

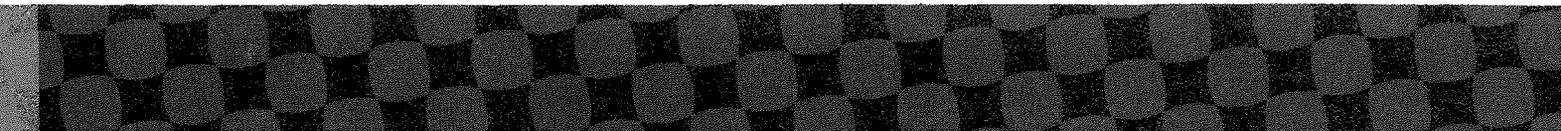
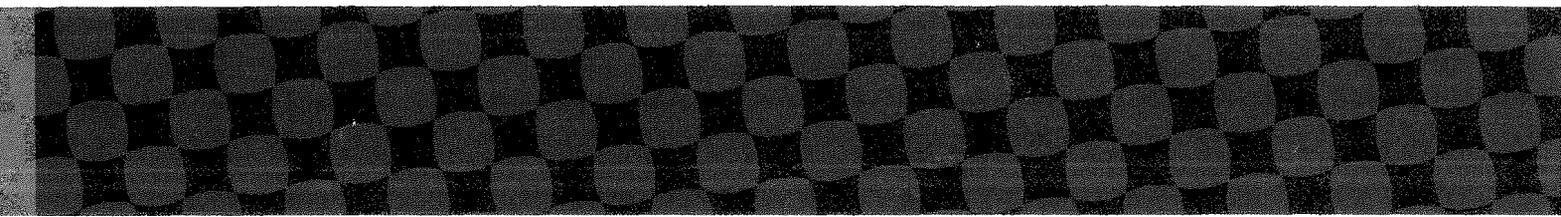
# POLICY DETERMINATION

Agency for International Development

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July 26, 1984

## USING PL 480 TITLE II FOOD AID FOR EMERGENCY OR REFUGEE RELIEF



A.I.D.

POLICY DETERMINATION

USING PL 480 TITLE II FOOD AID FOR EMERGENCY OR REFUGEE RELIEF

I. Introduction

PL 480 Title II authorizes the President to determine requirements and provide agricultural commodities, on behalf of the people of the United States of America, ". . . to [inter alia] meet famine or other urgent or extraordinary relief requirements . . . and for needy persons . . . outside the United States."<sup>1/</sup> The Act further states that the President may furnish the commodities through friendly governments and private or public agencies, including multilateral organizations.

The United States historically has shared its bountiful food supplies with victims of natural disasters (such as floods, droughts, earthquakes and hurricanes) and has helped to avert starvation for victims of man-made problems (such as refugees from civil disturbances or armed conflict). This humanitarian food assistance has been provided as emergency or refugee relief without regard to the political philosophy of the government whose people receive the food aid.

Like all forms of PL 480 food aid, requests for emergency or refugee relief are reviewed and approved under established procedures set forth by the inter-agency Development Coordination Committee (DCC). A.I.D. chairs the PL 480 Title II sub-committee of the DCC. All program approvals require unanimity.

II. A.I.D. Policy

It continues to be A.I.D. policy to provide food aid for emergency or refugee relief requirements of needy persons without regard to the political philosophy of their government. The guiding principle underlying this policy is that a hungry child knows no politics. The desire is to mount a concerted effort quickly and decisively in response to a humanitarian need.

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<sup>1/</sup> Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, as amended (PL 480), Sec. 201.

In determining the appropriate response to a request for such food aid, A.I.D. must take into consideration several factors including: (a) whether the food is to be provided through private or multilateral organizations, or on a government-to-government basis; (the provision of food on a government-to-government basis requires that the recipient government is "friendly" as defined in Section 103(d) of PL 480); (b) the nature of the emergency or other requirement -- including the need to provide food as quickly as possible; (c) the nutritional needs of the population affected; (d) the amount and type of food assistance provided by other international donors; (e) the logistical requirements of delivering the food to those in need; (f) whether or not there is reasonable assurance that the food will reach the intended beneficiaries, which may require on-site inspection by A.I.D. or an intermediary; (g) a determination that adequate storage facilities are available in the recipient country to avoid commodity spoilage or waste; and (h) a determination that the distribution of the food aid will not result in a substantial disincentive to or interference with domestic production or marketing.

In reviewing emergency or refugee food aid requests, A.I.D. must be sensitive to the enormous complexities associated with mounting an effective and timely response to urgent needs under uncertain circumstances that frequently require hard choices and immediate judgements. A.I.D. will review such requests to assure to the extent practical that the assistance is not a substitute for action which a responsible recipient government may need to take to assure adequate food supplies for its people, and that it will not create a dependency on further food aid shipments. At the same time, in deciding whether or not, or to what extent, to provide such food assistance, A.I.D. will endeavor not to penalize those in need of assistance for the politics of the government under which the people live.

The following additional factors will also be taken into account.

1. Emergency Situations. A.I.D. is reluctant to provide "emergency" food aid to help alleviate a chronic food-deficit situation that occurs year after year in the same country which in substantial measure is brought about by inappropriate government policies, since this reduces the resources available to respond to those emergency situations that are sudden and unanticipated. In such cases, the provision of emergency food aid should be linked to (but not necessarily conditioned on) a policy dialogue with the recipient country with the view to correcting the policies which bear significant responsibility for the chronic deficit. Emergency food aid provided in this fashion

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(perhaps in part under Title II, Section 206 authority) can help to assure adequate availability of food in the future. In cases where the chronic food deficit is related to weather or natural resource constraints (in contrast to policy constraints), the provision of emergency food aid should be linked to (but not necessarily conditioned on) a dialogue concerning measures that might help to mitigate or ameliorate the problem.

2. Situations Involving Refugees or Displaced Persons. Under these circumstances, A.I.D. may provide food aid to those in need under government-to-government programs and/or non-government programs, whichever is appropriate.

Persons requiring emergency food aid may reside in a country which, while their own, is controlled by a government unsympathetic to their legitimate need for food aid; or they may reside in an area of that country which is not under government control. Provision of food aid on a government-to-government basis under these circumstances should only be considered where A.I.D. can be assured that the food will actually be delivered to those in need.



M. Peter McPherson  
Administrator

26 JUL 1984

Date