Robinson 2002). This absence is mirrored by an effective EB prohibition on WFP engagement with the debate over rights-based development (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 114; Schenkenberg 2005). The source of this separation of WFP from the Right to Food discourse in the UN is to be found in US policy, demonstrating the hegemonic role of the US in the international food aid regime.

US antagonism to defining certain types of rights in international regimes dates back to debates over the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the 1940s (Evans 1996; Thakur 2001). In the context of conflict with communist regimes, the US supported codifying international civil and political rights (free speech, right to vote) linked to democratic and liberal norms, but opposed codifying international economic rights – for example, the right to employment or income – linked to materialist ideology. The concern was the latter could be taken to imply an imperative to change or limit the character of capitalism, and hence to be inconsistent with liberal democratic ideology valorising freedom ahead of equality. Given this historical context, and the vigorous critique of corporate agribusiness and US policy in which Ziegler and other Right to Food advocates engage, it is not surprising that the US has been hostile to the Right to Food discourse and its associated concept of ‘food sovereignty’ (Suppan 2002, 2). For example, at the ‘World Food Summit – five years later’ Conference held in June 2002, the US opposed a resolution supporting the right to food, arguing instead for greater trade liberalisation and a bigger role for the private sector and biotechnology to improve food security (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 114).

This issue and its connection to the WFP was implicitly raised by a member of staff at a WFP global staff meeting in Dublin, 2004, during a panel discussion involving then USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios:

Mr Natsios was asked to explain the USA’s position on the concept of the Right to Food. He replied that the USA did not believe that food was something to which a right could be assigned. He feared that the Right to Food diverted attention from the operational side, which he thought should be the focus. (WFP 2004d, 6).

Interestingly, the same meeting was later addressed by Ziegler. In his talk Ziegler ‘laid out the juridical status and definitions of the Right to Food and listed the practical measures he was allowed to use in the fight against hunger’ (WFP 2004d, 7). However, his participation was only as part of a panel with two journalists and Senator McGovern on ‘Communicating the Right to Food: how to put hunger higher on the public agenda.’ There is no record of the other panel members in this session saying anything on the Right to Food; there is no indication of Ziegler’s contribution having any relationship to the other sessions at the meeting devoted variously to NGO, UN and private sector partnerships, or the work of the UN Secretary General’s Hunger Task Force. Thus, although it is not correct to argue that the Right to Food issue is completely absent from WFP planning and thinking, it is not anywhere near the normative or conceptual heart of the organisation, even in the form of a subject of debate.

106 These were: ‘general reports to the Commission on Human Rights and to the UN General Assembly’; ‘field visits to initiate collab with gov’s & identify/report violations of the Right to Food’; and ‘urgent condemnations in cases of violations of the Right to Food.’ Also, ‘Mr Ziegler gave examples from India, South Africa and Nigeria where the Right to Food had brought about positive changes by appeals to the legal system.’ (WFP 2004d, 7).
In the context of general US hostility to international rights-based discourse, this can be portrayed as a case of the use of hegemonic power to neuter WFP’s engagement with an important human rights issue in its field of operations. As a consequence, according to this interpretation, the WFP has had its advocacy role limited so that it is devoid of any capacity to argue for change to the systemic causes of global hunger.

It is possible, however, to make a different, and more nuanced and convincing analysis of the disjunction between the WFP and the Right to Food discourse. This analysis amounts to a defence of the WFP and its avoidance of a more political version of advocacy, as a trade off in return for which it has maintained its formidable record for relative effectiveness. This analysis argues that the WFP, in avoiding the Right to Food debate, has quarantined itself from some of the most politically contentious debates in the UN system over human rights issues – something which has assisted its operational credibility and effectiveness. It is easy to see how WFP participation in the Right to Food advocacy could have caused bitter political struggles on the EB, and almost certainly a decline in US support (both governmentally, and in its domestic US political standing as it became a political target of anti-UN rhetoric). It is much harder to see how it would have contributed to an improvement in the problem of global hunger at either a symptomatic or causative level.

**Conclusion**

The limitations to the WFP’s effectiveness in absolute terms are deeply connected to its capacity to maintain relative effectiveness, and the operation of the IFAR feed-the-hungry norm. A multilateral food aid organisation dependent on food donations, largely directed by donors, and with limited cash supplementations, quite simply lacks a capacity to do much in an obvious, macro level way about the systemic causes of global hunger.

However, through a continuing attempt to articulate a development ethos along with logistical capacity to deliver food in a timely manner to people at risk of death and disease from malnutrition, the WFP does make a positive difference to many lives. Also, in subtle ways, in the process of undertaking and evaluating its operations, and discussing the nature of hunger as a problem in human societies, the WFP keeps open opportunities for efforts at both micro and macro levels to address hunger in a deeper way than simply providing food to hungry people.

The non-debate over the Right to Food points to a central element of the WFP’s normative uniqueness – the feed-the-hungry norm is not fundamentally based on the usual international legal normative underpinnings of international regime norms. The legal principles that underpin most of the norms of international regimes – that is, that they are part of a rules-based system – have much less purchase in the WFP, because they do not underpin the feed-the-hungry norm. This is important because the WFP’s effectiveness is so closely connected to US support, and this support derives at least partly from a normative congruence with domestic US norms, which themselves are antagonistic to quasi-legal compulsion in relation to material rights. In these terms, the US plays a hegemonic role in the IFAR.

The IFAR normative connection with the US is significant, not only because it reflects a congruence between international and US domestic feed-the-hungry norms, but also because it avoids the politically damaging (apparent) compulsion of a norm based on international law.
The following section concludes this chapter with a brief consideration of the implications of these normative characteristics, along with the analytical features of legitimacy in the IFAR for the future.

4. The future of IFAR global governance

The analysis of legitimacy in the international food aid regime has so far suggested that it is relatively effective, inclusive and accountable, albeit with resultant limits on its capacity to change the dynamics of power underlying the interrelated problems of global hunger and poverty.

While the WFP’s relative effectiveness has evolved from a complex array of factors over some decades, particular importance can be ascribed to the dominant role of the US, interrelated with a distinct normative congruence between the regime and domestic US politics. The operation of the feed-the-hungry norm explains how a superficial appearance of simple American dominance does not translate into the WFP being a pawn for American interests with little credibility as a multilateral organisation.

In light of this analysis, and the importance of the process of evolution to the contemporary form of the IFAR, it is appropriate to conclude the Chapter with some brief observations on the likely future development and evolution of the IFAR and the WFP.

A number of past and present UN officers spoken to in the course of the research used the wave metaphor for organisational success. According to this metaphor, organisations might be riding up a wave, peaking at the crest of a wave (being seen as at the top of their game), or falling from the top of the wave. There was a consistent view that the WFP was at the crest of the wave, and had been since around the mid to late 1990s. This implies there is only one direction in which the WFP can go from here.

Organisational change to the WFP with negative effects on its legitimacy is likely to come from four different directions. First, while the maintenance of the development part of the dual mandate has been relatively robust in the face of limited resources for development work, increased demands from emergencies and a reduction of donor contributions (for example due to a shift from in-kind to cash donation by the US) could still result in effective collapse in that element of the WFP’s operations. At the time of writing (2008), due to drought, subsidisation of biofuels and various other market changes, the world is facing the highest prices and lowest agricultural stocks since the end of World War II; worse than during the world food crisis of the early 1970s (Adam 2008; Chakrabortty 2008; Food and Water Watch 2008; Manalsuren 2008; Nichols 2008; Rice 2008; Spieldoch 2008). This situation is likely to put a lot of pressure on the WFP’s development operations as increasingly scarce resources are allocated to an expanding array of emergency and recovery situations.

Another ever present risk for UN agencies is management failure, resulting in inefficiency if not corruption, scandal and subsequent credibility and fund raising problems. The WFP has remained relatively free of serious problems in this area, but it is always possible that inept management at senior levels will allow the growth of such problems.
A third source of serious problems for WFP governance could be from the collapse of the EB consensus, resulting in one or more withdrawals from donor nations, and loss of legitimacy as an effective multilateral organisation. An American withdrawal would be catastrophic and result in collapse of the WFP, though this is the least likely development. More likely would be a slippage into a view of the WFP as a cipher for American interests given American nomination of the ED position and dominance in donations. A range of contentious issues in food production – its connection to agricultural trade policy, links to American corporate policy interests in biotechnology and biofuel issues – all carry implicit state conflicts that impinge on food aid and could be played out to destructive effect on the EB.

Lastly, and more immediately, the WFP’s attempts to expand fundraising into the private sector pose some risks. These are partly from strong European NGO antagonisms over its perceived intrusion into their fundraising turf, which could lead to attempts to mobilise political support from their polities and states against WFP fundraising efforts (something hinted at by the German representative at the June 2005 EB Annual Meeting). There are also risks associated with the development of relationships with private donors, if they were to appear to undermine the inclusion and accountability aspects of WFP governance.

In the face of changes to people, resources and policy all implicated in the potential organisational changes listed above, norms provide an important source of stability; however, normative change does happen, both influencing and influenced by organisational change, as well as external shifts. The possible organisational changes listed above all have different implications at the normative level.

Loss of development mandate capacity would imply a failure to maintain the symbolic reading of the feed-the-hungry norm, reflecting a narrowing of the norm to its literal reading alone. Such normative change would diminish the inclusion, accountability and effectiveness of WFP and the legitimacy of the IFAR. However, despite the increasing resource pressures on WFP’s development operations, it is hard to see the political circumstances existing for a shift in the norm leading to cessation of WFP development operations.

Management failures, were they to occur to a significant degree, may see loss of credibility on the part of the WFP, and could lead to conflicts on the EB as various versions of blame shifting began to be used. They could also imply a failure of the US nominated ED, and hence imply a loss of legitimacy for the WFP as a US dominated organisation. The fall-out could result in the Secretariat losing its credibility and hence its legitimacy as the accepted arbiter of how the feed-the-hungry norm is to be made operational; then state differences over interpreting and applying the feed-the-hungry norm could well expand into disputes within the EB, or the wider UN over the future of the IFAR. In other words, serious management failures could upset the balancing of interests and interpretations of the feed-the-hungry norm and thereby create a legitimacy crisis (Reus-Smit 2007) for the IFAR.

EB consensus could also be lost in circumstances not associated with management failure, but as a consequence of state conflicts – either within the IFAR, or spilling over into the regime from other issue areas. An important element of the IFAR’s legitimacy can be ascribed to its historical capacity to keep functioning without being excessively drawn into conflicts in the international relations system. While other UN bodies have
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periodically been drawn by proxy into Cold War or Middle Eastern conflicts, the WFP has managed to stay largely apart from such distractions. If one or more such conflicts were to overwhelm the EB, this situation would be linked to the norm losing its status as transcending such politics. For this to happen there would need to be one or more inter-state issues which themselves were capable of transcending the feed-the-hungry norm – perhaps not a complete impossibility in the context of the war on terror and climate change.

Risks from fundraising go largely to the issue of state roles and responsibilities within the multilateral system. The implication of private fundraising can be taken as shifting the process of global governance from one based on a polity of states to something more complex, mixing states, corporations and individuals together as members of the IFAR polity. For example, while ‘[g]overnance and policy will remain the sole purview of WFP Member States’ (WFP 2004c, 11), the WFP has identified the need to establish a Business Advisory Council. This is ‘a global network of chief executive officers and corporate leaders to discuss management issues with WFP executive management on an advisory basis...’ (WFP 2004c, 12), and has the effect of making such donors part of its polity through including them in governance processes. The normative implications of these changes are not immediately obvious, though there is some shift implied by a move away from the idea that the moral claims in the feed-the-hungry norm are the primary responsibility of states and the intergovernmental community. Arguably this shift has nevertheless already occurred by dint of neoliberal policy reforms in liberal democracies over the last few decades.

To summarise this discussion, while there are clearly many pressures on and risks to the functionality and legitimacy of the IFAR, the extent to which they are able to diminish the quality of the governance in which it is engaged is limited by the extent to which these pressures are connected to a weakening or narrowing of the feed-the-hungry norm. It is difficult to detect strong signs that this is likely in the near term. That said, a well established critique of historical institutionalism argues such an analytical approach will tend to overestimate the continuities and resistance to change of existing institutions (Blyth 2002, Ch2). Given the bias in this analysis to contextual and historical aspects of the IFAR, such a criticism may well have some application to the argument being made here. For that reason, while there is cause for some guarded optimism about the continued prospects for IFAR to remain legitimate through inclusive, accountable and relatively effective governance, it would be wise not to overstate the case for it.

Conclusion

In concluding this Chapter it is timely to consider the overall significance of this study. Why should it matter that IFAR governance is relatively effective, especially if that comes at the price of its capacity to actively contribute to reforming the problems with contemporary international political economy, which are the only likely means of achieving significant reductions in the numbers of hungry poor?
De Waal implicitly asked this question when he commented that the process of internationalization is the key to the appropriation of power by international institutions and the retreat from domestic accountability in famine-vulnerable countries. Moreover, the 'responsibility' of UN agencies, NGOs and foreign governments is a vague and easily evaded moral responsibility – nothing more than an aspiration - rather than a practical obligation for which the 'responsible' institution can be called to account. Moral outrage plus technical proficiency does not equal accountability for results." (de Waal 1997, 70).

If the IFAR dissipates accountability for famines by its very existence, without making a real difference to the underlying causes, it is difficult to see a credible argument for it being legitimised as a positive contributor to global governance, even in the limited relative form proposed here. However, de Waal overstates and oversimplifies accountability. While domestic state failures may play a large part in famines, other factors are also important. For example, colonial processes that contributed to poor quality domestic governance in the first place, or other global processes of climate change leading to drought, or the delayed arrival of food aid procured in a manner designed to benefit rich nation farmers or agribusiness ahead of poor country rural populations are also processes of power which should require some accountability.

This thesis has argued that the IFAR and the WFP have legitimacy. The number of hungry poor, and especially the number of fatally malnourished, is considerably less than they otherwise would be thanks to the work of the WFP. It might be in the nature of the delimited and fragmented kinds of regime-based global governance that effectiveness in an absolute rather than relative sense remains an elusive quality of such governance. But a bad situation would surely be worse without such global governance, and its existence if anything acts as a base from which a more absolutely effective form of global governance may yet emerge (albeit with attendant risks of an absolutist form).

The MDGs are important as an expression of precisely that aspiration for a form of global governance which can make a real difference to substantial global problems. No one single regime is capable of solving complex political problems of the order of global hunger by itself, as the framing of the MDGs attests. Thus the MDGs provide measures of absolute rather than relative effectiveness, and have been consciously structured to try and bring together the various international regimes around specific shared goals. This raises important questions as to what makes for legitimate (effective) regimes and international organisations.

This examination of legitimacy in the IFAR and the WFP has shed some light on this issue because it points to the beneficial, yet constraining implications of US hegemony, and also to the distinctive and unusual confluence of factors by which constructive engagement of the US as hegemonic power can occur. The effectiveness of the WFP stems from a normative underpinning that has enabled a peculiarly constructive, if limited, form of intergovernmental political consensus to emerge. This normative context also suggests that soft normative power can, in certain circumstances, be a path to effectiveness in international relations, despite the tendency for effectiveness to be seen as linked to rule-based normative power.

Nevertheless, it should be clear that the IFAR’s legitimacy is based in its specific history and context; it does not provide a template for organising legitimate regimes or global governance. Given the distinctive and unique characteristics of the IFAR, while there are grounds for some optimism about the near term future of the WFP, the development of forms of global governance capable of achieving the MDGs look to be far less attainable than the very formulation of the MDGs might suggest.
CONCLUSION

Since 1945 the US has dominated food aid at both bilateral and multilateral levels, being without doubt the central actor in the international food aid regime. US food aid policy derives from a complex array of political and bureaucratic interests, and has long appeared to be based on the interests of agricultural producers and shippers. However, such interests, while very important, are insufficient to explain the nuances of US policy or the development of the international food aid regime.

The paradox of hegemony refers to the fact that hegemonic power can only be hegemonic at the price of the hegemon being itself bound by the rules of the system it has established and dominates – despite a material capacity to choose not to be (Cronin 2001; Reus-Smit 2004).

This derives from the tensions between power as might and power as right (Hindess 1996). The paradox of hegemony stems from the tensions between these concepts: the hegemon gives up some ‘unconstrained’ power as might in exchange for the gift of (constrained) power as right, normally constituted through political legitimacy.

The international food aid regime provides a classic demonstration of hegemony, in the sense of a material dominance functioning in a politically legitimate domain. The central organisation in the IFAR, the WFP, has emerged from a tawdry display of apparent benevolence driven by rich country self-interest to become one of the UN’s most significant and respected operational agencies. It demonstrates American power, while at the same time garnering considerable international credibility. These characteristics suggest it is important to understand the extent to which WFP is actually engaged in legitimate (effective, inclusive and accountable) governance, and how it got to that point. In undertaking this task, the thesis has endeavoured to expand our understanding of global politics and the conditions in which intergovernmental organisations can function with relative success.

Chapter One situated the thesis in the wider field of regime theory and the study of IR, arguing the centrality of mutually constituting norms and interests in the genesis and evolution of international regimes, and the salience of legitimacy as a concept for undertaking political analysis of regimes. Of particular interest to IR scholars are questions concerning how US power operates in international regimes to generate (or not) legitimacy. In turn, legitimacy was defined as the product of three constituent features – inclusion, accountability and effectiveness – that provide an analytical framework.

Chapter Two argued that a focus on the WFP and the regime within which it is embedded stems partly from the intrinsic interest it provokes as a structurally typical but materially significant UN agency involved with combating global hunger, but also from the unique normative characteristics of the regime. This normative uniqueness derives from the feed-the-hungry norm, which is based on the ‘soft normative’ power of moral claims (of the hungry, producers and agricultural exporters) rather than the more common ‘hard normative’ power of international law. In this, it is reflecting its genesis from, and ongoing congruence with, the domestic US feed-the-hungry norm.

This normative congruence has enabled strong US domestic political support for the WFP, together with relatively constructive engagement and leadership from the US in the WFP. It helps explain the form which economic and strategic interests have taken
in the regime. Meanwhile, the divergence between the two norms since the 1960s regarding the moral claims of producers also shows the complexity of norm and interests interactions on hunger and food aid issues.

Chapters Three and Four detailed the historical evolution of the regime and the WFP. Chapters Five and Six analysed the legitimacy of the WFP and, implicitly, the wider regime, and argue that the IFAR has legitimacy as a global level institution.

In absolute terms, the WFP appears to have had limited impact on the problem of global hunger, with raw numbers of malnourished people not reducing but increasing over its 45 years of operations. Superficially this would seem to follow from dominance of donor interests in the WFP, reflected in an avoidance of any ‘politicisation’ of food aid and inherent support for the global status quo. Such an argument might emphasise that the US has worked to narrow the scope of the WFP away from the more strategic use of development projects or advocacy linked to political ideas such, as the Right to Food, which might threaten to change the power relationships which make mass hunger possible, making the WFP complicit in a regressive system which causes starvation.

This is too systemic and overly deterministic as an analysis, though, for two reasons. Firstly, because it does not appreciate the fact that the role of food aid in development has tended to be regressive. Thus, the apparent narrowing of WFP’s work away from long-term development to shorter-term emergency relief is also in fact a shift to focus food aid on the kind of work for which it is relatively and uncontroversially good.

Secondly, because it does not take into account the ways that the operation of a multilateral organisation, through its influence on international and domestic feed-the-hungry norms and related policy, has made possible the development of more progressive utilisation of food aid, even starting to influence shifts in American policy. The WFP has created an organisational forum for testing and assessing ways of improving global governance in the food aid regime. This has resulted in more progressive policies being adopted by state and non-state actors as well as the WFP itself. This is most clearly demonstrated in the promotion of the moral claims of producers in poor countries ahead of rich country producers whose moral claims had been dominant in its early years.

Yet the linkage between food aid and donor (producer) interests in both bilateral and multilateral contexts is changing very slowly, and slowest of all in respect of the US. The serial collapses (in July 2006 and then again in July 2008) of the Doha Round of trade talks on liberalising agricultural trade highlight the extreme sensitivities of donor/exporter nations. These failures also point to the structural difficulties confronting longer-term change to global politics, even when the numbers of the hungry poor are not declining. The 2008 world food crisis re-emphasises the apparently intractable nature of global hunger in the international political economy as currently constituted.

For all its success, the WFP is unable to have a wider impact on global hunger due to the limitations posed by its institutional environment; addressing global hunger and poverty may well require the kind of supra- (or trans-) regime global governance that is yet to be formulated, even in the face of the global climate change crisis.

What are the implications of this analysis for comprehending the operation of global governance more broadly?
Conclusion

In relative terms, the case of WFP shows us that international organisations within the UN system can evolve and adapt into successful, effective organisations (though there are no guarantees that such qualities will continue), given the right confluence of factors. Probably of most importance amongst these is the existence of stable hegemonic leadership based on credible inclusion, accountability and effectiveness creating legitimacy. Yet it is difficult to see how such leadership can emerge without a deep congruence between international regime norm(s) and norms within the hegemonic power’s domestic polity. It is this congruence that may make it possible to diminish the tensions created by the paradox of hegemony to the point that genuinely legitimate global governance is possible.
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PREFACE TO APPENDICES

The following Appendices are in two sections. Appendices 1-6 provide various texts of interest or importance, Appendices 7-11 are primarily concerned with food aid related data and statistics. The comments below relate to the latter section of the Appendices.

A Note on Food Aid Data
The data in Appendices 7-11 demonstrate in part the volatility of food aid resources, with apparently steady trends being disrupted by large fluctuations. Nevertheless the long term trends demonstrate a clear consolidation of an international food aid regime in which:

- Food aid as a proportion of aid overall has declined as volumes have shrunk, dollar value of food aid overall in real terms has declined, and as ODA has increased.
- Multilateral food aid (which virtually amounts to the WFP) has become the most significant channel for food aid
- Multilateral food aid has the greatest emphasis on procuring commodities from developing countries
- Multilateral food aid is predominantly concerned with relief rather than development
- The US is still easily and by far the largest food aid donor, as well as the largest donor to the WFP. However its predominant position as the world’s largest donor has been in long-term, gradual decline, together with its share of agricultural production. Food aid donations from the US have shifted away from bilateral programme aid, contributing to the above aggregate trends increasing the importance of multilateral food aid. US donations have also driven much of the increased importance of the NGO channel.
- The European Community and EU member nations are now treated collectively as a single donor in most food aid aggregate data, and rate as easily the next most significant donor after the US.

There are three principal sources of data on official development assistance (ODA) and food aid. These are:

- The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (in particular the most authoritative source on ODA)
- WFP and its Food Aid monitor service INTERFAIS. INTERFAIS has produced annual reports on food aid movements since 1988, regarded as the most comprehensive and authoritative data on food aid. Other data on food aid prior to 1988 is available via various reports of the WFP.
- The United State government Congressional Research Service (CRS) also produces well regarded reports on food aid and development assistance.

The most significant food aid commodities are cereal grains, averaging approximately 86% of food aid by volume over the last decade (INTERFAIS/WFP 2008, 36, Table 16). Other food aid commodities include pulses, oils and fats, meat and fish, and dairy products, with something like 80% of non-cereals in the first two of these categories (INTERFAIS/WFP 2005, 37)

Food aid data is complicated by the fact that it may be presented based on two different measures – by value (usually $US); and by volume (usually metric tons). Given the volatility of agricultural prices, $ values can fluctuate considerably when translated into
volumes, so care should be taken when reading statistical charts as to the measure being used. Much discourse and debate about aid in general is concerned with its dollar value – for example in relation to the target level for donor nations of ODA matching 0.7% of GDP. As food aid has moved away from in-kind donations to cash donations, increasingly food aid measurement has moved towards a focus on $ value and away from volume measures. Nevertheless, from the perspective of recipients, it is the actual volume that arrives that matters more than how much (or little) donors have given to enable its purchase. The price/volume relationship generates relatively little concern during periods of sustained surpluses and low global prices. However in the context of recent significant price increases in wheat, maize and rice – the major coarse grain commodities in food aid - the WFP has found its purchasing capacity reduced commensurately. Logically, if the prices double, it can only purchase half the volume for a given $ amount (see discussion in (INTERFAIS/WFP 2008, 19) for these effects in recent years).
Appendices

APPENDIX 1 - INTERVIEW GUIDE

Project Title: Global Governance and the World Food Programme

Semi-structured interviews – The following Interview Guide will be used as the basis for interviews, but the interview process will evolve depending on the operation of earlier interviews and the particular participant.

**Background questions:**

- Name
- Name of Organisation
- Organisational role/position
- Length of time in Organisation
- Previous experience in food aid/international organizations/NGOs/representing State actor

Note – for retired subjects, preface the questions with: “in your time at…, how would you have answered this question…?”

1. **Establishing perspective:**
   - Who do you represent?
   - What is your government/organisational view about the WFP’s importance in the world today?
   - Why/in what ways is WFP important?
   - What are the most significant things it does?
   - What are its strengths?
   - What are its weaknesses?
   - What do you see as the most important norms or values underpinning the work of the WFP? (How) have they changed in the last decade? Is there any disagreement about these norms amongst stakeholders?

2. **Inclusion**
   - How accessible is participation in the WFP for your country/organization?
   - Do you see many parts of the world being excluded from involvement?
   - How would you describe the differences between donor and recipient countries in WFP decision making?
   - What levels of involvement exist in the WFP governance?
   - What are the obstacles to greater involvement on the part of state/non-state actors?
   - Is it meaningful to talk about a political community of states and others in and around the WFP?
   - What if anything is distinctive about the WFP in comparison to other UN agencies?

3. **Accountability**
   - Are the checks and balances on the operation of WFP adequate?
   - Do they interfere too much with efficient functioning?
Appendices

- Are the government representatives to WFP sufficiently accountable for what they do there?
- Are NGOs sufficiently accountable for their relationship with the WFP?
- Are WFP staff/secretariat sufficiently accountable to the member states?
- Does WFP account adequately to other UN agencies?
- Where are the priorities for improving accountability in the WFP?
- Do concerns about sovereignty get in the way of improving WFP operations? How?

4. Change

- How would you describe the WFP’s processes of evolving and changing?
- Where do you see WFP heading in the next decade in terms of strategy and key policy concerns? How good is WFP in keeping up with the times?
- Are there any handicaps for the WFP in undertaking necessary evolution?
- What comments would you make specifically about opportunities/prospects for change to:
  - The WFP political community (if there is such a thing)?
  - The WFP’s relationship with other parts of the UN system?
  - Accountability issues mentioned before?

5. Conclusion

- Do you have any other comments about WFP in relation to global governance?

Thank you for your participation.
APPENDIX 2 – FAO CONSTITUTION
(FUNCTIONS)

Constitution of FAO – Article 1 (Functions of the Organization)

1. The Organization shall collect, analyze, interpret, and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture.

2. The Organization shall promote and, where appropriate, shall recommend national and international action with respect to
(a) scientific, technological, social and economic research relating to nutrition, food and agriculture;
(b) the improvement of education and administration relating to nutrition, food and agriculture, and the spread of public knowledge of nutritional and agricultural science and practice;
(c) the conservation of natural resources and the adoption of improved methods of agricultural production;
(d) the improvement of the processing, marketing and distribution of food and agricultural products;
(e) the adoption of policies for the provision of adequate agricultural credit, national and international;
(f) the adoption of international policies with respect to agricultural commodity arrangements.

3. It shall also be the function of the Organization
(a) to furnish such technical assistance as governments may request;
(b) to organize, in co-operation with the governments concerned, such missions as may be needed to assist them to fulfill the obligations arising from their acceptance of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture; and
(c) generally take all necessary and appropriate action to implement the purposes of the Organization as set forth in the Preamble.

Source: (Hambidge 1955, 248).
APPENDIX 3 – PRINCIPLES OF SURPLUS DISPOSAL

FAO Principles of Surplus Disposal
(Excerpt from FAO Council Resolution No. 2/20, 1954)

General Principles
1. The solution to problems of agricultural disposal should be sought, wherever possible, through efforts to increase consumption rather than through measures to restrict supplies.
2. Member Governments which have excess stocks of agricultural products should dispose of such products in an orderly manner so as to avoid any undue pressure resulting in sharp falls of prices on world markets, particularly when prices of agricultural products are generally low.
3. Where surpluses are disposed of under special terms, there should be an undertaking from both importing and exporting countries that such arrangements will be made without harmful interference with the normal patterns of production and international trade.

APPENDIX 4 – STATEMENT BY GEORGE MCGOVERN, 1961

Statement by the Honourable George S. McGovern, Delegate of the United States of America to FAO Intergovernmental Advisory Committee, Rome, Italy, 10 April 1961.

1. The United States favors a multilateral approach for the use of agricultural commodities as a supplement to bilateral arrangements.

2. We think FAO should have a major role in such a program, in co-operation with other UN organizations.

3. We believe this should be a truly multilateral program with the widest possible contributions by member countries.

4. We recognize that countries are here to advise the FAO Director-General on his report – not to take government positions on subjects covered in his report. Because of the need to move to the consideration of specific action proposals, however, we have been in touch with our Government over the weekend.

5. As a result, we are authorized to propose that an initial program on a multilateral basis might aim at a fund of $100 million in commodities and cash contributions. For its part, the United States would be prepared to offer $40 million in commodities, and the possibility of a supplementary cash contribution will be explored in Washington.

6. The $100 million total would be available for use over a fixed forward period. We are thinking of three years.

7. We recognize the desire of the (FAO) Director-General to make the widest possible use of commodities in alleviating malnutrition. However, we continue to believe that the primary aim of the program in its initial stage should be to meet emergency needs. At the same time, we would support use of the program fund for pilot activities in other fields such as school lunch or labor-intensive projects, in order to develop some diversified experience.

8. Specifics including additional staffing would have to be worked out for consideration by governments. This could be the responsibility of the (FAO) Director-General in informal consultation with individual countries.

9. The purpose of our proposal is to help in launching a multilateral program utilizing food to test approaches. After such experience, we could then examine the question of future additional work.

Source: (Shaw 2001, 18).
APPENDIX 5 – TEXT OF RESOLUTION 1714

Text of Resolution 1714 of the XVIth Session, UN General Assembly, 19 December 1961 – World Food Program (Incorporating as Annex 1, Resolution of the FAO Conference, 24 November 1961)

The General Assembly

Recalling its resolution 1496 (XV) of 27 October 1960 and Economic and Social Council resolution 832 (XXXII) of 2 August 1960 on the provision of Food surpluses to food-deficient peoples through the United Nations system,

Having considered the report of the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations entitled Development through Food – A Strategy for Surplus Utilization, the report of the Secretary-General entitled “The role of the United Nations and the appropriate specialized agencies in facilitating the best possible use of food surpluses for the economic development of the less developed countries”, and the joint proposal by the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations regarding procedures and arrangements for multilateral utilization of surplus food,

Having reviewed the action taken at the eleventh session of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization on the utilization of food surpluses and, specifically, its resolution of 24 November 1961 stating that, subject to the concurrence of the General Assembly of the United Nations, an initial experimental programme for three years, to be known as the World Food Programme should be undertaken, having also noted in particular the reference to safeguards contained in paragraph 13 of the above-mentioned resolution,

Recognizing the existing facilities for consultation provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization through its Consultative Sub-Committee on Surplus Disposals,

Bearing in mind its resolution 1710 (XVI) of 19 December 1961 on the United Nations Development Decade, and in particular the reference in paragraph 4 (d) to the elimination of illiteracy, hunger and disease,

I

1. Approves the establishment of an experimental World Food Programme to be undertaken jointly by the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in co-operation with other interested United Nations agencies and appropriate inter-governmental bodies, bearing in mind that the establishment of such a programme in no way prejudices the bilateral agreements between developed and developing countries, and accepts and endorses the purposes, principles and procedures formulated in the first part of the resolution approved by the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization on 24 November 1961, the text of which is annexed to the present resolution, including the safeguards mentioned in that resolution and General Assembly resolution 1496 (XV), especially in paragraph 9 thereof;

2. Approves specifically the establishment of a United Nations/FAO Inter-Governmental Committee of twenty States Members of the United Nations and members of the Food and Agriculture Organization to provide guidance on policy, administration and operations, and of a joint United Nations/FAO administrative unit
reporting to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization;

3. Requests the Economic and Social Council at its resumed thirty-second session to elect, subject to the provisions of paragraph 9 below, ten States Members of the United Nations and members of the Food and Agriculture Organization to the United Nations/FAO Inter-Governmental Committee, taking into account:
   
   (a) The representation provided by the ten States that were elected to serve on the United Nations/FAO Inter-Governmental Committee by the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization;
   
   (b) The need for balanced representation of economically developed and developing countries, and other relevant factors such as the representation of potential participating countries, both contributing and recipient, equitable geographical distribution and the representation of both developed and less developed countries having commercial interests in international trade in foodstuffs, especially those highly dependent on such trade;

4. Calls upon the Economic and Social Council at its thirty-third session, in co-operation with the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization, to review and to take appropriate action on the procedures and arrangements for the World Food Programme recommended by the United Nations/FAO Inter-Governmental Committee;

5. Decides that pilot projects to be undertaken by the joint United Nations/FAO administrative unit, under the guidance of the United Nations/FAO Intergovernmental Committee, involving the use of food as an aid to economic and social development, shall be undertaken in agreement between the Secretary-General, acting on behalf of the United Nations, and the Director-General, acting on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization;

6. Concurs in the calling of a conference where States Members of the United Nations and members of the Food and Agriculture Organization will be invited to pledge contributions;

7. Requests the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, to convene such a conference at United Nations headquarters as soon as feasible after the concurrent sessions of the Economic and Social Council and the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization;

8. Urges States Members of the United Nations and members of the Food and Agriculture Organization, in considering their contributions, to make every effort to assure the early attainment, on a voluntary basis, of the $100 million programme;

9. Further requests the Economic and Social Council, in co-operation with the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization, at its next regular session following the pledging conference, to review the composition of the United Nations/FAO Intergovernmental Committee and to make, by election for the balance of the three-year programme, any adjustments of membership that might be deemed desirable in the light of the considerations outlined in paragraph 3 above;

10. Instructs the United Nations/FAO Intergovernmental Committee, in preparing recommendation on the conditions and procedures for the establishment and operation of the programme for the review and approval by the Economic and Social Council and
the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization, to proceed on the basis of the present resolution and the resolution of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of 24 November 1961, taking into account the joint proposal by the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization regarding procedures and arrangements for the multilateral utilization of surplus food, statements made during the debates in the General Assembly and in the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization and such other conditions and procedures as may seem to it appropriate;

11. Recommends that Governments requesting assistance under this programme, the United Nations/FAO Inter-Governmental Committee, and the joint United Nations/FAO administrative unit responsible for the administration of the program, keep the resident representatives fully informed about, and, within their field of competence, associated with, activities undertaken under the programme;

12. Invites the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization to ensure that, in carrying out the programme, the joint United Nations/FAO administrative unit rely to the fullest extent possible on the existing staff and facilities of the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization, as well as other appropriate inter-governmental agencies;

13. Requests the United Nations/FAO Inter-Governmental Committee to report annually to the Economic and Social Council and to the Council of the Food and Agriculture Organization on the progress made in the development of the programme and on its administration and operation;

14. Decides to undertake, not later than at its nineteenth session, a general review of the programme, taking into account the objectives of its resolution 1496 (XV);

II

Recognizing that the experimental programme outlined above constitutes a step towards the broader objectives outlined in its resolution 1496 (XV),

Recognizing further that the ultimate solution to this problem of food deficiency lies in self-sustaining economic growth of the economies of the less developed countries to the point where they find it possible to meet their food requirements from their food-producing industries or from the proceeds of their expanding export trade,

Recognizing that the effective utilization of available surplus foodstuffs, in ways compatible with the principles of surplus disposal recommended by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, provides an important transitional means of relieving the hunger and malnutrition of food-deficient peoples, particularly in the less developed countries, and for assisting these countries in their economic development,

Recognizing further that food aid is not a substitute for other types of assistance, in particular for capital goods,

1. Recognizes that food aid to be provided under this programme should take into account other forms of assistance and country plans for economic and social development;
2. Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in close co-operation with the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and with interested groups or agencies, and jointly where appropriate, to undertake, as soon as feasible, expert studies which would aid in the consideration of the future development of multilateral food programmes;

3. Expresses the hope that, in the light of these studies and of the experience gained, the progress of the experimental programme will be such as to permit the United Nations and the Food and Agriculture Organization to consider the possibility and advisability of increasing the programme, taking into account the advantages to developing countries, the interests of the contributing States, the interests of the food-exporting countries, the effectiveness of the programme and its contribution to the objectives of General Assembly resolution 1496 (XV);

4. Endorses again the Freedom from Hunger Campaign launched by the Food and Agriculture Organization and requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, simultaneously with the implementation of the present resolution, to pay particular attention to the necessity of improving and increasing local food production and to include, where appropriate, reference to this subject in the reports mentioned above, and requests the United Nations/FAO Inter-Governmental Committee to consider the possibility of applying to this purpose a reasonable proportion of resources resulting from the World Food Programme.

1084th plenary meeting, 19 December 1961.

Annex

PART I OF THE RESOLUTION ON THE UTILIZATION OF FOOD SURPLUSES ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON 24 NOVEMBER 1961

The Conference,

... I

Resolves, subject to the concurrence of the General Assembly of the United Nations, that:

1. An initial experimental programme for three years of approximately $100 million with contributions on a voluntary basis be undertaken jointly by the Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations, in co-operation with other United Nations agencies, and appropriate inter-governmental bodies;

2. Contributions to the programme, to be known as the World Food Programme, may be pledged by countries in the form of appropriate commodities, acceptable services, and cash aiming in the aggregate at a cash component of at least one-third of the total contributions, and countries should give due regard to the importance of achieving this over-all objective when determining the cash element in their contribution;

3. An Inter-Governmental Committee of twenty nations which are members of FAO or the United Nations be established to provide guidance on policy, administration and operations, as outlined in paragraphs 11 and 12 of part III of the joint report of the Secretary-General and the Director-General;
4. The Committee be elected half by the FAO Council and half by the United Nations, taking into account the need for balanced representation of economically developed countries and of less developed countries and other relevant factors. In appointing its representative each Government should pay due regard to the complexities of the executive and operational planning required for the proposed programme;

5. The Inter-Governmental Committee meet in Rome early in 1962 to develop detailed procedures and arrangements for the Programme on the basis of this resolution, taking due account of the joint report of the Secretary-General and the Director-General and giving consideration to the views expressed in reports of meetings related to this subject held under the auspices of FAO and the United Nations;

6. The procedures and arrangements drawn up by the Inter-Governmental Committee be reviewed and approved in concurrent sessions of the Council of FAO and the Economic and Social Council in New York in April 1962;

7. A conference for contributing countries to pledge their contributions in accordance with paragraph 2 above be convened by the Secretary-General and the Director-General after the concurrent sessions of the FAO Council and the Economic and Social Council;

8. The FAO Council and the Economic and Social Council, at their next regular meetings following the pledging conference, should make any adjustment of country composition on the Inter-Governmental Committee (of twenty) that might be deemed desirable in view of the considerations mentioned in paragraph 4 above;

9. Subject to the guidance of the Inter-Governmental Committee, the Programme will be carried on by a joint FAO/United Nations administrative unit located at FAO Headquarters in Rome and reporting to both the Director-General and the Secretary-General, with the costs of administration and operation under this resolution to be met from contributions to the programme;

10. In the administration of the Programme attention should be paid to:
(a) Establishing adequate and orderly procedures on a world basis for meeting emergency food needs and emergencies inherent in chronic malnutrition (this could include the establishment of food reserves);
(b) Assisting in pre-school and school feeding; and
(c) Implementing pilot projects, with the multilateral use of food as an aid to economic and social development, particularly when related to labour-intensive projects and rural welfare;

11. Projects should be undertaken only in response to requests from the recipient country or countries concerned;

12. The administration of the proposed Programme will be require close co-operation, particularly on development projects, between FAO and the United Nations, as well as with appropriate United Nations agencies, and other appropriate inter-governmental bodies;

13. The Inter-Governmental Committee shall ensure that:
(i) In accordance with the FAO principles of surplus disposal and with the consultative procedures established by the Committee on Commodity Problems, and in conformity with the United Nations General Assembly resolution 1496 (XV), particularly
paragraph 9, commercial markets and normal and developing trade are neither interfered with nor disrupted;

(ii) The agricultural economy in recipient countries is adequately safeguarded with respect both to its domestic markets and the effective development of food production;

(iii) Due consideration is given to safeguarding normal commercial practices in respect to acceptable services.

In December 1994, WFP's governing body adopted the WFP Mission Statement, the first for an United Nations organization. The Mission Statement was based on a fundamental review of WFP's policies, objectives and strategies that involved member states of WFP, non-governmental organizations, United Nations and other agencies, academics and staff members. The WFP Mission Statement is to be considered as a living document that will be reviewed periodically.

(WFP 2007e)

WFP is the food aid arm of the United Nations system. Food aid is one of the many instruments that can help to promote food security, which is defined as access of all people at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life.¹ The policies governing the use of World Food Programme food aid must be oriented towards the objective of eradicating hunger and poverty. The ultimate objective of food aid should be the elimination of the need for food aid.

Targeted interventions are needed to help to improve the lives of the poorest people - people who, either permanently or during crisis periods, are unable to produce enough food or do not have the resources to otherwise obtain the food that they and their households require for active and healthy lives.

Consistent with its mandate, which also reflects the principle of universality, WFP will continue to:

* use food aid to support economic and social development;
* meet refugee and other emergency food needs, and the associated logistics support; and
* promote world food security in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations and FAO.

The core policies and strategies that govern WFP activities are to provide food aid:

* to save lives in refugee and other 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, particularly through labour-intensive works programmes.

In the first case, food aid is essential for social and humanitarian protection. It will be used in a way that is as developmental as possible, consistent with saving lives. To the extent possible, the provision of relief food aid will be coordinated with the relief assistance provided by other humanitarian organizations. In the second case, food aid is a pre-investment in human resources. In the third, it uses poor people's most abundant resource, their own labour, to create employment and income and to build the infrastructure necessary for sustained development.

WFP is well placed to play a major role in the continuum from emergency relief to development. WFP will give priority to supporting disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation and post-disaster rehabilitation activities as part of development programmes. Conversely, emergency assistance will be used to the extent possible to serve both relief and development purposes. In both cases the overall aim is to build self-reliance.

In carrying out its mandate, WFP will concentrate on what it is best suited to do with the resources available as cost-effectively as possible. WFP will focus on those aspects of development where food-based interventions are most useful. It will make all necessary efforts
to avoid negative effects on local food production, consumption patterns and dependency on
food aid. WFP will continue to play a major and significant role in providing transport and
logistics expertise and assistance to ensure rapid and efficient delivery of humanitarian aid.

WFP's multilateral character is one of its greatest strengths. WFP will exploit its capability to
operate virtually everywhere in the developing world, without regard to the political orientations
of governments, and to provide a neutral conduit for assistance in situations where many donor
countries could not directly provide assistance. WFP will provide services: advice, good offices,
logistic support and information; and support to countries in establishing and managing their
own food assistance programmes.

WFP, on request, will provide bilateral services to donors, UN agencies and NGOs on the basis
of full cost recovery. These will be administered and accounted for separately. Such services
will complement WFP's regular operations to the extent possible.

WFP will concentrate its efforts and resources on the neediest people² and countries in
accordance with the CFA's decision to provide at least 90 percent of WFP's development
assistance to low-income, food-deficit countries and at least 50 percent of its development
assistance to the least developed countries by 1997.

WFP will ensure that its assistance programmes are designed and implemented on the basis of
broad-based participation. Women in particular are key to change; providing food to women
puts it in the hands of those who use it for the benefit of the entire household, especially the
children. WFP assistance will aim to strengthen their coping ability and resilience.

To be truly effective, food aid should be fully integrated into the development plans and
priorities of recipient countries and coordinated with other forms of assistance. WFP's starting
point is the national policies, plans and programmes of developing countries, including their
food security plans. WFP will pull together its activities in an integrated way at the country
level so that it can respond to urgent needs as they occur while retaining core development
objectives. The country strategy note, where this exists, should provide the framework for an
integrated response by the United Nations system. In some special cases WFP will adopt a
multi-country or regional approach. particularly for the provision of humanitarian assistance.

No single agency has either the resources or the capacity to deal with all the problems of hunger
and underdevelopment. Hence the importance WFP attaches to collaboration with other
agencies, particularly with its parent bodies, the United Nations and FAO. WFP will continue to
work closely with the United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs, UNHCR, other
relevant agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the response to emergencies
and humanitarian crises. WFP will also collaborate closely with the Rome-based United Nations
food and agriculture agencies, FAO and IFAD, especially in using food aid for achieving
household food security. WFP will continue to forge effective partnerships of action with the
World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, regional bodies and institutions, bilateral
donors and NGOs in support of economic and social development.

WFP will play its part as an active member of the United Nations system to bring the issue of
hunger to the centre of the international agenda. In its dialogue with recipient governments and
the aid community, WFP will advocate policies, strategies and operations that directly benefit
the poor and hungry.

¹ FAO/WHO (1992) International Conference on Nutrition
² Normally, poor and hungry people are those who earn less than the equivalent of one dollar a
day, or who allocate the majority of their household budget to food.

Source:(WFP 2007e).
Appendices

APPENDIX 7 – GLOBAL FOOD AID FLOWS

A7.1 Trends in Food Aid by Volume
Record commodity prices in 2007 have also impacted on food aid, reducing the volumes available for given dollar allocations. Also transport and handling costs have increased dramatically. Though these have been relatively short-term factors, the long term has seen a steady decline in global food aid flows as Chart A7.1 shows. 2007 levels are the lowest since reliable record keeping began in 1961 (INTERFAIS/WFP 2008, 1).

Chart A7.1

Global Food Aid Deliveries by Volume, 1990-2007

Data Source: (INTERFAIS/WFP 2008, 1).
Note the spike in 1999 came because of large increases in program (government to government aid) from the US to Russia in the context of an economic crisis in the latter country, and grain surpluses in the former (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 28–31; Webb 2003).

A7.2 Food Aid as Proportion of ODA, Agricultural trade
Food aid has declined steadily and significantly as a proportion of Official Development Assistance (ODA) since the early 1960s. From constituting 22% of ODA in 1965 (Webb 2003, 2), and still over 13% of ODA in 1971, since 1995 it has averaged less than 2% of ODA (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 6–7).

Similarly, viewed as a proportion of agricultural trade, food aid has shrunk steadily over the last forty years. Table A7.1 shows that cereal food aid deliveries as a percentage of
annual world cereal production and imports in the last five years have averaged less than half the proportions of the early 1990s.

### Table A7.2: Cereal Food Aid Deliveries as % of World Cereal Production and World Cereal Imports – Annual Averages, Three Five Year Periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>% of Production</th>
<th>% of Imports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1991-1995</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997-2002</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2007</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note Barrett and Maxwell argue that looking at cereals rather than all commodities tends to overstate food aid as proportion of agricultural production and trade. Nevertheless they acknowledge the proportions are very small either way, and the trend has been clearly one of decline (Barrett and Maxwell 2005, 260, fn6).

### A7.3 Food Aid Channels

Food aid flows are defined in terms of three channels: Bilateral, Multilateral (more than 95% of which is through the WFP, the balance being through other UN Agencies such as UNICEF and UNHCR), and NGOs.

Multilateral food aid started from a low base in the 1960s, when bilateral food aid was the dominant channel. In 1979 just 5% of food aid was channelled through WFP. By 1989, the proportion channelled through WFP had increased to 23% (WFP 2000, 12), a trend that has continued into the 21st century (see Chart 7.3 below).

Thus, while there has been long term decline in global food aid flows, a disproportionate amount of this decline has occurred in bilateral food aid, with the significance of multilateral food aid and the role of the WFP increasing.

### Table A7.3 Food Aid Deliveries 2003–07 (million tons)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Food</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aid deliveries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of which WFP share is</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (INTERFAIS/WFP 2008, xi).
Appendices

Chart A7.3

Food Aid Deliveries by Channel, Selected Years 1991-2007

Data Sources: (INTERFAIS/WFP 2001; INTERFAIS/WFP 2008, xi; WFP 1996, 27).

A7.4. Food Aid Procurement

Food procurement from developing countries was first promoted at the World Food Conference in 1974, which called for “improved policy for food aid” and urged donor countries to provide cash resources for commodity purchases in developing countries. In 1979, the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes (CFA) adopted Guidelines and Criteria for Food Aid Programmes, which recommended triangular purchases with a view to diversifying food aid to suit beneficiary consumption habits. The Food Aid Convention also encourages the provision of cash resources for local and triangular purchases. (WFP 2006e, 8).

Food aid procurement modalities are behaving more and more consistently with the international feed-the-hungry norm’s emphasis on the moral claim of developing country producers. There has been a steady, if somewhat slow, shift from direct supply of commodities from rich agricultural exporting countries towards procurement from developing countries. This trend has increased (most recently as shown in Chart A7.4) with policy shifts from major donor sources such as Europe, Australia, Japan and Canada from the mid-1990s, and the increasing importance of multilateral food aid:

The likelihood that food aid is procured locally or regionally is significantly higher when food aid is channelled multilaterally rather than through NGOs or bilaterally. (INTERFAIS/WFP 2008, 10).
Chart A7.4

Percentage of Food Aid Procured in Developing Countries, 1991-2007


(See Appendix 8 for data on WFP procurement patterns.)
Appendices

APPENDIX 8 – WFP FOOD AID

A8.1 WFP Food Aid by Category
Chart A8.1a shows the overall trends in the volumes of WFP food aid since 1982, and the relative shares of Development and Relief respectively. The category of Relief incorporates Emergency Operations and Protracted Relief and Rehabilitation Operations.

Chart A8.1a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WFP Food Assistance by Category 1982-2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Thousand tons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thousand tons</td>
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<tr>
<td>4500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4000</td>
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<tr>
<td>3500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Years

Dev. Proj
Total Relief
Total

Data Sources: (Ingram 2006, 356; INTERFAIS/WFP 2008, ix, 22).
Note – the data in Ingram (2006) for Table 1 on p355 has been transposed with the data for Table 2 on p356. The data used here appears on p356, but is labelled as Table 2, concerning staff employment.

Chart A8.1b shows the relative shares of contributions for Development and Relief between 1990 and 1999, the period when the WFP switched from being a development agency with some relief work on the side to becoming a relief agency with some development work on the side.
Appendices

Chart A8.1b
CONTRIBUTIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT AND RELIEF 1990–1999

Source: (WFP 2000, Annex VI).
NFIs – Non Food Items
EMOPs – Emergency Operations
PRROs – Protracted Relief and Rehabilitation Operations

A8.2 WFP Procurement from Developing countries

Procurement of food from developing countries falls into two categories – triangular transactions, in which a cash donation from a donor is used to purchase food in a developing country for deployment as aid to a third, recipient country; and local purchasing in which the food is purchased ‘locally’ within the recipient country (in a region not affected by food insecurity). In 2006 WFP estimated that despite increases in local purchasing they still only accounted for a third of total procurement and ‘usually less than half of procurement from developing countries’ (WFP 2006e, 10).

From 2001–04, procurement from developing countries averaged 62% of the WFP’s total procurement (WFP 2006e, 10), though as Table A8.2 shows, such procurement has long been established as the majority mode of WFP purchasing.

Table A8.2 Developing countries as source of WFP purchases (%) 1990–97

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (WFP 2001a, 8 Chart 1).
Note – ‘The [1997] substantial increase in overall purchases and the decline in the percentage of procurement from developing countries is mainly due to a fundamental change in how Canada's contribution to WFP is made. Traditionally, the Canadian Government purchased cereals from the Canadian Wheat Board for their in-kind cereal contributions to WFP. However, starting in 1997, WFP was requested to effect the purchases from the Canadian Wheat Board on behalf of the Government of Canada. Therefore, the [decline in] percentage share of purchases from developing countries in
the 1997 figures is less dramatic in substance than a superficial reading of the chart would suggest.’ (WFP 2001a, 4).

In a further pointer to the complexities of procurement measures, and the way in which specific operations can distort short-term figures, a 2006 policy paper reported on WFP’s food procurement as follows:

WFP’s total food procurement has increased since 2000 and reached particularly high levels in 2003/04 because of increased cash contributions for the Iraq operation. Of 5.4 million mt [metric tons] of food delivered in 2004, 3.6 million mt were purchased – 1.5 million mt of which were for the Iraq operation. The value of WFP food procurement in 2004 was US$1.1 billion, of which US$310 million was for Iraq. The number of countries from which WFP procures also increased, from 78 in 2001 to 91 in 2004. Of the total amount procured, slightly more than one third was purchased through Headquarters and the remaining two thirds through country and regional offices.

WFP’s food purchases in developing countries grew from an average of US$63.4 million in the early 1980s to US$90.6 million in 1990, reaching a current high of US$683.7 million in 2004. This high can be attributed to the Iraq operation, for which most procurement was from nearby developing countries. (WFP 2006e, 8–9).
A9.1 Major Recipients

Whilst there is a lot of stability to the list of major donors - or ‘traditional donors’ as the WFP describes them, there has been considerable change to the major recipients of WFP food aid over the decades. Asia was the most significant recipient region during the 1960s and 1970s, with India, Bangladesh and China receiving significant food aid. In the early 1990s, with the disruption associated with the break up of the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe briefly became a significant recipient region.

Similarly, the significant contemporary presence of the Republic of Korea and China as donors is based on specific food aid assistance both countries are providing to the DPRK, and some of the spike in food aid flows in 2001-2005 relates to the ill-fated oil-for-food program for Iraq, and food aid associated with the war in Iraq. Recipient flows are also commonly influenced by relief associated with natural disasters, such as the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004 or the Pakistan earthquake in 2005.

According to the WFP’s food aid monitoring service, INTERFAIS, in 2007 65 percent of multilateral food aid was delivered to sub-Saharan Africa, 21 percent to Asia, 9 percent to the Middle East and North Africa, 3 percent to Latin America and the Caribbean and 2 percent to Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

The major recipient countries of multilateral food aid remained unchanged [from 2006] in 2007. With the exception of [Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea] DPRK, they also were the major recipients of emergency food aid. Sudan received 14 percent of multilateral food aid, Ethiopia 10 percent and Kenya, Uganda and the Occupied Palestinian Territory 7 percent each. Altogether, they accounted for 45 percent of the multilateral food aid. The remaining 55 percent was distributed among 76 countries. (INTERFAIS/WFP 2008, 9–10).
A9.2 Major donors
Chart A9.2a shows the major donors to global food aid over the ten years to 2005.

Data Source: (Hanrahan and Canada 2006, Appendix Table 1, 5).

While the US dominated food aid donations over the period with just under 60% of the total, as Chart A9.2b shows, from year to year the proportion of food aid from the US varied from between 43.3% and 69.3%, though it was always easily the largest single donor. Nevertheless, the US dominates all three channels as a donor. It is the only country which gives more in bilateral food aid than multilateral food aid (Barrett and Maxwell 2005). Also,

The United States is the principal donor that relies on NGOs to channel food aid. In 2007, 88 percent of food aid channelled through NGOs was provided by the United States, increasing from 79 percent in 2006. In terms of quantity discharged, this corresponds to 1.2 million tons of food. The other donors channelling food aid through NGOs were the European Union (European Commission and Member States: 6 percent), the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (3 percent) and the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC) (2 percent). (INTERFAIS/WFP 2008, 12).
INTERFAIS now reports on Europe collectively as the second most significant food aid donor after the US. Though individual European states still donate food aid separately, the European Commission (EC) itself is the largest component of the EU donor category.

WFP aid sources are similarly dominated by the US, EU and Japan as show in Charts A9.2c and A9.2d.

Data Source: (Hanrahan and Canada 2006, Appendix Tble 1, 5).
Chart A9.2c

Food Aid Contributions to WFP, 1996-2005

Data Source: (Hanrahan and Canada 2006, Appendix Table 2, 6).

Chart A9.2d

US Contributions to WFP as percentage of total WFP Contributions 1996-2005

Data Source: (Hanrahan and Canada 2006, Appendix Table 2, 6).

However, while the US has averaged approximately 59% of global food aid donations in the decade to 2006, its proportion of multilateral food aid donations is under 48%, and in 2007 dropped beneath 40% for the first time since 1998: The five major donors in 2007 accounted for 85% of WFP resources as shown in Table A9.2.
Table A9.2 WFP Major Donors by proportion of contributions, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>US</th>
<th>EU</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Japan</th>
<th>Australia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: (INTERFAIS/WFP 2008, 10).

The European Commission contributes over 30% of food aid donations from the European Union, with EU member states donations aggregated together making the balance of EU donations. The most significant European state donors include Germany, the Netherlands and the UK (each with over 10% of EU donations) as Chart A9.2e shows.

Chart A9.2e

Data Source: (Hanrahan and Canada 2006, Appendix Table 2, 6).
Appendices

A9.3 WFP Donations by Type
Chart A9.3 shows a significant increase in the proportion of resources donated as cash to the WFP from around the end of the 1980s, after it had spent its first thirty years struggling with regular cash crises (WFP 2000, 12-3). This period is also linked to the resolution of the conflicts with FAO, and the recommitment of the US to a clear leadership role in the IFAR.

Chart A9.3

CASH AND IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS TO WFP

Source: (WFP 2000, Annex IV).
APPENDIX 10 – US AGRICULTURAL TRADE PATTERNS

A10.1 US Agricultural Trade
The following charts show the complex changes to US agricultural production and trade over the last 40 years, and the diversity of changes in the different commodity sectors, together with an aggregate trend towards a less significant role in global agricultural exports.


Source: (USDA 2006, 9, Fig.7).
Table A10.1 US Farm Exports and Production shares by Commodity (1961-2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share of U.S. Production Exported</th>
<th>Wheat</th>
<th>Cotton</th>
<th>Rice</th>
<th>Corn</th>
<th>Soybeans</th>
<th>Broilers</th>
<th>Beef</th>
<th>Pork</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average over</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-69</td>
<td>53.8%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-79</td>
<td>57.8%</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>58.9%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-89</td>
<td>58.9%</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-99</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
<td>46.0%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-05</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td>49.7%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share of World Production</th>
<th>Wheat</th>
<th>Cotton</th>
<th>Rice</th>
<th>Corn</th>
<th>Soybeans</th>
<th>Broilers</th>
<th>Beef</th>
<th>Pork</th>
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<tr>
<td>Average over</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-69</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>67.6%</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-79</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>67.5%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-89</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>55.5%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-99</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>40.3%</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-05</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>40.8%</td>
<td>39.4%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Share of World Exports</th>
<th>Wheat</th>
<th>Cotton</th>
<th>Rice</th>
<th>Corn</th>
<th>Soybeans</th>
<th>Broilers</th>
<th>Beef</th>
<th>Pork</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average over</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-69</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
<td>87.6%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-79</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>67.8%</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-89</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>67.4%</td>
<td>74.7%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-99</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>67.2%</td>
<td>62.8%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-05</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>63.1%</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (USDA 2006, 10, Table 1).
Appendices

**US Share of World Agricultural Exports**

For all the post-war pattern of global dominance of the US as an agricultural producer and exporter, and the hegemonic role of the US in the international food aid regime, there are complex fluctuations and long-term shifts in the nature of the US role in the international agricultural economy. For example, the USDA reported in 2006 as follows:

Throughout much of the 1970s and 1980s, U.S. agricultural export growth was centered on bulk commodities to food- and feed-deficit markets such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the former Soviet Union. But global trade in consumer-oriented/high-value products also grew rapidly during that period, as consumers in high-income countries demanded more foreign food products. U.S. exports of high-value products—meats, fruits and vegetables, dairy products, and processed foods—expanded rapidly. Through the mid-1990s, these products accounted for an increasing share of growth in U.S. agricultural exports. However, since the mid-1990s, growth in both global and U.S. processed food trade has slowed, and bulk agricultural commodities still account for almost 40 percent of U.S. agricultural exports... (USDA 2006, 11).

**Chart A10.1b US share of world agricultural exports**

![Chart showing US share of world agricultural exports](image)

Source: (USDA 2006, 12, Fig.9).
**A10.2 US Food aid as proportion of total US exports**

As the US has shifted away from the pattern of the 1950s and 1960s of granting or lending on concessional credit terms large quantities of bilateral program food aid to an increasing emphasis on grants through multilateral and NGO channels, the proportion of its agricultural exports described as ‘food aid’ has decreased. Charts A10.2a and A10.2b show this trend in relation to wheat.

**Chart A10.2a**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>89/90</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90/91</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91/92</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>92/93</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>94/95</td>
<td>40</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01/02</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/06</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: (USDA Economic Research Service 2007, 105, Table 27).

CCC – Commodity Credit Corporation
EEP – Export Enhancement Program

PL480 food aid allocations form a major part of the Concessional elements included in Chart A10.2a. The proportion of total wheat exports comprising PL480 wheat is in Chart A10.2b. While there is a downward trend in this Chart, it is not nearly as clear-cut or dramatic as in the Chart above which includes other government export credit and export enhancement programs. The drop in FY 1995/96 is probably related to the 1996 Farm Bill that changed the emphasis in farm subsidies away from government programs of that type.
Chart A10.2b

PL 480 wheat exports as percentage of total US wheat exports
1989/90-2005/06

Data Source: (USDA Economic Research Service 2007, 105, Table 27).
A11.1 US Food aid distribution by program
Apart from PL 480, other sources of authorized food aid in the US system include:

- The Agriculture Act 1949, s416(b) authorising donation of surplus commodities held by the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC administered by USDA);
- Food for Progress, created in 1985 under the Food for Progress Act to authorise food aid donations from Title I or CCC resources under s416(b) to countries engaged in economic liberalisation reform in their agricultural sector (administered by USDA);
- The McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition program, initially piloted 2000-2002 as the Global Food for Education Initiative (administered by USDA); and,
- The Bill Emerson Humanitarian Trust, known from its establishment in 1980 to 1998 as the Food Security Wheat Reserve, designed to supplement PL 480 appropriations when demand for food aid exceeds them (administered by USDA).

In Financial Year (FY) 2006, Expenditures in these various programs were dwarfed by the PL 480 Title II allocations, primarily in emergency food aid (65%) as set out in Table A11.1.

### Table A11.1: Total US International Food Assistance – Fiscal Year 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>$US Million</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PL 480 Title II (emergency)</td>
<td>$1,197</td>
<td>54.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL 480 Title II (non-emergency)</td>
<td>$342</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL 480 Title II Misc*</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal PL 480 Title II</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,839</strong></td>
<td><strong>83.8</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food for Progress (Title I funded)</td>
<td>$73</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food for Progress (CCC funded)</td>
<td>$147</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal Food for Progress</strong></td>
<td><strong>$220</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food for Education</td>
<td>$86</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL 480 Title I</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s416b</td>
<td>No allocation</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEH Trust</td>
<td>No allocation</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL 480 Title III</td>
<td>No allocation</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,195</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (USAID 2006, Appendix 10, 35).

^ Does not include the Farmer to Farmer program which rates as international food assistance, but in the form of technical assistance rather than food aid (expenditure in FY2006 of $10m)

* This refers to non-food support in the form of cash disbursements in association with food aid including $41.6m in cash for WFP, and $157.7m unallocated.
In Fiscal Year 2006, WFP was listed as a Co-operating Sponsor on approximately 79% of USAID Emergency activities. Funding totalling $US1.16 billion went to WFP projects (calculated from data in (USAID 2006, Appendix 5, 26-8). Of 44 WFP projects funded by USAID Title II Emergency activities, 36 were defined as PRRO, and only 8 as IEFR projects.

WFP received no USAID Title II Non-emergency activity funding (totalling $US341,128.1), which all went to various NGOs as cooperating sponsors (USAID 2006, Appendix 6, 29–31).

Table A11.2 Proportion of USAID/USDA Food Aid Projects with WFP as Cooperating Sponsor, FY2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>No. of Projects</th>
<th>No. with WFP as CS</th>
<th>% of funding for WFP projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title II Emergency Aid</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>44*</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title II Non-Emerg. Aid</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food for Progress (CCC purchased)</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McGovern-Dole IFECNP</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (USAID 2006, Appendices 5–8, 26–33).
*36 of the 44 were designated as Protracted Refugee Relief Operations (PRRO), and only 8 as International Emergency Food Reserve (IEFR) – hence Emergency Operations.