

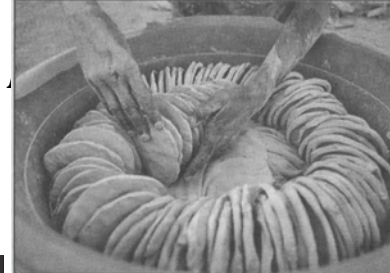
## *Ethics, Hunger and Food Policies*

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November 25, 2008



## *Last Resort: Haiti, January 2008*



- In the next hour 1,000 children will die
- **Half** due to hunger and malnutrition
- It is *preventable!*
- Every fourth child in developing countries is malnourished
- Almost 3 times the U.S. population is hungry
- Life expectancy at birth in some developing countries is 36 years
- About a billion people are overweight or obese



## *Rhetoric, Action & Likely Outcome*

- Rhetoric
- Action
- Prospects



Rhetoric  
Declarations  
Plans  
Targets

≠

Action



### *Reasons for Solving the Problems*

- Ethical
- Humanitarian
- Economic
- Security



### *What Ethical Standards?*

- Utilitarianism
- Deontological ethics
- Virtue ethics
- Human rights ethics



### *A Social Welfare Function?*

- Maximizing utility
- Relative weights?
  - Poor vs. non-poor
  - Different groups of poor
  - Malnourished vs. well-nourished
  - Current vs. future generations
  - Humans vs. animals



### *Deontology and Trade-offs*

- Limitations to utilitarianism
- Singer's argument
  - General agreement
  - Failure to implement
    - 10 million child deaths



### *Action vs. Failure to Take Action*

- A utilitarian perspective on child death
- A deontological perspective
  - My neighbor's children
  - My country's children
  - The Thorbecke hypothesis
- Genocide?
- Crime against humanity?



### *Socially Sensitive Trade-offs*

- Implicit but not explicit
- Poorest or less poor?
- Severely or moderately malnourished?
- Starving, iron deficient, or obese?



### *Socially Sensitive Trade-offs (Con't)*

- Child care vs. prenatal care?
- Corruption
- Illegal drug production
- Good nutrition, personal freedom, democracy



### *Freedom from Hunger as a Human Right*

- The UN declaration
- A right or a privilege?
- No enforcement, no penalty



### *Other Rights: Enforcement*

- Property rights
- Animal rights
- International trade
  - Legally enforceable rules
  - Trade policy causing hunger and poverty
- International institutions
  - WTO vs. UNICEF, ILO, and FAO



### *Conclusion*

- Moral imperative or enlightened self-interest?
- Deontological perspective
- Human rights perspective
- Utilitarian perspective
  - Compassion as utility
  - Economic interests
  - Stability

