INTRODUCTION
The world food problem since 1950 is that a large proportion of the population of Africa, Asia and Latin America is either undernourished or malnourished or both. Under-nourishment has been a scourge on the majority of human kind for much of human history. But, it was not until the Second World War that Europeans and Americans began to concern themselves with the world food problem. With the passage of time, the population growth crossed all reasonable limits and the food problem attained alarming dimension.

‘Food Aid’, has come to the rescue of mankind as a solution to the world food problem. In order to overcome these vast shortages of food in the chronically undernourished and malnourished regions of the world, food aid has become a permanent feature of international assistance to the developing world. The general term ‘Food Aid’, suggests food given extensively on a grant basis. However, the greater part of the food aid donations has been concessional sales of food to recipients from bilateral donors. But, considerable amount of food donations have increasingly come from multilateral agencies in the past decade. All the multilateral food donations are mostly in the form of grants.

Food aid has become a permanent feature of the food situation on the continent of Africa, more so in Sub Saharan Africa. Sub-Saharan Africa comprises of a vast region south of the Sahara, and lies mostly in the tropical zone.

The Sub Saharan region suffers from the vagaries of climate. For example, long periods of drought interspersed with infrequent rainfall, has an adverse effect on agriculture and the food situation. The food problem is further compounded by civil strife, high population growth, lack of infrastructure, and improper or lack of planning in the sub-Saharan
countries. This frequently results in famines and a large number of starvation deaths occur as a result.

Food Aid has provided Sub Saharan Africa with the most needed relief emergency or otherwise. There is uniformity in the belief that the Sub Saharan region will continue to face food shortages for a long time to come. Therefore, it is essential that the region receive adequate technological and economic help from the developed world in order to overcome the food crises on a sustainable basis.

Sub Saharan Africa has been chosen as the region for this study for the very reason that it stands out in suffering from food shortages or famines. The region’s food problem offers a complex situation where in a multiple of factors, both individually and in combination operate to bring about an unprecedented food crisis. Various forms of food aid have been donated to the region in order to mitigate or alleviate the food problem. But these aid measures due to various geographical and political factors have failed to yield the desired results.

Significance of Food Aid

Food aid has played a significant role in saving the lives of millions of starving people around the world. Food aid has not only produced instant relief to emergency victims, but it has also helped in developing the agriculture and economy of the suffering country by saving its foreign exchange. Also, programs like ‘food for work’ of the World Food Programme (WFP) have provided both employment and food to the poor.

Food aid contributes to normal consumption and to reducing the foreign exchange cost of importing food in food deficit developing countries. This takes the form of direct transfers under “Programme Food
Aid" which accounts for 60% to 70% of the food aid transferred to the developing countries.

Another significance of food aid is that it provides employment to the poor. The WFP’s ‘Food for work’ programme is one such example where a labour force paid in food undertakes public and sometimes private works. There is another form of food aid targeted at special groups, such as mothers and school children, within the population. ‘Supplementary feeding’ is this form of food aid that is targeted at nourishing mothers with children, small children, school children etc. Both types of food aid mentioned above fall under ‘Project Food aid’ which accounts for 20% of the total value of food aid.

One of the most important roles of food aid is providing relief in ‘emergency disasters and refugee feeding’. It is very important that victims of emergency disasters receive instant relief. Food aid has been successful in this aspect. The world has witnessed a large scale of refugees, as a result of civil war and natural disasters in the past few decades. Food aid has become an essential component of feeding these refugees.

Another aspect of food aid that is increasingly gaining in importance is its role in development. The more responsible proponents, of food aid have for some years made efforts at improving its developmental effect at least to the extent of limiting or offsetting the growth of dependence on food imports. This implies using the food or counterpart funds for investment in increased production and setting conditions on transfers or donation with the intention of improving their use in this respect.
Policy Aspects of Food Aid

Food Aid serves complex and diverse political, economic and humanitarian purposes. The principles that govern aid transactions among states consequently do not constitute a coherent regime; rather they are fraught with tensions and contradictions. This is a major reason why the effects of food aid as a development tool ending hunger, poverty and under development in developing countries, are seldom optimal.

From its temporary origin in the post war years, food aid has become a permanent feature of international assistance to the developing world. During this period international policy on surplus food production has been a mixture of both rationalised political expediency and humanitarian compassion.

If we look at the policy objectives of food aid, we find the following five broad policy implications:

1) Export promotion through the development of new markets or bidding markets away from others. There are formal safeguards against this, but they seem to be ineffective and there is ample evidence of the effectiveness of food aid for this purpose. The United states PL-480 is blamed to be an instrument of dumping and promoting US interests in food export.

2) Foreign policy, which can cover whatever foreign policy aims the donor has in respect of the recipient. The USA has used food aid to defend friendly governments against expected Left-wing pressure, to secure contracts for US firms and to secure agreement on matters of international policy. By the same token, it has used cutting off the supply of food aid as a sanction both against regimes considered
unfriendly and as a warning to otherwise friendly regimes whose leaders speak against the USA.

3) Developmental goals can cover a variety of things, but mostly discussion of food aid in development refers either to the foreign exchange which it saves or food for work programmes. The food for work programme of the WFP in the Sub Saharan countries deals with public work aimed at development. It provides much needed employment and food at the same time to the population.

4) Nutritional goals relate primarily to the use of food aid in special feeding campaigns for specific groups, whether they be considered malnourished or undernourished or for some other reason. There are for example a number of projects for improving the diets of school children. The Mid-day meal schemes for school children helps in increasing literacy while at the same time providing nutrition to children.

5) Emergency feeding is another objective wherein the purpose is to keep people alive and reasonably healthy until the food situation improves. Examples of emergency feeding can be seen in the feeding of refugees from Rwanda in Zaire and also victims of the earthquake in Latur district of Maharashtra in India.

**Food Security in sub Saharan Africa**

In the past three decades, the image of Sub Saharan Africa has shifted from great optimism to immense pessimism. In the minds of many, Sub Saharan Africa is now a continent in crises, a highly vulnerable region of the world. Famine, high population growth rates and declining agricultural production have to the external world rapidly become the most common symbols of Sub Saharan Africa. Population growth,
droughts, crop shortfalls, accelerating food import costs along with foreign exchange problems and the rising debt crises have exacerbated the problem.

Over the past two decades or so, Sub-Saharan Africa has become a significant net importer of basic food stuffs notably cereals. Since the continent is among the world’s most land rich areas, and since the vast majority of the population is composed of agricultural producers this clearly points to serious problems relating in some way to hunger and famine.

While opinions vary as to the underlying causes, most observers attribute growing food imports to an increasing imbalance between population and food supply. Population is growing more rapidly in Africa than anywhere else in the world. Given low levels of technology and low rates of development, growth of food and other agricultural production cannot keep pace with that of population. Therefore, imports have increased to fill the gap. This is made worse by inept and wasteful government policies, which have favoured the urban areas and the industrial sector at the expense of agriculture.

According to the Food and Agricultural Organisation World Food Report (1983), "Africa South of the Sahara is losing the race to keep food production ahead of population growth. New technology, new attitudes toward agriculture and new forms of assistance from the international community are needed." Further, the report states that, "of 41 Sub-Saharan countries with a significant agricultural sector, only five (Cameroon, Central African Republic, the ivory Coast, Rwanda and the Sudan) have kept food production consistently ahead of population growth."
In Sub Saharan Africa constant food shortages characterise the absolutely poorest strata, both urban and rural and is clearly linked to lack of income, since it occurs even when there is plenty of food around for those who can afford it. All the same, its severity will usually vary seasonally, and the population may experience food shortages at specific stress periods. Rural seasonality is generally more obvious and predictable than urban.

While a large number of specific factors determine who suffers from food shortage and who has secure access to food, four important factor stand out in Sub Saharan Africa.

- Access to land or other productive resources.
- Availability and security of employment.
- The effectiveness and stability of social and economic networks.
- Political stability.

Those who suffer most from food shortage in Sub Saharan Africa are primarily the following:

- who have no land or insufficient land for own production of food
- those who must compete for the worst most poorly paid and secure jobs,
- are forced in to dependent relationships to kin or non related households,
- And specifically those - whose rights within such relationships are weakest.
The level of savings is also an important factor, since those especially vulnerable to famine are often those whose savings are least or are held in forms whose value falls drastically when most needed.

Food aid has gone a long way in providing relief from hunger in Sub Saharan Africa. Food aid has contributed to the following purposes in Sub Saharan Africa.

- Food aid has been donated for the alleviation of natural disasters, famines, and man made emergencies such as civil war.
- Food aid has also been given for use as input into economic and social development projects and programmes, using food for work.
- Food aid has also been given as the main input in nutritional programmes, to provide vulnerable groups with subsistence.
- Finally, food aid has also been used to correct the macro economic problems besetting the Sub Saharan countries such as balance of payment and budgetary disequilibria.

**Conclusion**

The social and economic viability of countries has depended upon their ability to generate food surplus and to provide adequate nutrition for their populations. These requirements are no less important today and will continue to be important in the future. The challenges of meeting these requirements and ensuring an element of food security are formidable both economically and environmentally. It is estimated that by the end of this century the earth will have to support an additional 1.3 billion persons with an average purchasing power well above 1980 levels.
To satisfy this growth in economic and physiological demand for food will require two major initiatives. First, food output will have to enhance by as much as 40-50 percent. The majority of this growth must take place on the existing land base by narrowing the yield gap without sacrificing the environmental basis for food production. Moreover, the growth of food production should also serve goals other than nutritional ones. Expanding the productive capacities of the food system can allow enhanced employment opportunities particularly in Sub Saharan countries. If these opportunities translate into higher real incomes, rural population growth and migration to cities can be reduced and saving rate and local economic development improved.

A second challenge facing agriculture is to provide for a more equitable access not only to food but also to the resources required for its production. While increase in food output and production per capita are a necessary condition for alleviating hunger they are not a sufficient condition. The means not only to produce but also to purchase the food must be present.

In Sub Saharan Africa there is a pressing need to have a sustainable balance between food production and food need in the coming years. In order to achieve this, four conditions are to be met:

- Economic growth must resume or increase;
- Effective policies to reduce population growth and to slow rural to urban migration must be adopted;
- Resources must be committed to development of rural infrastructure, to continuation of international and national agricultural research and to provision of credit and technical assistance to give farmers access to modern inputs; and
- Measures must be developed to manage natural resources and to prevent environmental degradation.

These conditions can be met by an effective use of food aid, particularly as a developmental resource. If properly administered, food aid can serve as an effective instrument for the relief of hunger and malnutrition and as a useful adjunct to other forms of foreign aid designed to accelerate the economic development of Sub-Saharan African countries.

**Review of Literature**

There is no dearth of literature on food aid. There is abundant literature including books, journals and articles in various magazines. The most important source of primary as well as secondary literature is the World Food Programme and the Food and Agricultural Organisation. Besides the two, publications from United Nations, International Food policy Research Institute, International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Bank also have a number of relevant Publications on food security, food aid and development. It is to be especially mentioned that the Internet sites of these organisations are a store house of data and literature on food security, food aid and associated phenomenon. A large part of the primary and secondary work has been taken from the Internet.

The Primary Sources for the thesis are mainly from the World Food Programme and the Food and Agricultural Organisation. The World Food Programme’s Annual Report contains details of food aid provided to various countries by the WFP and others. It also details the programmes covered by the WFP. Another publication of the WFP is the “Food Aid in Figures”, which shows the details of major donors, major recipients and amount of food commodities involved as well as the money value of food
shipments. This contains not only the world's total food aid figures but also figures relating to special assistance programmes under emergency relief, development aid, as also the WFP's Own programme figures.

The "Food Aid Review" is another important publication of the WFP, published annually. The journal consists of review of the various food aid programmes, projects and emergency aid in various parts of the world. The journal consists of articles basically published by the WFP detailing the food security needs, production potential, and fulfilment of needs of various recipient regions as well as the policies of major donors. On Policies and Programmes the WFP has dedicated publication namely, "Food Aid Policies and Programmes", which is again an annual publication. This journal mainly concerns itself with the policies of the major donors for the instance, the US PL 480, the European Union food aid etc. The WFP's policies and programmes, both current and future are also detailed in this journal.

The Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations comes out with journals and publications at random dealing with agriculture, food productivity, food insecurity and food aid. The main publications are 'Food and Nutrition', 'The State of Food and Agriculture', FAO Social and Economic Development Papers', 'Food Nutrition and Agriculture' etc. The FAO also sponsored and publishes books on the subjects of Agriculture, food and Food security.

A number of books have come up in the past few decades dealing with the food problem in the world and Sub-Saharan Africa. A few such books have been of great help in guiding this study.

A book by Hans Singer, John Wood and Tony Jennings, 'Food Aid, the Challenge and the Opportunity', is a work dealing with all the aspects of food aid. It also compares other forms of aid with food aid and
considers the pros and cons of all kinds of aid. It arrives at the conclusion that even though financial aid gives freedom to the governments of the food deficit countries in dealing with food insecurity, it leads to leakages and therefore fails to address the problems of food security as well as food aid. This book also deals with the control mechanisms and discrepancies of food aid. In conclusion, the book considers future needs and future development and concludes that food aid is a must for dealing with food insecurity and it can make an important contribution to long term food security. The book explains what this means in practical terms and draws attention to the careful planning and management needed to realise its full development potential. According to the authors, "food aid will be with us through the rest of the century and it will only be as effective as the donors and recipients together, choose to make it. This is the challenge and the opportunity".

Philip Raikes book "Modernising Hunger" is one of the most informative and analytic works that could be found on the problem of food in Africa. The book is divided in to two parts. The first part deals with Africa, and the second part deals with the international dimensions of food security. The attempts made, historically by European colonists, and post independence by bilateral and multilateral entities, to modernise agriculture in Africa has increased rather than relieved rural poverty. This is the central thesis of the book and the starting point for a wide-ranging examination of the food crises in Sub-Saharan Africa. Distribution and inappropriate development policies are greater problems than food deficits, is another hypothesis dealt with in this book. This book also explores Africa's place in the international food economy and argues that, while European and United States protectionism has been harmful, the advocacy of whole sale liberalisation have over simplified the links between food security and food trade. Overall this book is very informative of the food security needs of Africa.
“Satisfying Africa’s Food Needs” edited by Ronald Cohen has been a very helpful book in understanding the problems related to food production and distribution in Sub-Saharan Africa. The book deals with food production and commercialisation in African agriculture and devotes itself to the problem of satisfying Africa’s food needs. The theme of the book according to Cohen is to find ingredients whose interactions and operations predict ways and means of avoiding famines, rather than just coping with them as they occur.

“The Political Economy of Food Aid”, by John Cathie deals with the policy issues involved with food aid. The book deals with the food aid policy and the changes in it since the inception of food aid. The policies and programmes of the major bilateral food aid donors (the USA and the EEC) are also dealt with in detail. From thereon he has gone on to deal with the evolution of multilateral food aid agencies, the principles of surplus disposal, the WFP’s contributions and international food aid policy. It also studies the role and effectiveness of international food aid in developing countries and the procurement of food aid and its management by different agencies. However, Cathie finds food aid inferior to untied financial aid and the book has “not made an argument against aid in general but food aid in particular because of its weakness as an instrument of economic development”. According to him, “if the rich countries were to provide the third world with untied financial aid, recipient countries would be able to choose whether they need food or not.”

Robert I. Bard’s Food Aid and International Agricultural Trade: A Study in Legal and Administrative Control is another informative book that deals mainly with the impact of food aid transactions on agricultural trade; both domestic and international. This book has two main themes – the first is to establish a comprehensive working model of the economic
and an financial interrelationship between food aid and commercial food trade and to describe the affect of various possible control devices upon these relationships. theme is to describe the and analyse the standards and the procedures now employed or seriously proposed to regulate the impact of food aid upon commercial agricultural trade.

The above book contributes to a clearer understanding of the complex economic and political factors that have shaped United States food Policy and the later developments, thereof, pertaining to both bilateral and multilateral food aid programmes.

'The food Resource', a book by John T. Pierce is one of the latest and most important book studying the food resources in recent times. Pierce starts from the problem of abundance in the US and the developed nations and then moves on to the problem of scarcity in the developing world. This book deals with the supply side of the food equation as opposed to the demand side and attempts to asses critically human intervention in environment and the implications for agriculture. The author has also dealt with the historical linkages to agricultural production, the present resources available for agriculture, the population pressure, importance of water resources and the role of climatic factors in food production. These are followed by the trends in world food production where he deals with the growth of population and food production. The author concludes with a stress on sustainable development. “Sustainable development over the long term is not a choice but an imperative for society. If we fail to make the conscious transition, the choice will be made for us - for sustainable development is a self-enforcing process capable of achieving its own equilibrium. We have the means to shape the equilibrium, to anticipate the necessary changes, but only if we are prepared collectively to reconsider, rethink and restructure our present modes of agricultural development”.

14
'Poverty, Development and Food' is a book edited by Edward Clay and John Shaw. This book relates between food shortage and poverty in general. It consists of the following important chapters. "Approaches to Quantifying the World Food Problem" by Barbara Huddleston with the historical perspective and the approaches to the world's food problem. "The Changing Role of Developing Countries in Agricultural Trade" by Tim Josling deals with the potential of agricultural development in developing countries, and their respective increase in agricultural production and trade. The chapter "Aid for Development: What Motivates the Donors?" by Raymond F. Hopkins, deals with the politics involved in bilateral trade or the motivation upon which the donor operates. "Food Aid for Food Security and Economic Development", by John W. Mellor is another important Chapter in this book. This chapter has been of great help in understanding the complications involved in developmental food aid. This book on the whole is an important work for any scholar or academician studying the food problem.

Another Edited book, "The Political Economy of Food" by Vilho Harle is a collection of well-researched work. We concern ourselves with the relevant and important work for our study. Food Import And Neocolonialism by Helena Tuomi, concerns itself with the politics involved in the provision of food to the needy countries. Peter Wallensteen's "Scarce Goods as Political Weapons: The Case of Food", is a chapter that criticises the donor contributions that use food as a political weapon to further their interests. Mervi Gustafsson traces "The Development of International Food Aid" in the same book.

Lars Bondenstam's "The Politics of Food on the Periphery", deals with the disposal of surplus food for the furthering political interests by the developed world. Vilho Harle in his chapter "The Dimensions of the World
Food Problem", deals with various aspects of food and the problem of scarcity.

Another book, "People, Food and Resources", By Sir Kenneth Blaxter has dealt with the per capita production of food and the over exploitation of natural and agricultural resources. This work comes out with some answers to the present food crises in the developing world and aims at sustainable agricultural development and food security.

"Nutrition and Development", an edited book by Margaret Biswas and Per Pinstrup Anderson is a commendable book dealing with the food shortages and nutritional deficiencies in the food insecure regions of the world. "Food security for Developing Countries", an edited book by Alberto Valdes is a similar work dealing with the food security and nutritional issues in the vulnerable regions of the world.

**Hypothesis**

The present thesis has dealt with the following Hypothesis:

The social and economic viability of countries has depended upon their abilities to generate food surpluses and to provide adequate nutrition for their populations. However, natural disasters and man made emergencies cause starvation and call for food aid for the alleviation of hunger and malnutrition as well as possibly inputs into economic and social development through specialised projects and programmes.

**Data Base and Methodology**

This study is a descriptive and analytical study employing quantitative analysis and cartographic techniques for the representation of data and figures. The use of computers with the help of tools or programmes such as the Geographical Information System (MapInfo) and Excel along with
Word has widely been resorted to for the study. The data and literature for our study has been obtained from the publications and Internet sites of the WFP, FAO and the United Nations.