



DISCUSSION PAPER

Reframing Food Crises and the Need for a Paradigm Shift

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Introduction

A food crisis is looming again. Food prices are rising, and ever more people are on the brink of starvation. Thus, this issue dominates the news cycle, and everyone is looking for a solution. Aside from its newsworthiness, this is not the first food crisis in the 21st century but the third one in fifteen years. Such frequency shows that the root causes have not been addressed. Unless a well-thought strategic action is taken, another crisis will always occur.

The discussion paper series “The Use of International Law in Addressing Food Crises” attempts to reframe the debate surrounding food crisis and use international law to instigate paradigm changes. With its enforcement capacity, the legal route can help address structural causes. It can set new legal rules or alter existing ones. Such changes can ensure paradigm changes and offer permanent solutions.

This discussion paper is the first part of a series that uses international law as a possible prism to view this predicament. The paper will focus on the high-level framing approaches adopted by international law concerning food crises. Two methods are noticeable: the first adheres to a human rights perspective, while the second adopts a trade and economics perspective.

The paper will explain that food crises should be framed as accountability crises that most often result from structural causes, including the flaws related to the dominant economic system that affect the accessibility of food. Finally, the author will explore the need for paradigm shifts, as they are paramount to efficiently containing food crises.



Wheat cultivation starts in Türkiye's Edirne. (Gökhan Balcı - Anadolu Agency)

1. International law and the framing of food crises

The scope of international law is wide, and its sources are varied. For the sake of brevity, this section will only focus on the most relevant international law sources that help frame food crises. To date, there is no binding treaty directly dedicated to food crises. However, many binding and non-binding United Nations (UN) legal documents are relevant to hunger, food insecurity, and food crises. Regarding the trade aspect of the subject, various World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements, including the WTO Agreement on Agriculture and the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, are among the relevant international law sources.

1.1. The UN Documents

Various UN documents address food crises. Some of these texts are binding, and some are not. They also have different impact levels, direct and indirect. Among those are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition, General Comment No. 12 (1999) on the right to adequate food, General Comment No. 15 on the right to water, the UN General Assembly Resolutions, reports of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, the UN Commission of the Human Rights Resolutions, and Economic and Social Council Decisions.¹ After a thorough review of these UN documents, one could say that the UN includes in its scope extreme (e.g., starvation) and moderate situations (e.g., the lack of access to qualitatively sufficient food). Secondly, the UN associates the issues with access to food and food crises with broader concepts of security, sovereignty, and sufficiency. Moreover, the UN considers the problems with access to food and food crises to be very closely related to human rights. Finally, for the UN, the issues with access to food and food crises are human-made and political, about accessibility, not availability, as well as accountability, and are the result of structural shortcomings. Under this approach, the reasons for the problems with access to food and food crises include commodification, trade liberalisation, contradictory policies, conflicts, and natural catastrophes.

For the UN, food crises are mostly associated with hunger, including famine and starvation. However, the UN does

not limit the problems with access to food and the food crises issue to these extreme situations. According to the UN, this issue covers cases where there is a lack of access to qualitatively and quantitatively sufficient food. For example, Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) recognises the right to “adequate” food. A former UN Special Rapporteur’s right to food definition includes the wording access “to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2001a, para 14).” The frequent use of the words, undernourishment, malnourishment, nutritional needs, and food quality in the UN documents also proves that this issue is not limited to extreme situations. After all, General Comment No. 12 emphasises, “The right to adequate food shall therefore not be interpreted in a narrow or restrictive sense which equates it with a minimum package of calories, proteins and other specific nutrients. (UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [CESR], 1999).” The UN accepts the multidimensional nature of food crises affecting people’s lives.

Beyond that, the UN associates the problems with access to food and food crises with broader concepts of security, sovereignty, and sufficiency. The UN endorses food self-sufficiency in developing countries to tackle such situations (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2001a, para 70). The UN uses the term food security to highlight “physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food (Rome Declaration on World Food Security, 1996)” as a solution for access to the food problem. The UN mentions food sovereignty as a solution that enables “national and individual sovereignty over food security policy (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2004a, para 27)” and ensures people’s primacy over trade concerns. Similarly, the UN relates the problems with access to food and food crises to poverty. General Comment No. 12 article 5 sees poverty as a reason for hunger (CESR, 1999). All these show that the UN understands the importance of access to food and solving food crises to ensure an adequate, sufficient, and secure standard of living for people.

The UN considers the problems with food access and food crises closely related to human rights. For example, according to a former UN Special Rapporteur on the

¹ Except for the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, none of these documents is binding. Still, most of these non-binding documents contain provisions that help interpret the legally binding documents related to the right to food.

Right to Food, hunger is a violation of human dignity (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2000a), and inadequate food “infringes people’s fundamental human rights (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2000a).” Food-related human rights include the right to life, the right to food, the right to a standard of living adequate for their health and well-being, including food, and the right of every person to be free from hunger. According to General Comment No 12, the right to food is “indispensable for the fulfilment of other human rights (CESR, 1999).” Moreover, these rights are shaping the UN’s framing of problems with access to food and food crises in two main ways. Hence, according to this framework, human rights violations cause food and food crises. In turn, human rights provide the means and ends for solving the access to food problems and food crises. As a means, human rights determine the responsibility of each stakeholder, including states, transnational corporations, and international organisations, in solving the issue. Human rights aim to ensure that addressing the problem is an obligation, not “a preference or policy choice, or just an aspirational goal (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2003a, para 24).” In the end, respecting, protecting, and fulfilling human rights are the aim of solving food crises.

The UN documents frame the problems with access to food and food crises around several main ideas. Accordingly, food crises are human made (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2001a) and trigger political and humanitarian crises (UN Human Rights Council, 2022). As a former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food puts it, “hunger is the result of human action or inaction (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2002a).” As per the former Special Rapporteur, “there is no secret as to how to eradicate hunger, there is no need for new technologies, there is simply the need for political commitment to challenge existing policies that make the rich richer and the poor poorer (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2004b).”

Second, crises are not about the availability of food but access to food. Because the society already has “sufficient resources (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2001a),” but needs “equitable and efficient distribution of food (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2001a).” According to a former UN Special Rapporteur, Brazil is among the countries where there is sufficient food, but insufficient and inadequate distribution. In Brazil, hunger and malnutrition are “a question of access to food – poor people simply do not have enough money to buy food or do not have enough land or other resources to grow their own food (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2003b).”

Third, food crises result from “structural shortcomings (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2005a).” The UN

mentions the need to address problems of structural hunger (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2003c) and that “eradicating hunger and poverty requires challenging structural injustices and inequities (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2005b).” These structural issues include seeing food access as an emergency rather than a development issue (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2005c). Moreover, as the current Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food puts it, transforming the food systems is difficult not because there is no way to transform them, but because there is lack of action and willingness to address structural challenges. (UN Human Rights Council, 2022). This inaction is sometimes due to a lack of willingness. But at other times, not addressing food crises results from structural challenges like debt (UN Human Rights Council, 2022, p. 14). Another example of a structural challenge is structural discrimination that women are subject to and negatively impacts women’s access to food (UN Human Rights Council, 2015).

Finally, the problems with access to food and food crises are about accountability and commitment. The UN documents employ the right to food to ensure accountability. According to the UN, the right to food is not an aspiration (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2003a, para 24), and therefore “remedies for violations of the right to food and water must be available through the courts” and “this should include judicial action, or other forms of accountability (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2003c).” In line with this thinking, the UN documents indicate accountability in several documents. For example, a former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food report mentions “accountability for transnational corporations (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2003d)” mostly in the form of facing courts for violating the right to food.

Moreover, a former UN Special Rapporteur on Right to Food report highlights the importance of establishing “accountability mechanisms to assess planning, budgeting and the results of nutrition-related interventions (UN Human Rights Council, 2016).” The UN documents also highlight the importance of commitment to act, and the documents complain about the non-committal language used in the relevant documents (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2004b). The UN documents also express dissatisfaction over inaction in practice. A former Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food draws attention to the “gap between principle and practice (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2003d).” Moreover, a former Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food takes note of the little progress made to “halve the number of victims of hunger by 2015”, as decided at the 1996 World Food Summit (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2003d).

Under these main ideas, the UN documents list various reasons for the problems with access to food and food crises. One reason is seeing water and food as the main “source of profit (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2001b),” i.e., commodification which causes provoked speculation (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2002b). Another reason is the increasing move of privatisation. Certain aspects of international trade liberalisation are hugely responsible for this situation, including the intellectual property regime and globalisation, as well as the policies of Bretton Woods institutions, the US, and the WTO. The contradictions within the UN system; policies of the UN agencies such as FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, and WFP, on the one hand, and contradictory policies of the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO, on the other hand, are also affecting the situation (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2001c). Natural catastrophes, rains, and soil infertility (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2002b) also play a role in crises. Low income at the individual level, and unemployment at the country level (UN Commission on Human Rights, 2005d) and the countries’ debt burden have an enormous impact on food crises. Conflicts are one of the major reasons for food crises. Sudden shocks, such as the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, worsen food crises. All these reasons can be addressed through necessary paradigm shifts.

1.2. Trade-Related Documents

The WTO is the most important organisation that directly or indirectly deals with the trade-related aspect of food crises. The WTO Agreement on Agriculture, dated 1995, is the most important in regulating agricultural product trade. However, the agreement does not contain a provision dedicated to food crises and access to food. The agreement lays out the WTO’s main approach to food. This organisation considers food as a commodity that should be subject to free trade. Accordingly, it contains provisions that endorse a “market-oriented agricultural trading system” and “reductions in agricultural support and protection” (Agreement on Agriculture, 1995). WTO’s approach to food, as laid out in the agreement dated 1995, was reaffirmed with the subsequent 2013 Bali package on food,² the 2015 Nairobi package on food,³ and the 2022 Geneva Ministerial conference documents.⁴ This shows that the WTO’s approach to food-related issues is consistent. The priority of this organisation is to end restrictions and distortions facing the commerce of agricultural products.

While WTO’s priorities seem clear⁵, WTO has still a long way to address food issues. The WTO connects access to



(Port of Ambarli - Anadolu Agency)

² The Bali package on food includes the outcomes of the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference held between 3-6 December 2013. This package contains the Bali Ministerial Declaration and accompanying ministerial decisions on export competition, tariff quota administration, public stockholding for food security purposes, and general services.

³ Nairobi package on food includes the outcomes of the 10th Ministerial Conference held between 15-19 December 2015. This package involves ministerial decisions on export competition, a special safeguard mechanism for developing country members, and public stockholding for food security purposes.

⁴ 2022 Geneva (WTO) Ministerial Conference documents on food include ministerial decisions on World Food Programme food purchases exemptions from export prohibitions or restrictions and the emergency response to food insecurity.

⁵ The disadvantage of WTO rules, which reflect WTO priorities and affect access to food is a big issue of concern. WTO Agreement on Agriculture is criticised for restricting mostly developing countries’ food policies and endorsing the rules to the benefit of developed countries. TRIPS Agreement is criticised for preventing indigenous people’s and small-scale farmers’ access to seeds.

food mainly with the concept of food security, although it acknowledges that the problem has a humanitarian aspect (World Trade Organization, 2022a). As per this perspective, WTO calls upon the international community to facilitate the flow of food aid and ensure that food is available (World Trade Organization, 1995). The WTO further acknowledges that access to food, and agriculture in general, has particular importance for developing countries and their “development goals, poverty reduction strategies, food security and livelihood concerns (World Trade Organization, 2004).” Accordingly, the WTO foresees special, and differential treatment for developing countries, especially for least developed and net-food-importing developing countries. The Ministerial Declaration on the Emergency Response to Food Insecurity directly addresses the issues related to access to food. This declaration links access to food with hunger and undernourishment and describes the current situation as a crisis. However, the WTO does not mention the right to food in this document, as is the case with most other WTO documents, and only talks about sustainable development goals. This shows that the WTO does not have a rights-based approach to access to food.

It is clear that the WTO’s long-term target is unrestricted trade in agriculture, and all other aspects of food, including access to food, are evaluated in line with this target. For example, for the WTO, trade restrictions, including public stockholding for security purposes, damage food access (World Trade Organization, 2022b), and the solution is unrestricted trade in agriculture. Similarly, according to the WTO, emergency measures introduced to address food security concerns should minimise trade distortions as much as possible and be temporary, targeted and transparent (World Trade Organization, 2022b). Likewise, even if developing countries enjoy some flexibility in agricultural trade, these flexibilities can only last for a certain time. For example, least-developed countries and net food-importing developing countries may “benefit from the provisions of Article 9.4 of the Agreement on Agriculture⁶ until the end of 2030, whereas, with regards to the same article, the deadline for developing country members is 2023 (World Trade Organization, 2015). In short, unrestricted agricultural trade is the norm for the WTO. Any situation other than this norm is a deviation from the WTO perspective. In other words, only unrestricted trade may solve food access problems and food crises.

2. How Should Global Food Crises be Framed Under International Law?

International law has two approaches to problems of access to food. The first approach, explained under Section 1.1 of this paper, is more people-oriented and takes the issue from more of a human rights perspective. The second approach, explained under Section 1.2 of this paper, is more trade-oriented and emphasises the importance of free trade for access to food. The first approach does not pay enough attention to issues around structural issues. For example, it does not properly address corporations’ excessive control over food systems and the problems this creates.

Corporation concentration in food systems is excessive. Mainly 3-5 large companies dominate farm inputs and food production and processing (Howard, 2016). As a result, a few companies in less competitive markets easily increase consumer prices. More people become dependent on imports, and as a result, in the event of supply-chain disruptions, they face difficulties accessing food. Moreover, these companies decide the rules on

agricultural trade. However, the first approach, for the reasons such as remaining neutral towards political and economic systems, does not pay due attention to the problems caused by corporations. For example, the 2021 Food Systems Summit did not engage with the problems created by corporations and presented corporations as innovators and investors that would enable access to food (Clapp et al., 2021). Similarly, except for some reports of UN Special Rapporteurs, many UN resolutions disregard the impact of corporate concentration on access to food.

Moreover, the first approach, even though it acknowledges the accountability problem, does not give due importance to the issue. For instance, under the human rights-based first approach, states still hold the main responsibility for ensuring access to food, and transnational corporations’ responsibility usually remains voluntary. Accountability may be one of the most important reasons for the unsolved problem of food access because many solutions are offered for solving food crises. However, practice lags behind the

⁶ Article 9.4 grants developing countries temporary exceptions that lead them to subsidise marketing. The wording of the article reads as “4. During the implementation period, developing country Members shall not be required to undertake commitments in respect of the export subsidies listed in subparagraphs (d) and (e) of paragraph 1 above, provided that these are not applied in a manner that would circumvent reduction commitments.”

theory and the solutions proposed. Several stakeholders show unwillingness to act. For example, states usually do not incorporate the right to food into their domestic legal order, and since they are not held accountable for their inaction, food crises remain unsolved.

On the other hand, concerning the second approach, there is a tendency not to question free trade as a reason for the global food crises. Because the second approach is based on promoting free trade as a key to development and growth, this policy was mainly laid by developed countries, such as the US, and mainly for the benefit of their economies, not the developing countries. Free trade has also greatly benefitted transnational corporations by opening developing country markets to them. Given the benefits of free trade to all these powerful stakeholders, it is unlikely for these stakeholders to change course or even acknowledge the flaws of their actions. The second approach sees the reasons as a result of the deviation from principles of free trade and market economy. However, free trade and the free market economy sometimes create severe issues.

All these show the dichotomy in framing global food crises. While the first approach looks at the issue from a more human rights perspective, the second approach, endorsed by the WTO, World Bank, and IMF, has a more trade-oriented view. These two perspectives create differences in the ways of dealing with the problems and thus lead to

conflicting practices. For example, even though the UN aims to ensure people's right to food, liberalising trade in agriculture with the endorsement of the WTO, World Bank, and IMF severely affects small farmers' right to food and threatens people's food security. Removing trade barriers in agriculture facilitated transnational corporations' entry into the markets. Competing with transnational companies has put small farmers, who cannot easily afford expensive food inputs and have no access to certain seeds due to patents at a severe disadvantage. Cheap imports, too, has decreased competing power of small farmers. As a result, farmers' income dropped, they faced difficulties with affording food, and they either changed the food items that they produce or migrated to big cities to work in the industry. For all these reasons, an alternative framing of crises is a must. Accordingly, food crises are accountability crises resulting from structural causes, including the ones related to the dominant economic system that affect the accessibility of food. Only this alternative framing can realise the paradigm shifts necessary for addressing food crises. For example, questioning economic system-related structural reasons will lead to partial de-commodification of food and prioritisation of the environment and people in international trade and investment systems. Highlighting the importance of accountability will facilitate a human rights-based approach. Lastly, paying due regard to structural causes will ensure inclusiveness and sustainability.



76th session of the UN General Assembly in New York (Tayfun Coşkun- Anadolu Agency)

3. What are the Necessary Paradigm Shifts to Address the Global Food Crises by Using International Law?

3.1. *Partial Decommodification of Food*

The first major paradigm that worsens food crises is the commodification of food. Under the commodification of food approach, food is primarily treated as a commodity traded under market principles. This creates many problems in terms of food security and access to food. Above all, as a result of being a commodity, companies see food as a means for profit-making and prioritise profit over people's well-being. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food confirms this fact in his report dated July 18, 2022, by stating that corporations' highly concentrated power enables a limited group of people to shape markets to maximise shareholders' profit (UN Human Rights Council, 2022). This becomes more problematic with the rise in privatisation. Accordingly, companies impact policy-making and global governance processes for profit-making. For instance, when it comes to food policies, corporations lobby to affect legislation and regulation and promote deregulation for their benefit. Mergers among companies occur to increase their profits. As a result, a few countries and companies dominate the food trade. The global grain trade is dominated only by four companies⁷ that control 70-90% of the grain trade (IPES-Food, 2022, p.6). A significant disruption occurs when "a major exporter goes offline (IPES-Food, 2022, p.6)."

The domination of the food trade creates dependency. The emphasis on staple crops starting with the colonial period has undermined traditional diets, leaving nations increasingly dependent on imports for what are now their main foods (IPES-Food, 2022, p.5). As a result of import dependency, many countries are now reliant on a few countries and companies. Another issue related to food commodification is that it becomes vulnerable to speculation in commodity futures markets. This was the case during the 2007 – 2008 crisis. In a 2010 briefing note, then the UN Special Rapporteur on Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter, concluded that a significant portion of the price volatility observed over 2007-2008 "can only be explained by the emergence of a speculative bubble (IPES-Food, 2022, p.12)." For these reasons, the concept of food as a commodity has to change, food must be partially

de-commodified, and corporate-led food systems must be limited and regulated.

3.2. *Prioritisation of People and Environment in International Trade and Investment Systems*

Today's international economic system has some aspects that worsen food crises. For example, the WTO rules reduce the policy space in food policies that are important for developing countries, especially for protecting developing country farmers. Moreover, in many countries, the international economic system destroyed the structural foundations of food production. It did so in many ways. The structural adjustment programs of the World Bank and IMF deteriorated food production conditions. For example, the 1980s' structural adjustment programs in African countries "promoted cash crops exports and cheap grain imports," and as a result, "state support programs" were diminished and "structural foundations of food production" was dismantled (IPES-Food, 2022, p.5). Intellectual property rights impact communities and farmers by preventing them from using the seeds they use to produce their food, as well as exchanging and reusing seeds (UN Human Rights Council, 2008). These show that some aspects of the current international economic system that prioritise the functioning of markets over the well-being of people and the environment worsen food crises. These aspects should change, and the environment and people's well-being should be better considered.

3.3. *Adopting a Human Rights-Based Approach*

The current human rights system has many shortcomings related to the accountability of stakeholders and ensuring cooperation and solidarity. These problems prevent proper addressing of food crises. One problem is to hold the states accountable. Worse than that, even states are reluctant to be held responsible regarding economic and social rights

such as the right to food. Because states see the right to food as an economic, social, and cultural right, non-justiciable, in other words, states tend to claim that economic, social, and cultural rights are not susceptible to third-party adjudication. As a result, individuals whose right to food is violated usually do not have the means to claim their rights. Moreover, other stakeholders, such as transnational corporations, consider human rights obligations voluntary. This being the case, many international companies opt for profit-making at the cost of directly or indirectly violating people's food rights.

Lack of solidarity and cooperation among stakeholders is another problem of the current human rights framework. Solidarity focuses on collective and societal dimensions of food crises and food access problems. Since food crises cannot be addressed solely at the individual level, a solidarity approach is necessary. Likewise, given that food crises cannot be handled via unilateral actions of a single stakeholder, cooperation among stakeholders is essential. In short, solving the problems with access to food and food crises requires adopting a human rights-based approach that promotes collaboration, solidarity, and accountability.

3.4. Ensuring Inclusiveness and Sustainability

Food policies are mainly shaped by international organisations, states, and corporations that have a say in the global economic order. That being the case, many governments and international organisations fail to pay attention to and respond to the needs of the most disadvantaged (UN Human Rights Council, 2022). For example, policies do not properly focus on the restrictions affecting the farmers' freedom to exchange and preserve seeds (UN Human Rights Council, para 81), nor do they focus on the impact of food crises on women. This has to change at many levels. At the international level, the level of inclusiveness in both policy-making and policy application must increase. At the national level, national laws should set a mechanism for ensuring the involvement of vulnerable groups in policy-making and policy implementation.

Solutions for problems with access to food and food crises usually focus on short-term solutions instead of long-term sustainable solutions. Food aid is one of the short-term solutions. Even though food aid does good for people in imminent danger, it has the risk of preventing capacity building. Moreover, uncontrolled food aid may distort the local production of food. Another issue that should

be considered when working towards sustainability is to avoid the negative impacts of path dependency. Path dependency is the creation of "accumulated investments in specialised commodity systems." Since farmers highly invest in commodity-specific skills, training, equipment, networks and retail relationships, it becomes more difficult for farmers to shift to different crops or different modes of production (IPES-Food, 2022).

On the other hand, government policies discourage diversification (IPES-Food, 2022). Fertiliser reliance also locks farmers into current production systems and holds back diversification. Path dependency and lack of diversification are risky because when there is a problem with certain staple food, farmers cannot easily switch to another type of food for providing food. Lastly, sustainability and conflicts, poverty and climate change have a two-way relationship. Conflicts, poverty, and climate change worsen food crises and impact the sustainability of access to food. On the other hand, unsustainable production and consumption patterns cause environmental degradation and climate change. For all these reasons, ensuring sustainability requires regulating food aid and opting for long-term solutions, being mindful of path dependency, addressing conflicts, poverty, and climate change, and focusing on agroecology to ensure sustainability.



United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres delivers a speech during a joint press conference with Turkish National Defense Minister Hulusi Akar at the Joint Coordination Center established in Istanbul for the safe shipment of grain products from the Black Sea region in Istanbul, Türkiye, on August 20, 2022. (Islam Yakut- Anadolu Agency)

Conclusion

Food crises are a chronic problem in the world, and international law aims to address this persistent predicament. For this purpose, international law frames food crises in two main ways. The first approach, adopted by the UN and the UN-affiliated organisations, is more human rights oriented. This approach considers food crises from broader security, sovereignty, and sufficiency perspectives. It defines food crises as human made and political crises that are about accessibility, not the availability of food, resulting from structural shortcomings. The second approach, adopted by the WTO and institutions like IMF and World Bank, is more trade oriented. The second approach connects access to food mainly with food security. This approach sees a market-oriented agricultural trading system and reductions in agricultural support and protection as the solution for addressing food insecurity. However, both these framing approaches have shortcomings and fail to address the root causes of food crises. The first approach does not pay enough attention to corporations' dominance in food systems and the problems due to that.

Moreover, the first approach does not properly address the problems around accountability. On the other hand, the second approach disregards the negative impacts of free trade and the market economy on food crises. Unless these shortcomings are addressed and the contradiction between these two approaches is eliminated, the world will continue to suffer heavily from food crises.

An alternative framing of the crises is a must for addressing food crises. Food crises are accountability crises resulting from structural causes, including the ones related to the dominant economic system that affect the accessibility of food. This alternative framing leads the way for necessary paradigm shifts for addressing food crises. First, being mindful of economic-related structural reasons may result in partial de-commodification of food and prioritisation of the environment and people in international trade and investment systems. This paradigm shift is important because food as a commodity approach causes transnational corporations to prioritise their profit over people's access to food.

Furthermore, food as a commodity approach creates path dependency and makes people reliant on imports from a few countries and companies. Speculation is another problem linked to food as a commodity approach. On the other hand, this paradigm shift is important because sometimes, WTO rules, IP rights, and IMF and World Bank policies impair access to food. Second, focusing on accountability can facilitate a more human rights-based approach. This is essential because the lack of accountability of states and multinational corporations creates inaction in addressing food crises. Lastly, addressing structural causes might ensure inclusiveness and sustainability. This is crucial because the current system does not pay due regard to the needs of vulnerable groups. Moreover, relying on food aid, path dependency, current production methods, and food systems will lead to unsustainability.

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