



## Reflecting the Role of International Organizations through WFP's Food Aid Intervention in the Ethiopian Crisis (2019–2022)

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### Abstract

The United Nations World Food Programme (UN WFP) is an international organization engaged in humanitarian work by providing food assistance to countries experiencing a food crisis. One of the countries currently receiving aid from the UN WFP is Ethiopia. Ethiopia is one of the countries experiencing a food crisis due to internal conflict, extreme climate change, natural disasters and the Covid-19 pandemic. Seeing the condition of Ethiopia experiencing a food crisis, the UN WFP is present in Ethiopia to help overcome the food crisis. The purpose of this study is to determine how the UN WFP's role through food assistance programs can overcome the food crisis in Ethiopia, especially during the pandemic. This study uses a qualitative method, researchers collect data from online sources such as books, journals, online news, the UN WFP website and other sources. This study uses the theory of the role of International Organizations in analyzing case studies. The results of the study show that the UN WFP has succeeded in carrying out four roles as an international organization, namely as a problem solver, collective act mechanism, aid provider and capacity builder.

**Keywords:** ethiopia, food crisis, international organization, UN WFP

### Abstrak

World Food Programme (WFP) merupakan organisasi internasional yang bergerak di bidang kemanusiaan dengan memberikan bantuan pangan kepada negara yang mengalami krisis pangan. Salah satu negara yang saat ini mendapatkan bantuan dari WFP adalah Ethiopia. Ethiopia merupakan salah satu negara yang mengalami krisis pangan akibat konflik internal, perubahan iklim ekstrim, bencana alam dan pandemi Covid-19. Melihat Kondisi Ethiopia yang mengalami krisis pangan membuat WFP hadir di Ethiopia untuk membantu mengatasi krisis pangan. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana peran WFP melalui program bantuan pangan dapat mengatasi krisis pangan di Ethiopia, terlebih di masa pandemi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif, peneliti mengumpulkan data dari sumber online seperti buku, jurnal, berita online, website WFP dan sumber lainnya. Penelitian ini menggunakan Teori Peran Organisasi Internasional dalam menganalisis studi kasus. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa WFP telah berhasil menjalankan empat peran sebagai organisasi internasional, yaitu sebagai problem solver, collective act mechanism, aid provider dan capacity builder

**Kata Kunci:** ethiopia, krisis pangan, organisasi internasional, UN WFP

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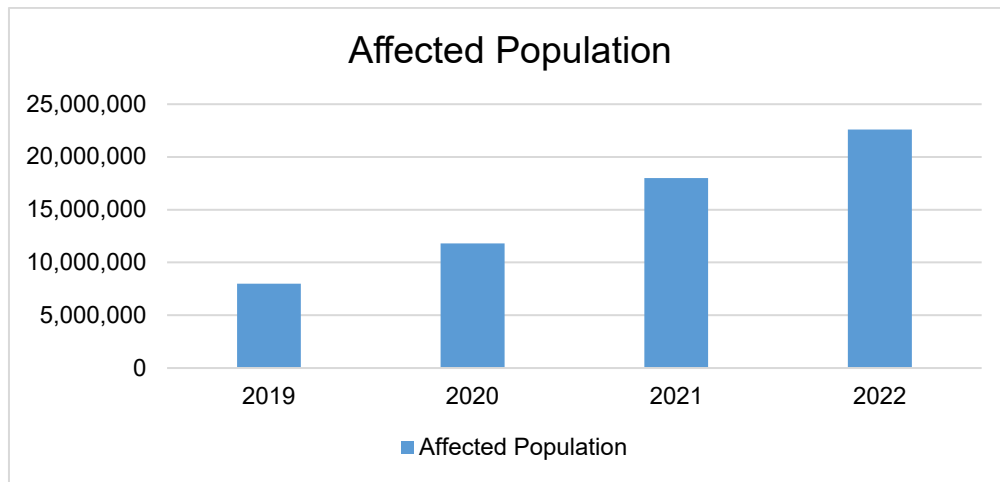


## **Introduction**

Food availability is a fundamental aspect of national stability, as threats to food access can lead to widespread food crises and increased vulnerability to hunger. A food crisis is often marked by rising levels of hunger and malnutrition and may be triggered by a combination of factors, including climate change, conflict, disease outbreaks, and natural disasters. In response to the growing global threat of hunger, the United Nations World Food Programme (UN WFP) was established by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the United Nations. Its mission is to combat global hunger through a range of food aid and emergency response programs. The UN WFP plays a vital role in saving lives and addressing the humanitarian consequences of food crises (Zada, 2025).

One of the countries experiencing a food crisis is Ethiopia. Ethiopia is the oldest independent country in Africa and the second largest country in Africa in terms of population (Hardikusumo, 2019). However, the food crisis is still a major problem. In 1973-1974 around 250,000 people in Ethiopia were estimated to have died from starvation (Hakiki, 2020) and an estimated 1 million people in Ethiopia died from famine in 1984-1985 (Kloos & Lindtjørn, 1994). Drought, disease, malnutrition, the Covid-19 pandemic and internal conflict have increased humanitarian needs in Ethiopia, especially in areas where productive assets and livelihoods have disappeared due to the prolonged crisis. The current Covid-19 pandemic and the conflict that broke out between the Ethiopian government and the TPLF in 2020 make the threat level of famine in Ethiopia even higher.

The conflict in 2020 occurred when Tigray held independent regional elections as a form of disappointment due to the many reshuffles and dismissals of leaders from Tigray since Prime Minister Abiy took office in 2019. The Ethiopian government responded by cutting ties and halting funding to Tigray, which triggered a firefight between the two parties (Puspita et al., 2022). This conflict has a real impact on the population in Tigray, especially for women and children, because in conflicts women and children are considered weak parties (Ali et al., 2023). Furthermore, the conflict has also led to continuous power outages and depleted medicine stocks (Pragilaksono, 2022).



**Figure 1. Affected Population in Ethiopia**

In 2019, there were 8,000,000 people in Ethiopia who were food insecure (World Food Programme, 2019a), the number of people experiencing food insecurity increased rapidly in 2021 to more than 18 million people, due to the pandemic and conflict (World Food Programme, 2021a), then in 2022 more people will need assistance, more than 22.6 million by the end of 2022 (World Food Programme, 2022c).

In 2021 Ethiopia became one of the countries in East African Region that experienced a severe food crisis. Food crisis that hit Ethiopia in that year was one of the worst in the world. Based on the 2021 global food crisis report, Ethiopia IPC level is at the highest level, IPC level 5 and became a country with number 1 most affected population in the world, more than 300.000 people (Global Report on Food Crises, 2022). Based on these data and conditions, the researcher has chosen Ethiopia as the case study.

The UN WFP plays a critical role in delivering food assistance to millions of vulnerable individuals affected by conflict, pandemics, and other humanitarian emergencies. In Ethiopia, the UN WFP provided food assistance to 6,408,951 people in 2019 (World Food Programme, 2019a). This number increased to 7,906,631 in 2020 and reached 9,833,546 in 2021 (World Food Programme, 2021a). By 2022, UN WFP had assisted 10,244,908 individuals in the country (World Food Programme, 2022c). This paper argues that although the assistance provided did not fully meet the overall needs, the combination of food and cash transfers, along with community-based training and development initiatives, contributed significantly to mitigating the effects of acute food crises and improving local food security and nutrition outcomes.

The framework of this study is underpinned by earlier findings on WFP intervention on global hunger. (Poetra, 2021) analyzes WFP's role in managing the food crisis in Yemen from 2015 to 2019, emphasizing the effective implementation of the organization's vision,

mission, and core values through transparent operations, active crisis oversight, and collaboration with local and international partners. Meanwhile, (Dewanti, 2018) examines WFP's Food for Assets (FFA) program in West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, showing how the organization contributes to reducing food insecurity by combining food aid with community-based projects to enhance local food resilience. Both studies underscore WFP's strategic and context-sensitive roles in tackling food insecurity within different national settings. Based on the two previous studies, a research gap can be identified in the limited analysis of the UN WFP's role in prolonged and complex humanitarian crises, particularly in conflict-affected countries such as Ethiopia. While previous research has focused on specific programs in relatively stable regions or earlier crisis periods, this study aims to fill that gap by examining the UN WFP's broader role and implementation strategies in responding to acute food insecurity during the multifaceted crisis in Ethiopia from 2019 to 2022.

This study utilizes the theory of the role of international organizations as presented by Kelly-Kate S. Pease (2019), which highlights the critical functions of entities like the UN WFP in addressing global challenges such as humanitarian crises. Pease outlines five key roles of international organizations—problem solver, capacity builder, collective act mechanism, aid provider, and common global market—four of which are relevant to this research. In the case of Ethiopia from 2019 to 2022, this paper found that the UN WFP served as a vital actor in distributing food aid, enhancing nutrition, and supporting access to education through collaboration with local partners and the Ethiopian government (World Food Programme, n.d.).

## **Method**

This study employs a qualitative descriptive research design to analyze the efforts of the UN WFP in addressing the food crisis in Ethiopia from 2019 to 2022. The data used are primarily qualitative in nature, consisting of textual materials such as reports, academic publications, and media sources. The analysis process followed the standard stages of qualitative data analysis: (1) data reduction, where information was filtered based on its relevance to the research focus; (2) data grouping, where relevant data were categorized into thematic areas to identify patterns and formulate a coherent narrative; and (3) inference, in which these patterns were interpreted in relation to the theoretical framework and research objectives (Alaslan, 2021).

This study relied solely on secondary data, obtained through online sources including official UN WFP reports, academic journals, policy documents, and credible news outlets.

To ensure the validity of the findings, source triangulation was used by comparing data from multiple independent sources to assess the consistency and reliability of the information. While the study did not employ software such as NVivo or other Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS), the manual coding and thematic analysis were conducted systematically to maintain analytical rigor and transparency in identifying key themes.

## **Result and Discussion**

The food crisis is a long-standing problem in Ethiopia. This prolonged crisis happened since 1983 caused by drought disasters in 1983 to 1985, 2015 and 2020-2022. The crisis worsened due to COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 onwards. Other significant factors are intrastate conflict that happened in 1998 between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and in 2020 between Ethiopia and TPLF. All the combined factors caused disruption to the economy and welfare of the Ethiopian people (Goddard, 2024). This paper subsequently highlights hunger intervention programs by UN WFP analyzed through the lens of four particular International Organization's roles: *Problem Solver*, *Capacity Builder*, *Collective act Mechanism* and *Aid Provider*. While UN WFP is primarily humanitarian rather than market-driven, the fifth role of IO, which pertains to market integration, cannot be analysed within this context.

### **a. UN World Food Programme Role as a Problem Solver**

In the role of a Problem Solver, international organizations often facilitate the establishment of forums where key issues can be discussed and addressed. This role also entails assisting countries through collective cooperation, thereby fostering collaborative efforts to resolve challenges (Pease, 2019). One notable example is the launch of a global meeting between the UN WFP and Ethiopia's National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDRMC), aimed at addressing the urgent issue of hunger and working towards its eradication.

In an effort to address hunger, the United Nations World Food Programme and the Ethiopian government's National Disaster Risk Management held a global meeting in 2019 under the theme "How to provide food assistance to end hunger transformatively". The primary objective of this meeting was to explore innovative approaches to addressing the global food system's challenges. The discussions were centered around achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2—Zero Hunger—by 2030. Where currently, 820 million people worldwide experience chronic hunger. At present, approximately 820 million people globally suffer from chronic hunger, and the fact that 125 million individuals face hunger

underscores a lack of sufficient access to food for a healthy life (World Food Programme, 2019b). This situation underscores the failure of the current food system to meet the needs of a significant portion of the global population (World Food Programme, 2019b).

In a two-day meeting in Addis Ababa, 200 participants from various countries, mostly Ethiopia, consisting of national policymakers responsible for nutrition and food security issues, donors and philanthropic institutions, food security academics, and food aid practitioners from humanitarian and development organizations attended the meeting. The event aimed to strengthen coordination between the Ethiopian government and various international organizations focused on providing emergency food assistance, increasing long-term resilience and building a more efficient distribution system. The meeting is expected to reach a consensus on their plan, namely to establish a Global Center for Transformative Food Assistance centered in Ethiopia in 2020, where Ethiopia has a good track record and knowledge in the context of providing large-scale food assistance.

The discussion above illustrates the urgent need for a new perspective in addressing the food crisis, particularly in Ethiopia. To effectively overcome this persistent challenge, innovative and transformative approaches are essential. One such approach could involve the establishment of a Global Center for Food Assistance headquartered in Ethiopia. Given Ethiopia's considerable experience in managing and distributing food assistance, it is well-positioned to serve as a strategic hub for coordinating global efforts. This center could play a pivotal role in developing scalable, sustainable solutions aimed at achieving a hunger-free Ethiopia-and, by extension, contributing to the global goal of ending hunger by 2030.

#### **b. UN World Food Programme Role as a Collective Act Mechanism**

##### **1) Cooperation between UN World Food Programme with UNICEF in combating malnutrition in Ethiopia**

In an effort to support the government in preventing children and mothers from malnutrition and providing school-based nutrition and health services, UN WFP and UNICEF have been working together in Ethiopia for three years. This first-of-its-kind partnership has the urgency to prevent acute malnutrition in Ethiopia, which has seen no progress in the past two decades. The Covid-19 pandemic, floods and droughts due to climate change, and the ongoing desert locust invasion are expected to worsen existing malnutrition levels. In the first year, UN WFP and UNICEF started a joint initiative to prevent acute malnutrition in 100 most vulnerable districts by providing integrated services to manage acute malnutrition. In the second year, conflict made UNICEF adapt a program to reach affected populations by scaling up health and nutrition services. In the third year, UN WFP and UNICEF restored

education service and implemented a school feeding program by rehabilitation and reconstruction of 60 damaged schools and provision of nutritious meals (World Food Programme, 2020).

This year, 4.4 million people in Ethiopia, including 2.7 million children and 1.7 million pregnant and lactating mothers, need treatment for acute malnutrition (World Food Programme, 2020). UN WFP and UNICEF believe that intensive, sustained action is needed, combining community-based and school-based prevention activities with expanded access to care for mothers and children with acute malnutrition in high-risk districts. This approach can help Ethiopia meet its target of reducing acute malnutrition among children to less than 3 percent from 10 percent by 2030.

UNICEF and UN WFP are targeting the 100 most vulnerable districts in the Amhara, Tigray, Afar, Southern Nations, Oromia, Nationalities and Peoples, and Somali regions. The two institutions aim to support the government in providing integrated services in 100 districts to address acute malnutrition, enhance innovation and research on acute malnutrition prevention efforts, provide school meals in Afar and Somali for 200,000 children, ensure a 70 percent increase in knowledge of these services so that they can change better feeding practices for children and pregnant and lactating mothers and finally provide nutrition and health information in 600 schools in the Afar and Somali regions (World Food Programme, 2020).

Through the partnership between the UN WFP and UNICEF, there is strong potential to support the Ethiopian government in leveraging its national food system to combat malnutrition more effectively. This collaboration aims to promote increased consumption of nutrient-rich foods among mothers and children, raise public awareness of optimal feeding practices, reduce disparities in food access, and foster local innovations tailored to community needs. These efforts are essential to building a sustainable and equitable food system capable of delivering lasting nutritional improvements across the country.

## 2) Cooperation between UN World Food Programme with Khalsa Aid International

Khalsa Aid International is a humanitarian aid organization based in the UK with a religious teaching foundation founded on the Sikh principle: "recognizing all humanity as one" (World Food Programme, 2021b). This organization has a mission to serve humanity. Khalsa Aid International has provided humanitarian assistance to millions of people around the world through global development programs and emergency relief projects since 1999. In supporting its work, the organization receives funding assistance, most of which comes

from donations from private donors who have supported and recognized the impact made by the organization.

In Ethiopia, Khalsa Aid contributed \$2.75 million to the UN WFP (World Food Programme, 2021b). This contribution is part of a three-year program to support refugees from the crisis in Tigray and school children in Yemen. The partnership facilitated by the UN WFP provides vital nutritional assistance to refugees from the Tigray region of neighboring Ethiopia, such as Sudan. This support is especially critical for vulnerable groups, including pregnant and lactating women as well as children under the age of five, who are at heightened risk of malnutrition.

From the perspective of the UN WFP's role as a collective action mechanism, forming strategic partnerships with various international organizations and governments is essential. These collaborations enable the UN WFP to mobilize financial resources and deliver targeted assistance to those in need. By leveraging contributions from its partners, the UN WFP not only addresses urgent food crises more effectively but also optimizes its expenditures. This cost efficiency allows the UN WFP to allocate saved resources toward future humanitarian efforts, ensuring the sustainability and continuity of its mission.

#### c. UN World Food Programme Role as a Aid Provider

In its role as an Aid Provider, international organizations are responsible for providing assistance to victims of natural disasters, conflicts, disease outbreaks, or refugees. This role is reflected through the provision of humanitarian assistance from external sources, aimed at alleviating the immediate suffering of affected individuals. Such aid serves as a form of temporary life support, helping to stabilize conditions and sustain basic needs until long-term recovery and development efforts can be implemented (Pease, 2019).

##### 1) Providing food aid to residents affected by conflict

In 2021, the UN WFP distributed emergency food assistance to communities in the war-torn Tigray border region. UN WFP has coordinated with Ethiopian Regional and Federal government authorities planning to immediately reach 250,000 people in Amhara and 530,000 people in Afar (World Food Programme, 2021c).

Food security in the Tigray region continues to deteriorate as a result of ongoing conflict, significantly straining the resources of the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and its partners. Dwindling food stocks have posed major challenges in meeting the urgent needs of approximately 5.2 million people. The last major delivery occurred more than two weeks ago, when the first convoy—comprising 100 trucks—entered the region carrying



3,500 metric tons of food, along with essential supplies such as health items and fuel (World Food Programme, 2021c).

Despite these challenges, the UN WFP field teams have resumed the next phase of food assistance operations in Tigray, having taken over responsibilities from non-governmental partners in two districts of the North West Zone: Shire Town and Tahtay Koraro. This renewed operation aims to reach up to 3 million people—an increase of 900,000 from previous efforts—underscoring the UN WFP's ongoing commitment to alleviating the humanitarian crisis in the region (World Food Programme, 2021c).

## 2) Provision of emergency food assistance

Following a temporary cessation of hostilities, the UN WFP resumed emergency response operations in the conflict-affected Tigray region of Ethiopia. However, ongoing insecurity continues to pose significant risks to humanitarian access and aid delivery. Despite these challenges, WFP managed to provide emergency food assistance to 10,000 refugees in Adu Nebried who had been displaced by the conflict. In addition, nutritional support was delivered to approximately 3,000 women and children, who are particularly vulnerable to malnutrition (World Food Programme, 2021d).

In areas such as Endabaguna, where malnutrition remains widespread, WFP has renewed its food distribution efforts across Northwest Tigray, targeting an additional 30,000 individuals. To meet this demand, the UN WFP has mobilized and pre-loaded trucks with essential supplies, preparing for further deployment into the region. Although some aid has successfully reached affected families, the closure of key access routes—particularly due to the destruction of two critical bridges between Gondar and Tigray—has severely hindered food delivery. With supply lines compromised and continued threats from warring parties, the UN WFP is urgently seeking alternative routes to ensure the continuity of aid.

## 3) Restoration of education services and implementation of school feeding programs

As a result of the conflict, 10 regions have felt the impact, causing more than 8,500 schools to be destroyed or partially damaged (World Food Programme, 2022d). The European Union, in partnership with the UN WFP and UNICEF, is providing a donation of €33 million to support the restoration of educational services and the implementation of school meal programs. This initiative aims to help children affected by conflict return to school and resume learning in a safe and supportive environment.

The funding will be used to strengthen the education system through a comprehensive and integrated approach, which includes school feeding, the reconstruction

and rehabilitation of damaged school infrastructure, the provision of essential education services, as well as child protection and health interventions. Access to safe, quality education is critical—not only for the well-being of children, but also for the long-term stability and development of the nation. UNICEF's education recovery efforts include initiatives to reduce dropout rates, rehabilitate schools, and enhance learning environments through community-based approaches such as the “My Home-Bete” initiative (World Food Programme, 2022d), which provides alternative and flexible learning models adapted to crisis-affected areas.

The UN World WFP effectively embodies the aid provider role outlined in Pease's International Organization theory by delivering life-saving assistance in crisis-affected regions like Tigray, Ethiopia. Through emergency food distributions, targeted nutritional support for vulnerable populations, and adaptive logistical operations amid conflict, the UN WFP demonstrates its capacity to act swiftly and strategically in humanitarian emergencies. Supported by multilateral partnerships and funding, the UN WFP not only addresses immediate needs but also contributes to long-term resilience and recovery. Its role as an aid provider is critical in bridging emergency response with sustainable development goals, particularly in contexts where national systems are unable to cope with large-scale crises.

#### **d. UN World Food Programme Role as a Capacity Builder**

In its role as a Capacity Builder, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) works to strengthen the ability of local institutions and communities to respond effectively to food insecurity and malnutrition. This role, as outlined in Pease's theory, involves empowering communities and governments by transferring knowledge, improving infrastructure, and developing sustainable systems that reduce long-term dependency on external aid (Pease, 2019).

##### **1) Empowering refugees through pop-up markets to improve the local economy**

The UN WFP has launched a pop-up ‘retail in a box’ initiative in Gorom refugee camp in South Sudan, which could help local businesses and help refugees buy the food they need. Established in 2011 in Gorom, 21 kilometers from the center of the capital Juba, the camp houses 2,200 refugees who fled from Ethiopia's Gambella region (World Food Programme, 2022a). UN WFP installed portable storage containers in the camp, creating a new market for the community, by converting metal structures into cubicles and shops complete with windows, ventilation, doors and adequate safety nets to make the camp residents feel comfortable shopping. Local suppliers were trained and selected by the UN WFP on cash management, food safety and quality, and customer service.

One key effort involves negotiating fixed monthly prices based on prevailing local market rates to ensure that prices remain stable and fair for both refugees and host communities. In addition, the UN WFP conducts regular market monitoring to guarantee the consistent availability of food in the appropriate type, quality, and quantity. A notable example is the Market-in-a-Box initiative, which has gained significant popularity in the Gorom refugee community. This initiative enables refugees to access goods more independently, reducing reliance on direct food aid and promoting self-sufficiency.

The UN WFP consistently seeks innovative solutions to improve access to essential goods while simultaneously supporting local economic recovery. By reviving retail networks and enabling the establishment of local markets, the UN WFP helps restore a sense of normalcy for affected populations, particularly refugees. A key strategy in this effort is the use of cash-based assistance instead of direct food aid whenever feasible. This approach empowers individuals to make their own purchasing decisions, which not only respects their dignity but also stimulates local commerce and strengthens market systems. Through such initiatives, the UN WFP plays a vital role in enhancing community resilience and economic capacity, aligning with its function as a capacity builder in post-crisis settings.

## 2) Integrated Risk Management

The Integrated Risk Management Programme serves as a core component of the UN World Food Programme's (WFP) Strategic Plan for Ethiopia (2020–2025). This program reflects a comprehensive approach to building resilience among populations vulnerable to climate-related shocks. This framework focuses on climate risk management services, capacity building, and nutrition-sensitive social protection for pastoralists, smallholder farmers, refugees, and high-risk communities. As part of this strategy, WFP is implementing two key initiatives: the Rural Resilience Initiative (R4) and the Satellite Index Insurance for Pastoralists in Ethiopia (SIPE). Both programs offer climate insurance solutions that enable communities in drought-prone regions to manage risk, recover from losses, and strengthen their long-term food security.

**Table 1. Difference between R4 and SIPE**

Aspect	Rural Resilience Initiative (R4)	Satellite Index Insurance for Pastoralist in Ethiopia (SIPE)
<b>Target</b>	Smallholder farmers	Pastoralist
<b>Type of Insurance</b>	Weather Index Insurance	Satellite-based vegetation index insurance (NDVI)
<b>Additional Feature</b>	Savings, acces to credit, agricultural training, community risk reduction	Focus on protecting livestock from drought
<b>Main Objective</b>	Enhance farmers resilience to climate risk comprehensively	Protect pastoralist from forage loss due to drought

The R4 program is a program designed to support farmers in dealing with uncertain weather by implementing four approaches to managing risk, namely risk reduction, risk transfer, and risk retention and prudent risk taking. Meanwhile, SIPE is a program designed to measure drought levels using satellite data that can help herders deal with extreme weather risks. UN WFP Ethiopia scaled up its insurance program in 2021, reaching 49,797 poor farmers under R4 and 28,297 herders under SIPE (World Food Programme, 2022b). The table below compares the impact of two major WFP-supported initiatives in Ethiopia aimed at increasing food security and resilience: the Rural Resilience Initiative (R4) and the Satellite Index Insurance for Pastoralists in Ethiopia (SIPE):

**Table 2. Impact of R4 and SIPE**

Impact	Rural Resilience Initiative (R4)	Satellite Index Insurance for Pastoralist in Ethiopia (SIPE)
<b>Hunger Risk Reduction</b>	Reduce farmers vulnerability to crop failure due to extreme weather	Reduce risk of livestock loss, a key food and income source for pastoralist
<b>Household Food Security</b>	Improves food storage through training and post-harvest savings	Support food access by maintaining herding during drought
<b>Stable Income Source</b>	Promotes income diversification via credit and savings	Provides timely cash payout during crises
<b>Crisis Effectiveness</b>	Provides longterm safety nets for climate resilience	Highly effective for shortterm response to extreme drought

In 2021, herders who participated in SIPE insurance received payments from insurance due to severe drought, the total insurance paid was US\$ 981,000 (World Food Programme, 2022b). In 2021, 600 members (World Food Programme, 2022b) were formed, divided into 29 new savings groups with the necessary material and technical support. To improve participants' knowledge in managing natural resources, awareness of grassland management was raised, by supporting the strengthening of the system and the formation of community-based grassland management and governance structures. The provision of corn, corn seeds, and sorghum as agricultural inputs to 400 households (World Food Programme, 2022b) was carried out in order to diversify their livelihoods.

In R4 insurance. The R4 risk reduction component is built on public works included in the National Strategic Safeguards (PSNP), where farmers work during PSNP working days, according to the premium paid to receive insurance coverage. In 2021, WFP trained 33 government experts, including 184 development agents, community development facilitators (CDFs), watershed committees, and extension promoters on environmental and social safeguards and integrated watershed management (IWSM) (World Food Programme, 2022b). Through the IWSM scheme, 2.7 million tree seedlings have been planted in 135

villages in 16 target districts, with a total area of 471 hectares (World Food Programme, 2022b).

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this study indicate that the ongoing conflict and the COVID-19 pandemic significantly worsened the food crisis in Ethiopia, exacerbating the vulnerability of affected populations. In response to these complex challenges, the role of international organizations—particularly the United Nations World Food Programme (UN WFP)—proved essential. Between 2019 and 2022, the UN WFP effectively implemented four of the five roles of international organizations as outlined by Pease: problem solver, capacity builder, collective action mechanism, and aid provider. Notably, the WFP's role as a problem solver was demonstrated through the initiation of a global consultation with Ethiopia's National Disaster Risk Management Commission (NDMRC) in 2019. This engagement fostered renewed governmental commitment to addressing food insecurity and aligned with the broader goal of achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger by 2030.

The UN WFP's role as a collective action mechanism was demonstrated through its collaboration with organizations such as Khalsa Aid International and UNICEF to prevent acute malnutrition in Ethiopia by delivering nutritious food to affected communities. As an aid provider, the WFP focused on distributing nutrient-rich food and implementing school meals programs, particularly targeting vulnerable groups such as children and women. Its capacity-building efforts were reflected in initiatives such as the development of retail markets that empower refugees and engage local entrepreneurs, thereby supporting economic resilience. Additionally, the WFP implemented risk management programs through training on the SIPE (Satellite Index Insurance for Pastoralists in Ethiopia) and R4 Resilience Initiatives, which contribute to enhancing local capacity in anticipating, responding to, and mitigating food crises.

These findings suggest that the WFP's multidimensional role in Ethiopia not only addressed urgent humanitarian needs but also contributed to building structural resilience. However, limitations in funding, access, and political constraints remain challenges that require ongoing attention. This underscores the importance of continued innovation and cross-sector collaboration to enhance the reach and effectiveness of food aid interventions in protracted crisis settings.

## Suggestions

Based on the findings of this research, it is recommended that the WFP pursue further innovations within its food aid programs, particularly by strengthening investment strategies and enhancing collaboration with a broader range of international and local partner organizations. Such cooperation can increase access to funding and resources, enabling the WFP to more effectively meet humanitarian needs in regions affected by food insecurity. Furthermore, expanded partnerships have the potential to extend the geographic reach and operational impact of WFP's assistance efforts.

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