CHAPTER IV

THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)
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OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)

One of the most important problems in the field of
economic and social cooperation is the production and distri-
bution of food. It was the middle of the nineteenth century,
when international conferences and meetings were held at
which there were exchanges of knowledge relating to biology,
bio-chemistry, crop diversification, and animal health. But
it was only in 1905 that these efforts took concrete shape
with the founding of the International Institute of Agricul-
ture. The League of Nations did not directly concern itself
with agriculture. But the work done under the auspices of
the League in the field of nutrition proved of great practical
significance.

The Food and Agriculture Organization came into exist-
tence as a result of a series of conferences held during
World War II. In 1941, the US Nutrition Conference for
Defence resolved that it should be a goal of the democracies
to conquer hunger"....not only the obvious hunger that
man has always known, but the hidden hunger revealed by modern
knowledge of nutrition."

1. World Book Encyclopedia of the Nations (UN, New York,
In May 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt called a special meeting at Hot Springs, Virginia. This was the first full United Nations Conference in this field, antedating the UN Charter Conference itself by two years. The Conference was attended by 44 nations. The nations represented at this Conference agreed to work together to banish hunger and establish a stable world agriculture.

In July 1943, on the recommendation of the Hot Springs Conference, the UN Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture was set up. This Commission drew up a draft Constitution for the FAO. FAO officially came into being on October 16, 1945, when its Constitution was accepted by more than 20 governments. The first session of the FAO Conference was convened in Quebec. FAO was born out of the idea of 'freedom from want' expressed in the Atlantic Charter. FAO is the outcome of the need for peace as well as the need for freedom from want.

PURPOSES

The Preamble of the Constitution of the FAO declares that the members are "determined to promote the common welfare by furthering separate and collective action for the purposes

2. Basic facts about the United Nations, p. 76.
of raising levels of nutrition; securing improvements in the efficiency of the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products from farm, forests and fisheries, bettering the condition of rural populations, and thus contributing toward an expanding world economy.

ORGANIZATION

FAO consists of a Conference, a Council and a Secretariat headed by a Director-General.

(1) The General Conference

It is composed of one representative from each Member-Nation. It usually meets every two years, and is attended by delegates from Member-Nations. It elects the Director-General, formulates policy, determines the Organization's programme and budget on a biennial basis and elects new members.

(2) The Council

The FAO's Council is composed of representatives of 34 Member-Nations, elected by the Conference for three years

term. It acts as the interim governing body of FAO between sessions of the Conference. It supervises the work of the Organization.

(3) *Secretariat*

The Director General of FAO is appointed by the Conference. He has full power and authority to direct the work of the Organization, subject to the general supervision of the Conference and the Council of FAO. He is assisted by an international staff.

*ACTIVITIES*

Article 1 of the FAO's Constitution describes the functions of the Organization as: "To collect, analyze, interpret, and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture; to promote national and international action with respect to scientific, technological, social and economic research relating to nutrition, food and agriculture; to improve the processing, marketing, and distribution of food and agricultural products."

In the beginning, the chief function of FAO was to collect, analyze and disseminate information about the international situation of agriculture, including nutrition, forestry and fisheries. But the first Director General Lord Boyd Orr, envisaged a growing and more active role for the agency.

FAO celebrated its 25th anniversary in 1970. Its budget increased from 2 million in 1945 to more than 100 million in 1970.

(A) Nutrition — In the field of nutrition, FAO is concerned with the study and appraisal of food consumption patterns throughout the world, changes and developments in food production and food supply and maternal and child nutrition. FAO’s first objective, as stated in the preamble of its Constitution, is to raise levels of nutrition. Millions of people in the world, who eat a sufficient quantity of food do not eat the right kind of food. This lowers their working capacity and impairs their health.

FAO works in close cooperation with WHO and UNICEF to improve child nutrition, with special attention given to

the development of the use of low-cost protein-rich foods. WHO is concerned with medical aspects of nutrition. FAO has collaborated with UNICEF in dairy and milk-plant development and in encouraging greater production and consumption of eggs, garden vegetables and other nutritious foods at the village and community level. The joint FAO, WHO, UNICEF Protein Advisory Group meets every year to review developments in the field of new high protein foods, such as peanut butter, cottonseed cereal and fish protein concentrate. FAO is mainly concerned with encouraging the most effective use of available foodstuffs. Much attention has been devoted to food technology, supplementary feeding programmes such as milk distribution to children, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and to education in nutrition.

(B) Fisheries — For many years, the UN has collected, collated, and disseminated information and statistics on various aspects of world’s fisheries. Fish are an excellent source of high-grade protein. Two World Fishing Boat Conferences have been sponsored by the FAO. The first was held in 1953 and the second in April 1962. The second Conference was attended by some 300 naval architects, boat designers, builders, owners, and marine engineers as well as government officials. Significant practical results have been obtained by these conferences. In some Universities,
Fishing boat design has been included in the naval architecture curriculum.

In the field of fisheries, FAO's work is conducted by its Department of Fisheries. FAO's assistance touches on all aspects of commercial fishing, fish processing and marketing. It also assists in training programmes for fishermen.

To further the development of fishing, two important Regional Councils have been established under the FAO. The formation of such regional councils for the scientific exploration of the sea and its resources was recommended by the FAO Conference. The first organized Regional Council was the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council. It was the outcome of the FAO Fisheries meeting held at Baguio, Philippines in 1948. In 1962, the General Fisheries Council for the Mediterranean was created.

Since 1951, FAO experts have helped Ceylon in the exploration of new and richer fishing grounds. In 1960, FAO fisheries experts from five countries were assigned to help establish the Fisheries Research Institute at Juliao, the port of Lima in Peru. There, the problem was to strengthen an already flourishing export trade in fishery products by systematic research.

In 1967, FAO began a world appraisal of fishery resources, while the training of fishermen and other operatives in the use of more advanced techniques and equipment was intensified.

In September 1968, FAO's Indian Ocean Fishery Commission was established. It was composed of representatives of 27 countries. Its aim was to promote and coordinate fishing development in the Indian Ocean. During 1968, FAO engaged in the planning or execution of 38 fishery projects financed by the Special Fund Component of UNDP. FAO participated in more than 130 fishery development projects during 1970. Among them were the International Indian Ocean Fishery Survey and Development Programmes, which embraced the largest number of countries ever involved in an FAO fishery project, and the $13.4 million UNDP/FAO fishery development project in the Atlantic Ocean, off Africa.

In 1971, FAO participated in some 200 fishery projects manned by 380 experts in 60 countries and territories.

C. Forestry

Only about one-third of the world's land surface is suitable for growing crops and two-thirds is covered by forests, grazing lands, and waste lands. According to one of FAO's reports, the aim of FAO's forestry programme is to utilize these two-thirds of the earth's land surface.

FAO's forestry work is confined to three general fields: forest policy, which formulates and promotes the sound development of forests and forest lands; forest technology, which is directed toward improved production; and forest economics, which includes the analysis of the economic bases of consumption of forest products.

In order to deal with forestry matters, FAO has established several regional commissions. These are the European Forestry Commission, the Latin American Forestry Commission, and the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission. In forestry management, FAO has promoted many new trends. It adheres to the view that foresters must assume responsibility for water management in forest lands.

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1. World Mark Encyclopedia of the Nations, p. 156.
2. Ibid.
In the field of forestry, FAO's technical assistance includes projects in forest conservation, soil and water conservation, education and training of foresters and other personnel, nursery and planting techniques, and the mechanization of forest operations. A large share of FAO's assistance in the field of forestry is used to help developing countries establish and strengthen their own forestry training institutions. For example, a forestry faculty was established with FAO assistance in Curitiba, Brazil; training and demonstration centres were established in Guinea and the Central African Republic; and a training centre for forest workers was organized in Philippines in 1966.

In Austria, Iran and Philippines, FAO has helped to establish laboratories in forest products research. FAO has also sponsored Seminars and Congresses on subjects like wood technology, forest products research, and productivity in logging. In early September 1960, at the invitation of the US government, the fifth World Forestry Congress held in Seattle, under the auspices of the FAO. About 2,000 foresters from 71 nations attended this Congress. The aim of the Congress was "Multiple use of Forest Lands."

At the end of 1971, more than 140 specialists from developing and developed countries met at FAO headquarters. They agreed on the urgent need for comprehensive action to protect the world's forest resources, which were dwindling in the face of rising populations and mounting demand for forest products. In the same year, some 300 foresters, wood technologists, architects, builders, planners and bankers from all over the world attended a consultation in Vancouver, Canada, on the use of wood in housing.

D. Agriculture

FAO has also been involved in providing direct aid to agricultural development. It provides technical assistance in various ways, through its own regular programme and through the UNDP. Technical assistance activities include expert advice, cooperative assistance to governments, the provision of fellowships and actual work in the field.

Nowadays, it is generally accepted that old methods of farming cannot provide adequate food for the growing population. FAO assists governments in organizing modern agricultural programmes and in bringing scientific discoveries to the attention of the individual farmer through the

collection, analysis and dissemination of agricultural data, the preparation and publication of studies, the research programmes, the conferences, and study centres it sponsors and assists.

In the FAO Secretariat, the Division of Economic Analysis keeps the world food and agriculture situation under constant review. Since 1965, it has been collaborating with other FAO divisions on the Provisional Indicative World Plan. In order to help the developing countries plan the economic aspects of their agricultural development, the division has been conducting an increasing amount of operational work.

FAO has been active in promoting wider use of seeds from superior and well-adapted varieties of crops and trees. It has also distributed samples of many types of seeds including seeds for grains, storage crops, vegetables and tea for experimental purposes. It has been estimated by FAO that the use of better quality seeds would increase the average yields of crops and vegetables.

In 1967, FAO launched a World Seed Campaign to foster the improvement of seeds and the use of better seeds through national and international efforts. This got underway actively in 1968, culminated in the World Seed Year in 1961, and ended in 1962. Its aims became part of the larger Freedom from Hunger Campaign.
FAO operated or participated in some 150 field projects during 1968. These projects were specifically designed to provide assistance in crop diversification, mechanization for land development and farm management.

With the creation of the European Commission on Agriculture and the periodic convening of regional FAO conferences, FAO has encouraged a regional approach to agricultural problems. These conferences, while discussing FAO's programme as it pertains to their respective regions, also consider other regional economic, technical and social developments having to do with agriculture and food.

The Organization also offers advisory services on such problems as the mechanization and selection of farm equipment, storage problems and training programmes.

Freedom From Hunger Campaign

In 1960, FAO launched the Freedom From Hunger Campaign. Its aim was to create a world-wide awareness of the problems of hunger and malnutrition which afflict more than half of the world's population. It also aimed at promoting a climate

of opinion in which solutions to these problems can be organized both on a national and on an international basis. FAO's Freedom from Hunger Campaign seeks to alert the masses of the world to the dangers inherent in the international food situation. On FAO's appeal, National Freedom from Hunger Committees have been set up by the vast majority of the member-countries. These Committees cooperate with FAO in preparing and executing constructive proposals for action to counter the dangers of the food and population crisis.

The purpose of the Campaign is to focus world attention on the continuing problem of hunger. The Campaign was originally scheduled to run for five years. But its term was later prolonged for an indefinite period.

In June 1963, the World Food Congress held at Washington D.C. brought together 1,300 experts in the field of sociology, economics, nutrition, science and education, from developed and underdeveloped countries. These experts were brought together to review the progress of the Freedom From Hunger Campaign and to discuss the problems of hunger and malnutrition and their solutions. The World Food Congress called

1. Lyke, Vernon Yan, op. cit., p. 440.
3. Basic Facts about the UN, op. cit., p. 76.
for land reform, minimum price guarantees, greater effort to obtain more complete and accurate data on world food consumption and needs. It also called for the continuation of Freedom From Hunger Campaign until hunger and malnutrition are defeated.

The aim of this Campaign is to increase public awareness of the extent of world hunger and poverty. It also aims at mobilizing support for programmes to improve the situation.

Under the Campaign National Committees had been set up in 93 developed and developing countries by the end of 1970.

WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

Following a resolution (1496 (XV), which was adopted unanimously by the General Assembly on October 27, 1960, the Director General of FAO prepared a report entitled "Development through Food - A strategy for Surplus Utilization." On the basis of this report, the FAO Conference and the UN.

General Assembly, in November 1961 and December 1961, respectively, passed resolutions establishing a World Food Programme.

In order to use food in aiding programmes of economic and social development, the World Food Programme was launched jointly by FAO and the UN. Sponsored by the UN and the FAO, the World Food Programme seeks to stimulate economic and social development through aid in the form of food. The Programme also helps to meet emergency food needs created by earthquakes, floods and other disasters.

The Programme began its operations in January 1963. Originally, it was scheduled for an experimental period of three years from the beginning of 1963 to the end of 1965. At the close of this period, it had so conclusively proved itself that the UN and FAO decided to continue it "as long as multilateral food aid is found feasible and desirable."

The major objective of the Programme is to promote economic and social development through the supply of food. Supplying food in emergencies is the second purpose of the World Food Programme. From its inception in 1963 until

2. *Basic Facts about the UN*, p. 45.
mid-1970, the Programme had provided food aid for about 450 development projects in more than 80 countries. While the Programme is primarily dedicated to development, it could not ignore the plight of the victims of emergencies. In ten years, up to the end of 1972, the Programme has carried out 161 emergency operations in 74 countries at a cost of over £120 million.

An Inter-Governmental Committee of 24 members supervises the World Food Programme. The IGC meets in regular session twice a year, usually at the headquarters of FAO in Rome. It reports annually to ECOSOC and the FAO Council which in turn report respectively to the UN General Assembly and the FAO Conference.

The FAO-World Bank Programme

In order to identify and develop investment possibilities for agricultural development programmes, FAO started a cooperative programme with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development in 1964. By June 30, 1968,

312 missions had been sent out and 160 projects were aided by this programme.

Provisional Indicative World Plan for Agricultural Development

At the First World Food Congress convened in 1963, the idea of undertaking a survey of the world food situation in relation to population and overall development, and of preparing a plan for action to counter the widening food gap, was originated.

FAO issued a Provisional Indicative World Plan for Agricultural Development in 1969. The Indicative World Plan is not a 'Plan' in the conventional sense of the word, instead it is an analysis of the main issues which are likely to be facing world agriculture in the 1970's and early 1980's. In addition, policies and techniques are also suggested for solving the problems through national and international action.

The Plan is called 'Indicative' because it can only indicate. It can not be imposed on anyone.

The Plan suggests ways in which the issues can be resolved by national and international action in five major areas, namely: development of new high-yielding varieties of food grains; reduction of wastage after harvesting; an all-out attack on protein deficiencies; making fuller use of rural manpower; and promotion of foreign exchange earnings and savings.

The Indicative World Plan attempts to define major strategic objectives. FAO held a Second World Food Congress in June 1970, at the Hague, Netherlands. It was attended by 1,800 participants. The IWP was a central element of the Second World Food Congress. The final Declaration of the Congress called on Governments to increase drastically the supply of resources for development through an improved system of international cooperation.

The purpose of food aid as the name itself suggests is to provide food to the hungry people. It is quite obvious that most of the people in the world today do not get two square meals a day and that in some vast areas, specially in Asia, bulk of population is faced with famine conditions. But merely feeding the hungry people would not solve their basic

problems of scarcity. These countries should be sufficiently developed, economically and socially, and their productivity should be increased. So that they become self-sufficient and develop and evolve a self-generating economy.

It has come to be universally recognized that the total aid supplied to these underdeveloped countries can be phased in such a way that a lasting contribution to their economy is made. It can be done by helping them to undertake their own projects, and to build up continuously their human and material resources. Nevertheless food aid is an integral part of the modern world's concept of aid for development in the long term interests of all. It should, however, be buttressed by other kinds of aid for all-round development also.

1. World Food Programme (FAO, UN, 1968), p.3.