

**Halving Hunger by 2015?**  
**An Evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals and the Conflicting Food**  
**Security Initiatives in Ethiopia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper**

By Jessica Penner

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## **Abstract**

Halving Hunger by 2015?

An Evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals and the Conflicting Food Security Initiatives in Ethiopia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

By Jessica Penner

Adopted in 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) offer a new way to achieve development. The Millennium Project asserts that MDGs will be best achieved within a country by tailoring their poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) towards the MDGs. By allowing countries to take ownership of their development strategy, it is possible for the country to achieve the goals. Using Ethiopia as a case study, this thesis evaluates the extent to which the country was able to tailor their PRSP towards hunger alleviation as well as the extent to which its PRSP replicates the previous failed attempts at top-down, structural adjustment. This thesis asserts that the Ethiopian PRSP development strategy uses a top-down trade liberalization approach and the Ethiopian government's efforts to guarantee food security in the PRSP are likely undermined by the document's concurrent emphasis upon the commercialization of agriculture and the liberalization of agricultural trade.

June 20, 2011

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Finally, this could not have been possible without the support of the International Development Studies Department and the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research. Thank you.

## List of Abbreviations

ADLI	Agricultural Development Led Industrialization
CDF	Comprehensive Development Framework
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organization
ECF	Extended Credit Facility
ESAF	Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMB	Grain Marketing Boards
HDI	Human Development Index
I-PRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
ICN	International Conference on Nutrition
IFI	International Financial Institution
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISI	Import Substitution Industrialization
LDC	Least Developed Country
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MP	Millennium Project
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NPAN	National Plans of Action for Nutrition
NSFP	National Food Security Programme



ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PASDEP	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty
PPESA	Privatization and Public Enterprise Supervising Authority
PRGF	Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility
PRGT	Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Program
SAP	Structural Adjustment Program
SDPRP	Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme
TTP	Trade Practice Proclamation
UN	United Nations
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank
WFS	World Food Summit
WFS-fyl	World Food Summit: Five Years Later
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

*“Food is at once nutrition, needed by the body for its survival, and cultural object, with various non-food uses and associations. Food functions as a sign or means of communication. It governs human relationships at all levels. Food serves to bring together people linked by blood, religion or citizenship; conversely, it is divisive, being distributed and consumed in accordance with existing hierarchies.” (Garnsey, 1999)*

## **CHAPTER 1: Introduction**

Worldwide, more than one billion people currently suffer from hunger. Numbers have been rising despite a long history of international attempts to curb this trend. The world food crisis, a Western movement towards localized food systems, worldwide crop failures, environmental weirding, rising food prices, and increasing world population have brought the issues of hunger, food security and food sovereignty to the forefront of the development discourse.

The most recent attempt by the international community to address worldwide hunger, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), has been an overt step to set a quantifiable target: to cut the number of people experiencing hunger in 1990 in half by 2015. This is one of the eight Millennium Development Goals attempting to guide development down a path to meet the needs of the extremely poor worldwide.

At the midpoint of 2011, we are more than two-thirds of the way towards reaching the proposed end date of the MDGs but, unfortunately, the number of undernourished has not decreased. On the contrary, it has substantially increased from the original 800 million in 2000, when the goal was established. The growing incidence of hunger is a direct result of the “triple crisis” of food, energy, and finance, which has dramatically

increased the ranks of the unemployed and lowered incomes even as food prices have reached record levels. Despite these issues, the international community continues to try to move towards reaching its 2015 target.

The implementation of the MDGs is guided by the United Nations (UN) and their working group, the Millennium Project (MP), set up to advise MDG-oriented plans and policies for their achievement. These recommended measures are executed through a poverty reduction strategy (PRS) framework by putting into effect a poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP), which purportedly allows individual countries to design their own country-specific plan tailored towards achieving all eight MDGs. Through this framework, countries are able to access loans from International Financial Institutions (IFI) for their implementation.

Despite these apparently well-intentioned attempts to alleviate hunger, they have been less than successful, as hunger is on the rise. In actuality, PRSPs seem to be little more than a reframing of the failed structural adjustment programs (SAPs) and the attendant trade liberalization strategies that further indebted most of the global South and exacerbated economic vulnerability by integrating poor countries into unstable global markets, thus increasing the effects of shocks, such as the rising world food prices.

This thesis will look at the vulnerability created by the PRSP process and exemplify the similarities with a case study of Ethiopia, by examining a hunger-focused PRSP compared to a typical trade-liberalisation strategy. The Millennium Project perspective of how the MDGs should be achieved stands to leave a country with an increased level of food insecurity as the PRSP framework dismisses the core principles of food sovereignty and sustainable hunger alleviation. PRSPs are implemented by imposing a one-size fits all

model onto a developing country despite its supposed participatory, country-owned features. For hunger levels to be reduced permanently, the UN and all involved in the MDG implementation, need to embrace alternative, country-led approaches to tackle local and country-specific hunger alleviation.

### **Thesis Statement**

The research question addressed in this study is: to what extent does the PRSP produced by Ethiopia represent a country-led, country-specific strategy in terms of its approach to sustainable hunger alleviation compared with trade liberalization?

I argue that the Ethiopian PRSP development strategy, although seemingly focused on food insecurity with its National Food Security Programme, is actually a top-down, IFI-influenced trade liberalization approach to development. The Ethiopian government's efforts to guarantee food security in the PRSP are likely to be undermined by the document's concurrent emphasis upon the commercialisation of agriculture and the liberalization of agricultural trade.

It is important to evaluate the policies for implementation as the policies reflect how the international community, specifically multilateral organizations and other important actors guiding development view the cause and solutions to hunger. Currently, there is little literature analysing the implementation of the hunger goal of the MDGs or attempting to place the PRSP MDG-tailored approach within a food security framework. Therefore, this work will help to evaluate the multilateral approach of hunger alleviation and contribute to the literature in international development studies with the hope of aiding future international food insecurity.

## **Methodology**

Ethiopia was chosen as the case study for this thesis for a number of reasons. Firstly, Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world. Gross domestic product (GDP) for 2010 was US \$30.94 billion or \$1000 per capita, ranking Ethiopia at 216 out of 227 or the 11<sup>th</sup> poorest country in the world (CIA, 2011). According to the World Food Programme, in 2010 over five million Ethiopians, or about six percent of the population, were affected by hunger. Undoubtedly the 100 percent increase in food prices from 2005 to 2009 contributed to the figure (World Food Programme, 2009). More recently, in March 2011, Ethiopia's Central Statistical Agency announced that the consumer price index was 25 percent higher than the previous year, following a 16.5 percent increase in February (Heinlein, 2011b). The food inflation rate is 5.8 percent, the highest seen since October 2009. The high incidence of poverty in Ethiopia leaves a lot of space for improvements as well as very visible impacts on the situation.

The second reason Ethiopia was chosen was due to their National Food Security Programme (NFSP), one of the most comprehensive food security programs in Africa and the outward commitment by the Ethiopian government to achieving hunger alleviation. Hunger alleviation is stated by the Ethiopian government as one of their top priorities (MoFED & United Nations Country Team, 2004). The NFSP was instituted during the first PRSP plan in Ethiopia, the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP) from 2001-2006 and has carried through to the second PRSP, the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) from 2006 to

2009/10. The NSFP was important for the case study selection as these policies show a commitment to hunger alleviation by the government.

The third strength of the Ethiopia which led to its selection for the case study was that as mentioned previously the country has now completed two PRSPs. After the first PRSP, Ethiopia was able to readjust the strategy and thus illustrates a progression of policy. In theory this would allow the country to learn from the first PRSP, adjust it and move forward in a direction that meets their goals – not only economic development but specifically increasing food security.

The most recent PRSP, the PASDEP will be the central focus of the discussion although, the original PRSP (the SDPRP) will also be consulted to show the progression in thinking and policy development.

The first and most vital will be Ethiopia's economic development policies in relation to, or as reflected in, the PASDEP. The PASDEP highlights agricultural commercialisation as the central means for the development of Ethiopia. My research questions the extent to which these policies depart from a typical trade liberalization strategy and fit into a strategy designed to reduce hunger and poverty by means of achieving food security

Second, I will examine and evaluate the programs within the National Food Security Programme. In doing so, I will focus upon three questions: (1) how does this program function? (2) Does it meet or attempt to meet the needs of the chronically food insecure? and (3) does the program guard against the shocks that might be felt from a potential economic downturn?

Thirdly, I will examine the participatory nature of the PRSPs. Participation is not only key to the MP view of creating a country-owned approach, but it is also the official PRSP framework. In the literature surrounding PRSPs, participation is supposedly necessary to ensure that the policy meets the country-specific needs. Participation is also contrary to systematic implementation of the trade liberalization approach, as it would alter the strategy. Thus, this research will also question: (1) *to what extent civil society was involved in the preparation of the documentation?; and (2) how did any involvement alter the policies?*

The analysis for this thesis draws upon primary and secondary sources. Most of the data come from official Ethiopian PRSP documents and a variety of secondary sources evaluating the PRSPs and their process/implementation. But in addition, over 250 secondary sources were reviewed, including online journals, newspaper articles, reports, websites, and books.

My research recognizes the limitations of relying on secondary data and statistics for this case study. However, the data acquired proved to be sufficient to build a case and provide an accurate conclusion to the research question in a holistic manner. Although statistics are at times inconsistent and hard to rely on, my intentions are to observe patterns and trends as well as compare tendencies and triangulate among different sources of data.

### **Structure of the Thesis**

The following chapter outlines the status of food insecurity in the world; discusses commonly used definitions of hunger, food security and food sovereignty; and provides

an indepth overview of the economic paradigms guiding food security and development paralleled with food sovereignty. Chapter 3 provides a background on multilateral food conferences and summits leading to the creation of the first goal and a history of the MDGs. Chapter 4 will look at the Ethiopian context and exemplify the implementation of the strategies to cut hunger. Finally, Chapter 5 will discuss the findings, provide concluding remarks and recommendations based on the data shown in the preceding chapters.



*Why should there be hunger and deprivation in any land, in any city, at any table, when man has the resources and the scientific know-how to provide all mankind with the basic necessities of life? There is no deficit in human resources. The deficit is in human will.*

*-- Martin Luther King, Jr*

## **CHAPTER 2: Hunger: Background, Solutions and Barriers**

### **The Value of a Food Secure Population**

The fight against hunger is based upon a general understanding that a malnourished population is more susceptible to disease and sickness (McIntyre, 2003) and is therefore less able to contribute to both the economy and the individual's community or family. There are approximately 12 million children below the age of five who die every day with more than 50 percent of their deaths being attributed to diet-related causes or preventable or treatable conditions with low-cost interventions (Rice, Sacco, Hyder, & Black, 2000, p. 1207).

People who consistently consume a balanced diet are also sick less often, less tired, live longer and learn better. A healthy working population allows for each member to contribute more consistently to their household, economy and community and, for a longer period of time (FAO, 2006a; Food Security Projects, 2005; WHO et al., 2000; World Food Programme, 2006).

There is no doubt that a healthy population contributes to the development (and/or economic development) of a country (FAO, 2002a). Mental and physical health is compromised when there is a lack of food leading to a reduction in productivity, output

and the potential wages one may earn. As a result, people experiencing chronic hunger cannot accumulate financial or human capital. According to the FAO's Anti-Hunger Programme, halving hunger is expected to be worth at least \$120 billion per year as a result of longer and healthier lives (United Nations, 2002a).

Health is not only dependent on the quantity and quality of food consumption, but also on healthcare, disease control and prevention. But without a minimum standard of food consumption, it becomes difficult for investment in health care or other health-related activities to be effective as nutrition is the single most important determinant of health (McIntyre, 2003).

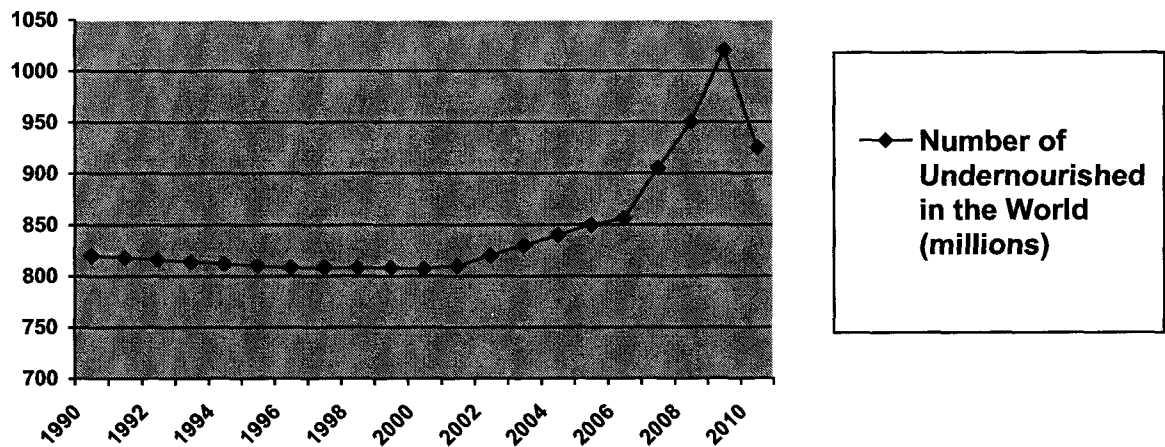
### **Hunger: The Current State of the World**

The exact number of people experiencing hunger is impossible to determine, much less the number of those who are food insecure. According to Barrett (2002), approximately half of the developing countries in the world have not undertaken nationwide malnutrition studies in the past decade and even the most industrialized countries have incomplete statistics on the numbers of food secure or hungry. Estimates of per capita consumption are based on national level food balance sheets and assumptions. They are averages that obscure the distribution of food and tell us little about the quality and quantity of food being consumed by each person. Moreover, they do not provide a good idea of the number of people meeting minimum caloric intake standards. It is likely that estimates are biased downward and because they are estimates, changes in the numbers of food secure or insecure can both be hidden or manipulated (Barret, 2002).

The World Food Programme estimates that the level of hunger in the world is 925 million as of September 2010 (World Food Programme, 2011), yet world food prices have risen over the last six months and therefore this number has most likely again increased above the 1 billion mark. The number of people affected by hunger steadily decreased from approximately 880 million people in the late 1960s to 850 million in the mid 1990s, yet much of the progress was erased between 1997 and 2006, when the global incidence was once again about 880 million. Since 2006, however, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of hungry people, jumping some 15 percent in a mere three years to 1.02 billion people in 2009 (FAO, 2009b). This enormous increase has been attributed to rising food prices resulting from the world food crisis, compounded by the world economic crisis and thus decreasing wages, remittances, export earnings, foreign aid leading to increases in levels of poverty all while food prices soar.

Between 1995 and 2005, the actual estimated number of *undernourished* people in the world fell by a total of nine million but this was followed by four million more people becoming undernourished each year in the second half of the decade, completely wiping out the previous achievements (Lovendal & Knowles, 2005).

**Figure 2. 1: Number of Undernourished Worldwide 1990-2010**

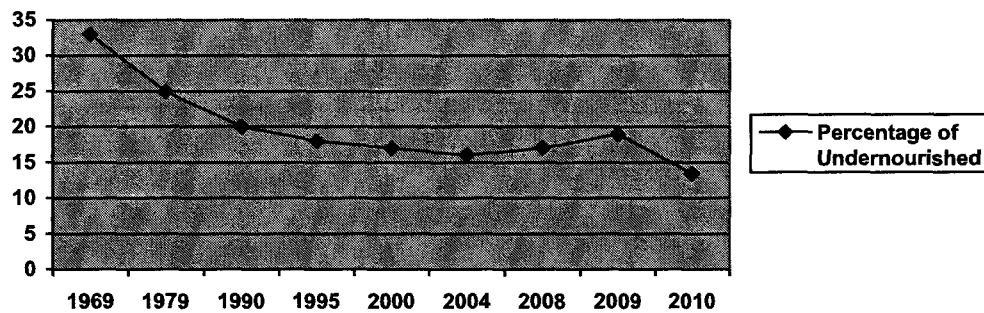


Sources: FAO, 2009b, p. 8 and World Food Programme, 2011

The vast majority of hunger exists in developing countries, with 47 developing countries experiencing food emergencies in 2007 and requiring some type of food assistance such as food aid. Of the millions of chronically hungry, 65 percent live in seven countries: India, China, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and Ethiopia (FAO, 2008c). The highest *proportion* of people who suffer from hunger exists in sub-Saharan Africa, where it is estimated that one in three are chronically hungry. Other parts of the world such as the Caribbean and Latin America had been making progress towards the MDG and World Food Summit targets until the dramatic rise in food prices in 2008 while East Asia and North Africa have been able to maintain some of the lowest levels of undernourishment in the developing world (FAO, 2008c).

While the World Food Summit goal of cutting the *number* of hungry people by half is becoming less and less attainable as the numbers rise, it is only recently that MDG target of cutting the *proportion* of hungry people in half is also becoming further out of reach.

**Figure 2. 2: Proportion of Undernourished in the World 1969-2010<sup>1</sup>**



Sources: FAO, 2009b, p. 11 and World Food Programme, 2011

### **Hunger Levels and the World Food Crisis**

There is no question that world food production has fluctuated and contributed to drastic changes in the prices of staple foods all around the world. For example, in late 2007, the world price of corn was 50 percent higher than the year before and the price of wheat doubled during the same period (World Economic Forum, 2008, p. 12). Since 2006, the rising prices of these staples, among others, have led to an increase in the number of people worldwide experiencing chronic hunger by almost 150 million. The FAO estimates that food prices in developing countries had risen by 48 percent in real prices at the height of the crisis and as of 2009 have dropped somewhat (Dawe & Morales-Opazo, 2009, p. 1). As of May 2011, food prices are higher than they have ever been before (FAO, 2011). The effects of rising food prices have been felt throughout the world, including developed nations. Even in the US, food prices increased by 4.4 percent in 2007, double the rate of non-food and non-energy inflation (World Economic Forum, 2008, p. 13). The Executive Director of the World Food Programme, refers to this situation as a global 'tsunami of hunger' (Runge & Senauer, 2008).

According to the World Economic Forum (2008), the extent of the consequences of these trends are difficult to accurately predict as it is unknown whether these higher food prices will be sustained. Policy-makers may step in or markets may adjust to compensate for inflation, making it much more difficult for poorer populations throughout the world to sustain their livelihoods. The World Bank reports that for each percent that food prices rise, the caloric intake among the poor drops 0.5 percent (L. Brown, 2008) and with every full percentage increase in the real prices of staple foods, there are 16 million more food insecure people in the world (Runge & Senauer, 2007).

Prices have risen dramatically not only as a result of declining food stocks or supply shortages. The increases are also as a result of tighter food supplies; the increases in oil and energy prices; the economic boom in India and China resulting in increased demand for cereals; climate change and weather-related events; market deregulation; the use of food for agrofuels; policies resulting in bad allocation of resources throughout the world; the falling US dollar; and a market which favours the more powerful (FSN Forum, 2008).

The impact of the food crisis has also been exacerbated by the world economic crisis. Foreign investment has decreased, official development assistance (ODA) is unlikely to rise and will in fact most likely decrease, remittances have fallen as have export earnings and all of these factors lead to increased unemployment and decreased wages.

Although the food crisis and the world economic crisis are not the focus of this thesis they do highlight that the globalized economic and trading system is vulnerable. Without safety nets, countries that are involved in this system are susceptible to the

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<sup>1</sup> Note the years do not increase at a constant rate

shocks, imbalances or shakes that occur. The increases in people suffering from chronic hunger over the last few years highlights this fact and speaks to the idea that as we look for solutions to resolve hunger, it is not only important but imperative to employ policies and implement programs that reduce vulnerabilities to global market shocks and provide safety nets where countries have agency and control to maintain a balance that does not result in their people becoming malnourished and even facing starvation.

## **From Hunger and Food Insecurity to Food Sovereignty**

### ***Hunger***

The UN's Millennium Development Goal of cutting the proportion of people suffering from *hunger* in half by 2015 is the focus of this thesis. Hunger is a term, widely understood as “a: a craving or urgent need for food or a specific nutrient b: an uneasy sensation occasioned by the lack of food c: a weakened condition brought about by prolonged lack of food” (Merriam-Webster, 2008).

The term *hunger* also has broader definitions, including the following cited by the US President's Task Force on Food Assistance (1984),

To many people hunger means not just symptoms that can be diagnosed by a physician, it bespeaks the existence of a social, not a medical, problem: a situation in which someone cannot obtain an adequate amount of food, even if the shortage is not prolonged enough to cause health problems. It is the experience of being unsatisfied, of not getting enough to eat. This, of course, is the sense in which people ordinarily use the word. It is also the

sense in which the witnesses before us and many of the reports and documents we have studied have spoken of hunger. This alternative definition of hunger relates directly to our communal commitment to ensure that everyone has adequate access to food, and to the nation's endeavor to provide food assistance. (President's Task Force on Food Assistance, 1984, p. 36)

The latter definition of hunger is significant because it includes causes of hunger resulting from social dimensions. It is more closely related to what is presently referred to as food security.

### ***Food Security***

The term, food security stemmed directly from Amartya Sen's work, *Poverty and Famines* (1983), where he begins by explaining that "Starvation is the characteristic of some people not *having* enough food to eat. It is not the characteristic of there *being* not enough food to eat" (Sen, 1983, p. 1). Sen's contribution to the literature on food security places 'access' to food as the central determinant to whether a person experiences hunger. The need for a sufficient quantity of food to be in the right place at the right time is a necessary condition for food security according to Sen, and also highlights that access to food exists through production, ability to access markets or social safety nets (FAO, 2006d).

According to Maxwell (1996), the most cited definition of food security comes from a World Bank study in 1986; "access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life". This definition has been used but has also transformed into a more



extensive explanation; “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life and include at a minimum: a) the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, and b) the assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (e.g., without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing and other coping strategies)...” while “...Food insecurity exists whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain” (Anderson, 1990).

Hunger and malnutrition<sup>2</sup> are indicative of a state of food insecurity, whereas people who are experiencing food insecurity may not be hungry or malnourished. This differentiation is clearly acknowledged in a US study on food security, where individuals are classified into one of three categories -- food secure, food insecure with hunger and food insecure without hunger -- recognizing the broadened definition of food insecurity separate from hunger, as a phenomenon experienced by many more than just those suffering from hunger (Committee on National Statistics, 2005).

Although food security addresses a much more holistic understanding of hunger, the term is not without criticism. For the most part, those defining the term agree it is meant to address the issue of access, availability and use of food at a national, household and individual level (Holben, 2005; McIntyre, 2003; WHO, 2010). However, there are accounts of up to 200 definitions cited (FAO, 2003) all with their own combination of measures, including nutritionally balanced, culturally appropriate, locally produced, socially acceptable, adequate calories, etc. The multitude of definitions contribute

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<sup>2</sup> Malnutrition is defined as the inadequate intake of protein, energy and micronutrients (WHO, NHD, & SDE, 2000).

towards some viewing the term as having a foggy or flexible meaning (Rosset, 2003; FAO, 2003) and this is evident in how the specific definition for the term must be explicitly stated each time it is used in publications.

There is also often confusion between the concepts of hunger and food security. They are used interchangeably in both common language, and as well as by international organizations, further contributing to only being able to use the term with an attached definition so it does not become confused with hunger. For an example of this confusion, in its 2009 report, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World*, the FAO describes the document as an annual report on world *hunger*.

With seemingly interchangeable terms and varying definitions, the methodology for calculating the numbers of people affected must also correspond – thus aiding to the confusion caused by the term, as each calculation would reflect a specific definition.

Generally, calculating hunger consists of determining whether a person or population has met a minimum caloric intake. For national hunger statistics, the FAO estimates the average quantity of food available per person, the minimum amount of calories required per person and the level of inequality in accessing the food and thereby estimates the number of people affected by hunger in a given area. Determining an accurate number of hungry people is next to impossible at a national level and this FAO methodology produces at most an educated estimate, leaving a possibly wide discrepancy between the estimated numbers and the reality of the situation.<sup>3</sup> Not only is this measurement insufficient to produce accurate statistics of people affected by hunger, it

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<sup>3</sup> For information on the various methods of calculating hunger and food insecurity see Anderson (1990), Barahonaa and Levy (2007), Nord, Andrews, and Winicki (2002), and Sibrian (2007).

also ignores that an adequate number of calories does not mean proper nutrition. Hunger statistics are just rough estimates and do not address the social determinants of hunger, the interhousehold distribution of food, whether people have access to a balanced diet and whether this access is secure and reliable.

While the definition and calculations can be unclear, the term becomes further watered down by lack of agreed upon methods employed to achieve food security. For example, there is a body of literature that sees food aid as contributing to food security by providing food for people who need it (FAO, 2002a; Mastny, 2008), whereas others feel as though food aid actually exacerbates food security as it increases dependency, has negative effects on local markets and even helps to hide the existing degree of food insecurity (DFID, 2002; Suppon, 2003; Windfuhr & Jonsén, 2005).

Because there is no agreement on how to solve food insecurity, it is impossible for the solution to be included in the definition. This has resulted in disregard for the term as it does not address the primary causes of hunger (Maxwell & Slater, 2003; Patel, 2009). By excluding in the definition “direct democratic participation, an end to the dumping of food and the wider use of food as a weapon of policy, comprehensive agrarian reform, and a respect for life, seed, and land” (Patel, 2009), the attempts to alleviate food insecurity do not address some of the key factors including that the current commercialized and industrialized food system does not necessarily represent what is best for the people nor does it meet their needs. As a result, food security is insufficient in describing the present food system and does not lead to appropriate policy responses. The right to food and the right for people to be included in the decision making process, is

necessary for hunger to be eliminated and for people to have reliable, access to appropriate food, conditions that are not necessarily a component of food security.

According to Patel (2009), the progression of the term food security is a reflection of the political economy. Food security avoids dealing with the social control of the food system as a means to purposely leave it unaddressed. If the definition included these issues, it would require states and International Financial Institutions (IFIs), which have accepted the term to enact policies that specifically address these matters, something that would require a major overhaul in the theoretical approach.<sup>4</sup> With specific strategies intertwined in the definition of food security, it would have made it much more difficult for national governments and international institutions to agree upon a definition and begin working towards a goal of reducing food insecurity.

As a result of the criticisms of food security and in line with developing long-term strategies addressing the root causes, *food sovereignty* has emerged to focus on these unaddressed aspects and to expand the view of how food insecurity and hunger may be solved. Food sovereignty is a framework, a movement, a voice and a set of general policy prescriptions aimed at ensuring the “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems” (Nyéléni, 2007a).

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<sup>4</sup> The current theoretical approach as well as further discussion surrounding the means to improve food security will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

## ***Food Sovereignty***

The concept of food sovereignty incorporates many of the elements that have been assigned to the more progressive notions of food security, but goes further by maintaining that food is a human right. Food sovereignty also holds governments and IFIs responsible for eliminating the root causes of hunger, namely poverty, landlessness, and food insecurity. The term is based upon six core principles:

- Focuses on food for people
- Values food providers
- Localizes food systems
- Makes decisions locally
- Builds knowledge and skills
- Works with nature (Nyéléni, 2007a)

Within this framework, those who produce, distribute and consume food are central to policy creation and implementation, thus ensuring that the sustainability of local and national economies are a priority. It opposes corporate control, a solely output-focused approach or one that disregards the environment. It works in line with the promotion of trade but not unregulated export growth. The approach aims directly at facilitating incomes for all and the right of the consumer to control their food as well as their nutrition (Nyéléni, 2007b).

Unlike food security, food sovereignty concerns itself where and how the food is produced as well as explaining that without acknowledging these factors, it is impossible for food insecurity (and therefore hunger) to be resolved (Patel, 2009; Via Campesina, 1996). Food sovereignty is more than just a term, but rather it is seen and used as an

approach that counters the mainstream development paradigm, which focuses on trade liberalization, trade-based hunger alleviation and industrial agriculture. It demands trade policies and practices that acknowledge the right to food and guarantees safe, healthy and ecologically sustainable production (Windfuhr & Jonsén, 2005). As the term incorporates some policy recommendations, it also highlights the inability of the terms, *food security* or *hunger* to make clear recommendations for changes to policy or approaches that lead to a resolution of the issue.

Proponents of food sovereignty oppose the current corporatized, industrialized, export-driven model of the food system because it is a system focused on profit making. A profit-driven system is one that may attract foreign investment and even contribute to GDP but the system itself does not provide quality food for people unless they can afford to purchase it. The Irish potato famine, a famous case study exemplifies this, where food was being exported from Ireland to nations who could afford to buy it even as one million Irish citizens died because they were not able to access food (Thorton, 1998). By democratizing the system, giving people control over land, the food supply and allowing them to inform policy, the system can work towards serving people rather than profit, something that is absolutely necessary to alleviate hunger or eliminate food insecurity. “The language of food sovereignty inserts itself into international discourse by making claims on rights and democracy, the cornerstones of liberal governance” (Patel, 2009). Food sovereignty is a direct call for peoples’ rights to shape and craft food policy.

This food sovereignty movement is led by La Via Campesina, a transnational movement of peasants, small- and medium-sized producers, landless, rural women, indigenous people, rural youth and agricultural workers. Initiating in 1993, it consists of

148 member organizations from 69 countries around the globe. It is an international voice “to develop solidarity and unity among small farmer organizations in order to promote gender parity and social justice in fair economic relations; the preservation of land, water, seeds and other natural resources; food sovereignty; sustainable agricultural production based on small and medium-sized producers” (La Via Campesina, 2007). The group has made great strides in bringing the issues to the forefront of international discussions surrounding poverty and hunger, including being invited to speak about the world food crisis and how to move forward at a meeting with the Human Rights Commission and the UN General Assembly in 2009 (Golay, 2009).

The widespread support for food sovereignty is a necessary move towards resolving world hunger. While *hunger* is the central term used within the MDGs, the elaboration of *food security* and *food sovereignty* show how these terms are necessary for broadening the understanding of hunger itself and therefore helping to determine and implement the necessary policies and programs for long-term, sustainable hunger alleviation.

### **Prerequisites for Hunger Alleviation**

Hunger exists throughout the world from the wealthiest, most fertile food-producing regions to the poorest deserts. It exists as a result of a variety of political and economic structures that have combined to create just over one billion people in the world who are currently suffering from hunger (FAO, 2009b).

An adequate sustainable supply of food to meet consumption demands and permanent access to this supply are necessary conditions for individuals to be free from

hunger. Echoing the previous discussion, a sustainable food system will also be necessary in the long run.

### ***Available Food Supply***

Often food security literature focuses on global production levels, particularly when looking at the long-term viability of a stable food supply. An appropriate worldwide food supply, able to sustain the world population is fundamentally necessary for food security to exist or hunger to be eliminated, as, without a sufficient supply able to sustain the population, the other factors, such as physical and economic access, corporate control, appropriate policies, etc. become less of a priority.

In the literature on hunger there are proponents of the opinion that limited food supplies are the central cause of food insecurity and hunger levels (L. Brown, 2004; Daily & Ehrlich, 1992; Goodland, 1997; IDRC, 1992; Meadows, Randers, & Meadows, 2004). Yet, 2008 proved to be a successful year aiding in replenishing world cereal supplies as production outstripped demand, while hunger levels got worse (FAO, 2009a).

The prevalence of macronutrient and micronutrient deficiencies with ample food availability highlights that contemporary hunger is not a problem of supply but a problem of distribution (Barret, 2002). The quantity of food produced worldwide does not reflect whether there is enough food produced for everyone to have a balanced, culturally appropriate diet or whether global *food security* is possible given the current production level. But, it does demonstrate that the number of people experiencing chronic hunger could be consuming more calories if distributional boundaries were overcome. Given that hunger is measured mainly in terms of the calories consumed, it is important to highlight that there are 17 percent more calories per person worldwide than were produced 30 years



ago (IDRC, 2006) and yet a higher number of hungry people today. This infers that the distributional barriers are on the rise.

Alongside the issues of poor distribution, ‘globesity’ – a sharp increase in obesity and diet-related diseases is threatening the nature of the world’s nutrition (WHO et al., 2000). Globesity is often typified by an increase in edible oils, caloric sweeteners and animal sourced foods (Maxwell & Slater, 2003). According to the WHO (2000), development-driven obesity is another form of malnutrition and is becoming increasingly common, especially in countries experiencing rapid development, and is resulting in a variety of diet-related diseases. These changes are happening at progressively lower and lower levels of income and the associated diseases are escalating in developing countries in situations where health systems are presently unable to deal with the new problems.

Development-driven obesity has directly resulted from the drop in price of “unhealthy” calories. With the mass subsidization of corn in Western nations, global prices for this commodity have dropped and become increasingly affordable (Pollan, 2006). With the abundant supply, industry has learned many ways to profit from this inexpensive oversupply, including processing it into high fructose corn syrup, now an extremely inexpensive sugar substitute, among many other corn products. These products, lacking in nutritional value yet high in calories are more affordable to a broader spectrum of the population, versus their more nutrient-rich counterparts. Corn is also fed to livestock, decreasing the economic cost of feeding an animal (in particular cattle). This has contributed to the production of mass amounts of affordable meat, yet unfortunately livestock fed a diet of grain does not have the same nutritional value, as these animals are not used to eating grain in this way and thus develop an extremely high saturated fat

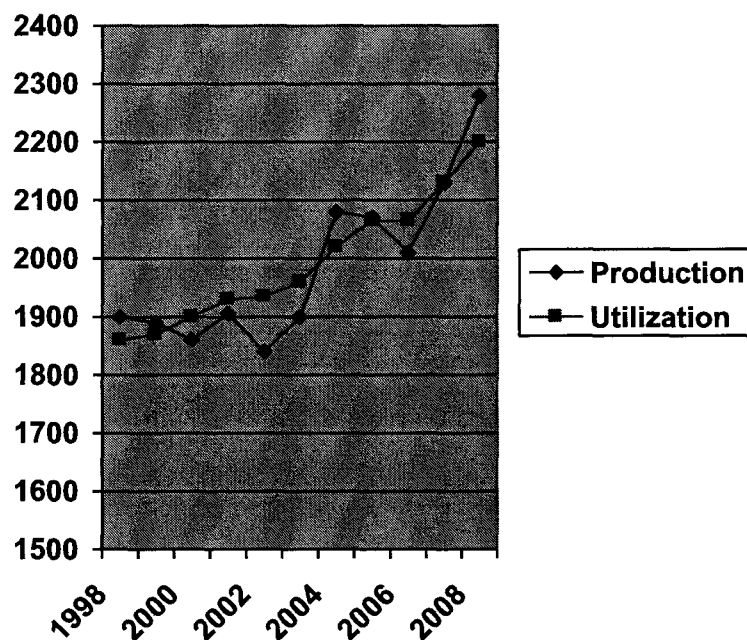
content because they cannot process the grain properly (Pollan, 2006). As a result, this fare increases the accessibility of lower income populations to cheap calories and thus contributes to a poor, overweight class of people throughout developed and developing countries.

Although enough food currently exists to feed the world population, the long-term sustainability of crop output is a concern. World crop and livestock output growth fell in 2005 to the lowest annual growth rate since the early 1970s and well below those of 2003 and 2004 (FAO, 2006c). This drop is explained as a result of a drastic decrease of output growth in the crop sector in developed countries from 12 percent in 2004 to negative four percent in 2005. Overall, food production per capita fell globally in 2005, which the FAO (2006) attributes to regional declines in Africa and throughout developed countries.

Cereal production increased sharply in the 2004 to 2005 period after several years at the same level but then declined again in 2005 to 2006, mainly due to unfavourable weather conditions. Since this downturn, world cereal production levels have slowly but steadily been increasing (FAO, 2008a; USDA, 2010).

Figure 2.3 shows total world cereal production and utilization over the past ten years as well as the fluctuations between this supply and consumption. Since 2007, production has surpassed utilization of world cereal crops, a positive move towards replenishing much of world food stocks lost since 2000.

**Figure 2. 3: World Cereal Production and Utilization (million tonnes)**



Source: FAO, 2009a

Proponents of the opinion that increasing food supply is crucial to relieving food insecurity often encourage a second Green Revolution. For the meantime we have established there is currently enough food to feed the world population much better than is presently happening and as much as supply issues may be a greater concern in the future as world population increases, the current malnutrition levels throughout the world are not directly related to a lack of supply. Therefore, when considering solutions for hunger alleviation, the solutions for achieving the goal of cutting hunger by half by 2015 should focus on physical and economic access rather than the need to increase production. In the long run, production concerns will have to be addressed, particularly in the context of a *sustainable* food supply but with ample supply in the present, reaching the one billion hungry will not occur by producing more food.

### ***Physical and Economic Access***

Access to food is the central barrier to reducing hunger (Barret, 2002; IDRC, 2006; International Food Policy Research Institute, 2007; Panitchpakdi, 2005; WHO et al., 2000). A lack of access to food refers to the inability to purchase or acquire (including growing food or through food programs) enough foodstuffs to avoid hunger and/or malnourishment.

Poverty is both a symptom and a cause of hunger (FAO, 2002a; Wanmali & Islam, 2002). As nutrition levels decrease, an individual's ability to work decreases as health problems rise and energy levels diminish. Breaking the poverty cycle can contribute greatly to reducing hunger in the long run.

Given that hunger is directly correlated to poverty, the quest for hunger alleviation becomes directly tied to resolving poverty and increasing incomes. As explained in the following section, strategies for poverty alleviation can also be combined with other measures aimed at bringing food to people in dire need. The primary focus, in particular at an international policy level, becomes the need for long term, sustainable poverty alleviation. As described in the debate of food security versus hunger, access to food is extremely important when informing program and policy interventions.

Income generation strategies can be effective, yet it should be noted that income levels are not always a fair representation of the actual level of hunger, nor do these strategies necessarily address the root of the issue of poverty or guarantee access to food. Hunger is not only a result of insufficient income but also caused by a lack of land entitlements, local and global trade effects, and supply issues (Rosset, 2006; Seshamani, 1998; von Braun et al., 2005; Wittman, 2009). Income, as the sole determinant of hunger

will not be a true representation, as many people who live on an income level implying a high level of food insecurity or hunger grow food to meet much of their nutritional needs and those who have an income above the hunger threshold may in fact not be able to afford a nutritious diet or only have access to unhealthy food choices.

With poverty as the central cause of hunger, the solutions for resolving this issue are something that have been tackled formally with international development strategies since WWII with varying degrees of success.

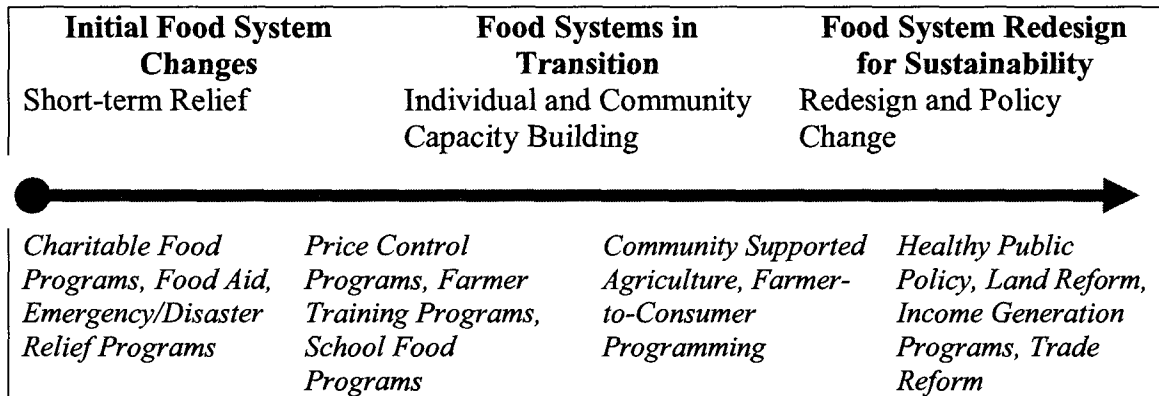
### **Hunger Solutions**

Because of the complexity of the issue, there is no magic bullet solution to hunger that has been agreed upon by scholars or practitioners. The concepts of hunger, food security and food sovereignty are multifaceted, multi-sectoral concepts, each on their own and as a whole are unable to specify effective, agreed upon policy prescriptions.

### ***The Spectrum of Solutions***

The responses to hunger can include a variety of actions throughout developed and developing countries. As Williams (2007) proposes, these range from short-term solutions to relieve immediate hunger problems to longer-term food system transitions that will aid in sustainable solutions, breaking the patterns that have lead to the levels of hunger that currently exist. The following figure shows a continuum of strategies to address food insecurity and hunger.

**Figure 2.4: Continuum of Food Security Strategies**



Adapted from: Williams, 2007

*Initial Food System Changes* address the needs of the most food insecure populations, the people who are at risk of dying from hunger. These immediate strategies often hide the degree of the problem, and therefore these strategies may contribute to future insecurity since the problems may not seem as severe. Although these are not long-term solutions, they are often necessary to relieve urgent situations in particular for those experiencing disasters or extreme poverty (Policy Working Group of the Nova Scotia Participatory Food Security Projects, 2006). This is the starting point of addressing hunger in order to meet the immediate needs of those in the most desperate situations.

*Food Systems in Transition* emphasizes improving the sustainability of the food system by building skills and mobilizing people for change (Policy Working Group of the Nova Scotia Participatory Food Security Projects, 2006). This includes uniting groups together to identify, define and solve their issues and therefore lead to skill and capacity building strategies.

Finally, *Food System Redesign for Sustainability* addresses the fundamental barriers to a nutritional diet for all, including policy and systematic changes and helps to build

long-term food security. This part of the spectrum is necessary to shift the food system away from necessitating the maintenance of costly short-term relief programs, as without these long-term solutions to shift the food system, hunger cannot be resolved.

Without each point on the continuum being addressed, hunger at one level or another will continue to exist. For the future alleviation and reduction of hunger throughout the world, the most important point on the continuum as well as the point where the UN can have the most effect with the MDGs is where policy and systematic changes occur. Ideally, programs should aim towards sustainable solutions with policy that does not require long term funding nor coordination but rather shifts the system to address its inadequacies. By using policy to address the systemic problems that lead to hunger, eventual widespread hunger alleviation becomes more promising.

### ***Policies and Perspectives of Food System Sustainability***

Supportive policies are the crux of addressing the sustainability of the food system and eliminating hunger in the long run. According to the European Commission, “the best way to achieve food security for all is to implement a broad-based policy for sustainable growth and poverty reduction” (Nielson, 2001). The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, attributes the global food crisis to be a result of systematic causes and the absence of a “robust and sustainable framework for global agricultural production and trade” (UNCTAD, 2008) and the profound failure of policy related to trade and development as the underlying causes of this crisis.

Because of the importance of policy as well as the recommendations from the UN's Millennium Project<sup>5</sup> on addressing the MDG target of cutting hunger by half by 2015, which focuses directly on policy implications, the focus will be on the theoretical frameworks of policy options for alleviating hunger.

### **Economic Development and Trade-Based Solutions**

Levels of hunger or food insecurity have been linked with a lack of development. This understanding has resulted in programming and policy aimed directly at raising GDP to encourage growth in the economy and thus lead to decreasing poverty and therefore decreasing hunger (Panitchpakdi, 2005; Shane, Teigen, Gehlhar, & Roe, 2000).

As GDP rises, this shows more economic activity within the economy as well as higher GDP per capita (assuming a relatively slower rate of population growth), a measure that infers that there is more income in the economy for each person in the country. This statistic is used to compare different economies, the wealth that exists within (including the quality of life for the residents within) and how productive a country or region is.

With a goal of focusing primarily on economic growth, measured by improvements in GDP, GDP growth becomes the primary goal. One of the central critiques of focusing on GDP growth is that this measure does not reflect income distribution within a country. Many developing and developed countries have high inequality throughout the

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<sup>5</sup> The Millennium Project, a UN subsidiary group was set with the task to outline a plan to achieve the MDGs by 2015. A more detailed discussion of the group and their recommendations is provided in the following chapter.



population, with the wealthiest portion of the population in control of most of the country's resources. As GDP increases, the increased income often flows to the already richer portions of the population versus the benefits being spread throughout the population (Donaldson, 2007; Fandl, 2008; Forbes, 2000; Iceland, 2003). In the past, this concept was justified through what economists predicted would be a 'trickle-down effect'. This is an economic theory, which assumes with more money floating in an economy, even if it is concentrated at the top, it will eventually filter down to the poorer populations as the wealthy increase their standard of living and their consumption, more jobs will be created and as well they pay more taxes which will contribute to social services. Therefore, the poor will also enjoy the benefits of a stimulated economy with a rise in their standards of living. This perspective, although not relied upon fully now, still has remnants of its impacts, as economists and politicians still do refer to improvements in GDP above all other development indicators as a sign of an improved economy, knowing that the benefits are not spread equally throughout the population.

Other development indicators do exist, such as the Gini coefficient, which specifically measures how income is distributed within an economy or the Human Development Index (HDI), which measures a number of development indicators such as health statistics, education levels and GDP per capita. These measures combined with GDP or on their own may be better indicators of how a country is developing and how or whether the levels of hunger are being affected by improvements in GDP.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> For further discussion on development indicators and the debates on their values, see Cahill, 2005; Dipietro & Anoruo, 2006; van den Bergh, 2007 and Wilson, Tyedmers, and Pelot, 2007.

The FAO acknowledges the limitations of GDP with a study demonstrating that economic growth does not automatically lead to hunger reduction as they show through cross-country analyses in developing countries (FAO, 2008b). Paradoxically, the group of countries that made the quickest progress decreasing hunger had the slowest economic growth. However, in this same study over the longer run, economic growth was in fact correlated with sustained cuts in hunger. This could also be evidence of the relationship between hunger and economic growth as one that is only apparent over time.

Despite evidence that growth has in some specific instances not reached the poor, many other studies have found the opposite, showing a direct correlation between economic growth and poverty alleviation (Dollar & Kraay, 2002a; Dollar & Kraay, 2002b; Gafar, 1998; Roemer & Gugerty, 1997).<sup>7</sup> Therefore, there is no concrete conclusion as to whether growth will reach the poor but we can conclude that given the right situation, GDP growth is capable of achieving poverty alleviation and increased food security (Bracking, 2004; Donaldson, 2008; Srinivasan, 2001).

*Growth with redistribution* is also advocated as a solution to offset increasing inequality (Thomson & Metz, 1998; Timmer, 2000). According to Timmer (2000), growth combined with policies that incorporate a food economy into a development strategy is important for addressing hunger. This is the approach that was used during the rapid export-led industrialization that took place in Asia with the case of the Asian Tigers, which successfully decreased the number of people affected by hunger in these countries.

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<sup>7</sup> The validity of the results presented by Dollar and Kraay has been hotly debated; see Amann *et al* 2006 and Nye, Reddy and Watkins, 2002.

These policies while heavily focused on export growth, included investment in rural farmers to increase productivity and thus income generation, higher prices at incentive levels and policies directed at reducing the urban bias that is involved in most development strategies. This improves food security through higher levels of productivity by the hungry themselves, although this is also reliant on a stable macroeconomic environment (Timmer, 2000).

Inequalities often need to be directly confronted for growth to reach the most impoverished populations. According to the Economic Commission “Economic growth is a necessary condition for food security because it contributes to increased food production and a strengthened external trade position, which allows countries to import food if necessary. However, growth is not a sufficient condition for food security. Above all, it is essential to strengthen people’s access to food by tackling poverty” (Nielson, 2001).

Economic growth does have the potential to improve incomes and thus food security. Although this is not always the case, it has been shown by a number of case studies that with sustained economic growth in a country, the incomes of the most impoverished will rise and this can be aided by government resources generated from the growth to help facilitate this process.

GDP as a tool to measure development is not only limited in representing inequality but it has also been criticized for not measuring and even encouraging the destruction of natural resources and the environment as a whole. The measure does not value intact natural resources and when resources are extracted and sold such as the cutting down of a forest and selling the lumber, the value of the lumber and the wages are added directly to

the GDP with no consideration for the loss of the forest, the habitat it provides, the potential loss of biodiversity, soil erosion, etc. GDP is only a measure of the value of output and services in an economy. It fails to account for social cohesion, unpaid work such as childcare or at home food production, literacy rates, life expectancy, child mortality, etc. (Lequiller, 2005; van den Bergh, 2007).

Although it has been made clear that GDP growth, in particular with government assistance can reach the poorest population and thus aid in the fight against hunger, the real difficulty lies in establishing policies and conditions for redistributive growth to occur.

In the 1970s when hunger was first tackled at the international level, the responsibility was placed on national governments. Import substitution industrialization (ISI) was the guiding ideology during this time period focusing on inward-looking development. Hunger strategies often included land reform and the subsidization of food, primarily as means to keep wages low to help stimulate the industrial sector.

Grain marketing boards (GMBs) were also introduced to improve food security through agricultural production support, marketing, logistics and value-addition (African Institute for Agrarian Studies, 2006). GMBs were used as the sole purchaser and distributor of grain in order to fix prices for producers and consumers, regulate the production to make sure there is enough food supply and to decrease the number of necessary transactions between farmer and consumer. In some circumstances when these boards were removed, this opened the competition of grain distribution and resulted in cheaper and more varied products for consumers (Seshamani, 1998) and at other times the

elimination of these subsidies caused a spike in hunger levels as prices increased drastically (Gera, 2004).

Much of the ISI ideology is premised on the idea of the infant industry argument, which states that in order for an industry to compete internationally it must be well established (or have economies of scale) and until it reaches that point, it requires national protection and nurturing to be successful (Suranovic, 2002).

The role of the state was crucial in the execution of ISI, yet many national governments were unable to regulate the economy successfully. As well, in terms of providing the necessary food supply, these measures did not offer the results that were needed to improve food security as many countries were without a sufficient agricultural base (Wanmali & Islam, 2002).

As the limited success of ISI was realized, the IFI prescription for development was completely reversed from inward to outward strategies. 'Globalization' was recognized as the solution to solve all of the world's underdevelopment. By integrating fully into the world market, the country would specialize its exports and open their borders to generate foreign exchange, thus increasing the GDP, decreasing unemployment and increasing wages. This is the model that represents current thinking to alleviate hunger.

Unfortunately it has for the most part also been unsuccessful in achieving the desired results yet still reigns as the primary means to achieve economic growth and thus contribute to hunger alleviation.

### ***Standard Economic Model***

According to orthodox economists, progress is attained by accumulating material, human and technical capital per unit of raw material, which includes an industrious civil

society with a high propensity to save and invest “wisely,” leading to the creation of more capital. The standard model for achieving the goal of economic development is based upon reliance on the market; an increased emphasis on the trade of goods and services, as it purportedly encourages the most efficient allocation of resources while optimizing output.

The foreign market is a central component of the orthodox growth model. According to proponents, trade allows each country to specialize in producing the goods that they can create most efficiently. This efficiency occurs when countries open their borders and reduce barriers to trade, such as excessive taxes, price controls and subsidies (Tweeten, 1999). Borders should be open to investments, and trade in goods and services. By having an open border, countries are able to specialize and compete on the world market allowing each country to produce at their *comparative advantage*.

In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, David Ricardo devised the so-called *Law of Comparative Advantage* describing how world economic welfare will be improved if each country specializes in producing the goods or services for which they have *comparative advantage*. The concept of comparative advantage is best explained with examples. If there are two countries, for example France and England, and France is superior in producing two goods, even though France has an *absolute advantage*<sup>8</sup> in producing both of these goods, Ricardo’s analysis shows that it still may be beneficial for France and England to engage in the trade of these items (Suranovic, 2007). A comparative advantage will exist if countries produce *most-best* in comparison to other countries, even

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<sup>8</sup> Absolute advantage is defined as the ability to produce more of a good or service with the same level or less inputs compared to an opponent

if it is less productive than the other country. It is with this concept of comparative advantage that international trade is viewed as beneficial for countries to engage in. The surplus that they gain from this exchange is referred to as *gains from trade*, a crucial concept in the context of economic development.

The free movement of goods is viewed to improve the welfare of both countries. Specializing and trading goods increases consumption possibilities for goods in both countries and raises the aggregate world production efficiency, as more of each good is likely to be produced with the same amount of resources. Trade also should improve the overall efficiency of consumption, suggesting that consumers will have more choices of products and better prices available.

With the availability of cheaper goods, real wages of workers in both countries rise and they are able to consume more of each good in a free trade model as opposed to autarky. The Ricardian model shows free trade to be a win-win situation where everybody in both countries benefits (Suranovic, 2007).

The model is a very simplified version of the real world, not accounting for many factors that play into a real world circumstance.<sup>9</sup> Regardless of these factors, the Law of Comparative Advantage has been instrumental in influencing mainstream economists in designing development or economic growth strategies.

The policies accompanying trade policies, including governmental deregulation and levels of protectionism versus free trade have been very influential in shaping these export-driven development models and their successes and failures. The neoliberal

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<sup>9</sup> For more information on the critiques of the Law of Comparative advantage, see Sapsford, 2002; Suranovic, 2002; Suranovic, 2007.

strategy explained in the next section is the current reigning development model based on this premise: that as incomes rise from producing and trading goods on the world market, individuals become capable of saving their disposable income, which is then re-invested into the economy to stimulate further growth of GDP and this contributes to poverty alleviation and hunger reduction

### *Neoliberalism for Economic Growth*

In a 1998 FAO-sponsored document, *Implications of Economic Policy for Food Security: A Training Manual*, two broad areas of policies are suggested to adjust the economy to create economic growth and thus lead to improved food security: stabilization and structural adjustment (Thomson & Metz, 1998). These recommendations, based on a standard economic model have been implemented in developing countries since the 1970s, not only focused on decreasing hunger levels but expanding and developing the economy. This (neo)classical economic view is the grounding for neoliberal policies, which encompasses stabilization and structural adjustment and aims towards a restructuring of an economy towards integration in global markets, decreased government expenditures and increased revenues for development.

In terms of food security, this model has a history of causing short run food supply issues, as countries are not prepared with necessary buffer food stocks as the economy adjusts to the open trade. With ideal circumstances, the economy will recover in the intermediate term with greater productivity to raise food production and consumer buying power and food imports in the long run, population growth should reach zero in order to maintain the ability of the economy to improve and support its population (Tweeten, 1999).



Stabilization policies are immediate changes aimed at short-term objectives with changes in macro-economic parameters including the devaluation of currency, stricter monetary policies and a reduction of budget deficit. Combined, these changes are supposed to result in lower inflation and reduce balance of trade deficits through their effects on the demand side of the economy.

Structural adjustment is implemented in combination with stabilization policies. It aims to fundamentally change how the economy operates. The policies are intended to improve the efficiency of markets, trade, and institutional and special sector reform, including deregulation, changes in international trade policies, privatization and agricultural policies (Easterly, 2005; Simon, 2002; Thomson & Metz, 1998).

In combination, these policies attempt to create a more efficient economy, generate foreign exchange, stimulate private industry, increase the appeal to invest and stabilize the macro economy. This adjustment explicitly promotes exports based on the Ricardian concept of comparative advantage (Simon, 2002).

Structural adjustment programs (SAPs), the combination of these policy measures were introduced in the late 1970's by the World Bank and the IMF as a response to the debt crisis and were aimed at stimulating growth to generate income for the countries to facilitate a means of debt repayment (Brawley & Baerg, 2006). They embrace the classical economic view of stimulating growth beginning with trade, opening borders and reinvesting in the economy. SAPs became a condition to loan agreements signed with the World Bank and the IMF. Originally, the Bretton Woods institutions deemed that SAPs would lead to poverty reduction to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor, the rural

and urban and overall, countries that underwent these policies would be better off than those that did not (Konadu-Agyemang, 2000).

In the 1990s it was concluded that these policies had had some successes but there were also a number of cases that resulted in large disasters (Easterly, 2005). According to a study by Easterly (2005) of the 20 recipients of repeated adjustment lending over 1980–99, there is no statistical evidence that per capita growth improved with an increased intensity of loans with structural adjustment conditions and there is little evidence that adjustment or growth occurred at all. The disasters that occurred included countries being left in a weakened state, further in debt, more environmental degradation, higher rates of poverty and few to no changes in the growth of the economy. This controversy surrounding SAPs stems from an inability of economists and policymakers to agree whether these policies lead to economic growth and how this affects the poor.<sup>10</sup> The failure of SAPs is also viewed as a result of restrictions placed on governments undertaking these policy recommendations and the inability to use complimentary policy instruments that would make the adjustments more successful politically and economically (Brawley & Baerg, 2006).

The effects of SAPs specifically on food security have also had very negative results. Countries that underwent SAPs often saw increased rates of poverty of smallholder farmers, in particular those who were net food buyers, low-income and wage earners in urban and semi-urban areas as well as smallholder farmers in remote areas leading to increasing food vulnerability and child malnutrition (Chilowa, 1998; Plaza & Stromquist, 2006). In Pakistan, for example, under the SAP, they were forced to cut their

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<sup>10</sup> For an example of this controversy, see a case study of Ghana (Konadu-Agyemang, 2000).

food subsidy program which provided affordable food to low-income people and this directly lead to an immediate increase in hunger as domestic food prices increased dramatically (Gera, 2004). Food security has been reduced by SAPs from not only the increasing domestic food prices and increasing poverty but as well, an increase in exports is directly tied to an increased reliance on food imports, a loss in food self-sufficiency (Patnaik, 1996; Seshamani, 1998).

Controversy surrounding trade liberalization as well as many aspects of structural adjustment programs and their ability to be pro-poor led the World Bank and the IMF to retreat their recommendations for economic development in the form of SAPs and to reframe them in the light of poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs). The PRSP was implemented as a national program of poverty reduction and as a foundation for lending programs with the IMF and World Bank as well as for debt relief for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC).

The adoption of PRSPs has been presented as a shift in the World Bank and IMF approach to development. The approach uses the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set out by the United Nations as its over-arching framework where the World Bank maintains a commitment to the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF).

The commitment by the World Bank to the CDF goals was supposed to represent a “new way of doing business” for the International Financial Institutions (IFIs). It is an approach to development whereby it was intended that countries become the leaders and owners of their own development policies (Wiens, 2004). This “new way of doing business” represents the core doctrine upon which PRSPs are theoretically founded with six main principles in approaching poverty-reduction:

- Full integration of social and economic aspects of development in the creation of national strategies for addressing poverty
- Creation of national development strategies should be participatory by engaging civil society broadly as well as multiple levels of government, in order to ensure national “ownership” of the development plan for poverty reduction
- Emphasizing that there can be no single blueprint for national development plans
- No set or rigid timeline, which is meant to take into consideration that participation, can at times be a lengthy and difficult process.
- Full transparency in the PRSP process and in its partnerships for development
- Right to self-determination for nation-states in the PRSP process, to ensure that the government and its citizens thereby, are in the “driver’s seat” of their own development (Wiens, 2004).

The CDF framework is represented in the five key theoretical principles underlying PRSPs as a means for poverty-reduction where the principles allegedly require PRSPs to be country-driven, results-oriented, comprehensive, partnership-oriented and long term. According to the World Bank and the IMF, country governments are required to craft the PRSP while abiding by these principles and submit the document to the IMF. Using this document the IMF creates the official document that will dictate the country’s approach to development and the terms and conditions of the loan they will receive.

One of the central changes that occurred with the move from SAPs to PRSPs was the replacement of the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) with the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF). The ESAF was the centerpiece to the IMF's actions to aid low-income countries. Through this facility, SAPs were crafted with their approach to economic growth and conditionalities were established on the loans along with repayment schedules. When it was determined that SAPs were failing to meet their goals of growth in developing countries, SAPs along with the ESAF were discarded and replaced with PRSPs and the PRGF.

The core goal of the PRGF is articulated by the IMF to "arrive at policies that are more clearly focused on growth and poverty reduction, in which the poverty reduction and macroeconomic elements of the program are fully integrated, and that embody a greater degree of national ownership, thereby leading to more consistent policy implementation" (IMF, 2000).

The PRGF is responsible for taking the PRSP and creating a PRGF supported program based on the original PRSP document. This program becomes the document used for implementing the growth strategy and conditions of the loans.

In 2002 and 2004, internal and external reviews confirmed that the new PRGF programs allowed for increased government spending, in particular pro-poor expenditure. The 2004 review also concluded "the PRS approach has the potential to encourage the development of a country-owned and credible long-term strategy for growth and poverty reduction... However, actual achievements thus far fall considerably short of potential" (IMF, 2004). Another review in 2005 (IMF, 2005) found that macroeconomic goals had been quite successful through the PRGF process but per capita income remained low as

well as the benefits were not reaching the poorer populations. Many external criticisms arose that the PRGF supported programs were no better than SAPs, at times even using the exact same policy measures which had failed under SAPs (Gottschalk, 2005; McKinley, 2004; Zack-Williams & Mohan, 2005). For example, in several countries such as Albania, Nicaragua and Senegal, their papers detail the past failures of SAPs and then proceed to advocate the exact same policies in the economic portion of the PRSP (Stewart & Wang, 2003). Indeed, as Hardstaff (2003) observed, “There is actually no major change in the shift by the two financial institutions. The move of renaming ESAF as PRGF is only an attempt to add poverty reduction into SAPs without changing the actual policy conditions.”

PRSP macroeconomic policies have been directly taken from PRGF agreements made with the IMF before the PRSP process is finished (IMF – IEO, 2004, p. 56). When the negotiation of PRGF agreements occur before PRSPs are completed, they cannot be influenced by national dialogue, thereby voiding the possibility of a country-specific policy. According to OXFAM (2004, p. 16), by March 2003, 16 out of 20 completed PRSPs had PRGF programs in place before the PRSPs were completed.

In July 2009, the IMF announced that the PRGF would soon be replaced with the Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PRGT), which would be comprised of three separate departments to cover loans. The objective for reshaping the PRGF would be to “make its support more flexible and tailored to the country’s needs” (IMF, 2009b). With the official announcement of the reformulation of the PRGF, the IMF also revealed large increases in loan monies, decreases in interest for this new money and extended periods

of interest-free time on past loans, implying large changes and a much more flexible and accommodating International Monetary Fund.

The Extended Credit Facility (ECF) is the department within the PRGT that has been assigned to take on the PRSP application and will work to construct ECF arrangements in replacement of PRGF supported programs. The ECF will aim to provide sustained engagement in case of medium-term balance of payments needs, to continue to be based on a country's own poverty reduction strategy, and to offer more flexible timing requirements than the PRGF for countries to produce a formal poverty reduction strategy document (IMF, 2009a). The ECF arrangements will support economic programs and provide policy support focused on stable and sustainable macroeconomic conditions that are consistent with poverty reduction and growth (IMF, 2010).

Because the ECF is relatively new and only a number of 'arrangements' have been approved and are yet to be implemented, there has been no evaluation of the approach of the ECF. The problems with the PRGF supported programs may not be the same with the adoption of ECF arrangements as changes in process will be made, although from the available documentation, I did not find any of the proposed changes implying that there would be a change in the neoliberal ideology (IMF, 2009c).

The reliance on neoliberalism contradicts poverty reduction targets (McKinley, 2004; Zack-Williams & Mohan, 2005). While the economic framework defines the levels of debt relief, aid and revenues available, as neo-liberalism continues to prevail, social policies aimed at the poor will be undermined, as exemplified by the history of SAPs and PRSPs. As mentioned previously, the policies under SAPs often instigated slower economic growth, greater economic instability, higher inequality, poverty and

underemployment (Hardstaff, 2003; Welch, 2001; Wise, 2009). From ESAF to PRGF to ECF, the move towards the adoption and focus on poverty reduction is extremely important. Moving to a more flexible environment where countries are able to influence the terms and conditions of their loans and tailor them to their particular circumstances is crucial. To what extent we will see a divergence from neoliberal policies will only be something that will become obvious in the coming years.

The persisting use of neo-liberal policies will only continue to contribute to the fundamental “values” of PRSPs being undermined as they have been shown to decrease livelihoods for the rural poor, decrease food security and increase food dependency (Wise, 2009). For instance, in the past, the PRGF agreements imposed have led to a lack of economic policy freedom, decreasing national ownership and have reverted back to the ‘one size fits all’ development plan. If the ECF continues to uphold neoliberal ideals, there is little opportunity for meaningful discourse and debate on economic policies and conditions from the PRSP documents (McKinley, 2004). Under the PRGF, when a country has attempted to deviate from the contractual obligations, the result was a suspension of aid, which has been illustrated in the case of Zambia (Zulu, 2003).

Supporters of neoliberal policies refer to economic models and the Law of the Comparative Advantage for the reasons why these policies should be implemented (Suranovic, 2007). Panitchpakdi (2005) also argues that cuts in tariffs, trade-distorting domestic support and export subsidies, and longer implementation periods can bring a multitude of benefits to developing countries that adopt neoliberal policies, in particular in decreasing hunger. He also argues the possibility of reducing transportation, distribution and marketing costs for food and inputs.



These economic policies mentioned have at times been linked to contributing to or instigating high levels of economic growth. As mentioned previously the Asian Tigers are used as examples to demonstrate the success of outward oriented growth strategies. Despite a few differences in the policies implemented, a situation like this cannot always be directly replicated. The problem in this argument was well posed by Nobel laureate Robert Lucas Jr., "simply advising a society to follow the Korean model...[is a little like advising an aspiring basketball player to]...follow the Michael Jordan model" (Srinivasan, 2001). "To make use of someone else's successful performance at any task, one needs to be able to break this performance down into its component parts so that one can see what each part contributes to the whole, which aspects of this performance are imitable and, of these, which are worth imitating" (Srinivasan, 2001).

There is proof that trade liberalization has been a successful part of development strategies but it also has a history of exacerbating poverty and increasing hunger and therefore it is important to increase the emphasis on supporting the poor through this transition phase and/or proceeding with caution (Asante, 2003; Konadu-Agyemang, 2000; Samatar, 1993; Winters, McCulloch, & McKay, 2004). These stabilization and liberalization policies are generally implemented not with food security as the ultimate goal, but rather a hopeful byproduct to immediate concerns facing developing countries such as controlling a balance of payments crisis or dealing with high levels of inflation (Thomson & Metz, 1998). According to the neoliberal logic, food security created through trade produces "self-reliance" by generating "hard" currency reserves to buy imports of food (Suppon, 2003).

Even with the continued IFI advocacy of neoliberalism, the overall strategy has not been successful. With over 40 years of implementing the policies, approximately 35 years of international discussions of resolving hunger and the current number of people in the world suffering is still the same as in 1970. Proportionally, the amount of hunger has decreased but with all of the time and money dedicated to alleviating poverty and thus hunger, the steps have only been small given that over one-sixth of the world population is hungry and many, many more are food insecure. The IMF also admits failure as they continue to change and revamp their institutions to hopefully find the recipe for poverty alleviation. The terms on which food is, or is not, made available by the international community have been taken away from institutions that might be oriented by concerns of 'food security', and given to the market, which is guided by an altogether different calculus (Patel, 2009), one that is not directed by hunger or poverty levels but rather entirely focused on generating money.

## **Summary**

In light of this discussion, international thinking seems to be slowly converging towards the recognition that alternative policies are needed in order to deal with the macroeconomic volatility developing countries are subject to in a fairly liberalized global economy (Gottschalk, 2005). Yet, simultaneously the fact is that stagnant economies cannot generate jobs and raise incomes. The basic equation seems to stand: so long as the value of exports exceeds the value of imports, trade does lead to growth; if supported by the appropriate distributive policies, such growth could combat poverty (Panitchpakdi, 2005). The exact policy formula must be specifically tailored to the country circumstance

and therefore there are no specific magic solutions or equations to alleviate poverty and alternative policies aimed at raising incomes and remedying hunger levels tend to require a more integrated approach relying on dedicated, autonomous governments able to battle the structural barriers; something that tends to be quite difficult.

Challengers of the trade-based hunger solutions often advocate for sovereignty and the right of those in developing countries to access a nutritious diet over GDP growth. This is not an argument against trade but rather a change in the focus of the development or hunger alleviation strategy away from a sole focus on economic growth. As mentioned previously, food sovereignty is an approach and a perspective of how hunger can be tackled, directly targeting the underlining cause: the maldistribution of resources. Poverty is a multifaceted phenomenon that goes beyond a lack of adequate income. Development, in particular hunger alleviation, must take all facets of poverty into account as an overarching objective (Srinivasan, 2001).

Policy alternatives have been suggested to reorient towards sustainability including:

- Strengthening small-scale farming;
- Rebalancing power throughout the food system, including revitalizing local food systems and more closely regulating the global;
- Building local and national capacity to deal with environmental stresses;
- Mobilizing private and public investments to sustainable development, along with corporate accountability mechanisms; and
- Establishing supportive institutions and arrangements to accomplish these goals (Ishii-Eiteman, 2009)

Regardless of the exact actions taken, the baseline that must be established is that each person has the right to food, to inform food policy and to be free from hunger (Patel, 2009). It is not the goal of this paper to get into the theory of rights-based development and who guarantees those rights but rather to make the point that the current paradigm guiding development will free the world from hunger, in part because it fails to guarantee such rights. The FAO recognizes that Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) are the most important determinant of development strategies in many countries and the prospects for the national realization of the right to food thus depend upon its integration into the PRSPs (FAO, 2006b), although these policies must be supported by the ECF. Yet the FAO (2009b) also maintains that, “To lift themselves out of hunger, the food-insecure need control over resources, access to opportunities, and improved governance at the international, national and local levels.”

*The freedom of man, I contend, is the freedom to eat."*

*-- Eleanor Roosevelt*

### **CHAPTER 3: A History of International Action on Food Security**

The challenge of eliminating world hunger is not a new one. The 1974 World Food Conference commenced with what has now become a 35-plus year international struggle against structures that have prevented hundreds of thousands from being provided adequate nutrition. Originally, dynamic strategies were promoted including many principles closely related to those of food sovereignty, advocating for a rights-based approach, yet this was without any financial backing or international supportive measures. As the goals of these earlier conferences went unmet, and the strategies evolved, the hopes of reducing hunger diminished, resulting more moderate goals with each successive conference. Predictably, smaller goals resulted in less hunger reduction and consequently a higher 'acceptable' number of hungry people. Even if the present target were to be met, cutting current worldwide hunger by half, millions would still be left starving, a far cry from the 1974 goal of completely eliminating global hunger.

This chapter outlines the history of multilateral action on food security and hunger alleviation, describing the origins of the Millennium Development Goal of cutting hunger by half, and highlights the theoretical approach guiding the implementation of the MDGs. This history is significant to examine because it shows an increasing reliance on neoliberalism at the multilateral level and the move away from securing the rights of the poor to access a healthy, reliable and affordable food source.

## **History of World Food Conferences**

The first international conference to tackle world hunger was the 1974 World Food Conference, organised by the General Assembly of the United Nations to determine specific actions through international co-operation to resolve the current level of hunger. There was representation from 135 states; liberation movements; United Nations bodies and specialized agencies; observers from intergovernmental organizations; representatives of 161 international and national non-governmental organizations; among many important representatives (United Nations, 1975). Together, these groups, individuals and representatives declared that “every man, woman and child has the right to be free from hunger and malnutrition” and a goal was set to eradicate hunger in the world within one decade (World Food Summit, 1996, 807). Donor countries were expected to accept and implement planning for food aid as well as make every effort to provide and ensure adequate quantities of food commodities available. The conference also established a World Food Council that helped lead to a number of follow-up conferences in the coming years.

At this point in time, food security was generally viewed as a problem of insufficient and unstable food supply (Barret, 2002) and therefore the declaration primarily focused on agricultural production and productivity. Yet, as the first conference to directly address food insecurity and hunger in the world, this was a large step to acknowledge the state of food insecurity as well as create an international commitment to address the situation. The conference also noted that aside from increasing production, to rid the world of hunger, it was essential to improve consumption and distribution of food and to build a system of food security (United Nations, 1975).

Responsibility to follow-up and make the changes necessary to eliminate hunger were left to individual governments or organizations but without a carefully crafted action plan, international financing for these efforts or enforcement measures. Despite the important recognition and movement towards hunger alleviation, more than 15 years after the original conference, the world had yet to witness a significant progress towards the goal and thus in 1992 the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations teamed up with the World Health Organizations to coordinate an International Conference on Nutrition (ICN).

The ICN aimed to address the 800 million people without access to enough food to meet their basic daily needs and the 40 percent of the global population with deficiencies in one or more micronutrients. This conference also yielded a wide array of representation including representatives from 159 countries, 15 UN organizations and 144 non-governmental organizations who signed the *World Declaration on Nutrition and Plan of Action for Nutrition* which was created to serve as a guide to the technical issues of nutrition policy and programme development. This declaration also recognized the right to food and how the resources and know-how existed to eliminate the problem of hunger (FAO & WHO, 1992).

One of the accomplishments of the conference was the preparation of National Plans of Action for Nutrition (NPANs). These plans represent country priorities for hunger alleviation and are designed to direct countries, donors and NGOs to implement projects in accordance with the plan. The country itself crafts the plans according to the guidelines and then they are submitted and approved by the FAO. These plans also assist as a means to mobilize political and funding support for nutrition programs. In some

instances, NPANs have been integrated into national development strategies with specific budget allocations and timelines, helping to integrate nutrition to the forefront of development strategies and other times they are used by various non-governmental and governmental organizations to coordinate efforts. NPANs recognized the dynamic approach that would be necessary to alleviate hunger (FAO, 1995). The ICN Plan of Action also called on the G8 to follow through on their commitment to pledging 0.7 percent of their GDP to development aid inferring that this would help finance NPANs.

With almost 100 countries developing their own NPANs, three years after the ICN at the FAO Conference in 1995, a call was made to convene a World Food Summit (WFS) in November 1996 to renew the commitment of world leaders to the eradication of hunger and malnutrition with the adoption of specific policies and actions (FAS Online, 2005).

Literature on the International Conference on Nutrition is not extensive, perhaps because the 1995 WFS announcement soon took the spotlight. Despite being overshadowed, it is important to highlight that through the Plan of Action, many components of food sovereignty are highlighted including the right to food, the necessity to control local resources, to develop country-specific plans, strengthening agricultural policies for sustainable growth of agricultural productivity, and the focus on the involvement of communities at each stage from planning, implementing and evaluating projects (FAO & WHO, 1992). Echoing the logic of SAPS, the report mentioned the necessity to liberalize the economy to create jobs. But it also clearly states that it is necessary to mitigate the adverse effects of liberalization.



The World Food Summit took place in November 1996 and brought together important stakeholders and close to 10 000 participants from around the world. The intention of the summit was to adopt a plan of action including policies and strategies at both the national and international level while raising awareness worldwide. The conference concluded with the signing of two documents, the World Food Summit Plan of Action and the Rome Declaration on Food Security, which aimed to solidify the commitments expressed at the summit and the agreed upon goals.

The World Food Summit Plan of Action called for a more cautious goal than 1974 World Food Conference goal of eradicating hunger and instead appealed for “an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view of reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than 2015” (World Food Summit, 1996, 807). The Plan also called on governments to launch a national ‘Food for All’ campaign and instituted a Committee on World Food Security (CFS), which would recommend policies that would maintain necessary cereal supplies and monitor prospective supply and demand situations in the future.

The Rome Declaration on Food Security reaffirmed “the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger” while pledging “political will and ...[a] common and national commitment to achieving food security for all.” The declaration also included the official commitment “to an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than 2015” from each signing member (World Food Summit, 1996).

The declaration acknowledged that while worldwide food supplies have increased, food insecurity is a result of the inadequacy of household and national incomes to purchase required foodstuffs, volatile supply, as well as the prevalence of disasters. International co-operation and solidarity were declared as fundamental for employment generation and raising incomes by focussing on increasing trade. The focus on trade was determined to be a key element in attaining food security including the trade of food and non-food goods. A number of commitments were agreed upon to ensure the trade targets were met, including participatory policies to enable a fair and market-oriented world trade system because it was recognised that special attention would be necessary for food exporting countries to endure the effects of the WTO measures agreed upon at the Uruguay Round in 1994 (Fresco, 1997).

Those signing the documents agreed to “implement, monitor, and follow-up this Plan of Action at all levels in co-operation with the international community...[and create] an environment – at the national and global levels alike – which is conducive to development and to the elimination of poverty” (FAO, 2005, p. 2).

Although the conference gave rise to both an international focus and extensive media attention directed towards hunger, many criticisms resulted with the release of the final declaration and the plan of action as they summarized the approaches that would be used to combat hunger. To address the food security issues, the Summit declared that cutting hunger was primarily the responsibility of national governments. Developing country governments became the primary decision-makers in charge of implementation yet there was little discussion of the role of international institutions and developed country governments or how they would be involved to help facilitate this responsibility

or where their own responsibility would lie. The conference discussed funding arrangements and how increased assistance would be necessary to alleviate food insecurity, but no official commitments were agreed upon to increase assistance or even reiterate the previous promises which had yet to be met by developed countries (Environmental Health Perspectives, 1997). In general, the lack of policy changes incorporated in the overall plan highlights a lack of change or willingness to move towards actually meeting the agreed upon targets.

According to Hopkins (1998), the outcomes of the conference were tailored to the positions of wealthy countries as responsibility fell onto developing country governments to help facilitate private sector expansion. National plans and thus declaring national governments as primarily responsible for their creation are important aspects of resolving food security (Maxwell, 1997), but it is equally important to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to fulfil this role (NGO Forum on Food Security, 1996). The outcome of the conference also allowed the international agencies leading the conference, along with developed countries to avoid official responsibility. According to Hussein (2002), donor and international agencies; national governments; the public and private sector; and civil society all have important roles to play and must work together for the WFS targets to be achieved. However, there seemed to be little interest in mobilising the stakeholders to create or implement national action plans as occurred at the International Conference on Nutrition four years earlier.

The final declaration was also viewed to have contradictory statements when it referred both to the need to maintain biodiversity and to support “the world’s smallholder farmers and fishers, including indigenous people” and at the same time focus on

liberalizing trade and reducing trade barriers, policy measures that have proven to undermine these issues (Branford, 2008; Cohen, 1998; Hopkins, 1998). Even after acknowledging the special consideration that would be necessary for developing countries to succeed within the agreements from the Uruguay Round, no specific actions or recommendations were made nor policies agreed upon to ensure positive effects.

Other than a commitment to reducing the number of hungry people in the world by half by 2015, the Summit did not make any other major promises. Countries walked away from the Summit having committed to this goal yet without declaring exactly how each signing member would be responsible for its achievement. Shortly after the conclusion of the conference, “in a post-WFS ‘interpretive statement’ the United States declared that the “fundamental right to be free from hunger” was a “goal or aspiration to be realized progressively that does not give rise to any international obligations” (Suppon, 2003), directly contradicting the Rome Declaration that had just been signed which guarantees the right of everyone to be free from hunger. The right to food has been officially recognized since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, but without respecting this right and a complete commitment to the issues related to food security, the likelihood of ever meeting a goal of reducing the number of hungry people by such a large percentage, seems doubtful.

Throughout the literature and the post-conference materials, there appeared to be little evidence of discussion about the 1974 conference goal which was abandoned without an evaluation of the actions that were (or were not) taken and what lessons could be learned or improved upon. According to Fresco (1997), there was no justification for

the goal of cutting hunger by half and that this is a relatively modest aim without calculations or a scientific basis of how it could be attained.

Since the end of the conference, the results have been less than promising and in 2002, government ministers met at the World Food Summit: Five Years Later (WFS-fyl) to evaluate the progress that had been made towards the goal set in 1996 and to call for an international alliance to accelerate action to reduce world hunger. The meeting also resulted in the release of a declaration reconfirming the goal set in 1996 and a renewed commitment to meet the deadline.

Reporting to the 2002 Summit Plenary, the Speaker of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Pierferdinando Casini, highlighted the participants' message to the Summit, including the right of everyone to adequate nutrition; the need for urgent international measures to reduce the number of hungry by half by 2015; and the need to secure terms and conditions conducive to food security in multilateral trade negotiations (FAO, 2002b). The issue of trade was the central topic throughout many official and unofficial discussions, yet during the summit, a lack of political will and the need for more resources were declared as the main reasons for the failure in reducing hunger in the past.

Prior to the meeting, a FAO preparatory paper charged both developing and developed countries with failing to show their commitments to dedicate resources towards the eradication of hunger, and therefore resulting in the disappointing movement towards the goal (Madeley, 2002). The FAO also stated that in order to meet the goal by 2015, it will be necessary for an additional public investment of \$24 billion per year to be made in developing countries and that without this investment it is estimated that there may be as many as 600 million hungry people in 2015 (United Nations, 2002a).

It is difficult to determine the extent to which the follow-up summit was able to achieve its goals, especially in terms of prioritizing the fight against hunger. It was attended only by lower-level representation from developed countries whereas heads of state from developing countries were in attendance (Hussein, 2002), implying a lesser commitment to the goal by Western nations. Official commitments were renewed to achieve the WFS goal, but the approaches which were previously ineffective seemed to remain constant with no major changes to providing more resources for the cause (Hussein, 2002). According to Hussein (2002), a number of powerful states were again against the Code of Conduct, which acknowledged safe and nutritious food as a universal right and stopped the Summit Declaration from including this language. Instead, the declaration was able to establish “voluntary guidelines to achieve the progressive realisation of the right to adequate food...over the next two years”, without required actions by any signing member.

Alongside the 2002 WFS fyl, a NGO/CSO Forum on Food Sovereignty took place discussing the targets that had been set and a limited number of key issues necessary to meet the WFS goals. At the end of the forum, a declaration was released addressing the reasons for the lack of progress on the goal, stating that the 1996 Plan of Action failed not because of a lack of political will or resources but instead because the plan actually supports policies that *lead* to hunger (NGO/CSO Forum on Food Sovereignty, 2001). The declaration maintains that free trade and privatisation policies result in hunger and rather, the focus should be on true land reform, provision of local markets and sustainable production practices (Pesticide Action Network North America, 2002). The sub heading and closing statement of the declaration summarizes the position of the NGO/CSO forum,

“For the peoples’ right to produce, feed themselves and exercise their food sovereignty...Keep the WTO out of food: Another world is possible”. The NGO/CSO Forum Declaration was in direct contradiction with the renewed methods for achieving the goal from the World Food Summit: Five Years Later. The NGO/CSO Forum and its recommendations were acknowledged at the World Food Summit but were not incorporated into the documentation or policy prescriptions.

Despite these important proceedings resulting from the WFS-fyl conference as well as the NGO/CSO Forum, the worldwide media did not give these gatherings as much attention as the World Food Summit in 1996. With the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals two years before this follow-up conference and the international commitment to achieving these goals, combined with extensive media attention, the WFS and the follow-up were no longer perceived as attention-worthy.

These conferences among other major conferences in the 1990s all contributed to the creation of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals adopted in 2000, combining previous commitments and future hopes into one document to create an approach dedicated to relieving poverty throughout the world. The target related to cutting hunger is not the same as the World Food Summit goal, but it has since become the primary focus of international efforts associated with worldwide hunger alleviation. These goals will be discussed in the following section in the context of the history described in the previous pages and then specifically focused on the first Millennium Development Goal, which commits to cutting hunger by half by 2015.

## **Millennium Development Goals**

### ***Background***

The Millennium Declaration was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in September 2000 recognizing the beginning of the new millennium and a reaffirmation in the faith of the UN and its Charter as “indispensable foundations of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world” (UN General Assembly, 2000). The resolution built on the foundation of the International Development Targets and was renamed as the Millennium Development Goals, based on specific, time-bound, measurable targets aimed at combating poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women. By using these goals, the UN, country governments, NGOs, individuals and the international community, including the World Bank and IMF would be directed towards a common end, representing a consensus on international development priorities. These goals are different from other UN goals because this is the first time that they have been endorsed by the UN system, member states and other major stakeholders. Through these goals, attention is focused on poverty reduction and most importantly understanding the multi-dimensional nature of poverty. The UN Development Group (UNDG) works to ensure the MDGs remain central to development efforts through focusing on five key dimensions - practical assistance in support of country priorities, country-level monitoring, global monitoring, research, and advocacy (United Nations, 2002b).

There are eight goals, including 27 measurable targets to be met by the year 2015. While the first seven goals focus on the results of poverty, the eighth explicitly recognises



that a global partnership is necessary for development. Table 3.1 lists the goals and each of the secondary targets.

**Table 3. 1: Millennium Development Goals and Targets**

<p>1. Halve Extreme Poverty and Hunger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day</li> <li>• Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people</li> <li>• <i>Reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger</i></li> </ul>	<p>5. Reduce Maternal Mortality by Three-Quarters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio</li> <li>• Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health</li> </ul>
<p>2. Achieve Universal Primary Education</p>	<p>6. Reverse the Spread of Diseases, especially HIV/AIDS and Malaria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS</li> <li>• Achieve, by 2010, universal access to treatment for HIV/AIDS for all those who need it</li> <li>• Halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases</li> </ul>
<p>3. Empower Women and Promote Equality Between Women and men</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015</li> </ul>	<p>7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources</li> <li>• Reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss</li> <li>• Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation</li> <li>• Achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020</li> </ul>
<p>4. Reduce Under-Five Mortality by Two-Thirds</p>	<p>8. Create a Global Partnership for Development with Targets for Aid, Trade and Debt Relief</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop further an open trading and financial system that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory, includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction—nationally and internationally</li> <li>• Address the least developed countries' special needs. This includes tariff- and quota-free access for their exports; enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries; cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to</li> </ul>

	<p>poverty reduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing States</li> <li>• Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems through national and international measures to make debt sustainable in the long term</li> <li>• In co-operation with the developing countries, develop decent and productive work for youth</li> <li>• In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries</li> <li>• In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies—especially information and communications technologies</li> </ul>
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Source: United Nations, 2008

### ***Strategies for Success***

In the original plan, the *Road Map towards the Implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration* (UN General Assembly, 2001), the UN provides an overall framework for reaching the goals including a focus on the international responsibility for improving peace, security and disarmament throughout the world as necessary for improving economic development and thus achieving the goals. The recommendations by the UN are premised by the need to increase international aid combined with programs focused on achieving each specific target.

The UN also published a document *The UN and the MDGs: A Core Strategy* (2002), one of only two documents that exist on the UNDP-MDG site that focus on the strategy for achieving the goals. According to this short ten-page report, partnership will be crucial for achieving the goals both at the global and country level with the help of monitoring, analysis, campaigning/ mobilisation and operational activities focused directly on the goals in order to contribute to their success, whereas the actual “strategy”

in this document is loosely defined. In terms of the strategy, the document supports the work of the Millennium Project as an instrument for success and the Global Millennium Campaign focused on increasing development assistance, trade opportunities, debt relief, technology transfer and other support needed to achieve the MDGs and in the process encourage broad-based partnerships (United Nations, 2002c).

In 2002, the UN Secretary General commissioned the Millennium Project (MP), lead by Jeffrey Sachs to develop a concrete action plan by 2005 so that the Millennium Development Goals would be met by their 2015 deadline. The Project was headed by Sachs and divided into ten task forces, each lead by an expert from the field to focus on different issues of poverty. The task forces came together in the end to write a consolidated report, *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals* (2005), more than 300 pages focused specifically on the MDGs and how they can be realised by 2015.

The recommendations made by the Millennium Project are based on a framework for long-term poverty reduction through sustained economic growth, focusing on technological advances and capital accumulation. The overall recommendations, propose that the goals will be best achieved through the adoption of country-driven national strategies complemented by an increase in official development assistance from western nations (Millennium Project, 2005).

The Project recommends a four-step approach for developing countries to tackle poverty and meet the MDGs. This approach includes mapping key dimensions and underlying dynamics of extreme poverty, undertaking a needs assessment to identify the specific public investments necessary to achieve the goals, the conversion of the needs

assessment into a 10-year framework for action and lastly, the creation of a 3-to-5-year MDG-based poverty reduction strategy with a 10-year framework (Millennium Project, 2005). Each strategy is tailored by the country itself to meet its specific needs.

The recommended framework for creating the plan and implementing the approach includes, among other initiatives, the creation of a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). PRSPs, as a means for achieving the goals, are supported by the UN (United Nations, 2002c) and the Project strongly encourages PRSPs to be used as a basis for these plans, yet it also identifies a strong need for their realignment specifically with the MDGs. According to the Project, PRSPs on their own rarely identify a plan ambitious or realistic enough to achieve these goals and therefore require adjustments such as longer term planning for success (Millennium Project, 2005; Sachs & McArthur, 2005). The MP sees a strong role for NGOs, the private sector and civil society in planning the MGD-poverty reduction strategies, while accompanied by a strong, willing and committed national government dedicated to investment and sound policies to orchestrate them. There are many details about various programs and policies that would be beneficial to achieving the goals but there are no details on how PRSPs should be specifically realigned.

Due to the overwhelming criticisms of PRSPs since they were instituted, combined with their recommendation for use to achieve the goals, it is a big omission by the Project to not address these issues. Most importantly, there is absolutely no mention by the Millennium Project of the macroeconomic framework issues surrounding PRSPs, the PRGF and how these unsuccessful policies and the systematic creation of the PRGF supported program could be reformed to better achieve the goals. The Project does

discuss the need for the IMF and the World Bank to align with the goals but does not address the specific changes that ought to be made or how important this will be for achieving the goals.

In support of the country-driven strategies, the Millennium Project also clearly states the necessity of increased development assistance to support governments instituting MDG plans. Developed countries who have repeatedly agreed to commit 0.7 percent of their GDP to official development assistance are encouraged to act on these past promises in order to help reach the MDGs. The pledge by world leaders to contribute this percentage to development assistance was first made in 1970 in a General Assembly Resolution and has since been reaffirmed on multiple occasions (Millennium Project, 2006), but has yet to be met by most countries. Of the 22 countries committed to this target, as of 2007, only four countries had met the goal. The Millennium Project has determined that if the commitment of 0.7 per cent were reached, there would be enough resources to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by the proposed end date. According to estimates, the total financing gap for low and middle income countries was \$73 billion in 2006 and will rise to \$135 billion in 2015 (Sachs & McArthur, 2005). However, from 2005 to 2006, there was actually an overall drop in official development assistance by 5.1 per cent (OECD, 2007) and then in 2007, the amount dropped another 8.4 per cent (OECD, 2008). With aid diminishing in these two years, most donors are far off the track to meet the target by 2015 and unless unprecedented increases are made in a short time, the level of development assistance necessary as quoted by the Millennium Project to achieve the MDGs, will not be met.

Official development assistance (ODA) is highlighted as one of the central means to meeting the Millennium Development Goals by allowing countries to break out of the poverty trap (Millennium Project, 2005). The poverty trap is the cycle that occurs when a country needs savings for reinvestment but extreme poverty inhibits families from saving. This is often compounded by low tax revenue, low foreign investment, high frequency of conflict, high population growth, and environmental degradation. These factors are all due to a lack of economic development that exists growth is impeded or even reversed (Sachs & McArthur, 2005). ODA can supposedly provide elements of the capital stock, such as infrastructure, human capital, and public administration above a minimum level necessary for self-sustaining economic growth. Although the positive effects of development assistance are debated (Bulir & Hamann, 2006; Clemens, Radelet, & Bhavnani, 2004; Eifert & Gelb, 2005; Gibson, Andersson, Ostrom, & Shivakumar, 2004; Kosack, 2003), the Project recommends that with a clearly outlined plan focused on achieving the MDGs, enough development assistance to support the projects, and supported by a willing and capable government countries should be able to achieve the Goals (Millennium Project, 2005).

The Millennium Project sees the PRSP as only one aspect of a multi-faceted approach by various organizations and levels of government. With the use of the PRSP, the guidelines, goals and methods of achieving the goals are laid out for groups to work together. The PRSP is not seen as the only way to consolidate the approach but rather that this method exists and it does not need to be reinvented to achieve the goals.

The PRSP is extremely important for consideration when looking at the ways countries will work towards the goals, because many of the programs and tasks that the

Millennium Project recommends will require financing for low-income countries do not have. PRSPs are a central means of accessing loan money to help finance the necessary means to achieve the goals.

Aside from the specific plans for achieving the MDGs, the goals are extremely significant for development because of their widespread acceptance, and also how they have dictated the targets for organizations and governments. The international community has for the most part embraced these goals, using them as the basis for projects to receive funding, giving general guidelines aligning governments and organizations towards a similar end.

While each of these goals is extremely important in the battle against poverty, for the purposes of this thesis, the last target of the first goal, halving the proportion of people experiencing hunger between 1990 and 2015, will be the point of the discussion from here on, focussing on the means and methods for its achievement.

## **MDG 1: Halving the Proportion of People Who Suffer from Hunger**

### *Background*

As mentioned previously, despite the reaffirmation to the World Food Summit goal in 2002 at the World Food Summit: Five Years Later, the MDGs were agreed upon in 2000 and seem to be taking precedence on the international stage. The WFS goal has not been directly abandoned as they are both aiming to reduce hunger but the MDG hunger target has the media and international attention.

It is important to realise the progression of international targets surrounding the issue of hunger alleviation. Over time, with each conference the ambition within each

goal has decreased significantly. This acknowledges the difficulty of alleviating hunger, yet it also allows for a greater acceptable number of hungry people in the world, a situation that we have the know-how and resources to remedy (Patel, 2009).

The MDG target of halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger clearly stems from the 1996 World Food Summit goal of cutting the number of hungry people by half. The wording is almost identical, save “proportion” versus “number”. As a result, it seems that throughout the literature, these two goals are seen to be the same. The wording is often interchanged and there is very little acknowledgement that the move from number to proportion sets the goal at 300 million less people to be free of hunger than with the WFS goal. As Pogge (2004) explains, as world population increases, the absolute number of hungry people may stay constant yet the proportion would then decrease. Therefore, by changing the word to proportion, the actual number of people who will be hungry in the world in 2015 (assuming the goal is met) will be more than if the WFS goal is achieved and therefore the Millennium Development target of cutting the number of hungry by half by 2015 is much less ambitious than the goal from which it stems.

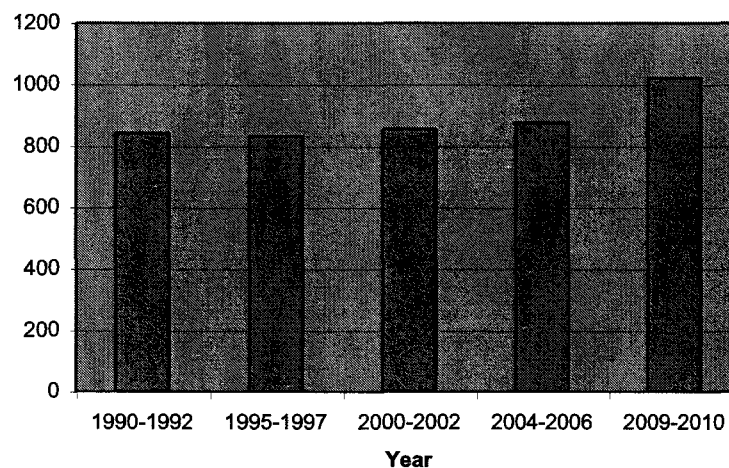
Secondly, Pogge also points out that the MDG target uses 1990 as a baseline instead of the year 2000, the year the target was established. This is significant because between 1990 and 2000, the population increased while the number of hungry people decreased, meaning that the goal was already well on its way to being achieved prior to the goal’s creation. In fact, the proportion of hungry was reduced by 35 percent between 1990 and 2000, leaving only 15 percent to be further reduced for the goal to be met (FAO, 2009b).

Given these two points, Pogge has calculated that the MDG goal of cutting hunger by half by 2015 will be achieved with a 19 per cent or 210.5 million reduction in the



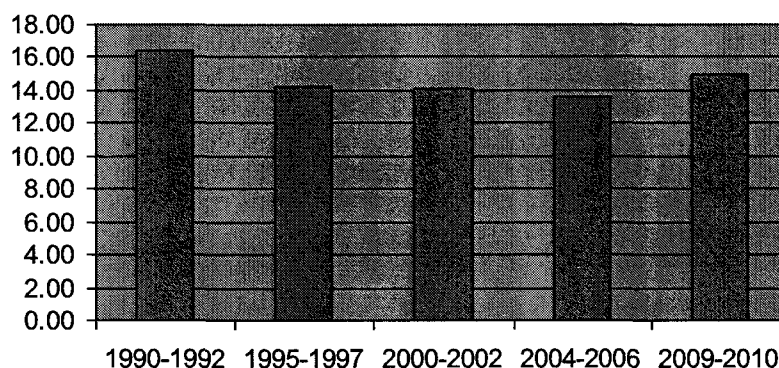
number of people who were hungry in the year 2000 by 2015. This is opposed to the WFS goal, which would have reduced the number of hungry people by 545.55 million (Pogge, 2004). Overall, this highlights that the change in wording from ‘number’ to ‘proportion’ sets the target more than 300 million less than the WFS goal. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 show worldwide hunger levels increasing for the most part compared to the proportion of hungry people in the world and decreasing as a result of the increases in world population until 2009-2010 where the increase in hunger has outstripped the increase in population growth.

**Figure 3. 1: Number of Hungry People Worldwide 1990-2010**



Source: FAO, 2009b

**Figure 3. 2: Proportion of Hungry People Worldwide 1990-2010**



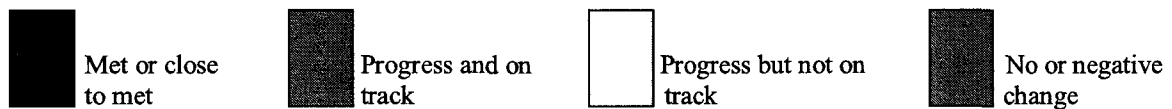
Source: FAO, 2009b

### *Status of the Target*

Despite setting the MDG target much lower than WFS goal, the new target is not likely to be achieved. The current status of the goal is somewhat debated due to the difficulty of measuring hunger as mentioned in the previous chapter, but the number of people considered to be hungry in the world has increased to more than 1 billion people as a result of the world food crisis and the global economic crisis in the last few years. In 2009 to 2010, food prices worldwide have dropped considerably after the record highs of 2008 (United Nations, 2009b) but the effects of the world economic crisis has continued to exacerbate hunger levels, in particular as these food price decreases did not filter into local markets in developing countries. Table 3.2 provides a chart from the Millennium Development Goal Report Chart in 2009 reporting the levels of hunger in different regions throughout the world as well as the direction in which they have been moving.

**Table 3. 2 The Status of Reducing Hunger by Half, by Region**

Africa		Asia				Oceania	Latin American & Caribbean	Commonwealth of Independent States	
Northern	Sub-Saharan	Eastern	South-Eastern	Southern	Western			Europe	Asia
	Very High Hunger	Moderate Hunger	High Hunger	High Hunger	Moderate Hunger	Moderate Hunger	Moderate Hunger		Moderate Hunger



Source: United Nations, 2009a<sup>11</sup>

### Summary

With only a few years left to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, it seems very unlikely that the world will come together to solve world hunger or even reduce the proportion of hungry by half. Despite this, it is important to evaluate where the process of hunger alleviation has come from and where it currently is, in order to attempt to help guide the future path to more success than we have seen until now. We can only hope that as the time-objective of the goals approach, the international community is working towards developing a new plan to reduce hunger, acknowledging the past mistakes and potential future paths.

In any case, PRSPs are seen as the central means for tackling all of the Millennium Development Goals. In this chapter and in Chapter Two, it has been shown that PRSPs can actually be linked to undermining poverty and thus result in increased hunger.

<sup>11</sup> This is most recent data available.

Neoliberalism has a long history of being intertwined in development and there are few signs of the IFIs embracing an alternative paradigm.

With all of this in mind, the following chapter explores the process of developing a PRSP for Ethiopia and documents the integration of groups focused on hunger alleviation and the resulting PRSP. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to correlate the policies or implementation of the PRSP to the actual level of hunger in the country. The thesis will then conclude by analysing the framework of the PRSP, the process of crafting the document and whether it represents the holistic approach advocated by stakeholders and tailored to the Ethiopian context.

*The agricultural sector remains our Achilles heel and source of vulnerability  
...Nonetheless, we remain convinced that agricultural based development remains the  
only source of hope for Ethiopia.*

*- Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi 2000*

#### **CHAPTER 4: The Case Study: Ethiopia**

The Ethiopian PRSP, entitled the *Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP)* implemented from 2006 to 2009/10 has been chosen as the focus for the case study. The process of crafting the PRSP will be examined, how stakeholder perspectives were incorporated into the resulting PRSP as well as how the economic policies of the PRSP differ (if at all) from standard PRGF prescription. As mentioned in the methodology section in Chapter 1, Ethiopia was chosen for this case study for several reasons, including the fact that the most recent PRSP instituted between 2006 and 2009/10 was the second PRSP adopted by the country, allowing for the opportunity to address past problems with the initial PRSP, in theory leading to a better use of the PRSP framework. Second, as a result of the high rates of poverty within the country, there exists a high necessity to address hunger; and third because the federal government of Ethiopia has made overt commitments to lowering the rates of hunger and thus this PRSP might act as one of the better cases of a PRSP focused on hunger alleviation because this focus already aligns with the government's commitments.

This chapter will begin with a very short historical background of Ethiopia to provide some context as well as a section describing Ethiopia's current development

indicators. At which point, I will delve into the background, process and outcome of the PRSP.

### **Background on Ethiopia**

Ethiopia is one of the oldest countries in the world, ruled independently for centuries under a monarch. It was one of the few countries in Africa to retain its borders during Africa's division. Colonized in 1936 by Italy and liberated with the help of the British in 1941 who recognized full sovereignty for Ethiopia without any special privileges.

The monarch continued to rule until 1974, when it was overthrown by a Marxist coup. The switch in government was fraught with problems, compounded with drought, food shortages, civil discontent and a large refugee problem (Asefa, 2003). In 1991, the government was pressured to step down and a transitional government took over.

In 1994, elections were held and since this time, Ethiopia continues to hold multi-party federal elections. Although there is much debate surrounding the level of democracy that exists and issues of corruption, Ethiopia has been accepted as a UN member state and seems to be actively working towards economic and social development.

The current ruling party's Marxist origins began as a rural-based resistance movement and therefore contribute to the government's commitment to equity and poverty reduction.

### ***Current Situation of Poverty and Hunger***

Poverty is extreme in Ethiopia. Overall gross domestic product (GDP) for 2010 was \$30.94 billion or \$1000 per capita, ranking Ethiopia at 216 out of 227 or the 11<sup>th</sup> poorest country in the world (CIA, 2011). Life expectancy throughout the country hovers at 55 years while the median age is just less than 17 years old and the literacy rate is approximately 43 percent. Together, these statistics show a country with a very young, undereducated population that is more often than not living in extreme poverty. It is unclear as to whether the level of chronic poverty is increasing or decreasing in Ethiopia and in fact may appear to have been fairly constant since 1992. According to Brown and Teshome (2007), the same assessment shows that while rural poverty has possibly decreased one to two percent, increases in urban poverty seem to have offset these improvements.

The rural poor in Ethiopia tend to be landless with little education. They are more likely to be women, elderly or young and to have large extended families with many children, headed by adults that are incapable of working. Urban poverty is also characterized by a lack of education and skills, but also the inability to access credit or savings, thereby limiting the ability to create small enterprises.

Many Ethiopians who are not chronically poor are nevertheless very close to it and thus prone to be drastically affected by shocks. Ethiopia is a country with a history of shocks including periodic and severe droughts, pervasive devastating illnesses and both internal and external conflicts. These factors reinforce and increase chronic poverty (Brown and Teshome, 2007).

From 1998 to 2007, GDP growth rates varied dramatically with rates as low as negative 3.3 percent in 2002/03 to 11.9 percent in 2003/04 (MoFED, 2006). Through these changes, poverty remains high, in particular in rural households with 38 percent living below the food poverty line (Robertson, O'Loughlin, & Hoogendoorn, 2010). According to the World Food Programme, in 2010 over 5 million Ethiopians were affected by hunger, much as a result of the doubling of food prices between 2005 and 2009 (World Food Programme, 2009). More recently, in March 2011, Ethiopia's Central Statistical Agency announced that the consumer price index was 25 percent higher than the previous year, following a 16.5 percent increase in February and a food inflation rate of 5.8 percent (Heinlein, 2011b).

Deputy Director Ysin Mosa was quoted saying that these figures are the highest they have seen since October 2009. The price increases are despite price ceilings set by government on a number of basic food items and as a result the government has had to take over the sale of staples such as cooking oil and sugar (Heinlein, 2011b).

"The Ethiopian economy is characterized by widespread poverty, rugged terrain, skewed distribution of population and inadequate road network and transport services. This has resulted in weak spatial integration, predominance of rural settlements in isolation from one another and low economic activity" (MoFED, 2006, p. 130).

### ***Agriculture and Trade in Ethiopia***

The basis of the Ethiopian economy has always been agriculture, which accounts for 45 percent of GDP and 85 percent of employment (MoFED & United Nations Country Team, 2004). Overall exports for the country are US \$1.657 billion with the main exports being coffee, qat, gold, leather products, live animals and oilseeds.



Despite agriculture being a mainstay of the Ethiopian economy, reliance on agriculture is unstable as there are many barriers to its sustainability. At the moment there is much deforestation, overgrazing, soil erosion and desertification that, combined with intermittent rainfall, negatively affects farm productivity. The former factors are related to land stewardship practices and in theory can be managed but the lack of a sustainable, reliable source of water makes it very difficult for the economic development plan to be heavily reliant upon agricultural activities. Droughts have a history of heavily characterizing the level of Ethiopian hardship. From 2007 to 2010, Ethiopia experienced two major droughts affecting over 6 million people (Robertson et al., 2010).

Between 1976 and 1991, all rain-fed lands in the highlands were confiscated and redistributed among all rural households (Devereux, Teshome, & Sabates-Wheeler, 2005). The government assumed ownership from rural elite and the church. Smallholders also lost their ownership of the land but continued to retain use rights. According to Devereux (2005), the land redistribution was a political success but an economic failure. This period is remembered for its militarization, war and repression combined with the worst African famine of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as the development programs including villagization, state farms and forced resettlement did not produce the expected agricultural results. Today people facing chronic poverty tend to be landless or with little land. Per capita cultivated land has decreased from 0.5 hectares in the 1960s to only 0.11 hectares in 1999 (Brown & Teshome, 2007).

Regardless of the barriers to agriculture and the exact causes of poverty within the country, agriculture continues to dominate the government's development strategy and the way of life in Ethiopia, and is thus central to this discussion.

## **PRSPs in Ethiopia**

According to the Ethiopian Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED) (2004), their goal is to build a free-market system that will enable the economy to develop rapidly, rescue the country from their dependence on food aid and stimulate a process of pro-poor economic growth.

Over the last 10 years, poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) have been seen as the main policy documents to catalyze these kinds of large-scale changes (Millennium Project, 2005). The development of the PRSP allows the country to access international resources, which are awarded as loans for the implementation of the strategy. As well, with the development of the Ethiopian PRSP combined with the country's poor financial situation, they were approved for Highly Indebted Poor Country status and thus were able to reduce their debt burden from previous loans.

To date, two PRSPs have been implemented: (1) the Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP) from 2001 to 2006; (2) the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) from 2006 to 2009/10. Instituted in 2001, the SDPRP became the guiding document for the country's poverty reduction and economic development and was followed up by the PASDEP in 2006. The PASDEP built on the strategies of the SDPRP and allowed the stakeholders to reflect on the past five years of implementation. Currently in mid-2011, as the PASDEP has come to an end, the process for the next PRSP is already underway with the expectation that it will be agreed upon and enter into the implementation stage within the year.

During SDPRP, the implementation of programs within both major economic and social sectors was promising. According to MoFED (2006), SDPRP provided the public with improved services in poverty-oriented sectors, infrastructure, agricultural development and food security. The Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) Strategy, among the central pillars of SDPRP was used as a means to accelerate and expand industrial development and increase overall economic growth (MoFED, 2006).<sup>12</sup> According to the SDPRP (2002:13), “ADLI is a strategy in which agriculture and industry are brought into a single framework, wherein the development of agriculture is viewed as an important vehicle for industrialisation by providing raw material, a market base, surplus labour and capital accumulation”. The ADLI framework characterized the Ethiopian development strategy from 1991 to the end of the SDPRP in 2005. The ADLI focused on the development of the rural sector through the enhancement of smallholder agriculture and industrialization while using domestic raw materials and the adoption of labour-intensive technology. The ADLI is based upon the belief that expanding the market for domestic manufacturing will lead to increased incomes for smallholders. According to Teshome (2006), this strategy recognized the connections between agriculture and other sectors, although by the time PASDEP was adopted and ADLI was moved to the background, it had not led to any notable impacts.

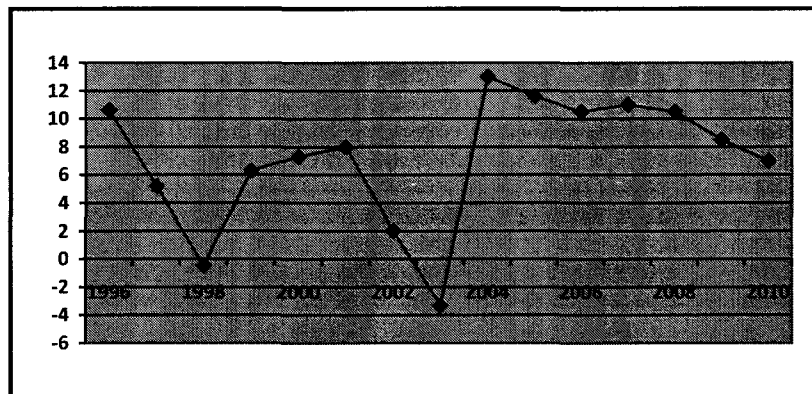
Figure 4.1 shows the changes in GDP growth over the time period of both PRSPs (2001 to 2010). The drought of 2002-03 clearly affected the Ethiopian Economy as growth fell to a negative 3.3 percent (MoFED, 2006) but the economy bounced back

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<sup>12</sup> The three other pillars of the SDPRP are (1) decentralization and empowerment; (2) justice system and civil service reform and; (3) capacity building for public and private sector.

reaching growth rates of well over 10 percent, although they have been steadily declining since.

**Figure 4.1: GDP Growth Rate in Ethiopia 1996-2010**



Sources: Dercon, 2000; CIA, 2011 and World Bank, 2011

After the apparent successes of the SDPRP, the government moved forward to adopt PASDEP as the next stage for development in Ethiopia. The evaluation of the PASDEP will be the focus of the remainder of this chapter, although the specifics of the SDPRP will also be referenced to show the evolution of the development plan where it is relevant to the discussion.

### **The Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty (PASDEP)**

After a consultation process and the opportunity for stakeholders to review the document, the PASDEP was debated in Parliament for two weeks before being officially adopted as the defining national strategy for the country.

Throughout the negotiation of the original PRSP (the SDPRP) it was decided that the main development objective of the Ethiopian government would be poverty

eradication with two dimensions of poverty being identified, both income and non-income (MoFED, 2006).

### ***PASDEP Overview***

The strategy adopted during the PASDEP planned to build on the approach used during the SDPRP. The focus will continue to improve education, health service provision, prevalence of HIV/AIDS, food security, capacity building and decentralization (MoFED, 2006). According to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED, 2006), the ADLI strategy will be enhanced to diversify and commercialize agriculture.

Ethiopia's strategy for the PASDEP period consisted of the following eight pillars:

- Building all-inclusive implementation capacity, including strengthening democratic institutions, civil service reform, justice system reform, *woreda*<sup>13</sup> level capacity, technology development and supporting the construction sector;
- A massive push to accelerate growth;
- Creating the balance between economic development and population growth;
- Unleashing the potentials of Ethiopia's women;
- Strengthening the infrastructure backbone of the country;
- Strengthening human resource development;
- Managing risk and volatility of human, economic and fiscal management; and,

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<sup>13</sup> *Woreda* is an administrative division of Ethiopia (managed by a local government), equivalent to a district. Woredas are composed of a number of *Kebele*, or neighbourhood associations, the smallest unit of local government in Ethiopia.

- Creating employment opportunities. (MoFED, 2006, p. 46)

Through these eight pillars, the PASDEP claims to address the core factors involved, including healthcare, issues specifically related to children, education, agriculture, poverty, population growth, gender equality, human rights, civil service reform, justice system reform, specifically targeting livelihoods in pastoral communities, infrastructure, focusing on tourism, mining, urban and rural development, privatization, and decentralization.

The combination of these goals alongside their prescribed methods for achievement represents an evolution with new policy directions, and as a result should be seen increasingly as the overarching policy framework in Ethiopia.

Much of the success of this plan depends on accelerated and sustained growth, as outlined within the PASDEP. The average growth during SDPRP, factoring in the major decline in 2002-03 was still more than 6 percent. One of the main factors contributing to the vulnerability of future growth projections stems from the dependence on the variable rain-fed agriculture that occurs in Ethiopia. The drought that occurred in 2002-03 was responsible for the economic downturn that year and the fact that Ethiopia is particularly prone to drought is an important factor to keep in mind through the following pages as we outline the specifics of the PASDEP.

According to Teshome (2006), “this new document [the PASDEP] has intensified the debate on agriculture both locally and internationally”.

### ***Export for Growth – The Main Driving Force***

The adoption of the PASDEP meant for a continuation of many of the policies of the SDPRP except for the role agriculture would play in the development strategy. To

tackle the poverty in Ethiopia, the PASDEP describes sustained economic growth as the solution to be accelerated by two main thrusts (1) the commercialization of agriculture and (2) accelerating private sector development (MoFED, 2006, p. 46).

Within the PASDEP the development of market-based agricultural development (or the commercialization of agriculture) is defined by a strategy that will support the strengthening of marketable farm products for domestic and international markets. Other elements include shifting to higher-value crops, export crops, investing in high-yielding areas, and better integration of farmers into markets.

The PASDEP states that agriculture plays a significant role in both the social and economic development of the country, yet the benefits have not been reaped as a result of natural and man-made causes. The approach to development is based on the concept that the natural resources of the country are conducive to agricultural development and if this resource was harnessed, this would enable the people of Ethiopia to be drawn out of poverty (MoFED, 2006, p. 67).

To move towards the commercialization of agriculture the PASDEP outlines the following as necessary to ensure success:

- Constructing farm-to-market roads;
- Development of agricultural credit markets,
- Specialized extension services for differentiated agricultural zones and types of commercial agriculture;
- The development of national business plans and tailored packages for specialized export crops (such as spices, cut flowers, fruits and vegetables);
- Supporting small-scale irrigation and area irrigation through multi-purpose dams;

- Measures to improve land tenure security, and to make land available where feasible for large-scale commercial farming;
- Reforms to improve the availability of fertilizer and seeds; and,
- Better-functioning agricultural markets for both inputs and outputs, and institutions, including improved value chains, information flows, quality and standards support, and cooperatives that strengthen the position of farmers in the market. (MoFED, 2006, p. 47)

This new agricultural strategy is presented with the PASDEP as a progression of ADLI, while changing the focus of the strategy. Yet, according to Devereux (2010) the PASDEP's move towards large-scale agricultural commercialization is a departure from the ADLI strategy, which saw farmers as drivers of growth in agriculture and the economy. Under this new strategy, private enterprise is seen as producing crops for export to raise the country's GDP.

### *Subsistence Agriculture*

Despite the shift away from ADLI, the PASDEP recognizes that the strategy for commercializing agriculture must also work towards improvements in subsistence farming, as for several million households improvements in welfare in the medium term will come from achieving higher yields. The benefits of globalization must balance with minimizing the associated risks. The strategies for commercializing agriculture will be based on the comparative advantage and development activities on agricultural land will be allocated accordingly.

By “[s]ecuring accelerated and sustained development of the agricultural sector through the transformation of the subsistence agriculture to market- oriented development



will also guarantee the sector's contribution to the attainment of the millennium development goals” (MoFED, 2006, p. 67).

While acknowledging the importance of subsistence agriculture and the importance of working towards market-oriented development, the PASDEP also considers the prevalence of subsistence agriculture as the ‘major impediment’ to agricultural development (MoFED, 2006, p. 67). This suggests the perceived limitations of small scale farming to contribute to development. Although it is not explicitly stated, one can assume that there is the belief that small acreage farming has increased vulnerabilities and smaller yields, and that it lacks the potential of becoming more market-oriented. Although contentious, there is much research that actually shows that smaller plot, more intensive agriculture actually has the ability to out-produce industrial farms (Horrigan, Lawrence, & Walker, 2002; Muhammad-Lawal, 2007; Rosset, 2000). With small scale agriculture seen as an impediment, this also reflects the government’s view that it is inferior to agriculture being sold in the market because it does not contribute to GDP, generate foreign exchange, or create income.

Although the PASDEP will support the small-scale farmers in the short or medium term, as an impediment to agricultural development this is not perceived as a long-term strategy for growth. The transition towards commercializing agriculture will also see a move towards encouraging the consolidation of land for farming and a more industrial model. This will be discussed in the coming pages under changes in land management.

### *Diversification of Exports*

The diversification of exports is mentioned within the PASDEP, with the intention of working towards reducing the reliance on coffee and by diversifying to more

traditional and non-traditional exports. Despite the volatility of coffee, it is expected to continue as the country's main export in the medium term. The other core agricultural products focused upon in the PASDEP include cereals, oil seeds, pulse, fiber crops, fruits, vegetable, coffee, tea and spices. The intention of the PASDEP is to raise export earnings from goods and services to 15 to 20 percent of GDP (MoFED, 2006, p. 48). Table 4.1 shows the expected increases that will be needed to achieve this result.

**Table 4. 1: Ethiopian Agriculture and Export Goals (under PASDEP)**

	<b>Start of PASDEP (2006)</b>	<b>End of PASDEP (expected) (2009/2010)</b>
<b>Agriculture</b>		
Growth of agricultural value added (%)	13.4	Period average of 6.2%per annum
% Share of agriculture & allied activities in GDP	46.2	43.9
Major crops production (million tons)	16.7	38.2 (level by end of 2009/10)
Meat production (1,000 metric tons)	566	837 (level by end of 2009/10)
Meat export (1,000 metric tons)	8	62 (level by end of 2009/10)
<b>Export</b>		
Revenue generated from agricultural exports (in US\$ millions)	546	1,515
Revenue generated from industrial export (leather and leather products) (in US\$ millions)	63.73	500
Revenue generated from mining (in million Birr)	20	44.7

Source: MoFED, 2006, p. 55

Diversification of both traditional and non-traditional export crops is intended to reduce shocks from price fluctuations in globalized markets and to make the economy more resilient to situations such as the outbreak of a crop disease.

As an example, the cut flower industry is one of the non-traditional agricultural export products Ethiopia will be using to diversify. In the PASDEP, it mentions

intensifying flower production in areas 1600-2600 meters above sea level with 2000 hectares to go towards producing flowers and to accelerate market-led development. It is also expected that this will create 70 000 new jobs (MoFED, 2006, p. 154), although it does not specify whether these jobs will go to local Ethiopians.

In less than a decade Ethiopia has become the fifth largest non-EU exporter to the EU cut-flower market and as of 2007 has become the second largest exporter from Africa (Gebreeyesus & Iizuka, 2010). According to Obole (2008), there are currently 60 flower farms in Ethiopia today and more than half of them are owned and run by foreigners. Obole explains how the growth of the flower sector impacts Ethiopia's rural poor:

Aduna Workneh, father of five, lives across bunches of flower farms near Menagesha town. Officials from the government and flower farms came and talked to him in person. "They told me I'll benefit much better if we sell my land. Though I rejected it, they still try to convince me." Aduna has four hectares of land where he grows crops to feed his family. He was offered up to 70,000 Birr but he says "this amount of money doesn't last long whereas my farm land feeds me for the rest of my life." (Obole, 2008)

Aduna describes the flower industry in his community by indicating that only a few members of the community have become employed and the majority are people who have come from other places. He also says that many of the greenhouses now cover indigenous trees and eucalyptus where they used to collect

firewood. He sees no benefit to these flower farms in his community (Obole, 2008).

While this is only one example of some of the effects, it only shows a situation that may have some positive outcomes such as foreign investment and job creation but concurrently has negative impacts on the community. With fifty percent of the profits leaving the country through foreign ownership, the jobs being outsourced and the land being used, where is the promised poverty alleviation?

### ***Integrating in Global Markets***

Although agricultural commercialization is by far the most discussed element of the PASDEP, in this section other aspects of liberalization highlighted by the PASDEP are presented to give a more complete view of the policy framework.

The integration in global markets is directly tied to agricultural commercialization as a means to profit and increase foreign currency. This aspect of the strategy is explicitly discussed as a priority in the PASDEP.

Constraints to integration were assessed and an Action Plan developed for implementation. The Action Plan prescribes the following actions:

1. *Revamping the privatization program to bring about greater private participation in trade and industrial activities;*
2. Strengthening capacity with adequate management and technical expertise on trade issues, including negotiators' skills;
3. Ensuring the legal and regulatory framework is conducive to attracting FDI and strengthening the institutional capacity of support organizations;

4. *Strengthening the management of the present land lease system to make land more affordable, accessible, and enhancing tenure security;*
5. Implementing the Trade Practice Proclamation (TTP) to establish healthy competitive environment by creating the necessary institutional arrangements to ensure both public and private enterprises are engaged in fair trade practices with the establishment of an Investigation Commission, and training of officials and judiciary to enforce the competition framework;
6. *WTO [World Trade Organization] accession, including trade facilitation; and,*
7. Providing better access to services (water, power, irrigation, roads, telecommunication) through more efficient utilization of existing infrastructure and building new capacity; and to promote public-private partnerships in infrastructure development for industrial development and speeding up implementation of industrial zones. (MoFED, 2006)

Many of these points are not discussed further within the PASDEP document than as mentioned here in this list but implications of a few are important to highlight.

Alongside the commercialization of agriculture, the PASDEP also identifies the acceleration of private sector development as an important thrust for development.

In terms of accelerating privatization, the PASDEP is clear to articulate that this changing role of the state does not mean that the state will be removed from all involvement but rather in places where the market can suffice, as the government's role is to step in where it is either too risky or not profitable to do so. As well, the government will ensure that the most impoverished still receive access to services even if they are run for-profit. The PASDEP indicates that committing to increasing private investment

through the creation of a favourable investment climate, acceleration of privatization as well as improved land lease management is crucial to help stimulate the economy.

The PASDEP details that privatization had been stalled until 2005 but the Privatization and Public Enterprise Supervising Authority (PPESA) has outlined the following strategy included in the PASDEP:

1. Commitment to a market-oriented, transparent and competitive bidding process;
2. Speeding up privatization transactions by increasing capacity and by providing more discretion for sale at market offered prices;
3. A sale process that allows the successful bidder flexibility to restructure the labor force of the enterprise; and
4. Introduction of a voluntary separation package to mitigate the social impact of possible labor restructuring.

During the PASDEP, the pace of privatization of public enterprises will be accelerated using different modalities such as leases, management contracts, joint ventures, and the sale of public enterprises.

According to the PASDEP, the strengthening of the present land lease system will make land more affordable, accessible and enhance tenure security, thereby contributing to a more favourable private investment climate. This includes streamlining access to land for businesses and securing land leases.

By integrating in global markets, and encouraging private investment through improving the investment climate, encouraging privatization and improving land lease management the intention is to strengthen the perception that Ethiopia has the potential to

make money for private investment. By encouraging investors both from outside and within the country it is hoped that it will help stimulate the economy and create jobs. Privatization and opening the country to foreign investment are both components of a trade liberalization strategy.

### *World Trade Organization Membership*

Joining the World Trade Organization is another important component of the global integration strategy. WTO accession has been on the Ethiopian agenda since 2003 and but was stalled because of the Ethiopian government's restrictions on trade and investment; the case has only been re-opened again. Acceptance into the WTO would help facilitate the integration of the economy into the international trading system, and provide access to markets.

In February of 2011, Ethiopia entered into discussions with the WTO to find a compromise between Ethiopia's refusal to open sectors such as banking and telecommunications to foreign competition and the WTO open trade regime. Ethiopia is looking for consideration of their economic position as a Least Developed Country (LDC) (Heinlein, 2011a). It is impossible to determine how this situation will unfold, as it is still in the negotiation process but it is likely that if Ethiopia does in fact want access to the WTO, they will have to lessen their restrictions on these mentioned areas.

The result of joining the WTO would be that Ethiopia would lose much of its agency regarding establishing tariffs, trade barriers and trade rules in general (Rosset, 2006). Tariff reforms have already been changing on an ongoing basis as Ethiopia attempts to align with the WTO (Fekadu, 2007).

Although the PASDEP does not get into the details of joining the WTO, this is extremely significant in terms of trade liberalization and the economic reforms that will be adopted. Even if there are some negotiations in the beginning, Ethiopia will have to find common ground with the WTO to be accepted. As well, this only facilitates further changes in the coming years. The WTO has the potential to impose the ultimate trade liberalization policies, including cutting government investment in Ethiopia, unifying exchange rates, devaluing currencies, eliminating import quotas and barriers,<sup>14</sup> privatizing state banks and other enterprises, reducing or eliminating subsidies including social services and price supports for farmers (Rosset, 2006).

Rosset (2006) mentions the possibility of currency devaluation through compliance with the WTO and although there is no mention of currency devaluation directly in the PASDEP, Ethiopia recently underwent a devaluation of 16.7 percent in September 2010 (Larson & Saragovi, 2010), the fourth devaluation since January 2009 (Malone, 2010). There are various speculations as to what the government wanted to achieve through the devaluation, from curbing high inflation, promoting exports or as an import substitution strategy – or all of the above (Larson & Saragovi, 2010).<sup>15</sup> Standard theory on devaluation dictates that devaluation is used to reduce the costs of exports, thus gaining foreign currency while decreasing the price of exports as a result of the currency being

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<sup>14</sup> According to Fekadu (2007), tariff levels and dispersion have already been reduced significantly in Ethiopia.

<sup>15</sup> Although Larson and Saragovi (2010) cite curbing high inflation as a possible reason for currency devaluation, it is more likely the case that the high inflation is a result of the currency devaluations as Ethiopia's economy is heavily dependent on imports and domestic substitutes are not available.



worth less. This encourages domestic buying and international selling both of which contribute to more money residing in the economy as well as outside currency coming in.

There is also the risk that the devaluation could cause inflation, which hit a high in Ethiopia of 64.2 percent in July 2008 (Malone, 2010) but regardless, devaluation is one aspect of a trade liberalization strategy as it enhances exports by reducing their prices on world markets.

While the growth strategy detailed in the preceding pages clearly shows liberalization undertones, the details of the analysis will be described in the final chapter. The following section shows a much different approach targeted directly at the poorer portions of the population, specifically targeting hunger and food insecurity.

### ***Policies for Addressing Hunger - The National Food Security Programme (NFSP)***

Alongside the policies and strategies discussed thus far, human development is also central to the PASDEP. As a result, the PASDEP also focuses on improving education and literacy, healthcare, access to safe water and sanitation reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS, improving food security and nutrition and housing conditions (MoFED, 2006, p. 52). While the PASDEP focuses on all of these human development factors, this section will specifically focus on the measures within the document directed towards improving food security.

The Ethiopian Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (2004) believes that the combination of variable rainfall and high levels of hunger render the country

particularly vulnerable to famine. As a result, hunger is a top priority. The goals relating to decreasing hunger during the PASDEP period are described in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: Ethiopian Poverty and Welfare Targets (under PASDEP)**

Poverty/Welfare	Base Line (2004/05)	PASDEP Target (2009-10)
Total poverty head count (%)	39	29
Food poverty head count (%)	38	28

Source: MoFED, 2006, p. 55

Within the PASDEP, it is the intention that the on-going ADLI strategy will be used to address the structural problems relating to hunger. Food self-sufficiency will be encouraged, food security programming will meet the needs of those who are not reached otherwise and meanwhile increasing production of raw materials and other inputs will lead to increased foreign exchange and an improved industrial sector (MoFED, 2006, p. 150). This is to be achieved by reducing the volatility of production, increasing off-farm income opportunities and voluntary resettlement to more productive areas.

The National Food Security Programme (NFSP) is also intended to address decreases in food production and income fluctuations related to hunger. The program aims to provide sustainable solutions and reduce vulnerability and variability in crop production and food availability through

more irrigation and water control, diversification of crops, and better integration of markets, transport, and information links; maintenance of macroeconomic stability; expansion of off-farm employment and income-earning opportunities, and better functioning credit markets; provision of improved health services and nutrition;

introduction of innovative measures, such as experiments with crop and weather-based insurance mechanisms (MoFED, 2006, p. 93).

### *Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP)*

The Productive Safety Net Programme was launched during the SDPRP and continues in the PASDEP. The program employs the poor to build infrastructure in difficult times, yet also provides free distributions to orphans, the elderly and others who cannot work (MoFED, 2006, p. 6). According to the PASDEP, many food insecure households are resource poor, affected by drought or degraded land and the focus on agriculture may not solve their food insecurity. For these reasons, the government sees it as important to promote non-agricultural activities.

For many of these issues the PSNP has an alternative approach where they offer labour-intensive public works and direct support for labour-poor households. Those able to work are employed in public works and paid a minimum amount while those who are unable are provided the same amount for free. This is a change in the past program where food was exchanged for work. This change is a result of a new understanding that being paid in currency allows the individual or family to use that money in other ways other than only food, including as potential investment in their land and/or assets for the future. The direct support for labour-poor households means that the households do not have to work to receive the benefits of the program when they are unable in order not to exclude the disabled, elderly or sick.

During the PASDEP period, the PSNP seeks to increase access to food for five million people who are chronically food insecure and ten million more during drought years. Despite the scale of the program, unfortunately the PSNP does not reach all

chronically food insecure households (T. Brown & Teshome, 2007). Regardless, according to Brown (2007), the program does achieve some of the goals as 75 percent of households surveyed consumed more or better food and 94 percent of these households attribute this to the program. As well, three out of five avoided having to sell assets during a food shortage, 36 percent avoided having to use savings and in both cases 90 percent felt as though the PSNP produced positive outcomes (T. Brown & Teshome, 2007, p. 24).

### *Building Sustainable Household Assets*

The Building Sustainable Household Assets program is specifically focused on subsistence households. The program provides skills and information through technological packages for farmers to help develop the government's rural development strategy (MoFED, 2006, p. 210).

These technological packages are distributed to households to enhance livestock and crop productivity, conserve moisture, develop natural resources, training, support for additional income-generating activities and market information. These activities are also apparently supported by a credit facility for some households. The government sees this as the sustainable means to overcome food insecurity for subsistence households by training these farmers to improve returns from their land.

### *Voluntary Resettlement*

The under-utilized land resources mentioned previously will be drawn upon through a voluntary resettlement program. According to the PASDEP, this will help disperse people from densely populated areas, reduce land degradation and provide food security

for the resettled populations. Until the beginning of the PASDEP, 440 000 households or 2.2 million people had been resettled, another 1.1 million will be resettled during the PASDEP (MoFED, 2006, p. 95).

Resettlement is voluntary and each household is given a start-up package consisting of two hectares of fertile land, seeds, oxen, hand tools, utensils and food rations to last the first eight months. Program participants are also provided with access to social infrastructure such as clean water, health post, feeder road and logistical support.

According to the PASDEP, a majority of settlers have become food self-sufficient and their livelihoods have improved but in outside research there are accounts showing that some of the settlers have not succeeded or there have been unexpected complications (Heinlein, 2011b).

One of the main problems faced by settlers is conflict with the pastoral population. The ‘underutilized’ land is, in fact, often grazing land for livestock and when the land becomes settled there is a high danger of conflict with pastoralists (Heinlein, 2011b), which should not be a surprise with 12 to 15 million pastoralists in the country (MoFED, 2006, p. 191). The PASDEP does look to securing the constitutional right of pastoralists not to be displaced from their own land but concurrently the government is reaching out to pastoralists in a way that may encourage them to become more stationary. For example, “Technical support through extension services will be given to pastoralists to encourage them to practice agricultural activities side by side with their regular activities through the introduction of small-scale irrigation” (MoFED, 2006, p. 70). Irrigation equipment, whether wells or rain water catchment infrastructure, are not easily transported. As according to an Ethiopian pastoralist:

The Government wants to settle us, to turn us into farmers. But we look at the problems of the farmers in the highlands and we ask why the Government hasn't solved their problems. Every year millions of tons of food aid goes to those farmers, who are supposed to be growing their own food. Does the Government want to turn us into beggars like them? (Pastoralist from Somali Region, quoted in Devereux 2004, p. 9)

At the same time, it should be recognized that purely through the analysis of the PASDEP there are a number of ways that the government is attempting to extend the food security and poverty reduction programming to pastoralists in such a way that they will benefit, including establishing Pastoral Affairs Standing Committee in the Parliament, and a Pastoralist Area Development Department (PADD) and Inter-Ministerial Board under the Ministry of Federal Affairs, developing education systems that meet their needs and as well, developing technology packages and programs for both subsistence farmers and pastoralists alike throughout the PASDEP.

#### *Non-Agricultural Activities*

The last portion of the NFSP focuses on households that are not directly tied to agricultural activities and will work to support activities that will contribute to the sustained development of the community and the individual. These activities may include strengthening market effectiveness, credit services through micro-finance; establishing marketing coops; water resource development; among other cultural, nutritional and agriculturally related projects.

It is also realized that although the Food Security Program targets the most geographically at-risk areas of the country, there inevitably will remain very poor

households in *woredas* that are not targeted under the program, and for them additional measures will continue to be needed. NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are playing a critical role throughout Ethiopia in providing support for both these groups. (MoFED, 2006, p. 98)

Overall, the National Food Security Programme is one of the most ambitious and comprehensive in Africa (T. Brown & Teshome, 2007). The programs stem from the government's socialist roots yet the sustainability of the program is not clear. According to Brown (2007), the government assumes that over the next five to ten years most households will become food secure with these programs and thus, as it progresses the numbers participating will continually decrease. Unfortunately, it does not seem as though the numbers of chronically food insecure are changing and to what extent the government can continue to fund this type of program is unknown.

### ***PASDEP Participation***

The last section of this chapter will draw out information regarding the extent to which civil society was consulted in relation to the aforementioned policies.

The PASDEP process benefited from two rounds of consultations with civil society, non-government actors, and partners. An initial round prior to drafting of the document sought views on priorities prior to drafting of the document, and a second round in December 2005- January 2006 sought feedback on the initial draft. (MoFED, 2006, p. 1)

Section 2.4 of the PASDEP discusses the details of the consultations that occurred with civil society and the results that were obtained. Most of the section focuses on whether farmers and individuals (specifically those in poverty) saw the desired results

from the SDPRP, including improvements in accessible education, farmer extension services, health facilities, drinking water, employment generation, etc. The results discussed in the PASDEP are more a measure of the effectiveness of the SDPRP policies, services and funding implemented to date, rather than working towards informing the PASDEP as to *how* these can be more effective or whether the strategies should be altered. There is no comment on the new policies of the PASDEP or whether civil society believes that the development agenda is on the right path.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the crafting of the PRSP is supposed to be a participatory process, engaging representatives from all communities throughout the country. Participation is deemed by both the Millennium Project as well as by the PRSP framework as essential for creating a country-designed approach.

Issues surrounding participation and influencing the crafting of the PRSP began with the adoption of the SDPRP. Criticism arose that groups had not been consulted or when they had, the Interim-PRSP (I-PRSP) had already been submitted with little ability to affect it. From the perspective of the Ethiopian government, the SDPRP consultations contributed to the document by:

- Confirming the broad development strategy, sectoral and cross-sectoral priority actions followed by the government
- Emphasizing decentralization and community empowerment
- Highlighting the significance of capacity building and cooperative efforts of public, private, NGO and communities.
- Emphasizing the significance of efficient, effective, transparent and accountable public service



- Highlighting the negative effects of harmful traditional practices in the struggle against poverty by households, communities and country. (Teshome, 2006)

According to Teshome (2006), CRDA, an umbrella organization representing over 400 NGOs in the country, was only informed of the I-PRSP by accident and was not able to have much influence because they were not members of either the PRSP Steering Committee or the Technical Committee. Despite the failures of the SDPRP to be truly participatory, the consultations that did take place were completely unprecedented. Involving the public (or at least some members of it) in this kind of policy discussion is something that had never happened in Ethiopia and therefore was a big step for the government (Brown & Teshome, 2007).

Teshome (2006) conducted a study looking at the level of participation in the PRSP crafting process in Ethiopia concludes that, comparatively, the PASDEP process is perhaps even more of a top-down policy document than the SDPRP, a total failure to be truly participatory. The PASDEP centers on a small group of key players, MoFED and the Prime Minister's Office and their associated advisors. Teshome also indicates that the World Bank had a key role developing the PASDEP through their reports, reviews and seminars and actually acted as a negotiator with the Development Assistant Group.

The government began consultations for the PASDEP in 2005 but the process was disrupted by the elections that year, as government–civil society relations were polarized. As a result, the meetings never went beyond the regional level as they had for the SDPRP. As a government official explained: “because the elections aired issues, we did not feel that there was a need for consultation” (Brown & Teshome, 2007).

### **What About the Droughts?**

According to the PASDEP, 70 percent of Ethiopia is dry sub-humid, semi-arid or arid and therefore is vulnerable to desertification (MoFED, 2006, p. 187). Earlier this year, Ethiopia reached out to the international community asking for help to feed 3.2 million as a result of severe drought in the southern parts of the country (Heinlein, 2011b). This is not unusual, as the country is consistently threatened by drought conditions.

As shown in Table 4.1, when drought hit the country in 2002-2003, GDP growth plummeted to negative 3.3 percent. Given the history of drought in the country, throughout analyzing the PASDEP, I would have expected there to be more of a focus on specific measures to insure against these negative shocks or at least acknowledge that the agricultural commercialization strategy would be highly volatile with the possibility of droughts.

There are multiple mentions of drought and water harvesting, well digging and irrigation infrastructure, but to what extent will these ‘solutions’ hold off a drought situation? The PASDEP does address the drought of 2002 to 2003 that happened during the SDPRP period but it does discuss the viability of escaping the effects of future droughts with the implementation of the new projects and programs under the PASDEP.

While not specifically mentioning the ability to undermine a drought, the PASDEP does say that there are untapped water resources in the country, which could contribute to reducing poverty and increasing growth, including 12 major river basins and 12 large lakes (MoFED, 2006, p. 126). In the same paragraph, it also estimates the annual surface

runoff at 122 billion m<sup>3</sup> and 2.5 billion m<sup>3</sup> of usable ground water. As well, the PASDEP discusses cultivating 487 000 hectares by use of irrigation, 470 water reservoirs to be constructed for water harvesting and 58 750 hectares to be irrigated by the water harvested (MoFED, 2006, p. 86). The PASDEP does not speculate the extent to which these sources will be able to carry the country through the years where the rainfall is minimal.

The only mention of solutions to drought throughout the entire 267-page document is the following quote:

The major source of growth is still the agriculture sector, as it is expected to be insulated from drought shocks through enhanced utilization of the water resource potential of the country (through development of small scale irrigation, water harvesting, and on-farm diversification) coupled with strengthened linkages between agriculture and industry (agro-industry) thereby creating demand for agricultural output. (MoFED, 2006, p. 65)

Despite this mention that the irrigation, water harvesting and farm diversification will insulate the drought shock, there is no data within the document that discusses how the aquifers will be affected in a year of drought and therefore how the irrigation capabilities will decrease nor how the harvest rainwater will be substituted. Given the magnitude of the issue, it seems as though it has been left unaddressed.

## **Summary**

In the following chapter, the data will be summarized and analyzed, answering the question of whether the Ethiopian case study fits into the one-size fits all liberalization PRSP or has it been tailored to be a country-specific strategy best-suited to Ethiopia's

specific context. Conclusions will be drawn and recommendations for future research will also be presented.

*There's enough on this planet for everyone's needs but not for everyone's greed.*

*~ Mohandas Gandhi*

## **CHAPTER 5 – Analysis and Conclusion**

The use of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and loans from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is a recipe that is bound to be fraught with problems. Although the use of PRSPs represent an institutionalized ideological recognition by the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to broaden and deepen their meaning of development, this has nonetheless resulted in the compartmentalization of development into concise goals, which can be managed, monitored and evaluated. As a result, the development industry has further identified it as just that; an industry in need of management, which requires specific, narrow tasks that emphasize the results of development rather than creating structures that perpetuate worldwide well-being.

Because development is set within a system of market capitalism, “Developing countries become conceptualised as giant corporations which require not only financial restructuring (though structural adjustment programmes) but also better-trained top management (‘good governance’) and corporate culture (strong civil society),” (Quarles van Ufford, Kumar-Giri, & Mosse, 2003). So while the “means” of development is emphasized, this approach loses sight of the purpose of development.

The MDGs attempt to outline the targets this industry must meet for success and the Millennium Project has set the path for their achievement, advocating dynamic, ‘country’-designed strategies, set in a very narrow prescription for the plans to be

accepted by the IFIs. Importantly, the first goal of IFIs is to ensure repayment of the loans that have been issued. Repayment trumps all other goals because it is unacceptable for countries to default on their loans, as this would sound the alarm that the market of development has crashed. Their secondary objective is for their development efforts to be sustained.

Development, the industry, is also detached from the reality that all throughout the world people are living in extremely impoverished situations. Women are dying in childbirth 100 meters away from a functioning hospital, food is being exported in times of extreme famine, poor countries are being supplied with weapons over food, and the environment is being destroyed in the process. All the while, resources exist to overcome these issues and First World countries surrounded by extreme wealth pat themselves on the back achieving goals of building roads, delivering food aid or even increasing enrolment in a school in Africa. These important improvements are made within a sea of devastation and hardship and therefore only so much credit should be awarded.

Enveloped by this system, Ethiopia has little other option than to participate within the parameters of the game. With a high external debt and mass poverty, the government is obliged to make an attempt to alleviate the hardship and hope to work towards the goals recognized by the international community as the height of success.

### **Economic Framework**

The growth acceleration strategy presented in the PASDEP describes and seems to support many of the tenants of trade liberalization outlined in Chapter 2. The overall strategy is by no means a direct replication of structural adjustment programs

implemented in the preceding decades. However, there are elements that align with both stabilization and structural adjustment. These elements include short-term objectives with changes in macro-economic parameters including the devaluation of currency, stricter monetary policies and a reduction of budget deficit; and policies aimed at improving the efficiency of markets, trade, and institutional and special sector reform, including deregulation, changes in international trade policies, privatization and agricultural policies.

The PASDEP stated that the two main thrusts of growth acceleration would be the commercialization of agriculture and accelerating private sector development. Between these and the export-led industrial growth, the necessary revenue will be generated for the period of the PASDEP and the future (MoFED, 2006, p. 62). This strategy follows the previous Ethiopian PRSP approach of Agriculture Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) focused on directing the benefits of a market-led strategy at the poor.

The commercialization of agriculture strategy within the PASDEP details the development of rural infrastructure, improved business plans, increased availability of seed and fertilizer and better functioning markets as priorities while also working towards improving land tenure security and making land available for large-scale commercial farming.

Accelerating private sector development is designed to work in combination with the agricultural plan as it opens the market for private investments from within and outside of the country's borders, strengthens credit markets and establishes the country as a safe place to invest.

Although smallholder farmers were portrayed as a major impediment to development, they were not left out of this development strategy and will, in fact, also be targeted for investment. However, the PASDEP also no longer ties agricultural returns back to the impoverished as with ADLI, thus disconnecting direct potential benefits and instead the strategy relies more on overall GDP generation and the trickle-down effect. It also seems as though improving land tenure security alongside easing the ability of farmers to rent their land will contribute to the establishment of larger commercial farms, another point for trade liberalization.

The PASDEP detailed the expectations for the agricultural sector and identified it as the principal means for generating foreign revenue, driving the development process and fuelling GDP growth. Agricultural exports would be diversified to reduce global market fluctuation risks and to explore niche markets.

The experience of Aduna Workneh in Ethiopia's cut flower farms demonstrates the impacts of these policies. He turned down the money offered for his land, realizing that the lump sum would not give him the ability to support his family in the long run as it would take away his ability to produce his own food. Meanwhile, the workers for the new farms were brought in from outside the village and the land that people from his village previously used to collect wood is now covered with greenhouses. This anecdote highlights some of the issues relating to these strategies.

The PASDEP also prescribes integration into global markets. The global integration strategies are similar to the trade liberalization approach as they reiterate improving the privatization program and strengthening management of the land lease system. As well, and most importantly, the PASDEP describes the desire for accession in the World Trade



Organization (WTO). Joining the WTO would require further easing of trade restrictions, opening markets, and decreasing regulations. Unfortunately, combined, these transformations are likely to increase the vulnerability of the Ethiopian economy. Research shows that Ethiopia is looking for special privileges on their membership and requesting exceptions from the conditions due to their Less Developed Country (LDC) status. Ethiopia has been trying since 2003 to gain membership to the WTO and as of February 2011 has entered into formal discussions to negotiate a middle ground on these restrictions. Although it is obvious that Ethiopia is not keen to settle, joining the WTO is certainly opening some new liberalization doors. Once a member, there will be the constant pressure to further open its borders to trade.

While these are not the only policies the government will be working towards implementing, there is clearly an emphasis on liberalization including privatization, agricultural development and large commercialized farming, opening markets and reducing trade barriers, which are the central components of a trade liberalization strategy and all exemplified here in the PASDEP. The PASDEP also speaks to stabilizing the macro economy and shielding the country from high inflation. It does not, however, mention the means by which this will happen.

The aforementioned liberalization policies are not the only focus of the PASDEP strategy. The document also mentions numerous strategies targeted specifically at improving human development indicators. But, as the highlighted policies demonstrate, Ethiopia, whether by its own accord or as a result of pressures from the IFIs, is pursuing a trade liberalization approach to development. This is consistent with the hypothesis that

PRSPs cause little deviation from the history of structural adjustment. The findings that the PASDEP has used a trade liberalization approach to development is also consistent with the research by Fekadu (2007) which finds that trade liberalization constitutes the key components of on-going reforms in Ethiopia.

### **Food Security Programs**

While trade liberalization is clearly adopted in the PASDEP, the document also explicitly states that tailoring economic development to benefit the chronically food insecure is a priority (among other human development indicators). As a result, I chose to examine the food security programs within the PASDEP to explore the extent to which the government was able to manipulate the policies and programs to include a hunger alleviation focus while producing an acceptable PRSP.

The National Food Security Programme (NFSP) is the mechanism intended to address decreases in food production and income fluctuations related to hunger. The program has four central components, each working directly at targeting the food insecure: the Productive Safety Net Programme, the Building Sustainable Household Assets Programme, the Voluntary Resettlement Programme, and Non-Agricultural Activities.

The first component of the NFSP is the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP), focused on creating work in times of need to provide cash for labour. Although it does not seem as though the workers are paid exceptionally well, the money paid by the program is intended to meet individuals specific needs. This is versus a typical food-for-work program, which pays a labourer in food during tough times, leaving no agency over their greatest needs during that period. Second, The Building Sustainable Household Assets

Programme distributes technological packages to smallholder farmers, providing them with inputs and training to improve their returns.

Seemingly one of the main aspects of the NFSP is the Voluntary Resettlement Programme which sets a household up with a start-up package and two hectares of land where they should be able to become food self-sufficient. Although providing new opportunities to rural households, this program does seem to have some issues such as displacing pastoralists and the degree to which the resettlers become self-sufficient. In the last aspect of the NFSP, the Non-Agricultural Activities, the government commits to supporting a wide range of activities that either indirectly supports agriculture or development in the rural areas.

With some of the most ambitious social programs in Africa, it seems as though the Ethiopian government is truly attempting to target rural food insecurity. The programs are capacity building, in theory providing sustainable solutions empowering people with skills and opportunities to profit and secure their livelihoods. By providing people with access to land combined with resources to start farming and training to provide the necessary skills, people participating in these programs are much more likely to be successful. In a primarily agrarian economy, improving farming skills to enhance yields and the sustainability of the land is necessary for long-term success. The Productive Safety Net Programme also acts as a 'fall-back' during times when the crops are not successful, giving people the opportunity to work during these times on infrastructure projects, as well as enhancing their communities at the same time. The programs also give autonomy to individuals by providing options to solve their food insecurity and to receive benefits.

While these programs sound as though they address many aspects of insecurity, they fail to address some very important factors. One of the central limitations of the NFSP is the inherent focus on rural populations. Although openly stated in the PASDEP that rural poverty and food insecurity is their first concern and once this is solved they will work towards urban poverty, this leaves little opportunity for urban people to remain in the urban centres and take advantage of the initiatives. As well, despite the overt focus on agriculture, there is little room for non-agricultural workers to reap the benefits of the central programs without becoming a farmer. While the NFSP promotes non-agricultural activities, there is very little focus on this program compared to the others as well as how individuals may gain access to these funds.

Another central concern regarding the resettlement program is the diffusing of communities and pitting people against each other. Although voluntary, relocating people to new parts of the country may lead to a drain on existing communities. While poverty is pervasive, the resettlement program has the ability to severely disrupt rural villages as they reshuffle the population. As well, by placing people on lands that may 'belong' to pastoralists, this stands to create conflict for newcomers and the displacement of pastoralists.

In theory, the Productive Safety Net Program is in place to provide employment during slow times. One possible downside to this program is that it may pull productive labour away from farming in pre-harvest seasons. One of the most labour-intensive times in farming is just before harvest. If farmers are forced to work off farm to get through this period, there is also the possibility that crops will be reduced or lost entirely. While this is

only speculation, it is a possible concern and the PSNP does not take this into consideration.

One of the central limiting factors of the long-term success of the program is sustainable funding. According to the government, the program is empowering its citizens to provide for themselves and once the farmers are established and knowledgeable, the programs will not be needed and the households will be self-sufficient. Yet, to date, the program has been running for just over a decade and there have been few changes in the overall level of chronic food insecurity and it seems as though this will not meet the government's goal of five to ten years as hoped.

Regardless of all of these potential limitations, the National Food Security Program should be recognized for its efforts to target poverty through multiple avenues and attempting to create sustainable solutions, breaking away from the historic reliance on food aid within the country. It does seem as though the Ethiopian government tried to institute policies that would protect its (rural) population from the potentially negative impacts of commercially and internationally-oriented food production. Regardless, it is impossible within the scope of this paper to determine the extent to which this program is able to help guard participants against shocks but it is possible to conclude that it is a step away from the liberalization strategies we saw in the last section and a move towards independence.

While these programs definitely are working in the right directions towards creating food self-sufficiency, given the limitations and potential problems with the program I can conclude that these programs will most likely not be sufficient in protecting the chronically poor from shocks resulting from trade liberalization. Even as the resettlement

program attempts to shift more people into farming, this is the sector often most susceptible to difficulties while the country liberalizes; other than taking these people off their new farms to work on infrastructure projects, there is little to protect them. As well, the government's emphasis on non-traditional crops such as cut flowers, this will provide little in the way of food self-sufficiency in dire times or when international markets fluctuate.

### **Participation in the PRSP Process**

According to both the PRSP framework as well as the Millennium Project, civil society's participation is inherent to the development of a PRSP. Participation is used to tailor the PRSP to the specific country and to ensure that the policies and programs that will be implemented will be focused towards the needs of civil society, NGOs, small businesses and others who might not normally be the recipient of the benefits of economic development. Typically, the participation processes undergone with PRSPs have been severely flawed as it has been documented in many cases that participation has occurred after the PRSP has been crafted or participation has not happened at all. This component has been included in this data to help identify whether the PASDEP has been truly tailored to the country's specific circumstance and to help determine the degree to which participation has helped inform the programming and policy to be implemented.

As shown in Chapter Four, participation in crafting the PASDEP was very poor. Although the document discusses the participation processes that occurred and portrays them as important, they were used more to reflect the successes of the previous PRSP and the SDPRP rather than to help inform the direction of the PASDEP.

As discussed in Chapter Four, the PRSP consultations were halted after a minimal evaluation of the SDPRP. It is possible that this evaluation began to integrate perspectives into the PASDEP but an evaluation of a previous policy document does not suffice to replace the participatory process in designing the PASDEP. Studies completed by Teshome (2006) and Brown (2007) show that participation was minimal and in some cases non-existent as groups that wanted to be involved were excluded from the discussions. Elections that occurred in the midst of the consultations may be partly to blame for the lack of participation as they disrupted the PRSP process. Nevertheless, it seems conclusive that the PASDEP did not have the opportunity to be informed through a participatory process.

Participation is a concept that is quite new in Ethiopia. The consultations for the SDPRP were the first of their kind. According to Brown and Teshome (2007) the government of Ethiopia tends to impose a technocratic and top-down approach to policy making. This was evident in the evaluation of the PASDEP consultations as there was little consideration given to a thorough participatory process and instead the government worked directly with the World Bank to create the document.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The data presented attempts to answer the question: to what extent does the Ethiopian PRSP represent a country-owned strategy, specifically targeting food insecurity in the country. Three factors were considered: (1) the extent to which the economic policies mimic the apparently IFI-imposed trade liberalization strategy, (2) the overall

strategy of specifically targeting food insecurity and (3) the level of participation in developing the policies.

From the research it is apparent that the economic development policies of Ethiopia as they appear in the PASDEP clearly follow a trade liberalization framework. There are elements of both neoliberal restructuring – including privatization, deregulation, changes in macro-economic parameters, changes in trade policy and initiatives to modernize agriculture – as well as stabilization – including devaluation of currency, stricter monetary policies and a reduction of budget deficits. Historically, IFIs have imposed these strategies on developing countries as a means of facilitating debt repayment. PRSPs are supposed to be a change in the development industry as the document is country-designed.<sup>16</sup> This is supposed to mean that stakeholders representing various groups within the country can be involved in the process and contribute to the development plan, in particular ensuring that the policies and programs are tailored to be pro-poor. With a standardized policy matrix, it is not likely that these policies are reflective of the country's needs.

While the economic policies look as though they are IFI-imposed, the programs targeting food insecurity are much different. These programs do not fit into the IFI matrix, but rather they seem to directly target the poor, in a fairly holistic manner. While attempting to resolve chronic food insecurity through these programs, it is unlikely that they will be able to shield the poor from the effects of trade liberalization. Unfortunately, the last factor, an evaluation of the level of participation in the PASDEP process, shows

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<sup>16</sup> Because the PRSP framework as well as the MP recommendations include civil society participation within their concept of country-driven, this understanding has been maintained within this thesis.



that civil society was not included in the policy or program development. Whether it is the economic policies or the food security programming, one of the conditions of the PASDEP and crucial to meeting the MDGs, as outlined by the Millennium Project is that the goals be informed through public consultation. Civil society was merely consulted in evaluating the success of the previous PRSP but not in a way to gain insight into future policy developments.

An evaluation of the PASDEP and secondary research demonstrates that while the strategy includes thorough food security programming, it is not a country-owned strategy that represents the various people, businesses, institutions and levels of government. The Ethiopian PRSP development strategy is actually a top-down trade liberalization approach to development and the Ethiopian government's efforts to guarantee food security in the PRSP are likely to be undermined by the document's concurrent emphasis upon the commercialization of agriculture and the liberalization of agricultural trade.

The Ethiopian government should caution the acceptance of the trade liberalization approach, despite the social safety net they are trying to put into place. From the evaluation of the food security programs, it is possible that the economic policies may work to undermine these attempts at creating self-sufficiency and reducing poverty in the country. Although, with few alternatives to World Bank and IMF funding, the Ethiopian government will continue to be at the mercy of their agenda and therefore in order to move forward and work towards true hunger alleviation and the reduction of vulnerability to world markets, the means will only occur through the revamping of IFIs.

The management of development, which defines its mandate in terms of concise tasks to be achieved as "ends", results in a limited vision that is void of responsibility and

limits the possibility of alternative approaches. However, more importantly, PRSPs have significant meanings for how development is conceptualised. The managerial tendencies, which are present in the PRSP framework, reduce development to a series of clearly defined tasks while obscuring the relationship of responsibility that permeates the inequalities of the current global system. As well, this framework prevents countries from adopting their own alternative approaches to full integration (and vulnerability) in the world market. Because of the power and influence that IFIs possess, the ways in which they “do development” can have significant impacts on the rest of the development industry. As long as the IFIs continue to manage development in a way that first and foremost ensures that countries focus on gaining income to pay back their loans, there is little room in the development discourse for serious improvements to the status quo.

Finally, it is important to begin thinking about the MDGs beyond 2015. Progress towards reducing hunger is too slow and given the present instability of the food system and as it must adapt to climate change, rising food prices, misdistribution, and potential future shortages, this is not the time to walk further down the path of a policy agenda that has a history of exacerbating poverty and creating vulnerability in world markets.

In terms of future recommendations for Ethiopia, I will begin by referring back to the final section of the data regarding my concerns about drought in the country and how the lack of acknowledgement could be a topic for future research as well as crucial to the country’s future development strategy. As drought has characterized hardship in Ethiopia, it is something that should be central to future development strategies. The reasons for why this important factor has not been made central would also be significant for informing future research.

Alternative sources of funding could also be crucial to Ethiopia as there may be fewer impositions related to trade liberalization. As countries such as China and India provide more loans to developing countries, an opportunity for a potential shift in the system is emerging. Competition in loan disbursement may lead to challenging the World Bank and IMF method.

In terms of the strategy used in Ethiopia focusing on the commercialization of agriculture and trade liberalization, it is also important to consider how precarious agriculture is throughout the world, not only in developing countries but also throughout the developed world. Observing Canadian farmers with access to credit, stability, infrastructure, subsidies, education and other agricultural luxuries, there is still a large percentage of farmers in Canada producing at a loss.

In the contemporary globalized food system, farmers exist to provide the raw products being sold to distributors and processors at affordable prices. Distributors and processors then sell their products to retailers and at each one of these stages the prices are marked up on the goods and a profit is made. Worldwide, while farmers struggle to make a living, the food industry records exorbitant profits.

This situation is indicative of a system that favours the corporation over the protection of the individual farmer and consumers' access to food. With farmers continually suffering from a lack of protection, fair prices and over-supplied markets, the sustainability of this system comes into question. How long can it continue to exist? Farmers in developed nations receiving subsidies allow the very volatile system to barely float while farmers in the global south live in poverty. The rise of food prices may be a

sign that the system is beginning to topple and food riots occur as a higher portion of the world population are no longer able to afford food.

These issues highlight the importance of the adoption of food sovereignty as a framework for those who produce, distribute and consume food, making them central to policy creation and implementation, thus ensuring that the sustainability of local and national economies are a priority. Food sovereignty also opposes corporate control, a solely output-focused approach or one that disregards the environment. The adoption of this framework will work in line with the promotion of trade but not unregulated export growth and aim directly at facilitating incomes for all and the right of the consumer to control their food as well as their nutrition (Nyéléni, 2007b).

While continually focusing development efforts throughout the global south, there is more competition in the selling of goods. The liberalization of trade is specifically related to these issues as it perpetuates the system of catering to businesses while disregarding its reliance on farmers. By involving countries and the individuals of those countries to influence the policy design, there is hope that they can work towards designing their involvement in the system to represent their needs.

*It is necessary to stop this war against small farmers. It is necessary to re-write the rules of trade in agriculture. It is necessary to change our paradigms of food production. Feeding humanity should not depend on the extinction of farmers and extinction of species. Another agriculture is possible and necessary - an agriculture that protects farmers livelihoods, the earth and its biodiversity and public health*

*-Vandana Shiva, 2004*

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