FOOD FORCE

There are thousands of people from third world areas fighting to stay alive as they combat hunger, disease, and war. Many citizens of well developed countries do not understand the situation that plagues those who are less fortunate, and many believe that simple monetary donations are enough to support those who starve daily. Humanitarian aid is more complicated than handing out food to the poor in some far away country. *Food Force* brings the player through a set of six missions to help inform the player of the process in which the United Nation's World Food Program brings aid to lesser developed nations in need. The missions represent the typical process required to provide aid through searching for people in need, developing a proper balance of nutrients in food, providing food quickly through air drops, looking for additional aid from citizens and governments, delivering supplies via land, and creating a self-sustaining community for the future. By presenting common scenarios that would be found in the field, the game is able to more easily inform the player of humanitarian aid. *Food Force* creates an environment to educate the everyday citizen of a well-developed country about the necessary steps that a humanitarian aid program utilizes to help those in need through the use of plentiful logos, integrated pathos, and powerful ethos.

LOGOS

Food Force uses logos by putting the player in the role of a World Food Program employee in the field to better inform players about the operations that the organization performs. Using the missions "Air Surveillance," "Food Drop," and "Food Run," the game integrates the player into real-time simulations of common situations. During "Air Surveillance," the player controls a helicopter with a view of the helicopter and terrain from above. As the player flies across the barren landscape, Carlos Sanchez, the fictional character who is the co-pilot of the helicopter, gives the player information about the terrain below. There are representations for dying crops (Fig. 1), a dried up river, empty villages, and refugees form a war zone. By establishing that these problems often occur in areas where aid is needed, *Food Force* is able to inform players of

Fig. 1: Aerial view of the helicopter and the terrain.

how the World Food Program gathers information about a food crisis. "Food Drop" switches gears by placing the player in the back of a plane in a first person point of view to drop food onto the ground below (Fig. 2). The game only provides a small time slot to drop the food. The wind also plays a role in effecting the trajectory of the food, so the player needs to compensate for the wind before dropping. If the player misses the safe zone by pushing the food off to the side of the red rectangle, Carlos Sanchez describes problematic situations that could occur, such as the losing food and causing injuries. This mission allows the player to gain knowledge about what issues may occur during the process of dropping food into areas that need it. When it is possible to use trucks to transport food into the crisis zone, the mission, "The Food Run," shows what issues ground transportation can bring when shipping food to the aid site. Because previous air drops are possible for sending food to the needy quickly, the necessity to use trucks are not immediately apparent. However, transportation via trucks can allow for more equipment to be brought for further development at the aid site. As the player maneuvers the truck along the road, several problems may arise. A bridge could have been collapsed, in which case construction engineers are on standby to build a temporary bridge (Fig. 3). Additional problems include a flat tire, hostile rebels blocking the road, and minefields from war. Rachel Scott, the guide for the mission, explains the problems and solutions along the way. While driving on the unpaved road, there are often forks that may cause different problems to arise (Fig. 4); therefore, the player can choose different combinations of paths as the mission continues to experience different problems that can occur. This mission informs players about the multiple possible problems that may arise during transportation.

Other missions use logos by giving the player a greater focus on the process in which aid helps starving people. The player is given a

Fig. 2: Dropping packages of food to the hungry below.

Fig. 3: Building a bridge to continue onward.

Fig. 4: Making a choice during a fork in the road.

broader look of the food crisis situation, and is in a calmer, more controlling position in these missions. "Locate and Dispatch" allows players to understand how the World Food Program gains additional funding for long-term food solutions during crises. As time goes by, different countries will present food aid during a certain time period with the goal being filling out all six months with a source of food. As the player hovers the cursor over a certain country, a pop-up occurs with more detailed information, specifically the price of the offer (Fig. 5). The offers are only available for a short amount of time, implying that the player must act quickly and still make proper decisions. Such quick decision making could be done by professionals in the field. As time continues to tick down, Miles, the guide for this mission, will constantly provide advice about certain purchases. He will often explain that buying from far away may be cheaper, but will take a longer time to ship to the crisis location. Understanding how the World Food Program gathers funds and food for aid allows the player to better acknowledge the process that is required to keep aid continuing for an extended period of time. Ending the series of missions is "Future Farming," which informs players about the process that the World Food Program uses to teach those who the organization aids to become self-sufficient. Over a projected time of ten years, the player must allocate food to certain areas of the village to promote growth.

By giving food to promote schooling, training, working, nutritional education, and HIV/AIDS education, the villagers are able to be educated while receiving food as an incentive to continue working and learning. As time continues to pass, structures begin to be erected and players can see the growth as food is continued to be allocated to certain programs to help create a self-sustaining village (Fig. 6). As players continue to make decisions about what programs to give food to, Joe Zaki, the guide for this mission, gives information and suggestions about what may be the best decision to make. This mission is to demonstrate that the World Food Program does not only provide food to those in need but also helps ensure that they will continue to have food after the organization has left.

     The mission "Energy Pacs" integrates information into gameplay to create an immersive and informative playing experience, so that players can fully understand the concepts that *Food Force* is attempting to present. The mission informs players about the necessity to create a balanced nutritional combination of ingredients for those in need. This mission focuses on giving the player information about the benefits some ingredients give for the starving villagers. The components for this particular example are rice, oil, beans, sugar, and salt. Sliding one of the ingredients up or down will prompt Joe to explain why that certain
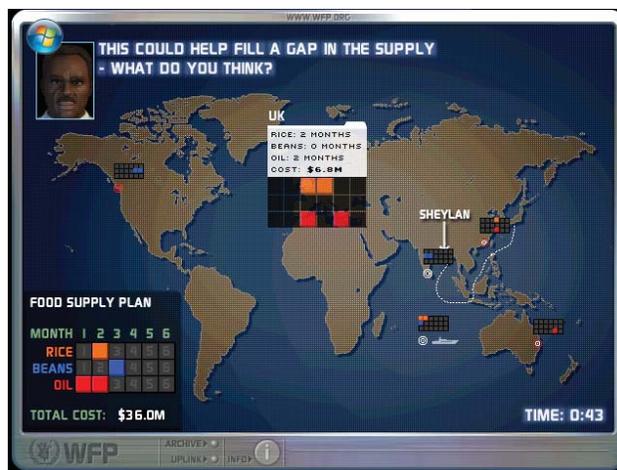
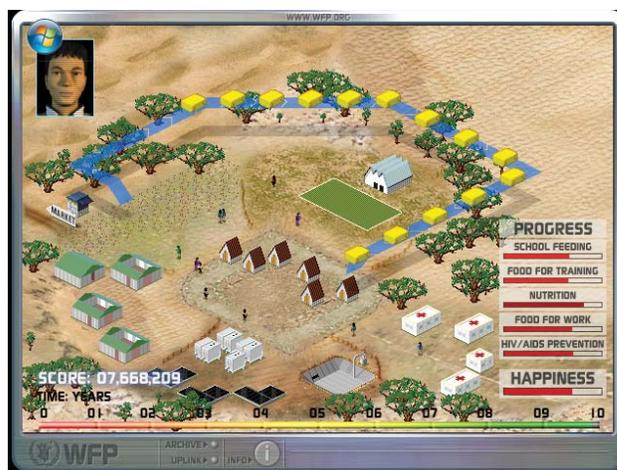Fig. 5: Food that is available and the price.

Fig. 6: Growth of the village over ten years.

ingredient is important for those who are starving. Another important factor that the game emphasizes is the fact that each ration can only cost a certain amount, in this case thirty cents (Fig. 7). The clear descriptions of what is needed, how much is needed, and how much it costs allow players to fully understand why nutrition cannot be overlooked when providing food aid.

Fig. 7: Ingredient sliders and price count.

PATHOS

In an attempt to better capture the attention of players, *Food Force* builds upon a story based on likely events to gather the sympathy of the player through the use of pathos. The setting is established in the fictional island country of Sheylan in the Indian Ocean. The people of Sheylan are plagued by drought and war, and over a million people are starving. Because the game uses logos to inform players of all the problems that these people experience, it pushes the player toward a call to action to help the World Food Program aid starving people. Although not directly told to, players may feel that they must help by donating to the organization because they know what their donations will directly affect.

ETHOS

Food Force is created by the United Nation's World Food Program; therefore, there is a strong presence of ethos being used to better inform players. Being the largest humanitarian aid group in the world, the organization fully understands the necessary steps to providing aid. Transposing those facts about aid into a game is a very effective way to communicate information accurately. Because the World Food Program is the largest group with over 15,000 workers in 73 countries, the facts that they present are assumed as correct. Their objectives focus on reducing hunger after an emergency, such as war and natural disasters, and preparing for future emergencies. These objectives show no deviation from providing aid to the hungry; thus, it is

unlikely that any ulterior motives exist. After over 50 years of operation, the World Food Program understands what techniques are effective and how to perform tasks with the greatest efficiency.

Because of experience that the organization has, the team that created the game understood exactly how to communicate information effectively, thus increasing their credibility as a reliable source of information. Combined with a few skilled game designers, the team that created *Food Force* is able to create an immersive environment that draws and keeps the attention of players. The game mechanics are easy to understand and execute, so that even a child learning about humanitarian aid can easily absorb the information. As the game is played,

information is dispersed throughout the game, rather than all at once. During each mission, performing a certain task causes a character to respond by giving information. After completing a mission, characters explain more about the actions that the player performed during the mini-game in the form of speech over several videos (Fig. 8). This method of information communication ensures that the player is neither overwhelmed by information nor losing interest.

Fig. 8: Three simultanious videos playing while information is being read as a voice-over

The focus on logos, with support from pathos and ethos, allows players of *Food Force* to fully understand what it truly means to be a humanitarian aid group. Because of commercials for donations to aid organizations skew the perspective of people who would like to help, a game is the perfect medium to capture the attention of those who have followed misconceptions. If game developers are able to create an immersive game environment, players will be able to learn anything while never losing focus because they will be continuously entertained. The player's integration into the game ensures that all the information that is being presented become ingrained into the player's memory while overwritingany misconceptions that the player might have. The heavy use of logos ensures that the game is able to give as much information to the player as possible. Although the amount of pathos is not very strong, the large amount of logos with the United Nation's name backing up the facts as ethos make up for the lack of pathos. After players interact with the game, they may have a greater intention to help further than just donating to certain organizations.