

Role of World Food Programme (WFP) on Combating Food Crisis in Yemen from 2015 to 2019

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Abstract: This paper argues that the World Food Programme (WFP) plays a significant role in combating the crisis in Yemen as one of the Islamic countries that recently considered the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. However, there haven't been many researchers who specifically explore how WFP, an international organization that works for combating the food crisis, implements itself and its programs to solve Yemen's problem. To clearly explain this gap, the concept of implementation of international organization will be applied to see how WFP implements its program to Yemen both by managerial and enforcement approach. While referring to several WFP reports and other research publications, the qualitative descriptive method will be used to describe the subject and object of the research paper. It is found that the World Food Programme (WFP) has successfully contributed to the decline of the food crisis in Yemen from 2015 to 2019. Its aid and funding program partnered with several international organizations could save a large number of Yemenis who are trapped in long-lasting crises and conflict.

Keywords: WFP, Yemen, Food Crisis, Implementation of International Organization.

1. Introduction

Being a country where the worst humanitarian crisis happened, Yemen contributes to the large number of people with food insecure especially in Arab Countries. Moreover, the number is getting larger as the escalation of civil conflict between the Houthi Movement and this Saudi Arab-backed government rises. As a result, there was a significant increase around 63.7% and reached 18 million people who were food insecure for only less than 3 years after the conflict escalated



(Alles, 2017). It is also found that the number of food insecure people from Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) phase 3 who are facing a food security 'crisis' and phase 4 for approximately 5,995,827 people who currently are among the worst affected by the civil conflict. In addition, those people are not living in a single city, instead they are spreaded to several cities throughout the country.

As a result, the country where most of the society are Moslem really depends on emergency assistance from both international and national actors. WFP, acting as one of the organizations whose mission is to combat the food crisis, plays an important role here. To understand this issue, the authors decided to apply the concept of 'Implementation of International Organizations' (Joachim, et. al., 2007). Furthermore, the authors will specifically focus on the enforcement and managerial approach of this concept.

2. Literature Review

Unlike other food crisis issues, despite being the worst humanitarian crisis, Yemen crisis becomes one of countries which has been rarely explored and researched. This finally leads to the least Yemen issue publications, especially those related to the food crisis. The authors found that only 1 researcher who specifically wrote about this issue. That writing composed by (Pangestu, 2019) provides support for this issue, suggesting that WFP plays an important role in combating food insecurity in Yemen through Emergency Operation (EMOP) and Special Operation (SO) by focusing at first on the most vulnerable people and saving their lives. It is expected to decrease the child mortality rate, combat micronutrient deficiency, and combat a variety of diseases. On the other hand, Pangestu did not explore how WFP implemented its program, instead Pangestu only focused on how as an international organization, WFP helped Yemen in the scope of food assistance.

Another publication that supports the author's view is Sani's writing (Sani, 2020) which specifically wrote about how WFP partnered with other international organizations such as UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) in distributing humanitarian assistance in order to achieve food security in South Sudan. In addition, WFP also partnered with World Health Organization (WHO) and UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) to create utility for malnourished children and people with disease like HIV. The writing provides an additional view that conducting partnership with relevant actors could ease WFP in achieving its mission which is to achieve food security and zero hunger.

3. Method

To enable explanative description about how WFP implements its program in Yemen, authors will apply qualitative and descriptive methods to this issue. Then, the authors decided to collect data by doing library research and finding academic publications related to WFP's role in combating the food crisis in Yemen. WFP official situation reports become major data that the authors will use to explore the data of WFP action in Yemen. In addition, interview recordings published by WFP also become another major data that authors will use to find the best view of this issue. Both interview recordings and official situation reports from WFP are trustworthy and valid to be the major data for this paper. To analyze this issue, authors will at first find how WFP implements its program generally, what method or approach used to run the program in the recipient country. Then, authors will apply the concept to see clearer and deeper and find more objective results.

4. Results and Discussion

First and foremost, to analyze WFP's role as an international organization in combating the food crisis in Yemen, it is important to elaborate at first the concept that authors will apply. Implementation of International Organization concept (Joachim, Reinalda, and Verbeek 2007) consist of enforcement, managerial and normative approach, however the authors of this paper consider and will only apply both enforcement and managerial based on the issue analyzed. Enforcement approach, as it shows on the name, explains that the method of implementation tends to be forcing the recipient countries in order to apply international organization's program to their domestic fields. One only way to use this approach is to give sanctions to the recipient countries when they are not in line with the value of international organization or did not implement the program effectively. Sanctions usually could be done only by naming and shaming the recipient countries to the international field as they stop implementing the value and program. As this significantly affects the image of recipient countries, they will tend to avoid this sanction. In addition, another form of sanction is to give economic or even military sanctions to the recipient countries such as the discontinuation of aid distribution or money lending. This method also is expected to increase the probability of the recipient country to implement the organization program. If refusing to implement the program is costly, the recipient countries will always try to implement it.

In addition, another method is through a managerial approach. This approach emphasizes on transparency, rule interpretation, problem solving, and capacity building of recipient countries. While also emphasizing on managerial situations, Joachim believed that international actors tend to create cooperative situations and find solutions through consultation and joint analysis. Joachim also believed that international organizations with their agencies play an important role in the implementation of international treaties, because they consist of the experts that could assist the technical matters, build the capacity of human resource and distribute financial aid for the recipient countries. This approach shows that international organizations tend to be open for another actor. One of the ways to use this approach is to monitor all kinds of activities related to the implementation or execution of the program or value by recipient countries. Furthermore, this method monitors how far the progress of the program is achieved and what challenges the recipient countries face through relevant monitoring tools or programs. Another is to conduct partnerships with relevant actors related to the program. If an international organization would like to distribute humanitarian aid, usually its partner would be actors providing support for transportation or humanitarian aid service.

4.1. Sanctions and Implementation in Yemen

Distribution of Foods in Yemen recently became a common program implemented by international as well as national actors. However, due to the act of rebels and some irresponsible society in Sana'a who in the end kept, hid, and did not continue the distribution to other people or forcibly take the food from those who needed it, WFP finally decided to stop distributing aid to that city temporarily in 2019. As a result, the 850.000 conflict-affected population in Sana'a did not get humanitarian aid for a short time (WFP, 2019). This temporary discontinuation of aid distribution is one form of sanction given by the WFP to Yemen and becoming the enforcement approach. Following this, WFP expects Yemen to be more serious and stricter to solve this distribution problem if the

discontinuation occurs in order to get more aid from WFP. This discontinuation of aid distribution also is relevant with article XII on WFP General Regulations and Rules which stated that recipient countries will be responsible for execution of program, project, and aid distribution. On top of that, however, the executive director is still needed to be responsible for supervising the program. The authors believe that this discontinuation sanction will force Yemen to run the program implemented by WFP because of the cost and benefit of this program. The cost is that Yemen will not get aid distribution and it could lead Yemen to be more vulnerable, could not protect its society as it needs to, there will be loss for Yemen, and it will be difficult to develop its own country.

4.2. Monitoring Program and Yemen Situation Update

WFP in implementing its program through managerial approach uses a monitoring program. It specifically monitors the situation as well as its activity in Yemen related to the crisis. In order to monitor the most updated situation in Yemen and its program, run by the Yemen Government, WFP built monitoring tools named Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Project (VAM). VAM is analysis and monitoring tools which are used by WFP to analyze and frame food security in certain areas. To gain the most objective and concrete data, WFP asks some critical questions as listed in table 2 to Yemenis and officials in Yemen (WFP 2015). In a certain time, as a response to the technological advancement recently, WFP developed VAM into digitally more advanced tools named mobile Vulnerability and Mapping Project (mVAM). Not only as a digitized version of VAM, mVAM is very helpful for countries where civil war or conflict happened because it uses digital media and long-distance interview methods such as through phone call, SMS, live telephone interview and interactive voice response system (IVR) (Bauer, 2016). This VAM tool provides WFP information of what needs to be prioritized and what action should be taken at first in combating the food crisis whether through distributing humanitarian aid or through teaching basic knowledge to survive in a conflict and crisis area. Furthermore, the output of this interview and monitoring process will be merged in a single report which is published monthly by WFP in its official websites. Until December 2019, WFP successfully composed more than 50 bulletins and it is still consistently published until now. Specifically, most of the content of this report includes food consumption, coping strategy and real time conditions of food insecurity in Yemen. The information of this report is not only available for those who have an internet connection, but also for Yemenis who contact WFP staff through cell phone.

Table 1: VAM Critical Questions asked by WFP

Questions	Data Gained
Who are included in food insecure people?	Food insecure people in Yemen correctly identified
Why are they food insecure?	backgrounds of food insecurity in Yemen
How many people are food insecure?	Number of food insecure people in Yemen
What must be done to save them?	Solutions for saving Yemenis
Is it possible for the situation to change?	Possibilities in changing situation
What are the risks and challenges faced?	Risk and challenges faced by Yemenis

Another method of monitoring activity that WFP conducts is Market Analysis and Monitoring. This tool is basically one of VAM's features, but it is more specific to things related to the market. It could specifically become tools for noting market activity such as the decline of commodity price, its availability, and how the price of those commodities competes in the international market (WFP, 2015). Then, the output (information) of this market analysis and monitoring is also written in its monthly report named Monthly Market Watch (WFP, 2019). The report mostly consists of information about the economic condition of the country in general, how food and fuel commodity price trends in the market are changing, availability of those commodities and what has not been in the market. Moreover, the report also consists of Alert for Price Spikes to monitor which commodity that prices higher than as it usually does and finally stop increasing it or change it to the normal price as it used to. As a result, there will not be people who sell the commodity at a top price even if the availability is very limited. This program really helps Yemenis especially for those who could not afford to buy basic needs. On top of that, this report also provides information about the map of each market so the monitoring process will be more effective. The last form of monitoring done by WFP is through the Yemen Situation Report. This monthly report more specifically focuses on the situation update in Yemen regarding its food security and all things related to it. This includes data about the number of food insecure people, number of people seeking for shelter (refugee) and report of WFP humanitarian aid distribution in Yemen (WFP, 2015).

4.3 . Being Transparent and Conducting Partnership with Relevant Actor

Being transparent is one of the components in a managerial approach. There are several activities which show its transparency to the public. First, WFP provides information through monthly situation reports about program plans which will be implemented in the future. One of the programs that WFP stated in the report is the increase of humanitarian aid to Yemenis (WFP 2015). Furthermore, programs which have been implemented are also explained in the report. WFP always shows what problems are found in order to evaluate and get better results. In addition, WFP is also very transparent to its financial matters by providing information about how much budget needed for the program, how much has been spent and where the budget comes from. (WFP 2017) Besides being transparent, conducting partnership is also another form of strategy in managerial approach in terms of implementing international organizations in the domestic field. By working together with experts in certain aspects WFP more likely succeed in achieving the better result of the program in that aspect. In the Yemen issue, WFP has conducted partnerships with both national and international actors. To begin with, WFP runs the School Feeding Programme with the Ministry of Education Yemen Arab Republic and School Feeding and Humanitarian Relief Project (SFHRP). This program which has been implemented since 2015 could successfully provide nutritious snacks and bars to approximately 680,000 students in 1600 schools from 32 areas in 16 provinces until 2019 (WFP 2019). Another international partner that collaborates with WFP is Food and Agriculture Organizations (FAO) in Food Security and Agriculture Cluster (FSAC). This program aims to increase the access to food of vulnerable people across the world, to increase their family income, and rehabilitation of food security assets in areas with high percentage of food insecurity. (Food Security Cluster n.d).

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, by applying the method of implementation of international organization specifically in enforcement and managerial approach, the authors found that WFP used the method of giving sanctions to recipient countries, in this case, Yemen, through discontinuation of aid distribution. This program aims to make Yemen become more serious about managing WFP programs. Another method is through the monitoring process by Vulnerability and Mapping Project (VAM) and Yemen Situation Report. The data gained from this program will be publicly shared and become reference for creating the better and more effective program for WFP. WFP is also very transparent to its activity such as its program plan, evaluation, and its financial matters, as a result they tend to cooperate with another relevant actor to get more assistance in order to achieve WFP main goal which is to achieve zero hunger.

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