THE ROLE OF THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (WFP) IN ADDRESSING THE FOOD CRISIS IN HAITI (2019-2021)

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Abstract This paper focuses on the role of the World Food Program (WFP) as an international organization in dealing with threats to human security, namely the food crisis in Haiti in 2019-2021. This study uses explanatory qualitative research methods using data sourced from books, scientific journals, websites, and the official website of the WFP. The results of the research show that the WFP acts as an instrument for the Haitian government to work together to deal with the food crisis, acts as an arena for other international organizations in dealing with food crises and acts as an actor in dealing with the food crisis in Haiti through the program Country Strategic Plan (CSP).

Keywords: Food crisis, human security, world food programme.

INTRODUCTION

In World Food Program’s annual report, Haiti is a country that has the highest level of food insecurity in the world because more than half of the population suffers from chronic malnutrition and 22% of sufferers are children (WFP, 2019). Analysys Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) also stated that there were 2.6 million people in need of emergency food assistance in the period March-June 2019. In addition, the World Food Program also said that there were 4.3 million people experiencing chronic hunger in Haiti (WFP, 2019).
The food crisis that occurred in Haiti is a threat to human security which is based on the realization of human rights to adequate food. This refers to one of the seven important components of human security according to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), namely food security (WFP, 2020). According to the World Food Summit, the definition of food security is a condition where all people have the availability of sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to continue a healthy and active life (FAO, 2016). UNDP also stated that human security or human security is centered on humans themselves. This indicates that the availability of food or the adequacy of food in a country does not guarantee the realization of food security (UNDP, 1994).

In addition to food availability and adequacy, physical and economic access to food is also an important factor in food security. As WFP has mentioned, where a human being can be said to be safe when he has food availability and access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to sustain his life. This means that everyone has the right to access food by producing it or buying it. However, often a person cannot access food due to a lack of people’s purchasing power due to poverty and a poor food distribution system (Wacth, 2022).

The food crisis that occurred in Haiti certainly requires special attention from the international community, such as international organizations. One of them is the World Food Program (WFP). WFP, which is a world food organization, certainly has an important role in handling the food crisis in Haiti. This is because the main purpose of establishing WFP is to tackle hunger and malnutrition and increase the food security of countries in the world. In its activities the WFP has provided food assistance with the aim of saving people in emergency situations, improving nutrition and improving the quality of life of the most vulnerable people and helping to build assets and improve the standard of living of the poor through its programs (WFP, 2022).

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) defines the concept of Human Security as “First, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease, and repression. And secondly, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life, whether at home,
in jobs or in communities. Such threats can exist at all levels of national income and development (UNDP, 1994).” From this definition it can be interpreted that first, human security is security from chronic threats such as hunger, disease, and oppression. Second, human security means protection from sudden and painful threats in everyday life, both at home, at work and in society. UNDP also categorizes Human Security into seven dimensions, namely: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security.

Therefore, in this study the focus of the discussion will discuss how the role of WFP in dealing with the food crisis in Haiti, the difference between this paper and previous writings is the time or year of research and the theoretical framework used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

According to the analysis conducted by IPC from October 2019 to February 2020, 1,046,000 (10%) of the population analyzed were at IPC Stage 4 (State of Emergency), 2,627,000 (25%) were at IPC Stage 3 (State of Emergency), 2,627,000 (25%) were at IPC Stage 3 (Critical) and 3.67 million (35%) of the population analyzed required immediate treatment. Then in the period March to June 2020 IPC analyzed 1,203,000 (12%) people were in IPC Stage 4 (State of Emergency), 2,898,000 (25%) people were in IPC Stage 3 (Crisis) and from the population analyzed there were 4.1 million (40%) needed immediate treatment (IPC, 2019). From the analysis for the period October 2019 to February 2020 and the period March to June 2020 it was concluded that there was an increase in food insecurity in Haiti.

In August 2020 to February 2021, there were 4 million people (42%) facing acute food insecurity with the classification of 905,472 people being in IPC Stage 4 (Emergency) and 3,083,497 people being in IPC Stage 3 (Crisis). If you look at the map, food insecurity is already in stage 3 or the food crisis has hit the whole country of Haiti and three other areas are already in stage 4 or a food emergency. Then from March to June 2021, there were 4.4 million people (46%) of the population analyzed suffering from acute
food insecurity with the classification of 1,156,915 million people in IPC Stage 4 (Emergency) and 3,198,820 people in IPC Stage 3 (Crisis) (IPC, 2021). If you look at the map, the number of food insecurities in IPC stage 4 or emergencies has increased in the past few months. The high level of food insecurity which has reached an emergency stage in Haiti is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The state of emergency was declared in March 2020 for a period of four months (IPC, 2020).

The food crisis that almost occurred throughout the country greatly impacted the entire population of Haiti, especially children. Children are the most vulnerable and are at risk of acute malnutrition. Malnutrition without proper care for the balance of nutrition can hamper the mental and physical development of children, increasing the risk of transmission of deadly diseases that can lead to death. According to the United Nations (UN), nearly 100,000 children under the age of five suffer from chronic malnutrition which reduces their immune system. This chronic malnutrition then causes children to be susceptible to diseases, such as cholera (IPC, 2021).

The food crisis that occurred in Haiti was caused by several factors, such as: a) Natural disasters and climate hazards. The Climate Risk Index states that Haiti ranks third among the countries most affected by extreme weather from 2000-2019 (Schafer, 2021). b) The Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic that has occurred since 2019 has influenced the government’s decision to place restrictions on activities for the people of Haiti. In addition, Covid-19 has also caused an increase in food prices, weakened the country’s economy and lost people’s livelihoods. c) Political, economic and social instability. Political and governmental instability has taken place during the reign of President Jovenel Moise where demonstrations have often occurred which have ended in violence (Servive, 2022).

The food crisis that occurred in Haiti requires attention from the international community such as international organizations. In this case, one of the international organizations that play a role in eradicating hunger and malnutrition is WFP. As with other international organizations that were established based on the agreement of its members to achieve common interests, WFP was also established based on the agreement of countries
to improve global food security. To achieve this goal, an international organization must have duties and functions. WFP itself has the duty and function to save and protect human life from the dangers of food crises, support food security and nutrition programs, work to reduce the risk of post-disaster food insecurity and stop the cycle of hunger between generations (WFP, 2019).

In addition to duties and functions, international organizations must also have a role in accordance with these duties and functions. Clive Archer classifies the role of international organizations into three things, namely as instruments, arenas and actors (Archer, 1992). As with the classification of food, WFP also has a role as an instrument, arena and actor in carrying out its functions and duties as an international organization that plays a role in eradicating hunger and malnutrition. The following is a classification of the role of the WFP as an instrument, arena and actor in dealing with the food crisis in Haiti in 2019-2021:

1. The Role of the WFP as an Instrument in Overcoming the Food Crisis in Haiti in 2019-2021

As stated by Clive Archer, the role of international organizations, the World Food Program (WFP) has served as an instrument for the Government of Haiti in dealing with the food crisis in Haiti in 2019-2021. In dealing with food crisis cases and strengthening community food security, WFP is assisted by its partners such as the National Government, Non-Governmental Organizations, United Nations Agencies, other International Organizations, Companies and even Individuals who are part of the international community. The National Government where WFP works is the main partner of the WFP which in every activity will continue to work together, collaborate and coordinate to deal with the food crisis (Wacth, 2022).

WFP itself has been working in Haiti since 1969 with its main priority being to support the Haitian government to develop sustainable solutions to cases of hunger and malnutrition as an effort to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) number 2, namely “Zero Hunger“ (WFP, 2022). Haiti is a country that has the highest level of food insecurity in the world.
because more than half of the population suffers from chronic malnutrition and 22% of sufferers are children. The high level of food insecurity has resulted in Haiti experiencing a prolonged food crisis (WFP, 2019). The food crisis that almost occurred throughout the country in Haiti greatly impacted the entire population, especially vulnerable populations such as children, pregnant women, people with disabilities and elderly parents.

In dealing with the food crisis in Haiti, WFP has supported the Government of Haiti by providing emergency food, logistics and telecommunications assistance. In addition, WFP also prepared food stocks including rice, beans, and vegetable oil for the people of Haiti as a form of response to the disaster (WFP, 2022). The WFP also supports the government of Haiti through its programs. Like the government’s plan regarding economic infrastructure development, in this case WFP supports the government by holding Food Assistance for Assets activities to rebuild community assets that support food security and the economy such as building fishponds, agricultural training, plantations and animal husbandry, building wells, increased production of local products and others. Then to increase food security and reduce post-disaster risk, WFP accelerated the reopening of schools in areas affected by natural disasters and held back school feeding to meet children’s nutritional needs (WFP, 2022).

WFP also supports the government to develop food security and nutrition policies. In this regard WFP supports the renewal of national policies and strategies for food sovereignty, food security and nutrition and develops national school feeding policies. In addition, the Government of Haiti also officially enacted the National Social Protection and Promotion Policy to deal with inequality and discrimination in society, reduce the number of unemployed which has reached 13.9%, protect people from disease and improve their economy (CF, 2021).

The development of this national food security policy is led by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor with assistance from USAID, CELAC, WHO, ILO, UNICEF, World Bank and UN Women (WFP, 2022). In addition, to strengthen, expand and effectively activate social protection policies that have been promulgated by governments, WFP is working with
all governments of Latin America and the Caribbean in reducing the social impact on the most vulnerable people. Various forms of assistance that have been carried out by WFP in supporting the Government of Haiti are a form of WFP’s role as an instrument for the Haitian government to deal with the food crisis that is currently hitting Haiti (WFP, 2022).

2. The Role of the World Food Program (WFP) as a Platform for Addressing the Food Crisis in Haiti in 2019-2021

Aside from being an instrument, WFP also acts as a forum for the Haitian government, other international organizations, and other actors in dealing with the food crisis in Haiti. As stated by Clive Archer, the role of international organizations is that international organizations are a place for member countries to meet to discuss problems that will be faced by these international organizations (Uyo, 2011). In this case, WFP’s role as an arena is to become a forum for cooperation with other humanitarian actors in dealing with the food crisis in Haiti.

With WFP’s top priority in Haiti, namely supporting the Haitian government to develop sustainable solutions to cases of hunger and malnutrition as an effort to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) number 2, namely “Zero Hunger” WFP works in line with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2017 -2021 in Haiti in accordance with Haiti’s priorities, namely eradicating poverty, social services, providing employment, gender protection and others (WFP, 2017). Through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) WFP collaborates with United Nations agencies, such as:

a. Coordinate with FAO in distributing food to support community recovery.
b. Coordinate with IOM in distributing biscuits and non-food items to refugees in shelters.
c. Collaborating with UNDP for the recovery of communities affected by Hurricane Matthew and expanding the Information System of the Ministry of Social Affairs (SIMAST) to improve accuracy in targeting the most vulnerable communities.
d. In collaboration with UNICEF for the implementation of *Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transition* to evaluate the post-hurricane nutritional situation.

In addition, WFP also cooperates with several international organizations and other member countries in terms of funding. In 2019 there were 2,627,000 people in IPC phase 3 or a crisis requiring immediate assistance. Then WFP provided 327 mt of food, funded by USAID, distributed to 27,370 people in two departments. According to the WFP Haiti *Country Brief*, there were several countries that became donors in every activity carried out by WFP throughout 2019, namely Canada, the European Union, France, Germany, Japan, Switzerland and the United States (WFP, 2019). This year, WFP is also holding training on nutrition and nutrition using funds provided by UN CERF. This activity aims to provide public understanding about maintaining cleanliness, prevention of malnutrition and screening of children suffering from malnutrition.

In addition to providing food assistance, WFP also provides air transportation services through the *United Nations Humanitarian Air Service* (UNHAS) for the humanitarian community to transport passengers and cargo (UNHAS, 2019). This air transportation facility by UNHAS is provided to support the humanitarian community in carrying out its program in handling the food crisis in Haiti. This air transportation service by UNHAS is a form of response to the unavailability of safe land transportation and commercial flights due to conflicts, natural disasters and others (WFP, 2019). This will make it easier for the humanitarian community to access remote and challenging locations to provide assistance.

3. The Role of the World Food Program (WFP) as an Actor in Overcoming the Food Crisis in Haiti in 2019-2021.

As an international organization, WFP acts as an actor in dealing with the food crisis in Haiti. WFP as an actor is an independent institution that makes policies regarding the activities that become the work program of the WFP itself. These policies were formally formed through meetings and documented in a report. In accordance with the role of WFP, namely
eradicating food crises, malnutrition and increasing food security, the policies that are prepared must also be in accordance with programs that support food crisis management and increase food security. As an actor in dealing with the food crisis in Haiti in 2019-2021, WFP has developed and implemented the *Country Strategic Plan* (CSP) program. This CSP is WFP’s annual program which consists of several activities that are expected to achieve the targets of WFP’s annual plan for the last three years (WFP, 2019).

From 2019 to 2021 WFP has carried out several activities to achieve seven strategic outcomes (WFP, 2019), such as: a) providing emergency food assistance to people affected by the crisis. In 2019 WFP established 4,800 mt of food stocks to prepare for hurricane season, distributed 8,657 mt of food aid in 2020 (WFP, 2020), and provided 32.6 million and 9,040 mt of goods in 2021 (WFP, 2021). b) improve the quality of smallholder farmers to improve food security and nutrition. In this case WFP has conducted a Home Feeding Program during 2019-2020 using food ingredients purchased from small farmers. c) using the 3PA or Three-Pronged Approach methodology to bring together communities, Government, and partners in Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) activities. FFA is one of WFP’s programs to strengthen community assets by modernizing salt fields, repairing rural roads, and improving watersheds.

**CONCLUSION**

The food crisis is a problem for food security that is currently rife. Haiti’s condition, where there are 4.5 million people living under food insufficiency, has caused Haiti to not fulfil the first food dimension. Then the second dimension of food security is *economic and physical access to food* which is determined by people’s purchasing power and total income. Currently Haiti is ranked 22nd among the poorest countries in the world with unemployment reaching 13.6% and causing people to be unable to access food economically and physically.

WFP is one of the international organizations that plays an important role in handling the food crisis in Haiti. According to Clive Archer, the classification of international organization orders is as *instrument, arena,*
and actor. WFP as an instrument, namely supporting programs from the Haitian government such as the 2012-2030 development plan which is a territorial rebuilding program and providing employment through one of its programs such as Food Assistance for Assets (FFA).

WFP as the Arena, is a collaborative forum for other international actors in dealing with the food crisis in Haiti. As an example of WFP’s collaboration with FAO, IOM, UNDP, UNICEF, and USAID through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for managing aid, distributing aid, and providing funds to deal with the food crisis in Haiti.

WFP as an international organization that acts as an actor in dealing with the food crisis in Haiti is an independent institution that makes policies regarding the activities that become the work program of the WFP itself. In this case WFP has developed and implemented the Country Strategic Plan (CSP) program. This CSP is WFP’s annual program which consists of several activities that are expected to achieve the targets of WFP’s annual plan for the last three years.

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