

Food for Peace:

America's Bounty Serves the World
From 1954 Into the 21st Century

U.S. Agency for International Development



Introduction

For 40 years, U.S. food aid has demonstrated the American people's commitment to eliminating world hunger and poverty.

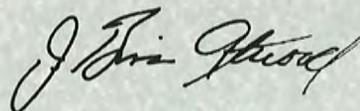
America's bounty has saved the lives of millions of people in more than 150 countries and territories. This flexible form of economic assistance has also been a major stimulus for sustained development. In time, many recipient countries have become important trading partners of the United States, able to provide for the needs of their people and to become dependable purchasers of U.S. agricultural exports.

Since Public Law 480 was enacted in 1954, more than \$50 billion has financed 372 million tons of food to needy countries. Today, nine of the top 10 importers of U.S. agricultural products are former recipients of food assistance. Moreover, the economic progress that these countries now enjoy has combined with the emergence of democracy and respect for human rights. The humanitarian concern of the American people has led to a more secure and prosperous world.

In much of Asia and Latin America, where hunger once dominated daily life and famine took millions of lives, basic food security has been established and sustainable development has begun. This progress is fragile and unevenly distributed, but it is real. In many places, our food aid investments have made the difference.

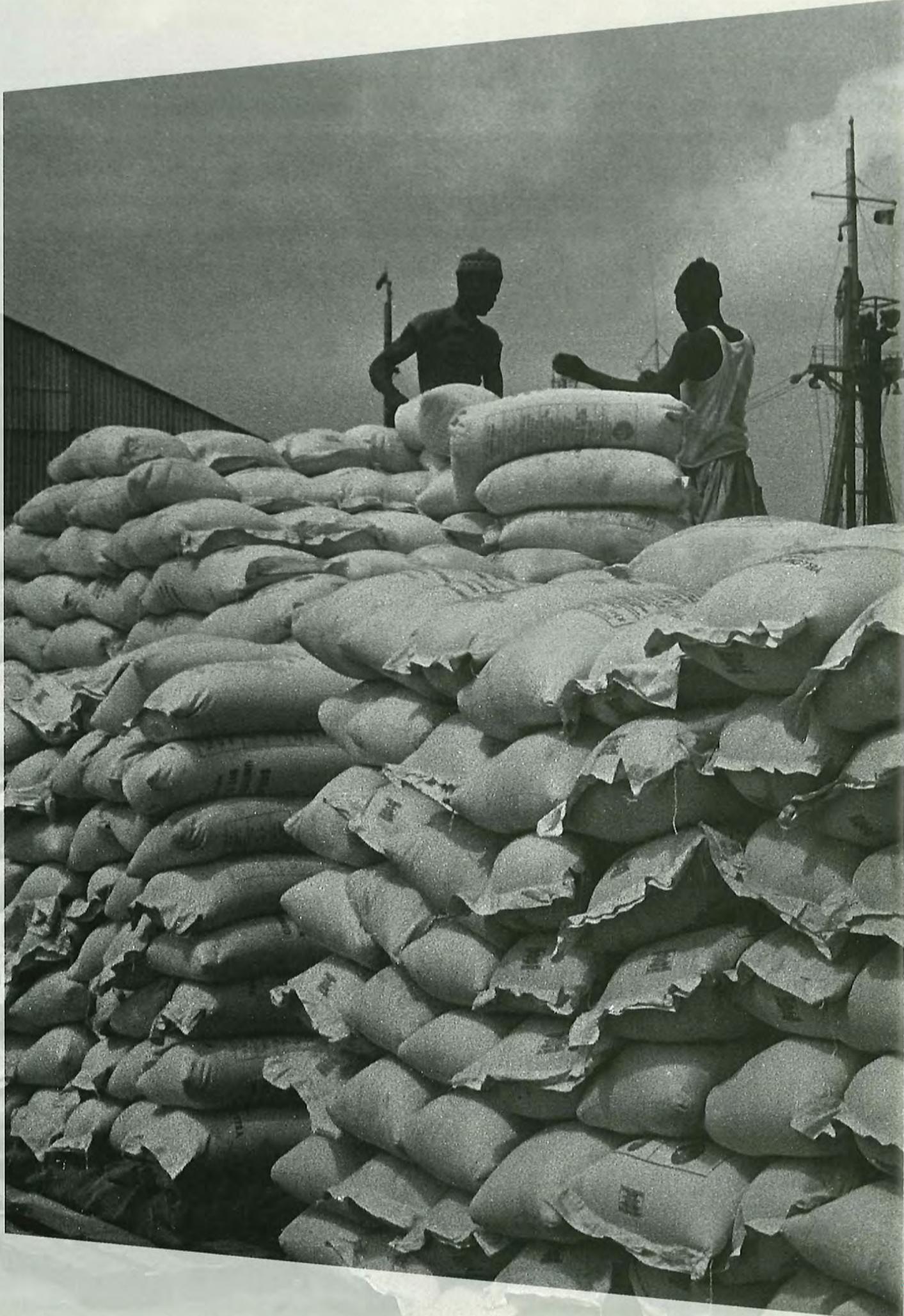
Now we face a final challenge in the poorest countries of the world, most of which are in Africa. The humanitarian needs are as great in the Horn of Africa as they once were in India. Yet the resolve of the American people to help those in need remains strong. The prospects for increasing prosperity and democratic progress in the poorest countries of the world are still compelling.

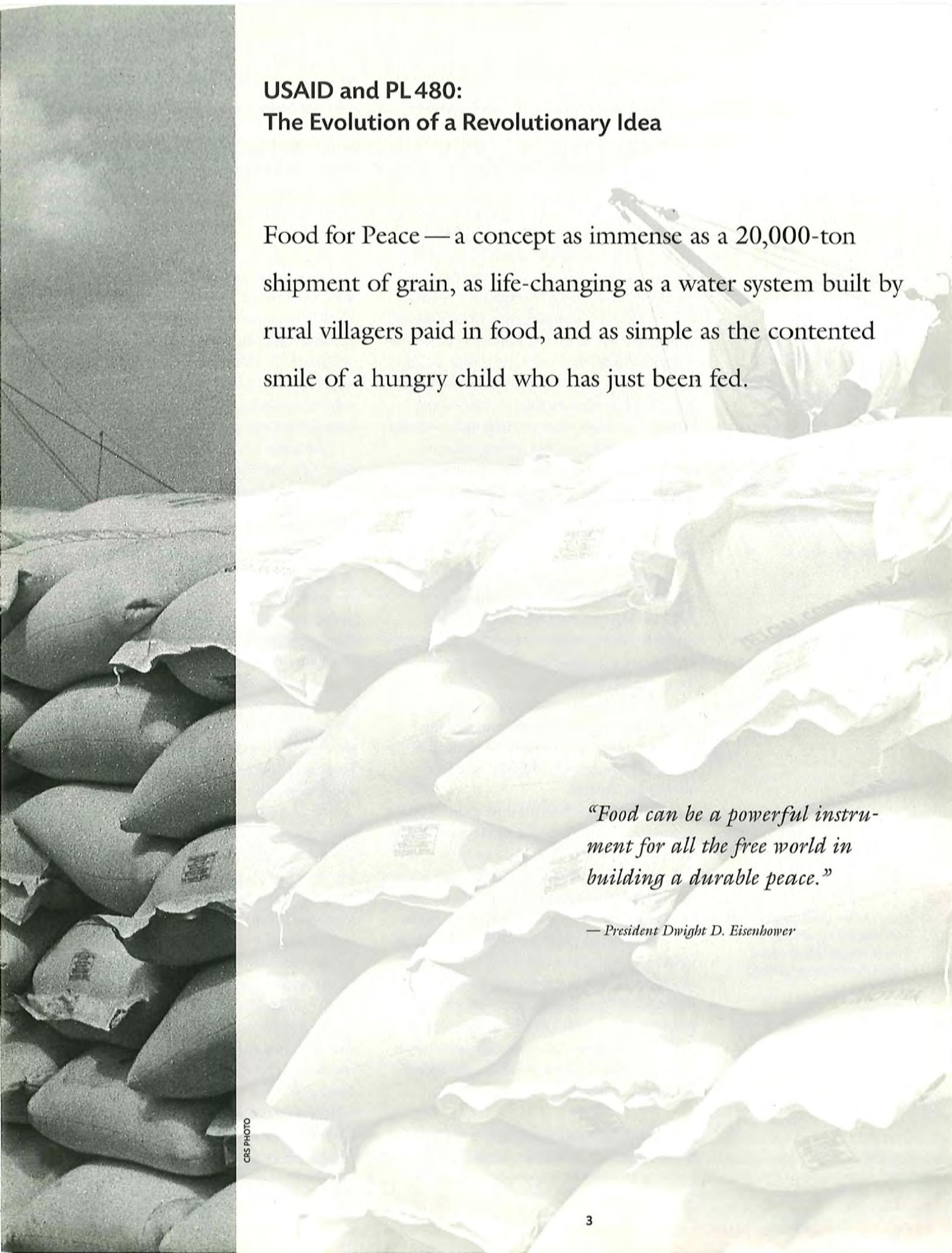
In addressing the challenges ahead, the United States Agency for International Development is especially fortunate to have the U.S. private voluntary organizations as partners. The PVO's have played a major role in the past success of U.S. food programs. They will be invaluable partners in the challenge that food aid now confronts.



J. Brian Atwood
USAID Administrator







**USAID and PL 480:
The Evolution of a Revolutionary Idea**

Food for Peace — a concept as immense as a 20,000-ton shipment of grain, as life-changing as a water system built by rural villagers paid in food, and as simple as the contented smile of a hungry child who has just been fed.

“Food can be a powerful instrument for all the free world in building a durable peace.”

— President Dwight D. Eisenhower

PL 480 has saved the lives of countless millions of people overseas, and has helped improve the lives of countless millions more.

RIGHT: As Greece struggled with the lasting effects of World War II, U.S. food aid helped both young and old.

Enacted in 1954, Public Law 480, the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act, was a bold stroke, an unusual marriage of ideas. In the U.S., we were producing far more food than we needed. In other countries, many of them wracked with internal conflict or devastated by natural disaster, people needed more food than they could produce. Why not join the needs of America's farmers with the needs of the world's hungry? What's more, this effort might also be able to further American foreign policy interests.

PL 480 was a landmark piece of legislation. It represented one of the first permanent peacetime foreign aid programs, and it had a huge, positive impact on U.S. domestic agricultural policies. In the more than 40 years since PL 480 was conceived, it has been recast and refocused a number of times. But one basic fact remains constant: Under the aegis of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), PL 480 has saved the lives of countless millions of people overseas, and has helped improve the lives of countless millions more.

Some background is in order. To address the economic ills of the Great Depression, in the 1930's Congress passed legislation aimed at improving farm prices, establishing price supports, and restricting production. Nevertheless, except for brief periods during World War II and the Korean War, unwanted surpluses continued to accumulate — and at taxpayer expense. This created the prospect of further lowering farm prices and threatening the economic security of American farmers.

At the close of World War II, awareness grew within the U.S. Government and the general population that America's economic well-being was tied to that of other nations. Farmers realized that their income was highest when foreign demand for their products was great. In addition, American leadership was playing a more activist role in global economics, as demonstrated by such policies and programs as the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan. During the 1940's, American farmers had responded to prewar and wartime challenges by producing an unprecedented abundance of crops. By the early 1950's, an unusual confluence of factors was in place:

- European economies had begun to recover.
- European farm production revived, greatly reducing the need for imported food.

- U.S. farm prices declined, and, as a result of price supports created back in the 1930's, government-held stocks increased.
- The face of hunger had changed. European needs were increasingly being met, but progress in global communications revealed a level of hunger in Africa, Asia, and Latin America few Americans knew existed.

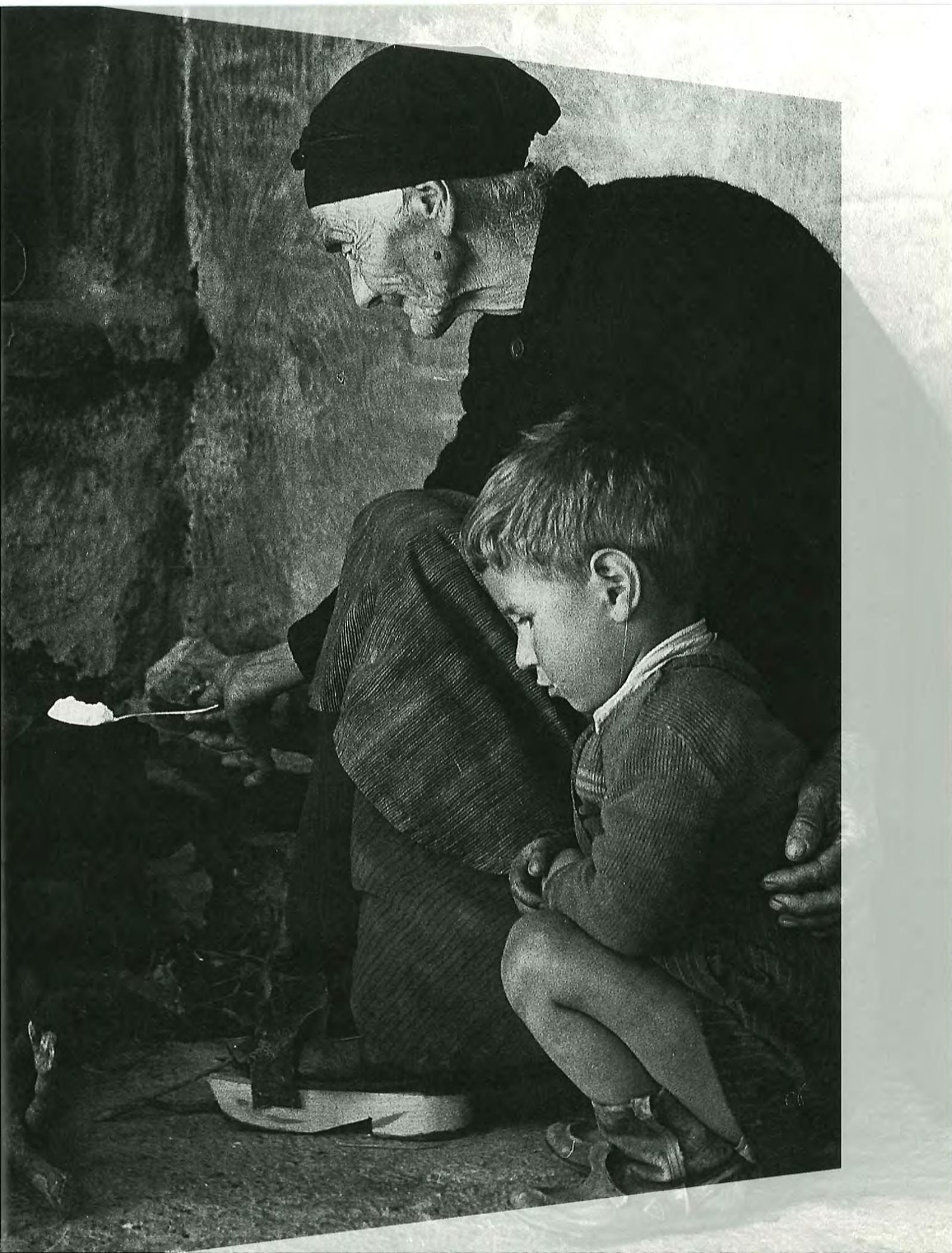
Even before PL 480 was enacted, an innovative precedent had been set. The Commodity Credit Corporation, a government-owned corporation within the Department of Agriculture, was created in 1933 to stabilize and support farm prices. Under the Agricultural Act of 1949, voluntary agencies could receive CCC surplus commodities that would otherwise be wasted.

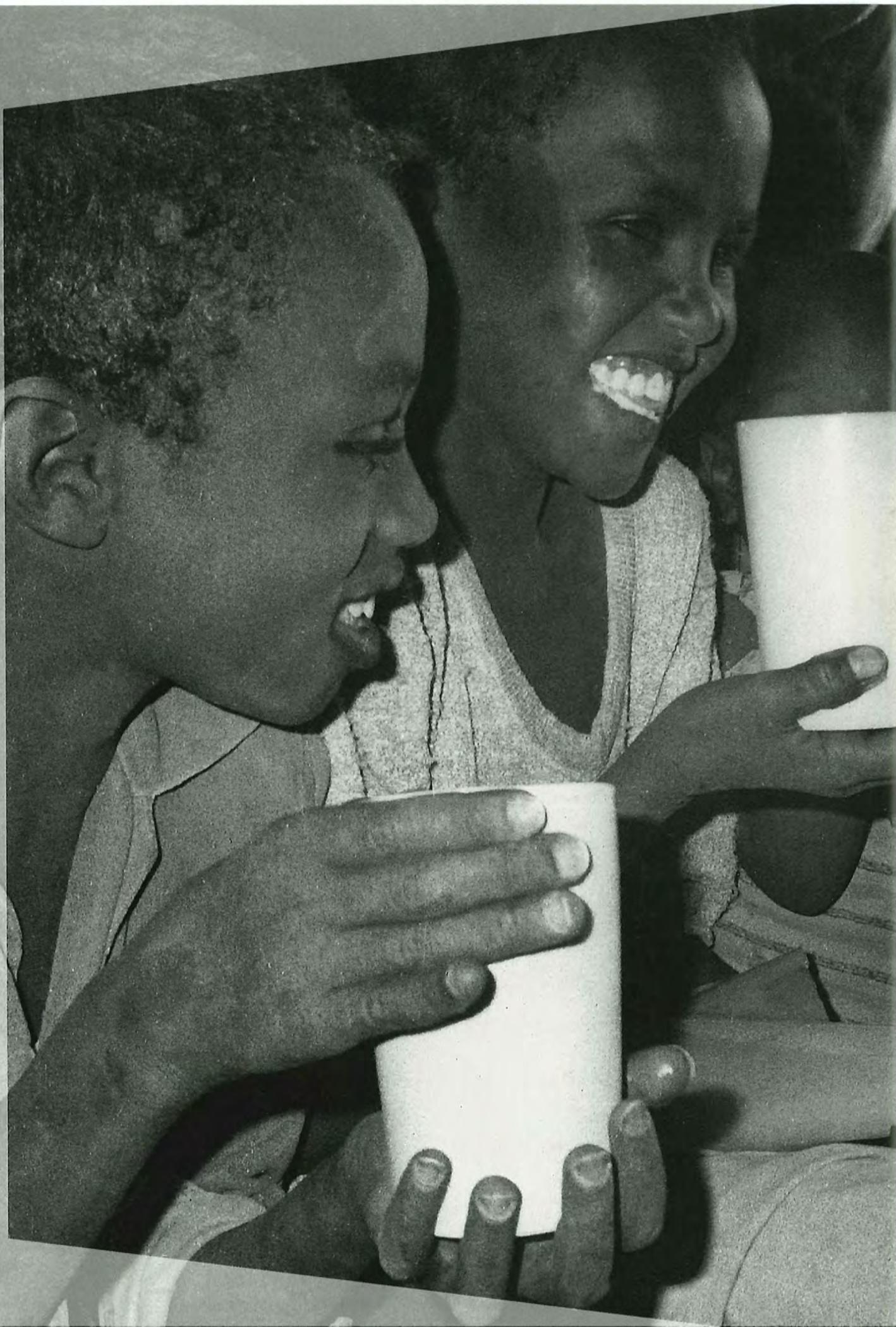
But there was a problem. Surplus commodities weren't supplied to voluntary agencies consistently or predictably. Between 1950 and 1954, surpluses were available to these agencies for only about 12 months.

In July of 1953, the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry conducted hearings to consider a bill giving the President authority to use farm surpluses for famine assistance overseas. During the hearings, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey made an impassioned plea for a greatly expanded program that would include donations, sales at concessional prices, sales for local currencies, and the exchange of commodities for strategic materials. He also recommended working in partnership with voluntary relief agencies wherever possible.

As a result of the efforts of Humphrey and many others, the bill under discussion in 1953 evolved into Public Law 480, signed into law on July 10, 1954. At the signing, President Eisenhower stated that PL 480 would "lay the basis for a permanent expansion of our exports of agricultural products, with lasting benefits to ourselves and peoples in other lands." The program was to be administered by the International Cooperation Agency, which became USAID in 1962.

PL 480 ensured a steady supply of food to agencies trying to plan longer-term projects. The law provided for the sale of CCC surpluses in local currency to foreign governments, and for donations of commodities to meet famine and other relief requirements. The law also provided for the donation of commodities to relief organizations that distribute food through independent pro-





grams, and allowed the CCC to barter surplus supplies for goods required by the United States.

In 1955, PL 480's first full year of operation, shipments totaled 3.4 million metric tons. By 1957, the figure had increased to 14 million metric tons, valued at more than \$1 billion. This increase in exports helped maintain farm income and decrease U.S.-held agricultural surpluses.

By the late 1950's it was widely acknowledged that PL 480's potential had only begun to be realized. Senator Humphrey explained why changes needed to be made:

[PL 480] was probably supported by more Members of Congress who conceived it as surplus disposal than by Members who understood fully its constructive potentialities. But at that time we did not know what we since have learned, namely, that our agricultural surpluses are a powerful instrument for promoting welfare, peace, and freedom on a world scale. . . . For that reason, I am proposing that the revised Public Law 480 be known as the Food for Peace Act. (Congressional Record, April 16, 1959: 5482, 5484)

The 1959 legislation encouraged the use of CCC commodities "to promote economic development in underdeveloped areas" and authorized using food surpluses in food-for-work activities.

A key step in the evolution of PL 480 came with the election of John F. Kennedy. Campaigning in Mitchell, S.D., he proclaimed that "food is strength, and food is peace, and food is freedom, and food is a helping hand to people around the world whose good will and friendship we want." Kennedy's commitment to Food for Peace was more than a campaign promise. As President, Kennedy's second executive order established the White House Office of Food for Peace; George S. McGovern was appointed its first director.

In the early 1960's, PL 480 grew dramatically, representing at one point almost 25 percent of total U.S. farm exports. The 1960's also saw PL 480's mission change to meet demands for foreign aid to fight the Cold War. The U.S. began to view PL 480 as a vehicle to support friendly — i.e., non-communist — nations or for attracting and holding the allegiance of countries leaning toward the Soviet Union.

Because of increased PL 480 donations to friendly countries at this time, the U.S. owned large amounts of foreign currencies. The government responded by expanding the number and

types of activities to which funds generated by the sale of PL 480 commodities could be applied, including paying U.S. Government obligations overseas, providing aid to developing countries for "mutual defense" purposes, and financing the countries' development efforts.

By the late 1960's, however, the U.S. realized the potential damage of such large foreign currency holdings; sentiment grew to limit the use of foreign currency. In 1973, Congress amended PL 480 to restrict the use of foreign currencies to humanitarian and development activities. Ironically, it appears that economic gains resulting from successful development efforts have more effectively encouraged the emergence of new democracies than food aid targeted to influence the outcome of the Cold War did.

Begun in the Eisenhower Administration, PL 480 has evolved in subsequent administrations. Although PL 480 initially centered on emergency aid, self-help was introduced early on. Throughout the decades, both USAID and the private voluntary organizations that distribute the food have exercised great creativity in incorporating food into a wide range of development efforts.

Food Aid Prevents Starvation: In crises, food aid performs the most basic of functions: it saves lives. Drought, flood, armed conflict — all manner of disasters can lead to life-threatening food needs. PL 480 commodities have been rushed to the scene countless times, saving millions of lives in the process.

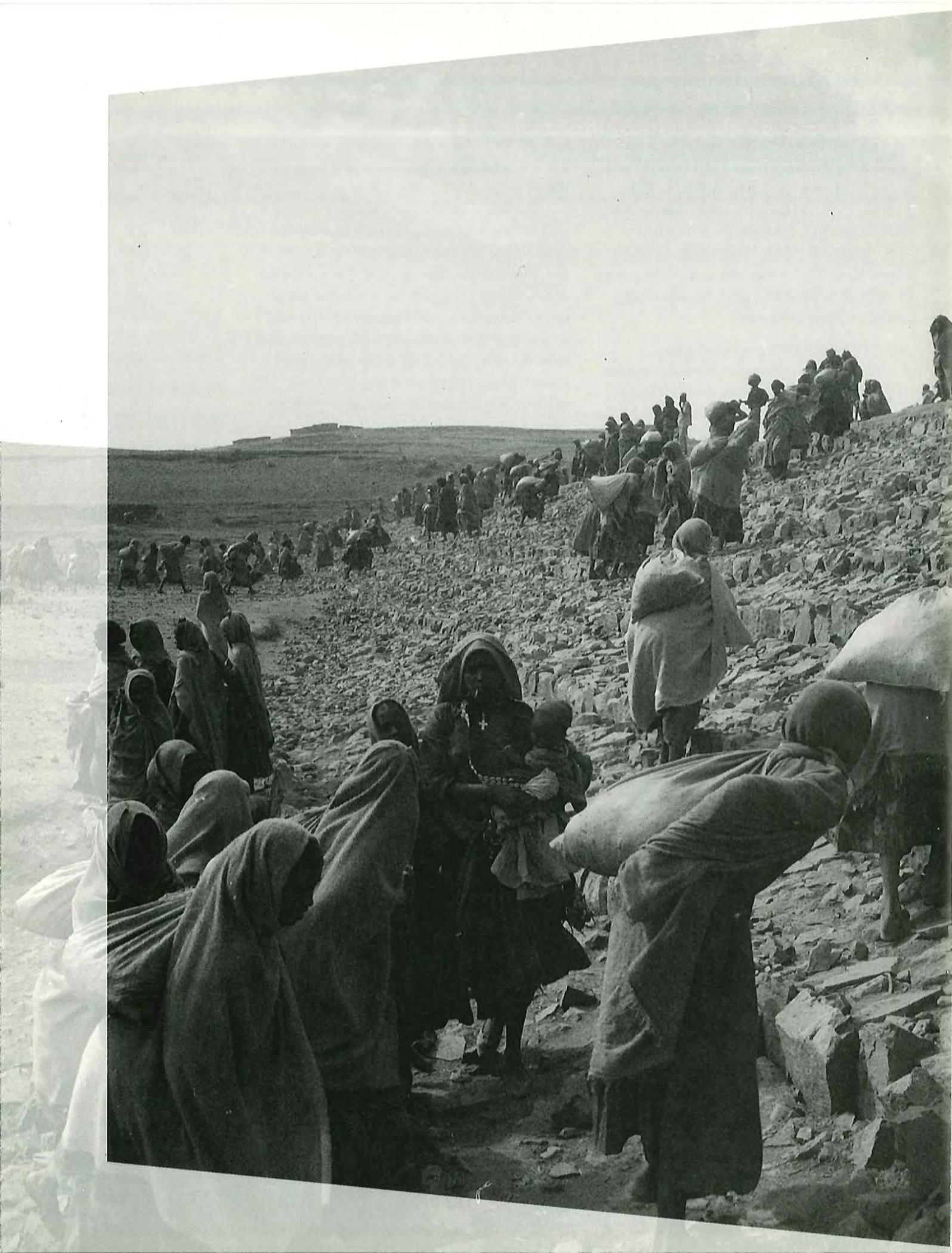
Food Aid Promotes Education and Health: School and preschool feeding programs perform more than the obvious task of increasing children's nutritional intake. School enrollment and attendance increase, leading to improved education. An educated population is less likely, in the long run, to be a hungry population. Feeding programs at health centers encourages mothers to bring in their children; at these centers, children are immunized and mothers receive training in nutrition, health, family planning, community leadership, and even literacy.

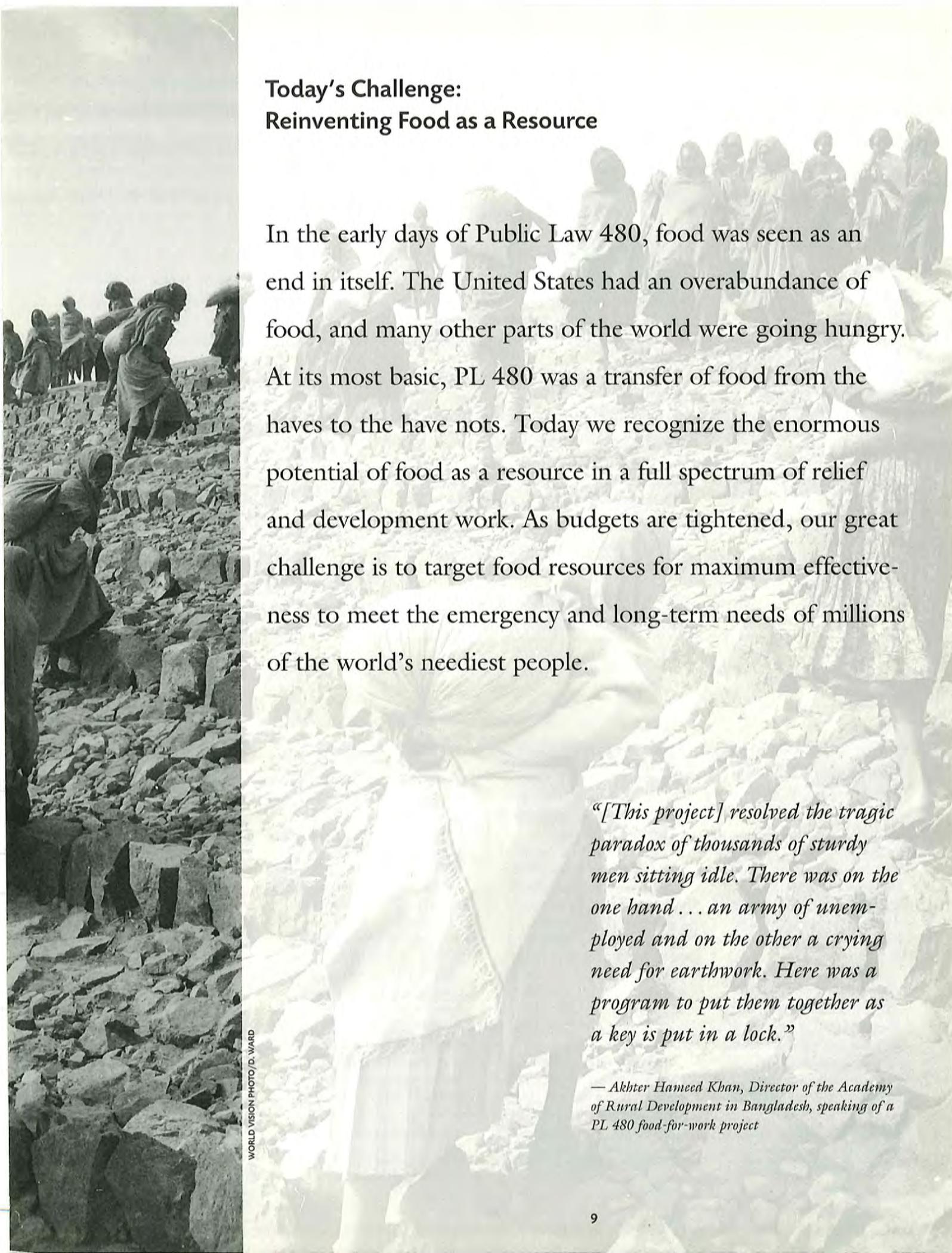
Food Aid Leads to Economic Growth: In food-for-work efforts, impoverished people are paid in food for their work on projects that will improve their communities and increase economic opportunities for themselves and their neighbors: farm-to-market roads, water systems for irrigation and consumption, food storage facilities, flood-prevention embankments, and more.

*"Food is strength,
and food is peace,
and food is freedom,
and food is a helping
hand to people
around the world
whose good will and
friendship we want."*

— President John F. Kennedy.

LEFT: At a feeding center in Ethiopia in the mid-1980's, PL 480 food helped restore these children's health.





Today's Challenge: Reinventing Food as a Resource

In the early days of Public Law 480, food was seen as an end in itself. The United States had an overabundance of food, and many other parts of the world were going hungry. At its most basic, PL 480 was a transfer of food from the haves to the have nots. Today we recognize the enormous potential of food as a resource in a full spectrum of relief and development work. As budgets are tightened, our great challenge is to target food resources for maximum effectiveness to meet the emergency and long-term needs of millions of the world's neediest people.

"[This project] resolved the tragic paradox of thousands of sturdy men sitting idle. There was on the one hand . . . an army of unemployed and on the other a crying need for earthwork. Here was a program to put them together as a key is put in a lock."

— Akhter Hameed Khan, Director of the Academy of Rural Development in Bangladesh, speaking of a PL 480 food-for-work project

Food security: having access to sufficient food to meet dietary needs for a healthy and productive life.

Over the years, PL 480 has evolved to meet changing priorities and to reflect the lessons learned by USAID staff, personnel from nongovernmental organizations (NGO's), local governments, indigenous NGO's, and PL 480 recipients themselves.

In 1990, the U.S. Congress passed, and President George Bush signed into law, the Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act (the Farm Bill), which contained the first comprehensive restatement and reorganization of Public Law 480. Under this amended Act, food resources are directed toward five purposes:

- to combat world hunger and malnutrition, and their causes;
- to promote broad-based, equitable, and sustainable development;
- to expand international trade;
- to develop and expand export markets for U.S. agricultural commodities, and
- to foster the development of private enterprise and democratic participation in developing countries.

The 1990 Farm Bill made a significant change in the overall focus of PL 480. Once

seen as simply an aspect of foreign policy, PL 480 addressed itself to food security as a primary goal. Food security is a comprehensive term that can be most simply defined as an individual, a family, a community or a nation having access to sufficient food to meet dietary needs for a productive and healthy life. In the 1990 rewrite, PL 480's three Titles were set out as follows:

Title I (concessional sales) is administered by the Department of Agriculture. Countries eligible for Title I agreements are less poor than those addressed in the other two Titles. They are expected to "graduate" from concessional sales in a relatively short time; they will then be able to purchase U.S. agricultural commodities in the world's commercial markets. Title I countries buy U.S. farm products on credit, then sell them through public or private channels. Sales proceeds can be applied to various development efforts.

Title II (relief and development food aid) is the domain of USAID. USAID programs commodities under this Title through the United Nations World Food Program,

World Vision and PL 480 Help Ethiopians Move Toward Food Security

World Vision uses Title II food to address humanitarian assistance needs around the world. World Vision ranks fourth of all U.S. PVO's in total Title II food distributions, programming 74,565 tons of food in six countries in FY94.

A major effort is underway in Tigray, a region which, like most of the rest of Ethiopia, has suffered from a prolonged and costly civil war. Food vulnerability, due to a lack of regular rainfall, has led to the development of a community-level, gravity-flow irrigation effort in Womberta Province. Through a World Vision Title II food-for-work effort, the community is

building an earth-filled dam with a 17,000 cubic meter capacity to irrigate more than 20 acres of land. Workers are digging out more than 76,000 cubic meters of soil by hand.

Hiwot, a 35-year-old mother, comes to the site every day with her 2-year-old daughter strapped to her back. One daughter died of diarrhea several years ago. "We lost everything during the famine of 1985," she says. "I remember one good harvest from before 10 years ago. I work so hard because we are so hungry for food."

Hiwot and her family live 45 minutes' hard walk from the work site. "Our survival depends on three things," she says, matter-of-factly. "We have food-for-work, my husband can find work as a laborer in town, and we can

sell some seeds and tools."

Half of Ethiopia's 53 million people live in abject poverty, with a per capita GNP of \$120, the third lowest in the world. Life expectancy is 51 years, and daily caloric intake is only 73 percent of the requirement. The population grows at 3.3 percent a year, further widening the food deficit.

Many of World Vision's activities in Ethiopia and elsewhere focus on increasing food security through improving community organization and agricultural productivity, income generation, reducing malnutrition among children under 5, and increasing asset creation through loans. Programs include environmental conservation, reforestation, credit unions, infrastructure improvement and agricultural diversification.



ABOVE: In the Tigray region of Ethiopia, community members in a food-for-work project build an irrigation dam.

RIGHT: PL 480 commodities are distributed in Sierra Leone.





ABOVE: Through WFP, Sarajevo's main bakery uses flour ground from PL 480 wheat to provide both employment and bread to people in need.

LEFT: Teaching mothers how to monitor their children's growth is one way to prevent malnutrition; food aid attracts mothers to the health centers.

Spotlight on an Emergency: WFP in the Former Yugoslavia

The United Nations World Food Program, founded in 1963, gathers food and other resources from donors around the world to combat hunger and promote economic development among the poor in needy countries.

In the U.S., we tend to think of needy countries as those whose needs are chronic: Bangladesh, Haiti, Ethiopia. But a developed country can suddenly face extreme need. The nations of the former Yugoslavia are a case in point.

Highly industrialized until recently, this area had long been able to meet its basic food needs. In fact, even after the

political upheaval, food was not scarce in many areas. But prices skyrocketed just as displacement of large numbers of people, the cessation of economic activity, and the other effects of war left many people without resources or income. Relief food — and in massive quantities — became an urgent need.

WFP began operations in the former Yugoslavia in November 1992, and in two years mobilized 609,475 metric tons of food from countries that span the globe. Forty-six percent of that total represents donations from the United States.

But delivering food is only part of the solution. In cooperation with the World Health Organization and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees — and with the help of

a Bosnian woman living in Sarajevo — WFP produced a booklet of recipes in the Bosnian language, using foods commonly provided as food aid.

In addition, WFP had 10,000 tons of wheat processed by a mill in Sarajevo into flour for use in a bakery and pasta factories. The resumption of work at the mills means both increased employment and valuable by-products from the milling process, such as animal feed.

WFP undertook this relief effort with the hope — in fact, the expectation — that the nations of this area would soon resume being donors of food aid, rather than recipients. In the long run, that is the hope for all food aid projects, until such time as food security is achieved in all the nations of the world.

international and local NGO's, and U.S. private voluntary organizations, as well as on a government-to-government basis. They are used to support both development and emergency aid projects. "Disaster preparedness" programs blend the two ideas, reflecting the awareness that the devastating effects of disasters can be mitigated or prevented by efforts to anticipate and prepare for them. Title II commodities may be sold (or "monetized") in order to provide local currencies to enhance the development impact of food aid.

Title III (government-to-government grants) is also administered by USAID. This is a grant program for some of the world's poorest countries. Title III commodities provided to countries characterized as "least developed" may be used in direct feeding programs, including those that deal with special health and nutrition needs of children and mothers. These commodities may also be sold locally by the government of the recipient country; proceeds of the sale must be used in development programs that alleviate hunger, improve nutrition, and support various child survival efforts, or to promote policy reforms that lead to those objectives.

USAID uses food aid to promote food security in a variety of ways. In emergencies, food aid helps people survive until they can

resume food production or the income-generating tasks that provide them with the resources to purchase food. Increasingly, relief efforts evolve into development work.

War and acute famine threatened millions of lives in sub-Saharan Africa in the 1980's. USAID's prompt response and guidance enabled the World Food Program and many private voluntary organizations (PVO's) to create massive emergency food aid programs. As emergency needs lessened, many of the organizations programming PL 480 food increasingly incorporated development work into their projects: food-for-work efforts included agroforestry and building sanitation systems. At feeding centers, food recipients — many of them refugees — received training in such critical area as farming, nutrition, and primary health care. Ultimately, many people on the brink of starvation received the help they needed to become self-sufficient.

Food aid is used as an incentive for farmers considering new agricultural methods. A subsistence farmer doesn't dare risk his or her meager crop solely on the advice of an agricultural extension agent. What if it doesn't work? How will the family survive? The guarantee of food aid until the next harvest can provide just the assurance many farmers need to undertake such techniques as terracing,

agroforestry, and crop rotation that will eventually improve both their harvests and the environment.

Food aid also helps enable newly emerging democracies to weather the transition from planned economies to democracy and free markets. Such transitions are often accompanied by political and economic turmoil; food aid can moderate wide swings in food prices and provide crisis support to those most vulnerable to economic upheaval.

Food aid makes a significant contribution to Americans, too. Thousands of farmers, millers, processors, packagers and shippers throughout the U.S. are employed in the production of commodities used in overseas aid programs. And food aid has greatly increased the development of markets for U.S. agricultural products worldwide: in 1994, for example, nine of the 10 leading importers of American farm commodities were former recipients of PL 480. Such countries as Brazil, Israel, Japan, Korea, and Zimbabwe now purchase our farm products

in quantities worth many times the value of the U.S. food aid they once received.

In the case of very poor developing countries, improved agricultural productivity has played a critical role in establishing basic food security. In the major development success stories in Asia — first Korea and Taiwan, then Thailand, India, and Indonesia, and now even Bangladesh — food aid-supported efforts to promote increased food production resulted in basic food security for large numbers of people.

These efforts also stimulated economic growth and development. As food production expanded rapidly, food prices fell relative to wages. The poor were able to purchase more food, improving their families' nutrition and enabling them to devote some of their resources to such other basic needs as health care, improved housing, and education. Demand for family planning services increased as the importance of child labor in agriculture declined. Income grew in rural areas, leading to sustained development.

CRS: How One Organization Has Used PL 480 Through the Years

Catholic Relief Services/USCC is the official overseas relief and development agency of the U.S. Catholic community. CRS uses food aid in ways consistent with its mission: helping disaster victims, providing assistance to the poor to alleviate immediate needs, and supporting self-help programs that involve people in their own development.

THE PAST: Since the creation of the PL 480 program, CRS has served up to 30 million people annually in as many as 32 countries.

1950's — CRS was founded as War Relief Services to help Europe rebuild after World War II. The decade saw CRS's geographic expansion and the creation of several PL 480 programs. Some of CRS's first PL 480 shipments in the 50's,

including those designated for Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity, went to India.

1960's-70's — The following decades brought greater sophistication in CRS's response to endemic poverty. India's family feeding programs were converted to targeted feeding in the early 60's; food-for-work projects began in 1969. In the Philippines, CRS began a school lunch program that included local reprocessing of imported commodities. Emergencies continued to demand CRS's attention: PL 480 fed thousands in the Bihar famine of 1965-8, and CRS made direct distributions in war-torn Vietnam until 1968.

1980's-90's — In the 1980's, drought in Africa posed an almost overwhelming challenge to the capacity of CRS and other aid agencies. Famine relief programs were undertaken in Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, Tanzania, Kenya, and, most notably, Ethiopia. At the same time, CRS

made great strides in sustainable development. In 1986, it began a program to support IMF-driven restructuring in Morocco, with food-for-work distributions and a monetization Development Support Fund to help increase the effectiveness of the government ministry responsible for vocational training. Meanwhile, regular PL 480 programs were phased out or phased over during this period to the current portfolio of 15.

THE FUTURE: Programs must now emphasize improving effectiveness in creating food security. Emergencies remain a challenge, and direct distributions must increasingly be supplemented by environmental protection programs (for natural disasters) and by conflict resolution efforts (for man-made ones). In these ways, food aid will remain relevant in meeting the continuing needs of impoverished people.



ABOVE: Since the 1950's, PL 480 food has furthered the work of Mother Teresa in India through Catholic Relief Services.

RIGHT: A worker carries a load of earth in a PL 480-supported road construction project in Bangladesh.







ABOVE: Workers in a food-for-work project in Bangladesh build roads, bridges, and embankments.

LEFT: In an emergency aid program in Pakistan, PL 480 food helps Afghan refugees.

CARE and PL 480 Build Roads to Food Security – Literally

In 1981 CARE, the international relief and development organization founded in 1945, began a food-for-work project in Bangladesh that was to have far-reaching success. Impoverished men and women were paid in food for their work on roads and other badly needed earthworks. Initially, workers were paid with PL 480 food; more recently, wages have combined food with cash payments realized from the sale (“monetization”) of donated food.

The project addresses a number of needs. Impoverished people need a reliable source of food and income. Many of the workers are women – most of them widowed or abandoned – who, in traditional Bangladeshi culture, have virtually no other avenues of employment.

And rural Bangladesh needs the roads these workers are building. Roads provide a means for farmers to get crops to larger markets, where demand is greater and prices higher. Roads offer a way for villagers to reach schools, clinics, hospitals and other services, and for government extension agents to reach rural communities. The CARE roads are built on raised embankments, essential in a flood-prone country like Bangladesh; the workers plant grass on the embankments to

prevent erosion, and culverts are built to facilitate drainage.

Lebujan, abandoned by her husband shortly after the birth of their child, is now a leader in the CARE program. She proudly recounts how her work on the project has changed her life.

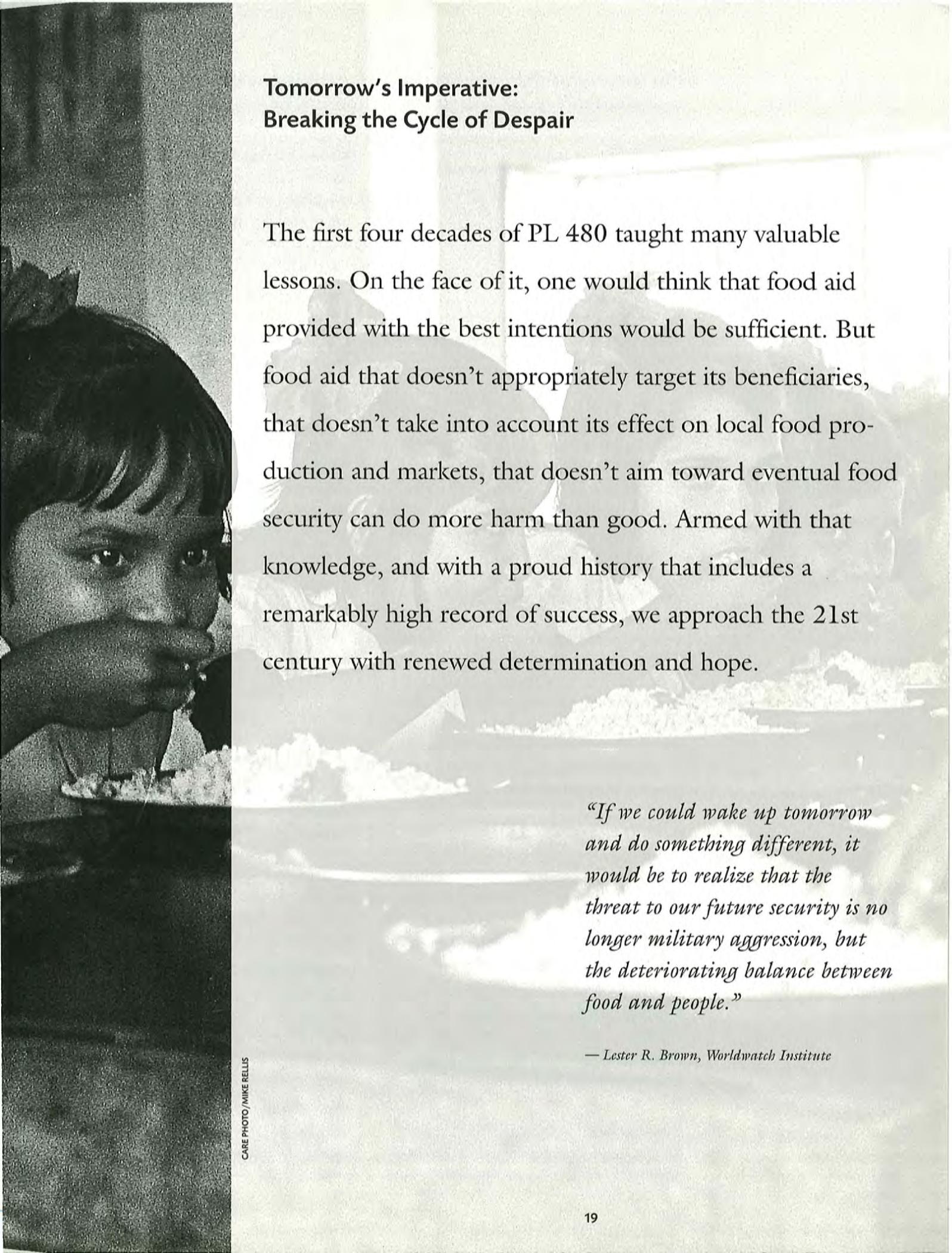
“I was interviewed by three separate people, then I was hired. I was made team leader because I could read and write. Slowly, my dreams came true. We no longer went hungry. With this job, my daughter and I were ensured three meals a day.

“In two years’ time, with my earnings I was able to buy chickens and goats to raise and sell at a profit. My daughter, Aklima, is now in the fourth grade, and I have great hopes for her.

“I will soon stop working for CARE to make room for other poor women who need a chance, but I’ll do fine. I have my poultry and goat-raising business. CARE has taught me how to be self-reliant.”

Lebujan is one of many who have learned self-reliance through this project. In fact, in recent years Bangladesh itself has made great strides in self-reliance. It’s now generally regarded as “food secure” in rice; that is to say, it produces all the rice its people need, widely available and at affordable prices. Many development experts feel the road construction project played a significant role in this remarkable achievement.





Tomorrow's Imperative: Breaking the Cycle of Despair

The first four decades of PL 480 taught many valuable lessons. On the face of it, one would think that food aid provided with the best intentions would be sufficient. But food aid that doesn't appropriately target its beneficiaries, that doesn't take into account its effect on local food production and markets, that doesn't aim toward eventual food security can do more harm than good. Armed with that knowledge, and with a proud history that includes a remarkably high record of success, we approach the 21st century with renewed determination and hope.

“If we could wake up tomorrow and do something different, it would be to realize that the threat to our future security is no longer military aggression, but the deteriorating balance between food and people.”

— Lester R. Brown, *Worldwatch Institute*

The world is currently producing enough food to feed all its people adequately... why, then, haven't we eliminated hunger?

On the eve of the 21st century, we can look back on considerable progress in the area of food security. Yet the chilling facts remain:

- 800 million people in the world are chronically undernourished; that is to say, they don't have access to sufficient food to lead healthy and productive lives,
- more than 180 million children around the world are underweight,
- 13 million people die every year from hunger and poverty-related causes; most of them are children under 5.

The world is currently producing enough food to feed all its people adequately. This has been true for some time now; why, then, haven't we eliminated hunger?

If there were one answer to that question, perhaps we would long ago have arrived at a solution. But the reasons for "food insecurity" are varied and complex.

Food security rests on three criteria. First, food must be locally available in sufficient quantities to meet the nutritional needs of a given population. Next, it must be affordable. Finally, it must be used appropriately; that is, it must be processed, stored, and prepared to retain its nutritional value, and health and sanitation services must ensure that people's nutritional well-being isn't lost to disease.

Many factors conspire to create food-insecure situations: chronic poverty, low agricultural productivity, environmental depredation, population growth, natural disasters, armed conflict, inadequate sanitation and health practices, poor infrastructure, failed economic policies, and even cultural traditions. These factors combine and recombine in changing patterns, but all affect the attainment of food security.

Poverty: A vicious circle is replicated all over the world: hunger prevents people from working — and earning — their way out of poverty, and poverty keeps them hungry. This scenario exists on both individual and national levels.

Low Agricultural Productivity: Lack of knowledge of more productive farming techniques and/or the lack of capital needed for

tools, higher-quality seed, irrigation systems, and the like keep food production low in poor communities.

Environmental Depredation: Food insecurity forces impoverished people to put unsuitable land into production, misuse water supplies, deplete the usefulness of the soil, and cut down the trees they, and the land, need to survive.

Population Growth: Approximately 100 million people will be added to the world population each year for the foreseeable future. By the year 2025, it is anticipated that the world population will have reached 8.5 billion, of whom 7 billion will live in developing countries. Population growth can wipe out gains in food production: In Africa, for example, food production increased by 33 percent in the 1980's, but per capita food production actually declined as population growth outstripped the increase in food production.

Natural Disasters: When natural disasters occur in the developed world, sophisticated communications and transportation networks — along with large stockpiles of food, medical supplies, tools, and other materials — keep loss of life and disruption of food production to a minimum. Such disasters are devastating in developing countries, where resources and infrastructure are often highly inadequate.

Armed Conflict: In addition to the other tragic effects of war, it wreaks havoc on food production and availability. Crops are destroyed or confiscated, whole populations are cut off from food sources, planting and cultivation schedules are disrupted, seed and food storage warehouses are looted.

Health and Sanitation: Inadequate knowledge of nutrition and the lack of sanitation and health services can erode the health even of people who consume a sufficient number of calories. In many cases, especially among children, the results are fatal.

Poor Infrastructure: The lack of roads, vehicles, fuel, and communications prevents food from getting where it's most needed. Surpluses may be lost to spoilage, when

RIGHT: Food is distributed to victims of a 1988 flood in Bangladesh that left 25 million people homeless.





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only a short distance away both needs and markets exist.

Failed Economic Policies: Some economic policies actually result in disincentives to local production and efficient marketing. Farmers may be discouraged from investing in sound agricultural or environmental practices because of uncertain land ownership and/or overly centralized government structures that stifle local initiatives.

Cultural Traditions: Denying girls and women access to education is just one example of a cultural norm that's an obstacle to food security. Women do much of the farming in developing countries, and illiteracy prevents them from getting information about improved farming techniques. Furthermore, because educated women are less likely to have many children, the lack of education leads to higher birth rates — which, in turn, depletes food resources.

Faced with the many interconnected factors that stand in the way of food security, what are we to do? USAID is a major player in the process of change; PL 480 is a flexible resource that can be used to support improved food security in a variety of ways. There is much reason for hope.

The successes outlined in the previous section have, to a great extent, charted USAID's course. Our work in the future must focus on three things: sustainable development, an emphasis on partnerships, and the use of integrated approaches to promoting development.

Not long after the enactment of Public Law 480, food aid began to be used in self-help projects. Helping people help themselves made sense, and the response from people involved in such projects was encouraging. But self-help was only the germ of an idea, and that idea has now evolved into sustainable development.

Development is considered sustainable when it permanently enhances a society's ability to improve its quality of life. Sustainable development promotes economic and social growth without exhausting the resources of the host country; it respects and

safeguards the economic, natural, and cultural environment; it creates many sources of income and chains of enterprises; it is promoted by articulated governmental policies; and it builds local institutions in which community members participate. Sustainable development enlarges the scope of freedom and opportunity — not just day to day, but generation to generation.

Sustainable development requires participation. It must be based on the expressed needs and experience of ordinary people, their ideas of what problems must be addressed, and their consultations with their government, development agencies, and each other. Fundamentally, it must involve, respond to, and be accountable to the people who will live with the results of the development effort.

From its very beginning, PL 480 food aid programs resulted from partnerships with a variety of governmental and nongovernmental organizations. These must be further expanded and developed in the coming years.

Partnerships begin with the collaboration between donors and host governments. Donors must recognize that development depends in every sense on the beneficiaries themselves — on the individual, community, and national levels. Donors act as catalysts; they can help, facilitate, even accelerate the process, but the major task must be carried out by the beneficiaries, not the donors.

The foundation of sustainable development is participation and a sense of ownership. At its most basic — and when it is truly sustainable — development isn't something that donors do for developing countries; it is something that donors enable the people of developing countries do for themselves. A true and complete partnership is an essential prerequisite.

An increasing amount of development work is being carried out by nongovernmental organizations (NGO's), including U.S.-based private voluntary agencies, indigenous NGO's, and professional and academic groups. These partners possess unique skills and contacts; they are USAID's natural partners in development, and their work is reinforced by the private sector.

PL 480 is a flexible resource that can be used to support improved food security in a variety of ways. There is much reason for hope.

LEFT: PL 480 food helps this Bolivian youngster stay healthy.

The partners in development must reinforce each other at every stage of the development process. A true partnership depends on joint assessment of development problems and the threats they represent, cooperative planning and division of responsibility, allocation of resources to reinforce other development efforts, the pooling of financial resources where possible and appropriate, the sharing of technical resources and expertise, and frequent, rapid communication of information about methods and results.

The third focus of USAID's and our partners' work in the future is the use of integrated approaches and methods. One aspect of this integration is the increasing recognition by donors and host governments of the "relief-to-development continuum." It is possible — in fact, it is more and more being acknowledged as fundamental — to meet humanitarian needs in ways that attack the root causes of food insecurity.

In the past, programs were often designated as either relief or development. Over the years, development experts on every level, including beneficiaries themselves, have come to realize that relief and development are, and should be, inextricably intertwined. The integration of relief and development aid can meet immediate humanitarian requirements — at its most basic, the saving of lives — while simultaneously breaking the long-term cycle of despair that drains resources and hope, and ultimately takes a toll in human life as well.

"Disaster preparedness" is one aspect of this integration. Responding to a disaster only after it has taken place leads to the inefficient use of resources, miscommunication, duplication of effort, and a decreased likelihood that the assistance provided will address root causes as well as immediate needs. Acknowledging and preparing for the possibility of disaster enables development partners to take a number of steps that can reduce the disaster's toll or perhaps avert it altogether.

■ In disaster-prone areas, steps can be taken to minimize the effects of a crisis before it occurs. The construction of earthquake- or flood-resistant housing, storage facilities, and other structures is one example.

■ Many disasters are the result of inefficient land use. Development projects must focus on repairing the damage; this will help minimize the effects of such occurrences as flooding in Bangladesh or drought in sub-Saharan Africa.

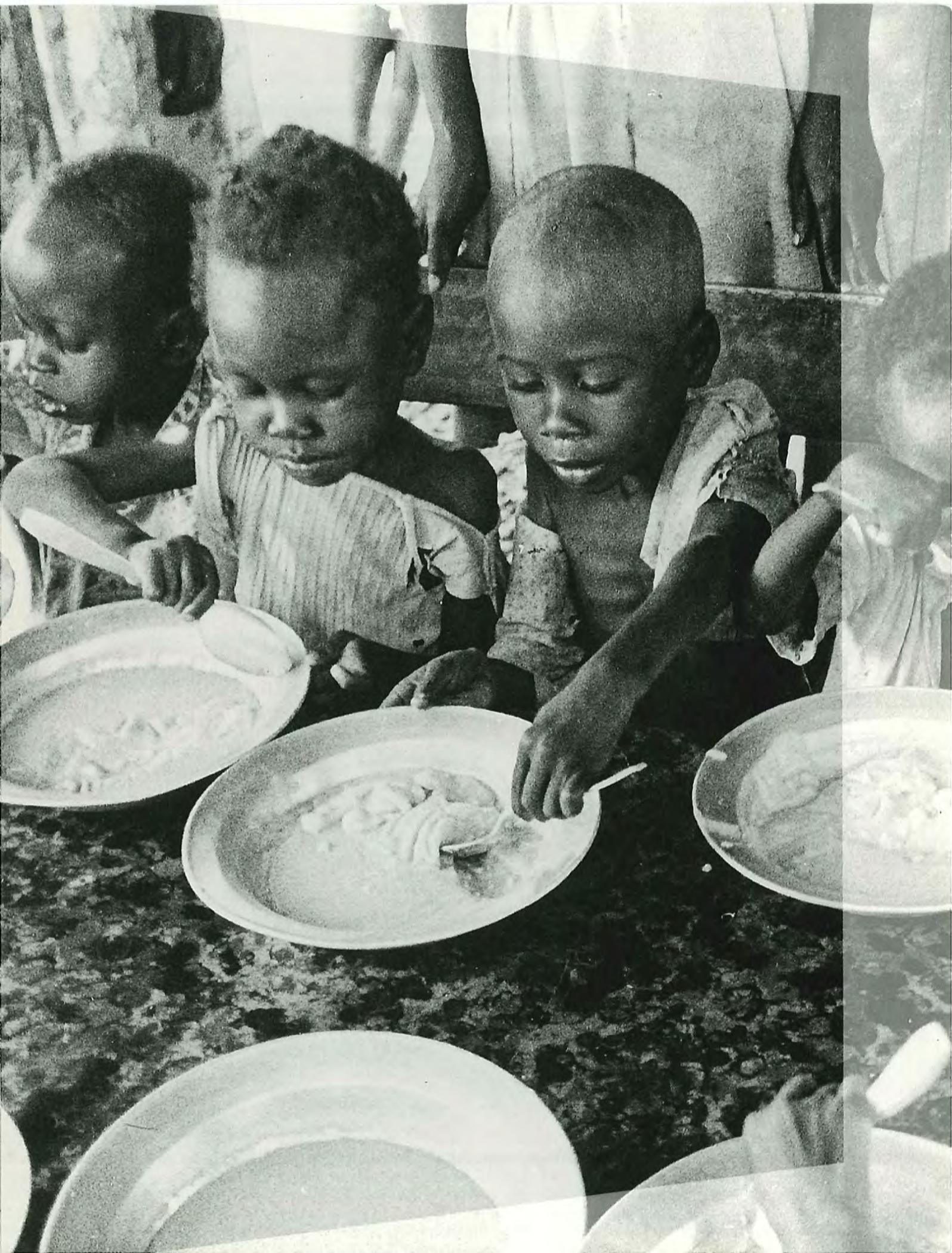
■ In the case of armed conflict, host governments, donor governments and NGO's often sense the approach of hostilities before they begin. Early intervention, in the form of dialogue between well-established development partners, can do much to avert the impending conflict.

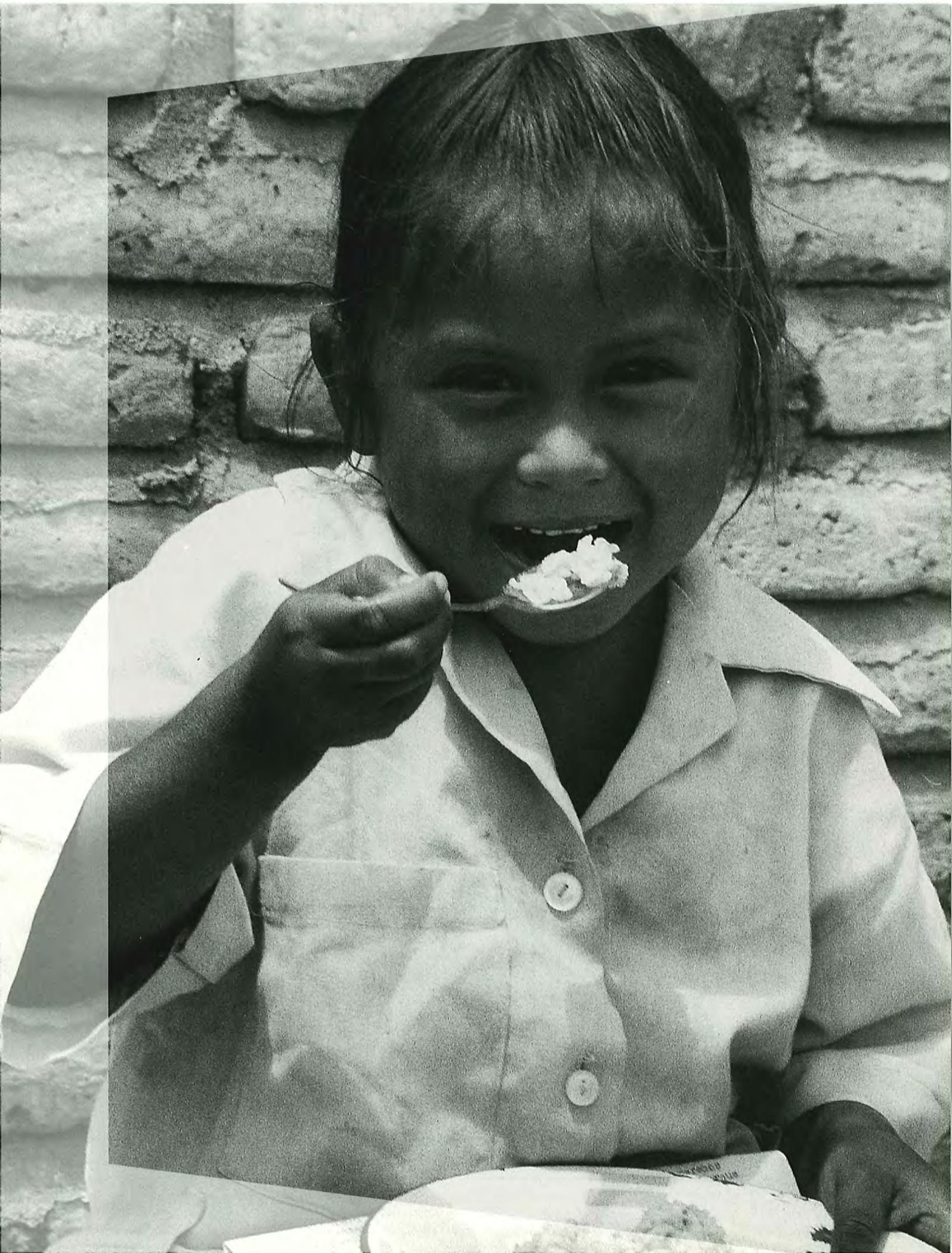
The inclusion of women in every aspect of the development process is another example of essential integration. In much of the world, women and girls are disproportionately poor, ill, and exploited. Untold millions of the world's women are overworked and undercompensated; in many cultures they are the principal food producers, as well as homemakers and providers of child care. Unfortunately, until recent years they were all but left out of the development equation.

Future development efforts must fully integrate women into all phases of the projects. The success of women — as workers, food producers and preparers, health providers, teachers of children, managers of natural resources, and participants in democratic societies — is essential to sustainable development. Any process that doesn't involve half of society is inherently doomed to fail.

Another facet of the integration of various approaches to development is demonstrated by USAID's PL 480 Farmer to Farmer programs. They began in 1985 through the Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance, a nonprofit organization with expertise in short-term volunteer technical assistance for farmers. A number of organizations joined the program, including the National Farmers Union, Partners of the Americas, and the Peace Corps. In the program's first 10 years, the agencies sent more than 1,800 volunteers to over 60 countries. These specialists spent between 15 and 90 days in the host countries, providing assistance and training in grain, fruit, and vegetable production; livestock raising; natural resource conserva-

RIGHT: Children in a preschool feeding program in Haiti receive nutritious meals containing PL 480 commodities.





tion; food processing and packaging; and farm credit management.

One of the major lessons of the first four decades of Public Law 480 is the critical need for evaluation at every stage of relief and development work, from planning through all phases of implementation. When development is truly sustainable, there are continuing benefits and much to be learned long after a project has, in theory, been completed.

Before a project begins, and at several points during its implementation, USAID and its partners must be assured that:

- The project produces measurable, positive results, building local capacities and permanently enhancing the target population's quality of life.
- The people who are expected to benefit from the project are fully involved in it, from planning and allocation of resources through management, oversight, and assessment.
- The project incorporates lessons learned by the development community and avoids duplication of effort. It contains the mechanisms for sharing the results of common problems with others locally, nationally, and regionally.

Much has changed in the first four decades of Public Law 480. The massive food surpluses of the 1950's have been substantially reduced, and budgets have been tightened throughout the U.S. Government. It is therefore of paramount importance to use food aid in ways that will confer the greatest benefits to people in need — and, as a result, to the U.S. and the rest of the world.

As a world leader, the United States can't afford to lessen its commitment to food aid. The U.S. allocates only *one thousandth of one percent* of its annual budget to the Food for Peace program, 25 times less than it allocates for domestic food aid programs. Yet PL 480 manages to have a significant and far-reaching impact around the world. Food aid programs provide humanitarian assistance, benefit the U.S. economy, and help the United States maintain its position as a leader in international affairs.

The future is brimming with possibilities. The world has witnessed monumental changes in recent years: the end of the Cold

War, substantive progress toward peace in the Middle East and Northern Ireland, the end of apartheid in South Africa, the emergence of democracies in many parts of the world, and measurable progress toward food security in a number of countries. These changes fill us with hope and determination.

Our imperative is clear. In the coming decades, USAID and food aid must play a vital role in reducing hunger and promoting development worldwide — and, ultimately, in the attainment of world peace.

The U.S. allocates only one thousandth of one percent of its annual budget to the Food for Peace program . . . yet PL 480 manages to have a significant and far-reaching impact.

LEFT: Food for Peace-supported school feeding programs like this one in Honduras increase enrollment and attendance.

USAID and the U.S. Department of Agriculture have worked in partnership with the following international and private voluntary organizations, using food aid PL 480 commodities to work toward food security around the world:

ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency International)

Africare

Aga Khan Foundation, USA

Agricultural Cooperative Development International

American Friends Service Committee

American International Association

The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee

American National Red Cross

American ORT Federation, Inc.

American Refugee Committee

AmeriCares Foundation, Inc.

Brother's Brother Foundation

CARE

Caritas Boliviana

Caritas del Peru

Catholic Relief Services

Christian Outreach Appeal

Church World Service

City of Hope International

Cooperative Housing Foundation

Corporations to End World Hunger Foundation

Countrymark Cooperative, Inc.

Diocese of the Armenian Church of America

Doulos Community, Inc.

Episcopal Church of the United States

Esperanca, Inc.

Eritrean Relief Committee

Ethiopian Orthodox Church

Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission

Feed My People International, Ltd.

Feed the Children

Food for the Hungry, Inc.

Freedom From Hunger

Fund for Armenia's Recovery

Fund for Democracy and Development

Global Jewish Assistance and Relief Network

International Committee of the Red Cross

International Development Foundation

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

International Lifeline, Inc.

The International Medical Corps

International Orthodox Christian Charities, Inc.

International Partnership for Human Development

International Rescue Committee

Institute for International Development

Jamaica Agricultural Development Foundation

Land O'Lakes

The Life Link

Lutheran World Relief, Inc.

Mennonite Central Committee

Mercy Corps International

National Cooperative Business Association

Norwegian People's Aid

Nurture Center to Prevent Childhood Malnutrition

Opportunities Industrialization Centers International

PRISMA, Asociacion Benefica (Peru)

Project Concern International

Project Hope

The Salvation Army World Service Office

Save the Children Federation, Inc.

TechnoServe

UNICEF

United Nations Border Relief Operation

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

United Ukrainian American Relief Committee

World Food Program

World Relief Corporation

World SHARE, Inc.

World Vision Relief and Development, Inc.

Young Men's Christian Association of the USA

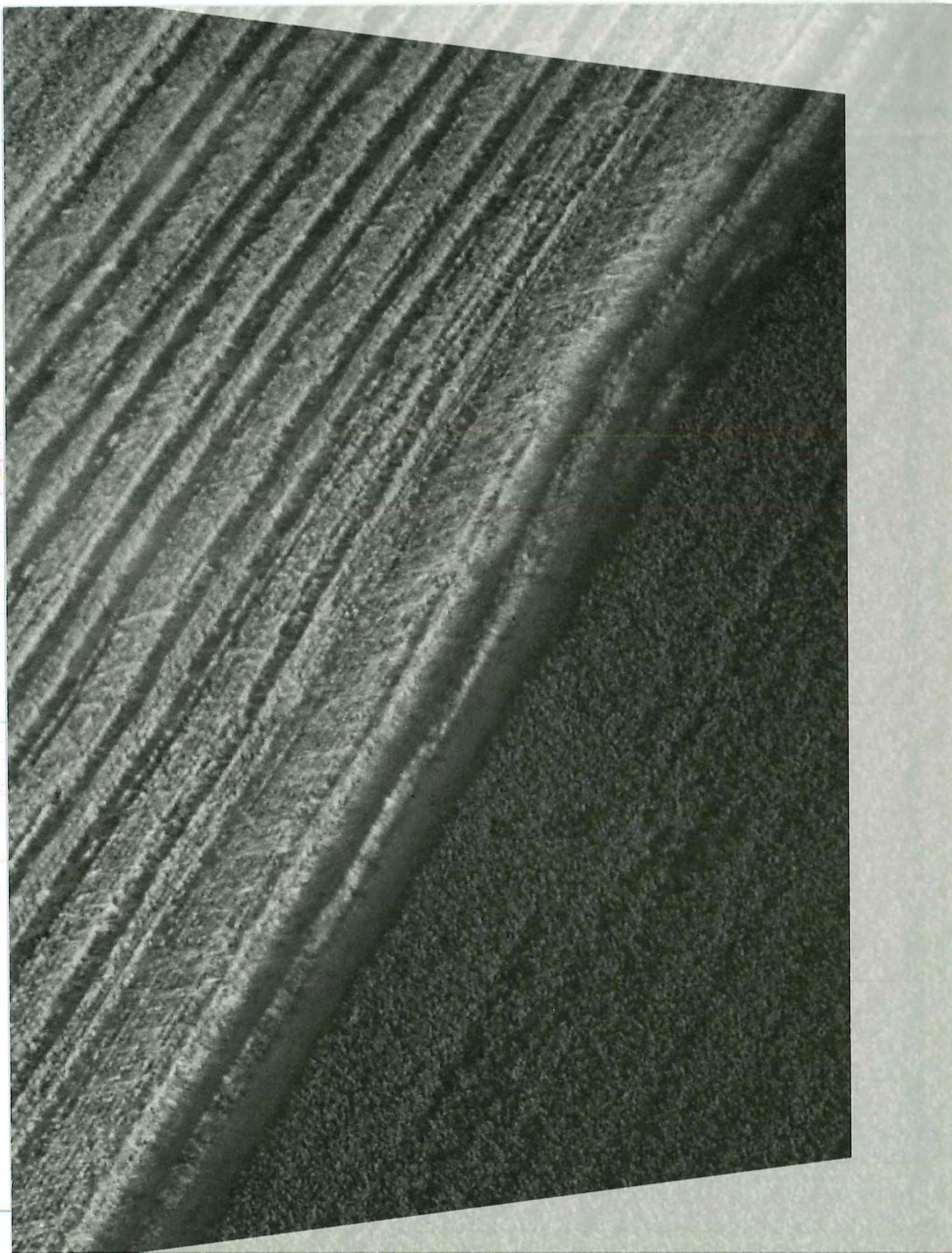


CRS PHOTO

LEFT: Food aid programs like this one in India help impoverished people work toward food security.

Produced by Mendez England & Associates
Design: KINETIK Communication Graphics, Inc.
Editorial: Banna Rubinow

Printed on recycled paper





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