Negative: Cargo Preferences for Food Aid – Good + Counterplan

By Katherine Baker

Affirmative plan repeals the "Cargo Preferences for Food Aid" (CPFA) policy, which requires 50% of the bags of food donated overseas by the federal government to be shipped on US-flagged vessels. Its goal is to reduce the time lag and cost of food aid (and thus allow more aid to flow and get there faster) by opening up more ships to be available for aid transportation.

As long as the AFF Plan is dealing only with the ships used to transport the grain, it is probably not going to lose on Topicality, since federal regulation of the CPFA falls under the Dept of Transportation. If the AFF tries to increase or modify the food itself, that should be challenged for Topicality by the Neg, since that's a foreign aid policy, not a transportation policy. The quantity, type and sources of food aid fall under the jurisdiction of other agencies like the US Dept of Agriculture (USDA) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

This brief contains an optional Counterplan that argues that the real problem in our foreign aid is not the ships transporting the grain but the fact that current law requires that we transport bags of grain all the way from the US to poor countries. Instead, we should be buying (or giving money for local aid agencies to buy) the food locally in the regions near where the need is. The only reason we carry bags of grain across the ocean from the US is because years ago farm state congressmen and farm lobbyists insisted that we do so, in order to drive up demand for US grain. It was never a good food aid policy. Much of the time, people who are starving in poor countries live not far from where adequate supplies of grain are being grown. They either can't afford to buy it or for some reason the grain can't get to them (blocked by war, bad roads, etc.). Sending free US bags of grain into a poor region undercuts the local farmers, because they can't compete with grain priced at zero. When local farms go out of business, the region will have long-term famine that will be even worse than whatever they are having now. The Counterplan changes a Food Aid policy (not a transportation policy, so it's not topical) to require food to be purchased locally whenever possible. It solves for getting more food to more people (since local food is cheaper than US food) and it avoids the disadvantages of the AFF (and the Status Quo) about hurting poor farmers in poor countries. Under the Counterplan, we don't change the US-ship requirement (to avoid Disads to the shipping industry) but we do change our bad Food Aid policy and get more food faster to more people.

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Negative: Cargo Preferences for Food Aid – Good + Counterplan

NEGATIVE PHILOSOPHY: Local Food Purchase

The Affirmative team has incorrectly analyzed the harm and therefore cannot solve for it in the best way. Instead of hauling bags of grain all the way across the world from the United States (regardless of who owns the ships), we should get the food locally and closer to the starving people. We need to recognize the real cause of the harm isn't how the grain is transported, it's the fact that we're transporting it at all.

THE REAL HARM: Requiring food to be bought in the US and transported to poor countries is the real problem.

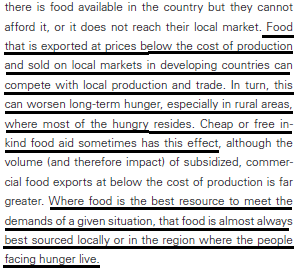
Link: Shipping US food overseas damages poor countries and discourages them from investing in their own agricultural development

Brett Schaefer & Brian Riley 2013 (Schaefer - master's degree in international development from the School of International Service at American University. Riley - master’s degree in economics from the University of Southern California) " U.S. Food Aid Should Focus on Combating Hunger and Malnutrition in Poor Nations" 15 Apr 2013 <http://www.heritage.org/global-politics/report/us-food-aid-should-focus-combating-hunger-and-malnutrition-poor-nations>

Reform of U.S. food assistance programs would improve efficiency and allow the U.S. to do more with less. Requiring USAID to purchase and ship U.S. food is shortsighted because it undermines agricultural markets in destination or neighboring countries, discouraging agricultural investment and development. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, “The empirical evidence shows that food prices almost invariably fall in local markets immediately after a food aid distribution.”

Impact: Long-term hunger gets worse. Local sourcing is almost always the best option to solve.

Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy 2005 (written by Sophia Murphy, Director of IATP Trade Program and Kathleen McAfee, Visiting Scholar in Geography at Univ. of Calif.-Berkeley) US FOOD AID – TIME TO GET IT RIGHT, July 2005 <https://www.iatp.org/files/451_2_73512.pdf>



THE COUNTERPLAN: We do exactly that. Instead of the Affirmative Plan, Congress, the President, and all necessary federal agencies do the following:

1. Rules requiring buying and shipping fixed percentages of US food are abolished, and all US food aid programs are directed to use local or regional sourcing whenever it is available.  
2. Funding from current budgets, Counterplan has a net savings of money  
3. Enforcement through existing means  
4. Counterplan takes effect the same day as the date mentioned in the Affirmative plan.  
5. All affirmative speeches may clarify  
6. No changes in US transportation policy. We change only food aid purchasing policies, not transportation.

COUNTERPLAN ADVANTAGES

ADVANTAGE 1. Faster Food

Buying food locally cuts 14 weeks off delivery time

Olga Khazan, 2013. (staff writer at The Atlantic.) “Here Are the U.S. States That Benefit Most From America's Wacky International Food-Aid Program” APR 5, 2013 <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/04/here-are-the-us-states-that-benefit-most-from-americas-wacky-international-food-aid-program/274709/>

What's more, buying food locally shaves 14 weeks off the delivery time, which can be crucial during a famine. "I've run these operations, and I know that food aid often gets there after everyone's dead," Andrew Natsios, who ran the U.S. Agency for International Development under President George W. Bush, told NPR.

ADVANTAGE 2. Cuts Costs

Shipping costs 34% more than buying locally

Dana Hughes, 2009. (Reporter for ABC News) “U.S. Food Aid Contributing to Africa's Hunger?” Oct. 29, 2009 <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/Health/us-food-aid-contributing-africas-hunger/story?id=8939151>

A GAO report published last month investigating international food assistance concluded that U.S. food aid shipped to 10 different Sub-Saharan African countries costs 34 percent more than food bought locally and regionally by the World Food Program.

ADVANTAGE 3. Seventeen million Saved

Link: Aid practitioners agree: we should buy locally, since we can get more food for the same budget

Brett Schaefer and Bryan Riley, 2013. (Schaefer is the Jay Kingham Fellow in International Regulatory Affairs at Heritage's Margaret Thatcher Center for Freedom. Riley is Jay Van Andel senior analyst in trade policy at Heritage Foundation.) “U.S. Food Aid Should Focus on Combating Hunger and Malnutrition in Poor Nations” April 15, 2013 <http://www.heritage.org/global-politics/report/us-food-aid-should-focus-combating-hunger-and-malnutrition-poor-nations>

Aid practitioners, including Bread for the World, CARE, and Save the Children, support reform. So do Nobel Laureate Norman Borlaug and former Bush Administration USAID Administrator Andrew Natsios, who jointly wrote, “Purchasing food locally simplifies the process, cuts down the time delay in delivery, reduces the logistical risks, and saves transport costs. These savings can be used to buy more food.” Indeed, President Bush proposed similar reforms in 2008, such as allowing $300 million food aid dollars to be given in the form of cash.

Impact: Buying food locally feeds 17 million more people per year

Olga Khazan, 2013. (staff writer at The Atlantic.) “Here Are the U.S. States That Benefit Most From America's Wacky International Food-Aid Program” APR 5, 2013 <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/04/here-are-the-us-states-that-benefit-most-from-americas-wacky-international-food-aid-program/274709/>

On one side, a coalition of humanitarian groups hopes the 2014 federal budget -- which should be announced Wednesday -- changes the current, decades-old system run by the Department of Agriculture so that emergency food would instead be bought in the markets of the country it's intended to help, rather than in the U.S. This, proponents say, will be more efficient (no more shipping food over thousands of miles of ocean), better for local producers and growers, and less disruptive to the food economies of developing countries. According to Oxfam, simply buying these grains from say, Niger rather than Nebraska, would save so much money that aid groups could feed an extra 17 million people per year.

COUNTERPLAN ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE

A/T “Already allows more food to be bought from developing countries”- Most of budget not affected.

Claire Provost and Felicity Lawrence, 2012 (Provost worked on the Guardian's Global development site including as a data journalist following the money in international aid; former Bertha fellow at the Centre for Investigative Journalism. Lawrence - special correspondent for the Guardian.) “US food aid programme criticised as 'corporate welfare' for grain giants” 18 July 2012 <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2012/jul/18/us-multinationals-control-food-aid> (brackets added)

In January, USAid [US Agency for International Development, part of the US State Department] revised its purchasing rules to allow the agency to buy most goods and services from developing countries. But the bulk of US food aid, which falls under the agriculture rather than the aid budget, was not covered by these changes.

A/T "Hurts US farmers” - US farmers no longer need the help, like they did in the 1950s

Olga Khazan, 2013. (staff writer at The Atlantic.) “Here Are the U.S. States That Benefit Most From America's Wacky International Food-Aid Program” APR 5, 2013 <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/04/here-are-the-us-states-that-benefit-most-from-americas-wacky-international-food-aid-program/274709/>

Meanwhile, charity groups rallying for a change say that the current setup is outdated. In the 1950s, the federal government wanted to boost struggling farmers' profits, so they bought up surplus grain and -- realizing they then had way too much of it on their hands -- decided to ship it overseas to needy countries. And even though the government changed its farm policy in the early 2000s, we're still managing foreign aid the way we did 60 years ago.

Buying from developing countries solves problem

Olga Khazan, 2013. (staff writer at The Atlantic.) “Here Are the U.S. States That Benefit Most From America's Wacky International Food-Aid Program” APR 5, 2013 <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/04/here-are-the-us-states-that-benefit-most-from-americas-wacky-international-food-aid-program/274709/>

The downside? Buying food in developing countries to then give back to vulnerable groups -- displaced people, refugees, malnourished children -- would be much, much cheaper than buying it in the U.S., so aid dollars could theoretically be stretched further. Cereal prices alone are 53 percent lower when bought locally (LRP), versus in the U.S. (transoceanic), according to a paper by three Cornell University researchers:

Cheaper to buy from region

Dana Hughes, 2009. (Reporter for ABC News) “U.S. Food Aid Contributing to Africa's Hunger?” Oct. 29, 2009 <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/Health/us-food-aid-contributing-africas-hunger/story?id=8939151>

U.S. law requires that food aid money be spent on food grown in the U.S., at least half of it must be packed in the U.S. and most of it must be transported in U.S. ships. The Oxfam report, "Band Aids and Beyond," claims that is far more expensive and time consuming than buying food in the region.

Buying food locally instead of US cost up to 50% less

Brett Schaefer and Bryan Riley, 2013. Brett D. Schaefer is the Jay Kingham Fellow in International Regulatory Affairs at Heritage's Margaret Thatcher Center for Freedom. Bryan Riley is a full-time advocate for free trade through his research and writing for The Heritage Foundation. He brings years of experience in trade and economic issues to his role as Jay Van Andel senior analyst in trade policy.) “U.S. Food Aid Should Focus on Combating Hunger and Malnutrition in Poor Nations” April 15, 2013 <http://www.heritage.org/global-politics/report/us-food-aid-should-focus-combating-hunger-and-malnutrition-poor-nations>

U.S. law requires most P.L. 480 food assistance be purchased from U.S. producers and shipped on U.S.-flagged vessels. This policy of purchasing food in the U.S. and shipping it thousands of miles to a crisis location is inefficient, costly, and shortsighted. Citing studies by Cornell University, Lancet medical journal, and the Government Accountability Office, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah noted that “buying food locally—instead of in the United States—costs much less—as much as 50 percent for cereals and as much as 31 percent for pulses. That’s because the average prices of buying and delivering American food across an ocean has increased from $390 per metric ton in 2001 to $1,180 today.”

Undermine long-term development strategies

Dana Hughes, 2009. (Reporter for ABC News) “U.S. Food Aid Contributing to Africa's Hunger?” Oct. 29, 2009 <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/Health/us-food-aid-contributing-africas-hunger/story?id=8939151>

American aid policies also undermine long-term development strategies that could break the cycle of drought and starvation in Ethiopia. "It's like having a health service that's running on emergency ambulances to deal with the sick all the time," said Gluck. "You can't just deal with the problem. You need to treat the underlying causes, otherwise you'll be locked into this endless cycle of foreign food donors."

Buying locally makes transport cheaper and easier

Dana Hughes, 2009. (Reporter for ABC News) “U.S. Food Aid Contributing to Africa's Hunger?” Oct. 29, 2009 <http://abcnews.go.com/WN/Health/us-food-aid-contributing-africas-hunger/story?id=8939151>

“The median time to deliver emergency aid from the U.S. is just under five months," said Barrett. "At a time when food aid is more important than ever before… we don't follow best global practices." Some of those best practices include buying food to distribute locally or regionally. For example, instead of shipping grain to Kenya from Iowa, USAID, the U.S. agency in charge of humanitarian food distribution, could buy it from Uganda, or use cheaper and easier ways to transport the food to its destination, allowing more money to be spent on the aid and less on logistics.

INHERENCY

1. Warehouses solve

Aid storage warehouses solve for the supposed problem of cargo preference delays

Maritime Executive, 2016. (The Maritime Executive publishing company was founded in 1997. Its mission is to provide industry leaders with in-depth analysis of maritime issues and to report the news affecting the global maritime community.) “Food for Peace Program Remains in Forefront of U.S. Maritime Issues” 2013-07-16 <https://maritime-executive.com/article/Food-for-Peace-Program-Remains-in-Forefront-of-US-Maritime-Issues-2013-07-16>

At the same time, USAID has for years ignored U.S. maritime industry and other government authorities input and advice as to how to make the program more efficient and effective. USAID sees the U.S. flag industry as a direct impediment to their overall program operation and administration. USAID unfairly blames the U.S. maritime industry for high transportation costs and excessive delays in getting relief cargoes to the people in need. However, they fail to mention that USAID maintains five international food aid storage warehouses for quick response. Meanwhile, the Office of the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) just released a report on June 27 that found “poor coordination, waste, and mismanagement” of USAID’s agricultural programs in the region.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

Number of people in crisis exaggerated.

Rasna Warah, 2012. (Rasna Warah, a columnist with Kenya’s Daily Nation newspaper, is the author of the recently published book Red Soil and Roasted Maize: Selected essays and articles on contemporary Kenya) “Don’t feed the world? How food aid can do more harm than good” January 2, 2012 <http://www.redpepper.org.uk/dont-feed-the-world/>

The UN uses a scale developed by the Food and Agricultural Organisation-managed Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit to determine levels of food insecurity. This ranges from ‘generally food secure’ to ‘famine/humanitarian catastrophe’. The unit’s estimates for the number of Somali people ‘in crisis’ in the period August–September 2011 indicate that less than half a million people – not the four million cited by the press – were experiencing famine. About 3.5 million people were experiencing some form of food insecurity but they were not dying of starvation as widely reported. And some of the food insecurity was related to inflation and rising food prices, not necessarily to drought.

Stopping food aid did not trigger famine

Henri Astier, 2006. (BBC news reporter.) “Can aid do more harm than good?” 1 February 2006. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4185550.stm>

Take the case of Zambia, which at the time banned aid because it worried about genetically-modified US maize. Donors were aghast. "Leaders who refuse to let their people have food, should be put in the dock for the most serious crimes against humanity," the US ambassador to Zambia said. But then something strange happened: nothing. Cutting off supplies did not trigger famine.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Military

Link: Cargo preference protects our national defense

Skip Witunski, 2017. (national president of the Navy League of the United States.) “The U.S. Merchant Marine serves an integral role in the Food for Peace program” April 28, 2017. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-us-merchant-marine-serves-an-integral-role-in-the-food-for-peace-program/2017/04/28/5777f79a-2b49-11e7-9081-f5405f56d3e4_story.html?utm_term=.0366dba034c7>

Our nation’s cargo-preference programs, including the Food for Peace program, are instrumental to sustaining the U.S. Merchant Marine and maintaining our national defense sealift capability, with the attendant billions saved. The minor savings from cutting cargo preference must be viewed with the huge cost of acquiring sealift capability by other means and the damage to our U.S. Merchant Marine that would occur.

Link: Helps the military

Samuel Oakford, 2017. (Freelance journalist based in New York, and regular IRIN contributor.) “The battle over the future of US food aid” 8 August 2017 <https://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2017/08/08/battle-over-future-us-food-aid>

Cargo preference law promotes both national security and commercial interests: it is intended to ensure logistics capacity for the military and benefit the maritime industry. Only 120 vessels from some 40 companies are eligible to carry US food aid.

Link: US controlled food shipments important for national security

Patricia Zengerle, 2017. (Reuters reporter“Exclusive: Trump drops plans for order tightening food aid shipping rules – sources” JUNE 30, 2017 <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-trump-aid/exclusive-trump-drops-plans-for-order-tightening-food-aid-shipping-rules-sources-idUSKBN19L2VU>

Supporters say Trump’s initiative would not only create new U.S. jobs in the shipping industry but that U.S.-controlled food shipments are important for national security because the U.S. fleet could be transferred to the military in case of a conflict.

Link: Reduce military sealift capacity

Sasha Chavkin, 2013. (International Consortium of Investigative Journalists) “How shipping unions sunk food aid reform” November 6, 2013 <https://www.publicintegrity.org/2013/11/06/13687/how-shipping-unions-sunk-food-aid-reform>

The other main argument against the changes is that they would reduce military sealift capacity by driving U.S.-flagged commercial ships known as the merchant marine out of business. Advocates say that in Iraq and Afghanistan, 90 percent of shipping supplies were carried by the merchant marine. “If you start hollowing out the U.S. merchant marine, and you start with eight to 10 ships, its going to call into question whether merchant marine operators have a viable future in the U.S.,” Wytkind said.

Link: Why target struggling merchant marines

Sasha Chavkin, 2013. (International Consortium of Investigative Journalists) “How shipping unions sunk food aid reform” November 6, 2013 <https://www.publicintegrity.org/2013/11/06/13687/how-shipping-unions-sunk-food-aid-reform>

Food aid reform advocates are trying to get part of the changes that were rejected in June back into the farm bill or the FY 2014 budget. Their current goal is for USAID to have the option of spending up to 20 percent of the Food for Peace program, in addition to 20 percent of overall food aid that is already in more flexible programs, on cash aid or local purchases. Shipping unions and their allies question why the struggling merchant marines should be a target for reductions, and are gathering their strength to ensure that enough liberal Democrats line up once again to sink the proposal. “We’re not shy,” Wytkind said. “All these battles are all about the same issue, when you start getting into reform debates like this. They’re about whether we’re going to have a viable US transportation industry that supports good middle-class jobs.”

Brink: Past reduction in cargo preference resulted in US flag fleet decline

Skip Witunski, 2017. (The writer is national president of the Navy League of the United States.) “The U.S. Merchant Marine serves an integral role in the Food for Peace program” April 28, 2017. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-us-merchant-marine-serves-an-integral-role-in-the-food-for-peace-program/2017/04/28/5777f79a-2b49-11e7-9081-f5405f56d3e4_story.html?utm_term=.0366dba034c7>

The U.S.-flag international fleet has declined steadily in recent years because of a 2012 reduction in cargo preference for Food for Peace. We should reinstate the 75 percent preference for international food aid, reversing the damage to a national capability through shortsighted savings.

Impact: US Merchant Marine vital for US military efforts

Skip Witunski, 2017. (The writer is national president of the Navy League of the United States.) “The U.S. Merchant Marine serves an integral role in the Food for Peace program” April 28, 2017. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-us-merchant-marine-serves-an-integral-role-in-the-food-for-peace-program/2017/04/28/5777f79a-2b49-11e7-9081-f5405f56d3e4_story.html?utm_term=.0366dba034c7>

The U.S. Merchant Marine is a valuable national asset that has always been there for the United States in times of war and national emergency. The U.S.-flag commercial fleet carried more than 90 percent of the materiel to Iraq and Afghanistan, and the Defense Department has repeatedly stated that its reliance on this public-private partnership saves American taxpayers billions of dollars.

Impact; Ships crucial for emergency sealift capacity

Maritime Executive, 2016. (The Maritime Executive publishing company was founded in 1997. Its mission is to provide industry leaders with in-depth analysis of maritime issues and to report the news affecting the global maritime community.) “Food for Peace Program Remains in Forefront of U.S. Maritime Issues” 2013-07-16 <https://maritime-executive.com/article/Food-for-Peace-Program-Remains-in-Forefront-of-US-Maritime-Issues-2013-07-16>

Currently, the U.S. food aid portion for cargo preference is approximately 11% with military cargoes making up about 85% and civilian agency cargo (such as Export-Import Bank financed cargoes) coming in at 4%. With the continual draw-down of U.S. war efforts throughout the world, military cargo is steadily decreasing thus putting even more pressure on the other components of cargo preference. Many of these ships and crews are the very same that the Department of Defense depends upon for wartime and emergency sealift capabilities. AMC continues to press forward to make the case and coordinate maritime industry efforts to keep our U.S. food aid program and all other cargo preference programs in place.

1. Decreased food aid

Link: Food Aid needs special interests

Samuel Oakford, 2017. (Freelance journalist based in New York, and regular IRIN contributor. IRIN delivers unique, authoritative and independent reporting from the frontlines of crises to inspire and produce a more effective humanitarian response.) “The battle over the future of US food aid” 8 August 2017 <https://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2017/08/08/battle-over-future-us-food-aid>

Moving away from in-kind food aid threatens the revenue of both shipping and farming industries. Schoeneman, who spoke in June on behalf of industry lobby USA Maritime, urged Congress to “ignore the siren calls for ‘greater flexibility’ from the so-called ‘food aid reform advocates’.” He said further reforms could upset carefully intertwined domestic interests that ensure food aid survives. Politically, the argument goes, food aid needs special interests to avoid being cut.

Link: special interests prevent spending cuts

Samuel Oakford, 2017. (Freelance journalist based in New York, and regular IRIN contributor. IRIN delivers unique, authoritative and independent reporting from the frontlines of crises to inspire and produce a more effective humanitarian response.) “The battle over the future of US food aid” 8 August 2017 <https://www.irinnews.org/analysis/2017/08/08/battle-over-future-us-food-aid>

“For more than 60 years, this domestic support has shielded Food for Peace from harsh spending cuts and efforts to significantly change the program,” Schoeneman noted.

Brink: Cuts are being proposed

Jeremy Konyndyk, 2017. (senior policy fellow at Center for Global Development; previously director for foreign disaster assistance at US Agency for International Development at the State Department) “'Trump's aid budget is breathtakingly cruel – cuts like these will kill people'’ May 31, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2017/may/31/trumps-aid-budget-is-breathtakingly-cruel-cuts-like-these-will-kill-people>

President Trump’s new budget plans take particular aim at foreign aid spending, proposing an overall cut [of 32%](http://uk.reuters.com/article/us-usa-budget-foreign-aid-idUKKBN18J2DC) to all civilian foreign affairs spending. Facing extensive criticism from Republicans and Democrats alike for the budget’s draconian vision, Trump’s budget chief Mick Mulvaney defended the proposal by arguing it should be judged not “[by how much money we spend, but by how many people we actually help](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/22/us/politics/trump-budget-cuts.html).”

Impact: Large cuts kill

Trumps proposed cuts would cut nearly 30 million from food aid

Jeremy Konyndyk, 2017. (senior policy fellow at Center for Global Development; previously director for foreign disaster assistance at US Agency for International Development at the State Dept) “'Trump's aid budget is breathtakingly cruel – cuts like these will kill people'’ May 31, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2017/may/31/trumps-aid-budget-is-breathtakingly-cruel-cuts-like-these-will-kill-people>

Let’s not sugarcoat this: humanitarian aid is lifesaving assistance, so cuts like these will kill people. As the head of foreign disaster response for the Obama administration, I had to weigh up budget trade-offs every year, knowing that saving lives in one region meant we would save fewer elsewhere. But I never faced trade-offs this extreme. Laying waste to US relief aid would be hard to defend even if the world were in decent shape. But proposing this amidst the worst slate of humanitarian crises in recent decades is breathtakingly cruel. This budget would cut nearly 30 million people from food aid rolls even as aid groups struggle to hold off four potential famines. It would undermine refugee aid even as global refugee numbers hit peaks not seen since the second world war and new South Sudanese refugees flee their country by the tens of thousands. And it would obliterate funding for the health, clean water, nutrition, and shelter programmes that keep victims of conflicts and natural disasters alive.

1. Jobs

Link and Impact: Over 33,000 jobs rely solely on transport of US food aid

Sasha Chavkin, 2013. (International Consortium of Investigative Journalists) “How shipping unions sunk food aid reform” November 6, 2013 <https://www.publicintegrity.org/2013/11/06/13687/how-shipping-unions-sunk-food-aid-reform>

A statement by USAMaritime, an industry group that represents shipping companies and unions, states that “over 33,000 Americans’ jobs depend upon the transportation of U.S. food aid alone.”

Impact: Shipments of food aid support 33,000 US jobs

Claire Provost, 2012. (Claire Provost is a journalist who worked on the Guardian's Global development site including as a data journalist following the money in international aid. She was a Bertha fellow at the Centre for Investigative Journalism (2014-2016).) “US food aid: the special interests blocking reform” July 19, 2012. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2012/jul/19/us-food-aid-special-interests-reform>

Last month, President Barack Obama lowered the share of US food aid that must be transported on US ships from 75% to 50%; USA Maritime, a coalition of shipping companies and maritime trade and labour associations, was quick to protest. It said shipments of international food aid support 33,000 US jobs and help maintain a merchant marine that can be called upon by the department of defence in cases of war or national emergency.

“Few jobs would be lost” Response: Does not consider multiplier affect

Sasha Chavkin, 2013. (International Consortium of Investigative Journalists) “How shipping unions sunk food aid reform” November 6, 2013 <https://www.publicintegrity.org/2013/11/06/13687/how-shipping-unions-sunk-food-aid-reform>

This figure has been called into question. When congressional supporters of food aid reform asked the Pentagon how many shipping jobs would be lost, it estimated that only 360 to 495 mariners on a total of eight to 11 ships would be affected. Wytkind noted that this figure does not consider the multiplier effects of the initial jobs being lost, nor the broader threat posed to the U.S. shipping industry as a whole.

1. US food shipments harm farmers in poor countries.

[If running the Counterplan, it specifically solves for this by avoiding whenever possible transporting bags of grain from the US into poor countries. The CPlan buys it locally within the poor region instead. This works better because often the cause of hunger is not that the food doesn't exist in the region, but that people can't afford it or it can't get to them from nearby countries that have it. The Counterplan solves for that without creating the Disadvantages caused by flooding local markets with free US grain.]

Big link: AFF plan = increased amount of food aid sent from the US

Link: Foreign food aid hurts countries. Example: Haiti is stuck in poverty thanks to outside aid

Rasna Warah, 2012. (columnist with Kenya’s Daily Nation newspaper, is the author of the recently published book Red Soil and Roasted Maize: Selected essays and articles on contemporary Kenya) “Don’t feed the world? How food aid can do more harm than good” January 2, 2012 <http://www.redpepper.org.uk/dont-feed-the-world/>

Like Somalia, Haiti offers a perfect example of how aid can destroy a country. This island in the Caribbean has received so much foreign aid over the years that it has been described as ‘a poster child for the inadequacies of foreign aid’ because of its extremely poor development record and widespread poverty. Every few years, a new disaster strikes Haiti and the world rallies around through massive fundraising campaigns. But Haiti, like its distant cousin Somalia, continues to remain poor, under-developed and the site of much misery – ideal ingredients for yet another fundraising campaign.

Link: US Food aid delivery hurts farmers, and nations. US rice wrecked Haiti's farm economy

PETER DUFFY, 2010. (freelance journalist since 1999, writing for The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, New York magazine, The New Republic, Slate, and many other outlets.) “Lessons From Haiti: How Food Aid Can Harm” AUG 31, 2010 <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2010/08/lessons-from-haiti-how-food-aid-can-harm/62252/>

But perhaps the greatest problem is the damage our food aid causes to farmers in developing countries, who are essential to the future health of their societies. Often in the news lately has been the harm that U.S. deliveries have done to the Haitian rice industry over the past few decades. On March 10, in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Bill Clinton apologized for his administration's role in exporting cheap U.S. rice to Haiti, undercutting local growers. According to a study by the Center for Economic and Policy Research, Haitian farmers provided 47 percent of the country's rice in 1988. By the 2008, the figure had dropped to 15 percent. And in a recent report on NPR's Planet Money, reporters described how bags of American rice are still being sold in Haitian markets.

Link: American food aid competes with local farmers

Celia W. Dugger, 2007. (Reporter for the New York Times.) “Charity finds that U.S. food aid for Africa hurts instead of helps” AUG. 14, 2007 <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/08/14/world/americas/14iht-food.4.7116855.html>

CARE, one of the world's biggest charities, is walking away from about $45 million a year in federal funding, saying American food aid is not only plagued with inefficiencies, but may hurt some of the very poor people it aims to help. Its decision, which has deeply divided the world of food aid, is focused on the practice of selling tons of American farm products in African countries that in some cases compete with the crops of struggling local farmers. "If someone wants to help you, they shouldn't do it by destroying the very thing that they're trying to promote," said George Odo, a CARE official who grew disillusioned with the practice while supervising the sale of American wheat and vegetable oil in Nairobi.

Link: Food aid drives down price for local farmers

Henri Astier, 2006. (BBC news reporter.) “Can aid do more harm than good?” 1 February 2006. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4185550.stm>

A bonanza often undermine self-reliance. "It is axiomatic that flooding the market with food drives down the price for local farmers," Mr Easterly says.

Link: Tons of aid translates to lower economic growth

Ana Swanson, 2015. (Ana Swanson is a Reporter at The Washington Post.) “Does foreign aid always help the poor?” 23 Oct 2015 <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/10/does-foreign-aid-always-help-the-poor/>

“I think his understanding of how the world worked at the micro level made him extremely suspicious of these get-rich-quick schemes that some people peddled at the development level,” says Daron Acemoglu, an economist at MIT. The data suggested that the claims of the aid community were sometimes not borne out. Even as the level of foreign aid into Africa soared through the 1980s and 1990s, African economies were doing worse than ever, as the chart below, from a paper by economist Bill Easterly of New York University, shows. The effect wasn’t limited to Africa. Many economists were noticing that an influx of foreign aid did not seem to produce economic growth in countries around the world. Rather, lots of foreign aid flowing into a country tended to be correlated with lower economic growth, as this chart from a paper by Arvind Subramanian and Raghuram Rajan shows. The countries that receive less aid, those on the left-hand side of the chart, tend to have higher growth — while those that receive more aid, on the right-hand side, have lower growth.

Impact: Free food slows recovery. It puts farmers out of business and slows down recovery

Rasna Warah, 2012. (columnist with Kenya’s Daily Nation newspaper, is the author of the recently published book Red Soil and Roasted Maize: Selected essays and articles on contemporary Kenya) “Don’t feed the world? How food aid can do more harm than good” January 2, 2012 <http://www.redpepper.org.uk/dont-feed-the-world/>

George-Marc André, the European Union representative to Somalia, cautiously admits that the EC is concerned that its efforts in Somalia are being hampered by UN agencies flooding the capital Mogadishu with food aid. In an environment where free food is readily available, he explains, farmers do not get value for their produce. Delivering food aid during the harvest season further distorts the food market. André says that UN agencies such as the World Food Programme could actually have ‘slowed down’ Somalia’s recovery by focusing exclusively on food aid, instead of supporting local farmers and markets.

Impact: US Food aid destroys local economies

Rasna Warah, 2012. (columnist with Kenya’s Daily Nation newspaper, is the author of the recently published book Red Soil and Roasted Maize: Selected essays and articles on contemporary Kenya) “Don’t feed the world? How food aid can do more harm than good” January 2, 2012 <http://www.redpepper.org.uk/dont-feed-the-world/>

Given that most of the food aid comes from the US and other countries outside Somalia, there is also concern that declarations of famine do more to help farmers elsewhere rather than supporting local producers. The food aid industry allows countries such as the US to offload food surpluses to poor countries. This distorts local markets and disrupts local food production. In other words, food aid destroys local economies, especially when it is provided over long periods of time, as in Somalia.

Impact: Excessive food aid doesn’t help people

Joshua E. Keating, 2012. (was an associate editor at Foreign Policy.) “Please, Don’t Send Food” June 18, 2012. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/06/18/please-dont-send-food/>

There’s been plenty of debate in recent years about whether humanitarian aid actually helps rid the world of extreme poverty. The inability of developed countries to make a dent in the problem, despite spending billions of dollars each year, is what economist and noted aid skeptic William Easterly calls the "second tragedy" of global poverty. But a recent study takes this skepticism to a whole new level, suggesting that food aid not only doesn’t work, but also can prolong the violent conflicts it’s meant to help resolve.

1. Increased food aid shipments = increased violence

Link: AFF plan = increased amount of food aid sent from the US

Link: Food aid shipments stolen

Joshua E. Keating, 2012. (was an associate editor at Foreign Policy.) “Please, Don’t Send Food” June 18, 2012. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/06/18/please-dont-send-food/>

The results confirm anecdotal reports that food aid during conflicts is often stolen by armed groups, essentially making international donors part of the rebel logistics effort. According to some estimates, as much as 80 percent of the food aid shipments to Somalia in the early 1990s was looted or stolen. In her book The Crisis Caravan, journalist Linda Polman reported how Hutu rebels who fled Rwanda after the 1994 genocide appropriated aid given out in refugee camps in neighboring Democratic Republic of the Congo, further fueling conflict in the region. Polman also estimated that Nigeria’s 1967-1970 Biafran war — one of the first African humanitarian crises to get global media attention — may have lasted 12 to 16 months longer than it otherwise would have because of the international aid seized by rebel groups.

Impact: Increase in food aid increases violence

Joshua E. Keating, 2012. (was an associate editor at Foreign Policy.) “Please, Don’t Send Food” June 18, 2012. <http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/06/18/please-dont-send-food/>

Looking at a sample of developing countries between 1972 and 2006, economists Nancy Qian of Yale University and Nathan Nunn of Harvard University found a direct correlation between U.S. food aid and civil conflict. For every 10 percent increase in the amount of food aid delivered, they discovered, the likelihood of violent civil conflict rises by 1.14 percentage points.

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