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FAO in the Changing Global Landscape

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Giannini Foundation of Agricultural Economics

FAO in the Changing Global Landscape.

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1. Introduction.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations came into existence on October 16, 1945 at Quebec City, Canada. It was first discussed at an intergovernmental meeting in Hot Springs, VA in 1943. Predating therefore the Dumbarton Oaks early planning for the United Nations by a year, and formal approval of the UN by 8 days and the World Bank by 2&1/2 months (December 31, 1945). Its charter therefore homesteaded virtually virgin international territory. FAO's current mandate is "to raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy". Article 1 its Constitution re Functions of the FAO reads 1. *"The Organization shall collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture. In this Constitution, the term "agriculture" and its derivatives include fisheries, marine products, forestry and primary forestry products."*

Since its creation much in the world has changed but FAO's mandate and functions have basically retained their initial focus as one of the earliest knowledge institutions. But whereas in 1945 FAO was quite alone on the food and agriculture landscape, it is now one of many **players**. Further the **context** and driving issues have changed, as have the **paradigms** relating to agricultural development and food security, and how the world perceives the way the **process of development** works.

Thus the purpose of this chapter is to explore how these four sets of drivers; **context-** issues and events; **paradigms**; **processes**; and **players** originally shaped FAO and how they have changed over time. That is accomplished by looking at three snap shots during the evolution of FAO; inception- 1940's (1945- 50); maturation- 1970's and current - the start of the 21st Century (2000-06). The chapter concludes with a summary of how all elements in FAO's landscape have changed very substantially over the past 60 years.

2. Drivers of the Landscape

Organizations are usually products of their historical **context**. That context is shaped by major issues of substance, and critical events that are then dominating the political, economic and social debate. In 1945 these were: how to return the world to peace, and as important, how to manage the future so war does not return; how to prevent the deprivations of the Depression from reoccurring; how to organize the international economy so that parochial nationalism does not recreate the economic chaos of choking trade barriers, financial instability and inconvertible exchange rates of the 1930's; and how to assure all have access to sufficient food. Conceptual models of how to

accomplish these objectives were driven by prevailing **paradigms** about: economic and agricultural development; how to accommodate Keynesian nationalistic economic models to the need for international interaction; the ensuring of the critical role of physical infrastructure; the need for technical assistance; and how to meet the essential need for international capital transfers. Paradigms need to be converted to **processes** and **approaches**-- the **how** of development. This required inventing new mechanisms of multi lateral cooperation to replace previously unsuccessful attempts such as through the League of Nations, but also to learn from other international initiatives that had some success, such as the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and the International Labor Organization (ILO). Finally plans and policies have to be implemented by someone- governments, intergovernmental organizations, private organizations and interest groups. These are called the **players**.

3. Drivers of FAO's Landscape; inception – 1945 -50.

A. Context: Issues and Events.

As Axis advances in Europe were stopped, and then pushed back, nations began to plan for a world future which would be free of war and free of the economic and social chaos and inequality that characterized the 1930's. The Declaration of St. James's Palace in 1941, the United Nations Declaration of 1942, and the Dumbarton Oaks Conference of 1944 all preceded the formation of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1945. The Breton Woods Conference of 1944 prepared for post war economic order through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD-World Bank) in 1945 and later for the International Trade Organization, a portion of which in 1947 emerged as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). And of course in 1943, 44 governments committed themselves to creating a permanent organization for food and agriculture in Hot Springs, Virginia.

At least three major issues dominated the Post WW II landscape:

--*Post War reconstruction and a return to normalcy*- there were major concerns about rebuilding destroyed infrastructure and restoring agricultural production Europe and Asia.

--*Creating a global mechanism to promote peace*, settle disputes, prevent war, create international public goods, improve health and promote exchange of technical expertise.

-- *Creating a functioning international economic system* which recognized national sovereignty over economic policy but also recognized the need for international cooperation in facilitating trade through a managed exchange rate regime, the reduction of trade barriers and facilitating long term capital transfers.

High among the substantive issues were concerns about post war food shortages, famine and rural poverty because of destruction of productive capacity, the damage to a functioning transport system and the loss of technical capacity in agriculture, including basic seeds and other inputs. Food security debates were dominated by concerns about inadequate production. Thus the creation of FAO, which occurred early in the process,

focused first on assessing the food situation, projecting what would be needed to stave off starvation and to recommending how the needed increased production could come about. In fact one of FAO's early pieces of analytical work, which resulted in one of its first publications, was the first **World Food Survey** published in 1946. "*Given the complete breakdown of statistics during the war, the approach used was to estimate a baseline of pre-war calorie availability and compare them with postulated minimum nutritional standards. The baseline conclusion was that over half of the world's population had access to less than 2,250 calories per day; one-third had access to over 2,750 calories per day. And the remainder was in between. Thus, between half and two-thirds of the world population were undernourished before the war. The analysis concluded that things were worse after the war.*" (McCalla and Revoredo, 2001 p. 26). The solution recommended was to dramatically increase indigenous food production.

The second **World Food Survey** published in 1952 presented "...an even more alarming picture" (idid, p.26). Thus was born the overwhelming FAO focus on increasing food production in war ravaged areas and in the growing numbers of newly independent countries –India, Pakistan and Indonesia among the early ones in the late 1940's. But by 1950 richer countries were beginning to be concerned about growing grain surpluses, in part because the recovery of European and Japanese agriculture occurred more rapidly than expected. Thus emerged an early divide between the rich and the poor. Those who were paying for FAO wondered why the focus was on increasing production in the face of surpluses

These issues are shown in the upper part of Figure One which attempts to depict the four drivers that defined FAO's early landscape.

B. Prevailing Paradigms of Economic and Agricultural Development and Food Security.

The pre the 1930's world trading system, based on the gold standard and relatively free trade, and which forced nations to adjust to an international gold standard, finally collapsed in the 1930's with competitive currency devaluations and beggar-my-neighbor increases in trade barriers. The failure of classical economic paradigms opened the door for the Keynesian revolution which focused policy on national variables of fiscal and monetary policy. International policy had to adjust to domestic concerns. Thus even in post war market economy development paradigms, the role of government was dominant in managing the economy, and in common with the Marxist paradigm, had a focus on domestic planning, which in developing countries was expressed in Five Year Investment plans. In these models the focus was import-substitution industrialization.

The implementation of this dominant economic development paradigm focused on physical infrastructure because that was what the war had destroyed. It also assisted national governments in pursuing appropriate policies and getting access to capital and technology for domestic industrial growth. The beginnings of foreign assistance came in the Marshall plan, and later in other bilateral assistance programs, which all had a very strong focus of engineering and physical capital and advised a limited role for economic policy and particularly for social investment. The idea that expanded trade was a path to

Figure 1. FAO in The Changing Global Landscape: Initial Drivers 1945-50

CONTEXT: ISSUES AND EVENTS

- Post-war Reconstruction and Return to Normalcy
Major concerns about:
 - food shortages and restoring ag. production
 - rebuilding destroyed infrastructure
- Creating a Global Mechanism to Promote Peace
 - facilitate political dialog and resolve disputes
 - share resources and technical assistance
 - international public goods
- Creating a Functioning International Economic System
 - managing exchange rates and ST financial crisis
 - providing for international capital transfers
 - reducing barriers to trade in goods and services

FAO's Turf

PLAYERS

- United Nations
 - General Assembly, Security Council, specialized agencies
- Bretton Woods Institution
 - International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IBRD aka World Bank
 - International Monetary Fund IMF
 - General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade GATT
- Bilateral Aid
 - US - Marshall Plan
 - US - Point 4
 - Others - Canada, Australia etc.
 - IICA
 - Rockefeller Foundation



PREVAILING PARADIGMS

- Nationalistic Approaches to Economic Policy
 - Keynesian fiscal policy
 - national investment plans
- Economic Development
 - focus on physical infrastructure
 - industrial development
- Agricultural Development
 - focus on physical capital and infrastructure
 - farmer education and technology transfer
- Food Security = National Agricultural Self-Sufficiency

HOW: APPROACHES AND PROCESSES

- Create Multilateral System of Global Interchange (UN)
- Multilateral Management of Global Economic Relations
 - managed exchange rates and ST capital assistance
 - providing and allocating LT capital flows
 - negotiating and implementing reductions in trade barriers
- Mechanisms for Development Assistance
 - multilateral resource and technical assistance
 - bilateral assistance

development had not emerged and, if anything, trade was seen as exploitative, thus protection was seen as a legitimate part of the domestic policy arsenal

Agricultural development was seen as mainly a technical issue with a focus on machinery, dams, irrigation systems, roads and other physical infrastructure. Farmers were seen as backward, needing to be educated to use better technology which would lead to increased production. The combination of the views that: increases in the production of food were critical; that agriculture was technically backward; that the principle focus of economic policy should be inward looking; and that the nation state was responsible for feeding its people, lead inevitably in most peoples mind to a food security paradigm of **self-sufficiency**. Trading for ones food supply was dangerous as clearly many nations should have learned in two World Wars.

C. How? Approaches to, and Processes of Development.

How were the critical issues to be addressed given these prevailing paradigms? Clearly it required creating an international architecture which preserved national sovereignty but encouraged and helped nations adjust to a more open and freely functioning set of international markets for goods, services and capital. While an individual nation might fear liberalizing trade if it thought no one else would do likewise, if there were a mechanism where all could agree and do it together, every one would be better off. If a country realized that its currency was over valued, it needed a structured mechanism with help to do the needful. The genius of the Bretton Woods Institutions and later GATT was to create institutions that could help stabilize international markets while leaving in place notions of national sovereignty over economic policy. By offering monetary assistance, opportunities for growth and advice, the IMF, GATT and the World Bank supported national policy makers to become more outward looking.

If nations could meet and debate their differences, the chances of conflict would be lessened. If the better off could help the ravaged and the less well off grow more rapidly, peace would be more likely. Thus the United Nations itself and its Specialized Agencies such as the World Bank, FAO, and WHO could provide technical assistance, policy advice and long term capital for reconstruction and development.

In agriculture if the global community wanted to help, the best way was with technical, biological and mechanical assistance, and capital for domestic investments. The FAO was created to meet this need and it pretty much had the landscape to its self. It would be at least 15 years before the World Bank would start to show much interest in agriculture.

D. The Players.

The players in the latter half of the 1940's are relatively few in number. The new United Nations and its early emerging specialized agencies such as FAO dominate the landscape. The developed countries that were not damaged by war played a part. By far the most dominant was the United States which provided capital, technical assistance and

policy encouragement in many ways including through the Marshall Plan which swamped efforts to move capital by the newly created World Bank. Other advanced countries such as Canada, Australia and South Africa provide monetary and technical assistance. The European pre-war colonial powers such as the UK, France and the Netherlands had tropical agricultural research organizations which potentially could help on the developing country side. In Latin America, the Rockefeller Foundation Mexico program and IICA preceded FAO. These are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

E. FAO's Turf – What is it and who else is in it?

FAO staked out its turf as **nutrition, food and agriculture** and it had little competition in the international context. Given the prevailing paradigms, the focus was on increasing indigenous food production by improving farmer education and providing him/her with improved technology. It was to collect, analyze, interpret and disseminate information on a global scale and to provide technical assistance if requested by its members.

4. Changing Drivers of FAO's Landscape; Maturation: the 1970's.

A. Context: Issues and Events.

By the 1970's some new issues emerged and some old ones recurred. Compared to the 1940's, some of the major ones were;

--*The Global political landscape has changed radically*- colonialism was over and many new nations emerged. The Cold War continued to stoke power bloc competition not only in nuclear arms but in assistance to developing countries;

--*The Global economic scene had also changed rapidly*- the IMF system of managed exchange rates, pegged to the US dollar, gave way to a more market oriented flexible exchange rate system. The establishment of OPEC drove up energy prices and created massive amounts of capital available to be invested- **energy** became a major issue;

--*A combination of events drove up agricultural commodity prices to two and three times previous levels*- this, following fears about famine caused by the failures of the South Asian monsoon in the middle sixties, shifted concerns back to global food production after a couple of decades of concern about grain surpluses. The CGIAR was created (1971) and global concerns resulted in the World Food Conference of 1974;

-- *The World Bank declared war on rural (1973) and urban (1975) poverty*- recognizing that most poor people were rural and often dependent on agriculture for some of their income, massively increased lending in agriculture and rural development;

-- *The environment emerged as an issue with the Stockholm Conference of 1972*-UNEP was formed but concerns about pressures to increase food supplies having negative consequences for land and water supplies, forests and fisheries emerged only in the 1980's;

Figure 2. FAO in The Changing Global Landscape: Additions to Drivers-1970's

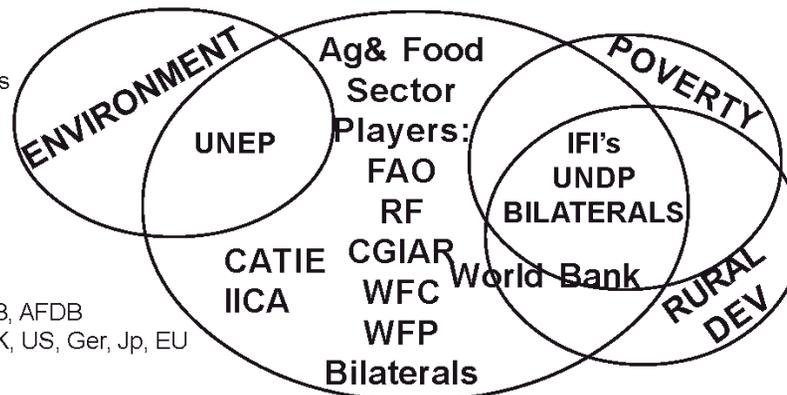
CONTEXT: ISSUES AND EVENTS

- Global Political and Economic Landscape Radically Changed
 - colonialism over - 100 new countries
 - cold war and nuclear proliferation - bipolar competition
 - breakdown of fixed exchange rates - US devalues
 - OPEC - rising oil prices, energy concerns
- Global Concerns About Food Prices and Supply
 - CGIAR formed, World Food Summit 1974
- Poverty Reduction - new global rallying cry
- Environmental Issues Emerge
 - Stockholm 1972 - UNEP formed
- Trade Liberalization Proceeding
 - only in industry not agriculture
- Molecular Biology Beginning to Impact Plant Sciences

FAO's Turf

MANY NEW PLAYERS

- CGIAR - 13 centers, TAC and 30 donors
- IFAD - Int'l Fund for Ag. Development
- WFC - World Food Council
- WFP - expanded World Food Program
- UNCTAD
- UNEP
- UNDP
- Foundations - FF, RF
- Regional financial institutions, IDB, AOB, AFDB
- Growth of bilateral aid agencies e.g. UK, US, Ger, Jp, EU
- CATIE
- IICA



CHANGING PARADIGMS

- Export Lead Growth, Now Competes with Import and Substitution Industrialization
- Despite strong academic case, agriculture still discriminated against
- Integrated rural dev. paradigm sweeps in
 - applied research replaces tech. transfer
- Increased food production is not a sufficient condition for food security
- Availability, access and good nutrition emerge as a definition for food security

HOW: APPROACHES AND PROCESSES

- IFI's Broader Focus
 - include new sector
 - comprehensive poverty programs
 - policy and markets also important
- Multi-institutional Consultation Group
 - CGIAR formed, over FAO objection
- World Food Summit
 - tries to internationalize food aid
 - creates global mechanism for coordination - World Food Council WFC
 - new lending agency, IFAD

--GATT had completed several Rounds of trade negotiations- substantially reducing industrial barriers to trade but leaving agriculture highly protected;

--Watson and Crick's discovery of the Double Helix in 1953 was already beginning to transform plant biology.

All of these events and more coalesced to substantially broaden the issues perceived to be contained in the landscape of nutrition, food, and agriculture. By now it was clear that while increasing global agricultural production might be a necessary condition for global food security, it certainly was not a sufficient condition. Access (income) and nutritional balance were equally important. Rural development emerged as all encompassing concept opening the question as to how it related to traditional agriculture development. The World Bank talked about single versus multiple track approaches. Instability in prices, concerns about the availability of essential commodities- e.g. food and oil; and early discussions about the possible negative externalities of agriculture on the environment, significantly complicated how people conceptualized "agriculture".

Thus unlike the 1940's, the issues shaping the landscape were greater in number, more complex and often conflicting. Uncertainty and instability characterized the international economic and political environment.

B. Changing Paradigms of Economic and Agricultural Development and Food Security.

The world trading system by the 1970's had evolved by reducing barriers to industrial trade and trade volumes and values increased substantially. Some nations in East Asia abandoned the inward looking import-substitution industrialization model and succeeded in growing rapidly by expanding exports. Thus export lead growth was a new competing paradigm for general economic development. The new priority of poverty reduction necessarily focused more attention on rural areas because most poor people lived in rural areas.

Despite academic treatises (Johnston and Mellor, 1961) arguing that agriculture had a very positive role to play in the early stages of economic development, the sector was still discriminated against, seen more as a source of resources than a positive source of growth. Rural development was approached in massive Integrated Rural Development Projects (IRDP's) which focused more on income transfers and investment in social capital than on improving the earning potential of the commercial crops of small farmers. However the new rural development paradigm did recognize that rural well-being depended on income and access to physical and social infrastructure, not just growing two blades of grass where one grew before. Naïve notions that technology transfers and extension education could do the job were abandoned and it was now recognized that applied agricultural research was essential to increasing farmer productivity and profitability and contributing to rural income growth.

The simple paradigm that food security **equals** food self sufficiency was being broadened to recognize that individual food security was a necessary condition for national and global food security and that it depended on not only availability of food but on access to food (which depends on income) and proper nutrition. While some economists were arguing for the inclusion of trade in national food security strategies, most agriculturalists remain wedded to the ideal of national food self-sufficiency.

C. How? Approaches to, and Processes of Development.

International Financial Institutions (IFI's), especially the World Bank, greatly expanded lending to a broader set of sectors. By the end of the 1970's rural development represented the larger sector of lending for the World Bank. Development assistance expanded through IDA, the newly established European Union and competitive bi-lateral assistance reached new heights. Also private foundations had become very active in development assistance. At one point in the 1960's the Ford Foundation was spending more in India than USAID. The Ford and Rockefeller Foundations in partnership with USAID invested heavily in human capital development particularly in agriculture. The development of the Agricultural University System in India, plus major similar efforts in other parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America supported by these agencies, confirmed that research and higher education facilities were deemed crucial to development.

These same Foundations, in the 1960's, invested in four new, and unique, international agricultural research institutes, which were later transferred to a new international funding mechanism called The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) which was formally created in 1971. The CGIAR was a loose consortium of donors –international financial institutions led by the World Bank, bilateral donors, foundations and multinational entities such as the EU who together supported an expanded system of independent Institutes which by 1981 numbered 13. This system claimed credit for the green revolution based on semi-dwarf rices and wheat. Out of the World Food Summit of 1974 came a proposed new funding mechanism to support rural development which focused on technical assistance to small farmers. The International Fund for Agricultural Development's (IFAD) hope for tapping OPEC funds were not fulfilled but it did join the landscape with modest funding. Also out of the Summit came a new mechanism, the World Food Council, which was to provide a means for coordinating the growing number of actors engaged in the food and agriculture sector. All of these entities potentially encroached on FAO's turf. FAO initially was concerned about the development of the CGIAR and joined only when identified as having a special technical role and when given a special role as a co-sponsor, a seat at the table despite not being a donor, and as the provider of Secretariat support to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

D. The Players.

The number of players in the international agricultural scene had greatly increased both because of new focus on rural growth and poverty, but also because of expanded interests in the environment. Further most of the newly independent countries were predominantly agricultural economies and they expressed concerns about commodity markets and price instability as well as the agricultural policies of rich countries which limited their markets. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development held in 1964 focused on the interests of small developing countries who were primary product exporters. The result was another new Organization, UNCTAD. Also in the UN System the World Food Program (WFP) was expanded, UNEP came on the scene and of course IFAD joined the new thrust on Rural Development. The World Bank and many bilateral donors greatly expand efforts in agriculture and rural development. These included among others The United Kingdom, France, Germany, Netherlands, Canada, Japan, the United States and the European Union.

E. FAO's Turf – How has it changed and who else is now in it?

FAO's basic perception of what its turf was did not change much, except to recognize that policies on prices, access to land and inputs and international market information were important to their small farmer clients. FAO increased their interest in some elements of rural development but generally remained focused on increasing food production, and they still adhered to the paradigm of self-sufficiency. But now there were many other players in the broadened turf as issues of rural development, poverty, and the environment overlapped into the food/agriculture space (see Figure Two). The CGIAR was a direct competitor in the area of agricultural research and extension because the *modus operandi* of the CGIAR was to form partnerships with national Ministries of Agriculture. UNCTAD advised on policy, The World Bank, which in the 1960's had agreed to buy technical support from FAO for project preparation and supervision, now greatly expanded its technical staff to support a massive increase in resources going onto agricultural and rural development. Similar expansions in staff occurred in many bilateral aid agencies. This meant that many other organizations such as CGIAR Centers, the International Financial Institutions (IFI's), other UN Agencies such as UNDP, UNEP, The World Food Program (WFP), IFAD and the Bilateral Aid agencies all now could offer analysis and technical assistance potentially in competition with FAO.

Bottom line: what FAO had staked out as its turf has been expanded and had become much more complicated. And FAO had acquired a lot of company on that expanded turf who held strong and some times competing views on what was needed and how it should be done. The World Food Conference, coming at the end of a severe commodity price run up in 1974, gave FAO some comfort that focusing primarily on agricultural production was still important. However by the end of the decade, prices had fallen back to levels lower than before the price run up, grain surpluses were again building and broader approaches to rural development regained the upper hand.

The challenge for FAO was how to interface with all these new imperatives, a radically changed international environment, and a proliferation of actors.

5. Changing Drivers of FAO's Landscape; Current: Beginning of 21st Century

A. Context: Issues and Events.

At the turn of the century the landscape was still changing rapidly. Compared to the 1970's some major changes were:

--*The Cold War was over, replacing a nuclear stand-off with increasing numbers of regional, national, and sub national conflicts.* The end of the Cold War reduced competitive pressures to expand aid and support levels fell. Severe food shortages and large numbers of refugees emerged with increasing frequency. Middle East conflicts continued to contribute to rising petroleum prices.

--*Emergencies became more dominant, not only increasing needs for WFP help but also placed demands on many traditional agencies for post-emergency assistance.*

--*The Millennium Assessment concluded that development was not achieving its objectives fast enough and laid out 9 Millennium Development Goals (MDG's).* Several, particularly, number 1 on poverty and hunger, focused on topics relevant to FAO.

--*The rise of the environment and other social sectors, especially health, radically shifted lending and assistance portfolios of IFI's and bilateral Agencies.* HIV/AIDS emerged as a huge health, labor and poverty issue. Funding for agriculture and rural development hit a 25 year low in 2001.

--*The molecular biology revolution was in full swing leading to- rapid privatization of agriculture research, the GMO debate and patents on living organisms.* The public-private landscape in agricultural research was fundamentally altered as access to intellectual property rights became a challenge for public research organizations.

--*Civil Society Organizations (CSO's) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) emerged as powerful forces in international development and global environmental and health issues.*

The world's attention to agriculture and rural development seemed to have waned even though rural poverty and 800 million undernourished people persisted. "The Five Years After" follow up to the World Food Conference found very slow progress towards meeting the goal of halving the number of undernourished by 2015. FAO's long interest in plant genetic resources eventually led to An International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources (ITPGR). But now in the world of intellectual property (IP) there were competing approaches in the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights, TRIPS) in the World Trade Organization (WTO). The World Bank championed good governance and declares war on corruption.

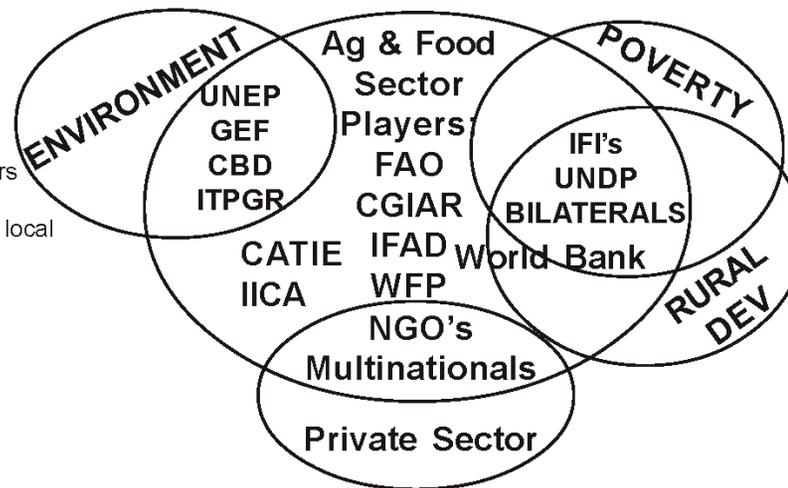
So the beginning of the new Millennium was characterized by great uncertainty, rising conflicts and increased competition for funds

Figure 3. FAO in The Changing Global Landscape: Beginning of the 21st Century

CONTEXT: ISSUES AND EVENTS

- Cold War Over - Succeeded by Regional and National Conflicts
 - natural and man-made emergencies arise
 - food shortages and increased numbers of refugees occur, putting pressure on many agencies
- Millenium Development Goals (MDG's)
 - target poverty and hunger
- International Aid Focusses more on Environmental and Social Sectors
- Rise of Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organizations - CSO's and NGO's
- Molecular Biological Revolution and GMO's in full swing

FAO's Turf



MORE NEW PLAYERS

- CSO's and NGO's
 - advocacy, implementation and partners
 - international, national, local
- Private Sector: Multinationals, national, local
 - research- GMO's
 - pest management
- International Treaties and Concords
 - FTPGR
 - CBD
 - WTO/TRIPS
- More UN Agencies:
 - WHO, UNICEF, USAIDS
 - FIVIMS, MDG's
- World Food Council Disappears

CHANGING PARADIGMS

- Economic Dev. Paradigm is now:
 - open economy, market driven, private sector lead
 - good governance and end of corruption
 - governments create favourable environment
- Ag. Dev.: Ag. Can be a Productive Sector and Lead Growth:
 - export lead development possible
 - improve productivity of small farms - make all production profit and market driven
- Food Security: 3 Parts
 - availability, access, good nutrition
 - trade in food crops acceptable

HOW: APPROACHES AND PROCESSES

- New Approaches:
 - democratization, participation, decentralization, client ownership
 - explicit roles for Civil Society (CSO's)
 - partnerships with Private Sector, CSO's and NGO's
- But Process More Short-Term and Crisis Driven
 - support for long term investments fades
 - more players in a decentralized, local model make process much more complicated

B. Changing Paradigms of Economic and Agricultural Development and Food Security.

The prevailing paradigms of general economic development continued to evolve. Comprehensive sector lending focused on poverty reduction was not always sustainable after the projects ended, in part because many nations had large structural (fiscal, monetary and debt) imbalances. Thus the taking on of additional commitments made matters worse. Thus poverty lending gave way to structural adjustment lending in the 1980's and then policy lending in the 1990's. Perceptions of the appropriate role of government changed from one of active participation in the economy to one of providing the appropriate environment for private sector actors, now seen as critical players in a market driven strategy. The most recent thrust is on good governance and eliminating corruption. Thus the current paradigm is open economy, market driven, private sector lead economic development, with the role of government to set appropriate rules, provide necessary public goods and make sure the playing field is level, fair and open.

Agricultural development paradigms continued to change. Massive rural development projects had high rates of failure and support for agriculture/rural activities in general plummeted. But rural poverty continued to be the predominant persistent poverty problem. Some countries had achieved rapid growth with agriculture exports leading growth and it began to be recognized that agriculture was a productive sector potentially able to contribute to poverty reduction through growth. The long, and artificial, distinction between food crops and market/export crops disappeared as it was recognized that with improved technology, and access to markets, farmers producing marketable surpluses of any commodity could improve their incomes. Further agriculturally stimulated rural non-farm activities in many countries provided for growth in employment and incomes. Thus the Johnston- Mellor argument finally seemed to be back in vogue, refocusing attention on the critical importance of agricultural growth particularly in the early stages of the economic transformation. It was finally recognized that agriculture in most countries was the largest private sector activity and that farmers would respond to incentives.

The food security paradigm also continued to mature. Food security for every citizen of the nation was the sufficient condition for national food security. Individual food security had three critical components, all of which had to be met: –1. Availability of adequate and diverse food supplies; 2. Continuous access to food, either by having sufficient income to buy it or having it provided by safety net programs; and 3. Nutritional security provided by an appropriate diet in terms of necessary nutrients and adequate energy. Trade was now a legitimate dimension in providing availability at international level and agricultural exports of even food crops were now recognized as legitimate if they were within the countries' comparative advantage.

C. How? Approaches to, and Processes of Development.

Accepted processes of development continued to be challenged and added to. The emergence of a wide variety, and burgeoning numbers of CSO's and NGO's at the local, national and international levels radically altered our perceptions of who were players. They had many new ideas about what needed to be done. Almost all were advocates for particular sectors, groups or causes. Many became involved in the implementation of activities particularly in emergencies and many have evolved to have sufficient capacity to be technical partners. Nowhere is the incredible array of involved entities more obvious than in the rural sector of many of the poor developing countries.

The concept of **democratization** in the design and implementation of projects necessarily required **participation** of potential beneficiaries. The adoption of the concept of **decentralizing** decisions to the lowest (community) levels led to the concept of **client ownership**, a far cry from top down, complicated, complex, ex-patriate dominated integrated rural development projects (IRDP's). Privatization, the end of central planning and the rise of markets, re-focused attention on what contributed most to rural growth. For farmers it meant technology that increased productivity and profitability; access to necessary inputs; and functioning fair and open markets at home and abroad. Thus trade liberalization became part of the rural development policy mix. For the rural sector it dictated education, infrastructure, especially transport and functioning markets.

The end of the Cold War and the rash of new conflicts and disasters has changed the rationale for international assistance and focused even more attention on the short run. Thus support for long term and continuing investments in development such as the CGIAR, institution building and rural infrastructure are more difficult to generate.

Overall, development processes have become more complex, with larger numbers of projects (because of decentralization and local ownership), more fragmented and inevitably more heterogeneous. The numbers of players who claim a legitimate interest has increased exponentially.

D. Additions to the Players.

As is by now obvious the number of players on the international food, agriculture and nutrition landscape has multiplied rapidly. Summarized here are those who have joined that are relevant to FAO. Literally thousands of NGO's/CSO's pay some attention to the rural landscape. Some of the big international ones such as for example WRI, WWF, Oxfam, CARE, and IUCN may have budgets that approach or even exceed FAO's. The privatization of agricultural research, and the marketing of GMO seeds by large multinationals, have placed larger agribusiness firms in the main stream particularly in pest management in agriculture. Plant patenting has introduced many complications into international policies for preserving plant genetic resources, previously a unique FAO field. FAO shepherded through the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources

(ITPGR) but the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and TRIPS/WTO all with competing concepts has greatly complicated the landscape.

In the United Nations sphere other agencies such as WHO, UNICEF, UNAIDS, FIVIMS etc became increasingly engaged in issues of nutrition and health. Millennium Development Goal Task Forces, particularly Task Force One are now players. New conventions such as on Desertification and The Montreal Protocol to mention two have overlaps with FAO turf and WFP and IFAD's roles are now more closely entwined in terms of emergencies, early warning and a renewed focus on Africa.

E. FAO's Turf – How has it changed and who else is now in it?

As should be clear there are now even more topics interfacing with the traditional FAO turf of agriculture, food and nutrition, yet even into the 1990's, FAO stayed highly committed to the notion that increasing national food production was a sufficient condition for food security. The initiation of the Special Program for Food Security (SPFS) in 1992 was still focused on projects at the national level to increase agricultural production. Only after a critical external review a few years later did the rhetoric, if not the substance, of the program change.

As the number of players has increased it has raised difficult problems for FAO as to how much to invest in partnerships, the new operative term. The need for collaboration in the UN system is obvious especially in the Rome based agencies. Yet the entity created to be the global focus for Food and Agriculture, The World Food Council, suffered a fate few UN agencies have-it was discontinued years ago. FAO's relationship with the World Bank and other IFI's still is largely through the Investment Center, which is not a part of regular FAO technical staff. Current United Nations reform discussions could have significant implications for FAO, particularly at the country level. The possibilities for relationships with NGO's and the Private Sector are almost limitless but as yet no clear strategy seems evident.

Thus as Figure 3. tries to indicate, FAO's turf is now more crowded and complicated both in terms of topics and players. The challenge is how does the Organisation adjust in terms of mandate and function and who should be its partners. None of these questions are trivial and simple answers are not obvious.

6. The Landscape, Then and Now, How Different They Are.

The **issues** on FAO's table over the past 60years have shown a steady increase in number, complexity, intensity and interdependence. A critical perceived need to increase global food production any where from 25 to 100 % in less than 15 years drove FAO's early existence. Then concerns about policy, trade, poverty, environment, preserving

genetic diversity, fostering rural development, intellectual property rights, and partnering with CSO'S, NGO's and the private sector have successively intruded on the issue space. What should be the focus of FAO's effort? --A narrow focus on technical agriculture providing assistance to farmers to increase out put, and providing international public goods relevant to that mission?-- or on all issues of rural development and poverty reduction including employment, trade and policy? --or being, in addition, responsible for the rural sector's stewardship of the world's agricultural soil, water and genetic resources as well as its forests and fisheries? --or some combination of these? If yes, which combination?

Identifying and selecting the best role for FAO is a non trivial task on which there appears to be no consensus. In the absence of clear priorities, the response to the expanding landscape has been to continue the topics that have been typically addressed and add pieces of the new ones. With static or declining resources, this inevitably means being spread thinner in more and more areas. Further, the rising share of FAO budget coming from trust funds and project funding means that the agenda is pushed and pulled even more frequently.

In terms of the **changing paradigms**, trying to keep up with their evolution has been complicated:

General development paradigms have changed 180 degrees from closed economy, inward looking, import substitution industrialization, with government the dominant planner and player, -- to open economy, export driven, market oriented, and private sector led growth with government having an indirect role responsible for creating a favorable environment to encourage the private entrepreneur to drive growth and development.

Agriculture development paradigms have likewise gone through radical revisions from:- treating the sector as a backward sector from which to draw resources – taxes, labor and food- and assigning it no positive role in development; through the proposition that you should invest in rural education and rural industry to draw labor and resources out of agriculture faster; to recognizing that poverty was predominantly a rural problem needing to be solved by social programs; to finally recognizing the possibility that agriculture could make a positive contribution to growth and development. In this evolution the role of agriculture becomes much more complex, more interdependent with the rest of the economy and charged with meeting multiple goals. Increasing food production is no longer a goal in itself. FAO has adjusted slowly and incompletely to this changing paradigm. But then the paradigm may not yet be settled. Who knows where it will be in the next decade.

The food security paradigm has gone from being the simple notion that national food **self-sufficiency = food security**, to notions of **food self-reliance** where domestic agricultural production plus agricultural imports financed by agricultural exports defined national food security, before finally adopting the three part concept of **availability, access and nutritional security** where supplies come from markets, domestic and international. In this version food security is a macro policy component of a country's over all development strategy.

The **how** of development in terms of **processes and approaches** has been transformed from an almost exclusive focus on the role of national government as a source of investment, major player in production and frequently a manager of markets to one where the private sector is the major player in production, marketing, input supply and research. The role of central government is substantially reduced and the Ministry of Agriculture is even more marginalized from the development process. Using agricultural research as an example, in 1945 probably more than 90% of agricultural research was funded by the public sector. The 10% private was in patentable products –machinery and animal pharmaceuticals. By the early 1980's the global division was 70% public and 30% private but in developed countries closer to 56-44. In 2006 the global numbers likely are 60/40 public/private but in developed countries it is now a majority private and in some rich European countries the private sector accounts for over 70% of research expenditures (Philip G. Pardey, Nienke Beitema, Steven Dehmer and Stanley Wood. 2006. *Agricultural Research: A Growing Global Divide*. Washington, D.C.: IFPRI, August.).

And finally the number of **players** involved has increased exponentially in terms of countries, agencies, CSO's/NGO's and private sector players of all sorts. In 1945 there were few players-less than 50 countries with less than a dozen that really counted. By 1975 there were many more developed countries, the European Union was expanding, There was an explosion in the number of newly independent developing countries, many of whom still did not belong to the World Bank or GATT and NGO's were not yet a major factor. The 21st century is marked by an explosion in power blocs as developing countries are exercising increase power through groups like the G-77, G-20 etc. The WTO now has over 150 members compared to the GATT which had less than 50 members in 1975. NGO's and CSO's have proliferated as have UN and multilateral mechanisms – conventions, commissions, programmes and funds.

In agriculture specifically in 1945 there was FAO, The Rockefeller Foundation, IICA, The Commonwealth Agricultural Bureau (CAB) and colonial tropical research programs in the UK, France, Netherlands, Belgium etc. and not much else. FAO was the largest and dominated the global landscape. By the 1970's many new players were emerging – CGIAR, IFAD, WFP, the World Bank and other IFI's, many bilateral aid agencies and more Foundations. And by 2006, all of the above plus many CSO's and NGO's.

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