



FOOD AID TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA:

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

**Mark Thomas
Kay Sharp
Simon Maxwell
(Institute of Development Studies, Sussex)**

**Roger Hay
Stephen Jones
Alaine Low
(Food Studies Group, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford)**

**Edward Clay
Charlotte Benson
(Relief and Development Institute, London)**

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For further questions and comments regarding this paper,
please contact: Cristina.Ascone@wfp.org

ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	African Development Bank
CEAS	Centre for European Agricultural Studies (University of London)
CEC	Commission of the European Communities
CFA	Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes (governing body of the WFP)
CILSS	Comite permanent inter-etats de lutte contre la secheresse dans le Sahel (Permanent inter-state committee for drought control in the Sahel)
CRS	Catholic Relief Society
EEC	European Economic Community
FAC	Food Aid Convention
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation (United Nations)
FFW	food for work
FSG	Food Studies Group, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford
GAO	(United States) General Accounting Office
IDS	Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITSH	internal transport, storage and handling
IWC	International Wheat Council

KIT	Koninklijk Instituut voor de Tropen (Royal Tropical Institute), Amsterdam
LRCS	League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
MSF	Medecins sans Frontieres
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODA	Overseas Development Administration (UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office)
ODI	Overseas Development Institute, London
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RDI	Relief and Development Institute, London
SADCC	Southern Africa Development Co-ordination Conference
SSA	sub-Saharan Africa
UNDRO	United Nations Disaster Relief Organisation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WFP	World Food Programme (United Nations)

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PREFACE

This study was commissioned by the World Food Programme and the World Bank. Chapter V was prepared by the Relief and Development Institute, London, and Chapter II by the Food Studies Group, Oxford. The remaining parts of the study, and overall co-ordination and editing, were the responsibility of the Institute of Development Studies, Sussex.

The views expressed in the study are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions either of the organisations listed above, or of the World Bank and World Food Programme.

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SUMMARY

This review starts from the proposition that the conditions determining the need and use of food aid in sub-Saharan Africa are sufficiently specific and generalisable (despite the region's heterogeneity in many respects) to warrant separate examination. The guiding question is how far those conditions have in fact shaped the experience of food aid in Africa, and in what ways that experience conforms with or differs from the wider knowledge of food aid.

The **Introduction** gives a statistical overview and a tentative list of factors which might be expected to make food aid to sub-Saharan Africa both valuable, and exceptionally difficult to manage effectively and efficiently.

Chapter II considers the evidence on **market** and food aid in Sub-Saharan Africa. After discussing those characteristics of African production and marketing systems which may make them particularly vulnerable to disincentive effects of food aid, the chapter assesses the available case study material. Some evidence is found of market disruption in countries which are major recipients of food aid (although this could be avoided by improved planning and monitoring). In general, however, the review concludes that, as far as the limited data show, policy disincentives have been more apparent than direct market disincentives. The concluding sections report a strongly-held view in the literature that commitment by donors and recipient governments to appropriate food policies (including market restructuring) is a key element in the successful use of food aid.

Chapter III examines **project food aid**: under four headings food for work, supplementary feeding programmes, food reserves, and other end-uses. On the first two, the evidence underlines the importance of effective planning and administration. It is found that food for work programmes in sub-Saharan Africa have historically focused on relief, with a consequent lack of quantitative analysis of developmental impact. Current emphasis, however, is on employment-oriented development. The literature on supplementary feeding programmes is particularly thin, and there is very little quantitative analysis of impact. The evidence suggests that this is due partly to the minor quantity of food aid used for supplementary feeding, and partly to the difficulties of measurement inherent in such programmes. The potential role of supplementary feeding during structural adjustment, in protecting vulnerable groups and safeguarding human resources, is noted. The use of project food aid in food reserves has been limited and not encouraging. Other uses (institutional feeding and budgetary support for training programmes) are of minimal importance in sub-Saharan Africa.

Monetization is reviewed in **Chapter IV**. Programme food aid (the major category of

monetized food aid) is discussed at length, and the experience of sub-Saharan Africa assessed on, each of seven key aspects: reliability, additionality, economic appraisal, reaching the poorest, impact on tastes, dependence, and the importance of policy. Among the review's findings are that fluctuations in the supply of programme food aid have been particularly problematic for sub-Saharan African countries; that programme food aid has an increasing role in balance of payments support in the region; and that there has been almost no rigorous economic appraisal of the impact of programme food aid transfers to sub-Saharan Africa. An increasing awareness is found of the importance of the policy environment, resulting in a shift towards linking programme food aid with national food policies (particularly in the context of structural adjustment). The literature on monetized project food aid is also outlined, within the framework of the WFP classification. The generation of project-linked funds in this way is found to have particular potential to improve the effectiveness of projects in sub-Saharan Africa, where project failure due to lack of non-food resources has been common.

Chapter V gives an overview of the definitions, history, and potential advantages of **Triangular transactions, local purchases and exchange arrangements**. The literature and statistical sources on sub-Saharan African experience with these operations are found to be fragmentary, as interest in them is fairly new. However, the chapter reviews reports of recent donor experience (which focus on emergency operations in the Sahel, Southern Africa and the Sudan) and gives a full description of the "Zimbabwe Maize Train Operation" (the first large-scale triangular transaction in Africa). Overall conclusions on triangular transactions are that such operations can be, but are not always, cost-effective in terms of commodity price and transport costs; experience with delivery times and reliability has been mixed; but triangular transactions have been successful in supplying more appropriate commodities than those available from traditional suppliers (though quality problems sometimes arise). It is suggested that fuller assessment by donors is needed of the implications of triangular transactions for food security in the exporting countries. Local purchases are found to have potential in cutting delivery times and providing appropriate commodities, but to be difficult to evaluate. Evidence on their cost-effectiveness is small, and mixed.

Food emergencies are referred to throughout the review as a major factor in food aid to sub-Saharan Africa, and are the focus of **Chapter VI**. The literature in this area is found to be diverse and growing, though still thin in some key areas. After briefly discussing the nature of food emergencies in the region, the major part of the chapter focuses on food aid as emergency relief. It finds that a range of distribution modes have been used in sub-Saharan Africa, in varying degrees and with varying immediate objectives (free distribution; food-for-work; monetization; triangular transactions; and commodity exchanges). Logistical problems and improvements have been the subject of a large literature, the main lines of which are summarised

under timing; in-country distribution; targetting; and donor co- ordination. Finally the limited evidence on the impact of emergency food aid (both on human suffering and on the recipient economies) is indicated.

In the prevention of food crises, the literature puts considerable emphasis on the importance of accurate and early information, allowing pre-emptive action by governments and donors. Experience of the provision of food aid for national emergency reserves is limited.

Fundamentally, however, food crises will only be prevented through long-term action for development and food security. The need for developmental objectives to be integrated with relief actions in the context of Africa's protracted emergencies and fragile livelihood systems emerges clearly from the section on the "relief-development interface"

Finally, the limited case-study evidence on provision of food aid the for refugees and displaced people suggests that many of the same issues arise as in emergency aid in general.

The chapter's concluding section stresses five key themes: the relief-development link; the need for preparedness on the part of donors and recipients; the crucial role of information in early warning, monitoring, and evaluation; the search for flexibility through a variety of distribution modes; and the need for lessons to be absorbed and applied for future emergency operations.

Common themes and implications from each of the five central chapters are drawn together in the **Conclusion**. four major themes emerge. firstly, understanding of Africa's continuing agrarian crisis is central to any analysis of food aid in the region. Secondly, if food aid programmes are to contribute to the strengthening of national food systems (an increasingly common aim in policy statements), they must confront the problems of reliability, commodity selection, and disincentives. Thirdly, the targetting of food aid on the poorest people has been hampered by severe logistical constraints, high delivery costs (especially in emergencies), and the prevalence of "superior" commodities, rather than local staples, in aid baskets. Fourthly, the level of planning, management and data-collection demanded for the effective use of food aid in sub-Saharan African conditions has frequently strained local administrative capacity. The weakness of data systems underlies shortcomings in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of food aid programmes; while administrative failures have led to an increasingly large and controversial role for NGOs in the local implementation of food aid projects and emergency distributions. These four themes have far-reaching implications for the future of food aid to sub- Saharan Africa. The Conclusion ends with a preliminary list of guidelines which future food aid

programmes, in the light of the region's continuing agrarian crisis and of the experience reviewed in this study, should incorporate. Such programmes, it is suggested, must be: focused primarily on food security (particularly for the poorest people and countries); integrated into national food strategies; designed to support sustainable livelihoods for the rural poor; flexible in their mode of operation, reliable from year to year, and co-ordinated. The need for emergency food aid will remain, and further improvements must be sought in information, response time and preparedness. Above all, the central focus must be, not on surplus disposal (as in the past), but on development for the future.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Food aid has been the subject of a number of major literature surveys; none, however, has focused exclusively on sub-Saharan Africa. This study does not aim to go over the same ground as previous surveys, but to take them (especially Clay and Singer [1985]) as a starting point from which to consider the specific experience of Africa. It begins from the hypothesis that this experience is likely to be different from that of other parts of the world, because of a complex of economic, agro-climatic and political conditions broadly characteristic of African countries - in other words, that there are, as Clay and Singer found, a distinctive set of questions about the efficiency and effectiveness of food aid" in the sub-Saharan African context [Clay and Singer 1985, p.7]. This is a theme which underlies the whole review.

The introduction first gives a brief statistical overview of recent trends in food aid to sub-Saharan Africa; then outlines the factors which are likely to make Africa different in its need and use of food aid; and finally outlines the scope and structure of the review.

Statistical Overview

The proportion of world food aid received by sub-Saharan Africa leapt from about 5% in the early 1970s to about 50% by 1981 [Benson and Clay 1986, p.311]; and, as shown in Tables 1 and 2 below, the volume of food aid flowing into Africa has continued to increase substantially in the present decade. The two tables show a marked rise in cereal and non-cereal food aid in the crisis years of 1983 to 1985. In Table 1 (cereal food aid) the break-down into the three categories of emergency, programme and project aid makes this link explicit. Emergency food aid rose from 24.2% of the total in 1980/81 to 48.05 % in 1984/85; and in 1986/87, as the emergency eased, total cereal food aid fell (though, significantly, to a level still above that of the pre-emergency years). The relatively minor role of programme aid (34.8% of cereal food aid to sub-Saharan Africa in 1986/87, compared with 54.8% worldwide) is distinctive.

TABLE 1 CEREAL FOOD AID TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

TABLE 2 NON-CEREAL FOOD AID TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA (LOW INCOME, FOOD DEFICIT COUNTRIES)

YEAR	TONS		TOTAL	%	
	EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE	REGULAR		EMER.	REG.
1980/81	458,300	480,200	938,500	49.26	50.74
1981/82	429,200	438,200	867,400	49.48	50.52
1982/83	421,200	440,200	861,400	48.90	51.10
1983/84	482,200	436,200	918,400	52.51	47.49
1984/85	2,074,200	1,320,200	3,394,400	61.13	38.87
1985/86	1,438,200	1,121,200	2,559,400	56.23	43.77

Source: WFP 1988a

YEAR	SEYCHELLES	CHILE	VIETNAM	GUINEA
1970	55,764	5,051	54,380	5,333
1980	62,361	2,152	40,450	2,027
1981	89,320	5,051	34,721	2,882
1982	21,311	1,870	27,100	2,341
1983	62,174	1,045	58,100	2,029
1984	102,312	2,125	100,200	2,125
1985	102,322	2,264	100,058	2,264

Table 1 Source: WFP 1988a

Table 2 Source: FAO 1986c (Tables 16 and 17)

Table 3 looks in detail at the distribution of cereal food aid in one year (1986/87). It is striking that thirty-four of the forty-one Sub-Saharan African countries listed are, by the WFP classification, "low income, food deficit" countries - a point underlined below. The distribution among countries (listed in order of tons of cereal aid received) again suggests the importance of emergencies: Sudan, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Somalia, four of the countries worst-hit by recent crises, together received 61.2% of cereal food aid to Sub-Saharan Africa in 1986/87. Other points in the table, however, suggest that need is far from the only factor determining distribution. Chad, also severely affected by the 1984/85 crisis, is low on the list. Botswana and Mauritius are among the top ten recipients in per capita terms, despite their relatively high income per capita. These figures and observations only scratch the surface of the subject; but they give some basic background against which to consider the issues raised by the literature.

TABLE 3 CEREAL FOOD AID TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 1986/87

TABLE 1 GLOBAL FOOD AID TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, 1988/89						
	EREAL FOOD AID (million kg)	FOOD AID AS % OF TOTAL	ESTIMATED % DEF	POPULATION (million)	FOOD AID PER CAPITA (kg)	GDP PER CAPITA (\$US)
LOW INCOME, FOOD DEFICIT COUNTRIES						
SUDAN	254.1	25.2	20.2	22.0	10.8	220.0
ETHIOPIA	234.1	18.1	19.2	42.0	12.7	100.0
MAURITANIA	209.0	16.3	16.2	14.0	11.0	110.0
SOMALIA	144.0	4.2	11.2	5.5	10.3	100.0
ZAMBIA	112.0	3.7	14.0	5.0	10.4	100.0
MAURITANUS	109.0	3.0	10.4	10.0	10.3	100.0
KENYA	106.0	7.5	7.0	21.2	7.0	100.0
GUINEA	90.0	2.9	7.0	6.0	10.0	100.0
SENEGAL	80.0	1.0	7.0	11.0	11.0	100.0
PAKISTAN	72.0	2.0	7.0	11.0	10.0	100.0
GHANA	58.0	2.0	11.0	11.0	10.0	100.0
ANGOLA	50.0	2.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	100.0
CAPE VERDE	39.0	1.0	10.0	0.3	100.0	100.0
TANZANIA	35.0	1.0	10.0	23.0	7.4	100.0
ZAMBIA	34.0	1.0	10.0	11.0	10.0	100.0
SIERRA LEONE	32.0	1.0	10.0	4.0	10.0	100.0
LESOTHO	30.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
MAURITIUS	30.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
BURKINA FASO	22.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
CHAD	18.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
GHANA	15.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
GUINEA	15.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
GUINEA BISSAU	10.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
LIBERIA	8.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
LIBERIA	8.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
U.A.R.	8.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
TOGO	5.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
SWAZILAND	2.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
BURUNDI	1.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
LIBERIA	1.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
EGYPT, GUINEA	1.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
UNITED STATES	0.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
ALGERIA	0.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
OTHER COUNTRIES						
EGYPT	36.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
ZIMBABWE	27.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
MAURITIUS	14.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
MAURITIUS	9.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
COMOROS	2.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
CONGO	1.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
BANGLA	0.0	1.0	10.0	1.0	10.0	100.0
TOTALS	3650.7	100.0				

Sources: WFP 1988; World Bank 1988e; United Nations 1988

Is Africa Different?

Sub-Saharan Africa is by no means homogeneous. Its forty-five states and vast territory encompass huge variety in economy, climate, resources, political structure, and so on. Particularly important in the context of food aid is the existence within the region of both food-importing and food-exporting countries (and, often, regional food surpluses and deficits within countries). Generalisations, therefore, should be taken with an implicit caveat. Nevertheless, there are a number of characteristics frequently found in the countries of sub-Saharan Africa which combine to make them particularly vulnerable, both to chronic food insecurity and to severe and frequent food crises; and to make it difficult to deal effectively with these problems.

1. Agro-climatic conditions in large parts of the continent (notably the semi-arid Sahelian belt) make agriculture precarious, and productivity low even in good years [Mellor 1987].

2. Recurrent droughts underline the environmental vulnerability of many areas.
3. Levels of endemic malnutrition are high [UNICEF].
4. Populations are often dispersed over large areas [Curtis 1988], making it difficult both to monitor their situation and to reach them with developmental inputs or relief.
5. Pastoralism is common and requires tailored solutions.
6. The physical infrastructure, notably the transport system, is extremely weak in most of the poorest and therefore most vulnerable countries.

Compounding these more or less "natural" handicaps is a range of policy problems associated with external pressures and internal administrative and institutional weaknesses:

7. Investment in agriculture has been generally neglected [Shapouri et al 1986; Eicher and Staatz 1985; Mellor 1987].
8. State administrative structures tend to be weak and short of skills and resources [Shapouri et al 1986; WFC 1985; Curtis 1988]; yet public sector involvement in agriculture has been high [Hopkins 1988; Curtis 1988].
9. Agricultural extension services suffer from the same problems of weak staffing and under-resourcing.

10. Scientific institutions are weak and there is a lack of research on food crops [Eicher 1988; WFC 1985; ADC 1982].
11. The perennial problem of poor or non-existent data stems in large part from these weaknesses.
12. Many sub-Saharan African countries are heavily indebted and economically vulnerable, over-dependent on commodity export revenues.
13. Dependency on food imports and food aid is growing.
14. Unstable food markets, with significant fluctuations both in supply and demand, are characteristic of the region.

Finally, Africa adds to these many problems a high level of instability and upheaval.

15. 15. War and civil conflict in many areas has caused or exacerbated severe food shortages and long-term disruption of agricultural production.
16. 16. Refugees from war or conflict, and people displaced by drought and other disasters, are a major problem in Africa. There are estimated to be about five million refugees in Africa.

None of these points, of course, is new. Indeed, they are all depressingly familiar, as is their overall result. The very high proportion of African countries which fall into the "low income, food deficit" bracket has already been commented on. The region includes a large number of countries with structural food deficits for which, even under optimistic assumptions about food production, food imports will remain substantial for many years [Shapouri et al 1986]. Cereal production actually fell in sub-Saharan Africa in 1987, and import requirements for 1987/8 were estimated by FAO to have risen by 25% [WFP 1988a p. 13]. This implied a likely food aid requirement of 4.6 million tons, a rise of 43% over the previous year [WFP 1988a]. Yet many of the same factors which make food aid vital, and often urgent, also make it exceptionally difficult to use effectively and efficiently.

Scope and Structure of the Review

The present review validates Clay and Singer's prediction that Sub-Saharan Africa would be a "growth area in food aid writing for the remainder of this decade" [Clay and Singer 1985, p.7]. Of the 362 references listed by them, only 29 are explicitly concerned with Sub-Saharan African countries; yet this survey, conducted only a few years later, found over 300 documentary sources of direct relevance to food aid in the region. Nevertheless, the literature remains extremely thin and inconclusive in many areas. Much remains to be done. This survey, which focuses primarily on European sources, represents a first attempt to construct an overview of the experience of food aid in Sub-Saharan Africa; and at least to formulate (though in too many areas not to answer) that "distinctive" set of questions" hinted at above.

The five main chapters of the review deal respectively with food aid and markets; project food aid (under its various end-uses); monetized food aid; triangular transactions and other "alternative" arrangements; and food emergencies. Each chapter begins with an overview of the topic, summarising, where relevant, the findings of earlier reviews of the wider food-aid literature. Underlying the review throughout is the question of the specificity of African experience with food aid: in what ways is it different? why? and what are the implications for the design and management of food aid programmes? Finally, these threads are drawn together in a concluding chapter, which refers back to the factors touched on in the introduction and suggests some directions indicated in the literature for the future of food aid in sub-Saharan Africa.

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TABLE 1 CEREAL FOOD AID TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

YEAR	TONS			%			
	EMERGENCY PROGRAMME	PROJECT	TOTAL	EMERG.	PROG.	PROJ.	
1980/81	458,000	953,000	485,000	1,896,000	24.16	50.26	25.58
1981/82	499,000	1,136,000	560,000	2,195,000	22.73	51.75	25.51
1982/83	421,000	1,150,000	859,000	2,430,000	17.33	47.33	35.35
1983/84	845,000	1,366,000	804,000	3,015,000	28.03	45.31	26.67
1984/85	2,463,000	1,386,000	1,113,000	4,962,000	49.64	27.93	22.43
1985/86	2,074,000	1,520,000	722,000	4,316,000	48.05	35.22	16.73
1986/87	1,458,000	1,131,000	662,000	3,251,000	44.85	34.79	20.36

Source : WFP 1988a

TABLE 2 NON-CEREAL FOOD AID TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA
(LOW INCOME, FOOD DEFICIT COUNTRIES)

YEAR	SKIM MILK POWDER	OTHER DAIRY	VEGETABLE OIL	BUTTER OIL
1979	56,784	5,611	34,035	6,322
1980	63,361	9,152	40,450	6,407
1981	86,910	6,761	54,001	9,869
1982	70,831	3,903	52,138	7,345
1983	60,124	3,846	55,362	5,086
1984	107,803	6,175	77,284	9,411
1985	103,922	15,324	136,812	19,383

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TABLE 3 CEREAL FOOD AID TO SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA 1986/87

	CEREAL FOOD AID (millions kgs.)	FOOD AID AS % OF TOTAL	CUMULATIVE % AGE	POPULATION (millions)	FOOD AID PER CAPITA (kgs.)	GNP PER CAPITA (\$US)
LOW INCOME, FOOD DEFICIT COUNTRIES						
SUDAN	864.1	28.2	28.2	22.6	38.2	320.0
ETHIOPIA	554.4	18.1	46.3	43.5	12.7	120.0
MOZAMBIQUE	309.1	10.1	56.4	14.2	21.8	210.0
SOMALIA	144.8	4.7	61.2	5.5	26.3	280.0
ZAMBIA	112.9	3.7	64.9	6.9	16.4	300.0
MADAGASCAR	109.5	3.6	68.4	10.6	10.3	230.0
KENYA	106.6	3.5	71.9	21.2	5.0	300.0
GUINEA	90.0	2.9	74.9	6.3	14.3	N.A.
SENEGAL	80.2	2.6	77.5	6.8	11.8	420.0
MALI	72.3	2.4	79.8	7.6	9.5	180.0
GHANA	62.4	2.0	81.9	13.2	4.7	390.0
ANGOLA	60.5	2.0	83.9	8.98	6.7	N.A.
CAPE VERDE	59.5	1.9	85.8	0.33	180.3	N.A.
TANZANIA	55.0	1.8	87.6	23.0	2.4	250.0
ZAIRE	54.9	1.8	89.4	31.7	1.7	160.0
SIERRA LEONE	42.8	1.4	90.8	3.8	11.3	310.0
LESOTHO	32.2	1.1	91.8	1.6	20.1	370.0
MAURITANIA	30.2	1.0	92.8	1.8	16.8	420.0
BURKINA FASO	22.2	0.7	93.6	8.1	2.7	150.0
CHAD	18.9	0.6	94.2	5.1	3.7	N.A.
RWANDA	15.2	0.5	94.7	6.2	2.5	290.0
UGANDA	15.0	0.5	95.2	15.2	1.0	230.0
GAMBIA	13.2	0.4	95.6	0.66	20.0	N.A.
GUINEA BISSAU	10.0	0.3	95.9	0.91	11.0	N.A.
NIGER	9.5	0.3	96.2	6.6	1.4	260.0
BENIN	7.5	0.2	96.5	4.2	1.8	270.0
C.A.R.	5.9	0.2	96.7	2.7	2.2	290.0
TOGO	5.5	0.2	96.9	3.1	1.8	250.0
SWAZILAND	2.0	0.1	96.9	0.67	3.0	N.A.
BURUNDI	1.7	0.1	97.0	4.8	0.4	240.0
LIBERIA	1.7	0.1	97.0	2.3	0.7	460.0
EQUAT. GUINEA	1.4	0.0	97.1	0.4	3.5	N.A.
COTE D'IVOIRE	0.0	0.0	97.1	10.7	0.0	730.0
NIGERIA	0.0	0.0	97.1	103.1	0.0	640.0
OTHER COUNTRIES						
BOTSWANA	36.0	1.2	98.2	1.1	32.7	840.0
ZIMBABWE	27.2	0.9	99.1	8.7	3.1	620.0
MAURITIUS	14.5	0.5	99.6	1.0	14.5	1200.0
MALAWI	9.8	0.3	99.9	7.4	1.3	160.0
CAMEROON	2.1	0.1	100.0	10.5	0.2	910.0
CONGO	0.0	0.0	100.0	2.0	0.0	990.0
GABON	0.0	0.0	100.0	1.0	0.0	3080.0
TOTALS	3060.7	100.0				

 [Back to where you came from](#)

II. MARKETS: STAYING WITHIN ABSORPTIVE CAPACITY.

II.1. Overview

Food available for domestic consumption has three sources: domestic production, commercial food imports and concessional food imports (food aid). Domestic food production comprises marketed surplus plus retentions for storage or consumption by producers. In most countries in sub-Saharan Africa an important distinction is that between officially marketed surplus sold to a parastatal marketing agency and sales in parallel or unofficial markets [Singh et al 1985]. Food aid may have market disincentive effects to the extent that it reduces domestic food production and sales by domestic producers, and a commercial displacement effect to the extent that it replaces commercial imports [Clay and Singer 1985].

Like other forms of aid, food aid is fungible in that it frees national resources, which would in its absence have been allocated to food production or purchase [Clay and Singer 1985; Sharpley 1986]. There is therefore a risk that there will be a policy disincentive effect, if food aid is used by recipient governments to support policies that are unfavourable to domestic food production and delays reforms which would otherwise have occurred [Clay and Singer 1985; von Braun and Huddleston 1988; Cassen 1986].

Food aid has been and remains one of the most frequently and heavily criticised forms of development assistance. Critics accuse food aid of undermining recipient food security directly by reducing domestic agricultural producer prices and causing market disincentive effects, and indirectly by encouraging dependence on concessional imports of food rather than the development of a national food production capacity [George 1977; Bennett and George 1987; Bovard 1988]. On the other hand, advocates of food aid have stressed its capacity to relieve poverty and hunger, and that the extra budgetary or foreign exchange resources provided to recipient governments may ease rather than hinder reform [Sharpley 1986; Clay and Singer 1985; Streeten 1987; Singer et al 1987].

In their 1985 Survey, Clay and Singer noted that "the debate on the economic impact of food aid on the national economy and agricultural production is inconclusive" [p. 27]. The complexity of the mechanisms by which food aid may affect domestic agricultural production, especially the influence on government policy-making makes the measurement of the impact very sensitive to the model used, even where data quality is good [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987]. However they did venture some limited conclusions on the evidence available, in particular that "massive disincentive effects do not seem to have occurred" and the "overwhelming normative conclusion" that governments have some margin for manoeuvre in making more effective use of food

aid" [p. 42]. Some experiences of food aid seem clearly to have been positive for domestic agriculture, with rapid increases in food production and graduation away from dependence on aid (e.g. Taiwan, S. Korea, Israel, India, Brazil) [von Braun and Huddleston 1988; Streeten 1987]. Clay and Singer noted in particular the often ignored success of massive food aid to Europe under the Marshall Plan.

There now appears to be a consensus that earlier fears of severe disincentive effects on domestic production particularly in South Asia were overestimates, due in part to simplistic theoretical reasoning, particularly the neglect of unofficial markets in determining average producer prices, the ability of farmers to switch crops in the face of reduced producer prices [von Braun and Huddleston 1988; Cassen 1986], and the ability of well articulated markets to reduce the localized effects of project or emergency aid [Clay in Curtis et al 1988]. In addition, government has a range of policies available to mitigate disincentive effects, for instance using counterpart funds raised from the sale of food aid to finance higher producer prices for farmers [Streeten 1987].

However as Clay and Singer stressed, most of the evidence on the impact of food aid has come from studies of the traditional major recipients of programme aid (mainly from the U.S.A. under PL 480) in South and East Asia (chiefly India and Bangladesh), Latin America and North Africa (Tunisia and latterly Egypt). For instance a 1979 review of 21 studies included only one sub-Saharan African case [Maxwell and Singer 1979]. Clay and Singer noted in 1985 that "the literature as yet contains few systematic assessments of the impact of food aid for many of these countries". It is not clear that lessons drawn from the experience of these countries (mainly in the 1960's and 1970's or earlier) can be applied in the very different conditions of Sub-Saharan Africa in the 1980's and beyond [Harriss 1988]. It is only recently that a literature of assessment and evaluation for Africa has developed, and it is still very small. For instance, there is little quantification of the costs of disincentive effects of food aid in the literature reviewed below: none of the studies of programme or emergency aid attempt it.

In the early 1960's, food aid to sub-Saharan Africa amounted to only 0.62 kg per person per year. By the early 1980's this figure had increased almost tenfold [Mellor 1987]. The volume has increased from 868,000 tons of cereals in 1976/7 to a peak of 4,954,000 tons in 1984/5 [CEC 1988b], and the sub-Saharan African share of world food aid receipts has risen, though the distribution between countries is very uneven and has fluctuated greatly [Benson and Clay 1986; Shapouri et al 1986]. At the same time agricultural performance in the region has been poor, lagging behind population growth [Rukuni and Eicher 1987]. The average rate of increase in agricultural production of 1.7% per annum from 1971- 85 compared with an all developing country average of 3.0%. In contrast, over the period 1961-70, sub-Saharan Africa's growth rate of 2.8% had been slightly above the developing country average [FAO

1987d]. There has also been a long-term deteriorating trend in cereal producer prices, particularly in the Sahel, which has not been apparent in other developing countries [FAO 1985]. Hence there is cause for concern about the impact of increased food aid to the region, as part of a broader concern about the development of SubSaharan African agriculture [Mellor et al 1987; World Bank 1988c].

II.2 Assessing the impact of food aid: A framework for analysis

A simple but important starting point is that aid (of any kind) is a transfer of income to the recipient. Consequently, the receipt of food aid will tend to boost aggregate demand in the recipient country, unless the food aid substitutes for other types of aid which would otherwise have been received. This income boosting effect will tend to increase demand both for domestically produced food and for commercial food imports. On the other hand, food aid will tend directly to increase domestic food availability for the recipient country (shifting the supply curve to the right).

At one extreme of the range of possible outcomes, the food aid increase may substitute completely for commercial imports. There need then be no adverse effect on domestic producer prices or domestic food production. The effect of the demand increase caused by the aid transfer could then be a net increase in producer prices and domestic production. This would in principle occur in a small open economy where domestic food prices are determined directly by world prices. At the other extreme in a closed market, food aid could substitute completely for domestic production [von Braun and Huddleston 1988].

These observations lead to the identification of several issues as of crucial importance. First, whether food aid is additional to other aid, or substitutes for it. Second, if food aid is additional, the distribution of the income transfer. It may be passed in whole by the recipient government to poor consumers by free food distribution, or the government may retain some or all of it by selling food below or at open market prices or using food for work schemes to finance the construction of publicly owned capital assets. In general, to the extent that the income increase accrues to poor food deficit households the demand effect on the food market will be greater [Mellor, 1987]. The method of distribution will also have implications for domestic production. For instance food for work schemes may reduce the labour available for agriculture. Third, whether food aid substitutes for commercial imports. To the extent that it does, its impact depends on the use made of the foreign exchange saved. As Clay and Singer emphasize, there is a trade-off between foreign exchange savings and budgetary support for the recipient government [Clay and Singer 1985]. Fourth, the responsiveness of producer prices to an increase in domestic food availability. Where there are dual markets, average prices reflecting actual trading possibilities for producers need to be used. Fifth, the responsiveness of domestic food production and marketed surplus to producer price changes. Sixth, the

responsiveness of demand for food to price changes, since even without an income increase, price elastic demand will partially offset a supply shift [Huddleston 1984]. The government policy stance and the type of aid (project, programme or emergency) have implications for all these questions [von Braun and Huddleston 1988].

Recent literature [Maxwell 1986a, 1986b, 1986c] has emphasised two particular factors in the analysis of the impact of food aid. First, that it is insufficient just to observe trends in producer prices. Some concept of the optimal price is required. Maxwell suggests that the import parity price (the cost of supplying imports to the market including all transport and other expenses), measured at the shadow exchange rate, is an appropriate bench-mark measure of opportunity cost [Maxwell 1986c]. Second, in countries with poorly developed transport and distribution systems or with administrative restrictions on internal food movements, local or regional markets may be poorly integrated and an analysis conducted at the national level may be misleading or incomplete. For instance food aid may have only a marginal impact on national food availability, but if it is distributed in isolated rural areas (as emergency relief or as part of a food for work or supplementary feeding project) it may have a dramatic effect on local and regional food availability. This will be particularly significant if disincentive effects within a market are non-linear or are only important above a threshold level [Maxwell 1986a]. Likewise, the distribution of cash in such fragmented markets will have only a limited impact on increasing food availability [Devereux 1988]. The sale of programme food aid in major cities will generally have less localised effects. Sometimes a wider perspective than the national is required, taking account of the danger of excluding surplus producers from natural export markets through reliance on food aid from outside the region. This applies, for instance, to the cases of Zimbabwe and Malawi in Southern Africa, and Kenya in the Horn of Africa [Green 1986b] (see chapter V).

II.3. African circumstances: implications for food aid

There are several reasons to fear that Africa may be particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of food aid. First, Africa's record of effective use of all kinds of aid is poor: this may be attributed at least in part to the continuing shortage of administrative and scientific expertise. As Eicher says "Africa's capacity to deal with its three basic food battles (increasing food production, reducing vulnerability to famine, and reducing poverty) is constrained by its political instability and early stage of scientific and institutional maturity" [Eicher 1988]. Second, African governments have historically placed a low priority (compared to Asian governments) on improving agricultural performance. For instance the median share of government expenditure allocated to agriculture was only 7.4% in 15 sub-Saharan African countries in 1978-80, while in Asia the share has been 20% or more [Mellor 1988a]. As in other developing countries government pricing policy tends to contain a bias against agriculture, which is more marked for export crops than for staple foods, but the

overall anti-agricultural bias is more marked for Africa than for Asian countries [FAO 1985]. The political constraints facing many African governments [Bates 1981] may increase the risk of policy disincentives, discouraging the allocation of additional resources to agricultural development. Third, there are specific characteristics of production and marketing systems which may increase the risk of disincentive effects. These characteristics may also suggest additional uses for food aid and ways in which it may be made more effective.

II.4. Food production and marketing characteristics in sub- Saharan Africa

Two fundamental features of food markets and production in sub- Saharan Africa need continually to be stressed. First, the diversity of experiences, systems and institutional arrangements. One aspect of this diversity is the variation in the share of domestic requirements met by local production. The degree of dependence on imports and food aid varies greatly both between countries and from year to year. For instance Ethiopia has been 95% self sufficient in cereals, but food aid supplies 80% of imports [Maxwell 1986c], Botswana imports 75% of its cereal requirements [Cathie and Herrman 1987], and Senegal imports 50% of its food with food aid 18% of imports [Maxwell 1986b]. Cereal imports per capita range from 145.4 kg per capita per year for Botswana to 2.1 kg for Uganda [CEC 1988b]. Second, the limited useful information available to researchers. Statistics on all aspects of African agriculture are often of dubious reliability and those for staple food production are particularly so: Lipton describes food output data for several countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including the four largest, as "almost worthless" [Eurostat News 1988]. They may have become even less accurate as the breakdown of parastatal marketing systems has reduced the officially marketed share of total production [Borton and Clay 1986; Berry 1984; Fones-Sundell 1987]. There has also been only very limited research on key aspects of the production and, particularly, the marketing systems in sub-Saharan Africa [Ross 1987], many of which are still in the process of major reform. As noted by Durojaiye and Aihonsu [1988],

"the formulation of staple-foodstuff marketing policies ... has been based largely on little or no information about the structure of the market, seasonal price behaviour of the foodstuffs and storage implications of such behaviour"

Lipton points out that this lack of usable information is the reflection of government priorities as well as of weak capacity [Eurostat News 1988].

Accepting these caveats, the following are frequently noted as significant characteristics of African foodgrain cultivation, compared in particular to (South) Asia:

(1) The seasonal pattern of production is unimodal in the semi-arid areas of the Sahel and Eastern and Southern Africa [Foeken and Hoorweg. 1988], and there is relatively little irrigation. Eicher [1988] notes that only 5% of arable land is irrigated, compared to 35% in Asia. This has strong implications for labour use. Mellor [1985] (see also Lele [1984]) argues that the:

"agro-climatic and technological conditions that dominate African agriculture tend to cause low labour productivity and a scarcity of labour in seasonal peaks. Thus in the short-run withdrawal of labour from food production causes a much more substantial decline in food production in Africa than in Asia."

This pattern of production is characterised by a high variance in yield (and area planted and production) between years [Koester 1986; Lele 1984], as with only one planting season it is vulnerable to climatic and other disruption. Seasonal food shortages are also characteristic and may have a disruptive effect on production [IDS Bulletin 1986; Kumar 1988c].

(2) Rural wage labour, though it is significant in some countries accounts for a smaller proportion of the labour supply than in (South) Asia or Latin America, and a high proportion of producers are subsistence oriented [Lele 1984; Ghai and Radwan 1983]. This reduces the flexibility of production response to incentives (although land may be relatively abundant [Mellor and Ranade, forthcoming]), and may imply an increased adverse impact on future output of food shortages, since poor nutritional status could lead to reduced planting [Ahmed and Mellor 1988; evidence for Zambia, Kumar 1988c].

(3) Supporting services including access to credit for farmers are under- developed [Lipton 1987]. For instance seed distribution networks have often been ineffective [Eicher 1988]. The dispersion of population and poorly developed infrastructure contribute to this, as does monopolization by inefficient parastatals. Consequently there is little use of more advanced technologies [Hollist and Tullis 1987; Mellor and Ranade forthcoming].

These characteristics have implications for the responsiveness of production to producer price incentives, which for sub-Saharan Africa is still a highly controversial issue and crucial for the assessment of the disincentive effects of food aid. While there is evidence for relatively high price elasticities of supply for individual crops [Bond 1983], the evidence in favour of a high price elasticity of aggregate production is not strong [Fones-Sundell 1987; Mellor and Ranade forthcoming; Streeten 1987; Kumar 1988b]. One commentator observes that the "data base is too weak and unreliable to be used in models which purport to measure the role of price policy" [Fones-Sundell 1987]. Since low producer prices have generally been

accompanied by other policies discriminating against agriculture, it is difficult to isolate the effects of different policies.

Recent literature emphasises the non-price constraints on agricultural production. Mellor and Ahmed argue that "in the absence of technological change . . . aggregate agricultural production is particularly unresponsive to prices" [Mellor and Ahmed 1988]. It is also emphasised that the whole pricing structure, especially the terms of trade between agriculture and industry [Krueger et al 1988; Bevan et al 1987], and the government policy stance [Rao 1989], are relevant in determining incentives rather than producer prices alone. Where improved price incentives have been combined with other supporting reforms, food production has shown the capacity to expand rapidly, most notably in Malawi and Zimbabwe [Eicher 1988; Bratton 1986]. Rukuni and Eicher [1987] conclude that the "hallmark of the maize expansion in SADCC's maize belt is a balanced package of technology, price incentives, and institutional improvements". A recent study of reforms in Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe concludes that "although price incentives are a necessary condition for increased agricultural output, they are not a sufficient condition" [Harvey 1988 p.237].

Sub-Saharan African food markets have generally been represented as characterised by pervasive government interventions generally aimed at ensuring urban food availability, leading to dual and segmented formal and informal markets [Singh et al 1985], with bans on unofficial inter-regional grain transport [Maxwell 1986c]. In several countries major reforms of marketing have been or are in the process of being carried out, but there is as yet little detailed evidence of the long-term effects of these changes [Harvey 1988; Thomas and Weidemann 1988]. Inefficient parastatal marketing as well as high transport costs due to poor infrastructure and dispersed populations leads to the observation of frequent wide spreads between consumer and producer prices. For instance one study found that farmers in Nigeria, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, and Sudan received on average 40-50% of the final consumer price compared to an average of 71-87% for four Asian countries [Ahmed and Rustagi 1985]. Even where parastatal marketing organisations have statutory monopolies, they often account for only a relatively small proportion of grain marketed. For instance it is estimated that in the Sahel region only 10% of grain produced has been marketed through official channels [Club du Sahel 1987b, p.305]. Consequently official purchase prices may not reflect the actual marketing opportunities for producers, who may be able to get better prices in the parallel market. On the other hand they may not receive the full value of the quoted official price, due to delays in payment. Maxwell [1986b] noted that in Senegal farmers often receive only half the floor price.

Parallel markets may be highly competitive [Club du Sahel 1985c; Morris 1988], and there is strong evidence that farmers' marketing decisions are price sensitive [Jabara

1985; Ateng 1987; Thomas and Weidemann 1988]. Rural markets are known in some areas to provide a significant proportion of food consumed by smallholders [Ateng 1987]. However there is a lack of reliable evidence about the degree of spatial integration of markets (spatially separate markets are integrated if prices differ between them only by the transport costs between the markets) [Harriss 1981; Ravallion 1987]. This is a severe omission if we wish to assess the likely effect of food aid distributed in rural areas and, also a central area of contention is the current disputes over the causation of famine. For instance, Sen's view that markets in Ethiopia during the famine of 1972-4 were relatively integrated [Sen 1981] has been challenged, with observed correlations between prices in different markets being attributed to movements of population rather than food [Seaman and Holt 1980; Devereux 1988]. A recent study argues that markets in Nigeria are well integrated [Durojaiye and Aihonsu 1988], while a study of Rwanda [WFP/ADB 1986a] found wide variation in prices according to production area, and time of year, despite it being a small country with a fairly good communication network and little government intervention.

Both official and parallel markets can exhibit instability on both the supply and demand sides. This occurs both over a seasonal cycle and between years, as limited storage capacity exists. On the supply side marketed surplus is a low proportion of grain production, and fluctuates much more than does production. In a crisis, as in the Sahel in the early to mid 1970's, the surplus may disappear. The resulting instability in urban supply has been identified as an important contributory factor to Africa's increased dependence on food aid [Harriss 1988].

From these characteristics of food production and marketing systems in sub-Saharan Africa can be drawn some implications for analyzing the effect of food aid on markets, and for the design of food aid policies. The diversity and lack of firm evidence about important elements of the system imply the need for great caution and careful monitoring of each individual experience. The instability in both production and marketing indicates that market capacities to absorb food aid without severe disruption may vary greatly both from year to year and over the seasonal cycle. Since the availability of food aid to individual countries also fluctuates markedly [von Braun and Huddleston 1988], there is a large risk of market destabilisation. This will be exacerbated to the extent that local food markets are poorly integrated. However the problem of seasonality indicates a role that well targeted and administered food aid could play in reducing the vulnerability of domestic consumption and production to disruption [Kumar 1988a].

II.5. Assessment of case studies

It is generally accepted both that food aid to sub-Saharan Africa is largely additional to financial and other forms of aid, and that it only partially replaces commercial

imports [Farzin 1988; Maxwell 1986b]. The additionality of food aid to other aid results from the large and continuing grain surpluses caused by agricultural price support policies in donor countries, particularly the U.S.A. and the E.E.C. [Singeret al 1987].

Among the major recipients of food aid in sub-Saharan Africa there is evidence of market disruption and policy disincentive effects. These countries have generally received large amounts of food aid for sale. For instance Somalia, which was self-sufficient in grains until the early 1970's, is now one of the major recipients of food aid and has become increasingly dependent on counterpart funds from the sale of food to finance general government expenditure. Over the period 1975-84, real producer prices for maize, sorghum and rice are estimated to have fallen by 6.25%, 8.3% and 20.5% per annum respectively and open market prices have fallen well below import parity, assisted by a sharp real appreciation in the exchange rate. Comparing 1970-9 with 1980-4, imports rose from 23.0% to 38.0% of domestic consumption (1970-9 to 1980-4). Over the same period food aid increased its share of imports from 20.3% to 51.7% [Farzin 1988]. There is also evidence that "nearly all Title I food deliveries to Somalia in 1985 and 1986 arrived at the worst possible time, the harvest months, and none at the best time, the critical hungry period" [AID Inspector General Audit, Jan 26 1987, quoted in Bovard 1988]. It is also argued that Sudan has been able to ignore the implications of a 50% fall in domestic wheat production and falls in producer prices for other crops due to the very large amounts of US emergency supplies received [Shapouri et al 1986]. As for Somalia, the timing of food aid arrivals in the Sudan has sometimes been inappropriate and has increased price instability [De Waal 1987], though it has also been argued that the disruption of the seasonal price pattern has reduced storage incentives [Buchanan-Smith 1988]. In Tanzania, which became a major recipient of bilateral programme aid after 1974/5 and from 1976-83 received 70% of its cereal imports as aid, there is a belief among donors that this has had policy reform disincentive effects, and that "food aid has been used to bolster inadequate and unsatisfactory agricultural policies", while the receipt of PL480 Title I aid has helped to increase national indebtedness [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987].

Tanzania was able to maintain low producer and urban consumer prices by subsidizing parastatal marketing and milling organizations [Stewart 1986]. An evaluation of European Community aid [Clay and Benson 1988] also notes that the average total elapsed time from the request for aid to its arrival was up to 23 months, and that the "agricultural calendar is not taken into account in determining time of arrival".

The experience of food aid projects directed towards the establishment of emergency and stabilization reserves using WFP food aid has also been generally disappointing [WFP 1985d reviews the experience], with some divergence of objectives between donors and recipient governments evident and severe flaws in the project designs. In

Tanzania the Emergency Grain Reserve was apparently used by the National Milling Corporation in Dar es Salaam as a normal working stock, and adequate records of its use were not maintained. A similar experience is documented for Niger, and in Mauritania a price stabilization reserve was exhausted by the production crisis from 1981-3. In the latter case, lack of flexibility in the terms of agreement prevented the release of the counterpart funds generated to other uses. In Botswana, the emergency reserve was judged successful in helping to deal with the post 1982 drought, but the emphasis on strategic storage rather than the encouragement of domestic production has been criticised for creating a "dependency syndrome" [Cathie and Herrmann 1987]. The rationale for and the design of the type of price and income stabilization policies which food aid has been used to support in the Sahel region has also been questioned, since it undermines incentives to move to a sustainable pattern of production and consumption [Gagnon 1987]. It has been argued that "the greatest peril to Sahelian development is the continued resuscitation of institutions that have no sure foundation in rural communities" [Club du Sahel 1985c] and that food aid to the Sahel has been excessive and unsuited to local requirements [Jost 1987 p.271].

Experience in some other countries receiving smaller quantities of food aid has been evaluated more positively. For instance in Rwanda it was found that pricing policies for food aid sales had not led to substantial divergence from international prices [WFP/ADB 1986a]. Kenya's receipts of programme aid since 1980 do not appear to have had major disincentive effects on either markets or policy [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987; Shapouri et al 1986]. Some other traditionally effective users of aid, such as Cameroon, have not received large enough quantities of food aid to have discernible macroeconomic effects [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987]. Evidence on the incentive effects of food for work projects has been generally positive [Cameroon Ministry of Agriculture 1986]. Botswana's food for work scheme has been carefully timed and wage rates have been set to avoid attracting workers away from agriculture. This scheme has played an important part in the country's widely recognised success in avoiding famine during the 1980's [Hay 1988]. The evaluation of food for work in Gambia also does not provide evidence for labour disincentives [Msuya 1986]. In Kenya, a study [Bezuneh et al 1988] found increased marketable surplus, labour demand, and household savings among participants in a food for work scheme. However, a study of Lesotho found that projects financed by food aid paid higher wages and offered longer-term employment than agriculture and were therefore more attractive to the agricultural labour force and that labour was attracted away from agriculture during the cropping season [Hunt 1988]. A survey of rural public works and food aid notes that overall assessments for Asia have been positive, but that the impact for sub-Saharan Africa is more problematic [Clay 1986]. There is little evidence that supplementary feeding projects as in Zimbabwe and Botswana have had significant disincentive effects [Green 1986].

In Ethiopia, considerable attention has been paid to the risk of disincentive effects at the local market level, since a high proportion of food aid has been distributed through emergency relief and food for work projects. Food for work projects have been judged to be reasonably successful in avoiding disincentive effects [Grannell 1986; Msuya 1986]. There is some evidence that participants in food for work schemes increased their marketed surplus [Maxwell 1986c]. While the purchasing and pricing policies of the parastatal marketing organization AMC may have disincentive effects (for instance the use of pan-territorial pricing, low procurement prices, subsidised wheat sales in urban markets, and restrictions on private grain movement), these policies are not due to the receipt of food aid since this has accounted for a relatively small proportion of national food availability [Maxwell 1986c]. Food aid has however been largely additional to commercial imports, since these have faced a binding foreign exchange availability constraint [Maxwell 1986c]. However, the expansion of emergency food aid distribution and sales from 1985 did have an effect on the free market (where approximately 75% of grain sales are estimated to take place). Maxwell concluded in 1986 that free market prices were still above import parity (evaluated at the shadow exchange rate), though AMC purchase prices were well below this level.

Increasingly, donor and recipient attention has been focused on linking food aid to a major restructuring of domestic food markets, often as part of an economy wide structural adjustment, for instance the conclusion of the 1986 World Food Programme! African Development Bank seminar was that:

"Food aid should be used especially to promote agricultural and rural development, increase productivity and generate employment and incomes" [WFP/ADB 1987].

A pioneering use of food aid was Mali's plan to restructure cereal pricing and marketing policies developed in 1981. The existing marketing structure catered for urban consumers, with private trade officially banned but operating in parallel markets, and was characterised by low producer prices, high consumer prices, and large losses for the parastatal marketing organisation, OPAM. Food aid donors established a common counterpart fund with 5 year guarantees of commitment, with OPAM using the sales of imported cereals to finance its local purchases [Tuinenburg 1988]. Assessments of the project indicated that it had an overall positive impact in supporting a partial liberalisation of markets, but that cash resources were required to support the counterpart funds and that greater flexibility in donor grain allocations was desirable, to allow a more active price stabilization role to be played [WFP 1985d]. The reform programme in Senegal has been more wide ranging. Senegal has been only 50% selfsufficient in food [Maxwell 1986b], and has been a significant recipient of programme food aid from the U.S., E.E.C. and Canada, (though Maxwell notes that it is very difficult to obtain agreed statistics on the size of flows). It has

been argued that these have led to policy disincentive effects [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987; Shapouri et al 1986]. The New Agricultural Policy launched in 1984 as part of the 1985-92 Adjustment Programme sought to remove the previous bias in favour of groundnuts and against food production. The policy aims to develop a market for local cereals other than rice by increasing prices and providing other incentives to domestic production [Club du Sahel 1985c]. Aid donors agreed to provide a common counterpart fund. The project includes the establishment of village level cereal banks partly financed by farmers to cover 25-50% of annual demand. Maxwell [1986b] concluded that there was inadequate evidence to support the hypothesis that food aid was producing a disincentive effect on food production, though there were "warning lights", especially the low producer price for millet. He also concluded that at the margin food aid probably substituted for commercial imports, though usual marketing requirements were met. Food aid is also being used to support reforms in Madagascar, where an attempt partially to liberalize rice markets had not been successful [Shuttleworth, forthcoming]. The project approved by the CFA in October 1986 supports price stabilization through financing stock holding, but concentrates on other factors including irrigation, seed production, erosion control, agricultural extension and road improvement [Tuinenberg 1988].

In some countries, food aid is being used to support broader macroeconomic objectives, for instance in Sierra Leone to support currency devaluation [Longhurst et al 1988]. In this case there is little evidence about market disruption effects, but it is noted that monopolization of the resale of food may have led to the maintenance of high consumer prices. In Ghana, food aid is being used to support the government's "human recovery programme" (part of a major macroeconomic adjustment), providing financial resources for the project, allowing the maintenance of low urban food prices and providing food for work for infrastructure projects [Stewart 1988; Horton 1986].

This review of experience broadly supports the conclusion that "whether food aid has disincentive effects is mainly a question of the market and price policies in a recipient country and its response to changes in food aid supplies" [von Braun and Huddleston 1988]. Where there have been severe disincentive effects this may be attributed to the lack of donor and recipient will to offset them. However, there are not yet models of country experience to demonstrate that the problems of policy design, local and national monitoring of disincentive warning signals and the reconciliation of donor and recipient government objectives can be solved in the sub-Saharan African context to make effective use of large scale programme aid to promote agricultural production. Scope for the use of food aid for projects such as food for work is limited because of their organizational requirements. The FAO estimates that only a third of available food aid can be absorbed in this way [Huddleston 1984]. A major problem for effective use is the "unstable and insecure nature of food aid supply" and lack of sensitivity of supplies to requirements [von Braun and Huddleston 1988]. Instability in food aid supplies implies a need for great flexibility in other policies to avoid

undesirable side effects. In most sub-Saharan African countries foreign exchange constraints, low storage capacity and administrative weakness militate against such flexibility [von Braun and Huddleston 1988]. Consequently the onus must be on donors to develop procedures to make food aid a less potentially destabilizing factor. A problem is that recipients have strong incentives to overstate their requirements in negotiations with donors [Pons 1986]. This can only be solved by the development of more objective and accurate methods of assessing requirements and absorptive capacities [Jost 1988].

II.6. Food aid and food policy

In principle it is possible to solve the "fundamental dilemma" [Streeten, 1987] of combining high producer prices to encourage production of food with low consumer prices to protect poor purchasers by using counterpart funds from the sale of food aid to finance marketing deficits and to invest in agricultural development. Since food is the most important of wage goods, food aid may thereby relieve constraints on the mobilisation of labour. Singer [1987] accuses critics of food aid of using an unduly narrow framework for the disincentive debate. The immediate price disincentive may be only the "left hook of a J curve" with a cumulative expansion of income and output to follow. While this is the potential of food aid, its capacity to achieve such a result in sub-Saharan Africa has still to be demonstrated.

The avoidance of disincentive effects and the promotion of the successful use of food aid require commitments to an appropriate food policy by both donor and recipient governments [WFP/ADB 1987; World Bank 1986]. A recent study of all forms of bilateral aid to Africa suggests that reform policies have not been well supported by donors during the 1980s and that for the USA in particular "political events seem to exercise a major impact on aid allocations" [Gulhati and Nallari 1988]. Somalia and Sudan who are noted above as having particularly poor records in the use of food aid have been major recipients of US food aid in sub-Saharan Africa for strategic reasons. The subordination of food aid to the donor's agricultural policy inherent in the notion of "surplus disposal" militates against the successful use of food aid for supporting an appropriate recipient country food policy. Donor emphasis on developing new export markets or insistence on the maintenance of "usual marketing requirements" have been manifestations of this [von Braun and Huddleston 1988; Cathie 1985]. One effect of the "surplus disposal" approach has been an inherent instability in the food aid system to the extent that the global availability of food aid is negatively correlated with recipients' need for it [von Braun and Huddleston 1988; World Bank 1986].

While domestic political constraints on donor policy will persist, there is still scope for improving the management of food aid to avoid the risk of disincentives to production and to support recipient government food policy. Major donors are now publicly

committed to using food aid primarily for developmental purposes. For instance, the Food Security Act of 1985 commits the US Government to supporting agricultural reform [WFP 1987a]. The EEC claims that although agricultural surpluses were the driving force behind the creation of food aid, it is now "administered strictly according to considerations of development policy" [CEC 1988a]. There has been some indication of the willingness of donors to Africa to substitute financial for food aid when food is not required [Jost 1988].

II.7. Avoiding disincentive effects: improving food aid management

Food aid needs to be linked to other forms of assistance to facilitate long-term agricultural development, and to maximise employment growth [Mellor 1987]. Improved management of food aid counterpart funds can be facilitated by *multiannual programming*. A major problem with EEC food aid has been that the budgeting system has imposed a short time horizon which has been one of the reasons for long lead times between order and delivery. A programme of multiannual commitments on a forward, rolling basis is possible within an annual budget system [WFP 1987b]. There is also scope for *coordination and pooling resources with other donors* [CEC 1988a], including the development of common guidelines on the use of counterpart funds [WFP 1987b]. It has been stressed in the context of a proposed five-year food aid strategy for Lesotho that to go beyond rhetoric this must be "in project specific terms based on ongoing assessment of food aid efficiency and effectiveness, concrete proposals to overcome known, perennial shortcomings and constraints and the actual commitment of supplementary technical and financial support" [WFP 1987e].

Donor response flexibility can be improved by allowing more *freedom in donor budgets*, for instance to enable more *local or regional purchases* of foods [Stephens 1986; Sharpley 1986; World Bank 1986] (see chapter V.). The financing problems caused by record harvests in some maize producing countries such as Zimbabwe in 1985/6 indicate the scope for cost-effective donor finance of triangular and other local purchase arrangements within sub-Saharan Africa, though difficulties in forecasting production and availability have been encountered, as well as lack of farmer-level storage capacity [WFP/ADB 1987]. Improved donor co-ordination as well as more detailed market intelligence for potentially exportable commodities and streamlining of food trade and export regulations have been identified as ways of improving the effectiveness of triangular transactions [RDI 1987; Ronco 1988]. More flexible budgeting by both donor and recipient would reduce the reliance of projects on counterpart funds and permit the use of alternative funding sources when it is undesirable to sell more food.

On the recipient side, recognition of the need for agricultural reform has become widespread in sub-Saharan Africa and major reforms of agricultural policy have been

implemented [Kydd and Scarborough 1988]. There are, however, dangers in attempts by donors to impose reforms through adopting the position of food strategy co-ordinator: "policy dialogue" may be resented as a euphemism for conditionality [Raikes 1988, p.196], and attempts by donors to impose conditionality on the use of counterpart funds are unlikely to be successful in promoting agricultural reform [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987]. The best index of recipient commitment is the use to which counterpart funds or saved foreign exchange is put. To the extent that employment is generated, productive agricultural investment promoted, the spending power of low income food deficit households augmented, or the tax burden on agriculture relieved [von Braun and Huddleston 1988], the domestic food production sector will benefit. Most estimates of the income elasticity of demand for food of poor households are in the range 0.6 to 0.8 [Mellor 1987]. However, it has also been argued that agricultural households in sub-Saharan Africa have a relatively high propensity to invest which is constrained by the need to avoid risk and meet immediate consumption needs at low income levels. This is an area which requires further research as it has important implications for the productive use of food aid for the promotion of income and employment growth [Hunt 1988; Bezuneh et al 1988]. Careful targetting of food aid interventions has been stressed as a vital component of the effective use of the resource [WFP 1987e; World Bank 1988d].

Maxwell [1986a, 1986b, 1986c] has stressed that an *impact monitoring system* is important in the African context to give warning of adverse market effects from the distribution or sale of food aid, and that monitoring arrangements should be specifically incorporated in food aid projects. This system should collect information in each affected market. While in the long term major improvements in basic agricultural statistics are necessary [Eurostat News 1988] a relatively limited system may be adequate to avoid severe localised problems, since as Maxwell [1986a, 1986c] notes, unless "warning lights" such as producer prices dropping below import parity or reductions in area planted show, a more detailed analysis need not be carried out in that market. Such a system could be combined with early warning systems directed towards the identification of famine risk such as those which have been established in many countries in the Sahel and other drought-prone areas [Clay and York 1987].

Although policies aimed at increasing publicly owned grain stocks have been criticised [Buccola and Sukume 1988], there is a role for *increased storage capacity* at the local market level. Experience with local cereal banks in Burkina Faso suggests that these work most effectively when they are controlled by local farmers rather than government organisations [Sanatana 1981; Roche 1984]. Greater storage capacity would help to protect isolated markets from temporary disruption by food aid receipts, though in the long term market integration through relaxing restraints on private trade and infrastructure investment will be the best solution. There may also be scope for *developing alternative uses* for food which cannot immediately be absorbed by local markets. In all developing countries the use of cereals for animal

feed is increasing faster than direct human consumption [Sarma 1987]. Projects to develop processing facilities for the production of animal feed might increase the market's short-term absorptive capacity, though the place of such projects in a food security policy would need to be carefully assessed. Increased access to concessional finance for cereal imports, such as has been provided under the IMF Compensatory Financing Facility since 1981, might also enable a more flexible response by reducing dependence on food aid [World Bank 1986].

II.8. Conclusion

This review has indicated that the effective use of food aid in Sub-Saharan Africa for the promotion of food security, including the avoidance of disincentive effects, has been hampered by multiple donor and recipient objectives, lack of market and production information and poor project design and implementation. In general policy disincentives have been more apparent than direct market disincentive effects, though given the lack of reliable statistical information the true extent of the latter has been unclear. Consequently, while there are useful steps that can be taken to monitor and minimise the risk of market disruption, donor and recipient government commitment to an appropriate food policy remain the key elements in the successful use of food aid.

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III. PROJECT FOOD AID

III.1. Overview

This chapter is concerned with the use of project food aid, delivered directly to the target consumer, the traditional way in which project food aid has been used. However, project food aid is, on occasion monetized, releasing counterpart funding for a variety of uses. Monetized project food aid is included in Chapter IV.

The review of project food aid has been divided into four sections: food for work in which food aid is used as a wage; supplementary feeding projects in which food aid is targetted at groups with inadequate levels of nutrition; projects aimed at the establishment of food reserves both for emergency relief and market stabilisation; and other uses, primarily institutional feeding and support of training programmes.

Total cereal project food aid to sub-Saharan Africa in 1986/87 amounted to 662 thousand tons (20.4% of total cereal food aid to the region), down 40% from the peak of over a million tons in 1983/84. This shows that the volume of project food aid has been linked to the extent of emergencies in sub-Saharan Africa and that the use of projects in emergency areas is an important feature of project food aid.

III.2. Food for work

Overview

Food for work (FFW) is a particular type of public works programme, in which wages are paid in food rather than cash. The wider literature on public works in developing countries shows that they are among the best ways of providing income support for poor people of both sexes. However, FFW has disadvantages over other public works programmes because food as a resource is less fungible and more costly and complex to administer. Clay in his 1986 review article concludes:

"There remains a near unbridgeable gap in the literature between those who suggest that there are lessons for improvement to be learned from a mixed record, and the root-and-branch critics of food for work. The gap appears to remain because, as many writers suggest, public works and food aid supported food for work suffer from over-ambitious statements of objective. Projects which are simultaneously highly successful in terms of employment and income generation, and have positive distributional benefits from asset creation in the long run, are few in number." [Clay 1986, p. 1,248]

Very few of the public works references cited by Clay and Singer are concerned with sub-Saharan Africa. The body of literature on FFW and public works in this area still remains small and mainly focussed on Ethiopia and Lesotho.

It is necessary to clarify the types of FFW project. All FFW projects are aimed at the provision of employment and income, and the creation of assets. However, the balance between these two broad objectives varies. At one end of the scale are "relief" projects where the main concern is the relief, often short term, of the participant workers. At the other end are projects that are primarily aimed at the generation of assets. The sub-Saharan African literature on FFW frequently fails to differentiate adequately between the development/relief objectives of FFW projects. This emerges as particularly important in sub-Saharan Africa.

It is also important to distinguish between the types of asset to be created within development projects. These are often sub-divided as; directly productive (irrigation, drainage, land reclamation, reforestation, soil conservation), economic infrastructure (roads, bridges etc.) and social infrastructure (schools, clinics, community buildings, domestic water supply etc.) [Clay and Singer 1985, p.70].

The Role of FFW in sub-Saharan Africa

Historically, FFW in sub-Saharan Africa has focussed on relief more than development. Cereal food aid supplied to sub-Saharan Africa for use on agricultural and rural development projects peaked during the emergency of 1984/5 at 561,000 tons. By 1986/7, this figure had fallen to 343,000 tons, 10.5% of total cereal food aid to the region [WFP 1988a]. The FFW programmes both in Lesotho, particularly in earlier years, and Ethiopia, the second largest ever undertaken world-wide [Lirenso 1986] were more concerned with the impact on target populations than on the assets created [Bryson 1984]. The Ethiopian programme is described as an effective response to the emergency [Holt 1983]. FFW has been of far less significance in other parts of Sub Saharan Africa.

Current emphasis is on the development of sub-Saharan Africa through the pursuit of rural based, employment oriented development strategies [Mellor 1988a, Ezekiel 1988, WFP/ADB 1987]. This approach will involve a switch in the focus of FFW projects away from "relief" towards development objectives. The literature reflects this in the number of writers referring to the potential of using FFW for the promotion of agricultural development and rural infrastructure [Mellor 1987; Ezekiel 1988; Singer 1989]. However, the evaluative literature remains focussed on projects that were generally aimed at different priorities. This also partly explains the shortage of quantitative analyses of the developmental impact of FFW projects.

An Assessment of FFW in sub-Saharan Africa

The literature on FFW is predominately concerned with six areas. First, project identification, planning and management which has particular importance in FFW. Second, the effectiveness of FFW in reaching the poorest, an important justification of food aid. Third, the issue of disincentive effects on the local economy, an area that is raised in discussion of all types of food aid. Fourth, the problems of dependence for work, food and project financing. Fifth, the effectiveness of different commodities, their acceptability and impact. Sixth, the impact evaluation of FFW in sub-Saharan Africa, the problems encountered and conclusions drawn. Each of these areas is discussed below.

1. Project Identification, Planning and Management

FFW projects are more complex than financially aided projects to identify, plan and manage. Administrative and resource constraints in sub-Saharan Africa have frequently led to problems in these areas. Local databases in sub-Saharan Africa are weak and there have often been difficulties in identifying suitable projects for FFW [Clay and Singer 1985]. FFW projects have extra logistical problems associated with making payments in kind rather than in cash. There are many examples of logistical problems in FFW projects in sub-Saharan Africa. Internal transport has often caused problems [e.g. WFP 1979c, 1979d]. Delays in the receipt of food aid are also common [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987; Admassie 1985; WFP 1986a], often resulting in gaps in payment of food wages and payment at below the correct ration rate [Woodham 1986]. The impact of food rather than cash wages on the local economy must be assessed to ensure disincentives are avoided (see chapter II). Payment with food can lead to a loss of flexibility and additional costs in the establishment of distribution systems [Clay and Singer 1985]. The complexity of managing FFW projects, sometimes requiring separate bureaucracies, often places considerable strain on the administrative capacity of recipients [Fitzpatrick 1986; Club du Sahel 1987b; WFP 1979a, 1979e]. Some have stressed the high opportunity cost of the local staff working on FFW programmes [Fitzpatrick 1986]. A further problem is the uncertainty with respect to the continuity of food funding of FFW programmes, which makes forward planning difficult. Even in cases where food aid has continued for long periods, each renewal includes provision for its termination [e.g., Lesotho, Bryson 1984]. Leakages in sub-Saharan Africa have varied widely, being generally acceptable but high on occasion [WFP 1984a].

Many FFW projects have suffered from a lack of financial resources [e.g., Ghana, WFP 1979d; Dawson 1985] and there is general agreement that the non-provision of non-food complementary resources has been a major cause of poor performance. FFW focus on "relief" has led to difficulty in attracting financial support, especially

from international lending institutions [WFP/ADB 1987]. Ultimately food may need to be completely replaced if the target area moves out of food deficit. The provision of food may itself relieve pressure on government budgets [Tanzania, Ezekiel 1986, p. 5.30], releasing funds for projects.

In an attempt to reduce the bureaucratic burden and to improve the management of food aid projects the WFP has amalgamated projects into "multi-purpose" projects [e.g., Cameroon, Ezekiel 1986, Mali, WFP 1979e; Burkina Faso, WFP 1985c; Woodham 1986; Uganda, Fitzpatrick 1986; Benin WFP 1979a]. In Mozambique, a "Food Bank" is proposed [Government of Mozambique 1987] to coordinate the flow of food aid to FFW projects. These initiatives may improve project management but may also have further entrenched the "separateness" of food aid from other forms of assistance. It has been argued [Stevens 1979] that this separation has led to food aid becoming treated as an "inferior" form of aid, receiving less priority from recipient governments than financial aid. Ultimately, the view has been expressed [e.g. WFP/ADB 1987] that food aid planning and administration should be fully incorporated into the overall development planning process, including structural adjustment, of recipient countries [WFP/ADB 1987]. Several writers have proposed an important role for FFW in structural adjustment programmes in sub-Saharan Africa (see section IV.3.).

An important solution to the lack of financial resources available for FFW is the monetization of additional food. Generated counter-part funds are generally tied to particular project uses, such as covering internal transport, storage and handling costs [e.g., Ethiopia, Holt 1983]. Monetization of project food aid is covered in chapter IV.3.

The overriding conclusion on this area is that FFW projects will not function efficiently without good management. This is probably of particular importance in sub-Saharan Africa due to the well established deficiencies in administrative capacity and internal infrastructure, described earlier (Chapter I).

2. Reaching the Poorest

As with other public works programmes, FFW can be targetted at the poorest and neediest sections of the community, providing an income transfer effect where most needed [Reutlinger 1984] while maintaining self help attitudes and avoiding the evolution of "dependence", although this latter effect is not widely accepted [Stevens 1979]. Targetting assistance at the poorest groups in a community is unlikely to maximise productivity, as the poorest will inevitably include the old and the sick. FFW may be self- targetting on the poor because the wage offered is only attractive to such groups or because communities themselves organise FFW for their neediest

members [Lesotho, Bryson 1984; Stevens 1979] Evidence from Ethiopia [Admassie 1985, Holt 1983], Lesotho [Bryson 1984] and Togo [De Sabatino 1978] stresses the importance of the strength and involvement of local institutions and grass roots organisations in the identification, planning and organisation of successful FFW projects.

The issue of participation is closely related to the objectives of the FFW project, whether predominantly for "relief" or for development. FFW projects have been criticised both for neglecting the poor and for neglecting productivity, for focussing on asset creation and productivity at the expense of the poorest and weakest members of the community, and for being cost ineffective by employing people with extremely low productivity [Stevens 1979].

As might be expected, the acceptability of food as a wage varies widely. In some cases men were reluctant to work for food, resulting in complete domination of the programme by women [Lesotho, Bryson 1984; WFP 1980b]. This gave FFW an additional opportunity as a conduit for the development of educational and other programmes directed at women, and also, on occasion incorporated direct on site feeding of children. Food as a wage was more acceptable in food deficit areas, where due to high prices, the income transfer effect is greater [Ethiopia, Holt 1983].

In Ethiopia, it emerged that most workers on FFW projects only worked a few months of the year on the project [Holt 1983] and the use of FFW to provide seasonal employment in sub-Saharan Africa is of importance. Although harder to design and administer, projects that can be closed down during the "busy" season and can operate during the "slack" season are seen as having an important role to play in many sub-Saharan African countries, where poverty, unemployment and hunger have a seasonal dimension [Lanagan 1983]. Disincentive effects are also minimised with this approach.

While it is generally accepted that FFW involves the distribution of food to the poorer sections of communities during the duration of the projects, in the wider literature it has been suggested that those at the top of existing hierarchies tend to gain control of the assets created, particularly for projects involving productive assets. This issue is not addressed in the sub-Saharan African literature, the explanation being perhaps that the large majority of FFW projects have either been mainly "relief" oriented, or focussed on the production of infrastructure. Also, perhaps, land tenure and use systems in Africa help to prevent the acquisition of assets, particularly in the context of soil conservation and forestry projects which have been the most common forms of productive FFW projects in sub-Saharan Africa. Jackson does cite a World Bank report of a case in which Ethiopians engaged in FFW planted trees upside down as they felt the benefit from the scheme was biased in favour of the wealthy [Jackson 1982].

The effectiveness with which FFW reaches the poorest depends on trade-offs between "relief" and development and between short and long term benefits. In sub-Saharan Africa, the focus has mostly been on short term, "relief", with FFW often introduced in "post- emergency" situations (see chapter VI).

3. Disincentive effects

One of the objectives of FFW is clearly to raise incomes in the recipient area and stimulate effective demand and therefore, the demand for food. However, the point is frequently made that by bringing food into the area, supply is increased and local food prices are depressed. There is very little literature examining quantitatively the impact of FFW on local food prices in sub-Saharan Africa (see chapter II). The general view is that the majority of FFW projects involve insufficient volumes of food to have a major depressive impact, except in cases where levels of market integration are extremely low, while the effect of additional income is likely to increase the overall demand for food. The main exception cited is Ethiopia where FFW is on such a large scale that a wider impact might be expected. However, Lirenso [Lirenso 1986] and an FAO study [FAO 1982] argue that food aid has not led to disincentives to agricultural production, state investment in agriculture or to changes in taste patterns, except possibly in some sub-regions and neither Maxwell [1986c], a WFP study [1983a] or Holt [1983] find evidence of production disincentive effects, although Maxwell anticipates that pricing policies may lead to problems.

In Mauritius [Burki et al 1976] and Lesotho [Stevens 1979] FFW has been associated with another negative impact on local agriculture, through the loss of labour to FFW projects. This again raises the importance of the provision of seasonal FFW in cases where labour is normally fully utilised in domestic agriculture for part of the year.

A further negative impact of FFW has been cited in connection with pastoral populations, where it has been claimed that "agricultural bias" can discriminate against the needs of the pastoralist community [Apthorpe 1986; Woodham 1986]. The difficulty of using FFW in pastoralist or semi-pastoralist communities is noted [Fitzpatrick 1986] and the risk of FFW forming the basis for settlement for the "wrong" reasons [Apthorpe 1986].

The inadequate monitoring associated with FFW programmes to date makes it impossible to draw authoritative conclusions on their impact on local markets. However, with the exceptions of Ethiopia and Lesotho, it would seem unlikely that FFW has been on a sufficiently large scale to have a significant impact.

4. Dependence

There is evidence [e.g., Lesotho, Bryson 1984] of a trade off that may develop between dependence on food aid and efficient use of it. As already stated, the complexities of organising effective FFW involve intricate administrative and logistical capabilities, and investment in physical infrastructure for distribution, storage etc. Recipient Governments increase their skill in these areas, the longer food aid is delivered. However, this raises the issue of growing dependence on food aid for the programmes undertaken, especially if they are not aimed at increasing local agricultural production [WFP 1986a]. The budgetary implications of large scale FFW programmes are significant (also see section IV.2.).

Similarly there is a risk of growing dependence for individual participants in FFW schemes. In Lesotho individuals have worked on FFW continuously for up to twenty years [WFP 1986a].

5. Commodities

There are few instances of the commodities offered for FFW proving unacceptable to recipients. Food remains generally less popular than cash wages, except in some instances among women [Katona-Apte 1986], but has been acceptable as part wage [e.g., Ghana, WFP 1979d] and as whole wages in most cases.

There is very little analysis as to the income transfer impact of food paid as wages. It appears to be generally assumed that due to food deficits, food received is of high value to recipients, whatever it is. Rations are generally based on the idea of nutritional requirements for families rather than achieving a desired level of income transfer and this perhaps illustrates the focus on the "relief" role of FFW.

As base line nutritional status surveys are not generally a part of FFW programmes, their actual impact on nutritional status is seldom measured. Many project evaluations make qualitative statements about nutritional impact based on the observations of those involved.

6. Impact Evaluation

A common complaint of FFW evaluations is the poor standard of reporting systems and monitoring undertaken [Holt 1983; WFP 1985c], the setting of unrealistic targets and a general lack of data collection on which evaluations can be made. This has resulted in a dearth of quantitative analyses of the developmental impact of FFW projects.

A partial explanation may lie in the "relief" focus of FEW projects and the

accompanying low levels of productivity. Many projects may not have needed a formal analysis to conclude that the rate of return was not comparable with financially aided projects. Low productivity definitely seems to dominate the sub-Saharan African experience so far. Stevens states that:

"The evidence that has been acquired on labour productivity in the four countries studied (Lesotho, Burkina Faso, Botswana and Tunisia) shows without exception that it is extremely low. The primary reasons appear to be that FEW attracts people with a low work capacity, and that supervision and ancillary equipment are inadequate. This much is clear; what is more open to question is whether the low productivity is necessarily a bad thing since it may be a corollary of reaching the poor." [Stevens 1979, p.110]

Even attempts to measure the income transfer efficiency of FEW payments are rare. An example is a WFP evaluation of Lesotho in which it is concluded that the value of the family ration was 55% above the cost to the WFP and Government of Lesotho, although this result was dependent on a high local value being attributed to the canned fish element of the ration [WFP 1986a].

Ezekiel cites Tanzanian cases in which a rice production project assisted with FEW achieved a satisfactory rate of return and FFW rubber projects in Zanzibar succeeded to the point where they could be used as examples to help overcome the government's reservations about FFW [Ezekiel 1986]. A rate of return of 10% was estimated and found acceptable for a selected catchment within the Ethiopian EFW soil conservation programme [FAO 1982]. However, quantitative studies are rare and achievements are often cited in terms of the proportion of physical targets achieved. Another approach is the "additionality" justification of food aid. Over half of Lesotho's road network is the result of FEW projects [WFP 1986a], which, whatever the rate of productivity, might not exist at all if food aid had not been available [Stevens 1979]. Niger's large scale FEW programme of 1984/5 is claimed to have successfully avoided the exodus of people off the land that would otherwise have occurred [Club du Sahel 1987b].

A more detailed analysis of a FEW project in Kenya is provided by Bezuneh et al [1988]. This study examines the impact of FEW on agricultural production, income, capital investment, employment and the food consumption mix of the participants. A peasant-household-firm model is used incorporating a linear programming approach to the production side and an "almost ideal demand system" approach for the consumption side of the model. Participants and non-participants in the project are compared.

"...results indicate that FEW in the study area increased agricultural production, income, capital investment, employment (including hired labour), and marketable surplus. It caused a production shift from the more nutritious maize to higher- priced millet. This suggests that food aid may increase food security sufficiently to alter the market orientation of the farmers." [Bezuneh et al 1988 p. 190]

A cautionary note is sounded in that the project is integrated into an existing rural development programme and receives relatively high priority from the Government of Kenya. It is also not clear whether the positive conclusions are based on the actual or postulated behaviour of the farmers.

Conclusion

Although it is dangerous to generalise in concluding on FEW on an area as diverse as sub-Saharan Africa, the literature does seem to allow some broad statements. There is potential to use public works in sub-Saharan Africa, as elsewhere in the world, to provide sustained benefits to the poorest sections of the population. This applies to FEW both with a "relief" and a developmental bias. The experience of sub-Saharan Africa so far has been mainly with programmes focussed on "relief". However, the literature stresses the developmental potential of FEW in the future, including its inclusion in structural adjustment programmes.

The literature on the experience of sub-Saharan Africa in FEW highlights the importance of project identification, planning and management in overcoming the particularly difficult logistical and infrastructural constraints common to the region. The participation of local organisations and NGOs emerges as an important element in successful projects. Improved databases and monitoring systems are essential for effective evaluation. FEW demands extensive administrative support and the monetization of food aid can have a crucial role in providing the resources for this, and the other non-food resources required for a project. Monetized food aid also allows the conversion of FEW into cash for work in areas in which it is inappropriate to deliver additional food. Consideration of income transfer efficiency is central in the choice of food aid commodity and between food wage and cash wage. Potential disincentives can generally be avoided through the adoption of a flexible approach. Participants on FEW schemes are always poor, if not always the poorest, but the assets created should also be targetted at the poor.

Donor flexibility in switching between financial and food support will minimise the risk of budgetary dependence on food aid and multi-year commitment will allow better project planning.

III.3. Supplementary feeding programmes

Overview

Although all aspects of food aid, including programme, FEW and emergency food aid projects affect the levels of malnutrition and hunger in the community, the role of supplementary programmes can be considered separately, as this type of project food aid is specifically aimed at nutrition (see chapter VI). Supplementary feeding has a particular role to play in the development of human resources [Clay and Hay 1986]. The impact of direct feeding programmes on the nutritional status of their targets is disputed and a large literature exists on the effectiveness of these programmes and on the methodology of impact assessment. The position is stated by Clay and Singer:

"There has long been broad agreement that supplementary feeding projects can be nutritionally effective, especially those in targetted programmes for mothers and pre-school children, provided they are well-managed and carried out in the context of a broad-based health and nutrition programme. However, where these conditions are not satisfied the effects are likely to be inconclusive, even negative." [Clay and Singer 1985, p. 96]

CARE's summary of research findings is very similar, but adds:

".....Other factors contributing to success include the creation of linkages between the feeding activity and the use of local foods; extensive community involvement in all phases of the program; careful targetting; and attention to a range of planning and administrative concerns." [CARE 1985, p. 6]

Supplementary feeding programmes generally take one of two forms; school feeding programmes, and mother and child feeding programmes. School feeding can involve simply the allocation of a supplementary ration of enriched biscuits or may involve the provision of a full midday meal. As well as improving the participants' nutritional status, programmes generally have two additional objectives; to increase attendance at schools and to improve students' performance. Mother and child feeding programmes are targetted at pre-school children and pregnant or lactating mothers. Programmes are generally part of broader primary health care programmes and provision of food may again have the additional role of encouraging attendance at clinics. Food rations are generally taken home from the clinic, calculated to last until the next visit is due.

Once again, the large majority of the literature does not refer to the experience of sub-

Saharan Africa. In Clay and Singer, the majority of references to sub-Saharan Africa are drawn from either Stevens [Stevens 1979] or Jackson [Jackson 1982] and very little has been added to the literature on these areas since the Clay and Singer review.

The Role of Supplementary Feeding Programmes in sub-Saharan Africa

Supplementary feeding programmes represent a relatively minor use of food aid in sub-Saharan Africa. Cereal food aid supplied for nutrition improvement projects in sub-Saharan Africa totalled 166,000 tons in 1986/7. This represents 5.1% of total cereal food aid to the region. This type of food aid has declined from a peak of 237,000 tons in 1984/5 [WFP 1988a]. A feature of supplementary feeding in sub-Saharan Africa is the role played both by local and international NGOs, which often distribute the food and run the programmes.

An Assessment of Supplementary Feeding in sub-Saharan Africa

Important issues in the evaluation of these programmes include:

1. Project Identification, Planning and Management

As was the case in FEW projects (see section III.2.), the literature stresses the importance of effective planning, administration and community participation [e.g. USAID 1986a; WFP 1979h] in the success of supplementary feeding projects. There are many examples of projects failing where lack of management has led to delays, unsuitable rations, breakdown in communications and ineffective monitoring, [e.g. Central African Republic, Botswana and Senegal, Jackson 1982; Benin, WFP 1979a; Mauritania, WFP 1980a; Botswana, WFP 1979b; Ghana, Figa Talamanca 1984; Tanzania, USAID 1986a; Sudan, WFP 1979f].

Many supplementary feeding programmes in sub-Saharan Africa are run by NGOs and Bryson has pointed out the risks involved if this reaches the stage where local Ministries are not involved in programmes at all [Bryson 1984].

2. Reaching the Poorest

Supplementary feeding programmes are, by definition targetted programmes. The optimal way of ensuring that food reaches the targetted recipients is disputed. Two important distinctions must be made: between programmes that provided food to be eaten on the spot and food to be taken home; and between programmes targetted at broad sections of the population and those targetted at malnourished Sub-groups.

The literature suggests that food that is taken home will generally be shared between the whole family [Jackson 1982, International Science and Technology Institute Inc. 1981]. Even when food is consumed by the target, there may be an effect on the rest of the family if the Intra-household distribution of food changes as a result of the food aid. In the light of this experience, some writers have stressed the importance of precise targetting [Figa Talamanca 1984], while some programmes have targetted families with malnourished members rather than individuals [e.g., Kenya, Practical Concepts Incorporated 1981]. School feeding programmes have often been criticised for being too broadly targetted [Jackson 1982] and also for missing the most needy elements of their target population, the children who do not attend [Stevens 1979; Jackson 1982; Figa Talamanca 1984, Bryson 1984]. In the Sahel it is suggested that, most often freely distributed food aid has not been targetted [Club du Sahel 1987b].

Once it is accepted that supplementary feeding impacts upon the whole family, determination of the distribution of benefits depends on intra-household income distribution. There is a wide literature on this subject in sub-Saharan Africa which is beyond the scope of this review. However, this literature is not concerned with food aid per se and the supplementary feeding food aid literature has not gone beyond recognising that take home rations do affect the whole family.

The introduction of many structural adjustment programmes in sub-Saharan Africa, which have often adversely affected the poorest [Singer 1989] has led several writers to promote supplementary feeding as a way of protecting the vulnerable and preserving a nation's human capital stock. This suggests an increased role for targetted supplementary feeding in countries undergoing structural adjustment [Pinstrup-Andersen 1988b].

3. Disincentive Effects and Dependence

As in the wider literature, there is agreement that supplementary feeding programmes should utilise local foods where these are available. There is a fear that use of unfamiliar imported food will establish tastes for these items and thereby a long term dependence on imports [Raikes 1988; WFP 1979g].

It has been suggested that:

"Food aid tends to distract communities from seeking solutions to their child under-nutrition problems through interventions employing local resources" [USAID 1986, p.3]

and within the Sahel:

"Except in Niger, free distribution has demobilized peasant communities working on development projects or FEW projects being implemented in the region." [Club du Sahel 1987b, p. 283]

However, the literature does not go so far as to suggest the need to end supplementary feeding programmes in sub-Saharan Africa to avoid dependence or disincentive effects on local communities, but stresses the need to be aware of the risk of their occurrence.

4. Cost Effectiveness

The cost effectiveness of programmes is related to the approach to targetting and the importance of secondary objectives. There is a trade-off between programme costs and administrative costs, the former rising as targetting is relaxed and leakage to the family increases, and the latter rising as targetting is tightened. The inefficiency of feeding large proportions of non-malnourished participants is stressed by Jackson [1982] and Stevens [1979], while others (e.g., CRS 1980) counter that the cost is justified due to the secondary objectives; health education, income transfer, school attendance and school performance.

Apart from the comparative cost effectiveness of "less" or "more" targetted programmes, the literature is also concerned with the relative cost effectiveness of different commodities. Jackson [1982] claims that in many cases equivalent levels of nutrition could be provided at lower cost if local foods were purchased. This may be achieved through monetization (see chapter IV.3.). Reutlinger and Katona-Apte [1984] have stressed that in cases in which supplementary rations are being taken home, the income transfer efficiency of the food becomes of primary importance, as foods with maximum income effects are also likely to maximise nutritional effects. This view counters the long held position that rations should be based on providing the desired nutritional balance for the target group. Reservations about using the income transfer approach for commodity selection in nutrition projects, which stress the ease with which "alpha" values can be distorted, and the uncertainty as to the use families will make of extra income, have been expressed by Tagle [1984] and de la Paz [1986]. In summary, no overall conclusion can be reached as to the cost effectiveness of supplementary feeding in sub-Saharan Africa.

5. Impact Evaluation

Measurement is a major problem in the impact evaluation of supplementary feeding programmes. There is a substantial literature on this area [Haaga and Mason 1985; Hoorve.g. 1988]. The most popular method for nutritional impact is the growth chart, which has for example been used by CRS since 1965. The chart can be used for

education, diagnosis and evaluation [CRS 1980]. Growth charts can say nothing about nutritional impact on other members of the family and other factors may cause changes in status apart from the supplementary feeding programme [Hoorve.g. 1988] It is also difficult to find suitable indicators to measure the impact of secondary objectives. Attentiveness is clearly problematic, even attendance at school may depend on a host of other factors [e.g. WFP 1979f]. The educational impact of mother and child feeding programmes is extremely difficult to monitor [e.g., WFP 1979b]. These problems have resulted in very qualitative evaluations of supplementary feeding programmes, generally relying on growth charts, coverage and attendance rates.

There is little evidence from sub-Saharan Africa to suggest that school feeding programmes have had a significant effect on childrens' nutrition [CRS/USAID 1986; Practical Concepts Inc. 1981; Jackson 1982; Stevens 1979; International Science and Technology Institute Inc. 1981]. Mother and child feeding programmes in Lesotho had a positive nutritional impact [Bryson 1984], but there was no evidence of any improvement in Burkina Faso [CRS/USAID 1986]. The view expressed by CRS is perhaps more indicative of the overall picture. The CRS review of their food aided nutrition programme in sub-Saharan Africa stated that the food ration in mother and child feeding programmes was aimed at nutritional, income enhancing and educational objectives and that the impact of the programme could not be sub-divided between the three [CRS 1980].

Bryson cites the general success of building up the coverage of school feeding in Lesotho, to 96.5% of enrolled children and notes the potential educational benefits of the school gardens that formed a part of the programme [Bryson 1984]. A positive impact on attendance is claimed in Benin [WFP 1979a] and Mauritania [WFP 1980a].

Jackson [1982] gives examples where supplementary feeding has interfered with the other functions of schools and health centres.

Conclusion

The primary conclusion of this review of the sub-Saharan African literature on supplementary feeding is that it remains extremely thin and that what has been written is almost entirely qualitative rather than quantitative. The explanation would appear to be that this form of food aid does not represent a large part of total food aid to the region, and that the problems associated with measurement and evaluation of programmes with such intangible and varied objectives have prevented decisive analyses.

The lessons for future supplementary feeding programmes emerge as: the

importance of good administration, planning and community participation; the integration of projects within wider educational and health programmes; the use of local foods wherever feasible; and the consideration of the income transfer efficiency of commodities wherever they are likely to be perceived as an additional family resource. Supplementary feeding has a particular role within structural adjustment programmes, protecting the poorest and maintaining the nation's human capital stock (see chapter IV). The specific issue of monetization and supplementary feeding is covered in chapter IV.

III.4. Reserves

Project food aid has been used to establish and/or strengthen both emergency food reserves and reserves to be used for price stabilisation. These issues are covered in Chapters VI. and II. respectively. Recipient Governments, particularly those of land locked and inaccessible states have emphasized the need for national and, both within the Sahel and the SADCC countries, regional food reserve systems [Clay and Singer 1985]. However, donors have not been eager to use food aid in this way. Doubts have been expressed as to the cost effectiveness of storage systems in sub-Saharan Africa and the ability of recipients to manage them effectively [Clay and Singer 1985; McIntyre 1981; WFP 1984b]. Previous experience in sub-Saharan Africa is summarised by Cassen;

"Food aid has been used to help build up national stocks but the experience of some countries (Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, Burkina Faso) has discouraged donors from continuing. The problem has been the capacity of the countries concerned to use stocks for stabilization purposes, often because of inadequate transport and local storage facilities, or weakness of stock management institutions." [Cassen 1986, p. 163]

Project food aid has been more successful when monetized in support of price restructuring, the most cited example being Mali (see chapter II).

III.5. Other uses of project food aid

Two other uses of project food aid that are not of great significance in sub-Saharan Africa, but do not fit under any of the headings above are institutional feeding, and use in training programmes.

Food aid can be used for institutional feeding (hospitals etc), not as supplementary food, but as a substitute for food that would otherwise have to be purchased locally. Similarly food aid can be used in training programmes to reduce the cost of the

programmes. Both these uses are ways of using food aid for budgetary support without monetization.

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IV. MONETIZED FOOD AID

IV.1. Overview

Food Aid donated for sale in the recipient country is classified as monetized. Thus, programme food aid, the major type of food aid at the global level, falls under this heading. This chapter focusses on programme food aid. However, both project and emergency food aid programmes have, especially more recently and especially in sub-Saharan Africa, included a degree of monetization, and are also covered.

IV.2. Programme food aid

As the volume of food aid to sub-Saharan Africa has increased during the 1980s, the proportion given as programme food aid has fallen, from 50.3% in 1980/81 to 34.8% in 1986/87 [WFP 1988a]. This again illustrates the importance of emergency food aid in the region.

There is a wide literature on the many issues associated with programme food aid. This literature comes to no broad agreement on many of them [Clay and Singer 1985], and the approach followed below is to briefly review each aspect of programme food aid, but to focus on the sub-Saharan African experience. on below focus

Programme food aid primarily provides budget and/or balance of payments support. The degree of balance of payments support depends on the extent that the food aid replaces commercial imports, or is additional to them. Food aid is not intended as a substitute for commercial imports and the "usual marketing requirement" measure has been used to prevent this [Clay and Singer 1985]. However, actual experience is that commercial imports have been displaced [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987]. Counterpart funds realised in local currency from the sale of food aid may be used to support a Governments recurrent or capital budget. Conditionality on their use is often imposed by donors.

Proponents of programme food aid stress its potential as a development resource, its additionality and its fungibility [Clay and Singer 1985]. The experience of sub-Saharan African countries has raised many issues and these are reviewed below.

Reliability

The effective use of a resource for development depends upon good management and planning. Food aid has proved to be unstable and this has hampered its effectiveness;

"Food Aid appears to be inherently unstable and insufficiently tuned to meet shortfalls in domestic food production or to supplement foreign exchange needs. The general instability of food aid matters very much to countries confronted with high levels of instability in food production and severe short term constraints in foreign exchange reserves and storage capacities. This situation is familiar in many sub-Saharan African countries." [Von Braun and Huddleston 1988, p.260]

This problem could be eased if donors would make longer term food aid commitments. However, this has not generally been the case in sub-Saharan Africa.

"... donors have admittedly been unwilling to make the longer term commitments of assistance that would enable recipient countries to plan the proper developmental use of food aid." [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987, p.35]

The availability of food aid inevitably remains linked to the size of surpluses in donor countries rather than the needs of recipients, a factor that in the past has led to pro-cyclical flows;

"Fixed budgets for food aid provide less food when prices are higher. Even worse, these budgets are often curtailed when prospects for commercial exports improve." [World Bank 1986, 52]
p .

Delays are also a frequent problem faced by food aid recipients as is illustrated by this report on EEC food aid to Mali;

"The delay between the time that the government has to make its initial request to the EEC for Food Aid and the receipt of the quantities allocated is normally such that there have been two harvests between request and receipt. Under these conditions food aid can have little relationship between needs and allocations." [Lynton-Evans and Ruche, 1982b, p. 53]

Delays in delivery and inflexibility in varying food aid in the light of changing local circumstances can lead to unnecessary over-supply and disruption of local markets [Club du Sahel 1987b].

Additionality

Additionality is commonly used in the food aid literature in two different ways. The additionality of food aid over financial aid is noted by many as a justification for its continuation despite its "inferiority" [Clay and Singer 1985]. Determining the extent that food aid and financial aid are interchangeable depends on speculation as to "what might happen". However, Singer and Diab note the fact that, while US food aid is administered separately with a separate budget, EEC food aid shares a budget with financial aid. This increases the likely additionality of US food aid in relation to the EEC's. Their overall conclusion is that there is probably little substitution and that food aid is therefore largely additional [Singer and Diab 1988].

The other additionality factor of food aid is the degree that it is additional to, or replaces food imports. This is important in determining food aid's impact on domestic markets (see chapter II, above). Whereas food aid was initially explicitly intended not to interfere with existing commercial imports, its role as balance of payments assistance, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa is increasingly stressed [Clay and Singer 1985].

The degree to which food aid replaces commercial imports is difficult to measure. In many cases food aid has continued for several years and estimates of "usual marketing requirements" have little meaning. However, there is broad agreement that in sub-Saharan Africa, food aid increasingly does, at least partially replace commercial imports [e.g., Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania, Mellor and Ezekiel 1987; Lesotho, Mauritania, IDS/CEAS 1982].

Economic Appraisal

The literature includes almost no examples of rigorous economic appraisal of the impact of programme food aid transfers to sub-Saharan Africa. The literature is most substantial on the impact of programme food aid on domestic markets (see chapter II, above). Quantification of impact on the balance of payments, and of the cost effectiveness of the transfers and the use of generated counterpart funds and foreign exchange are rare. One explanation of this neglect is the view widely expressed that food aid is an "inferior" form of aid, reducing expectations as to its performance. Another relates to the poor database available in sub-Saharan Africa countries on which to base appraisal.

Singer questions the "inferiority" aspect of food aid [Singer 1987] and notes the substantial proportion of total development assistance that is given as food aid [Clay and Singer 1985]. Methodologies for the evaluation of food aid are concerned with the measurement of the total cost of the food aid to the point of sale, in relation to the value to the recipient Government. There is disagreement as to the correct measurement of the cost of food aid in situations where surpluses exist in donor

countries, but food sold to food aid budgets is charged at prices well above market clearing levels. Similarly the value to recipients varies according to assumptions made about foreign exchange savings [Mitchell and Stevens 1983]. The sale of programme food aid at subsidised prices is criticised as reducing the budgetary benefit for recipients, who nevertheless may have other objectives justifying this approach, such as protecting the consumption of poor urban populations.

Reaching the Poorest

The effectiveness of programme food aid in reaching the poorest sections of the community depends largely on the pricing policies of the recipients, the degree of market integration and the commodities involved. Food aid sold at low prices tends to favour consumers rather than producers and urban over rural populations [Clay and Singer 1985].

In many cases programme food aid is used to maintain low prices in urban areas. This is to the benefit of poor urban consumers but may lower the incomes of producers through lower prices. In Zambia it has been suggested that even with subsidised targetted food, some of the poor will still not benefit [Chambers and Singer 1982] and the importance of maintaining effective demand for food and labour in the countryside in times of shortage is stressed [Kumar 1988a]. Poorly developed market integration and high transport costs will push up prices in more remote rural areas (see chapter II).

Timmer has noted that programme food aid to sub-Saharan Africa has often consisted of "superior" goods (particularly wheat and rice), undermining the self-targetting aspect associated with food aid, in which the commodity given is the staple of the poorest [Timmer 1980].

As with other forms of aid, food aid is also prone to "leakage" in directions not intended, such as feeding the army [Askin 1986].

The equity implications of food aid have mainly been considered at the national level. However, there has been some study of the distribution of food aid between countries. Eggleston concluded that the level and distribution of US food aid over the period 1955-79 was linked to: the need of recipients; the political and military concerns of the US; the party in power in the US; the level of US commercial sales to the recipient; and the foreign exchange holdings of the recipient. Only one African country, Zambia was modelled independently and the most significant determinant of US food aid to Zambia was the level of agricultural production in Zambia, a proxy of need [Eggleston 1987]. Sharpley [1986] criticises the distribution of Australia's food aid to Africa, particularly the disproportionate share going to Egypt. The overall

position was summarised by an Agricultural Development Council publication;

"Unfortunately, the allocation of concessional supply reflects the history of the relationships between individual donors and recipient countries and the food aid priorities of each donor. This pattern of supplies is sub-optimal in terms of the value of the resource transfer as well as of the costs of food aid to the donor countries." [ADC 1982, p. 106]

The Impact on Tastes

There is concern expressed that programme food aid of commodities not grown on a large scale by recipients has changed taste patterns, and that this will result in continuous import of these commodities. Raikes states the position in general terms;

"to the best of available knowledge, a taste for wheat products well in excess of local supply has already developed in many of the towns of Africa" [Raikes 1988, p. 199]

Eicher suggests that wheat and rice are becoming the "fast foods" of West Africa, and notes that per capita rice consumption has doubled from 12 to 24 kgs in the past 20 years [Eicher 1988].

Delgado and Miller note that increased consumption does not necessarily imply a change in taste, but may reflect increased availability or relative price changes [Delgado and Miller 1985]. Mellor and Ezekiel point out that changes in tastes are unlikely to be solely due to food aid. The relative convenience of rice and wheat, and commercial imports are also significant factors [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987].

There is, however, clearly some legitimacy in the concern over changing taste patterns and some donors (e.g., EEC) are trying to take account of local tastes and provide local staples [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987].

Dependence

The literature on food aid and dependence is concerned with the objectives of food aid, the link between food aid and local agriculture and the budgetary role of receipts from food aid sales. National dependence on imported food and budgetary dependence on food aid are both discussed.

If food aid is primarily intended to bridge a gap while local production is increased, it should be "self-terminating". This appears to have been the case in many countries

that once received food aid and no longer do [Clay and Singer 1985]. However, certainly in the earlier days of food aid, the view was expressed that a major objective of the donors of food aid was the establishment of export markets for their producers [eg. Ezekiel 1986].

Several writers have noted the tendency of food aid to increase over time to countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Shapouri et al forecast the increasing food import needs in many sub-Saharan African countries even under optimistic assumptions about local production;

"The accelerating growth rates of food imports in many of our 11 study countries and the decline this implies in their food self sufficiency are alarming".[Shapouri et al 1986, p. 36]

Raikes suggests a ratchet effect by which food aid increases sharply as a result of emergencies and, although falling after, does not fall to the pre-emergency level [Raikes 1988]. Food imports have risen steadily in Somalia for example, and food aid has formed an increasing proportion of these imports, rising to 90% in 1984/85 [Raikes 1988]. In Mali, where the use of food aid to restructure the cereals market is cited as an exemplary use of food aid [WFP 1987c];

"... levels of food aid have increased only since the program was launched, rising from 26 to 36, then to 56, then to 90 thousand tons in 1984/85." [Club du Sahel 1987b, p. 289]

However, the presence of increasing food aid alongside increasing import requirements does not prove causality. While there is no dispute that food gaps are widening, an alternative view stresses that there are other causes for this, related to the broader agricultural situation and rate of population growth (see chapter I). Thus increasing food aid is a symptom rather than the cause of import dependence. Nigeria, a country that does not receive food aid, has a high level of dependence on wheat imports and it has been suggested that, among other factors, this has been due to the neglect of the agricultural sector while resources were available from oil exports [Andrae and Beckman 1985]. If it is accepted that food aid does not itself lead to dependence, additional food aid can play a major role in reversing the decline in sub-Saharan African agriculture, provided it is used to strengthen that sector [e.g., Mellor 1988a, Ezekiel 1988].

A theoretical way in which food aid may lead to dependence is through its support of national budgets. Meeting recurrent costs is a growing problem for many sub-Saharan African countries and receipts from programme food aid have a role in easing this burden [Jennings and Shaw 1987]. However, budgetary support may

allow governments to neglect agricultural policy and, if the development of fiscal systems is also neglected, the continuation of food aid becomes essential for the financing of the budget [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987].

Green points out that;

"In one East African LDC, the likely restoration of food self-sufficiency in maize in 1985/86 could, in principle, have increased the recurrent budget deficit for 1985/86 by up to US\$100 million or 30 percent." [Green 1986a, p. 18]

Cathie and Herrmann [1987] suggest that the continuous supply of food aid to Botswana has led to a "dependency syndrome", while a similar tendency is noted in Lesotho [Stevens 1979; Bryson 1984]. It was noted at a conference in the Sahel that there was a risk that food aid requirements might be estimated based upon the resources required to finance projects [Club du Sahel 1987b]. On the other hand Sharpley cautions against neglecting the potential to use food aid to support recurrent expenditure by tying all counterpart funds to development programmes [Sharpley 1986]

The solution to this problem appears to be to ensure the pursuit of production oriented policies (see below) and for donors to switch from food aid to financial aid in the event of a return to food self-sufficiency. However, in practice, of the major donors only the EEC is committed to this "switching" approach. In 1986, the EEC substituted financial aid for food aid in Niger, Chad, Burkina Faso, Mali and Zambia as a result of improved harvests. In each case the funds were used to support the respective cereal boards and/or their reform [CEC 1988d]. Canada planned to convert all food aid to the Sahel in 1986/87 into credits for local and regional food purchase [Club du Sahel 1987b].

The Impact on local markets

The impact of food aid, particularly programme food aid on domestic markets has long been one of the main areas of concern in the analysis. This issue is covered in Chapter II, above.

The Importance of Policy

The literature increasingly stresses the importance of examining the policy environment when assessing the impact of programme food aid. It is generally accepted that many of the adverse effects of food aid in the past can be ascribed to poor policy [Clay and Singer 1985]. Programme food aid releases resources for

recipient governments. Experience has shown that this will not necessarily guarantee their optimal use. Earlier studies have stressed the use of food aid resources to pursue unsuitable policies [Ezekiel 1986].

Schuh [1981] argued that food aid to Africa allowed governments to avoid devaluation, that the resultant over-valuation of exchange rates led to general internal price distortions and the encouragement of imports. The overall result inhibiting long term growth. 1982 evaluations of EEC food aid to Senegal and Mali Ruche 1982a, 1982b] concluded that food aid had kept prices low for urban consumers. The review [Lynton-Evans and been used mainly to on Mali stated;

"As a result no cereal projects have been financed and virtually no benefit felt by the poor. Certainly no tangible assets have been created nor have any employment opportunities created." [Lynton-Evans and Ruche 1982b p. 45]

Tanzania is another example where food aid is said to have allowed the government to follow inappropriate policies towards the agricultural sector [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987]. In Kenya, Ezekiel [1986] suggests that food aid allowed the parastatals handling it to continue inefficiently.

The imposition of conditionality on the use of counterpart funds generated by the sale of programme food aid attempts to ensure that these resources are used for developmental purposes. Many donors accept the importance of using counterpart funds as levers to change policy [KIT 1985] and have increased their demands in relation to the administration and use of funds in recent years [Club du Sahel 1987b]. Conditionality often reduces the fungibility of the resource and there are many examples where counterpart funds have not functioned well. Problems include non-payment of sales receipts into the funds [CEC Court of Auditors 1987], leakage of funds into general budget support [Massignon 1985], heavy administrative costs (particularly if there are different accounts for different donors) [Club du Sahel 1985b], and insufficient resources for project identification and planning [World Bank 1988b]. The use of programme food aid counterpart funds for covering the cost of internal transport, storage and handling of emergency aid in the Sahel is noted [Massignon 1985; Club du Sahel 1985b] and the importance of using counterpart funds for development stressed.

Many references are made to the need to strengthen the agricultural databases in recipient countries to enable more effective planning [KIT 1984; Club du Sahel 1987b]

The literature consistently stresses the importance of donor coordination [e.g., World Bank 1986] and the pooling of counterpart funds as a means to improving their

effectiveness [Massignon 1985], although Sharpley warns about a possible loss in flexibility if only one fund exists [Sharpley 1986]. However, common counterpart funds are rare and are concentrated in the Sahel where Mali, Senegal and Mauritania have them. Mali is the most cited and longest established [Massignon 1985]. Donors pool resources and a multi-year programme is established [KIT 1984], primarily aimed at market restructuring (see chapter II).

Conditionality increases the chance of conflict between donor and recipient views and Raikes notes that conditionality for food aid, as with other forms of tied aid, is not popular with recipients [Raikes 1988].

An additional initiative to improve the developmental impact of food aid has been the shift towards linking food aid with food strategies and food policies;

"... particular attention was paid to beneficiary countries food strategies and sectoral development policies and the role which Community food aid might play in their implementation through multi-annual programming and the use of counterpart funds..." [CEC 1988d p.1]

Donors and sub-Saharan African recipients do not always agree as to the longer term role of food aid. As Mellor and Ezekiel point out, many sub-Saharan African countries specify self sufficiency in food as the overriding objective of their food strategy;

"donors generally tend to emphasize the objective of self-reliance rather than the objective of self-sufficiency to which many developing countries are strongly committed." [Mellor and Ezekiel 1987, p. 23]

National self-sufficiency is broadened to regional self-sufficiency in the case of the Permanent Inter-State Committee for drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) [Mollet 1986]

The issue of policy reform has become still more central in many Sub-Saharan African countries which have embarked on structural adjustment programmes. Increasingly, writers on food aid are stressing the role it can play as an integral part of structural adjustment programmes [eg. Singer 1989]. Singer suggests a role for all types of food aid within structural adjustment. Programme food aid can be used as an additional resource, as balance of payments support, to support project and recurrent budgets without increasing inflation, and to ensure food security. Project food aid can be used both to finance projects within the structural adjustment framework,

particularly through labour intensive public works, thus protecting incomes of the poorest, and through targetted supplementary feeding of those worst affected by the austerity of the programmes, maintaining the human capital base [Singer 1989]. The role of project food aid in adjustment is also outlined by Stewart using Botswana and Ghana as successful examples [Stewart 1988]. Pinstруп-Andersen stresses the importance of targetted programmes to ease the burden of adjustment borne by the poorest [Pinstруп Andersen 1988b]. Mellor emphasises the potential that food for work programmes can play in developing rural infrastructure, a precondition for agricultural development [Mellor 1988b].

Hopkins is more cautious and demonstrates "five dilemmas in Policy-based uses of food aid." First, food aid has generally involved subsidies which structural adjustment aims to remove. Second, conditionality on the use of counterpart funds is usually concerned with specific projects rather than the pursuit of macro policies. Third, food aid, particularly project food aid tends to require substantial government input for management, while structural adjustment programmes emphasize reduced government and increased private sector roles. Fourth, food aid needs to fluctuate in response to varying levels of local production, making longer term planning more difficult. Fifth, particularly in Africa, negative attitudes towards food aid lead to its association with failure, rather than a means of restructuring the agricultural sector [Hopkins 1988].

Thus, an overall picture emerges that, although food aid potentially has a major role to play in structural adjustment, there are pitfalls to be avoided and changes in the way food aid is used are a pre-condition to success. In summary, programme food aid to sub-Saharan Africa is more likely to succeed if it: is received regularly and reliably in response to carefully estimated needs based on a sound database; is switched with financial aid in years of self-sufficiency; forms part of a food strategy aimed at increasing domestic agricultural production and the food security of the poorest; and consists primarily of products that are cultivated locally.

IV.3. Monetized project food aid

A frequent and serious criticism of project food aid in which imported food is distributed directly to beneficiaries, is the high and often unnecessary cost involved in transporting food over large distances on undeveloped transport networks, when alternative sources of food are available at lower cost. This aspect of project food aid both reduces its cost effectiveness and prevents its use as a resource in non food deficit areas. The sale of project food aid and the use of the revenue to finance projects increases the fungibility of the transfer. The revenues can either be used to finance projects that still involve the distribution of food commodities, or can be used to finance projects in non food deficit areas, for example through the purchase of local food (local purchases are covered in chapter V.). This monetization of project

food aid blurs its distinction from programme aid. Nevertheless, a distinction can be maintained as monetized project food aid involves a very close link between the sale of the food and the project in which the revenues are to be invested. In sub-Saharan Africa, project failure due to the lack of non-food supporting resources is common (see section III.2.) and monetization is seen as playing a major role in improving the effectiveness of this type of project.

The WFP [WFP 1987c] divides monetized project food aid into three classifications:

A. Projects in which the sale of food aid commodities is an inherent part of their operation, for example, dairy/livestock development, food security projects, including food reserves and price stabilisation measures, and the manufacture of high-protein foods for human consumption or of livestock feed

B. Projects in which food aid is sold to closed groups of designated beneficiaries outside normal commercial markets, either directly or through institutions such as cooperatives or mothers clubs, the funds created being used mainly for institution building and to finance income-generating activities.

C. Projects in which part of the food aid provided is sold on the open market in the recipient country to finance non-food items required for the development activities carried out under those projects supported by the direct distribution of food aid to the beneficiaries

In the period 1963-1986, 225 (16%) of the total of 1,398 approved WFP projects involved monetization. 14.9% of food committed in all WFP projects was monetized. Of the 225 projects; 99 were classified as type A, 79 as type B and 47 as type C. [WFP 1987c].

In sub-Saharan Africa, there have been several "A" projects involving price stabilisation and market restructuring and these have been discussed in Chapter II. The dairy development in Tanzania is an example of a type A project. However, as with other projects the generation of funds did not result in the success of the main objective of the project, the increase in local production of milk. Lack of foreign exchange and inappropriate pricing policies were cited as the reasons [Ezekiel 1986]

Examples of type B projects would be cash for work programmes where food is made

available for purchase by the workers. Type C projects provide the most fungible use of monetized project food aid, but these have been the rarest so far. Food for work and supplementary feeding programmes can benefit from the increased flexibility of partial monetization of their food resources. Local purchase and "swap" arrangements are included in chapter V.

There are many examples in the literature in which a greater role for food aid funded public works programmes is promoted [Mellor 1988; Ezekiel 1988; WFP/ADB 1987]. The option to monetize part or all of the food aid resources for these projects clearly increases the flexibility of this type of assistance. The main objection to sale of project food aid has been the risk of disincentive effects on local production. While this is a real risk, it is now generally agreed that it has not been as widespread as originally feared and can be avoided if projects are well planned and managed (see chapter II).

IV.4. Emergency food aid

It is unusual for emergency food aid to involve monetization. However, in cases where internal transport and handling costs (ITSH) are high, additional food aid, or a proportion of the emergency food aid is sometimes sold to cover these costs. Emergency food aid has also been monetized to allow its more efficient use. Food is sold in one part of a nation and purchased in another, closer to the area of need (see chapter VI., below)

IV.5. Conclusions

The literature and experience of sub-Saharan Africa with monetized food aid, particularly programme food aid allows some conclusions. There has been an evolution in the actual and proposed use of programme food aid. From early emphasis on the use of programme food aid as a fungible resource, conditionality has been increasingly imposed, initially through tighter controls on the use of counterpart funds, next through increased emphasis on the use of food aid as part of national food strategies and finally through integration of food aid with structural adjustment programmes. This process arose largely because experience showed the potential misuse of programme food aid, particularly in the sustenance of inappropriate pricing policies and the growth of budgetary dependence.

However, many of the problems experienced with programme food aid were not related to inappropriate recipient policies. The lack of long term commitment of food aid leading to wide annual variations, poor coordination between donors, insufficient supporting financial aid, and inappropriate commodities have all created problems. These problems will have to be overcome if food aid is to play an integrated role in

structural adjustment and development strategies in sub-Saharan African countries
[Stewart 1988; Green 1986a; Stephens 1986; KIT 1984; WFP/ADB 1987].

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V. TRIANGULAR TRANSACTIONS1 LOCAL PURCHASES AND EXCHANGE ARRANGEMENTS

V.1. Overview

The importance of triangular transactions and local purchases within food aid operations globally and in sub-Saharan Africa since 1983/84 has been increasing. Between 1983/4 and 1986/7, total purchases in developing countries, including triangular swap exchanges, increased from less than half a million tons to over 1 million tons or from 4.6 to 8.5 percent of total cereals food aid. The trends are broadly similar for sub-Saharan Africa with triangular transactions and local purchases to recipient countries in sub-Saharan Africa, increasing from under 300 thousand to over 760 thousand tons in 1986/7. However, these operations are relatively more important to sub-Saharan African food aid recipients, increasing from 9 percent in 1983/4 to over 23 percent of total cereals food aid in 1986/7. But a significant proportion of these operations involve food originating in developing countries outside sub-Saharan Africa. The most important of these sources are Asian rice exporters, and Japan is the most important donor involved in these triangular transactions.

Donors have entered into triangular transactions, local purchases and exchange arrangements with two sets of concerns in mind. It has been intended to strengthen food aid operations in terms of increasing cost-effectiveness, speeding up delivery and providing appropriate commodities in keeping with food habits and customs. It has also been hoped that through such transactions, food production in developing countries would be encouraged and that intra and inter-country trade would be fostered and stimulated.

This chapter is intended to provide a brief overview of recent developments involving the various triangular (or trilateral), local purchase and exchange arrangements with special reference to sub-Saharan Africa. Conceptual and policy issues raised by these experiences are also considered.

The chapter begins with a discussion of an obvious conceptual problem. We lack a single phrase to characterise this set of arrangements which many commentators as well as administrators in donor agencies tend to group together. This awkwardness and ambiguity in descriptions of food aid actions reflects definitional problems that require some clarification. These issues are reviewed and definitions are suggested that are operationally useful in policy analysis and programme management (Section V.2).

In Section V.3., the literature and other sources of information available on these food aid transactions are identified and classified. Certain aspects of them are then drawn

upon and discussed in the remaining sections of the report.

The origins and growth in use of these food aid transactions are considered in Section V.4. The patterns and trends in triangular and other food operations using commodities acquired in developing countries in the 1980s are also discussed. The rationale for such operations and a summary of the findings of the RDI [1987] study are presented in Section V.5.. These findings have been broadly confirmed by subsequent studies although the other major study on triangular transactions [Hay et al 1988], has thrown up some slightly differing results. Finally, the policy implications of these experiences in triangular transactions, local purchases and exchange arrangements are considered in Section V.6.

V.2. Definitions

There are currently a range of food aid operations that are variously labelled:

- triangular transactions or trilateral food aid transactions
- local purchases
- exchanges and swap arrangements.

These have two common features. First, food aid agencies, including NGOs, have been exercising considerable ingenuity in exploring the possibilities for using food from a *developing country source* in food aid operations.

Second, virtually all these operations involve budgeted *financial resources or commodities specifically earmarked for food aid operations*. Where grains are concerned, most of these commodities appear to represent a part of the minimum contribution of a donor or group of donor countries (in the case of the EEC) under the Food Aid Convention.

Triangular Transactions: are the most widely discussed and probably most important type of operation involving food aid commodities originating in a developing country in recent years, in sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere. Typically, such an operation involves a donor agency making a cash purchase of food with finance from its food aid budget in one developing "source" country for shipment to another developing country, the "recipient" of the food aid. Such a transaction is, from the viewpoint of the donor, an alternative to a "normal" food aid shipment involving commodities usually supplied from a developed exporting country, and to a limited extent purchased on the international market. It is noteworthy that donor countries with commitments under the FAC, but without surplus grains of a suitable type of their own to export in any significant quantity, including Japan, Federal Republic of Germany, Netherlands and the United Kingdom, have been disproportionately

important in this type of activity.

Donor agencies also make *cash purchases* in a developing country for use in food aid actions in that same country. These operations are normally considered as "local purchases". Again, by implication, a local purchase is an alternative to a normal food aid operation. Until recently, donors were not able to count such operations as part of their obligations under the FAC. This is now allowed and probably explains the greater willingness of some donors to undertake such operations, for example, in Sudan since 1986. Again, by implication, such a local purchase is likely to be an alternative to a normal food aid operation. Local purchases are sometimes included explicitly in the plans of operation of food aid projects by the WFP.

There are, in addition, forms of triangular or trilateral "exchange", "swap", or barter arrangements which have some of the characteristics of a triangular transaction. For example, the United States, Canada and Australia have made normal food aid shipments of wheat to Zimbabwe which have been exchanged for another commodity, white maize, and then shipped by the donor at its expense to another developing country as food aid. This type of arrangement is a combination of a normal food aid transaction to the developing exporting country with a triangular movement of food to a second country. This complexity would need to be considered in assessment of the experience of those donors who are practised at such arrangements. Donors who are grain exporters and who have less flexibility in being able to use the food aid budget for purchases of commodities in a third country tend to be involved in this type of operation.

There are, in addition, *commodity exchange or swap operations* in which the donor imports food aid commodities into a developing country and then exchanges these for other commodities in the same country, most commonly stocks held by a public food agency, to be used in a food aid operation, again in the same country. The study in progress of WFP commodity exchanges has revealed a wide variety of such practices that could be broadly grouped together as exchanges. These include the import of a commodity, most commonly wheat, originating from bilateral donor FAC commitments, which is directly bartered for a second commodity, usually a coarse grain, for example in Kenya and Sudan. In other instances, the donor provides grain to a food milling organisation and in return takes delivery of flour or meal at a fixed exchange rate as in Zambia. In other cases, the agency is supplying a commodity to a country whilst drawing the same commodity from local stocks at an agreed rate of equivalence. This is more common with wheat aid to South Asian countries such as Pakistan where the final food aid recipients are located a considerable distance from the point of entry of imported commodities into the country. A fourth variant is the importation for sale of commodities where the counterpart funds realised from the sale are in turn used for purchase of locally produced food. Such practices tend to occur in countries where public food agencies involved in the marketing of the

commodity in question do not exist. The distinction between a commodity exchange and monetization is unclear in this case.

The focus on triangular transactions in sub-Saharan Africa in the RDI [1987] study pointed to another important distinction, that between *regular and non-regular* or intermittent developing country exporters or sources of commodities. This distinction is of value because in regularly exporting developing countries such as Thailand and Argentina the process of purchasing and movement follows normal commercial practices, entails use of established transport routes and generally involves commodities widely traded at the international level. So such purchases are essentially no different to those made in developed countries. In contrast, purchases from non-regular sources often entail ad hoc purchasing and transport arrangements, may have to overcome substantial transport obstacles and often involve commodities with rather specific culinary and other characteristics related to local and regional markets. Few countries in sub-Saharan Africa can be considered regular exporters competing in international markets with developed countries as suppliers of cereals, legumes and vegetable oils. Rather, most of the sub-Saharan African countries which have been involved as the exporting country in triangular operations or the source area for local purchases have, until the present, only intermittently or periodically entered world or regional markets as exporters. Much of the debate on the advantages or disadvantages of triangular transactions is concerned with the latter situation of the non-regular export or source economy. However, the distinction between regular and non-regular sources is a question of judgement based on consideration of recent trade experience.

V.3. Literature and sources of information

The fragmentary literature and limited sources of statistical information on the various food aid operations involving the acquisition of commodities in sub-Saharan Africa and other developing countries reflects the only recent upsurge of interest in this subject. Three studies commissioned by donor agencies have been undertaken that look at the cost-effectiveness, appropriateness, administrative and wider policy implications; the RDI [1987] study for WFP of their triangular transactions and local purchases, the RONCO [1988] study of US trilateral operations and the 1988 evaluation of EEC triangular transactions [Hay et al 1988]. A study is also currently underway of WFP experience in commodity exchanges [RDI, forthcoming]. In addition there have been a number of articles written discussing the potential advantages and problems associated with such operations [eg. Shaw 1983; Jost 1985]. These are summarised in Section V.5. In relation to sub-Saharan Africa there have also been a number of reports and studies that consider these operations in a regional or specific context. Such documentation has largely focussed on donor activity, particularly emergency operations, in three regions: the CILSS group of countries, the SADCC countries, particularly Mozambique and Zimbabwe, and

Sudan. There is, in addition, a substantial literature of planning and appraisal missions and evaluation reports that in passing consider usually logistical and administrative issues raised by specific operational experiences.

There are two major sources of statistics on these food aid operations, FAO and WFP. FAO began to collect and distribute statistics on triangular transactions, local purchases and triangular swaps from donors in 1983/84. FAO and WFP have made a point of publishing statistics on such operations since 1987 [FAO 1987c; WFP 1988a]. With the growing scale of resources allocated to such operations, donors are also increasingly reporting their food aid purchase and exchange activities separately to other food aid as in, for example, the WFP annual report for 1987 [1988b]. It is becoming possible, therefore, to document the evolution of such operations with reasonable accuracy at least since 1983/84 and for certain donors since the late 1970s [RDI 1987].

Earlier studies have confined themselves to the cost- effectiveness issue [RDI 1987, RONCO 1988]. Most of the "policy discussions" of these operations have been largely concerned with stating the (potential) opportunity for the cost-effective use of aid resources in this area, as summarised by Shaw [1983] and Jost [1985]. However, the most recent study has presented the economic issues involved in such operations in a systematic and formal way [Hay et al 1988].

Before proceeding to review the patterns and trends in triangular, local purchase and exchange operations, the various sub-components of the literature are briefly reviewed.

Review of recent donor experience:

As mentioned above, there are three recent studies commissioned by WFP, USAID and the European Commission. The first two of these have been published and relatively widely disseminated. This section draws heavily on the conclusions and analytic discussions of these studies. The recently published latter report [Hay et al 1988] provided findings generally consistent with the other studies. The RONCO [1988] study concentrates on four exchange operations in West and Southern Africa while the Hay et al [1988] report focusses on Eastern and Southern Africa particularly since this is where most EC triangular transactions have taken place.

Many of the emergency operations in sub-Saharan Africa during the 1980s have involved triangular or local purchase operations. Most of the evaluative reports on such operations have been concerned with organisational issues such as timeliness of response and appropriateness of resources. Taken together, these reports constitute a substantial body of case study information that provides a broad

indication of donor experience with triangular and local purchase operations [WFP 1982d; WFP 1986k, 1986m, 1986n, 1986o, 1986p, 1986q, 1986r, 1986s; UNOEOA 1986; Borton et al 1986; RDI 87; RONCO 1988; Clay and Benson 1988; Borton et al 1988; Jost and Gabas 1988; Rodriguez 1988; Hay et al 1988]. The report on WFP activities [RDI 1987] took into account such documentation on WFP and other donor activity as was available up to the end of 1986 in making preliminary generalisations about the administrative and logistical issues associated with such operations as well as the prima facie evidence that more appropriate commodities were being provided than would have been available through alternative provision of food aid directly from major food exporting countries (see below Section V.5.). Subsequent evaluations [RDI 1987, RONCO 1988, Hay et al 1988, Borton et al 1988] review cost effectiveness, timeliness and administrative issues related to acquiring commodities in Africa.

There has been no systematic review of the issues of appropriateness of different commodities in emergency operations or for development purposes in Africa. Most of the documentation including the evaluation reports are essentially anecdotal. There are however a small number of studies of commodity markets by FAO, the IWC and USDA [FAO 1984; FAO undated; FAO 1987a; FAO 1986b; IWC/FAC 1986a, 1986b].

The Zimbabwe Maize Train Operation was the first large scale triangular operation in Africa involving many bilateral donors and WFP logistics support (see Section V.4.). Nevertheless the operations were never fully evaluated after they came to an end in 1983/84 with the onset of a major drought in Southern Africa. The operations are relatively well documented and provide a bench- mark against which to measure the operation since 1985/86. [WFP 1981b; WFP 1982b; WFP 1984c; Joshi 1986; Shaw 1983].

Several other WFP policy programme session papers have been concerned with these food aid operations [WFP 1986h, 1986i, 1986t, 1986u; WFP 1987b, 1987d; WFP 1988b; WFP/ADB 1986b].

A substantial body of writing on triangular transactions and local purchases has been associated with the Network for Prevention of Food Crisis in the Sahel, of the Club du Sahel and such information is now systematised in an annual report [Club du Sahel 1985b; 1986b; 1987a]. The challenging analytic task is the beginning of an attempt to relate donor triangular local purchase and exchange activities to trade and agricultural policy in supplying countries and regional implications, in studies of the Club du Sahel [e.g. 1987b] as well as in other studies [eg. Koestler 1986; Hay et al 1988]. In particular the relationship between regional co-operation in improving food security and promoting intra-regional trade in the SADCC and CILSS group of countries needs to be taken into account.

With the upsurge in triangular and local purchase activities from 1985/86, FAO and WFP in particular began to collect and distribute fuller statistical information on these operations. The pattern and trend of operations based on this documentation is reviewed in Section V.4. below. It should be noted that such statistics include triangular swaps but usually exclude local exchange operations. The on-going study of WFP local exchange arrangements will eventually provide a more detailed statistical review of exchange activities. However, it is already clear that the scale of such operations is significant in one or two African countries, notably Sudan, and that they play a large role in the Asian regional activities of the WFP. The assessment in the AID evaluation [RONCO 1988] that local exchanges are less important than local purchases will need to be qualified to take into account the exact level of such activities. Meanwhile, the increasing role of local purchases creates an ambiguity in food aid statistics as a significant part of assistance to some African countries no longer involves food imports. Consequently, food aid can no longer be directly estimated as a proportion of total recorded imports in any meaningful way, for, for example a number of Sahelian countries and Sudan.

As this has become an area of high priority in donor policy, it is to be expected that there will be a substantial increase in the documentation on this subject. For example, the Netherlands, one of the more important bilateral sources of finance for triangular transactions, is currently undertaking an evaluation of its food aid programme. A feature of these activities involving acquisition of commodities in developing countries is that minor donors and also NGOs are playing a relatively more important part than in food aid overall (see Section V.4.). A more balanced assessment of these activities will therefore also require that these experiences are taken into account. Finally, because of the recent and rapid growth in such operations, it is possible that preliminary assessments may have to be rapidly revised. For example, the fluctuations in international commodity market prices since the mid-1980s and the possibility that some operations are becoming more regular and routine, notably in Southern Africa, will be factors to be taken into account in such continuing reassessment.

V.4. Patterns and trends in triangular, local purchase and commodity exchange operations

In 1963 the United Nations World Food Programme was founded as the first multilateral programme concerned exclusively with food aid. It would provide an outlet for donor countries with too small or intermittent surpluses to sustain their own food programme; and allow richer ones with resources other than food a means of supplying food aid. It was also seen as a means of mobilizing surpluses in other than donor countries for use as food aid. So from its inception WFP received donations both in cash and kind. Some of this cash was spent on purchases on donors' behalf rather than on transport, administration and other associated costs of food aid. WFP's

more recent involvement in triangular transactions and local purchases therefore seemed a natural transition, given both its commitments to actively promoting agricultural development and nutritional self-sufficiency and to mobilizing surpluses. The first Food Aid Convention in 1967 furthered opportunities for donors to give cash rather than food by establishing food aid commitments on the part of a number of donors who did not have commodities available for export that could economically be used to meet commitments.

However, cash purchases of food aid remained very low. For example, between 1963 and 1974 total pledges to WFP, excluding FAC contributions and miscellaneous income, amounted to US\$1,070 million of which 72 percent was of commodities. Of the remaining 28 percent, comprised of contributions of cash and services, US\$6.2 million was spent on cash purchases. So commodities acquired through purchases formed only 0.8 percent of total commodities distributed by WFP - and most of these purchases were of wheat from developed countries.

Two major international initiatives were then taken to encourage cash purchases of food aid in developing countries. Firstly, in the wake of the oil crisis of the early 1970s and its subsequent detrimental impact on developing country economies and food production, in 1974 the World Food Conference adopted an "improved policy for food aid" Donor countries were urged to "provide, as appropriate, to food aid programmes additional cash resources for commodity purchases from developing countries to the maximum extent possible" [Resolution XVIII, Report of the World Food Conference, Rome, 5/16 November 1974]. Secondly, in 1979 "The Guidelines and Criteria for Food Aid" adopted by the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes recommended that donor countries should make efforts to provide, whenever possible, cash resources with a view to financing food aid through triangular transactions between themselves, developing food exporting countries and recipient countries wherever applicable, and to diversifying the varieties of food provided as aid [WFP/CFA: 7/21 June 1979, Rome. Annex IV, p.47].

But up until 1977/78 virtually all of WFP purchases continued to be of wheat, mostly in developed countries. Then in 1977/78 WFP cash purchases included 21.9 thousand tons of rice and some purchases of coarse grains. This marked the beginning of purchases in developing countries on a much wider scale than ever before. At about this time other donor agencies were also "experimenting" with triangular transactions. For example, the EEC funded a shipment of 500 tons of white maize from Zambia to Botswana under its 1978 programme [IDS/CEAS 1982].

Two key operations then occurred which both in turn contributed significantly to total volumes of triangular transactions and bought attention to the possible positive effects of them. One was the Thai-Kampuchean border refugee emergency operation

which began in 1979. The other was the Zimbabwe "Maize Train" Operation.

Zimbabwe "Maize Train" Operation

Zimbabwe is a land-locked country, dependent on transport networks of neighbouring countries for international trade routes. The long period of civil strife in the country coupled with that in Mozambique, Zimbabwe's main throughway to sea ports, had left the transport system very run-down by 1980. Railways were particularly badly affected. Zimbabwe had two successive bumper crops of maize of 2 million tons in 1980/81 and 1.5 million tons in 1981/82. Simultaneous increases in production of other export crops placed enormous strains on transport resources. Demand for transport far out-stripped supply and so the government was forced to devise a strict system of priorities in the allocation of wagons for the movement of goods. Maize is a comparatively high volume-low value good and so ranked low on the list of priorities. The Zimbabwean Grain Marketing Board (part of a government parastatal with the responsibility of ensuring sufficient domestic food crop supplies) was faced therefore with the prospect of having to stockpile the maize for two or three years until the transport situation had improved. This would have imposed great strains on both its storage and financial resources and so it was decided to approach the WFP for assistance in reducing surpluses.

Other parts of Africa were simultaneously facing acute food shortages; and WFP were trying to implement triangular transactions on a significant level. Zimbabwean maize surpluses offered the perfect opportunity to achieve this. And so, in April 1981, the Zimbabwe "maize train" operations began.

Considerable transport problems were encountered, largely arising because the maize was being moved through Mozambique, for use there and for export by sea. But, nevertheless, by the end of 1983 over 400,000 tons of maize had been delivered to a total of eighteen different African countries, involving about twenty different donors. The maize was used in both emergency operations and as grant food aid in support of development projects. The operation was the first cooperative donor effort to support triangular transactions. Donations to the maize train operation included expertise, cash and urgently needed equipment with which to improve transportation and logistics facilities as well as cash donations to finance purchasing of the maize. A major effort was undertaken to reconstruct transport and communications infrastructure. However the drought affecting many other African countries did not leave Zimbabwe unscathed. In 1983 the quantity of maize moved by the maize train fell; and by 1984 Zimbabwe itself was forced to import maize. Outstanding deliveries were deferred by mutual consent and were finally delivered in 1985 after another bumper crop. 1986 crops were also bumper but in 1987 Zimbabwe's worst drought in 40 years hit heavily on maize production and exports were once again halted. In 1988 provisional figures for maize production suggest a crop not much less than the

bumper 1985 and 1986 crops. The Zimbabwe maize train thus provided an early indication that while in some years surpluses are available, even in African countries of more regular surpluses they cannot be guaranteed.

The recent African food crisis of 1982-86 also provided some opportunities for triangular transactions and local purchases. Drought did not affect all countries, or all regions of certain countries, simultaneously and some food surpluses were available in parts of the continent. Meanwhile some donors, despite substantial domestic surpluses, were willing to provide food aid in cash rather than in kind to facilitate purchases. There have also been many recent resolutions by African regional meetings favouring triangular food aid. For example, the report of the Abidjan Seminar sponsored by the African Development Bank and WFP provided further examples of the strong desire to increase the role of triangular transactions in food aid in Africa. [WFP/ADB 1986b]

The African food crisis waned after improved harvests in 1985-86 led to substantial agricultural surpluses in some countries. In 1986/87 food aid to sub-Saharan Africa was only about 40 percent of the peak levels reached in 1984/85. But in other sub-Saharan African countries food deficits continued and so food imports were necessary. For example, a CILSS report [Club du Sahel 1988d], commenting on the situation in Sahelian countries in 1987, noted that harvests in the north of several Sahelian countries had been poor while those in the south were quite favourable. An opportunity for local purchases therefore existed and a concerted effort was made by the international donor community to respond to this situation. In 1986/7 intra-sub-Saharan Africa triangular transactions and local purchases increased by 60 per cent over the previous year's level to 497 thousand tons.

During this post-crisis period there have also been some switching between sources, and "problems of implementation" have occurred which reflect mainly, but not only, problems in source countries and regions. In early 1987 some exporting countries embargoed or severely restricted purchases and shipments for export, even under existing contracts. The Governments in Kenya and Zimbabwe had become insensitive to the risks of a rapid reduction in stocks and to subsequent supply problems of a poorer harvest. Others, for example Malawi and Niger, were again moving temporarily into deficit. But the feared supply problems did not materialise, except in Malawi. There have been good harvests in 1988 and so, for example, Sahelian states are again looking for enhanced donor commitment to triangular and local purchase operations.

Although we are not yet able to quantify the trend, it appears that during 1986-88 donors also increasingly engaged in both triangular and local exchanges arrangements due to budgetary constraints on the financial resources available for commodity purchases under food aid programmes.

V.5. Economic assessment

V.5.(a) The case for triangular transactions and similar food aid operations

Food security interventions are intended to be counter-cyclical, i.e., reducing the amplitude of inter-year variations in supply and prices to consumers. There is a strong presumption from the economic literature that trade is more cost-effective than inter-year storage for the individual economy in achieving such counter-cyclical intervention. Triangular and similar actions are therefore prima facie attractive as measures to foster trade both within and between African economies. Legal trade is severely circumscribed where comparative advantage (especially taking into account transport costs and the spatial distribution of markets) would indicate a case for greater economic integration than a host of non-tariff barriers permit. These barriers and a high proportion of self provisioning by households in rural areas result in regional and national markets being thin and volatile. Market structures therefore potentially amplify the impact of the weather on the largely rain fed production of basic staples.

A list of the advantages of triangular operations typically includes:

- i. *Creating additional demand in the exporting country or region.* When stocks of parastatals surplus to current distribution requirements build up, an increase in demand in the form of exports and purchases for local food aid operations reduces the danger of a "policy cycle" in the form of price reductions and decreased purchases for producers amplifying the effect of weather on the production cycle.
- ii. *Promotion of exports with foreign exchange gains to the producing countries.* Similarly, there may be foreign exchange savings through a swap operation which substitutes for commercial purchases.
- iii. *Providing more appropriate food aid commodities, especially for rural populations.* There are potentially direct, immediate benefits in terms of acceptability and ease of processing. This implies a higher value to final recipients and reduced long term risks of shifting consumer tastes further towards imported commodities that will pose a severe foreign exchange problem for many lower income countries.
- iv. *Shipping arrangements can be simplified with reductions in costs and improved delivery times.* Delivery times can be especially important with food security related emergency operations in deficit regions and areas.
- v. *Improving the distribution system because of associated investments in*

infrastructure, system management and general operation through greater use.

vi. *Stimulating regional trade.* The organisation of triangular operations confronts existing non-tariff barriers.

vii. *Focus for international cooperation bringing together food aid, financial and technical cooperation.*

Sceptics can, of course, counterbalance such arguments with hypothetical, and sometimes plausible, alternative and negative consequences of donor meddling with trade patterns. The implication is that, given existing non-tariff barriers and the highly administered nature of legal trade, this is clearly a second best situation. The likely overall impact of an intervention must reflect a full and careful analysis of the specific institutional context and not be based solely on general principles.

V.5(b) Findings on recent experience

As discussed in Section V.3., there have been a number of studies evaluating recent experiences with triangular and similar operations. Purchases in regular exporting developing countries are similar to those in developing countries in terms of cost-effectiveness and timeliness of delivery although they may include the supply of a more appropriate commodity (such as white maize from Thailand). However, purchases from non-regular exporting developing countries have been promoted as offering improvements in these areas. Focusing on this latter set of countries particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, the RDI [1987] and other evaluation reports have concentrated on these issues in assessing the impact of triangular transactions and local purchases. A number of conclusions have emerged.

First, such operations can be but are not always cost-effective in terms of commodity and related transport costs in quite a wide range of country situations. (In this context cost-effectiveness is defined in terms of the import parity price for the importing region or economy). This is most likely to be the case where actions involve trade between landlocked countries or neighbouring interior regions and where there are high cost/poor transport from/to ports. Examples of such cost-effective actions are bilateral actions organised by WFP from Kenya to Southern Sudan and Kenya to Southern Ethiopia. Many of the actions involving shipments of Zimbabwean maize to neighbouring provinces of Mozambique are similarly cost-effective. But Hay et al [1988] found that during the period 1984-87 there had been a decline in the efficiency of cereals triangular transactions relative to food aid from Europe. Meanwhile, the scope for cost-effective actions has been otherwise circumscribed by international grain prices. In 1986/7 these prices reflected competitive dumping/subsidisation by major exporters. In the tighter market of 1988, world and export prices are much

closer to internal prices in some exporting countries. If calculations were to be based on international prices that more closely reflect production costs in major exporting countries, the economic case for more integration of grain markets within sub-Saharan Africa is probably greater than suggested by a cost-effectiveness analysis of recent triangular operations. The extent of the production response in the main exporting countries to the US drought and consequent high prices will heavily influence the short term prospects for cost-effective triangular operations. Similarly, the outcome of the Uruguay Round negotiations which resume in April 1989 will have important consequences for the longer term.

Second, experience is more mixed with regard to the timeliness and assuredness of triangular and similar type operations. The RDI [1987] study found that a high proportion of WFP actions involving coarse grain in sub-Saharan Africa went through quickly and compared favourably with typical times request/decision to arrival of emergency shipments from major exporting countries. So, if food aid is seen as part of a trade based strategy for food security, there would appear to be a case for making greater use of triangular operations. However, the Hay et al [1988] study found that EC triangular transactions had not been more timely than bilateral food aid operations. Also, in the RDI [1987] and other studies, a minority of actions by various donors were also found to have been subject to delay and to have involved high administrative costs, eventual deferral and even cancellation. In some cases alternative normal food aid operations or an alternative triangular operation from Asia had to be organised [Borton 1988]. These cases and the high administrative costs of most triangular type operations indicate policy issues that require further analysis.

Third, maize and other coarse grains provided under triangular type operations were by and large more appropriate than alternative commodities available from developed country export source. However, in some cases, as is not infrequently found with normal food aid, there were serious problems of quality of and condition of grain made available by parastatals in, for example, Somalia and Sudan.

The Hay et al [1988] study has also considered the supply side arguments for cash purchase in greater detail. It found that although triangular transactions have been successful in transferring resources to source countries, these benefits have accrued mainly to governments rather than to the farmers.

Local Purchases: The RDI [1987] report is the only study to date that has considered local purchases. These actions were found to be more difficult to evaluate. This was particularly true of the smaller local purchases involving commodities for which importation would be implausible, such as dried fish. It would be reasonable to assume that such purchases were cost-effective but that they could entail high (hidden) administrative costs. It was suggested that these purchases be given more attention in future evaluations of specific project operations. Meanwhile, purchases of

pulses, wheat and rice were generally found to be cost-effective, although some doubt was raised as to the cost-effectiveness of local purchases of rice in Africa. Local purchases of coarse grains, the item of which the most purchases have been made, were generally found to have occurred at around import parity prices except in Zimbabwe and Malawi, both also exporting, where purchases were closer to export parity prices.

The timeliness of delivery of local purchases was not examined in any detail in the RDI [1987] report. However, on balance it would seem that by eliminating lengthy import and export procedures, they might well be more timely, depending on local transport conditions. In terms of commodity appropriateness, local purchases provided a variety of locally acceptable foods as a nutritional supplement to cereals food aid.

V.6. Policy implications of recent experience with triangular operations

The triangular food aid cycle in sub-Saharan Africa during the 1980s is indicative of the thinness of markets within the region and the quite rapid changes in the supply and demand situation that can be expected. For that reason a reliance on "trade" including food aid that is likely to involve substantial response lags and delivery problems is that much less effective. A high proportion of the aid provided in response to a food crisis is on an emergency basis. But the typical emergency response cycle, except for small highest priority shipments, is within 6 months and in practice many actions are taking longer, especially to land-locked destinations. Triangular operations have not been successful in significantly reducing these times. The implication is that national distribution systems must make some combination of working/food security stocks that provide a margin of assurance in relation to realistic assessment of such lead times.

A further question is whether the performance of triangular transactions improve as these have become "routine" operations. The ultimate operational credibility of triangular operations depends in part on this issue. For that reason, it would be desirable to monitor experience since 1986 for selected important source countries.

Triangular type operations are attractive to parastatal organisations and governments as an alternative to meeting the costs of inter-year storage. The willingness of donors to meet administrative and transport costs shifts the relative costs/advantages of storage versus disposal. Some governments, for example Malawi and possibly Niger, may have been tempted into apparently attractive short run export/disposal measures easing the budgetary position of parastatals. For example, Malawi was continuing to export under triangular agreements such as that with the EEC for Tanzania made in 1985 into 1987. But Malawi is now importing after the "unexpected" influx of

Mozambiquan refugees and domestic problems. Were those aid financed exports in 1986 at export prices that could compete in, for example the Botswana market, sufficient compensation for commercial import/food aid at Malawi's own high import parity prices in 1987? Where parastatals are under pressure to improve their budgetary position as part of some adjustment programme, there is a powerful incentive to engage in short run disposal measures. It is hard to avoid the conclusion that donor responses have been reactive and not based on a fuller assessment of the food security implications for the exporting economies.

The considerable non-tariff barriers to legal trade in basic staples within country and across borders have been highlighted by attempts to organise triangular operations [Jost and Gabas 1988; RDI 1987]. The barriers in exporting countries are duplicated by the regulations of importing countries, particularly as these effect commodities crossing land borders. Non-tariff barriers such as, obstacles to the private trade in moving grain from region to region within a country in part reflect national food security concerns. Trade in basic staples may be more circumscribed by such food security related barriers than traditional trade in export commodities. Are neighbouring countries in fact serious about developing trade where this implies a reliance on a neighbouring economy for basic staples? Barriers in part reflect justifiable concern over phyto-sanitary problems. These, for example are justified at present in relation to greater grain borer infested maize that might otherwise be exported from Tanzania. However, problems encountered in moving maize overland from Kenya to Ethiopia or from Mali to Senegal in 1986/7 appear to have reflected unjustifiable concern and been part of an administrative reluctance to allow such movements. Thirdly, the barriers reflect the generally complex and weak trade regulatory administration in potential exporting countries. If legalised trade in basic staples is to grow in importance between sub-Saharan African countries, substantial measures are required to reduce unnecessary non-tariff barriers. For example, complementary measures are required to ensure the quality and phyto-sanitary condition of grain stocks.

On balance, local purchases would appear to offer a viable alternative to normal food aid imports. However, as discussed in the RDI [1987] report, except in an emergency situation, large scale food aid operations in a country self-sufficient in, or with exportable surpluses of food commodities would be unlikely. Yet WFP internal guidelines stipulate that local purchases should only be entered into in countries with such surplus availability. Other donors also apply this general rule of thumb when considering local purchases. Thus although local purchases appear to be a relatively efficient means of supplying food aid to all parties involved, large scale purchases are unlikely. Instead local purchases are more likely to be of one of two types. They may be small scale purchases of food commodities that are complementary to the basic cereals supplied. Alternatively, they may be ad hoc responses to intermittent surpluses in countries that in other years import the commodity in question, and do

not have well developed channels for exports of such infrequent surpluses. Purchases of the latter type are likely to involve higher administrative costs precisely because of the infrequency of the purchases. Meanwhile, special attention needs to be paid to the issue of pricing local purchases in countries with export potential on a regular basis.

V.6.(a) Implications for aid donor support for food security

The use of budgeted food aid resources and other operations involving the use of food aid from within sub-Saharan Africa has been justified strongly in terms of the benefits to the "source" economy and the economic gains from stimulating regional trade. Yet that aspect of operations has received least attention in the economic analysis of actual operational experiences so far, except in the Hay et al report [1988]. Donors have been largely reactive, responding to the short term opportunities provided by the changing supply situation in source countries (regions) and potential opportunities for use in food aid actions. A large part of these commodities appears to have been utilised in emergency operations, notably in Mozambique, Sudan, Ethiopia but also elsewhere. Such operations are definitionally supposed to be *ad hoc* and reactive although actual practice is somewhat different, in, for example, the case of Mozambique and where there are long term refugees/displaced populations, as in Somalia. But, if African commodities operations are to have a continuing and important role in food aid activities, then it would seem imperative that donors in co-operation with potential source economies develop a coherent medium term framework for planning and organisation of such operations.

A set of specific suggestions were made in the RDI [1987] study for improving the planning and management of triangular and local purchase arrangements that concern both donors and beneficiary countries. The Hay et al [1988] study made similar proposals. However, there is a need for an awareness of the problematic implications of donors becoming involved in the planned promotion of regional trade in food. The still continuing process of reviewing the operational elements of food security in the SADCC region and the deliberations of food trade policy for the Sahel region in the Mindelo Conference have highlighted some of these issues such as the distribution of the benefits and costs of trade creation and diversion.

The World Bank and other donors are involved in policy analysis and supporting the strengthening and reform of grain marketing operations in a number of countries. Recent experience with triangular operations have highlighted the complex and considerable non-tariff barriers to trade that have ambiguous and often negative food security implications. This is a potentially fruitful area for policy reform.

Secondly, there is a danger of a policy amplified basic cereals cycle in relation to thin

markets. Policy reform should presumably address stockholding decisions in terms of a realistic assessment of costs versus risks. Donor resources have been often more readily available since 1986 for financing exports. Because of the slowness of donors to programme and implement food aid actions and barriers to trade some of these interventions may even become pro-cyclical.

Thirdly, the priority accorded to national food security where storage and trade in cereals staples are involved makes it unlikely that countries will proceed far in liberalising trade with neighbouring countries in this commodity area. Are there ways in which food aid donor interventions that are politically attractive can be better integrated into a medium term programme for strengthening food security and marketing reforms directed to agricultural development.

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VI. FOOD EMERGENCIES

VI.1. Overview

In recent years, emergency food aid for sub-Saharan Africa has become a significant and high-profile category of international aid. In 1985/86 the share of world-wide cereal food aid devoted to emergencies reached a peak of almost 30% (compared with about 11% ten years earlier, and 16.5% in 1986/87) [WEP 1988a, Table 8]. In the same year, sub-Saharan Africa received about 63% of that world total of emergency cereal food aid (compared with a peak of 77% in 1984/85, and 56% in 1983/84) [WFP 1988a, Tables 8 and 10]. Within the region, too, the relative importance of emergency food aid is much greater than in the world as a whole. At the height of relief operations in 1985 (as Table 1 in the Introduction shows) emergencies accounted for almost 50% of cereal food aid to the region. Though this proportion has since fallen off, it remains high (at nearly 45% in 1986/7); and, given the continent's historical vulnerability to food crises and its deep-rooted food security problems, there is little doubt that such emergencies will recur. Analysis of the current literature on the use, management and effectiveness of relief food aid therefore loses no urgency from the fact that the worst of the most recent major crisis has passed. In fact, this is in many ways an ideal time to review the literature: long enough after the height of the latest emergency for academics and aid agencies to have documented their reflections, yet soon enough for the experience to be fresh.

The explosive growth in emergency food aid is a recent phenomenon, and previous literature reviews therefore have relatively little to say about its use in sub-Saharan Africa. Maxwell and Singer [1979] specifically exclude emergencies from their analysis of issues. The Clay-Singer review [1985] devotes a chapter to food aid and emergencies, but was written before most of the literature on this decade's "African food crisis" became available. It finds a "still fragmentary literature" on emergencies [p.56], and draws mainly on non-African sources. Nevertheless, Clay and Singer identify three major themes in the general literature on food emergencies, which are equally relevant to the present Africa-focused survey:

- (i) the broad concept of "emergency food aid" - what is an emergency what should emergency food aid be designed to do, and how useful, in practice is its designation as a distinct category?
- (ii) difficulties of implementation and logistics; and
- (iii) the developmental context of emergency food aid (how can "relief" be integrated with "development"?). They also raise (but do not specifically explore) the question of how to prevent recurrent

and continuing emergencies.

Recent additions to the literature on food emergencies in sub-Saharan Africa (which fall into three broad categories of aid agency reports, popular books and academic work) have considerably expanded the available knowledge in each of these areas. This chapter attempts to give an overview of this specifically African literature, and to suggest a framework of main themes and issues into which the fragments might fit. It outlines, first, some background debate on the nature of food emergencies in Africa. The remaining four sections then deal with food aid for the relief of emergencies (including implementation problems and alternatives to free food distribution); food aid for the prevention of emergencies; the "relief-development interface"; and food aid for refugees and displaced people.

The nature of food emergencies in sub-Saharan Africa

The experience of sub-Saharan Africa in the 1970s and 1980s has stimulated a re-examination of the definitions (for food aid purposes) of emergencies. Attention has particularly focused on the paradox of the "continuing emergency", a phrase coined to describe the chronic or recurrent food crisis conditions suffered by many African countries.

The WFP's three-way classification of emergencies into sudden natural calamities; man-made disasters; and slowly-maturing crises of food availability (due to crop failure, drought etc), has been usefully reformulated by Hay. Focusing on African experience, he suggests that

"type A emergencies result from sudden catastrophic natural events. Type B emergencies are characterised by the involuntary movement of people away from their homes. Type C emergencies result from an erosion of the capacity of families to acquire enough food for survival" [Hay 1986a p.2].

Of these three, types B and C have been most significant in sub-Saharan Africa. The distribution of WFP emergency aid may be taken as indicative: in 1985, there were 45 newly-approved or ongoing WFP emergency operations in sub-Saharan Africa, of which 27 were drought-related (involving WFP commitments of about 300,000 tons for over 9.7 million people in 16 countries); while 17 operations (about 138,000 tons) were targetted on about 1.7 million refugees, returnees and displaced persons in 11 countries. None of the African operations in that year were related to sudden natural disasters [WFP 1986c]. These figures, of course, relate to the height of famine relief operations, and probably underestimate the relative importance of refugee food aid in most years (see section VI.5 below). Recently, too, the floods in Sudan have come

as a reminder that Africa is not immune to sudden natural catastrophes.

Other sources emphasise the overlaps and interconnections between the different classes of emergency in African experience [WFP 1985b, p.3; de Waal 1988a], and the multiple causes of "type C" crises which can be obscured by labels such as "drought" and "famine" [Thomson 1983; Borton and Clay 1986]. Borton and Clay, in their overview of the nature and causes of the "African food crisis", stress the diversity of experience among countries. They caution against over-generalisation, and against typologies based on extreme cases (such as Ethiopia) [p.258]. They also point out, as does Singer [1985, p.10], that war and insurgency contributed to the creation of famine in the four countries worst affected between 1982 and 1986 (i.e., Chad, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Sudan) [see also section V.5. below]. Green [1986b] has also stressed the interconnections between war and food crisis in Africa. Nevertheless, the third model of emergency ("erosion of the capacity ... to acquire enough food") has clearly dominated recent African experience and literature, and has almost come to be seen as a distinctly African type of crisis. The "overwhelming predominant disaster category" [RDI 1985] in sub-Saharan Africa is the food emergency - the collapse of the food system itself, rather than, for example, a sudden disaster causing temporary disruption to food supplies.

A different perspective on the typology of food crises is that of the World Bank's food security study, 'Poverty and Hunger'. It distinguishes between "chronic" and "transitory food insecurity", defining famine as "the worst form of transitory food insecurity" which can be caused by "wars, floods, crop failures, the loss of purchasing power by groups of households, and - sometimes but not always - high food prices" [World Bank 1986, p.1-S]. In these terms, the poor in many vulnerable countries of sub-Saharan Africa may be seen as subject to long-term chronic food insecurity, which renders them all the more vulnerable to the effects of recurrent periods of acute, "transitory", problems.

The further idea of the chronic, "extended", or "continuing" emergency in Africa is outlined by Clay and Singer. They note that many see it as "a symptom of wider agricultural and food sector problems that require broad, radical food policy measures"¹; while others emphasise "the need to provide effective food entitlements to vulnerable rural populations" [Clay and Singer 1985 pp.58-59, 64; see also Holt 1983; Thomson 1983; Ingram 1987; Clay and York 1987]. Clearly, analysis of this phenomenon leads into much broader issues than the present review attempts to cover. Limiting the focus specifically to food aid, however, it may be useful to distinguish two (analytically) distinct concerns in the relevant literature. One is with appropriate uses and objectives of food aid in the context of "continuing emergencies". This concern is explored in section VI.2. below on the role and implementation of emergency food aid. The other is with the implications (both for donors and recipients) of the repeated or continuous provision of "emergency food aid" - that is,

of kinds of intervention originally designed as short-term measures to deal with "urgent situations" following "a demonstrably abnormal event" (to borrow from WFP's basic definition of emergencies [Clay and Singer 1985, p.65]). This question is also touched on below, in sections VI.2. and VI.4.

VI.2. Food aid for the relief of food emergencies

There has in the past been something of a consensus that the provision of food aid in emergencies is uncontroversial and basically unproblematic (however great the practical difficulties of implementation). Its specific exclusion from general discussions of food aid [such as Cassen and associates 1986; Maxwell and Singer 1979] is perhaps due to its relative insignificance, in quantitative terms, until quite recently. Clay and Singer note that even severe critics of food aid agree on its "inevitability" as a response to short-term crises [Clay and Singer 1985, p.57]. However, a reading of recent African literature shows that emergency food aid is far from straightforward. Many of the issues which complicate the use of food aid in general, and which are dealt with in the preceding chapters of this review, also arise in emergency contexts. Clay and York make the point that assumptions about the non-controversial nature of emergency food aid can lead to a dangerously uncritical attitude [Clay and York 1987, p.6]. This section sketches some key aspects of emergency food aid which are raised in the African literature (though there is as yet little documentation in some areas).

VI.2.(a) Objectives and "modes" of emergency food aid

The objective of emergency food aid may seem obvious - it is to relieve suffering and prevent deaths. However, the immediate objectives in pursuit of this overall aim are less self-evident. The range of short-term objectives which arise in the literature include: direct nutritional support, to reduce malnutrition and mortality; income transfer; livelihood support; the prevention of extreme effects of famine, such as mass migration; and long-term goals of rehabilitation and development. The tailoring of food aid to serve these various needs and to fit the specific conditions of each case calls for flexibility, and a range of "distribution modes" [USAID 1986a, p.xi]. The five modes discussed here are free distribution; food-for-work; monetization; triangular transactions; and commodity exchanges.

(i) Free distribution

Free distribution directly to hungry people is the most common form of emergency food aid, and in famine situations is likely to remain the most important element of the relief response. Much of the literature concerned with it focuses on practical issues of implementation (including timing, transport and targeting), which are summarised in

section VI.2.(b).

Within the mode of free distribution, decisions are to be made between general rations and the various kinds of supplementary feeding programmes (mother-child health clinics, school feeding etc.). The balance between them can be problematic. Mitchell, for example (writing on Wollo in Ethiopia) found that "too much emphasis was placed on [selective feeding programmes] and in the absence of sufficient general ration distribution their role was seriously undermined" [Mitchell 1986, p.59]; while AID found that the opposite imbalance (general feeding without supplementary inputs) had reduced the impact of their aid in Sudan and Mali [USAID 1986a, p.xiv]. In supplementary feeding, the relative advantages of take-home (dry) and on-site feeding are also to be considered [Young 1987; Gibb 1986; see also section 111.3 above].

Free distributions will undoubtedly remain central to short-term famine relief. However, they are not always appropriate. Reasons for using alternative modes include concern about the creation of dependency [Williams 1986; WFP 1986f] and production disincentives [WFP 1986f]; and the cost and difficulty of distribution, particularly through the weak infrastructures of many African countries [Kumar 1985]. A common perspective is summed up in the WFP's evaluation of its operations in the African emergency:

"Wherever required for humanitarian reasons, food assistance should be distributed free. However, governments and assisting agencies should, whenever possible, explore more effective ways of employing food aid, including food-for-work schemes and sales, studying the purchasing power of the intended beneficiaries and possibilities of public work programmes." [WFP 1986f, p.25]

(ii) Food-for-work

Food-for-work schemes have a key place in the linking of relief to longer-term developmental goals, and the literature on this is summarised in section VI.4. (relief-development interface). A general discussion of food-for-work can be found in section 111.2.

(iii) Monetization

There is as yet little literature on the monetization of emergency food aid, though there seems to be growing interest in its potential. As Hay, for example, says:

"Many people view the sales of emergency food aid with distaste -

or even alarm. This view tends to restrict the use of food aid as a general resource ... and limits its support for the kinds of activities central to a relief-development strategy. There are situations where the sale of emergency food aid is most desirable." [Hay 1986b, p.280]

In his conceptual paper for the WFP, Hay distinguishes three situations where the sale of food aid would be appropriate (stressing the need to analyse the crisis situation in terms of supply or demand deficit): national market support by grants of food aid when the national supply is threatened; exchange arrangements through a marketing agency, where the imported food aid is sold and locally produced commodities delivered in the countryside; and the sale of food aid in local markets where demand exceeds supply [Hay 1986a, p.23]. Literature on the practice of such operations in sub-Saharan Africa is scarce. The WFP has had a long-running internal debate on the subject [see, for example, WFP 1982a], while bilateral donors are generally less restricted where monetization is concerned.

National market support: Where a shortfall food crisis takes the form of a shortfall in national supply, it may be appropriate to provide "unplanned non-project food aid ... through speedier channels of delivery" [Benson and Clay 1986, p.309] to support the national market. There seems to be little literature on this form of emergency action.

Governments in some cases prefer sales to free distribution of emergency food aid [the example of Cape Verde is cited in WFP 1982a, p.4]. Borton and Stephenson discuss government and donor responses to the 1984/85 food crisis in Kenya, where the government's strategy gave priority to market support, but the "massive" US donation was tied under PL480 Title JI to free distribution or food-for-work. In this case a compromise was reached allowing about half the donation to be sold [Borton and Stephenson 1986, p.9-10].

Urban sales for rural relief: Where the urban population have the purchasing power to buy food, donors may find it appropriate to sell imported aid on the urban market and use the funds generated in rural relief programmes - in the form either of cash or locally-purchased commodities. Clearly this can give considerable flexibility. AID's evaluation of its African emergency operations found that

"use of commercial markets to monetize emergency food assistance in urban areas was ... a key component of the overall impact achieved in Sudan, Mali and Chad" [USAID 1986a, p.xi]

Ingram also argues that monetization on the urban market to release cash for projects in affected rural areas is sometimes "the best way of helping people" [Ingram

1987, p.9]; while Kumar's discussion of the complementary roles of cash-for-work and food distribution in Ethiopia indicates the potential advantages of such flexibility [Kumar 198.5].

Monetization for internal distribution costs: The provision of a proportion of emergency food aid to be monetized as a contribution to high internal transport and handling costs, is now a common practice in African operations. It is further referred to in section VI.2.(b), under in-country distribution.

Sales by recipient: The sale of food aid by recipient individuals households is controversial in some quarters, and often stereotyped by the media as a sign of corruption or waste [see, for example, Jansson 1987 on Ethiopia; Fraser 1988, p.225-7 on Africa in general]. However, several writers refer to such sales as a way of increasing the range of usefulness of emergency food aid, seen as needed income transfer rather than direct nutritional support [De Waal 1988b, 1988c; Hay 1986a]. Harrell-Bond quotes Wilson's comment on this:

"When [commodity] aid is sold ... it is often suggested that therefore aid was not needed. On contrary it would seem the likely that aid in cash was what was needed, so that people could meet their needs as defined by them" [Harrell-Bond 1986, p.354]

Such sales could thus be seen as a kind of "grass-roots monetization", increasing the flexibility of emergency food aid in practice.

(iv) Triangular transactions

Triangular transactions and local purchases, in emergencies and in general, are discussed at length in chapter V, particularly section V.3. which reviews reports on recent donor experience. As noted there, there is little literature on these relatively new forms of "alternative" delivery arrangements. Barker and Quinney [1989] give a detailed recent account, and broadly positive evaluation, of an internal purchase scheme (sometimes called an "internal triangular transaction") for relief in Tigray. The potential of such arrangements to speed delivery times in emergencies is also touched on in section VI.2.(b) below.

(v) Commodity exchanges

Exchanges of food aid for local commodities have been experimented with in some countries as a way of supporting local terms of trade in food emergencies (see section V.2. for a general discussion of commodity exchanges). Borton and Stephenson [1986], for example, describe Oxfam's grain-for-livestock project in

Kenya, in which drought-weakened animals were bought with WFP grain, and the meat dried and used in local feeding programmes. This, they conclude, "is an excellent programme which helps to prevent destitution among herders, deals with some of the environmental causes of the crisis, and at the same time fosters community self-help and provides relief with dignity" [p.17]. Hay also refers to this programme and to a similar one in Mali, seeing the same major advantages as Borton and Stephenson (maintaining pastoralists' income, and countering environmental deterioration), adding that the exchange preserves an otherwise deteriorating food stock. He also mentions a scheme in Ethiopia where fishers' endangered income was supported by grain-fish exchanges [Hay 1986b, p.281].

VI.2.(b) Implementation and logistics

The evaluative or "performance" literature [Borton and Clay 1986, p.265] produced by or for relief agencies in the wake of the latest African food crisis deals primarily with what Clay and Singer [1985, p.61] call "uncontentious, technical issues of implementation". [e.g. USAID 1986a, 1986b; GAO 1986; WFP 1986f; Borton et al 1988; IDS 1986a; Borton and Holt 1986; Borton et al 1986; Eldridge 1986; Mitchell 1986; Pearson 1986]. This literature is largely concerned to examine the procedures of the organizations involved, and assess the administrative efficiency of their relief food operations (though, of course, such operations are not conducted in vacuums and the evaluations inevitably touch on wider issues). A frequent heading or sub-heading in these reports, which expresses their orientation to improving future operations, is "lessons learned"; and among these, the four general areas most frequently stressed are:

- (i) the timing of emergency food aid deliveries;
- (ii) accurate and timely information (from early warning and needs assessment through monitoring and evaluation);
- (iii) co-ordination - with governments and among donors and agencies; and
- (iv) experience and expertise among personnel. [Pearson 1986; Fraser 1987, p.256; IDS 1986a; USAID 1986a, p.xiii]

Borton and Clay's useful summary overview of this literature [p.265-266] also draws attention to the unprecedented part played by NGOs in recent famine operations in sub-Saharan Africa, a point strongly reinforced in the Ethiopian case by Jansson [1987, ch.3], and in the ODA's evaluation of its emergency aid to Africa [Borton et al 1988].

Many of the documented problems of implementing emergency food aid -timing, co-ordination, targetting, transport and other infrastructural weaknesses - are not exclusive to emergency situations, though they tend to be heightened by the abnormal conditions of emergencies themselves; by the need for speed; and sometimes by the unaccustomed volume of commodities to be moved (a particularly visible problem at recipient country ports - see, for example, Jansson 1987, ch.4 on Ethiopia). The following pages outline some major issues raised in the literature on the implementation of emergency food aid programmes in sub-Saharan Africa.

The "time factor"

Urgency is central to the concept of an emergency, and concern about the speed of relief operations is probably the single most important theme in the evaluative literature. Delays are an apparently universal problem. WFP, for example, found that during the 1984-85 African emergency the waiting period for delivery of its emergency food aid was not significantly shorter than for non-emergency aid [Fraser 1988, p.100]. Its major 1986 evaluation of operations in twenty-five African countries finds that 36% of the food arrived outside the "useful" period - that is, the period "between the date the request was received and the next harvest" [WFP 1986f, p.3]. The US General Audit Office similarly found late arrival of food was a major problem with the 1984 US emergency programme in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal and Somalia [GAO 1986], and stressed the need to speed up its operations. Search's article on EEC procedures explores some bureaucratic causes of delay [Search 1986].

While late deliveries of emergency food aid can sometimes be usefully diverted to other uses (as happened, for example, with WFP's 1982 operation in Mozambique [WFP 1983b]), the potential negative effects of such delays are stressed by most writers. Obviously, late delivery means a failure to help the victims of acute food crises. Also, if delivered after the following harvest, emergency aid can depress market prices and undermine local production (see section VI.2.c.).

The evaluators of the WFP Mozambique operation just referred to comment that, given the known delivery times, "the objective of the original operation could not reasonably be the immediate relief of the reported famine-stricken rural population" [WFP 1983b, p.10], and urge a more realistic assessment of objectives for future operations. This suggests that one option is to plan for inevitable time-lags (by, for example, prepositioning of stocks); the other, which is not incompatible with the first but has received more attention in the agency literature, is to try to shorten them. Measures recommended in the various reports to achieve such a reduction in delays can be divided into two categories: (a) ways of speeding up or shortening existing procedures; and (b) alternative arrangements.

In 'Measures for ensuring speedy delivery of emergency food aid', WFP considers its emergency operations in four phases (which can also be applied, with some adjustments, to other organisations involved in emergency food aid):

- internal procedures;
- procurement and delivery to donor ports;
- delivery to the recipient country; and
- internal distribution [WFP 1985b].

Each of these phases can be targetted by measures to reduce the time-lag in emergencies. The WFP report in fact found it had achieved improvements in the third and fourth phases between 1977/79 and 1983/84. The GAO's report on improving US response time, on the other hand, focuses on procurement and shipping (the second and third phases) [GAO 1986]. Detailed scrutiny of internal agency procedures and procurement arrangements cannot usefully be summarised, but can be found in the main evaluation reports cited above; while internal distribution is referred to below.

Several reports stress the crucial importance of early requests for assistance from the governments of recipient countries. The RDI survey of disaster preparedness discusses the example of the Burkinabe government making requests for food aid only after the harvest, despite the existence of an early warning system [RDI 1985, p.20]. Political interests may also intervene, as in the Nimeiri government's reluctance to declare an emergency in Sudan [Pearson 1986]. The WFP report 'Lessons Learned' lists the need for early submission of requests among its main conclusions, suggesting that in some cases it may be necessary to act before an official request is received [WFP 1986f, p21]. These comments need to be balanced, however, by other cases where donors, and not the government concerned, were slow to initiate action. Borton and Clay, for example, draw attention to the contrast between international reactions to requests for help from Kenya and Ethiopia [Borton and Clay 1986, p.266].

Apart from direct commodity deliveries from donor countries to recipient countries, several alternative ways of getting food aid rapidly to those who need it are discussed in the literature. The potential gains and problems with prepositioning of emergency food aid stocks are explored in general terms, with particular reference to Africa, by an FAO report of 1986 [FAO 1986a]. It uses a broad definition of "prepositioning", referring to "administrative" as well as "physical" closeness of stocks to crisis areas (the former term referring to reductions in time taken for administrative and procurement procedures). The report concludes that considerable savings in time can

be made by prepositioning stocks at donor ports or third countries, although the benefits of pre-positioning in the vulnerable region itself were found to be small, and far outweighed by the problems. Greater use of prepositioning is recommended in WFP's 'Measures for ensuring speedy delivery' [WFP 1985b]. Fraser cites an example of effective prepositioning by WFP in 1978-79, in which advance shipments were made to West African ports in anticipation of shortages caused by the recurrence of drought [Fraser 1988, p.240]. Singer [1985, p.12] refers in passing to difficulties encountered by the US PL480 programme in prepositioning stocks in Niger and Kenya; and to WFP's experiment with prepositioning outside famine areas, in Rotterdam and Singapore. There seems, however, to be little detailed evaluative literature as yet on the operation of such stocks in sub-Saharan Africa.

Local borrowing of food against planned deliveries of food aid has been successfully used by WFP to cut delivery times, though the need for compatibility with requirements and with replacement possibilities can pose problems [WFP 1985b, p.12]. *Local purchases* and *triangular transactions* have also been recommended as ways of improving response times in emergencies [Search 1986, p.249; WFP 1985b]. As discussed in chapter V., however, the evaluative literature on these operations is still small, and inconclusive on their potential as time-saving measures. The 1988 evaluation of ODA emergency operations in Africa, for example, found that its triangular transactions actually produced slower delivery times than established delivery routes; but that conclusions could not be drawn from this due to the special circumstances in Mozambique at the time [Borton et al 1988].

In-country distribution

The physical difficulties of transport within recipient countries are documented in virtually every report on emergency operations [e.g., Robinson et al 1980; Mitchell 1986; Pearson 1986; Jansson 1987; Fraser 1988; USAID 1986b]. Jansson, for example, in his account of the international relief effort in Ethiopia in 1984/85, has a chapter entitled "the Logistics Nightmare". He points out that distribution, not availability, of food was the great problem at that stage of the crisis [Jansson 1987, p.46]. Similar experiences are to be found throughout the emergency literature. Indeed, the writers of USAID's 1986 evaluation conclude that

"the major impediment to better and faster distribution of assistance in the 1984-1986 drought was the same as in the 1973-74 Sahel drought crisis: the weakness of African transportation and logistics systems" [USAID 1986b, p.xii].

Recognition that poor transport infrastructure, scattered rural populations, and lack of resources for administration and distribution of emergency aid are endemic problems

in many of the African countries most vulnerable to food crises has led to a gradual departure from the principle of internal distribution being entirely the recipients' responsibility. This move has been strongly championed by the WFP, which maintains:

"In major emergencies, where the rapid supply of large volumes of food aid is crucial, the donor community must accept the need to cover at least half of the costs and sometimes the whole cost of internal distribution of food to the beneficiaries of emergency operations where required" [WFP 1986f, p.23]

Provision of an additional quantity of food aid to be monetized as a contribution to internal transport, storage and handling (ITSH) costs has thus become more frequent in African emergency aid in recent years. In some cases, such as Australian aid to Kenya in 1984/85, a quantity of food aid has been supplied exclusively to fund the purchase of vehicles for general relief distribution [Borton and Stephenson 1986, p.11].

The potential advantage of alternative arrangements, such as local exchanges and monetization, in avoiding transport bottlenecks associated with bulk movements of food aid within countries with weak infrastructure, is pointed out by some writers [such as Hay 1986b]. Others stress the need for technical as well as financial assistance to local logistical and administrative structures if the bottlenecks in internal distribution are to be overcome [USAID 1986a]. The strengthening (or weakening) of local administrative capacity during emergency relief operations has been a particular point of debate in Sudan [IDS 1988; Walker 1987, p.47].

Targetting 1

1 This section owes much to comments from John Borton of the Relief and Development Institute.

Very little is written on the targetting of emergency food aid, despite its currency as a topic of debate. Free distributions can be targetted either on areas or on groups of people: either method relies heavily on accurate and prompt information, which has been in short supply in African emergencies. USAID's blanket claim that targetting "increased the impact and cost-effectiveness" of its emergency food aid to Africa in 1984-86 [USAID 1986a, p.xii] is questioned by Keen in a paper on Western Sudan. He gives a detailed account of the AID targetting operations in the region in 1985, and finds that they failed in their objective of reaching the neediest people, due to local political factors as well as operational shortcomings [Keen 1988]. The IDS

Sudan Food Security Workshop, discussing the targetting of aid in the same region, noted the clash of cultural perceptions between the "Western" idea of targetting the poor and local Islamic rules of charity [IDS 1988, p.21].

Supplementary feeding programmes are by their nature targetted, usually on children. Here again, the choice of indicators and collection of accurate and appropriate data are problematic [see, for example, Buckley 1988; and Autier 1988 on MSF operations in Chad]. The established practice of relying on anthropometric measurements has recently been widely questioned. The RDI's forthcoming workshop report on targetting, for example, recounts a case where two anthropometric surveys of children in Darfur (Sudan) produced estimated malnutrition rates which differed by 100% [RDI 1989]. Socio-economic indicators have been experimented with as an alternative.

Many of the decisions taken in emergency operations in fact involve implicit targetting. The "screening" function of food-for-work wage rates is commented on below (section VI.4.). A broader concept of targetting might also consider the information and criteria by which regions, and even countries, are selected as the targets of emergency food aid.

Donor co-ordination

There is clear agreement in the literature that co-ordination among donors and other organisations involved in relief food operations is a desirable and important goal; and that it is difficult to achieve. As noted above, it features in the recommendations of most agency reports on African emergency operations [e.g., WFP 1986f; USAID 1986a]. Jansson [1987] and Pearson [1986] document the problems of Co-ordination in Ethiopia and Sudan respectively; while the importance of including governments and NGOs in co-ordinated action is stressed by Singer [1985, p.10]. Overall, it seems the African literature expands the documentation of experience with co-ordinated action, but has little of substance to add to Clay and Singer's observation that it is "a difficult and complex matter" [Clay and Singer 1985, p.61].

VI.2.(c) Assessing the impact of emergency food aid

Quantitative assessments of the impact of emergency food aid are significant by their absence from the available literature. Clay and Singer, in their general survey, also found "little in-depth analysis of impact" [p.57]. Cost-benefit criteria do not seem to be widely applied to emergency food aid, and Jansson may express a common viewpoint when he says that cost-effectiveness "must always remain in the background when it is a question of saving lives in emergencies" (Jansson 1987, p.44). Those (mostly brief) references which are made to the effects of emergency

food aid in Africa can be divided into two categories: impact on mortality and suffering, and economic impact.

Impact on human suffering

While there is virtually universal agreement that emergency food aid has saved many thousands of lives in Africa, there is little hard evidence of the extent of its impact on mortality, malnutrition and suffering. The USAID evaluation of its operations in Sudan, Mali and Chad in 1984-86 identifies the problem as one of lack of information ("initial lack of monitoring resulted in not knowing what the programmes were achieving and what changes were needed to improve their impact" [USAID 1986a, p. xiv]). Others suggest that it may be in the nature of famine and crisis situations that such measurements cannot be made. Borton and Clay [1986, p.261] point out that there are no reliable estimates of the numbers who died in the 1982-86 crisis even less is it possible to estimate the numbers who would have died without food aid, or who would have lived if more or different aid had been provided, and so on. Such questions, as Pearson [1986, p.i] notes with reference to Sudan, are "endlessly debated within the aid business

Certainly, it is hard to see how statements such as Jansson's that "the relief operation kept alive more than seven million Ethiopians" [Jansson 1987, p.74] are arrived at. Nevertheless the vast majority of writers support the general impression that food aid was significant in reducing deaths and suffering in the recent African food crises. One writer who questions this assumption is Alex de Waal, who argues from detailed research on famine in Western Sudan. In one paper he states provocatively that "food relief is ineffective at tackling malnutrition. It does not save lives." [De Waal 1988c, p.23]. This extreme claim is somewhat qualified in other works, in which he concedes that relief grain distribution did lower mortality and destitution in 1985-86 [De Waal 1987, p.i], and that distribution of supplementary foods such as milk and oils probably had a positive effect on the health of vulnerable children [De Waal 1988b, p.5]. Nevertheless, his arguments that the indirect effects of food relief in preventing destitution and supporting livelihoods are more important to recipients than its direct nutritional effect, and that badly-managed food relief can actually increase mortality through the creation of disease-prone famine camps, are an interesting counter-balance to orthodox assumptions. The impact of emergency food aid on people's health and survival is surely an area in urgent need of research.

Impact on the economy and livelihood systems

In the context of continuing emergencies and the extended provision of emergency food aid to Africa, concern has grown about possible longer-term impacts on the economies of recipient countries. Indeed, four of the five case-studies Clay and

Singer cite as examples of such longer-term effects are on sub-Saharan Africa countries [Clay and Singer 1985, p.63-65, referring to Stevens 1979 on Upper Volta; WFP 1983b on Mozambique; Holt 1983 on Ethiopia; and Thomson 1983 on Somalia]. This area of the literature, however, is still small.

Concern has been expressed that late deliveries of large quantities of emergency food aid which coincide with the harvest can, as Ingram puts it "play havoc with prices and other incentives" [Ingram 1987, p.9]. Fraser also comments in general terms that food aid which arrives too late after an emergency "may cause market distortions" [Fraser 1988, p.230]. There seems, however, to be little or no quantitative assessment of such impacts. More generally, some writers express concern about the possible production and policy disincentive effects of extended emergency aid. Ingram, for example, argues that emergency food aid, like non-emergency aid, "should be provided in such a way as not to reduce incentives to work by beneficiaries or to deal with underlying problems by governments" [Ingram 1987, p.8]. Thomson considers it "probable" that continuous flows of bulk food aid sold on the market in Somalia have had a disincentive effect on local production (though she points out the analytical difficulty of isolating the impact of food aid) [Thomson 1983, p.213 and passim]. Section 11.5 above examines the case of Somalia, and other evidence on market and policy disincentive effects of prolonged food aid.

Free distribution in feeding centres or camps has been thought particularly likely to create dependency and discourage cultivation. Pearson, for example, quotes a report by an EEC agricultural economist working in Western Sudan which accuses "indiscriminate distribution of food aid" (Pearson's words) of contributing to a serious shortage of labour to harvest and thresh the grain crop [Pearson 1986, p.95-96]. De Waal (referring to the same region) also reports fears that the continued distribution of food aid after the large 1985 harvest would lower the price of grain and inflate labour rates, making it unprofitable to bring in the next harvest; but notes that in the case of the 1985 harvest such extreme pessimism "proved to be unfounded". In fact, de Waal argues that the influence of food aid on the economic decisions of the farmers he studied was minimal. Far from finding evidence of dependency among rural people in Darfur, he suggests that

"their stubborn refusal to take food relief wage labour when it interfered with the more important tasks of cultivating their of own field suggests a 'self-reliance syndrome'"[De Waal 1988b, p.3,9].

De Waal also reports some positive effects of free grain distributions in helping maintain people's long-term livelihoods by keeping them from needing to eat seed or sell livestock, or by allowing them to buy tools, seed or transport home; however, he finds these effects were minimal and would have been more effectively achieved by cash income transfers [1988b, p.11.; 1988c, p.18]. Walker [1987] gives a detailed

and considered account of the use of food aid in an Oxfam operation to support pastoral livelihoods in the Red Sea Province of Sudan. (See also section VI.4. below).

Finally, it has been suggested that emergency food aid may have a negative impact on ongoing development projects. One example is the fear of labour shortage on the Sudanese project referred to above. Clay and Singer also quote Stevens' finding that emergency resources in Upper Volta "doomed certain kinds of development food aid to failure" [Stevens 1979 p.20-21, quoted by Clay and Singer 1985, p.59]. The interaction of emergency and developmental food aid is further discussed in section VI.4.

VI.3 Food aid for the prevention of food emergencies

Prevention and preparedness overlap significantly where food aid for slowly-developing crises is concerned. By being prepared for events such as drought or crop failure, governments and aid agencies can prevent food crises, or at least prevent their worst effects. The following paragraphs outline two main themes in this area of the African literature.

Information and early warning

The critical role of information in effective emergency programmes is stressed throughout the literature [see especially Clay and York 1987]. Early warning of impending crises is particularly crucial in the kind of slowly-evolving crises which predominate in Africa. As the present survey focuses specifically on food aid it does not attempt to cover the extensive literature on the design and development of early-warning systems in Africa, but looks only at discussion of the role of such systems in the deployment of food aid to counter emergencies.

Early warning obviously makes possible pre-emptive relief action to prevent the full development of a food crisis. As Singer has commented, "early action has a special premium attached to it" in forestalling destitution and migration, and thus avoiding the most extreme effects of famine [Singer 1985, p.10].

Some writers [such as Pearson 1986, p.iv] question the usefulness of the duplication of information systems by different bodies; while others (such as Clay and York, giving the example of Mali) see advantages in the development of "parallel and potentially complementary" early warning systems [Clay and York 1987, p.10- 14]. Most writers, however, agree that lack of information has been a serious constraint on the effectiveness of emergency food aid in Africa, and that further development of early warning systems is urgently needed [Pearson 1986; Borton and Stephenson 1986]. The RDI's 1985 report on disaster preparedness in six African countries

recommends that

"disaster preparedness should ... concentrate on enabling governments, donors and agencies alike to have a full, technically based, picture of the prevailing situation in a country with regard to food availabilities. This in turn may persuade donors if not to commit substantial food aid in advance of a crisis ..., then at least to make allocations before the chaos of a full-blown crisis makes every stage of the emergency programme more difficult to organise" [RDI 1985, p.97].

Hay, by contrast, maintains that "information was not a limiting constraint to relief action in Africa during the 1980s", and that "Africa's food crisis could have been, and was, predicted" [Hay 1986b, p.284/273]. Singer also comments that a good deal of information was available but not used [Singer 1985, p.10]. Mitchell [1986] (writing on Ethiopia) and D'Souza and Shoham [1985] (on Africa in general) stress the importance of linking early warning information to effective response. Factors affecting the speed of donor response, including pre-positioning of stocks (see section VI.2 above), are also obviously relevant to the ability of food aid to prevent (or mitigate) the development of food emergencies through early action.

National strategic reserves

National stocks of food to be used in case of shortages, thus preventing the development of a crisis and avoiding the need for emergency aid, are perhaps an obvious preventive measure. Clay and Singer suggest that the provision of food aid to assist governments in building up such reserves seems, in principle, an appropriate extension of the aid agency practice of earmarking resources for emergency use. In practice, however, this attractive idea has encountered major difficulties [Clay and Singer 1985, p.59-60].

The WFP's 1981 report on improving emergency operations records that the CFA, in accordance with the FAO Plan of Action on World Food Security, agreed to the use of food aid for national reserves in October 1979; and at the time of the report the Programme was supporting such projects in six countries, all in sub-Saharan Africa [WFP 1981a, p.18-19]. However, its 1985 sectoral evaluation of five African food reserve projects reported largely disappointing results. Four of the projects (in Botswana, Tanzania, Niger and Mali) had emergency stocks among their specified objectives, while the fifth (in Mauritania), though intended as a price stabilisation reserve, had in fact been used as an emergency reserve to compensate for a poor harvest. The Botswana reserve, too, was used to alleviate the effects of drought in 1982/83. Major weaknesses of the projects, however, were dependence on donors to

replenish the stocks (in the absence of sufficient domestic production or foreign exchange to do so independently); and the difficulty of keeping emergency stocks separate in practice from general government reserves [WFP 1985d]. In general, these problems seem to have dissuaded donors from involvement in such projects [see Cassen and associates 1986, and section 111.4 above]. Benson and Clay note that the proportion of cereal food aid used for national reserve stocks in sub-Saharan Africa remained more or less constant (at around 5%) from 1979/80 to 1984/85, though the absolute quantity of course increased significantly [Benson and Clay 1986, p.310].

Both areas outlined above - information systems for early action by governments and donors, and national reserves - are basically about intervening in incipient crises early enough to prevent their escalation into full emergencies. However, the question has also been asked "whether the emergency could have been prevented ... using the potential of food aid as a developmental tool rather than an emergency tool" [Singer 1985, p.9]. Hay has argued that

"disaster preparedness ... has less to do with creating new institutional capacity ... and more to do with identifying particular groups of people who have been declared by history to be vulnerable to repeated famines and with concentrating effort on investment strategies which will increase and stabilise their incomes" [Hay 1986b, p.286]

Perspectives on the role of food aid in such investment to reduce the threat of food emergencies in Africa are reviewed in the next section, on the "relief-development interface"

VI.4. The relief-development interface

The concept of the link between relief and development which is most current in the recent African literature is not the "traditional relief-rehabilitation-development sequence" [WFP/ADB 1986b, p.14]. It is, rather, a concept of the "merging" of the two aims [Adams 1986]. This perspective is closely connected with the idea of the continuing emergency, and the realisation that the food crises which have afflicted Africa in recent decades "are not extraordinary episodes separate from the development process" [USAID 1986a, p.ix]. The same AID report neatly expresses the two-way nature of links between relief and development in this context, suggesting that the evaluative criteria should be

"whether development programmes are designed to preclude such emergencies and whether emergency food assistance is designed

to be developmental (i.e. aimed at increasing income immediately and in the longer term" [USAID 1986a, p.ix; see also WFP/ADB 1986b, p.14-15]

The first part of this dual question (development programmes to preclude emergencies) extends to the broad areas of food policy and security; and the role of food aid in such programmes is dealt with throughout the other chapters of this survey. The second part (designing emergency food assistance to be developmental) is the main focus of this section.

Given the intermeshing of the aims of emergency and developmental food aid in the African context, several writers have questioned the usefulness of the official distinctions between them. Clay and Singer, for example, cite Austin and Wallerstein's general criticism of the dichotomy between humanitarian and developmental assistance encoded in American food aid law (PL480) [Clay and Singer 1985, p.58-9]; and an example of the difficulties caused by this in Kenya is given in Section VI.2.a. above. In practice agencies do not necessarily maintain the rigid distinction implied by official terminology. Stevens mentions the example of all EEC food aid to Upper Volta being defined as emergency aid ("which, despite its name, often resembles developmental food aid"), apparently because of the different conditions attached to the funding of internal transport [Stevens 1979, p.36]. While this example may be a sensible bending of categories, some writers express concern about the use of emergency food aid procedures, with their less rigorous appraisal requirements, for longer-term commitments [Clay and Singer 1985, p.63; Thomson 1983; Holt 1983; Adams 1986; Stevens 1979]. Singer seems to have voiced a common feeling when he wrote:

"The old division, whether conceptual, administrative or resource allocative, between emergency food aid and non-emergency or developmental food aid simply collapses in the light of the present African experience" [Singer 1985, p.13].

One important strand in the literature on the developmental links of emergency food aid is the need to avoid negative impacts. This has been touched on in section VI.2., in discussion of possible impacts (particularly of free food distribution) on the economy and livelihoods. Concern about the impact of relief distributions on specific development initiatives - and, on the positive side, some ideas on using emergency relief in ways which can support livelihoods (such as grain-livestock exchanges) - are also mentioned above.

The importance of phasing out relief distributions as early as possible and moving on to developmental action (with the aim of avoiding dependency and severe disruption

of local production), is an established principle of emergency food aid [WFP 1982a; Walker 1987]. However, some writers argue, as suggested above, that the aims of relief and development can and should be pursued simultaneously. Hay's "relief-development strategy" (and the WFP/ADB's "emergency-development strategy") express to this idea:

"It is possible to meet urgent human need and the underlying causes of famine at the same time if transfers of income to households facing income collapse and starvation are made in ways which protect household assets, mobilise labour, enhance skills, create new employment possibilities and result in increased investment at the household and community level" [Hay 1986b, p.282; cp.WFP/ADB 1987, p.14].

Though Hay finds a strong case for providing cash instead of food in some situations, he nevertheless sees an important role for food aid, conceptualised as income transfer, in such "investment" (a key word in his argument). He suggests a list of development-oriented criteria for assessing famine relief, short-term objectives being: contribution to nutritional welfare, health, household consumption and employment; prevention of internal migration; defence of rural-rural and rural-urban terms of trade; and support to household food security strategies. Longer-term objectives, he suggests, should be contribution to new employment opportunities, and to household, community and national investment. [Hay 1986b, p.285]

Food-for-work is the tool most generally seen as spanning the relief-development gap, both in terms of phasing out handouts, and of merging relief and development action. The general arguments and experience on food-for-work in Africa are summarised in section 111.2.: the present section outlines only some aspects of it in the relief-development context. Specific advantages of food-for-work in (or following) emergency operations are listed by various writers, the main ones being:

(i) creation of capital assets (new, or rehabilitated) [Clay and Singer 1985; Adams 1986];

(ii) the "screening" or self-targetting function of food-for-work (as an alternative to, or method of phasing out, general distributions of food) [Clay and Singer; Adams 1986];

(iii) the possibility of dispersing famine camps by creating economic opportunity [Adams 1986];

(iv) food-for-work schemes can function as a "barometer" of an

emergency, the number of workers enrolling being an indicator of the general situation [Stevens 1979, p.120]; and

(v) a regular works programme geared to provide additional jobs in an emergency can offer effective food security [Clay and Singer 1985; WFP/ADB 1987].

Some of these points, of course (as well as the argument that such schemes avoid dependency and protect the self-respect of recipients) apply to food-for-work in general, not only in emergencies.

Problems with using food-for-work in emergency contexts are mostly seen as the result of setting up such projects too quickly, with inadequate data collection, or inadequate consideration of long-term consequences [Stevens 1979 p.126; Holt 1983 p.199; Adams 1986 p.320]. It has been suggested that this problem could be solved by the development of "emergency preparedness plans" to allow the rapid implementation of previously-designed projects [WFP/ADB 1987, p.14]. This subject is discussed by de Waal in a forthcoming paper on the Sudan famine code [de Waal 1988d]. A different problem, suggested by Stevens [1979, p.121], is that food-for-work may become "tarred with the stigma of destitute relief", undermining its effectiveness as a development tool. On balance, however, there seems to be a strong consensus on the positive potential of food-for-work to link relief and development in African food crises.

Two case studies of successful projects of this kind are given by Holt and Adams. Holt [1983] describes how the Ethiopian food-for-work programme, the largest of its kind in sub-Saharan Africa, started as post-famine rehabilitation and has developed a significant developmental role. He argues that the function of this programme in a food-deficit area (Clay and Singer refer to it as the "de facto food security net for much of the rural population of Ethiopia" [p.59]) suggests the need for a broader definition of "relief aid". Characterising this use of food aid "partly as a back-stop to the more formal relief food distribution", he suggests that food-for-work in this context, despite its developmental objectives, should be evaluated firstly by its efficiency as a relief measure [Holt 1983, p.201].

By contrast, the Turkana Rehabilitation Project in Kenya, described by Adams [1986], was set up from its inception in 1980 with the dual objectives of immediately providing food to famine victims, and implementing a five-year rehabilitation programme. Reflecting on the success of the project after five years of operation, Adams notes that it is now developing the capacity to predict and minimise the effects of drought, and describes it as "a useful example of how emergency relief could evolve into a programme with a more developmental orientation" [p.324]. The project's long-term

effects on the pastoral Turkana economy are more difficult to assess; but Adams concludes that

"it is likely that food-for-work is a particularly effective form of support in times of crisis for people who would otherwise be forced to live off their animals, thus putting them under greater stress. However, there is little more than anecdotal evidence to support these hopeful 'conclusions.'" [p.321]

VI.5. Refugees and displaced people

Refugees are a problem of major dimensions in Africa. Borton and Clay pointed out in 1986 that Africa, with one tenth of the world's population, had at least a quarter of its refugees, mostly unevenly concentrated in a small number of countries [Borton and Clay 1986 p.265]. Estimates of numbers vary (though there is little doubt that they are growing) - perhaps partly because of variations in the use of the label, discussed below. A significant proportion of emergency food aid is directed to these people. From 1981 to 1985, for example, about 32% of WFP emergency aid to Africa as a whole was destined for refugees and displaced people [WFP 1986d, p.4 and Annex II].

The meaning of "refugee" has undergone some interesting adaptations to African circumstances. In 1969 the Organisation for African Unity, broadening the UNHCR definition, ¹ applied the term to any persons compelled to seek refuge outside their own country owing to "external aggression, occupation and foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order" - a definition adopted by the UN in 1979 for all refugee operations in Africa [WFP 1986d, p.2]. Nationality - the crossing of a border - remained the key factor which distinguished "refugees" from non-refugees. However, for the purposes of WFP and other agencies concerned to provide relief and assistance to such people, the usefulness of this distinction has been widely questioned. (See, for example, de Waal's case study of assistance to Chadian refugees in Western Sudan, in which he argues convincingly that conflicting concepts of 'refugeehood', and fundamental misperception of the problem by international agencies, actually prolonged the famine and contributed to a major disaster for the people involved [de Waal 1988a]). WFP's 1986 report, 'Emergency food aid for refugees and displaced persons', recognises the distinct nature of the refugee problem in Africa:

1 The Statute of the UNHCR defines a refugee as "any person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or political opinion is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear or for reasons other than personal convenience, is unwilling to avail himself of the

protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence, is unable or, owing to such fear or for reasons other than personal convenience, is unwilling to return to it" (quoted in WFP 1986d, p.2).

"Increasing cross-border and in-country migration due to drought has resulted in situations where it is difficult to distinguish between genuine political refugees and drought victims" [WFP 1986d, p.5].

In 1988 James Ingram (Executive Director of WFP) went further and defined refugees for the WFP's purposes as "persons who, because of conflict situations or severe food shortages - the two are often related - have been obliged to relocate themselves either within their own country or beyond its borders" [Ingram 1988, p.3]. This is quite different from the UNHCR definition, because it serves a different purpose. For those primarily concerned with relief (including food aid), the essentially political distinction between "refugees" and "displaced persons" is of secondary relevance, particularly in the multi-causal crises encountered in sub-Saharan Africa. Robert Chambers' phrase, "mass distress migrants" [quoted by Harrell-Bond 1986, p.xi], might be suggested as an alternative.

A further critical characteristic of the problems of mass migrants in sub-Saharan Africa is that

"the severe droughts in recent years ... have created situations in which the indigenous population living in the vicinity of refugee camps and settlements of returnees is as badly in need of food assistance as the refugees" [WFP 1986d, p.5].

Refugees and displaced communities, therefore, cannot be considered in isolation - a factor stressed by case-study evidence [de Waal 1988a; Harrell-Bond 1986] and by WFP policy as expressed in the report quoted.

Given the nature of the problem, then, what is the experience with emergency food aid for these groups of people in sub-Saharan Africa? There is, in fact, very little literature. Barbara Harrell-Bond, however, has published a substantial case-study of a settlement scheme for Ugandan refugees in Southern Sudan. Her focus on the refugees' viewpoint, and her underlying argument that "imposing aid can never be successful" [Harrell-Bond 1986, p.366], make an interesting counter-balance to the perspective of the WFP report cited above. Though food aid is not her main focus she does discuss it briefly, raising four key sets of issues:

(i) Firstly, there are the familiar problems of logistics and timing of

deliveries [see also WFP 1986d p.9-10]. Harrell-Bond reports that supplies from WFP repeatedly arrived late, due to transport problems and bureaucratic delays. Local prepositioning of relief stocks, she suggests, could have done much to avoid these problems. [p.234, 236-8]

(ii) Secondly, she finds that as there were food surpluses in parts of the region, planned local purchases would have been appropriate; and that food aid could have been sold in the town of Juba (where there was demand, but frequent supply shortages) to fund purchases of local commodities for the refugees. This would have ensured more acceptable commodities than the rice and dura which were mainly supplied. A related issue was the sale of rations by the recipients, which was first outlawed and then encouraged, and which Harrell-Bond finds was necessary for the settlers to obtain a palatable diet. [p.236, 239]

(iii) Thirdly, the precarious dependence of the settlers on unreliable deliveries of food aid (which repeatedly failed at the crucial season of greatest food shortage and heaviest agricultural labour) made it impossible to achieve self-sufficiency in food production in the time scheduled, as they were forced to hire out their labour to local farmers rather than cultivate their own crops [p.236]. Harrell-Bond argues forcefully that

"it is not possible to justify a system of determining when rations should be cut off which is based on the number of planting seasons which have passed, and which does not take account of ecological differences in an area; or whether refugees have land, or tools, or seed; or whether, should all these be available and the rains have not failed, they are well enough to plant their fields" [p.249]

(iv) Finally, the interdependence of mass migrants and local populations in vulnerable areas is underlined by the conflicts which arose over rights to wild foods and the administration of food aid; and the fact that the refugees' forced reliance on local piece-work, paid largely in cassava, "dangerously depleted" the food reserves of the local people [p.238, 240].

Clearly, generalisations cannot be made from one case study; but these points

suggest that most of the issues surrounding the planning and implementation of emergency food aid for refugees and displaced people are not fundamentally different from those raised in other sections of this chapter. This inference is supported by the close similarity of the conclusions and recommendations of WFP's two reports on refugees and displaced persons [WFP 1986d] and on "lessons learned" from the African food crisis [WFP 1986f] (a similarity commented on in the former report).

One obvious point to be drawn both from discussions of the nature of the problem, and from the limited case-study literature, is that the crucial distinction for food-aid purposes is not that between "refugees" and "displaced persons", but between temporary congregations of migrants needing short-term support until they can return to their own land; and people who are unable or unwilling to return and need to establish self-sufficiency in long-term settlements. Settlement schemes, whether within or across national borders, will inevitably need food support until such self-sufficiency is achieved [FAO 1981; Jansson 1987, ch.7; Harrell-Bond 1986].

Temporary encampments, whether of drought victims or war refugees, pose different problems for food aid organisations. The importance of the distinction is emphasised by de Waal's case-study, where he argues that the critical (indeed, fatal) mistake was to classify the group of people concerned as temporary migrants who would return home when the drought broke, when in fact they could not return, and needed to be allowed to settle [de Waal 1988a].

VI.6. Conclusion

While it is difficult to draw any concrete conclusions from the diverse and patchy literature reviewed in this chapter, some common themes clearly emerge.

The first is the critical importance, in the context of Africa's continuing emergencies, to link relief food aid with developmental objectives and with the protection and support of sustainable livelihoods. Such development-oriented relief clearly requires contingency planning.

In more general terms, disaster preparedness is a major priority. At the national level, such preparedness implies actions ranging from fundamental food policy and food security measures to the establishment of buffer stocks. Donor preparedness must prioritise the achievement of an immediate response capacity, whether through prepositioning, administrative streamlining, or alternative modes of operation.

Information, it emerges from all areas of the literature, is vital but scarce: information for early warning of crises, for monitoring and targetting of relief operations, and for the assessment of impact and efficiency. There is a great lack of quantitative data,

and a preponderance of anecdotal evidence, in most agency reporting. The analytical literature on several aspects of emergency food aid is still thin. The need for improvements in monitoring and evaluation is a lesson which has been drawn before, but still recurs [see, for example, Cutler and Keen 1989]. Such improvements are vital if the effectiveness of relief is to be improved, and if the experience of successive emergencies is not to be continually lost to organizations as individuals move on.

In the implementation of emergency food aid programmes, a recurrent theme is the search for flexibility. Triangular transactions, local purchases, commodity exchanges, and the monetization of emergency aid (and the various uses of funds generated, including cash income support) have all been suggested and tried as ways of designing food aid to be quick, efficient, appropriate to local needs and conditions, and supportive of long- term developmental interests in emergency contexts. A great deal more research and analysis of these operations is needed. The sudden expansion in the operational role of NGOs in emergency food aid, especially in relation to local government and infrastructure, is another important but so far under-researched issue.

Lastly, it is of vital importance that the "lessons" listed and discussed in so much of the literature on the recent "African food crisis" are not only learnt, but are absorbed into institutional memories and applied in the next (inevitable) African food emergency. This has clearly not been adequately done in the past. As one writer puts it:

"There can be nothing surer than the occurrence of continued periods of drought in Africa. Despite the lessons of the 1970s there was very little experience brought forward for application to the famines of the 1980s. This should not be allowed to happen again" (Hay 1986b, p.281).

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VII. CONCLUSION

This review has examined the literature on the nature, scope and impact of food aid to sub-Saharan Africa. The characteristics of Sub-Saharan Africa outlined in the introduction have shaped the food aid programmes to the region and emerge as central to understanding their performance and potential. The literature is patchy: uneven in coverage, biased to certain countries and with a strong predisposition to qualitative rather than quantitative analysis. Despite this limitation, four main themes emerge strongly from the literature and cut across the discussion on markets, project or programme food aid, triangular transactions and food emergencies.

(a) The food and agrarian crisis in Africa

At the heart of any analysis of food aid to Africa must lie an appreciation of the agrarian crisis in the region. There are many reasons for this crisis, both internal and external, and some critics have argued that food aid itself must take part of the blame. However, in whatever way responsibility is apportioned between drought, war, the neglect of agriculture and/or a hostile external environment, the consequences are all too clear: declining food production per capita, increasing instability of food systems, rapidly escalating poverty and vulnerability in rural areas, and permanently high levels of food insecurity throughout the region.

Food aid to sub-Saharan Africa has been shaped by this "continuing emergency". As the data shows, emergency programmes dominate food aid to the region and this has led to a break down in the distinction between emergency and developmental food aid. An "emergency" mentality has dominated in attitudes towards other types of food aid. Both "relief" and "developmental" objectives have been mixed in project and programme food aid. This has clouded the debate on the optimal achievement of these objectives, particularly in the areas of: food for work, market restructuring, monetization and income transfer efficiency. Similarly, the literature on emergency food aid is increasingly concerned with the transfer from "relief" to development. Recipients have also associated food aid with emergencies affecting the ease with which food aid can be promoted as a developmental resource.

At the same time, the structural problems in African food systems have led to growing dependence on food imports and food aid. This means that on all the topics covered by the review, food aid is an increasingly important factor; on some, such as rural works or supplementary feeding, it is the dominant factor. Growing dependence has political and economic implications. To take one example, public sector finance, both for recurrent and development budgets, is at risk of 'growing dependence on the revenue received from the sale of food aid.

(b) Strengthening national food systems: reliability, commodity selection and disincentives

An obvious response by food aid donors to these long term structural problems has been to focus on the development of stronger, more resilient food systems. The literature in the 1980s has been replete with policy statements about using food aid to increase food production and develop livelihoods for rural people. In many cases, these aspirations are reflected in political initiatives, such as national food strategies. In practice, however, the food aid literature has been dominated by a concern with three potential negative effects of food aid.

(i) Reliability

The literature shows that food aid has tended to be unstable and has varied with availability rather than in accordance with recipient requirements. This has been a feature of all food aid programmes, including emergencies. The unreliability of food aid has produced problems for the planning of projects and recurrent budgets and has made food security in sub-Saharan Africa significantly harder to achieve.

(ii) Commodities

The prevalence as staples in the diets of sub-Saharan Africans of coarse grains and other foods not readily available from the surpluses of donor countries, has posed particular problems for food aid programmes to sub-Saharan Africa. A major response to this problem has been the attempts to utilise food surpluses within the region through local purchases, "swaps" and triangular arrangements.

(iii) Disincentives

Disincentive effects on domestic agriculture have been recognised as a potential effect of food aid since food was first given as aid. In sub-Saharan Africa, the instability of food markets suggests a high risk of disincentive effects from emergency and other forms of food aid programmes. The analysis of the impact of food aid on domestic production and prices in sub-Saharan Africa is seriously hampered by lack of data. However, many qualitative assessments have been made and the overall view that emerges is that: disincentive effects have occurred in several countries; however, the gravity of disincentive effects has been overstated, often due to oversimplistic partial analyses of markets; and disincentive effects can generally be avoided through the pursuit of suitable policies; monitoring of domestic production and prices should form an important part of any food aid programme.

(c) Reaching the poorest: targetting and logistics

While one stream of the literature reviewed concentrates on the consequences of poor agricultural performance at the national level, another is concerned with the consequences for the food security of individual households, usually in rural areas. Neither chronic food insecurity in normal times nor acute food insecurity in emergencies are equally distributed through the population. A central argument of the proponents of food aid is its effectiveness as a targeted form of aid. In sub-Saharan Africa, the review shows there is a high cost of delivering food aid to target groups because of the wide dispersal of populations and poor infrastructure. Costs are especially high in emergencies. This has undermined the efficiency of food aid as a targeted intervention.

High delivery costs of, often, relatively low value foods have reduced the income transfer efficiency of targeted food aid. This has led to increased focus on the relative income transfer efficiency of different commodities and of monetized food aid. Wheat and rice have also been criticised for their "superior" characteristics, primarily being the preferred foods of wealthier, urban populations.

One constraint hindering effective targeting is the level of logistical difficulty encountered in sub-Saharan Africa. Logistical problems have been a feature of all types of food aid programmes. Poor internal infrastructure and high transport costs have affected the performance of most programmes. Logistical problems have not been confined within the borders of recipient countries but have also plagued the timeliness of deliveries of food by the donors.

(d) Straining state capacity: planning, management and data

It is clear from the literature, that food aid places great and, often, unrealistic demands on state capacity in sub-Saharan Africa. The sub-Saharan Africa situation demands particularly developed planning and management skills, but these skills are, unfortunately, particularly under-developed in the region. Food aid programmes have suffered as a result of this lack of administrative capability, as have other forms of aid.

State failure has led to NGOs playing a major role in food aid distribution in the region. NGOs have been particularly involved in emergency food aid and mother and child supplementary feeding programmes, but have also been responsible for large scale food for work projects in some countries. This feature of food aid in sub-Saharan Africa has been praised by some for its greater efficiency in reaching the poorest, but criticised by others for its "separateness" from government institutions.

The weakness in sub-Saharan African data collection, collation and dissemination emerges as a frequent explanation of poor planning, monitoring and evaluation of food aid programmes. The lack of reliable data affects emergency food aid through

the under-development of early warning systems, and affects the impact of programme and project food aid, by hindering planning and need assessment. The failure of monitoring systems to supply effective management information is a feature of programmes in sub-Saharan Africa and is reflected in the lack of quantitative analysis of the evaluative literature. Micro level analysis of quantitative impact is rare and quantitative macro analysis of food aid programmes' impact on the balance of payments, recurrent costs or domestic markets is rarer still. These conclusions are drawn from the literature on the experience of food aid programmes to sub-Saharan Africa. They suggest six main guidelines for the future of food aid to the region.

(i) First, the level of agricultural production and the size of food gaps will require the continuation of food aid programmes. Emergencies will continue to absorb a substantial proportion of food aid, but a growing share will be focussed on development and will be targetted at benefitting the poorest people of the poorest countries. If food aid is to contribute to the solution of the agrarian crisis in Africa, programmes will need to focus primarily on food security, and must deal with the constraints imposed by the sub-Saharan African situation.

(ii) Second, and following from (i), the integration of food aid as a resource available within an integrated food strategy will be central to its effective use. In some instances food strategies will themselves form a part of wider structural adjustment programmes. Depending on the nature of particular food strategies, food aid will contribute in a variety of ways: as a substitute for commercial imports, easing foreign exchange constraints; in the re-structuring of cereal markets, through the funding of short term differentials between consumers' and producers' prices; as a form of budgetary support, particularly focussed on development expenditure, primarily the development of rural infrastructure through food for work and cash for work (funded through the monetization of food aid) programmes; and as a way of protecting human capital, through targetted feeding programmes aimed at sections of the populations whose incomes are jeopardised by the adjustments

(iii) Third, the achievement of food security will depend on devising programmes that allow the poorest sections of the rural population to obtain sustainable livelihoods. The design of food aid programmes to achieve this end will be perhaps, the greatest challenge facing food aid planners. New, cost-effective ways of targetting food aid are needed. To ensure that income transfer efficiency is maximised, the "fetishism of physical distribution" [Green 1986a] must be avoided and a flexible approach adopted, with an increased awareness of the importance of the long term impact of programmes.

(iv) Fourth, support of food strategies will require a flexible and coordinated approach by donors. Multi-year commitments, joint counterpart funds, the provision of complementary resources, the capacity to "switch" between financial and food aid,

monetization, triangular arrangements and the strengthening of monitoring and evaluation systems are all important areas in which donors can contribute to the increased effectiveness of food aid programmes.

(v) Fifth, a role for emergency food aid will remain. Improvements in its effectiveness depend upon: improved information and early warning systems; the development of faster response times through improved management; and, either prepositioning or a wider use of buffer stocks. Donor flexibility in emergencies is also essential, with wider utilisation of triangular transactions, local purchases and monetization.

(vi) Finally, the effectiveness of food aid in achieving its objectives will depend on the capacity of local administrations and infrastructure. NGOs can continue to play an important role in this area, but must develop local management capability.

It is clear that the problems of food security in sub-Saharan Africa are extremely complex. In the recent past, food aid to sub-Saharan Africa has mainly focussed on the relief of crises through the disposal of donor surpluses. The challenge for the future is to develop agriculture through the supply and careful use of suitable food commodities.

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