

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND GLOBAL STUDIES



Master’s Thesis

The issue of food insecurity in Kenya

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# Abstract

Food security is one of the indicators regarding the level of country’s development and was named the first MDGs that to be reached by the 2015. The target is to eradicate the extreme poverty and hunger by half compared to the levels in 1990. As the deadline is approaching, it is interesting to look at how countries are dealing with reaching their targets. It was reported that on the global level the target is going to be achieved. However, some countries are not likely to reach their own goals and improve food security situation. Thus, it is interesting to see what are the challenges these countries face in scaling-down the level of hunger. Kenya, being one of the countries that are not likely to achieve its food security goal, was chosen to analyze as a case study. The purpose of this thesis is to analyze the reasons why food insecurity is still present in Kenya, despite international commitments and government policies. The following four factors after the initial research were found to have the most immense influence on the issue: neoliberal trade regime, foreign food aid, domestic policies and climate change. The factors were analyzed employing theories or neoliberalism and dependency. It was found that trade liberalization agreements and financial ties with international financial institutions restricted Kenya from developing in an efficient way its food security policies. Furthermore, due to the extensive inflows of inexpensive food imports and always available foreign food aid, local farmers found themselves in a disadvantageous position compared to the foreign food producers and this led to discouragement of domestic food production. Therefore, the agricultural sector is currently declining in Kenya, even though it is of the prime importance regarding employment and Kenya GDP. After the adopted liberal trading regime, Kenya found itself involved in unequal and exploitative relations that restrict it from improving food security situation. Governmental programs were found to be inefficient because SAPs prevent government from subsidizing vulnerable sectors or efficiently funding food security policies. Climate change, the result of the unsustainable development of currently developed economies, as well impacts heavily, by draughts or floods, food security in Kenya. All things considered, food security situation in Kenya is mostly caused by the neoliberal trading regime and the dependency on the advanced economies imposed by the regime.

**Key words**: *Food security, hunger, neoliberal world order, food aid in Kenya, climate change, dependency on food aid*

# Table of Contents

[Abstract - 2 -](#_Toc406427937)

[Table of Contents - 3 -](#_Toc406427938)

[List of Abbreviations - 5 -](#_Toc406427939)

[1. Introduction - 6 -](#_Toc406427940)

[1.1. Problem Formulation - 7 -](#_Toc406427941)

[2. Structure of the Thesis - 9 -](#_Toc406427942)

[3. Methodological Framework - 9 -](#_Toc406427943)

[3.1. Ontological and Epistemological Considerations - 9 -](#_Toc406427944)

[3.2. Research Design - 11 -](#_Toc406427945)

[3.3. Research Method - 13 -](#_Toc406427946)

[3.4. Thesis Framework - 14 -](#_Toc406427947)

[3.4.1. Theoretical Framework - 14 -](#_Toc406427948)

[3.4.2. Empirical Framework - 15 -](#_Toc406427949)

[4. Theories - 17 -](#_Toc406427950)

[4.1. Neoliberalism - 17 -](#_Toc406427951)

[4.2. Dependency theory - 18 -](#_Toc406427952)

[5. The Causes of Food Insecurity in Kenya - 19 -](#_Toc406427953)

[5.1. International Regimes - 20 -](#_Toc406427954)

[5.1.1. Structural Adjustment Programs - 20 -](#_Toc406427955)

[5.1.2. Agreements on Agriculture - 21 -](#_Toc406427956)

[5.1.3. Analysis - 22 -](#_Toc406427957)

[5.2. Food Aid Programs - 25 -](#_Toc406427958)

[5.2.1. Analysis - 27 -](#_Toc406427959)

[5.3. Kenyan policies - 28 -](#_Toc406427960)

[5.3.1. National Food and Nutrition Security Policy - 29 -](#_Toc406427961)

[5.3.2. Analysis - 31 -](#_Toc406427962)

[5.4. Climate Change - 33 -](#_Toc406427963)

[5.4.1. Analysis - 34 -](#_Toc406427964)

[6. Conclusions - 35 -](#_Toc406427965)

[Bibliography - 37 -](#_Toc406427966)

[Appendix 1 - 44 -](#_Toc406427967)

[Appendix 2 - 44 -](#_Toc406427968)

[Appendix 2 - 45 -](#_Toc406427969)

[Appendix 3 - 45 -](#_Toc406427970)

[Appendix 3 - 45 -](#_Toc406427971)

[Appendix 4 - 46 -](#_Toc406427972)

[Appendix 5 - 46 -](#_Toc406427973)

# List of Abbreviations

FAO – Food and Agriculture Organization

FNSP – National Food and Nutritional Security Policy

GHI – Global Hunger Index

IFAD – International Fund for Agricultural Development

IFIs – International Financial Institutions

IFPRI – International Food Policy Research Institute

IMF – International Monetary Fund

MDG – Millennium Development Goals

SAPs – Structural Adjustment Programs

SFPs – School Feeding Programs

SGR – Strategic Grains Reserve

WB – World Bank

WFP – World Food Program

WFS – World Food Summit

WTO – World Trade Organization

# Introduction

“*Population, when unchecked, increases in a geometrical ratio. Subsistence increases only in an arithmetical ratio. A slight acquaintance with numbers will show the immensity of the first power in comparison with the second*” (Mathus, 1798, p. 4). Here Malthus entails that the human population, if not controlled, will continue to increase immensely, compared to the food production. As a result, it is implied, the humans, because, at some point there will to too much of them, will face starvation, due to the lack of food. However, now it is noticeable that there is enough food produced to feed entire human population and more, simply the unequal food distribution is the problem.

Food security has been an important part of global discourse concerning development and poverty reduction (Vink, 2012). Despite the fact that there is enough food produced to feed the entire population, 1 billion people still go to bed hungry (CGIAR, 2011). The amount of food produced in the world continues to rise rapidly and it is indicated by Griffin (1987) that throughout the whole human history the quantity of food produced has not been larger. Hence, the concept of food security shifted from focusing on food availability to accessibility (Glopolis, 2013). Due to the expected increase in population from 7 to 9 billion, the amount of food insecure people is also projected to grow (Rayfuse & Weisfelt, 2012). Raising numbers of population worldwide pressures the governments to direct the development of the country in order to meet increasing food demand (Patel, et al., 2012).

Food security is one of the fundamental human needs and is referred to as a principal indicator of poverty and physical well-being. It is suggested that the way to increase economic performance is by decreasing hunger. However, the first one does not entail aggregate food security. Due to the unequal management of economic resources the poor remain hungry (Jenkins & Scanlan, 2001). The concept of food security was defined during the World Food Summit (WFS) in 1996 as *“Food security exist when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”* (FAO, 1996). Additionally, food security depends not only on food availability, accessibility to food, but as well stability of its resources (Gregory, et al., 2005).

The UN has set Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) during the World Summit in 2000, first of which was to halve the extreme poverty and hunger by 2015 compared to the levels in 1990. During the aforementioned WFS countries also committed to cut by half the number of persistently undernourished people (FAO, 2014). Extensive improvements have been achieved regarding all of the MDGs on the global level. To reduce by half extreme hunger and undernourishment, among others, according to FAO report, is within reach on the global level. Some countries have already achieved their targets, others are still on their way, while some, such as Kenya, are not expected to realize their objectives (GoK, 2011).

Evidently, global average disguises extensive differences among the world regions. For instance, highest Global Hunger Index (GHI) levels are in South Asia and Sub-Saharan regions (IFPRI, 2012). In whole Sub-Saharan region one person in four is still experiencing chronic hunger. As stated in the same report, Sub-Saharan Africa has made the least progress in improving food security situation. According to FAO (2006), Africa is the continent experiencing highest number of food emergencies. What is notable, human factor is the variable influencing food crises the most (see Appendix 1) whereas, on the global level, climate is the number one cause of food crises.

## Problem Formulation

The following problem formulation is addressed and analyzed throughout the thesis aiming to identify

*Why food insecurity is still present in Kenya despite the implementation of governmental policies and foreign programs?*

Kenya has been chosen as a case study because of its inability to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger even though it is the leading economy in East Africa as well as regional business center (Glopolis, 2013; GoK, 2011). Throughout this thesis it will be attempted to analyze the obstacles that Kenya encounters on its path to ensure food security.

Food security depends on several factors ranging from climate change to international market systems. One of the food insecurity causes is reoccurring droughts more frequently and more severe, and consequently increased food prices due to higher input costs. Additionally, as a result of high levels of poverty, majority of the population in Kenya has low purchasing power and is not able to obtain food, even though it is within their reach (Glopolis, 2013). The same report highlights the paradoxical fact that while neighboring countries have lower poverty rates their economic performance is not that significant as Kenya’s. Thus, it is important to determine why the country is still suffering hunger and poverty, even though its overall economic performance is improving significantly.

Some authors suggest that failure to achieve food security is due to ignorance of agricultural sector in development country’s agenda (Rajaonarison, 2014), although the government implements agricultural policies and programs related to environmental protection and food security. Country as well receives foreign aid in a form of various development programs related to natural resource management and food aid. However, Kenya is still ranked by the WB to be one of the poorest countries, also based on Human Development Index (Patel, et al., 2012). Even though Kenya’s economy can enjoy the extensive sector of agriculture, which mostly focuses on the export of luxury goods, such as flowers, coffee and tea, to the developed countries, Kenya suffers chronic food shortages having less than 20 percent of its land suitable for agricultural usage (Langinger, 2011).

Even though the importance of agricultural sector is declining, in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP), it is still paramount in country’s economy as it contributes to nearly a quarter of GDP and employs 75 percent of the population (Waithaka, et al., 2013). As well, the majority of the population in Kenya is still living in rural areas, hence depending with their livelihoods on agriculture. Agriculture in Kenya in turn heavily depends on rainfall, thus current trends of climate change heavily impacts Kenya’s agricultural sector. For instance, draughts are more usual and last longer. Rainfall patters became unpredictable and heavier, destroying crop yields, the major contributor to domestic food supply in Kenya (Patel, et al., 2012).

Thus, food insecurity has always been the problem for Kenya. In the past it faced enduring food crises mostly caused by the long-lasting and periodic draughts. The present food crises, however, are powered by climate change, volatile energy prices and globalization, the determinants altering the concept of food affordability. They are changing the habits of food consumption, production and food market. Moreover, due to the influence of these factors, disadvantaged people are forced to further reduce their food intake, change to less balanced and nutrient diets, consequently negatively affecting their health (GoK, 2011). This is why it is important to clarify why food insecurity is still present in Kenya and if what is the prime reason preventing it to achieve the desired state of food security.

# Structure of the Thesis

The thesis consists of six parts. It begins with introduction to the overall problem where the problem formulation and research question is defined. The chapter on the structure of the thesis provides clarity about what topic is covered in each chapter of the thesis. Thereafter, the methodological part follows where methods used are explained together with research design. Following that, the clarification and reasoning of chosen theories and type of collected data are described. Subsequent theoretical part describes the theories used to analyze the collected data. The following chapter on the causes of food insecurity in Kenya provides the overview of the gathered data and analyzes it using previously described theories. The thesis is ended with the conclusions that are found in the analytical part and the problem formulation is answered.

# Methodological Framework

The following chapter defines ontological and epistemological perspectives of the thesis, research design and research methods. The theoretical and empirical frameworks of the thesis are as well covered in this chapter. The frameworks provide the information of the reasoning behind choosing the theories and the empirical data, and why these and not the others considered, were chosen in the end.

## Ontological and Epistemological Considerations

The research focuses on analyzing the level of food insecurity in Kenya, as well as, the causes of it. Because of the fact that food security is influenced by factors such as internal governmental policies, foreign food aid programs, and the influence that the global trade system has on the establishing food security in Kenya. They are studied in order to understand the basis of the problem.

To begin with, food security is sometimes related with the country’s ability to maintain food self-sufficiency, or vice versa. According to scholars, this is widely spread misunderstanding (Pritchard, 2014; Hollist & Tullis, 1987). There are countries, for instance, that are not producing enough food to be self-sufficient, but by importing the amount needed to satisfy needs of the population, they are able to enjoy the state of food security. On the other hand, countries, producing enough food to sustain self-sufficiency, export such a big part that the population is starving. The third case is when countries neither produce nor import food, due to the lack of financial assets. There population is suffering chronic hunger. Hence, food security is ought to be defined as the ability of the population to consume basic nutritious diet, the production or receiving sources of which are secure.

Food availability concept was defined in the FNSP as *“the physical existence of food, either from own production or from the markets”* (GoK, 2011, p. 11). The food availability on the national level consists of internal food production, food imports, domestic food reserves and foreign food aid. Furthermore, access to food is defined as the capability of households and individuals with their sufficient resources to acquire enough of nutritious food to satisfy their daily needs. Since 1980 in Kenya food availability per capita has decreased by over 10 percent while the maize consumption has increased by 3 percent yearly. Unfortunately, the majority of the population lives on the diet mostly based on maize, the kind of crop not containing diversity of vitamins and having harsh aftereffects on development of children.

Sub-Saharan Africa is challenged by severe economic and agricultural issues. Large number of food emergencies cases has been recorded in the region, sometimes even leading into a large-scale starvation, due to the lack of aforementioned food availability. Even though these food emergencies are usually caused by natural climatic changes, the main factors causing them are structural economic issues (Christensen, 1987). Food insecurity can be either chronic or transitory. Chronic food insecurity is a continuous failure of households and individuals to buy food or produce their own. Transitory, on the other hand, is a temporary inability to acquire food resulting from volatile food prices, food supply or household incomes. Both types of food insecurity are researched on in this thesis.

It was noticed by Young (2012) that on the level of global agricultural markets, the food security of one country might be food insecurity of another’s. The degrees of vulnerability to hunger are not equal within the classes of society. The hunger is mainly, but not only, a case in rural areas and affects the poorest the most. This is the case in Kenya too. While in rural areas and in urban slums people are experiencing continual hunger, in Nairobi residents face another issue; there obesity is perceived as a great challenge. In the capital of Kenya 41 percent of women, within the urban area, are overweight (GoK, 2011). From this comes the conclusion that hunger is mostly related with certain social classes and groups, such as landless agricultural workers, small-land owners, who are forced to take up off-farm jobs in order to sustain self-sufficiency, small-scale craftsmen providing traditional crafts in usual way (Griffin, 1987). The author concludes, not the food deficit to be the reason for hunger, starvation is basically caused by the general poverty of certain groups. It is the lack of financial resources within these groups and lack of purchasing power that restrains them from acquiring sufficient amounts of food to satisfy their diets. Broadly speaking, the center of the issue is, called by A. Sen, the “entitlement systems”. It refers to the linkages embedded in the layers of the society’s laws, customs and traditions determining the capability of people to access food resources.

There has been a number of studies trying to estimate the scale of under-nutrition. Among them, according to Griffin (1987), the WB has carried out in 1965 one of the best, where researchers have evaluated calorie deficiencies in Latin America, Africa, Middle East and Asian countries differentiated by income level. It was found in the study that in the studied regions more than a half (56 percent) of the population lacked at least 250 calories in their diets. Additionally, the study of FAO employing the similar methodology analyzed the malnutrition situation on the country level, rather than regional as the WB. The findings were one quarter of the population in Third World countries is suffering from lack of protein supply.

More recent studies on the global food security come from FAO, IFPRI and the Economist. There are Global Food Security Index (GFSI) and Global Hunger Index (GHI) indicating the food security situation in the world. The report from FAO, IFAD and WFP on “The State of Food Insecurity in the World” is as well one of the documents used throughout the research. The GHI designed by the IFPRI follows the advances of the world made in eradicating hunger and undernourishment. The Index tracks the developments in 120 countries, where over 80 percent of world’s population lives. The GHI consists of three food security aspects: the percentage points of the population that is under-fed; the percentage of under-five who are underweight; and the mortality rate of under-five year olds. In spite of decrease in overall world index by 34 percent since 1990, there are still around 20 countries in the world with “alarming” and “extremely alarming” hunger levels (Appendix 2) (The Economist, 2013). Thus, according to the Index, compared to 1990, Kenya decreased its levels of hunger somewhat 0-25 percent and in 2012 the hunger level reached 19.3 out of 100 and is perceived as serious (IFPRI, 2012).

The GFSI presents food security progress within each region. The Index was built to provide a potent analytical framework to measure and understand the reasons of food insecurity in the world. It conducts the analysis within 109 countries, according to the following food security dimensions: accessibility, affordability, and quality and safety. Kenya, with 40.1 point out of 100 is distinguished to be in the 80th place in 2014. Additionally, in comparison with 2013, Kenya increased its food security by 1.4 points in 2014 (The Economist Intelligence Unit , 2014).

## Research Design

The purpose to define the research design is that research would be carried out consistently and research question would be answered as objectively as possible. A well thought out research design minimizes the possibility of flaws in the conclusions (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Therefore it is crucial to set it out accurately. To begin with, the scientific standpoint of the research is hermeneutical. From the hermeneutical perspective, social reality is constructed by the social powers. Hermeneutical approach empowers to interpret and primarily seeks in depth understanding of the phenomenon in question (Colin, 2004; Kinsella, 2008). Hence, by fully understanding the issue, the author will be able to provide an answer to, and explanation for the research question. Thus, in order to grasp the causes of the food insecurity in Kenya, the research is divided into two parts - internal determinant and externals ones. For the internal determinant it was chosen to analyze national food security policies and especially the newest National Food and Nutrition Security Plan (FNSP), prepared by the Kenyan government in 2011. The external factors include global liberal trade system, food aid programs and climate change. By analyzing both, internal and external factors contributing to the issue of food insecurity in Kenya, the author is able to comprehend the fundamental causes of the problem, to possibly determine which actors are superior in creating or maintaining the problem, and provide better explanation to the main question of this research.

The research question “*Why food insecurity is still present in Kenya, despite national policies and foreign aid programs*” mostly focuses on explanatory research type. Still, implicitly, there is a part for a descriptive research as well, as in order to properly understand the roots of the problem and carry out the analysis, a descriptive research needs to be done regarding the factors that were discovered to influence the issue the most. Answering explanatory question it is part of the process to involve causal explanations (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Causal relationship means that actions of one actor influence the actions or the state of the other. Consequently, the hypothesis that has emerged suggests internal and external factors and the overall process of dependent development are the causes of chronic food insecurity in Kenya.

Case study is chosen to be the main strategy of the research conducted in the thesis. The reasoning for choosing Kenya as previously mentioned was the need to seek for the reasons why hunger is scaled-down in one area, but not in the others. It is important to have in mind that as Kenya is not the only country experiencing still ongoing chronic food insecurity, the results that are found out might not be applied to other suffering regions.

Deductive approach is employed throughout the research in the thesis as the theories are applied in order to explain the particular situation. As described by Wilson (2010), a deductive research is preoccupied with evolving hypothesis that is based on already existing theories and then conducting a research with the purpose to assess the hypothesis. However, the deductive research of this thesis is not conducted in its pure form. Gulati (2009) stated that the deductive reasoning goes from the particular to general. This indicates that one causal relationship and the theory explaining this link might be applied in many other cases as well. However, as already mentioned, in this particular case, one size does not fit them all. Deductive research of the thesis was started by formulating a research question, which is “*Why food insecurity is still present in Kenya*?”. After the initial literature review the hypothesis, that certain internal and external factors and overall pattern of countries development causes undetermined attitude of countries politics, hence food insecurity still being present, was developed. Hereafter, neoliberalism and dependency theories were chosen with the purpose to explain this failure of Kenyan government to provide food security for the country. The following analysis of literature sources provides the answer and concludes if the theories are applicable or not.

When conceptualizing the problem, afterwards the general literature study, it was noticed that most of the countries are likely to reach their MDG on eradicating hunger by half except for Kenya and few other countries. Thus, this means that the problem is not embedded in the global structure. It was determined to be more a functional one, meaning that since the world in a common effort is going to achieve MDG on halving hunger the global system is working properly. Yet, as Kenya is not able to achieve its goal, there is an issue in part of the system, thus our research problem is functional. Hereafter the problem is properly conceptualized, theories were chosen accordingly.

## Research Method

Prior to formulating the research question, a variety of sources has been accessed in order to gain an overall knowledge about the subject in question. With the purpose to answer the research question qualitative and quantitative data have been used to complement each other.

Only the secondary sources are used throughout the research. Collected data consists of research articles and books with the focus on the topic in question, reports conducted by the international organizations, such as FAO, WFP, IFAD (all three are under the supervision of the UN), NGOs, as well as national policy plans drafted by Kenyan government. The drawback of using secondary sources is that they might not always be updated and, even though it is unlikely, the chosen articles might be biased.

In order to analyze the data, it was divided into three parts: domestic factor, external factors and the factor of the changing climate impacts. Policy plans of the Kenyan government on the food security and nutrition were chosen to represent the domestic factor; liberal trade agreements, food aid and school-feeding programs were chosen to illustrate the influence of external powers. Lastly, because of the fact that food security is not only caused by man-made factors but also the natural environment has an immense impact on it, climate change effects are analyzed in order to find out to what extent food security relies on the favorable climatic situation in Kenya for its food production.

Chosen neoliberal and dependency theories are used in the analytical part of the thesis to analyze, provide a deeper understanding and explain why food insecurity is still present in Kenya. Following the initial overview of the literature, it was clear that agricultural market liberalization and SAPs adopted in the 1980s played an important role in the Kenyan food security system. The theory of neoliberalism can explain best the relation between these two parts. Furthermore, it was also observed that due to the international organizations’ food aid programs, country becomes dependent on them; therefore failure to provide food security itself. Here, dependency theory was selected to provide the deep analysis of links between food aid and food security in Kenya.

## Thesis Framework

This section provides reader with an overview of the theoretical and empirical frameworks of the thesis. To begin with, theoretical framework is described together with the rationale behind choosing the theories employed. Following, the empirical framework is presented and explanation how it relates to the main problem formulation contributes to answering it.

### Theoretical Framework

With the purpose to analyze why food insecurity still persists in Kenya, even though international action and attempts of Kenyan government are used to eradicate it, two theories have been chosen. The theory of neoliberalism belongs to the branch of international relation theories and the theory of dependency is one of the development theories. This has been done consciously with an attempt to have more comprehensive analysis and by combining both could have better overview from national and international levels.

Neoliberalism has been chosen due to the fact that it provides an explanation and reasons behind the agricultural market liberalization, which had an immense impact on the Kenyan market and consequently on the food security in Kenya. Neoliberalism is the theory of political economic tradition advocating that the prosperity of a human is best achieved by liberation of his entrepreneurial opportunities that are bounded by institutional framework. The government should only create and maintain institutional framework designed for free trade. The rapid growth in power of newly established International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and the capital centralization alongside, the structural crisis within the central economies led to the unfavorable impacts on the exports of periphery. What is more, the drop of primary commodity prices deepened the degradation there. The three main characteristics of neoliberalism are privatization, deregulation and disengagement of the state with areas of social provision. Neoliberalism is able to explain how re-regulating markets via state-led policies benefits dominant classes and the poorest ones become even poorer with no access food and other goods. In general, theory focuses on the importance of institutions and their imposed norms.

Dependency theory analyzes the relationship between the developed economies and developing ones, the exploitation of the periphery by the advanced ones. The theory focuses on the impacts of unequal relationship between the two parts. Dependency is described as the integration of periphery in the global system by which underdeveloped countries and former colonies are profited from in the terms of economics and their underdevelopment in this way is preserved (Soete, 1981). Thus, the theory explains the underdevelopment as a particular situation where the group of disadvantaged countries is conditioned by the growth of dominant ones. The main statement of the theory is that the international exchange and foreign investments inflict negative effects in the social welfare of the recipient countries (Jenkins & Scanlan, 2001). Overall, dependency theory has a focus point on unequal, exploitative and dependent relations between the First World and the Third World.

Other theories and concepts were considered, such as good governance or entitlement systems to explain the ineffectiveness of Kenyan policies. After the theoretical considerations, however, it was decided that only the neoliberalism and dependency theories will be used as they together are capable of providing the answer to the issue in question.

### Empirical Framework

In order to find out why food insecurity is a major issue in Kenya, empirical evidences are needed to analyze the situation. Four factors have been chosen with the purpose to analyze the problem. The criteria for choosing the influencing factors were set. Firstly, the factors influencing food security should be domestic and external, with the aspiration to identify weather the foreign influence is stronger or the domestic efforts are not effective enough. After the general overview of the issue one more factor was identified. The climate change appears to have extensive effects on food security in Kenya as well. Thus, the chosen factors are governmental policies addressing food insecurity, neoliberal reforms and subsequent SAPs, foreign food aid programs and climate change. The reasoning why two international factors were chosen (SAPs and food aid programs) is that the neoliberal reforms and SAPs were willingly adopted by the Kenyan government while the international food aid programs are targeting the issue of food insecurity. Their goal is not to change the overall way of market functioning.

To begin with, National Food Security and Nutrition Policy (FNSP) was chosen to illustrate what are the actions taken by the Kenyan government. To analyze this document is important due to the fact that it shows what are the food security issues seen by the Kenyan government and how are they seen from the domestic perspective. Additionally, the document demonstrates the view point of the policy-makers on the previous efforts to eradicate food insecurity and malnutrition in Kenya, and what future problems are expected to arise. Finally, it presents the overall policy targets and objectives and what actions will be taken in order to achieve them.

Second factor, neoliberal reforms and following SAPs, was chosen due to its heavy influence on the agricultural market in Kenya and consequently food insecurity. Just after the declaration of independence, Kenya focused on import substitution trying to encourage local agricultural and industrial production for local consumption. This was meant to create more employment possibilities, reduce the demand for foreign exchange, inspire innovation and, overall, stimulate Kenya to become self-sufficient in key areas such as food. However, this way of developing was changed when Kenya signed an agreement with the WB and Kenya adopted liberal trading regime. And even though policy was expected to bring macroeconomic success, food security and poverty reduction, in Kenya’s practice, the outcome was distressing.

The reasoning behind the third factor, foreign food aid programs, is that it is advocated to be one of the efficient ways to alleviate both short-term emergencies and long-term food shortages. However, the factor of foreign food aid programs is peculiar as some scientists argue that Kenya becomes dependent on it. Nonetheless, School Feeding Programs (SFPs) is the determinant attracting children to attend school, since they are unable to get sufficient nutrient meal at home. In this way, the programs are incentives for the students to enroll to school and keep attending it. As the education is stated by some scholars to be the key to the prosperity of the country, the importance of these programs is absolutely critical.

Lastly, climate change has immense impacts on agriculture in general. Nonetheless, even though it is a menace to the entire world, the regions of Africa and South Asia are experiencing the effects the first. In addition, they are also the most vulnerable ones. The average temperature in African continent got warmer by half degree Celsius during the last century. This century the average temperature is expected to rise by 3 degrees Celsius. Consequently, climate models project, arid areas will become drier and the humid areas -wetter (Patel, et al., 2012). As it is further stated by the Patel, climate change will impact the production of rain-fed crops and forage, as agriculture in Kenya is dependent on rain. Moreover, water availability decreases while water shortages increase. Thus, less agricultural production leads to increased food insecurity.

# Theories

In this chapter the theories of neoliberalism and dependency will we described. It is done with the purpose to gain the deeper understanding that later they could be efficiently be used to explain the collected data.

## Neoliberalism

Neoliberal policies took over in political-economic tradition since the 1970s and spread through the world. The three main characteristics of this thinking are privatization, deregulation and disengagement of the state with areas of social provision. Neoliberalism is the theory of political-economic tradition advocating the prosperity of a human is best achieved by liberation of entrepreneurial opportunities that are bounded by institutional framework defined with rights to private property, unregulated markets and free trade. The state in this practice is expected to create and maintain the institutional framework suitable for such processes (Harvey, 2005). However, Harvey highlights that beyond setting up the proper environment for the effective trade relations, the state should not intervene. The market is a symbol of rational and adequate allocation of resources. The interference of the government into the matters of market is unwelcome, considering that it distorts the market logic and violates efficiency and freedoms (Munck, 2005). Additionally, the state is not able to acquire enough information to control the markets, and influential interest groups will unavoidably bias and alter state interventions to benefit themselves (Harvey, 2005).

The theory emphasizes that the maximum social well-being will be reached of maximizing the scope and frequency of market relations and connecting all human activities to market (Harvey, 2005). In Colás (2005), neoliberalism is described as completely political matter which favors private and economic markets rather than the public ones and authority of the state. As well, neoliberalism re-regulates markets via state-led policies in order to benefit dominant classes. Since the access to market place is guaranteed to an individual, then it is his responsibility to attain his own well-being. The success of failure of an individual is the direct reflect of his entrepreneurial skills or personal flaws, such as lack of investments to his own human capital through education (Harvey, 2005).

Neoliberalism and new international world order was designed once the Bretton Woods agreements were set and institutions such as the WB, the UN, and the IMF were established with the purpose to stabilize international relations and maintain international peace (Harvey, 2005). Once neoliberal policies were adopted, they brought a ‘creative destruction’ of those established institutional frameworks and their powers, divisions of labor, social and welfare structures (Harvey, 2005). The immense growth in power of newly established IFIs and the capital centralization alongside has reached great heights since 1980s (Duménil & Lévy, 2005).

The attempt to adopt neoliberal thinking in Africa after 1980 resulted in small scale change in its impoverished condition. The advanced capitalist economies imposed neoliberal policies on the developing countries in two separate steps. The first phase started as a reaction to the debt crisis. A number of developing economies embraced neoliberal economic model which was compatible with structural adjustment policies commanded by the WB and IMF with the purpose to reorganize current debt and to lend more. The second phase was enforced by WTO during the Uruguay Round trade agreements (Gonzalez, 2004). Some authors suggest that the more distant the country is located from the center, the more disadvantageous was its shift towards neoliberalism (Duménil & Lévy, 2005). ‘Third World debt crisis’ was the prime reflection of neoliberalism in the countries of periphery. The main reason of the crisis was the growth of interest rates in 1979. The structural crisis within the central capitalist economies led to the unfavorable impacts on the exports of periphery. What is more, the drop of primary commodity prices deepened the degradation there.

## Dependency theory

The dependency theory came about 1950s due to the dissatisfaction with the modernization theory of development. The theory developed as a critical response to the mainstream thinking of economic growth that dominated after the World War Two. It was argued that mainstream development theories are unable to reflect the accurate relationship between the developed economies and the underdeveloped regions. Modernization theory is said to present the deceiving attitudes of the developed world towards their former colonies (Matunhu, 2011). Dependency implies a perpetual division of global economy into a core and a periphery and entails the impossibility of development in a capitalist way in the periphery (Bienefeld, 1981).

Dependency is defined as the integration of periphery in the global system by which underdeveloped countries and former colonies are exploited in the terms of economics and their underdevelopment is preserved (Soete, 1981; Matunhu, 2011; Ghosh, 2001). This kind of exploitation is impossible without economic and political domination. The political power is needed to design and maintain dependency. However, the level of dependency is determined by the level of economic exploitation (Soete, 1981). Hence, if political domination does not impose economic exploitation, it is difficult to determine dependency within inter-relations between countries. This economic exploitation of underdeveloped countries is the critical element of dependency.

Furthermore, Dos Santos in his structuralist model of dependence explains that it emerges due to the fact that some countries are able to develop by self-impetus, whereas others can only grow as a part of the countries in power (Ghosh, 2001). The dominant countries, is worth noticing, may have positive as well as negative effects on the development of underdeveloped countries. The structuralist model of development describes underdevelopment in terms of how former colonies have been blended into global economy by the developed capitalist economies. The inferior countries have become the exporters of primary commodities and importers of already manufactured goods from those primary commodities they previously exported. For instance, if Less Developed Countries would not be able to sell enough of their goods, they could not buy the proper equipment from the advanced economies to create new industries with additional work places. Looking from this viewpoint, the dependency of underdeveloped countries is defined through trade relations. According to Dos Santos in Ghosh (2001), dependency is a particular situation where the group of disadvantaged countries is conditioned by the growth of dominant ones. It is noteworthy that the international division of labor is the basis of dependency. The division of labor favors the industrialization in some economies but prevents it in others, whose development is conditioned by the dominant powers in the global economy.

# The Causes of Food Insecurity in Kenya

In the following section the factors that have an impact on food security in Kenya are presented. Rosin et al. (2014) reveals that the causes and explanations of the food crisis have proven to be too many to prioritize one as well as are tricky and volatile to grasp. The crisis influenced the rethinking of the links between global food production, the approaching limit of oil-based energy, quickly changing global climate and financial markets, which are becoming more and more volatile. After careful research, the most outstanding factors were determined to be: international regimes, humanitarian food aid, ineffective national policies and climate change. It is acknowledged that these factors might not be the only factors influencing food insecurity in Kenya. Nevertheless, they are considered to be the most prominent ones and contributing to preserving the issue the most.

From the newly released data on the food security situation in Kenya it is evident that food security is still a vastly spread problem. According to the data from the report, produced jointly by FEWS NET, Government of Kenya and WFP, only very small part of Kenya is under none or minimal food security pressure. The major part of the country, however, is in the stressed situation and part of the country, in October 2014, experienced critical situation (Appendix 3). This amounts to 1.5 million people still experiencing acute food insecurity. What is worse, in comparison with the last year, this number is higher by 75 percent. However, the situation is projected to get better within the period of October – December, as stated in the report, due to the short-cycle crops and expected decline in food prices. The areas where food security was critical are expected to disappear (FEWS NET; GoK; WFP, 2014).

## International Regimes

International regimes and international agreements have an immense impact on the food flows from and to Kenya. Therefore, it is important to analyze to what extent they influence food security.

### Structural Adjustment Programs

Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) are the series of loans provided by the IFIs (either IMF or the WB) with additional conditions. The programs come from the school of thinking where the human and economic developments are if not entirely separated, then the economic development is highly prioritized over the human one by giving minimal economic role to the government (Kang'ara, 2000). The regime programs imposed, demanded Kenya for cutting down on the government spending and scaling up the exports with the purpose to maximize income needed to pay the debt. Additionally, it had to devaluate its currency, harshly cut down on social spending, deregulate the agricultural commodity pricing and substitutions, remove any import quotas, keep the tariffs low as well as the privatization of governmental companies was extensively encouraged (Gonzalez, 2004).

Kenya was one of the first countries to get a Structural Adjustment Loan from the WB in 1980 (Gertz, 2009; Nyangito, 2003). Country has been changing its trade regimes starting from independence to this date. By employing different trade policy instruments the country was trying to liberalize its trade. During 1960s and 1970s, Kenyan government focused on substituting imports with the attempt to protect infant industries and small-scale producers. But after signing the agreement with the WB, Kenya altered its import-substitution policies to liberal trading regime (Gertz, 2009). Same author continues to suggest that, generally speaking, country’s experience in liberalizing trade was unsatisfactory and failed to bring macroeconomic success, food security and reduce poverty as intended.

When implementing the SAPs in Kenya, it was focused on elimination of the monopoly of the state government in the agricultural sector over marketing of products, imports, pricing and distribution. Apart from the fact that in the early stages of reform implementation there was undisguised governmental resistance, the significant steps towards market liberalization started in 1993. The reform with market deregulation and trade liberalization targeted to stimulate Kenyan private sector to increase its participation in the production, marketing and processing of agricultural products (Nyangito, 2003).

Furthermore, since 1980s in response to growing demand for ethically produced food, African small-holders got increasingly involved in the activity. However, looking back, often these producers got heavily dependent on export markets with negative consequences, such as food insecurity, hunger, poverty, and import dependence. Currently they are also facing urges to change their traditional way of farming to more intensive and diverse in order not to miss out in global trade (Smith & Lyons, 2014). By the same authors it is indicated that in Kenya, the production of French beans is shipped mostly to the European supermarkets and, additionally, is regulated by European multi-stakeholder rules of ethical labor standards and ethical agricultural production. To illustrate the escalation of food exports after implementing of neoliberal trading regime, in 1988, for instance, Kenya exported only to the UK almost 4 thousand tons of legumes, while during the year 2005 the number increased to 25 thousand.

Additionally, when in 2009 Kenyan government was facing problems due to food shortages in some regions of the country, extensive amount of food was being shifted to fill up the supermarkets in the UK. Kenya has a strong trade relationship with the UK, since it is a former colony. The Kenyan food farms that have trade relationships with the UK are using innovative technologies and produce food at high standards. Even though they employ great number of laborers, they are often accused of water pollution, overuse of irrigation and low workers’ wages. Furthermore, the farmers producing for the domestic market face challenges due to their small-scale farms, lack of technological capabilities and climate change induced unreliable rain patterns.

### Agreements on Agriculture

One of the SAPs imposed for Kenya was the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), the main multilateral framework regulating global agricultural trade (Rayfuse & Weisfelt, 2012). The AoA encouraged Kenya to minimize export subsidies and internal production support as well as to minimize import barriers in order to maximize the access to market (Rosset, 2006; Rayfuse & Weisfelt, 2012). Kenya joined the WTO in 1995 when signing the AoA. The Agreement caused immense changes in the worldwide agricultural environment in terms of institutional framework and laws that define agricultural production policies and agricultural trade relationships between countries (Nyangito, 2003). Developing countries generally consider that the AoA did not benefit them in any way.

Hereafter, the three pillars the AoA is built upon are defined. To begin with, with the purpose to increase the access to the market, the AoA required that countries would remove import quotas. The countries were also demanded to decrease their tariffs. According to the level of their development, countries needed to reduce more, if they were more developed and reduce less, if their level of development was lower (Rosset, 2006). Rosset (2006) continues to argue that even though the decision seemed judicious, it has put the poor countries in a disadvantageous position. Considering the fact that developed economies can provide the needed financial support to their farmers, Kenya, for instance, did not have enough financial resources. Consequently, the government of Kenya was able to support their farmers only through tariffs and other import restrictions. The second pillar is the export substitution. Referring to this pillar, Rosset (2006) suggests that it should be constrained. The last pillar is the removal of domestic support. The reason for scaling down the levels of domestic support is to prevent the increase in prices of the goods that later might be exported (Rosset, 2006).

The predominant purpose of the AoA is to pave the way for a fair and market-centered agricultural exchange system by eliminating production-and-trade twisting practices as domestic production quotas and export subsidies (Nyangito, 2003; Gonzalez, 2004). The goal of the Kenyan government for adopting the AoA policies was to encourage small and large scale farmers to expand their production. Nevertheless, after the implementation of policy reforms, the general trend has been that the overall agricultural and food production have been decreasing, Nyangito (2003) finds.

### Analysis

The essential condition when aiming to achieve food security is widely acknowledged to be economic development. The WTO has been promoting trade liberalization as the way for the developing countries to eradicate poverty and starvation. However, Joshi (2012) states that there is a controversy surrounding the target (to reduce poverty and hunger) and the strategy (trade liberalization) to reach it. The WTO frameworks of the AoA has been concluded by the Schutter (2011 in Rayfuse & Weisfelt, 2012) to be conflicting with the goal to reach global food security and fail to deliver effective policy framework bringing about the right to food. The AoA prevents member states to adopt strategies and policies to support vulnerable domestic sectors (Joshi, 2012). Just after the independence, the first two decades, living standards and well-being in Kenya rose significantly. However, in the 1980s and 1990s, when the AoA was signed, economic performance, which has a direct influence on the food security and nutrition in Kenya, was stagnant or even negative. The yearly growth in the agricultural sector declined from 6 percent just after the independence in the 1960s to 1.3 percent after the adoption of the AoA in the 1990s (GoK, 2011).

The government is continuously trying to increase food security levels in Kenya and, when adopted the trade liberalization policies, there has been ongoing discourse on how these policies are affecting the efforts of the government. There are different viewpoints regarding this question. Policy makers are arguing that neoliberal policies benefit the country due to the emerging development opportunities, such as transfer of technology. This, is advocated, will raise the efficiency and productivity, and subsequently the economic growth. On the other hand, the civil society holds the position that trade liberalization benefits only certain sectors, but not the ones linked with increasing food security, such as farming (Omolo, 2011).

The agricultural trade liberalization primarily aimed to increase the availability of food products on the global level. However, the AoA and SAPs imposed by the IFIs brought to most of the developing countries disappointment, since the regime failed to bring about what was promised. The agricultural trade liberalization was expected to reduce the prices of agricultural commodities. For Kenya, since it is a net importing country, this might at first look seems as a positive side of the regime. Nevertheless, if one would start thinking about its exports, Kenya is exporting comparatively a small amount of goods and with the low prices cannot gain enough money to immensely increase development pace of its production capacities. The institutions, keeping in place the same norms for the states of all levels of development, are somewhat preventing the poor countries from development and persisting their disadvantaging practices.

What is more, the two main impacts of the AoA on the developing countries were the limitations of the policies implemented by government in order to protect infant or vulnerable sectors, and the growth of poverty within certain sectors in Kenya (Joshi, 2012). Since the main negotiations were carried out in between the superpowers, the US and the EU, developing countries, with Kenya among them, were barely included. This exclusion of Kenya and other developing economies restricted from the possibility of making an impact on the policy-making.

As aforementioned, the Agreement demands for Kenya to improve market access by putting tariffs on existing non-tariff imports. Kenya was unable to adopt this condition due to the trade liberalization conditions previously demanded by the IMF and the WB. Consequently, the country was not allowed to use special protective supplies in a case of rapid import escalation or low import prices. Joshi (2012) explains if the immense increase in the food imports appears, it diminishes the incentives to expand or cultivate local food production and consequently upsurges the country’s dependence on the imported food. The result is that Kenya has only limited capabilities to protect basic food and vulnerable agricultural products. It is visible that almost one-size-fits-all neoliberal policies advocating economic development make Kenya more and more dependent on the food imports and hence, making it more food insecure.

Kenyan domestic producers and markets are disadvantaged by the unfair competition induced by imports of subsidized goods from other countries. Agricultural trade liberalization, after signing the AoA, has changed Kenya, the former net food exporter to be now the net food importer (GoK, 2011). Having in mind that one of the main neoliberalism pillars is the limiting state intervention to the minimum extent needed to maintain the institutional structures for the free trade, this disadvantages Kenya in a sense that domestic producers cannot compete with the international ones on the global level. Local farmers do not have innovative technology and do not have the resources to obtain it. Furthermore, the Agreement enforces Kenya to produce the food goods according to the certain sanitary standards. Kenya, as most of the other developing countries, finds it challenging to implement these standards due to number of issues in the implementation process as well as the lack of technical capacity. The developed economies are benefiting from this situation and using the AoA to limit the imports of goods coming from developing world. Additionally, labor standards, environmental standards and other recently emerged non-tariff issues are taken advantage of by the developed countries to create barriers with the purpose to prevent from additional competition from the developing world (Nyangito, 2003).

Lastly, because the AoA was outside the other trading agreements, this imposes complete disorder, as overload of contradicting policies one after the other have been adopted. For example, to increase the prices of domestic goods compared to the world market; to reduce domestic prices of agricultural products; to isolate the domestic prices from the volatility of the world ones (Brandão & Martin, 1993). The main outcome of these policies was self-destroying. As the domestic policies were aiming to increase and stabilize domestic prices, trying to reduce and destabilize global prices, not having in mind the relation between the two and that domestic prices in the long-term are linked to the global ones (Mundlak & Larson, 1992 in Brandõ & Martin, 1993).

All things considered, it is noticeable form the analysis that the external factor of neoliberal trading regime and imposed SAPs have restricted Kenya in a number of ways to increase its food security. Kenya’s food security is overly dependent on international trade. This lessens country’s capacity to handle the external shocks, such as overproduction or harvest failures in other countries. It needs to be noted that Kenya does not have vast capacities of increasing domestic agricultural production; hence it is left with the international trade as a mean to ensure country’s food security.

## Food Aid Programs

Trade is seen as the main tool in global food distribution. However, poor countries usually do not have enough financial resources to acquire the amount of food needed to satisfy the demand of the country. From this follows, food relief is perceived as a means to deal with volatile local food production and wide-spread hunger (Barrett, 2001).

According to the USAID data, the contributions have increased from 112 million US dollars in 2010 to 116.4 million in 2014. As seen in the data (Appendix 4) in the year 2011 the food aid reached almost 135 million US dollars. This was because of the especially severe draught that year. Additionally, compared to the year 2013, this year Kenya received 10 million more worth of food aid (US AID, 2014). Hence, this implies that the situation has worsened this year as all of the relief was attributed to the emergency aid. By recent studies it is assessed that there are constantly around 2 million people who need food assistance or assistance to access the food. Naturally, throughout the more frequent periods of draught or heavy rains, the number could easily double (GoK, 2011).

The education is said by Johannes D. Schmidt to be the key to development, as he states that “*there is no literate population that is poor and no illiterate that is anything but poor*” (Schmidt, 2004). In order to achieve one of the MDGs, to make primary education attainable to everybody, the Kenyan government in 2003 introduced the policy of the free compulsory primary education for all Kenyan children (Langinger, 2011). In order to increase the school attendance in the poorest and traditional communities, which is evident from the country’s experience not to be the highest, free meals are the incentives used to attract school-aged children to classes. In this way the beneficiaries are the poorest households that are usually unable to provide nutritional meals to their children. The SFPs, one kind of the food aid programs, is a settlement made with to provide school children with food in addition to meals they receive at home, with the purpose to motivate them to enroll and stay at school. They are aiming to reduce the levels of temporary hunger and raise the attendance in classes and overall school achievements (Khatete, et al., 2013).

The SFPs were started in Kenya because of chronic food insecurity and poverty that raised obstacles for children to finish their primary education in most of the districts of the country, and currently is one of the most extensive and longest-standing programs across the country. The WFP by using SFPs have targeted food inequality in most vulnerable areas in Kenya both, districts in the arid and semi-arid lands, and urban slums in Nairobi. The programs were started in 1980 by the WFP in collaboration with Kenyan government as a response to growing frequency of food crises caused by reoccurring draughts, heavier rainfalls resulting in flooding and political violence (WFP, 2009). The programs gained pace after 2003, when the national policy of Free Primary Education was introduced (Asiago & Akello, 2014). The highest coverage was of 1.85 million pupils enrolled in more than 5 thousand schools across the country. At the moment, the WFP is distributing food to over half-million Kenyans. This number varies depending on the current climatic situation in the country (Lawrence-Brown, 2014). The Kenyan government since 2008 is responsible for half of the program, while the WFP puts its focus on providing the meals to the primary education schools where the lowest education levels were recorded, and in the most food insecure regions of Kenya. The educational results, of those students who attend schools providing meals, were recorded to get higher by 28 percentage points. The numbers of children completing their primary education were as well higher among the schools involved in the programs. They were also more likely to continue to their secondary education. It is worth mentioning, the educational results were better in the urban areas than in the rural. What is more, the same WFP report finds that the levels of hunger reduced and the nutrition increased significantly of students receiving school meals. The main fact is that the WFP school meals were most of the time the biggest meal of the day and, usually, the only meal (WFP, 2009).

The study, conducted by Khatete, et al. (2013), was trying to determine if there is a relationship between SFPs and school attendance. Looking firstly into school enrolment (Appendix 5), significant increase in the school population was found in the study. In the rural areas this was mostly associated with the introduction of Free Primary Education together with the introduction of SFPs. Yet, not compelling change was noticed afterwards. In the urban slums, however, teachers have noticed that since the implementation of the SFPs the numbers of enrolled students are higher. It is related with the inability of the parents to provide the sufficient nutrition to their children. In the different study by Wambua (2008 in Khatete, 2013), it was affirmed that the immense part of the students from the poor families attend school because they might not get the food at home. Subsequently, school attendance, according to the teachers interviewed in the study, has increased since the SFPs have been initiated (Appendix 6). These findings suggest that school feeding can be an effective incentive to reinforce attendance in schools and somewhat increase the state of food security in Kenya. Moreover, respondents felt school feeding being very important in stabilization of school attendance (Appendix 7). But only the levels of school enrolment do not mean that pupils are learning efficiently. Without proper and sufficient nutrition students are not able to achieve their best. Thus, one way to determine the efficiency of SFPs is to look at the changes in students’ academic achievements. In the already presented study the findings are the same in both types of studied districts, urban slums’ district and the rural district. Overall level of achievements has fallen. Levinger (2002 in Khatete, 2013) suggests that in addition to SFPs, a proper environment to facilitate learning process ought to be created.

### Analysis

Proponents of food aid are convinced that it is an efficient and competent tool of scaling-down the level of hunger. They support their statements by arguing that when food aid is used for work or school related programs, it encourages the development of the country. Additionally, food aid programs decreases the need to import food and consequently restricts the increase in food insecurity. However, the opposite side of the food aid discourse argues that due to the programs, the developing countries have become more dependent on the food imports (Kirwan & McMillan, 2007; Rancourt, et al., 2013).

What is more, there are challenges regarding SFPs integrity in terms of how the food intended to feed children is handled (Asiago & Akello, 2014). Some authors provide evidence that food aid is not always efficient because it not always reaches the ones in need and the ones that the aid is targeting. Considering that food aid should focus on covering food availability, when food shortfalls causing undernutrition appear, food aid ought to be provided only as a response to aforementioned food availability shortfalls (Barrett, 2001). When in the 2011 Kenya suffered the most devastating draught, millions of people went through the immense impacts of the draught and were forced to survive on the emergency food aid from the government and international humanitarian agencies (Kiguro, 2013). Foreign aid, on average, was not effective, in speeding up the long-term growth and food stability in Kenya. It contributed even less to increasing equality in the income distribution and had no positive effect on reducing the levels of hunger (Griffin, 1987).

Other studies find that the humanitarian food aid does contribute to the reduction of poverty and hunger. It was indicated by the empirical data that, in one region more than in the others, SFPs had positive results; the students were more food secure since they were receiving meals at school. The households, consequently, have extra money to buy more nutritious food for other household members. Having in mind that due to better nutrition student can achieve higher educational results, with the higher education he hypothetically is able to somewhat influence the development of the country towards ensuring its food security.

However, overall, food aid has deterrent influence on agricultural production which in turn results in increased dependence other food sources (Bezuneh, et al., 1988). The students and households become dependent on the humanitarian food aid as they do not consider it ending. Of course, this is only referring to the SFPs. For instance, the newest WFP announcements stated that due to the lack of funding the WFP had to stop providing humanitarian food aid to the Syrian refugees. As a results around 2 million people who were dependent on it, will starve. The dependency theory prevails since the development of the periphery relies on the relations with the advanced economies. The core economies, according to the dependency theory, are attempting integrate the developing countries to the global economy. Manifesting the support to development of the poor countries by providing food aid, the developed countries are making them dependent on it and in the end, as stated by a number of authors, their development and increase of self-reliance is restricted (Soete, 1981; Matunhu, 2011; Ghosh, 2001).

Only as a result of WFP food aid, people are able to survive in some regions in Kenya. It is evident that dependency of food aid is immense in some regions, as presented in Thielke (2006), since people do not even try to produce their own food, only wait for the new food deliveries from Nairobi. Even the food crops, such as corn, could be grown in Kenya, they are being imported as an aid from the US, and subsequently destroying the market for the local farmers who would grow them. Food security is influenced by the ability of individuals and households to produce their own food in sufficient quantity and to generate income to purchase food, the adequacy of infrastructure, effectiveness of food distribution systems and the affordability of food prices (GoK, 2011).

Finally, it is noticeable that the structural exploitation exists not only within the international relations, but between the relations of the actors within the country too. According to Asiogo and Akello (2014), SFPs are challenged by the number of issues in spite of opportunities and expected positive outcomes by the WFP and other stakeholders. For example, by embracing SFPs politicians in developing countries are trying to gain popularity. Moreover, part of SFPs food meant for students is sold to raise money to increase schools budget or increase personal budget of teachers. Furthermore, the urban areas of the country attract all the investments and infrastructure developments in Kenya while rural regions are left on their own. This is clearly seen in the previously mentioned statement that almost half of the women in Nairobi are overweight, while there are rural regions in Kenya where food security is in the critical situation. Within those rural areas richer people are exploiting the poorest ones and the so on (Matunhu, 2011).

Thus, various negative and positive aspects of food aid have been analyzed and it can be concluded that despite the fact that food aid is necessary when food emergencies occur or to help students in learning. Nevertheless, this non-stop food aid is making country and its population dependent on it and even deters the increase of self-reliance.

## Kenyan policies

A policy plan, directed towards combating food insecurity, ascribes political interest and interference into all aspects of food, starting from production, distribution to creating food availability for all. The government of Kenya by implementing such strategies aims to increase food availability and accessibility, as a main pillar in increasing economic development and improving overall food security in Kenya (Kilonzi, 2013). It is stated in the Kenyan Constitution that national security in Kenya includes the protection of Kenyan population, their rights and freedoms, stability, peace and other national interests. Thus, the right to be free from hunger is among the rights that are protected by the Constitution (GoK, 2011; Glopolis, 2013).

The first National Food Policy was introduced in the 1981. It targeted to sustain self-reliance on food and guarantee fair food and nutrients distribution among the Kenyan population. The government was to play the main role in accomplishing these targets. Government was to set the grain prices and have the monopoly over input distribution. The second National Food Policy, however, emphasized the market-orientated approach, which still ought to be limited to a certain extent. The policy was not fully effective as the implementation framework was not clearly stated, neither was the coordination mechanisms of the policy implementation, or the commitments to fund the planned actions (GoK, 2011). Furthermore, Kenyan government was one of the firsts to establish national strategy responding to climate change as a threat to country’s food security (Maina, et al., 2013). Its efforts and adopted policies to stimulate economic recovery and the country’s agricultural sector, mainstay of the Kenyan economy, in all respects align with the country’s international commitments to eradicate chronic hunger and extreme poverty, the UN MDGs, pledges during the WFS in 1996 and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program.

### National Food and Nutrition Security Policy

The Kenyan government is highly motivated to slash hunger and malnutrition in the country. This commitment includes building and strengthening self-reliance with the purpose to immensely scale-down chronic food insecurity. To lessen the potential impacts of future crises, foreign food aid is used in connection with the long-term development strategies, such as FNSP. Kenyan government in 2011 launched the FNSP, the policy targeting persisting hunger and under-nutrition, affecting one third of the Kenyan population. There are three main broad goals declared in the policy. Firstly, policy aims to improve the possibilities for all Kenyans to be able to have a fully nutrient diet. Secondly, it is attempted to boost the quality and quantity of the food Kenyan population is able to access at all times. The final goal attempts to protect the food-wise vulnerable part of the population by using innovative safety programs for the country’s long-term development.

Food security structure adopted by the Kenya government in FNSP contains not three, as usual, but four dimensions of food security. They are as follows: availability, accessibility to food, stability of food supply, and nutritious diet (GoK, 2011). It is noticeable that FNSP acknowledges the currently emerging issues for food and nutrition security. Among the other approaches how to combat the climate change, global food and global financial crises, one the FNSP strategies is the Strategic Grain Reserve (SGR). Its main goal is to protect the local farmers from the over-supply during the periods of favorable weather and to provide the help for the population during food crises. The reserve must contain 4 million bags of maize and a cash equivalent of the same figure (GoK, 2011). This allows the government to provide relief by rapidly mobilizing food, during the emergency situations for the starving or hunger experiencing population. Having cash reserves, the government is able to purchase commodities in the well-functioning markets when the emergency situation strikes. The SGR used to consist only of maize, which is not the main food among the communities most prone to hunger. To improve the situation, in the FNSP the government committed to alter SGR to Strategic Food Reserve by including other essential food goods relevant to local eating habits. The government as well committed to develop the reserves in the terms of physical stock amounts and cash (GoK, 2011).

 Additionally, food trade is concluded, by the FNSP policy-makers, to be the main factor determining the level of national food security. With the changes in the demography, reductions in foodstuff production and self-reliance, food imports have become an extremely important factor in ensuring food security in Kenya. Because the Kenyan population after the market reforms is able to enjoy the inexpensive and various food imports, the government acknowledged that these cheap imports from developed economies might remove local producers from the market. Therefore, the government with the purpose to increase food security set a goal to assist the Kenyan agricultural sector in increasing its regional and international competitiveness; to increase the regional trade; involve state into market regulation in a transparent way, to scale-down the uncertainty of supply and food imports.

The other FNSP strategies aiming to alleviate food insecurity are: the strategy of food availability and access, the strategy to increase domestic food production, food safety, standards and food quality control, school nutrition and nutrition awareness, the strategy for early warnings and emergency management, and the strategy to improve institutional and legal framework and financing (WHO, 2011).

According to the Omiti and Laibuni (2012) article published in the Daily Nation, a newspaper in Kenya, the actions of the state towards food and nutrition security can be categorized into three approaches. The first one being consumer-orientated action, which targets the most vulnerable segment of the society by providing social safety nets, food subsidies and price control among others. The second one is producer-orientated actions with the purpose to encourage domestic farmers to expand their production levels, using input supple measure. And last one is trade-orientated actions aiming to stabilize volatile food prices and increase domestic supply by implementing policy instruments, such as tariff reductions or export restrictions.

### Analysis

After gaining the independence, the state spending, which was cut after the SAPs were adopted, was mostly concentrated on human development, food security, education, increasing sanitation and other basic human necessities (Kang'ara, 2000). The forced reduction of the state spending on these important social sectors prevented Kenyan government to improve the situation within all these areas. It is notable that the first national policy concerning food security has been introduced in the beginning of the 1980s, at the same period as the SAPs were adopted. It is a positive initiation of policy-makers, the acknowledging that there is a prominent problem threatening country, and attempting to take an action in order to eradicate it. However, financial resources were needed for the policy to be implemented efficiently, and that the desired result, to increase the state of food security in Kenya, will be achieved. Since state spending was harshly cut, government did not have enough funds to implement and maintain the policy initiatives concerning food security. Thus, it is evident that one of the causes of the food insecurity is still being present in Kenya and even though Kenyan government attempts to implement policies targeting the issue, the SAPs imposed by neoliberal institutions restricts government from implementing policies efficiently. Lack of good governance and political will and SAPs have obstructed government in providing basic social services and decent living conditions in Kenya (Kimani-Murage, et al., 2014).

In addition to this, the AoA have negative impacts on the developing countries in the terms of governmental power reduction. Kenyan government was taken away the possible revenues from the tariffs, as agricultural trade liberalization policies demanded the state to remove the tariffs. With those revenues the government could fund reforms or initiations in educational sector, health care, address various feeding programs and safety nets. Moreover, the Kenyan government is not allowed to improve food security by using trade-based or labor-based policies, because the Agreement restricts government from introducing new subsidies (Joshi, 2012). Therefore, the ineffectiveness of the Kenyan food security policies and general attempts of the government to reduce the situation of chronic hunger can be attributed to the neoliberalism and its economic policies imposed on the Kenyan government. The main stance of neoliberalism, or sometimes called liberal institutionalism, is the reduction of state power and the governance of the market mechanism is left for the international institutions and their norms.

According to Joshi (2012), the AoA permits the developed countries preserve particular trade-distorting subsidies at the same time preventing the exercise of the same policies by the developing states. More importantly, it was found in the study that both tariff and non-tariff barriers encourages economic growth in the developing countries, while neoliberal institutions inflicting their removal disrupted growth and possibilities to improve food security situation (Rosset, 2006). This unequal relationship between developed and developing states, the main focus point of the dependency theory, and economic exploitation of the periphery blocks the way for Kenya to initiate certain incentives for the domestic producers to expand their production or to increase their competitiveness compared to the farmers from developed countries. It is important to note the fact that this unequal relationship is imposed by the international institutions, external powers according to the dependency theory to be of singular importance, and this simply adds up to the argument.

One more reason for the ineffectiveness of until now adopted national policies regarding food security is the weak institutions and corrupt government (Joshi, 2012). Strong institutions, capable of imposing the norms that are followed, are an immense factor in achieving the effectiveness of any policy. Too less time has passed since the independence and, in addition to this, there has never been a stable government since then that the country would have developed strong basis for effective institutions and norms they establish.

The last point, neoliberalism clearly advocates that each individual is responsible for his own well-being. According to the theory, everybody has a guaranteed access to the marketplace and individuals are accountable for their own achievements or failures there. Success or failure is viewed from the prism of person’s entrepreneurial skills or lack of them. This might work in the advanced capitalist economies with the developed infrastructure. This is not always the case all-round the globe. In Kenya, despite the fact that urban population is rapidly increasing, majority of the population still lives in the rural areas of the country. The infrastructure in these regions is poor and individuals living in the remote areas do not have such capabilities to travel, sometimes several days, until the market place and in the end not to make a fortune, due to the free market liberalism. Thus, if an individual is not able to produce enough goods or food that when exchanged them to other goods or foodstuff or money would get enough to ensure his, and the household he live in, food security, that it his own fault. Neoliberalism provides the necessary environment for the growth and individuals have freedom to benefit from it or not.

All things considered, the issue of food security is still present in Kenya even though government attempts to implement food security policies that would give a visible result. The ineffectiveness of these policies, having in mind that they have been developed for more than three decades now, is in turned caused by a number of factors. The bottom line and the cause of this issue are the effects of the neoliberal policies imposed by the IFIs in the 1980s and the consequences that followed.

## Climate Change

It is scientifically proven that Sub-Saharan Africa will be affected by climate change particularly harsh (Symons, 2014). Kenyan food security heavily depends on agricultural production, which in turn mostly depends on the rainfall. Changing climate impacts food security of individuals, households as well as regions and the whole nation (Waithaka, et al., 2013; Patel, et al., 2012).

The causal relations between climate change and food security have been extensively researched concerning effects on the output of yields and hence, food production. Increasing global temperatures are causing weather anomalies that cannot be predicted anymore. Other effects of the changing climate and additional global environmental changes, such as decreasing water quality and availability, decreasing land productivity and others have escalated concerns about attaining the state of food security for the most vulnerable. Further concerns are discussed rotating about the meeting the food demand of rising global population, their changing diets and subsequent further degradation of the environment. It might degrade with the further exploitation of vegetation and escalated intensification of land use. This might in turn put food systems in peril (Gregory, et al., 2005). Therefore, recently politics in Kenya has rapidly built up the interest in adaptation to climate change. Kenya is one of the first countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa to establish national policy on climate change in 2010 as part of its development agenda (Symons, 2014).

Floods during the year 1997 – 1998 and draughts during the period 1999 – 2001 were thought to be to worst in the country’s history. The natural disasters led to thousands of people being displaced from their home. The floods, for example, caused damages to country’s infrastructure equivalent to around 1 billion US dollars and extremely reduced the productivity of hydroelectric power plants in Kenya. As a consequence, Kenya had no choice but to take another loan, 72 million US dollars, from the WB. The draught in 2004 led to famine in some regions of the country. Another draught in 2006 brought about 3.5 million of the population requiring for the food aid and other humanitarian aid (Mwendwa & Giliba, 2012). Moreover, rising global temperatures are shrinking the ice cap of Mount Kenya and in turn the seasonal rivers that used to run from the mountain top to the surrounding territory have dried out. As a result of decreased water availability, in some districts of Northern Kenya people might already travel more than 10 km a day (Ramin & McMichael, 2009).

What is more, the degree to which the climate change is able to damage or cripple the agricultural sector depends on the ability of the sector to adjust to the unstable climatic situation and conditions. This adaptive ability of Kenyan agricultural sector is low. Essentially because of the lack of financial capacity to invest in more resilient production designs, lack of technological advancements, high dependence on rain-fed agriculture, more and more frequent draughts and floods, crop and livestock infections (Symons, 2014; Waithaka, et al., 2013). Declining agricultural production and increasing degradation of environment caused by climate change pressure Kenya’s economy and general welfare and well-being of the population. Climate change also causes declining fish stocks, volatile production of hydroelectric power and rapid deforestation of Kenyan land (AFIDEP, 2012).

### Analysis

The developing countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya being among them, and South Asia, are currently experiencing the impacts of the climate change despite the fact that they did not contribute, or at least not that much as already developed economies, in escalating the climate change. The developed states had their opportunity to grow their economies by exploiting earth’s natural resources and releasing pollutant emissions causing global climate change. To mitigate rising global temperatures and changing climate, there are held numerous negotiations. Countries gather together to discuss the prominent issues and decide on the international agreements which all countries would adopt in order to alleviate the impacts of changing climate. There are countries which want to lessen the impacts of the climate change and are prone climate change mitigation legally binding agreements. On the other hand, there as well are countries which resist any legally binding commitments to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, as that would mean reduced productivity in manufacturing and in turn lost economic revenues.

What is more, even though the most parts of the world will be suffer harsh and negative effects of climate change, certain developed regions in the North are likely to benefit from the rising global temperatures. For instance, currently Russia and Canada have vast amounts of land that is not suitable for agricultural cultivation. With the rising temperatures, the extensive amount of land will become less cold and suitable for agricultural production (Korepin, 2011). As well, the crop fertile period will become longer and thus, provide already developed countries with even more economic benefits. The main reason of economics and maintained or increased competitiveness prevents any effective climate change mitigation agreement to be adopted by the entire world. Consequently, any effective action is taken and Kenya is left to endure reoccurring severe draughts that demolishes the food production in the country making food insecurity lasting issue. Here it can be again referred to the dependency theory which explores the unequal and exploitative relationship between the advanced economies and developing states. The advanced capitalist countries aim to maintain their economical superiority over other regions and do not want to reduce the extent of their production. This leads to the unrealized Kenyan foodstuff production that could have been done if harsh climate change impacts would not have been emerged and the level Kenyan food security could have increased.

Additionally, as the stance of neoliberalism declares, each sovereign state is responsible for its development. Thus, it has to implement policies, with the purpose to achieve it, which do not interfere with the international systems. The countries are free to conduct their development in any way as long as they stick to the international norms. Yet, the chronic and long-term food insecurity, brought about by the international systems, are currently of major significance compared to the destructive events such as draughts and floods. According to Pearson (2012) 8 percent of deaths in 2004 related to food were brought about by food emergencies, while the remaining 92 percent were caused by general poverty and malnutrition.

The last point, the Kenyan agricultural sector lacks crucial investments from the government. As aforementioned, the sector is too vulnerable to adapt to the climate change consequences and each time the draught or a flood cause an extensive damage to country’s infrastructure and household food insecurity. Nevertheless, the government, due to the SAPs imposed by neoliberal institutions cannot allocate the funds needed to strengthen the sector. As well, within the last decade the Kenyan government has developed environmental and climate change policies and has an appropriate knowledge about the key environmental issues. Still, the government lacks the capabilities to monitor and enforce the legislation, which for the most part comes from the extent of financial resources.

 Thus, it is evident from numerous sources that climate change has an immense impact on the food security situation in Kenya. Yet, the country is restricted to improve the internal situation by exploitative international order and previously adopted commitments.

# Conclusions

The purpose of the thesis was to find out the reasons why food insecurity is still present in Kenya despite the foreign development programs, foreign aid, international commitments and Kenyan food security policies, and to distinguish which factor is the most prominent. Four factors were chosen for the analysis: international regimes and SAPs imposed by the IFIs, foreign food aid programs, Kenyan domestic food security policies and climate change. These all four factors on larger or smaller scale have a negative impact on food security in Kenya.

 Neoliberal way of development was seen as a tool to stimulate Kenya’s development and ensure food security through free trade agreements. Neoliberal economic policies as the most recent and widespread stage of global capitalism do not facilitate development and increase in food security in Kenya, and reform strategies aiming to increase country’s integration into the global system will be counterproductive (Bond, 2005). The SAPs imposed by the IFIs restrict, not stimulate the improvements of the food security situation. Inexpensive imports due to the trade liberalization brought about the disincentives for the local farmers to expand the scales of their production, since they could not efficiently compete in the market. Since the local production decreases, the dependency on the imported food increases and population relies upon the scales of production abroad.

 Foreign food aid as well decreases the extent of domestic agricultural production, was found during the analysis. Even though foreign food aid is meant to provide the food supplies only if any food emergencies appear, to compensate for the domestic production shortfalls, it became constant and is considered by the majority of the Kenyan population as ever-lasting. Thus, people do not see the reasons why they should work to grow their own food, especially if they live in unfertile lands. Referring to the dependency theory, the decreasing agricultural production was explained. Through the trade liberalization policies developed countries deepened the inequality between them and developing countries, exploiting them and making them dependent on the imports. Additionally, SFPs set up by WFP are effective means to somewhat increase food security in Kenya. Since the introduction of the programs there is a higher number of students enrolled at school. This is maybe because they receive very little meals at home or do not receive them at all.

 Food security policies implemented by the Kenyan government throughout the analysis were found to be ineffective. Even though policies targeting food insecurity were developed and implemented since 1980s, the results are not visible. This is again caused by the neoliberal economic policies and SAPs imposed by the IFIs on Kenya. Because of the fact that neoliberal politics required to diminish state power to minimum and SAPs required to cut down state spending on social sector, the ones that would make a difference in increasing the situation of food security in Kenya, the attempts to improve the situations were not effective.

Lastly, climate change impacts were analyzed on the food security in Kenya. It was found in the research that the effects are devastating and they are becoming more frequent. What is more, here the dependency theory prevails again, since the climate change was caused by the unsustainable development of the First World countries. Their pollutant-intensive way of production caused the climatic changes which are currently hitting the regions of Southern Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa the harshest. Subsequently, as the severe draught or a flood hits Kenya, the crop yields fail and population needs to rely upon the imported food. From the conducted analysis it was found that chronic and long-term food insecurity are currently of major significance compared to the destructive events such as draughts and floods, as 8 percent of deaths in 2004 related to food were brought about by food emergencies, while the remaining 92 percent were caused by general poverty and malnutrition.

To give a profound answer to the problem formulation, it is clear that the main influencer is the adopted neoliberal way of development and everything what came afterwards (the ineffectiveness of domestic food security policies, the dependence on foreign food aid and imports of agricultural products) was the result of failed neoliberal economic policies adopted in the 1980s. Climate change, was not a result of neoliberal policies, it is worth noticing. Still, it was caused by the development of the advanced economies. The domestic influence is not strong enough yet to make a visible impact. What is worth mentioning, Kenya gained its independence in the 1960s and there has been no stable government since the debt was taken from the WB and SAPs were imposed. The chosen theories of neoliberalism and dependency theory provided explanation in depth to the problem formulation, thus, it can be concluded that the external factors, liberal trading regime, play the major role in composing food security in Kenya.

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# Appendix 1

Food Emergencies, 2005

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dominant variable | Africa | Asia | Latin America | Europe | Total |
| Human | 10 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 15 |
| Natural | 8 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 16 |
| Combined | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| total | 25 | 11 | 2 | 1 | 39 |

Source: FAO, 2006

# Appendix 2



Source: The Economist, 2013

# Appendix 3

Current food security outcomes, October 2014



Source: FEWS NET, 2014

# Appendix 4

Food for Peace Contributions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | U.S. Dollars | Metric Tons |
| Fiscal Year 2014 | $ 116.4 million | 74,780 MT |
| Fiscal Year 2013 | $ 106.7 million | 86,480 MT |
| Fiscal Year 2012 | $ 113.7 million | 91,272 MT |
| Fiscal Year 2011 | $ 134.8 million | 118,617 MT |
| Fiscal Year 2010 | $112.0 million | 109,840 MT |

Source: US AID, Food Assistance Fact Sheet, 2014

# Appendix 5

Target Schools’ Population from 2003-2009

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Average population | % Change |
| 2003 | 274 | - |
| 2004 | 418 | + 52.5 |
| 2005 | 412 | - 1.4 |
| 2006 | 402 | - 2.5 |
| 2007 | 406 | + 0.9 |
| 2008 | 330 | - 18.7 |
| 2009 | 337 | + 2.1 |

Source: Khatete et al., 2013

# Appendix 6

School Attendance after Introduction of SFPs



Source: Khatete et al., 2013

# Appendix 7

Role of SFP in stabilizing daily attendance



Source: Khatete et al., 2013