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Food Insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Is There a Feminist Explanation?

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Acronyms	Explanations
AGW	Anthropogenic Global Warming
DRC	The Democratic Republic of Congo
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
NAP-GSP	UN Environment National Adaptation Plan Global Support Programme
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
UN	United Nations
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization

Abstract

The Democratic Republic of Congo is currently battling the second largest hunger crises in the world. Although agriculture is the primary source of livelihoods for the Congolese, only 10 percent of arable land is cultivated for food purposes and more than half of the population is considered to be food insecure. This study has identified three factors that affect the Democratic Republic of Congo's food security, namely; climate change, internal conflict and land rights. In order to investigate the links of these factors to food insecurity, this study theory tests the explanatory power of two theories; Feminist Political Economy and Feminist Food Justice.

Both Feminist Political Economy and Feminist Food Justice have their own focus and agenda, and concentrates their analysis on different factors relating to food insecurity. Feminist Political Economy highlights inequalities and power structures and how they affect the political, economic and social aspects of society. Feminist Food Justice contributes by placing gender at the core of solving hunger and nutritional issues. It is concerned with the ability to secure food, and the components, participants and frameworks that need to be put in place in order to reach food security.

This study will observe how the chosen theories can be used as a tool to explain the case of food insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Theory testing will allow for a detailed inquiry into the theories and identify their analytical strengths, weaknesses and where the theories do not have the explanatory ability. By adding a gendered layer to the ongoing scholarly discussion of food insecurity, the connection of climate change, internal conflict and land rights will be illustrated.

Key words:

theory testing, food insecurity, climate change, internal conflict, land rights, gender, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Feminist Political Economy, Feminist Food Justice

Introduction

Seen from a historic perspective, food insecurity has fallen dramatically worldwide. In the early 1990s, 1.2 billion people were malnourished globally, with that number declining to 991 million in the 2000s (FAO et al., 2017). In 2015, the United Nations (UN) committed to end hunger by 2030 through the Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 2: Zero Hunger, n.d). It seems that the goal to end hunger by 2030 may be overly enthusiastic (FAO et al., 2020: viii) as approximately 800 million people were malnourished as of 2020 (Global Nutrition Report, 2020: 19). As if this goal was not ambitious enough, the current global COVID-19 pandemic is posing new challenges.

In October 2020, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the World Food Program (WFP),

“For its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict” (Nobel Media, n.d).

The action of selecting the WFP as the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize shows the aim of fronting food issues as one of the biggest problems the world is facing today. The current COVID-19 pandemic affects social, political and economic dynamics globally which as a result is directly linked to challenges of food insecurity. Albeit rewarding such a prestigious prize to the WFP has caused debates, it illuminates the issue of food security globally (Specia & Stevis-Grindneff, 2020), (Lavanga, 2020) (Reuters, 2020).

For over two decades, there has been widespread famine and issues of malnutrition in the Democratic Republic of Congo. A country that holds 52 percent of Africa’s water reserves (UNEP, 2011: 9) and is the second largest country in Africa (World Vision, 2019).

Agriculture in particular is the primary source of livelihoods for most Congolese, accounting for “40 percent of the national gross domestic product and employing approximately 70 percent of the country’s population” (USAID, 2018: 3). The Democratic Republic of Congo has one of the highest population growth rates. In the 1960’s the country was inhabited by 16 million people, and today the population has grown to over 90 million people (Worldometers, 2020). It is estimated that by 2050 the population will reach approximately 200 million

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2018: 5). The WFP estimates that the Democratic Republic of Congo has approximately 80 million hectares of arable land, which could potentially feed 2 billion people, however, currently only 10 percent of arable land is cultivated for food purposes (WFP, 2019). The World Bank concludes that among 64 percent of the population of the Democratic Republic of Congo is considered to be “extremely poor and lives on less than \$1.90 a day” (World Vision, 2019). A report by the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) together with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), WFP and World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that for more than 3 billion people in the world a healthy diet is unaffordable, as the cost of a healthy diet exceeds the “international poverty line (established at USD \$1.90 purchasing power parity (PPP)) per person daily” (FAO et al., 2020: xvii).

The Democratic Republic of Congo is very rich in natural resources and has endured great political instability and corruption over the past decades (Transparency International, 2014: 2-5). In addition to this volatility, the country is currently battling the second largest hunger crises in the world after Yemen. Due to the ongoing concerns with climate change, internal conflict, land rights, gender inequality and the displacement of people, these elements may lead to an unstable agricultural sector and the consequences may result in food insecurity (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2018: 5).

This research is focused on testing feminist theories as tools to explain the problem of food insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In particular, the interest of this research is how feminist theories can be applied to explain and research the likely factors of climate change, internal conflict and land rights and furthermore increase understanding on how these factors may contribute to food insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In addition to testing the usability of feminist theories, this research will highlight possible policy recommendations within the discussion of food insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

In regards to climate change, the Democratic Republic Congo may be particularly sensitive to climate change (NAP-GSP, 2018: 2) as the national economy is abundantly agrarian and agriculture and the extraction of natural resources are the backbone of local and national economies (Bele et al., 2014: 334). Rising temperatures and changes in precipitation are two

of the main indicators of climate change, which may impact water resources and food security (World Meteorological Organization, 2019).

Another critical issue that may impact food security in the Democratic Republic of Congo is internal conflict. There are over 100 armed groups that control just the eastern region of the country alone (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020: n. p). Regardless of the 16,000 UN peacekeepers, rebel groups continue to terrorize and govern regions across the country. Internal conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo is estimated to have internally displaced 4.5 million Congolese (UNHCR, 2020: n. p) and forced more than 800,000 Congolese over the borders to neighboring countries (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020: n. p).

Access to land has a great significance on the ability to be self-sustainable. Land rights may provide the additional element of security, that may allow individuals to have a stable and safe place of residence and potentially a stable source of income and nutritional base. Having access to land rights and the possibility of owning land may allow an individual to consider other socio-economic elements of the household which may improve their quality of life. According to Jean-Philippe Platteau “land ownership problems have become a source of the increasing inequality and food insecurity among the vulnerable sections of the rural population” (Platteau, 1992: 1).

Food insecurity is a worldwide problem. This research aims to contribute to the ongoing scholarly discussion of factors that may impact food security from a feminist perspective. The goal of this research is to theory test two different feminist approaches; Feminist Political Economy and Feminist Food Justice and investigate their explanatory power on the factors of climate change, internal conflict and land rights. Additionally, this research will observe the theories analytical strengths, weaknesses and identify where the theories do not have the explanatory ability.

The research question will now be presented:

How and to what extent can feminist theories be used as a tool to explain food insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo?

and the following sub-research question:

How can the analysis of feminist theories highlight possible policy recommendations within the discussion of food insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo?

Methodology

Experiences

In the initial phase of this research, the field of interest was a palm oil company named Feronia Inc, with three plantations in the locations of Lokutu, Yaligimba, and Boteka (Feronia Inc, n.d). We were originally interested in how a Canadian company predominantly owned by foreign investment banks could run plantations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and pay their workers below a dollar a day (Human Rights Watch, 2019). Originally, the interest was to look into the social, political and economic aspects and consequences of these palm oil plantations. After identifying the likely ramifications, the palm oil industry may have on society, it became clear that food insecurity was a major issue in the DRC. This led to an interest in which factors may have a part in food insecurity. After lengthy discussions and investigation, the field of interest was narrowed down to three major factors that may impact food security.

Limitations

As the methodology of this research is theory testing using feminist approaches, the decision of testing a theory initially limits the scope of the thesis as theory testing in itself has a limitation. This is due to the nature of theories, which are systems of ideas that intend to explain something from a particular perspective. At the same time, it excludes other perspectives, explanations, approaches and ideas. This research will test where its chosen feminist theories succeed, fall short and cannot explain the links between the factors of climate change, internal conflict and land rights. Additionally, by applying feminist theories this thesis excludes other explanations, approaches and perspectives that could shine light on the other factors that may also impact food security in the DRC.

There are limitations as to the use of secondary data, including data obtained from online sources, academic journals, governmental and non-governmental organizations. The considerations are that authors have agendas of their own, and it is impossible for this thesis to verify information produced by various academics, organizations and journalists. One of the many concerns using articles and information produced through western media is that it may be Eurocentric, produced for a specific purpose and perhaps, does not include a nuanced picture of the DRC. However, when using secondary data collected from sources in the DRC or in the region, there is also a concern that the media can be affected by the ongoing internal

conflicts and that the different sources have their own agenda in how to depict the situation. Furthermore, using material that is produced by an international non-governmental organization or a non-governmental organization also has its considerations. This material is always produced for a purpose, and this thesis may not fully know what that purpose is. Thus, it is important to recognize that the material used in this thesis has been produced for other purposes.

Empirical Material

Gathering empirical data guided this thesis to the three fields this research will investigate through the lenses of feminist theories. Once having gathered the empirical data, the authors first searched in various academic search engines for ‘food security’ and ‘food insecurity’ in the DRC. Then, the factors that had already been of interest which were climate change, internal conflict and land rights in the DRC were more closely examined. By doing so, the research scope was limited to these three fields of: food insecurity in the context of climate change, food insecurity in the context of internal conflict and food insecurity in the context of land rights. This research focuses specifically on these three aforementioned factors and food insecurity and is not concerned with other possible factors and challenges that may impact food security in the DRC. Limiting the focus allowed for producing more specific research on food insecurity in the DRC. However, it also excluded other fields and factors that may or may not have an impact on food security. Furthermore, other theoretical approaches may have been relevant and contributed to this research.

The likely factors that may cause food insecurity in the DRC have been researched and chosen and this decision has therefore influenced this thesis’ methodological approach to the research. For the reason that COVID-19 was (and still is) an ongoing global pandemic during the research of this thesis, the research scope was naturally redirected due to travel restrictions. Because of the global pandemic, the focus of this research changed to theory-testing, which influenced the research design of this thesis. We did conduct one online interview, however the data pertained specifically to the DRC’s palm oil industry. This information was considered valuable, but due to the fact that the palm oil industry was no longer a factor in this thesis, this interview has not been included in the data.

The secondary data that formed this thesis was collected from diversified academic journals such as: *Women and Agriculture*, *Feminist Studies* and *Sociological Inquiry*. Academic articles and reports were collected from sources such as: The African Development Bank, The International Food Policy Research Institute, The Food and Agriculture Organization, The World Bank, and The Global Hunger Index. Furthermore, related articles were included from online news sources such as: Climate Watch, The Council on Foreign Relations, and The New Humanitarian. We acknowledge that the secondary data gathered was originally written by other people and used for different intents and purposes. Therefore, we are aware that the data's intentions are dissimilar to that of the original author and the data this research has gathered has previously been used for other contexts.

In this next section of the methodology the research approach will be discussed. Specifically, our understanding of knowledge and where that knowledge originates from.

Research Approach

We are concerned with the nature of knowledge and reality. This knowledge has subsequently impacted the construction of the research question and sub-research question of this thesis and has influenced the methods in data collection and the relationship to the data (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012: 127). We do not believe it is possible to have an objective opinion to our data as there will naturally always be a human bias. For this reason, we are concerned with how knowledge can be produced subjectively. We observe that personal values should not impact academic practices; however, it is impossible to not be objective during the research process.

This thesis' research focus falls under the domain of social science for the reason that it examines the issue of food insecurity in the DRC through the lens of two feminist theories. This research employs a subjectivist view as it indicates that a social phenomenon, such as food insecurity, may be created from the perceptions and doings of phenomena such as climate change, internal conflict and land rights. Subjectivism highlights that in order to understand the true reality of what is happening, one must research the social construction of a situation, specifically, what is really happening (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012: 150). Our standpoint is that gender is socially constructed and it is interwoven in ideology and the institutional structures of today's society. This can be termed as 'constructivism' which are

“accounts of the interaction of gender, race and class [and, more recently, sexuality, nation and age] which permit researchers to address complex variations in institutional arrangements and social norms” (Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 9).

There have been different stages to the research approach of this thesis. First, we, the authors, worked inductively where we had an idea of a research issue. We reviewed a great deal of existing secondary data and then narrowed the scope down to one key issue namely; food insecurity. We began the selection process of theories to test against our case idea and then we started to develop the literature review, where we wrote a theoretical narrative between the main scholars on the subjects of climate change, internal conflict and land rights. In doing so, we realized that many scholarly perspectives have a non-gendered approach to food insecurity. Thus, it became apparent that a component of the research was missing, and it was the inclusion of gender. In order to incorporate a gender perspective into this research, we decided to theory test feminist theories. We believed that it would be a fruitful addition to this research in the investigation of food insecurity and its likely influencing factors.

In the second stage of our research approach, we moved into the deductive phase where we reviewed all of our collected data to construct the case of this thesis. This subsequently allowed us to create links within the data collection, such as the likely relationship climate change, internal conflict and land rights may have to food insecurity in the DRC. This subsequently led to the construction of the thesis’ research question. This process helped us identify patterns in our data and reinforced our choice in this thesis’ theoretical framework for theory testing (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012: 211). Then, we moved into the abductive stage, where we began the process of creating a theoretical framework for this thesis employing Feminist Political Economy and Feminist Food Justice.

In order to test the two feminist theories, we began by going through the components of the two theories in our theoretical framework. The components for Feminist Political Economy were; the ‘social component’, the ‘political component’ and the ‘economic component’. The components of Feminist Food Justice were; ‘supporting food production at multiple scales’, ‘revaluing food work that feeds families’, and ‘providing good food for all’. We viewed the feminist theories as ‘machines’ and therefore we took the case’s data of food insecurity and climate change, food insecurity and internal conflict and food insecurity and land rights and

put the information through the ‘theory machines’ of Feminist Political Economy and Feminist Food Justice.

In the following section, this thesis strives to create a theoretical narrative between the main scholars on the subject of food insecurity and its likely relationship to climate change, internal conflict, land rights and gender. In doing so, this thesis aims to highlight the different literary discussions in order to synthesize the already existing literature into a coherent, relevant review. The information will be critically discussed, while the literature review will attempt to identify the gaps in existing knowledge and discussions. This thesis will do this by pointing out the limitations of different theoretical traditions, essays by informed experts, related research, and reviewing areas of controversy.

Literature Review

Climate Change

Climate change is said to directly affect temperatures, precipitation and lengths of the growing seasons, which are all critical elements of crop development. Fisheries are additionally highly sensitive and are at risk from overfishing, and large-scale fish farming and coastal pollution (IPCC, 1998: 6). Communities in the DRC will experience crop losses and escalating livestock mortality, infrastructure damage (IPCC, 1998: 6), and unfavorable repercussions on fisheries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2018: 3). In concurrence with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands' report, the UNDP-UN Environment National Adaptation Plan Global Support Programme (NAP-GSP) states climate change will generate unpredictable rainfall and droughts in the future and the agriculture sector will continue to suffer and further threaten food security (NAP-GSP, 2018: 1).

Anthropogenic Global Warming (AGW) characterizes human emissions as the cause of greenhouse gases (Bast, 2010: 7). In accordance with the AGW theory, fossil fuels and deforestation could significantly increase the CO₂ in the atmosphere over the next century. According to Richard Parncutt (2019), greenhouse gas emissions may be impacting water supplies and reduces access to food thus worsening global hunger issues (Parncutt, 2019: 1). According to Joseph L. Bast, AGW theory maintains that man-made CO₂ emissions are to blame for a long list of global catastrophes, such as: food insecurity, famines, the spread of diseases, changes in weather, floods, droughts and crop failures (Bast 2010: 7). In contradiction to Bast's (2010) argument, Agu and Ogbeide-Osaretin (2016) indicate that the Theory of Bio-thermostat suggests that carbon emissions improve the productivity of plants as carbon is in fact good for the earth (Agu & Ogbeide-Osaretin 2016: 4). Simply put, "the more there is [of carbon], the better plants will grow" (Agu & Ogbeide-Osaretin 2016: 4). If this is a solid argument, then this would mean that the increasing amounts of CO₂ that, according to Bast (2010) will have irreparable effects for the planet, would not be as harmful as predicted (Agu & Ogbeide-Osaretin 2016: 4). Roger Pielke, a climatologist suggests that The Theory of Human Forcings Besides Greenhouse Gases explains that mankind's impact on the global climate is not solely because of the greenhouse gas emissions, but the building of cities, irrigating deserts, and clear-cutting forests (Pielke, 2009: 413).

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports that climate change affects the Food and Agricultural Organization's (FAO's) four pillars of food security: (1) availability (2) access (3) utilization and (4) stability (FAO, 2020). Namely, the food availability may be reduced by the negative effects on crops, livestock and fish. Food utilization may be negatively affected by increasing diseases and pests. Food access and stability may be impacted by disruptions in income and food purchasing power, markets, prices, infrastructure and transport services. The four pillars of food security estimate that increased CO2 emissions have the ability to "decrease protein content in many crops, reducing nutritional values. Flooding will affect the stability of food supply through direct disruption of transport and markets" (IPCC, 2019: 519).

Internal Conflict

"Today's conflicts are deeply rooted and increasingly intensive, involving determined armed groups with access to sophisticated armaments and techniques" (United Nations, 2020). According to a report on conflict and food security by the International Food and Policy Institute, activities of conflict have the ability to displace people thus impacting food supplies. Furthermore, conflict can disrupt agricultural activities as farmers may be fearful to plant crops as an outbreak of violence may force them to flee their lands (IFPRI, 2019: 56). Correspondingly, Couldrey and Herson (2010) discuss that conflict causes displacement of farmers, the burning of fields and food stocks, the destruction of infrastructure and causes widespread malnutrition (Couldrey & Herson 2010: 11). Martin-Shields and Stojetz (2019) alike, draw a connection from agricultural production to conflict and food security. They attribute conflict to the weakening of land and agricultural assets as conflict affects farmers' food production and resilience capacity (Martin-Shields & Stojetz, 2019: 150). In the FAO's 2017 report 'Leveraging Food Systems for Inclusive Rural Transformation' food security is categorized into four pillars: food availability, access, stability and utilization (FAO, 2017: xii).

According to Martin-Shields and Stojetz (2019) conflict and food trends can accurately be analyzed through the FAO's four pillars of food security. Here, they elaborate that conflict is evidence of state weakness and increases government ineffectiveness in the context of food security (Martin-Shields & Stojetz, 2019: 153). Brück and d'Errico (2019) back up this notion by suggesting that "state fragility and weak institutions" are responsible for situations of food

insecurity, natural disasters and forced displacement of people. They insist further that food insecurity and conflict traps are a consequence of humanitarian emergencies (Brück & d’Errico, 2019: 146). Brück and d’Errico (2019) point out that strong institutions are needed to deal with conflict and prevent food insecurity. They contribute to the discussion of food security and conflict by highlighting three main aspects: the need for adequate data on policy agendas, accounts of conflict and food security and “the decisive role played by specific practices and policies in smoothing the negative effects of conflicts for food security” (Brück & d’Errico, 2019: 145).

Fatema and Kibriya (2018) highlight, similarly to Brück and d’Errico (2019) that institutions are the key issue and that it can be a powerful tool and should be used to,

“improve physical security and food security. Informal local institutions as well as market based and formal national institutions alike shape food and conflict outcomes across population groups” (Fatema & Kibriya, 2018: 2).

Fatema and Kibriya argue that food secure households are less likely to be involved in a conflict of conflicts. Based on their research, food secure households have fewer incentives and higher consequences involving themselves in situations of conflict. Additionally, families in food secure households have a higher social status which results in more cohesive behaviour (Fatema & Kibriya, 2018:3). Ellen Messer and Marc. J. Cohen (2007) claim the easiest way to measure the relationship of conflict and food security is to identify, classify and count conflict countries and then measure their openness to trade with other countries and how it relates to conflict (Messer & Cohen 2007: 3). Their research suggests that conflict and post-conflict countries almost always tend to be challenged with issues of food insecurity (Messer & Cohen 2007: 9).

Land Rights

Internal conflicts and land rights have a causal relation, as the World Bank report on ‘Land Policies for Growth and Poverty Reduction stated’,

“The deprivation of land rights as a feature of more generalized inequality in access to economic opportunities and low economic growth have caused seemingly minor social

or political conflicts to escalate into large-scale conflicts with devastating economic and social consequences” (Deininger, 2003: 157).

The term land right is broad and includes both economic and legal components, (Meinzen-Dick et al, 2019: 73) and there is no single land issue, as there are several issues connected to the terms of land tenure (Lund et. al, 2006: 3). Land rights are “social conventions that regulate the distribution of the benefits that accrue from specific uses of a certain piece of land” (Deininger, 2003: xxii). Jean-Philippe Platteau claims that “land ownership problems have become a source of the increasing inequality and food insecurity among the vulnerable sections of the rural population” (Platteau, 1992: 1). The World Bank has been involved in reforming land holdings in Africa, and published a document on its policy position on land reform (Deininger, 2003). This report has been criticized by several scholars who have highlighted that the World Bank is continuing to reproduce power structures that may be a disadvantage to women and marginalized groups (Fortin, 2005; Manji, 2003). In addition to this critique, there has been a growing body of research that focuses on the importance of women’s rights to land (Agarwal, 1994; Haddad et al., 1997; Quisumbing & Maluccio, 2003). Bina Agarwal argues that the most important factor affecting a woman’s economic situation is rights to property (Agarwal, 1994). UNHCR and the World Bank have also highlighted the institutional discrimination of a woman’s rights to land. For example, in cases where unclear inheritance regulations affect women negatively and where women risk ejection from their homes or do not have the legal right to inherit property (Deininger, 2003: xxvi, OHCHR, 2017).

Scholars have also linked the access to land rights to food security, through the uncertainty created by unpredictable access to land that can lead to decreases in investments of the land which according to Vlassenroot leads to “a shift in the qualitative use of land and put food security mechanisms under stress” (Vlassenroot, 2005: 1). Watkins and von Braun (2003) Kherallah, Delgado, Gabre-Madhin, Minot, and Johnson (2002) and von Braun and Kennedy (1994) argue similarly that in cases where small farmers, and especially women have access to land through policies, practices and institutions it leads to poverty reduction and food security (in Messer & Cohen 2006: 19).

The critique to this presented literature is that gender and women are not represented within the three areas discussed. Gender has been mentioned, however not sufficiently represented.

The scholarly discussions highlighted in this literature review on climate change, internal conflict and land rights are linked to food insecurity, however the discussions' do not highlight gender to the extent that this thesis seeks. In these discussions' climate change, internal conflict and land rights are at the forefront, and this research is interested in how these factors may impact food security, women and marginalized groups. Therefore, a more gendered approach will now be taken into consideration. Through this literature review, this research aims to contribute to the discussions on a whole, and by adding a gendered layer to the ongoing discourse of how climate change, internal conflict and land rights may influence food insecurity.

This leads us to the question of how women and marginalized groups can be represented in the issue of food insecurity? One possible way is through the explanatory power of feminist theories. Feminist theories differ from other theoretical frameworks as it is inclusive of women and marginalized groups. The approach identifies who is missing, and in the case of this thesis' investigation and as previously highlighted by the literature review, it is the women and marginalized groups who are missing.

Gender

A way of looking at the implications of gender in politics, institutions and generally in the world is to use a gender analysis to identify and discover implications of having a non-gendered scope (Sjoberg et. al, 2011: 6). Peterson (1992) argues that it is not just about the woman or adding women to the traditional male-stream constructions, it revolves around changing the ways of being and knowing (Peterson, 1992: 205). A gendered way of looking at the world allows for an emphasis on women's everyday experiences and the potential consequences of women's unequal social positions (Steans, 1998: 5). Using a gendered lens is a way to filter knowledge, as it allows for a focus on gender as a different kind of power structure, or by illuminating the ways in which gender is central to understanding societal structural processes (Steans, 1998: 5).

Sjoberg, Cooke and Neal (2011) claim that even though women have entered economic arenas over the past decades and there continues to be a focus on gender equality, women still remain underrepresented in economic and political power structures (Sjoberg et al., 2011: 3). "Gender describes the socially constructed behavioral expectations, stereotypes and rules that construct femininity and masculinity" (Sjoberg et al., 2011: 3). Gender equality is more than

having 'women' being added to institutions, gender equality is about changing the institutions that set the standards of what it means to be 'a man' or 'a woman' (Sjoberg et al., 2011: 4). This is illuminated by the way gender is added to professions, such as *female* political leaders, *female* soldiers and *female* postmen. While occupations such as nurses, teachers and housekeepers are assumed to belong to women, and are thus being specified if a male inhabits it, *male* nurse, *male* housekeeper etc. (Sjoberg et al., 2011: 3-4).

This research perceives gender as an important lens to look at food insecurity in the DRC, due to the reason that women are often the ones responsible for providing food for the family (FAO et. al., 2020: 3). By employing a gendered approach, the woman is in the center, and the aim of this thesis is to look at how the factors of climate change, internal conflict and land rights may impact food security through a feminist lens.

Within the feminist discourse the ways gender is constructions has been extensively researched and how it creates unequal relations between the genders, particularly the way in which unequal gender constructions have manifested a belief that the man possesses preferable traits over the traits of women (Ritzer, 2006: 304). Janet Chafetz (2006) argues that there are two ways in which gender inequality is being sustained; coercive and voluntary. The coercive is linked to the way in which men may have an advantaged position of having resources that makes it possible to organize on macro level, which may lead to the ability to control women on a micro level. For example, men controlling elite positions and defining labor structures, and generating systemic structures that favor men. These systematic structures that favor men may result as a barrier for women in obtaining work. The voluntary follows from the coercive "because once a system favoring males exists, it constrains the options that women have" (Janet Chafetz in Ritzer, 2006: 91). According to Chafez, "when ideologies, norms, and stereotypes portray men and women differentially, socialization will tend to reinforce these cultural definitions, with the result that women will 'voluntarily' act in ways that perpetuate these definitions" (Janet Chafetz in Ritzer, 2006: 91).

Throughout this literature review, scholarly discussions of climate change, internal conflict, and land rights have been reviewed. As previously mentioned in this section, this research is interested in the feminist scope of how these factors may or may not contribute to food insecurity in the DRC. Therefore, a gendered scope was included in this literature review. By adding a feminist approach, this research attempts to contribute to and highlight what feminist

theories can add to the field of research in a more comprehensive way. They can be achieved by adding a gendered layer to the discussions of food insecurity and climate change, food insecurity and internal conflict and food insecurity and land rights.

The limitations of the literature reviewed in this section is that none of the scholarly discussions on climate change, internal conflict and land rights include women and marginalized groups. This research on food insecurity, climate change, internal conflict and land rights can contribute to the already existing scholarly discussion by highlighting that these factors may have a role in causing or affecting food insecurity. However, this literature review has indicated that the aforementioned factors require to be supplemented by an additional theory or approach in order to shine light on their role in food insecurity in the DRC.

Therefore, presenting the next section of this thesis; the theoretical framework, in order to introduce the two feminist theories that will be tested in the analysis; Feminist Political Economy and Feminist Food Justice.

Theoretical Framework

Originally, the interest of this research was how issues of food insecurity could be explained from the perspectives of economic, political and social structures. This research discovered that the Theory of International Political Economy was a possible option as the theory might have the explanatory capability to answer the research and sub-research questions. However, after learning more about the theory and the ongoing discussion of International Political Economy, this research was influenced by criticisms the theory has received for being gender biased. We, the authors acknowledge the importance of incorporating a theory that could be gender inclusive. Thus this research aims at investigating food insecurity through a feminist lens in order to showcase women and marginalized groups and how food insecurity affects them all.

Feminist Approaches to Food Insecurity

This chapter of the thesis will provide a detailed narrative of the two feminist theoretical approaches that will be tested later in this thesis' analysis section. The following theoretical framework was selected with great consideration in order to test how and to what extent feminist theories can be used as a tool to explain food insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The first section of this theoretical framework chapter will begin by a short introduction to Food Sovereignty as it is considered to have inspired the development of the theory of Feminist Food Justice. Then this chapter will provide a detailed explanation of Feminist Food Justice. Thereafter, an introduction of the theory of Political Economy will be presented and lastly followed by the theory of Feminist Political Economy.

There is widespread food insecurity in the DRC and according to the FAO's report on the 'State of Food Security in the World' 750 million people, almost one in ten in 2019, were at risk of severe levels of food insecurity (FAO, 2020). The WFP estimates that 21.8 of 90 million people are at risk of food insecurity in the DRC (WFP, 2019).

Peterson and Runyan (2010) refer to gender as "socially learned behavior and expectations that distinguish between masculinity and femininity" (Peterson & Runyan, 2010: 5). The world is gendered and some traits are preferred over others. In the sector of agriculture, for

example, masculine traits (to be strong, to be ambitious and rational) may be preferred over other traits such as being emotional and caring, which may be classified as ‘weak’ traits. Since the world differentiates between gender, this has created a gender hierarchy, which is defined as “a system of power where maleness is privileged over femaleness” (Jackson, 2019: 274). For example, only 2 percent of the world's private land is owned by women, and at the same time in the global south women are the producers of 60-80 percent of the food consumed in households. Additionally, women are often the primary providers of water and fuel for the household (Runyan & Peterson, 2015: 223).

In order to highlight gender inequalities gendered perspectives are necessary. A gendered perspective can potentially help show the different positions of women and explain how the structures of international political and economic systems keep reproducing a disadvantaged position for women (Jackson, 2019: 276).

Feminist theory does not encompass one uniform way of thinking as most feminist theorists are from different social backgrounds, classes, and ethnicities which allows for different perspectives. In the western world, the main core of feminism is the idea that traditional philosophies have excluded not only women, but people from different social classes, backgrounds, ethnicities and other groups (Tong, 2001: 5485). According to Susan Gal (2009), “Feminism is always interpreted in situated contexts through a multilayered process that is called “translation” (Gal in Phillips & Cole: 2009: 93). Gal furthermore points to how “translation takes place in specific sets of social relations that mediate the movement of ideas and define the conditions of possible political action” (Gal in Phillips & Cole, 2009: 185). Phillips and Cole (2009) follow the same line of thought, and claim that feminism “is re-contextualized as it engages with the conditions and implications of particular issues in particular settings” (Phillips & Cole, 2009: 185).

A dilemma where the perspective of feminism can be relevant is in regards to how “women’s reproductive work with food including, breast-feeding, cooking, and meal preparation” (Sachs & Patel Campillo, 2014: 406) can be explored without explaining it in terms of the traditional divisions of labor. Despite efforts made in order to facilitate women’s participation in the labor market mainly in the west, women continue to work longer hours than men. Especially when unpaid work activities such as, caring for children, preparing meals and doing housework are accounted for.

In the period 2010-2015 women spent double the time as men on unpaid domestic work in all regions of the world (UN Data, 2015). For example, in the developing world and countries such as the DRC, much of the labor women do in their homes is linked to feeding the family, which is known as ‘care work’ and unpaid work (Sachs & Patel Campillo, 2014: 398). Moreover, according to the FAO’s report on The State of Food and Agriculture, women lack the resources, opportunities and knowhow needed to make the best use of their time. In addition, women face extreme barriers when trying to gain access to “productive resources, markets and services” (FAO, 2011: 3). This is due to a gender gap in the agriculture sector which prohibits and impacts women’s productivity which reduces their input (FAO, 2011: 3). Accordingly, applying a feminist perspective to such an issue of gender inequality in a sector such as agriculture could reduce the gender gap and could potentially be a positive move for communities, by increasing productivity and reducing food insecurity (Isaković, 2018: 2).

Food Sovereignty

La Via Campesina, an international peasant movement, developed the framework of Food Sovereignty in 1996 in order to inspire people to reconsider how agriculture and the distribution and trade of food can be organized to make best use of land and aquatic resources (La Via Campesina, 2018: 2). Peasant farmers created the concept of Food Sovereignty as they are the most targeted centralized power in food and agricultural systems. Food Sovereignty shines light on standardized change, the human opportunity for decision making and democratic control over vital components in peasant farmer’s communities. Specifically, how people feed themselves with nourishing food, how farmers utilize their land, water and other resources to advance the health of current and future generations (La Via Campesina, 2018: 3). Rajeev C. Patel’s article ‘Food Sovereignty: Power, Gender and the Right to Food’, echoes La Via Campesina’s framework by saying “communities have the right to define their own food and agriculture policy” (Patel, 2012: 2). Patel claims that people should have the right to create food systems themselves, in their own communities that are not controlled by powerful corporations or governments (Patel, 2007: 236).

In order to achieve a more nuanced, inclusive gender balanced framework, Carolyn Sachs and Anouk Patel-Campillo states that the framework of Food Sovereignty inspired their framework of Feminist Food Justice (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 397). Sachs and Patel-

Campillo highlight that while La Via Campesino's Food Sovereignty approach attempts to take control over community agriculture systems for the benefit of the people, the approach also recognizes the importance of the woman's role in agriculture, family and society. There are gender concerns that have been raised by Sachs and Patel-Campillo concerning women in agriculture, women in positions of food provision and women's relationship to providing food and the household. Sachs and Patel-Campillo emphasize that within these gender concerns, everyone should have equal access to "culturally appropriate, healthy food" for both women, men, girls and boys" (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 404). There are still gender inequalities that amongst others do not acknowledge women equal to men, which is one of the reasons why the new framework of Feminist Food Justice was developed to address gender concerns and equal access to food (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 404).

Food Justice

Food Justice means equal access to food for all. However, the two words alone, 'food' and 'justice' do not have the power to expedite immediate change. Nor can 'food' and 'justice' alone establish new policies, economic change or revamp the global food system (Gottlieb & Joshi 2010: 5). So, what is Food Justice? The answer to this question, although it may vary, is related to the desire to encourage social and political action and create a "new language of social change in the food arena" (Gottlieb & Joshi 2010:5).

Gottlieb and Joshi (2010) define the concept of Food Justice by identifying three main elements,

“(1) seeking to challenge and restructure the dominant food system (2) providing a core focus on equality and disparities and the struggles by those who are most vulnerable and (3) establishing linkages and common goals with other forms of social justice activism and advocacy- whether immigrant rights, worker justice, transportation and access, or land use” (Gottlieb & Joshi, 2010: ix).

Along the same lines, Alkon and Norgaard (2009) characterize Food Justice as the need for access to healthy, cost-effective, culturally appropriate food, specifically in the context of racialized geographies, institutional racism and racial formation (Alkon & Norgaard, 2009: 289). Gottlieb and Joshi (2010) support this characteristic by noting that the discussion of

Food Justice has impacted the discourse of food systems and advocacy as it has the ability of critiquing the global, industrial food system as a whole. Namely, Food Justice engages in discussions of, “race, class, gender, the disparities and negative economic, health, environmental and social consequences associated with the dominant food system” (Gottlieb & Joshi, 2010: x). In the same manner, Alkon and Norgaard (2009) highlight that using the analysis of Food Justice can act as a “theoretical and political bridge” between discussions of sustainable agriculture, environmental justice and food insecurity (Alkon & Norgaard, 2009: 289).

The concept of Food Justice is related to issues of food insecurity, as it reexamines the way sustainable agriculture and environmental justice is evaluated. Food Justice achieves this by associating food access to the bigger questions of power and political efficacy (Alkon & Norgaard, 2009: 300). Alkon and Norgaard outline that access to healthy food is not determined by one’s financial ability, rather a country’s historical process which indicates who lives where and who has access to specific services. Furthermore, for the reason that food is often a cultural glue that holds a community together, the concept of Food Justice can shine light on social inequality within communities (Alkon & Norgaard, 2009: 301). Though there are defined gender dimensions of hunger and food insecurity, central frameworks that undertake food security and food sovereignty in developing countries do not identify gender as a fundamental component (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 397). This is problematic, as women have centralized roles in community agriculture, such as in small farms. Eradicating issues of hunger and malnutrition involves acknowledging conflicts of gender inequalities. Albeit, Food Sovereignty and Food Justice highlight the need for gender equality, what is needed is a closer collaboration between issues of gender and the feminist perspective (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 409). In the following section the approach of Feminist Food Justice will be discussed.

Feminist Food Justice

According to Sachs and Patel-Campillo (2014), there are obvious gender imbalances in the methods major actors employ to tackle issues of food insecurity and hunger (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 397). The Feminist Food Justice approach emphasizes amongst others three things; ‘supporting food production at multiple scales’, ‘revaluing food work that feeds

families’, and ‘providing good food for all’ (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 405). The next sections will go into detail on the three components of Feminist Food Justice.

Supporting Food Production at Multiple Scales

The Feminist Food Justice approach observes that there are a variety of actors and levels included in food production, from large-scale multinational corporations to small scale or rooftop gardens. The approach acknowledges gender as essential when considering agricultural production and decision making as farming on a small scale is often done by women and or those from marginalized groups. In order to ensure that the Feminist Food Justice process is put on the agenda and flourishes, Sachs and Patel-Campillo suggest that institutions of public governance and civil society should have an active role. Furthermore, local and national levels should according to Sachs and Patel-Campillo, legitimize the process by establishing supportive environments for women and marginalized groups who are interested and engaged in farming. In addition, locally there should be protective mechanisms in place to provide safety for women and children and provide or equip urban areas with spaces where farming is encouraged. These spaces can be used as a tool to make people connect to food and other people, and be a facilitator for women in farming and decision making (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 405).

The Feminist Food Justice approach seeks to eradicate hunger. The approach recognizes that in order to reach this goal, land reforms and redistribution of land is necessary, and for this to be achieved, policymakers on international, national, regional and local levels need to work towards the same goal (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 406). The approach also recognizes that eradicating hunger might be difficult due to the past and present (sometimes violent) struggles of land between governments, communities, political and economic elites. Feminist Food Justice suggests that local governments and communities work together in order to continue towards the goal of food justice and the eradication of hunger (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 406).

While Raj Patel (2012) also maintains that there are inconsistencies in addressing issues of food insecurity and gender imbalance, he suggests that a feminist analysis is required in order to investigate the likely power inequalities that are built on class power, racism, patriarchy and sexism that may ultimately promote issues of food insecurity for women (Patel, 2012: 405). Similarly, Alkon and Norgaard (2009) highlight that because the Feminist Food Justice

approach has the ability to highlight the dynamic between race and power, this may make sustainable agriculture more attainable for low-income families and people lacking healthy food (Alkon & Norgaard 2009: 301). Sachs and Patel-Campillo support this notion by recognizing that a Feminist Food Justice approach recognizes food production at all levels from large scale agribusiness to roof top gardens. Gender is especially essential when observing the functionality of the smaller operations, as it is more likely that women from “more marginalized racial and ethnic groups, are doing the farming and making the decisions” (Sachs & Patel-Campillo 2014: 405).

Revaluing Food Work that Feeds Families

Sachs and Patel-Campillo emphasize that it is important to “incorporate the understanding that gender roles are fluid” (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 406). Understanding gender roles as fluid can thus provide opportunities in educational systems for children to engage in all types of activities. Which can facilitate children to see the value in cooking for example, therefore questioning, “traditional gender roles at home or in society” (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 406). Often, women are the core workers in small farms and are the foundation of the food production and food provision in households (Allen & Sachs, 2007: 2). In many regions around the world, women are not hired as full-time workers and from 2010-2015 only 50 percent of all women participated in the workforce (UN data, 2015).

Women often work as part-time or seasonal workers in agribusiness, which makes their positions vulnerable because many places that employ full-time workers, provide them with safety equipment while part-time, precarious workers are not prioritized in the same way (Sachs & Alston, 2010: 284). Feminist Food Justice argues that improving the rights of farmers and food workers, will lead to better standards that advocate for improved working conditions and steady incomes (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 407). In order to compete in the global market, many companies operate with low wages. This is unfavorable for workers, and often negatively affects precarious workers (Patel-Campillo, 2012: 277). Feminist Food Justice argues that instead of lowering wages in order to compete in global markets, focus should be put on good working conditions, job security, suitable employment and instead of focusing on high productivity, the focus should be on quality of life and food (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 408).

Providing Good Food for All

Feminist Food Justice emphasizes that on all levels, governments and organizations should make the commitment of “providing food for all, regardless of income, gender, race, ethnicity and age” (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 408). Although a state should be responsible for providing the needs of the people (Van Esterik, 1999: 226), if the state is incapable or unwilling to do so international or national aid organizations may assist, however, only if the state allows them to do so (Helman & Ratner 1992: 13). Feminist Food Justice emphasizes that those organizations who use surplus food to provide meals in areas of food insecurity, may cause problems for local farmers. This is because surplus food may affect the price of food locally and have negative repercussions on local farmers (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 408).

Women play key roles connected to food and provision in agribusinesses, in small farms and in households, however, Feminist Food Justice emphasizes that efforts should be made to make food provision more inclusive for people. The approach argues that on local levels, in order to reduce gender inequality and highlight the work that is done in the ‘private sphere’, including men and boys is necessary. By including men and boys in cooking and food preparation, this will highlight the ‘private’ sphere and make the responsibilities of the home public and equally shared. This can be done by arranging cook-outs and competitions where both women and men participate together (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 409). By bringing the ‘private’ sphere out into the public, it can illuminate the domestic sphere, and contribute to gender equality and shared household responsibilities.

This part of the theoretical framework has introduced Feminist Food Justice through its development from Food Justice and Food Sovereignty. The next part will introduce the International Relations theory of Political Economy and thereafter the theory of Feminist Food Justice.

Political Economy

According to Gilpin (2001), there is a high price to pay for economic globalization. Growing income inequality, rising levels of unemployment, environmental degradation, and human exploitation can have disastrous consequences for national economies (Gilpin, 2001: 9). Poor countries in particular may be negatively impacted by globalization. However, the notion that

globalization is responsible for all of a country's economic, political and social problems is farfetched (Gilpin, 2001: 9). 'Political Economy' is defined as the "interaction of the market and such powerful actors as states, multinational firms and international organizations" (Gilpin, 2001: 17). There are clear correlations between the political, economic and social workings of a country, where the impact of politics on the economy is of interest. In addition, Political Economy as a tool has the ability to shine light on distinct sectors of economic and political mechanisms that are related (Isaković, 2018: 2-3). According to a report by Isaković, the classical approach to Political Economy highlights the interconnectedness between "production, labor, trade, laws, government policies, and the distribution of national income and wealth" (Isaković, 2018: 4). However, True (2010), argues that Political Economy as an analytical tool, alone operates in a masculine nature, through a biased lens (True, 2010: 44). Isaković (2018) supports this notion by pointing out that Political Economy is a limited framework that is 'gender blind'. It cannot be assumed that all citizens of a country, man, woman, girl and boy have the same requirements, abilities, opportunities and problems. With this gender-blind perspective of society, Political Economy does not highlight the political and economic workings that lead to inequalities in society, or how to assist areas with issues of internal conflict (Isaković, 2018: 4). Apodaca (1998) contends that there is nowhere in the world where women enjoy equal social and economic rights (Apodaca 1998: 147).

The classical approach of Political Economy has received critique from feminist scholars because the theory looks at relations through a gender-blind point of view (Isaković, 2018: 4). According to Isaković, the Political Economy approach considers all members of the society as the same, and thus categorizing them to have the same needs, issues, abilities, access and power. The critique is that Political Economy "tells us nothing about political and economic mechanisms that lead to [gender] inequalities in society, and not how to deal with inequalities in conflict areas" (Isaković, 2018: 4).

A Feminist Political Economic perspective does not only add women to the equation, but suggests making room for equal distribution of power and resources (Isaković, 2018: 5). A Feminist Political Economy approach has the ability to inquire into the who, what and how in regards to the structures of power between social, political and economic components, and who has access to them (Isaković, 2018: 2-5).

Feminist Political Economy

According to Ellen Mutari and Heather Boushey (1997), in the late 1990's an emerging critical research flourished, this 'new' economic discourse argued for the "important contributions of empirical research on women's economic experiences by challenging the gendered assumptions guiding the neoclassical paradigm" of political economy (Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 3). Mutari and Boushey (1997) state that a feminist analysis can contribute to a more nuanced view on economic and social theory. They describe Feminist Political Economy as "an act of synthesis - the creative combustion of insights drawn from diverse intellectual standpoints in the hopes of generating new illumination" (Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 4).

In the arena of economics and political economy, feminists have succeeded at showcasing how men have the advantage of "practice of and knowledge production about [what men define as] 'economics'" (Peterson, 2005: 501). Additionally, how the domestic work of women, their reproductive work and caring labor is regarded insignificant to what is considered production and analysis, which is less valued in comparison to the traditional male-dominated activities (paid work and the formal economy) (Peterson, 2005: 501). A Feminist Political Economy perspective investigates three major components; namely the social, political and economic components which are often intertwined and could lead to gender inequalities in the society (Isaković, 2018: 2).

The Social Component of Feminist Political Economy

The social component of Feminist Political Economy investigates how the effects of war can negatively impact women's and men's access to healthcare, education, the labor market, natural resources, clean drinking water and an individual influence over economic and political decision making (Isaković, 2018: 2). The approach acknowledges environmental sustainability, the access and control over natural resources and the role natural resources play in sustainable development (Isaković, 2018: 5).

According to True (2010), a Feminist Political Economic framework is imperative to other feminist political theories and approaches that investigate gendered-based violence and feminist security studies that do not consider how the global political economic structure can impact women's exposure to violence (True, 2010: 44). In line with the social component,

Feminist Political Economy illuminates that inequalities within society are often “root causes of war” (Isaković, 2018: 2). The Feminist Political Economy approach also highlights how public-private gender divisions of labor and socially imbalanced power relations may affect women’s liberty and human rights (True, 2010: 41).

Within the domestic arena of child care, an important aspect is women’s unpaid labor and that women’s ability to participate in paid work is affected by their responsibilities for children (Power & Rosenberg in Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 158). This is because women are often taking care of the family this may lead to them obtaining work in the informal economy (UNIFOR, n.d: 3). Working in the informal economy may impact incomes, which can have consequences on the food security of the family. Family responsibilities can affect women differently according to their cultural heritage, race, or class. Children have an effect on the economic resources of the household and often impact women’s economic resources as a result. Depending on the economic situation of a particular family, some women may respond to child-care demands by hiring help, taking advantage of facilities or reducing their position at work. Women with fewer resources and a poor economic situation may resolve to increase their position at work (Power & Rosenberg in Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 158).

The Political Component of Feminist Political Economy

The political component of Feminist Political Economy focuses on how different policies have the ability to influence the economy (Isaković, 2018: 2). In the context of a conflict, Feminist Political Economy looks at the links between resources assigned to different security institutions such as the military, private security companies and the police. The component also looks at the relation and development between militarization and effective demilitarization and its consequences (Isaković, 2018: 5). There is emphasis on war related violations and mistreatments and sufferings affecting women and men during a conflict. Furthermore, the component looks at the gender dynamics that originate from violations caused by conflict and war (Isaković, 2018: 5).

As men may be seen in traditional societies as the heads of households, gender dynamics within the household are different and sometimes, in favor of the man. Land titles are commonly given to the man which consequently renounces the woman from the right to cultivate her own land, or neighboring lands, obtaining seeds or the opportunity to sell their own produce (Apodaca 1998: 147). True (2010) highlights that women in Kenya own less

than 1 per cent of land, however they perform 70 per cent of agricultural labor. “The denial of equal property rights has the effect of putting women at greater risk of poverty, disease, violence and homelessness” (True 2010:41).

The Economic Component on Feminist Political Economy

The economic component of the Feminist Political Economy approach observes the “access to and distribution of wealth and power in order to understand why, by whom and for whom certain decisions are taken and how they affect societies” (Isaković, 2018: 2). Tracing gender norms back to the nineteenth-century industrialization, the adult man was the primary worker earning the family wage. Young and unwed women were seen as the secondary labor force in the western world, and when women got married they were expected to withdraw from paid labor (Cameron, 1996: 55). Davis (1997) argues that there is an idea of ‘separate spheres’ for the genders. On one hand, there is the domestic sphere, which is generally intended for women, while the formal labor market, on the other hand is intended for men (Davis in Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 93). This idea of ‘separate spheres’ is a historical phenomenon that also relates to the formation of the labor force and production in the capitalist firms.

Davis suggests that by shedding light on the ‘domestic ideology’ using it as an economic factor, it has the ability to highlight the work that is done in the private sphere and add an economic aspect to it (Davis in Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 93). This can shed new light on ‘domestic ideology’ which is also called the private sphere and has been seen as uneconomic, but can now be seen as an ‘economic variable’. Viewing domestic ideology as having an economic variable has great implications for “the determination of ‘class’, ‘work’ and the development of ‘value’” (Davis in Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 93). Following Davis’ idea that the ‘domestic ideology’ can be seen as an economic variable opens up for inquiries into the economic value of the domestic sphere which some critics say has been constructed for women while men have been encouraged to work and ‘create wealth’. Creating wealth may be seen as a symbol of manhood, that gives power, and also gives power over other men and women (Davis in Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 105). Additionally, Isaković adds that a feminist perspective on Political Economy can look at the division of the household labor, and the “access to and distribution of economic resources” within the household (Isaković, 2018: 5) By looking at the different factors of access and distribution, it can also illuminate gender patterns in wages (Isaković, 2018: 5).

The Feminist Political Economy theory investigates social policies, such as labor rights, health rights, intra-household labor division, the access to and allocation of economic resources, gender patterns in wages, the fairness of wages, symbols of human well-being, and unpaid care work. These are areas that can be useful to look at in regards to food insecurity in the DRC. Feminist Food Justice also contributes on different arenas; however, the approach is concerned with the ability to secure food, and the components, participants and frameworks that need to be put in place in order to reach food security.

This research sets out to investigate the likely factors that impact food security in the DRC and the likely policy recommendations within the discussion of food insecurity in the DRC. The identified factors of climate change, internal conflict and land rights will be contextualized as possible instigators of food insecurity in the following contextual background chapter.

Contextual Background

Globally, food insecurity has fallen dramatically. In 1991–92, 1.2 billion people were malnourished globally, with that number declining to 991 million in the 2000s (FAO et al., 2017). In 2015, the UN committed to end hunger by 2030 through the Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 2: Zero Hunger, n. d). It was a very ambitious and admirable goal, unfortunately it seems that the goal to end hunger by 2030 can be hard to reach (FAO et al., 2020: viii) as 821 million people were malnourished in 2017 (Martin-Shields & Stojetz, 2019). FAO et al., estimates that for more than 3 billion people in the world a healthy diet is unaffordable, as the cost of a healthy diet exceeds the “international poverty line established at \$1.90 PPP per person daily” (FAO et al., 2020: xvii).

Food security is according to Mbow et al., (2019),

“A situation that exists when all people at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and good preferences for an active and healthy life” (Mbow et al., 2019: 442).

Food insecurity is therefore the definition of a situation when a person cannot obtain their needed intake of energy and or nutrition, as well as if a diet is not nutritious, for example if there is consumption of excess calories or if the food is not healthy (Mbow et al., 2019: 442). According to the WHO, a healthy diet consists of fruit, vegetables, legumes, nuts and whole grains. Consuming a balanced diet can help protect against malnutrition and non-communicable diseases such as, strokes, cancer, diabetes and heart disease (WHO, 2020). One of the many direct consequences of food insecurity is malnourishment, a term that defines those facing chronic food deprivation. The DRC ranked number 179 of 189 on the 2019 Human Development Index, where there were 21.8 million people acutely food insecure (WFP, 2019). Another consequence of food insecurity is child stunting which was at 41.8 percent in 2017-2018 in the DRC (Global Hunger Index, n.d). Child stunting according to the Global Hunger Index is an indicator of malnourishment or undernutrition.

The DRC has one of the highest population growth rates. In the 1960’s the country was inhabited by some 16 million people, and in 2017 there were approximately 82 million inhabitants. It is estimated that by 2050 the population will reach approximately 200 million

(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2018: 5). The WFP estimates that the DRC has some 80 million hectares of arable land, which potentially can feed 2 billion people, however, right now only 10 percent of arable land is cultivated for food purposes (WFP, 2019). Due to ongoing climate change, internal conflicts, issues with land rights, traditional gender roles and the displacement of people, these elements lead to an unstable agricultural sector and the consequences may be that of food insecurity (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2018: 5).

Establishing that the DRC faces struggles of food insecurity allowed this research to look into and identify possible factors that could contribute to food insecurity in the DRC. The factors identified by this thesis are climate change, internal conflict, land rights and gender inequality, which will be discussed in the following sections of this context chapter.

Climate Change in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Climate change is a global issue and changing at an exceptional pace. Countries worldwide emit greenhouse gases up into the atmosphere and into the ocean which impacts the planet's climatic balance (United Nations Climate Change Annual Report, 2019). Rising sea levels, increases in temperature, inconsistent rainfall and extreme weather impacts the poor unjustly. Their possible incapacity to deal with such drastic changes, makes them vulnerable to climate change (Climate Watch, 2020).

Information on climate change is reportedly the weakest in Africa where technology is reputedly slower and where domestic economies depend on climate-sensitive industries like farming and the excavation of natural resources (Bele et al., 2014: 332). The DRC specifically, is highly sensitive to climate change (NAP-GSP, 2018: 2) as the national economy is abundantly agrarian where agriculture and the exploitation of natural resources are the backbone of local and national economies (Bele et al., 2014: 334).

As rising temperatures and changes in precipitation are two of the main indicators of climate change, water resources and food security are heavily impacted in the DRC (World Meteorological Organization, 2019). An increase in precipitation risks damaging crops and erodes fertile soil which can bring about pests and crop diseases. The lack of precipitation on the other hand, stresses plants and reduces crop yields (USAID, 2018: 3). Rain-fed agriculture

is described as a chief support of livelihoods for approximately 90 percent of Congolese people (African Development Bank, 2018: 5).

Climate change threatens agriculture in the DRC as it is unprotected against climate change and remains a significant portion of the DRC's national GDP and a major source of jobs (World Meteorological Organization, 2019: 5). Agriculture in particular is the primary source of livelihoods for most Congolese, accounting for "40 percent of the national gross domestic product and employing 70 percent of the country's population" (USAID, 2018: 3). 52 percent of Africa's water reserves are located in the DRC, making it the most 'water-rich' country in all of Africa. Surrounding communities rely on the ecosystems of these rivers, lakes and wetlands for food and water sources (UNEP, 2011: 9). Many populations are dependent on basic resources, goods, services and employment from these water sources. "However, the adverse effect of climate conditions to which the country is exposed overtly affects ecosystems goods and services, thereby significantly affecting the economic, social and environmental dimensions of the national sustainable development" (Bele et al., 2014: 334). Populations living in developing countries are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change (Bele et al., 2014: 332). Food security, the access to and utilization of food and sustainability of food sources are also impacted (IPCC, 2019: 143).

Countries of high density and regions of hot climates are proportionately low-income earning countries that are said to be most heavily affected by climate change (World Meteorological Organization, 2019: 24). Although the DRC is the most river dense country in the world with a total of 20,000 kilometers of riverbanks (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2017: 4), access to clean drinking water is challenging. An increase in extreme rainfall and temperatures will only make access more difficult. The inability in finding safe drinking water can result in displacement of populations which may lead to conflict and political instability (African Development Bank, 2018: 10). Due to the DRC's widespread poverty and high population density, the country is susceptible to related socioeconomic factors such as increased food insecurity, water shortages and internal conflicts (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2018: 3).

Internal Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo

According to the WFP, the DRC is currently battling the second largest hunger crisis in the world after Yemen. For the past 25 years, armed internal conflict and rampant displacement has dominated the country and is said to be caused by food insecurity and conflict (WFP, 2020). Internal conflict has seriously damaged the national infrastructures in the DRC, leaving much of the infrastructures irreparable or left to deteriorate which continues to cause challenges for the country (Foster & Benitez, 2011: 1-2).

Conflict by definition, “is no means a negative force, rather it is a natural expression of social difference and of humanity’s perpetual struggle for justice and self- determination” (Anderlini & Stanski, 2004: 1). However, the ongoing conflicts in the DRC that have resulted in massive human rights violations and high death tolls have been a primary area of concern both at domestic but also at international levels (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2015: 2). Conflict in the DRC reportedly goes back to the colonial era where the state excavated natural resources for personal profit. Internal conflicts therefore are said to be associated with the exploitation of the very competitive natural resource sector where state and non-state actors try to capitalize for personal gain (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2015: 2).

“While natural resources may not be the cause of conflicts per se, in the absence of strong institutions to ensure effective regulatory oversight and protection of human rights, the exploitation of natural resources can become both an incentive for rebellion against the state as well as a fuel of war” (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2015: 2).

There are allegedly over 100 armed groups that control just the eastern region of the DRC alone (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020: n.p). Regardless of the 16,000 UN peacekeepers, rebel groups continue to terrorize and govern regions across the country. Internal conflict in the DRC is estimated to have internally displaced 4.5 million Congolese (UNHCR, 2020) and forced more than 800,000 Congolese over the borders to neighboring countries (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020: n.p).

Conflict-related gender violence remains a leading problem where brutal sex crimes and assaults are targeted against women and girls and are regularly reported nationwide. Weak

state entities such as the judicial system and police may be to blame for failing to provide protection for women. With traditional gender roles and an already low status in society women may be rendered defenseless to the brutality and exploitation of armed militia groups (Forced Migration Review, 2010: 14). Not only do internal conflicts affect the livelihoods and safety of the Congolese people, conflict can also disrupt transportation of food sources over borders domestically and internationally.

Direct regional attacks on farms may reduce crop harvests, cause terror, enslavement, forced recruitment, malnutrition, disease and even death (Cohen and Pinstруп-Andersen 1999: 378). In the worst cases, armed rebel groups target civilians prohibiting them from accessing their own land. The inability to access one's land can subsequently result in food insecurity and displacement (WFP, 2020).

Land Rights in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Prior to 1908, the DRC was an area mostly composed of indigenous people and local communities. These individuals had a “customary land right system that most likely covered the whole territory” (International Union for Conservation of Nature, 2016: 2). However, when colonial powers drew the borders of the African continent and the area of the DRC came under Belgian colonial rule (1908-1960), land became a state asset. In the years after 1960, access to land in the DRC has been seen as either an investment, credit or a source for resources that has been used as a currency of power (Vlassenroot & Huggins, 2005:120).

Access to land is often crucial in order to provide food and water, and it can also be used to acquire resources that can be sold or traded. Furthermore, land can provide nutrition, income and the possibility to conduct trade (Tarimo, 2014: v- xi). Land rights are “social conventions that regulate the distribution of the benefits that accrue from specific uses of a certain piece of land” (Deininger, 2003: xxii). Access to land has a great impact on the ability to be self-sustainable. Land rights also provide the additional element of security, that allows individuals to have a stable and safe place of residence and potentially a stable source of income or nutritional base. Having access to land rights and the possibility of owning land may allow an individual to give attention to other socio-economic elements of the household and to possibly improve their quality of life. According to Jean-Philippe Platteau “land ownership problems have become a source of the increasing inequality and food insecurity among the vulnerable sections of the rural population” (Platteau, 1992: 1).

Today many rural communities in the DRC struggle with access to land due to the conflicts, industrial scale agribusinesses, building of new infrastructures and identity (where land rights or access is tied to national identity or gender) (International Union for Conservation of Nature, 2016: 1), (Vlassenroot, 2005: 120). Another element of land rights is the uncertainty about the access to land, which may result in decreasing land investments. “These elements lead to a shift in the qualitative use of land and put food security mechanisms under stress” (Vlassenroot, 2005: 1). This may affect the potential use of the land in the future as if not tended to, it can be rendered useless for cultivation purposes for years.

Climate change, internal conflict and land rights may impact vulnerable groups of the people, due to their impacts or consequences on food security. These groups are often defined as women and children, but men are also targeted in conflict and may face difficulties obtaining access to land based on their ethnicity amongst others (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2015:42). Gender can be a vulnerability, however, Quisumbing, Meinzen-Dick, Raney, Croppenstedt, Behrman, and Peterman (2014), argue that gender does not only refer to women, but to the relation between men and women (Quisumbing et al. in IFPRI, 2014: 6).

Gender in the Democratic Republic of Congo

According to Quisumbing et al., (2014) gender refers to the “social roles and identities associated with what it means to be a man or a woman in a given society or context” (Quisumbing et al. in IFPRI, 2014: 6). Based on the observed normative gender roles between men and women in the DRC, cultural, religious, ideological, ethnic and economic factors can influence responsibilities in society (Quisumbing et al. in IFPRI, 2014: 6). Nguyen, Yeoh, and Toyota (2006), argue that in the past, the male has been the one who has migrated, often moving from rural to urban areas to find jobs, (Nguyen et al., 2006: 38). This has left women ‘behind’, but it has also initiated a change where the women have been responsible for the household and become more visible in society (Rola-Rubzen et al., 2020: 115). In the Eastern DRC, women have become the primary economic provider for many families due to the ongoing conflict which has impacted the situation of men (UNIFOR, n.d: 3). In the same region, sexual violence as a weapon of war is targeting both women and men (Bjørkhaug & Bøås, 2014: 7), and the wars have negatively affected children and especially girls that are targets of rape as a weapon of war. As a result, both girls and boys face alienation from their

communities because of humiliation caused by stigmas connected to torture and rape (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2015: viii).

In the DRC, less than 10 percent of women are land owners. In 2016, approximately 42 percent of women had no other options than taking up loans from family or friends due to restricted access to credit and financial institutions (UNWOMEN, 2016). In rural areas, women have traditionally worked in the informal economy due to family responsibilities in connection to children and the household (UNIFOR, n.d: 3). Many places women may not be able to buy or inherit land (due to economic or institutional restraints). However, scholars argue that if women had land rights it would have potential economic benefits, especially in areas where women are the main providers or cultivators. For example, in areas where there are high levels of adult mortality and “unclear inheritance regulations could undermine women’s livelihood in case of their husband’s death” (Deininger, 2003: xxvi). In the DRC, it is customary that women “gain shares in property through marriage, not inheritance” (Nsapu, 2017: n. p). This is contradictory to the inheritance law today, which leaves women at a disadvantaged stage if she claims a share of the land inherited from parents which may cause conflict within families and communities (Nsapu, 2017: n. p).

In the following analysis section, this thesis’ case of climate change, internal conflict and land rights in the DRC will be examined. In the analysis, the explanatory ability of Feminist Political Economy and Feminist Food Justice will be tested for its ability to shine light on food insecurity and these factors in the DRC.

Analysis

The analysis of this research paper is divided into three parts: part one: climate change, part two: internal conflict, and part three: land rights. In each part, the two feminist theories; Feminist Political Economy and Feminist Food Justice will be tested on the three factors.

Part one of the analysis will apply the social, political, and economic analytical components of Feminist Political Economy to the case of climate change and food insecurity in the DRC. This is in order to test if Feminist Political Economy has the ability to explain how climate change impacts food insecurity in the DRC. Furthermore, part one will also test if Feminist Food Justice is capable of contributing to an explanation of how climate change may impact food insecurity issues in the DRC. This will be done through the three analytical components of; supporting food production at multiple scales, revaluing food work that feeds families, and providing good food for all.

In addition to the theory testing of Feminist Political Economy and Feminist Food Justice, this analysis section will also highlight possible policy recommendations within the discussion of food insecurity in the DRC. Here, this research attempts to shine light on women's contribution to food insecurity in the DRC and how issues of food insecurity may be solved. Within each part of the analysis a discussion will follow where a summary of the findings will be presented and the usability of the feminist theories will be considered.

Part two and part three of the analysis, will deploy the same structure as part one. However, in the part two, the selected feminist theories will be tested on this thesis' case of internal conflict and food insecurity, and in part three, the theories will be tested on the case of land rights and food insecurity. In addition, both part two and three will attempt to highlight possible policy recommendations within the discussion of food insecurity in the DRC.

Part One: Feminist Political Economy on Climate Change in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Analysis of the Social Component of Feminist Political Economy

As previously discussed in the context section (*on page 31*), rain-fed agriculture is described as a chief support of livelihoods for approximately 90 percent of Congolese people (African Development Bank, 2018: 5). However, changes in precipitation and rising temperatures threaten water resources and food security in the DRC and are two of the main indicators of climate change (World Meteorological Organization, 2019). The social component of Feminist Political Economy highlights that gender inequality in a sector, such as agriculture, which is already highly impacted by climate change, may increase the gender gap (Isaković, 2018: 2) and potentially cause further repercussions for agricultural productivity, thus increasing food insecurity for Congolese communities. The undesirable effects of climate change have the potential of destroying ecosystems that the DRC is dependent on for survival (UNEP, 2011:9).

The perspective of the social component of Feminist Political Economy suggests that women's equal access to these natural ecosystems could be beneficial for communities as ecosystems can be a food source and therefore reduce problems of food insecurity (Isaković, 2018:2). The threat of climate change has the potential of affecting women's economic, social and environmental dimensions (Bele and et al., 2014: 334). The social component of Feminist Political Economy highlights that public or private gender divisions of socially imbalanced power relations may affect women's liberty and human rights. Due to the widespread poverty and high population density, the impacts of climate change in the DRC may have socioeconomic consequences on women, such as food insecurity and water shortages (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2018: 3). The social component of Feminist Political Economy observes in this example, that the fragile state of a woman's socioeconomic status may impact her exposure to violence and 'are often root causes for war'.

The Discussion of the Social Component of Feminist Political Economy

After testing the social component of Feminist Political Economy, a discussion on whether the approach has the explanatory power to shed light on how climate change may impact food insecurity in the DRC will follow. This discussion will also take into consideration where the

approach succeeds and falls short in its explanation. Furthermore, the discussion will highlight possible policy recommendations within the discourse of food insecurity and climate change in the DRC.

A main finding is that the social component of Feminist Political Economy has partial, yet questionable explanatory power to highlight how climate change may impact women and food insecurity. This is for the reason that the theory of Feminist Political Economy is not set out to explain climate change, because climate change is not part of the theory.

The component of Feminist Political Economy suggests how the issue of gender equality in a sector, such as agriculture in this case, may potentially reduce the gap and be a positive move for communities who deal with issues of gender inequalities. Gender equality and rights, according to Feminist Political Economy are said to increase productivity, which in this example of agriculture, may thereby reduce the risks of food insecurity. Additionally, the approach manages to shed light on how women's equal access to natural ecosystems may benefit communities and therefore secure food sources. However, the linkage between the case data on climate change and food insecurity and the social component of Feminist Political Economy is a stretch and the connection is mediocre. While there is a coherent link between how access to natural ecosystems can make a positive impact on food insecurity, the social component of Feminist Political Economy does not explain how the climate, in particular, connects to a woman's unequal access to the natural ecosystems and food security. Again, the social component of Feminist Political Economy has the explanatory power to outline how inequalities within society can be 'root causes of war. For example, the inaccessibility to natural ecosystems (food sources as previously mentioned) may cause unrest and conflict amongst citizens. However, there is no direct association of climate change being an instigator of inequalities for marginalized groups.

While the social component of Feminist Political Economy attempts to understand how the effects of war can negatively impact a woman's ability to access the labor market, natural resources, and clean drinking water, the approach cannot offer an explanation. As previously mentioned, this is because the theory cannot link climate change as a threat to the sector of agriculture. Additionally, while the social component of Feminist Political Economy investigates feminist security and gender issues, it cannot address how a change in a woman's economic circumstance, for example: a loss of a job in the agriculture sector due to climate

provoked droughts or floods, can expose them to food insecurity. The approach investigates how changes to economic security could expose women to violence. However, in order for the approach to contribute to the understanding of food insecurity and climate change in the DRC it needs to be supplemented by another theory or approach. Lastly, while the social component of Feminist Political Economy recognizes how family responsibilities can affect women adversely according to their cultural heritage, race and class, the approach cannot detail what these responsibilities are and the external variables that may disrupt these responsibilities.

Analysis of the Political Component of Feminist Political Economy

According to the political component of Feminist Political Economy, it adds women to the equation and in addition makes room for equal distribution of power and resources (Isaković, 2018: 5). Therefore, by testing the political component of Feminist Political Economy on the case data, it has the ability to illuminate which factors that may impact and make certain groups more vulnerable, such as women. Furthermore, the political component of Feminist Political Economy highlights power structures within the national and local government institutions and can identify inequalities in the distribution of power and resources that may impact people's food security. As mentioned in the context section (*on page 32*), the DRC suffers from widespread poverty combined with high population density, which makes the country vulnerable to political factors that may affect food insecurity and water shortages (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, 2018: 3).

The political component highlights decision making and resource investments in security institutions such as the police and the military. Resource investments and the protection of jobs in agriculture cannot be explained by the political component, as it does not have the explanatory power to discuss how the impacts of climate change plays a role. Moreover, the political component of Feminist Political Economy does not have the ability to explain how policies and investments in agriculture can explain food insecurity. Rather, the political component is focused on security measures in connection with conflict, which this thesis will return to in the next section of internal conflict and Feminist Political Economy.

The Discussion of the Political Component of Feminist Political Economy

In this section of the analysis, the Feminist Political Economy's explanatory power will be tested and observed if it has the ability to shed light on how climate change may impact food insecurity in the DRC. The theory's explanatory strengths and weaknesses will also be investigated. And lastly, a review of possible policy recommendations within the discourse of food insecurity in the DRC will be highlighted.

Similar to the social component of Feminist Political Economy, one finding is that the political component has only partial explanatory power to highlight how climate change may impact women and food insecurity. The component adds women to the equation and makes room for equal access to power and resources. In this thesis' context of food insecurity, adding women to the equation is understood by recognizing women, men and marginalized groups as equals where all citizens are entitled to equal rights and services in society. This is a strength of the approach by acknowledging women and marginalized groups as equally vulnerable and by addressing which factors may impact this vulnerability, such as the repercussions of climate change.

The political component of Feminist Political Economy highlights the links between resources within different institutions, such as the military and the police. The connection of the case context of climate change to the political component of Feminist Political Economy is observed as weak. This is because the Feminist Political Economy only regards the links between military and police resources in the context of conflict. As the approach is not set out to consider climate change, this thesis acknowledges the inability to analyze with the political component of Feminist Political Economy. Another shortcoming of the political component is its inability to recognize other dynamics that originate from conflict and war. Here, the approach shines some light on the gender dynamics, however nothing else.

The connection between the political component and the case of climate change and food insecurity is weak as the component is primarily focused on political issues in the context of women, conflict and war. The political component investigates women, but Feminist Political Economy does not take into consideration food insecurity in the community. In order for the approach to contribute to the understanding of food insecurity and climate change in the DRC it needs to be supplemented by another theory or approach.

This thesis has already established that climate change can be a threat to agriculture in the DRC, and according to the data this thesis has collected, the country does not have many protective mechanisms to deal with the consequences of climate change (*on page 22*). As agriculture plays a significant role in the DRC's national GDP and is one of the major sources of jobs for the country, climate change may have negative political and economic implications for the country. This leads to the last component in part one of this analysis, namely the economic component of Feminist Political Economy.

Analysis of the Economic Component of Feminist Political Economy

As previously discussed in this thesis' context section (*on page 31*) the DRC's national economy is largely agrarian where the agriculture sector and natural resources are the foundation of the national economy (Bele et al., 2014: 334). The effects of climate change will likely have serious consequences for the national economy as increases in precipitation risks damaging crops and can destroy fertile soil, generate crop diseases thus negatively affecting crops yields and food sources (USAID, 2018: 3). These consequences of climate change could have irreversible results on the economies of individuals and their ability to provide the necessary livelihoods for their families. The economic component of Feminist Political Economy highlights that a negative impact on the national economy may effect the access and distribution of economic resources within a household (Isaković, 2018: 5). Furthermore, with a focus on various factors of access and distribution of the economy, the economic component illuminate possible inequalities in wages, for example, gender patterns where men have a higher salary than women (Isaković, 2018: 5).

As previously discussed (*on page 30*), the agriculture sector is unprotected against the effects of climate change (World Meteorological Organization, 2019: 5). Negative impacts on the agriculture sector could have serious consequences on the national economy as agriculture is a major source of jobs. In this example of how climate change may impact food security, the economic component of Feminist Political Economy highlights how certain decisions are made and how the decisions may affect societies (Isaković, 2018: 2). One way to interpret this connection is to observe it as legitimate or illegitimate power holders in the DRC and how they may make decisions based on what they consider to be important for their own interests in local and national economies. The economic component of Feminist Political Economy investigates who is protected and who has access to wealth and power. The theory recognizes

the sector of agriculture in the DRC as unprotected under the wrath of climate change and its probable negative repercussions on the national economy.

The Discussion of the Economic Component of Feminist Political Economy

In the following section of the analysis, the Economic component of Feminist Political Economy will be investigated for its ability to explain the case of climate change and food insecurity in the DRC. This research will evaluate where the theory succeeds in its explanations, where it falls short, and where there is room for possible policy recommendations in contribution to the ongoing discussion on the issue of food insecurity in the DRC.

The economic component of the Feminist Political Economy has the explanatory power to highlight that the negative effects from climate change may have unfavorable effects on the local and national economy. This may suggest that economic resources, access and distribution will negatively impact the economy of households. While the economic component of Feminist Political Economy places the spotlight on where there are likely gender discrepancies in wages, it does not specify the factors that influence access and distribution. For this reason, the approach has an unsatisfactory explanation to what may cause gender patterns in wages. In this example, this thesis cannot link the factor of climate change as a likely factor of gender patterns in wages which may impact food security in the DRC.

The economic component is partial in its explanation of how negative impacts on the national economy may affect the division of household labor and the access of economic resources. The Feminist Political Economy approach cannot acknowledge the woman's care work within the home and its contribution to the local and national economy and possible food security.

In the DRC the agriculture sector is responsible for 40 percent of the national GDP and 70-90 percent of jobs (*on page 32*). A loss of jobs, due to changes in agriculture may therefore affect the economy, which may have a domino effect and negatively impact the livelihoods of the Congolese people, thus creating grave food insecurity issues. However, as previously mentioned, Feminist Political Economy does not set out to analyze climate change, so there is no explanation or reasoning for climate change's likely negative impact on agriculture.

As mentioned in the introduction of this analysis section, possible policy recommendations would be suggested, however this research found no recommendations in this section concerning the factor of climate change and food insecurity.

The next section of part one climate change will test if the theory of Feminist Food Justice may be capable of explaining how climate change impacts food security in the DRC. This will be done through the three components of; supporting food production at multiple scales, revaluing food work that feeds families, and providing good food for all. At the same time, this thesis will highlight new policy recommendations within the discourse of food insecurity in the DRC.

Feminist Food Justice on Climate Change in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Analysis of Supporting Food Production at Multiple Scales

The component of supporting food production at multiple scales within the Feminist Food Justice approach deems it essential to have gender represented in production and decision making. This claim is based on the idea that small scale farming is often done by women or individuals from marginalized groups (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 405). It is recommended that because the majority of the Congolese population is dependent on agriculture (African Development Bank, 2018: 5), bringing women and marginalized groups into the decision making and production could benefit them as it could increase productivity. This may bring about new ideas that potentially could reduce food insecurity.

Furthermore, within the component of supporting food production at multiple scales, the Feminist Food Justice approach emphasizes that processes of establishing supportive environments should be legitimized at local and national level. This is in order to engage women and marginalized groups in farming (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 405). Bele et al., (2014) claims that the effects of climate change in the DRC may have consequences on the economic, social and environmental dimensions of the country (Bele et al., 2014: 334). By establishing supportive environments that engage people, particularly women and marginalized groups in farming, could contribute to these individuals making and or providing food for the family, thus reducing the risk of food insecurity in this specific case.

The theory of Feminist Political Economy recommends protective mechanisms in order to provide safety for women and children according to the component of supporting food production at multiple scales (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 405). However, the theory does not explain what exactly the protective mechanisms are. It can be interpreted as either protecting women and children from someone or protecting them from something like, food insecurity. Moreover, the component of supporting food production at multiple scales, also foregrounds the importance of equipping urban areas with space where farming is encouraged (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 405). The component recommends rooftops and community gardens as examples of providing space in urban areas for farming. These measures may benefit food insecurity in the DRC because attention and encouragement will be made on supplying and farming in small scale gardens to provide food for families. In contrast to encouraging large scale agri-businesses that potentially exhaust the soil and reduce crop yields (USAID, 2018: 3).

Encouraging individuals in urban areas to conduct farming, either on rooftops, community gardens or allotments may contribute to reducing food insecurity in cities. However, rural areas where farming might already be challenging due to climate change or other factors are not taken into consideration. Furthermore, providing safety for women and children in regards to farming is important, but the theory does not explain how or who will provide safety. It may also be easier to set up protective measures in a community garden than to have protective measures on a farm located in a conflict area or an area affected by climate change

The Discussion of Supporting Food Production at Multiple Scales

After testing the component of supporting food production at multiple scales it will now be discussed whether the Feminist Food Justice approach has the explanatory power to highlight how climate change may impact food insecurity in the DRC. This discussion will also take into consideration where the approach succeeds and falls short in its explanation.

Furthermore, the discussion will suggest possible policy recommendations within the scholarly conversation of food insecurity in the DRC.

Although this research identified a weak link between climate change and food insecurity in the DRC. After learning more about the component of supporting food production at multiple scales, and researching if the component has the ability and explanatory power to explain how

climate change affects food security, it was discovered the component does not have the ability to discuss climate change. This is because it simply does not set out to observe the factor. This research finds that in order for the component of supporting food production at multiple scales to be able to highlight the effects of climate change on food insecurity it needs a supplementary theory or approach for support.

However, the component has the ability to discuss farming and knowledge sharing. Here, the component recommends individuals in urban areas to conduct farming. This suggestion may reduce food insecurity in cities by stabilizing local food sources.

Analysis of Revaluing Food Work that Feeds Families

The component of Feminist Food Justice, revaluing food work that feeds families, recommends that by improving the rights of farmers and food workers, it may lead to benefits and steady incomes (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 407). According to the World Meteorological Organization, countries of high density and hot climates like the DRC, tend to be low-income earning countries and are heavily affected by climate change (World Meteorological Organization, 2019: 24). The component of revaluing food work that feeds families suggests that improving rights for farmers and food workers can be a contributing part in securing food for families and thus reducing food insecurity.

The component emphasizes that instead of focusing on high productivity within agriculture, the aim should be to enhance quality of life and food (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 408). The DRC is sensitive to climate change (NAP-GSP, 2018:2) but because agribusiness and the exploitation of natural resources are closely connected and both contribute to the national economy (Bele et al., 2014: 334), reducing productivity in agribusinesses, for the sake of the quality of life and food can have an undesirable effect on the country's national economy. This could potentially lead to further risks of food insecurity.

A strong argument of the component of revaluing food work that feeds families is incorporating the understanding that gender roles are fluid. The component claims that by incorporating fluid gender roles in education institutions, children's participation in all types of activities may be facilitated and by this “question traditional gender roles at home or in society” (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 406). This research recommends questioning traditional gender roles which can have an effect on food insecurity for families, as it may

lead to changes in work-patterns of families and individuals. However, the connection between climate change and food insecurity and traditional gender roles is not strong.

The Discussion of Revaluing Food Work that Feeds Families

The component of revaluing food work that feeds families has illustrated that it does not set out to investigate climate change. For this reason, the component of revaluing food work that feeds families cannot be applied to the case of food insecurity and climate change in the DRC. This research finds that in order for the component to be able to highlight the effects of climate change on food insecurity it needs the support of a supplementary theory or approach.

The component of revaluing food work that feeds families recommends that by improving the rights of farmers and food workers it will lead to benefits and steady incomes for the aforementioned workers. This research suggests that if there is no land to cultivate because the security mechanisms to protect the country against climate change are missing, improving rights of farmers and food workers might be inadequate.

A strong argument of the component is that it recommends that by incorporating fluid gender roles in education institutions this can lead to equality in the labor market, and work patterns of families and individuals. This positive change may have a stabilizing effect on issues of food insecurity. Furthermore, incorporating fluid gender roles may lead to changes in the household roles and food production. Equality amongst the genders may have positive effects on families and society, however in a context where climate change is presumed to threaten the agricultural sector, there is no connection to the approach of Feminist Food Justice.

Analysis of Providing Good Food for All

Within the component of Feminist Food Justice, providing good food for all, emphasizes that on all levels, governments and organizations should make the commitment of “providing good food for all” no matter income, gender, race, ethnicity or age (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 408). Climate change threatens agriculture (World Meteorological Organization, 2019: 5), which again threatens the ability to provide good food for all. The component states that it is governments and organizations who should commit to providing good healthy food

for all. However, some countries do not have the ability to do so, then the responsibility becomes that of organizations.

Moreover, the component of providing good food for all, states that on local levels the ‘private’ sphere should be made public, by bringing the preparation of food out of the private (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 409). The approach recommends that by engaging the whole community in preparing food and increasing the interest this may engage the community in the task. In addition, it can include men and boys and engage them in the preparation of food. This could potentially open up for discussions around the time consumed in preparing food, which can lead to a conversation about the value of care work within the home.

The Discussion of Providing Good Food for All

After learning about the explanatory power of the component of providing good food for all, it became clear that this particular component does not set out to investigate climate change. For this reason, the component of providing good food for all cannot be applied to the case of food insecurity and climate change in the DRC. This research finds that in order for the component to be able to highlight the effects of climate change on food insecurity it needs a supplementary theory or approach.

The component of providing good food for all recommends that on local levels the ‘private’ sphere should be made public, by bringing the preparation of food out of the private (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 409). This point has little relation to climate change, as this is an attempt to bring the private sphere out in the public and illuminate the value and time that care work takes. The component suggests that to bring the private sphere out in public, one option is to have cook-outs where men, women, and children are involved in the preparation and making of the food. In cases where food is scarce, individuals may have demanding jobs, and the climate may not be suitable for spending the day cooking outside, and prioritizing cook-outs can be hard.

In the next part, part two of the analysis, the same analytical structure will be applied, however, the feminist approaches will be tested against the case of internal conflict and food insecurity.

Part Two: Feminist Political Economy on Internal Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Analysis of the Social Component of Feminist Political Economy

As previously discussed in the context section, the DRC has been greatly affected by internal conflicts for the past 25 years. Conflicts in addition to large scale displacement of the Congolese people, have impacted the country and is said to be the result of a combination of food insecurity and regional disputes (WFP, 2020). The social component of Feminist Political Economy recognizes how the effects of wars and conflicts may negatively impact women's access to natural resources, such as water (Isaković, 2018: 2).

Internal conflict in the DRC is estimated to have internally displaced 4.5 million Congolese (UNHCR, 2020 n. p) and forced more than 800,000 Congolese across the borders to neighboring countries (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020: n.p). The social component has the explanatory power to highlight the likely ramifications of war and conflict on women's access to healthcare, education, natural resources and the labor market (Isaković, 2018: 2). The ongoing conflicts in the DRC that have reportedly resulted in massive human rights violations and high death tolls have been a primary area of concern (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2015: 2). Conflict-related gender-based violence where brutal sex crimes and assaults are targeted against the population (Forced Migration Review, 2010: 14), are just some examples of human rights violations that are widespread in the DRC. The social component of Feminist Political Economy acknowledges women's liberty and human rights by addressing socially imbalanced power relations which may have the ability to uncover structural gender aspects (True, 2010: 41).

The likely weak state entities such as the DRC's judicial system and police force may be one of the factors that fails in providing protection for women. With traditional gender roles and an already low status in society women are vulnerable to the brutality and exploitation of armed militia groups (Forced Migration Review, 2010: 14). The social component of Feminist Political Economy suggests that the lack of protection for women against internal conflict and its repercussions (Isaković, 2018: 2), may lead to food insecurity. For example, in some cases, militia groups target civilians and restrict them from accessing their own land, which may inhibit them from food sources. This barrier can result in food security issues and even displacement (WFP, 2020). The social component of Feminist Political Economy draws in

different supportive explanations. First, there is an understanding that the effects of war can negatively impact women's and men's access to natural resources. Second, there is an investigation into the imbalance in societal power relations. If militia groups are governing civilians using violence as a method to control and prevent them from accessing their land, then men's and women's liberty and human rights may be at risk (True, 2010: 41).

Lastly, the social component of Feminist Political Economy illuminates that inequalities within society, such as men and women being powerless to militia groups and not being able to access their land, can often be one of the "root causes of war" (Isaković, 2018: 2). Loss of access to land, and violent attacks on farms may reduce harvests which may create fear, cause enslavement of civilians, forced recruitment into rebel groups, cause food insecurity and an eventual death (Cohen and Pinstруп-Andersen 1999: 378).

The Discussion of the Social Component of Feminist Political Economy

The social component of Feminist Political Economy has explanatory strengths when it comes to investigating internal conflicts and the possible impact on food security in the DRC. The Feminist Political Economy theory highlights how the effects of war and conflicts may impact a person's access to natural resources. Additionally, barriers to healthcare, education and the labor market are included in this investigation. Though, there is no direct link to food insecurity, this research interprets natural resources as being all encompassing and including food sources, such as water and food commodities. The theory acknowledges how liberty and human rights can be addressed through looking closer at imbalances in power relations within society. This research interprets the analyzing characteristics of the social component of Feminist Political Economy as having the explanatory power to highlight that the simple lack of protection for people from rebel groups and civilian violence may lead to issues of food insecurity.

The social component of Feminist Political Economy investigates unequal power relations in society. This inequality may result in women and marginalized groups being more vulnerable in a situation of conflict. The theory does not explicitly outline what type of societal power relations could place women and marginalized groups in vulnerable situations. Moreover, the theory does not go into detail on the specificity of these ramifications. This research has made its own connection based on its interpretation of the theory and includes food insecurity as one of the ramifications, which consequently may be placing people at greater risk. This research recognizes that the only clear link to food insecurity is by highlighting gender

inequality in a sector. The social component of Feminist Political Economy recommends here, that gender equality in agriculture for example, could then reduce the gender gap and potentially be positive for communities. This would be done by increasing agricultural productivity and therefore reducing food insecurity. This link between conflict with local rebel groups resulting in food insecurity is the only direct link the social component of Feminist Political Economy can provide.

Analysis of the Political Component of Feminist Political Economy

Food insecurity is suggested to be a consequence of amongst others armed internal conflicts and countrywide displacement amongst the Congolese people (WFP, 2020). In this section of the analysis, this thesis will test the political component of Feminist Political Economy to see if it can be used as an analytical tool in the case of food insecurity and internal conflict in the DRC. The political component examines an individual's right to cultivate land or neighboring lands, the right to collect seeds and the right to sell produce from their land (Apodaca 1998: 147). There is a continuing domestic and international concern with the extensive human rights violations and high death tolls that are suspected to be closely connected to the DRC's issues with internal conflict (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2015: 2).

The political component of Feminist Political Economy highlights that gender dynamics may originate from violations brought on by conflict and war (Isaković, 2018: 5). This research interprets this as both men and women's human rights being affected by the ongoing internal conflicts in the DRC. Access to clean drinking water and food for example, are two likely factors to be impacted by conflict and war. Furthermore, the political component of Feminist Political Economy shines light on the resources assigned between security institutions such as the military, private security and police (Isaković, 2018:5). Within this investigation, the political component of Feminist Political Economy has the explanatory power to look closer at how the security institutions in the DRC, are failing in protecting their people from human rights violations and high death tolls due to internal conflicts.

Internal conflicts in the DRC have roots back to colonial times where the state is said to have exploited the country's natural resource reserves and over extracted for personal profit (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2015: 2). It has been suggested that internal conflicts in the DRC are still to this day, closely related to the exploitation of natural resources where state, and non-state actors try to capitalize for personal gain (United Nations

Economic Commission for Africa, 2015: 2). The political component of Feminist Political Economy highlights resource exploitation because it does not entail equal distribution for men and women of power and resources (Isaković, 2018: 5). Additionally, the political component has the ability to draw links between different institutions, such as the military and the police and examine the resources invested into the prevention of the over extraction of the DRC's natural resource reserve (Isaković, 2018: 5). As discussed in the context section (on page 32), security institutions in the DRC do not provide equal protection for men, women and children in the context of conflict. Civilians are oftentimes rendered defenseless to the consequences of armed militias groups (Forced Migration Review, 2010: 14). Again, the political component of Feminist Political Economy suggests an investigation into the resources allotted to protect civilians. This research interprets this point as civilian security and well-being is not a top priority for the military and police in the DRC.

The Discussion of the Political Component of Feminist Political Economy

After testing the political component of Feminist Political Economy, it will now be discussed whether the approach has the explanatory power to shed light on how internal conflict may impact food insecurity in the DRC. This discussion will also take into consideration where the approach succeeds and falls short in its explanation. Furthermore, the discussion will highlight possible policy recommendations within the discourse of food insecurity in the DRC.

The political component has the explanatory power to explain much of the thesis' case of internal conflict and may possibly aid in connecting internal conflict as a factor of food insecurity in the DRC. This research considers the political component to have successfully highlighted that conflict can impede the right to cultivate land and the likely repercussions of internal conflict. This research understands that the prohibition to cultivate or access land due to internal conflict may negatively impact one's access to food sources, and as a result, cause food insecurity. In addition, the political component of Feminist Political Economy acknowledges how gender dynamics may originate from violations brought on by conflict and war. Though a strength of the component, this research considers it a weakness, as the political component does not emphasize further, what these gender dynamics may be. Therefore, this thesis interprets 'gender dynamics' as men and women facing different barriers in the situation of conflict and therefore may have unequal access to livelihood resources such as food.

The political component of Feminist Political Economy addresses the resources assigned between security institutions. Again, this point is vague in its explanation. This research draws a connection between the DRC's weak state entities and the often reported human rights violations as a lack of resources invested into security for civilians. The political component of Feminist Political Economy satisfactorily recognizes the need for an investigation into equal resource distribution between men and women, however it falls short to describe further details on which resources. In the scope of this thesis, this point is understood as a call for political gender equality, meaning equal rights in jobs, wages, human rights, food security and protection from security institutions. This research regards this as an important consideration, especially in the context of internal conflict where women and men are often exposed first hand to the brutality of armed militias.

After testing the political component of Feminist Political Economy on the internal conflict context from our case, this thesis deems it strong in its explanation into the factors that involve conflict. Nevertheless, the theory is not explicit in what it means by 'distribution of resources', 'the links between assigned security institutions' and 'gender dynamics'. Because of this, much is left to interpretation.

Analysis of the Economic Component of Feminist Political Economy

As a result of the exploitation and extractivism of natural resources in the DRC, a competitive environment was created and conflicts erupted because of it (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2015: 2). The economic component of Feminist Political Economy questions who has access and distribution to power and showcases why, by whom and for whom these decisions, (natural resource excavation for example) are made and how these decisions ultimately affect the societies around them (Isaković, 2018: 2). Extracting natural resources may cause a loss of jobs which may result in internal conflicts and lead to food insecurity. In addition, the likely link between internal conflict and the exploitation of natural resources, internal conflict may also provoke human rights issues. As highlighted in the context section (*on page 33*), the DRC has been accused of catastrophic human rights violations, which has resulted in the massive displacement of Congolese citizens (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2015: 2).

Internal conflict and displacement may lead to the loss of jobs and financial instability. The economic component of Feminist Political Economy acknowledges the access and distribution of economic resources within the household (Isaković, 2018: 5). The access and

distribution of economic resources may be potentially impacted in a situation of conflict. Without access to jobs or money this can have a negative impact on the economic situation of individuals and therefore provoke further unrest within communities which in turn can provoke food insecurity.

As previously mentioned in the context section (*on page 33*), the absence of strong formal institutions to,

“ensure effective regulatory oversight and protection of human rights, the exploitation of natural resources can become both an incentive for rebellion against the state as well as a fuel of war” (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2015: 2),

may be problematic in the case of internal conflict and food insecurity in the DRC. The lack of formal institutions to protect civilians from internal conflict, may have unfavorable results on the economy. The economic component of Feminist Political Economy can be used as a tool to question how the distribution of power and decision-making impacts societies (Isaković, 2018: 2). Additionally, the economic component shines light on possible gender patterns in wages (Isaković, 2018: 5), which may impact personal economies and food insecurity.

Internal conflict may not only affect the livelihoods and safety of the Congolese people, but it can also complicate food source transportation over regional and international borders (Cohen and Pinstруп-Andersen 1999: 378). The economic component of Feminist Political Economy can uncover the incapacity to transport food sources which could have great implications for the ‘domestic ideologies’ of individuals. The disruption of food source transportation is a critical factor which may impact the employment and incomes of many and have a negative impact on ‘class’, ‘work’, and the development of ‘value’ within communities (Davis in Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 93). The inability to transport food sources over borders, may not only lead to food insecurity issues, but also provoke regional conflicts. The direct regional attacks on farms may reduce harvests, forcible recruitment into rebel groups, malnutrition, disease and death (Cohen and Pinstруп-Andersen 1999: 378). The economic component of Feminist Political Economy highlights why power is exercised in the fashion it is, and how these power struggles may affect decision making and affect societies (Isaković, 2018: 2). Though there is not a clear link to regional attacks on farms, this research finds the imbalance

of power in the DRC to be one of the leading causes of internal conflicts having a major impact on the DRC's economy.

The Discussion of the Economic Component of Feminist Political Economy

After testing the economic component of Feminist Political Economy, it will now be discussed whether the approach has the explanatory power to shed light on how internal conflict may impact food insecurity in the DRC. This discussion will also take into consideration where the approach succeeds and falls short in its explanation. Furthermore, the discussion will highlight possible policy recommendations within the discourse of food insecurity in the DRC.

This thesis' case has thoroughly discussed how the exploitation of natural resources can fuel internal conflicts in communities. The economic component of Feminist Political Economy questions why and by whom has access and distribution of power and how it can affect societies. Though this research acknowledges the connection between the excavation of natural resources and power distribution, it draws a connection from power distribution to conflict and from conflict to food insecurity. Unequal power relations have the ability to cause unrest which may result in conflict. The connection of conflict and food insecurity is drawn from the social component of Feminist Political Economy's analysis on internal conflict where it is discussed that conflict and war may negatively impact an individual's access to natural resources (Isaković, 2018: 2).

The economic component of Feminist Political Economy highlights the access and distribution of economic resources within the household. This research finds that the theory has the ability to shed light on the division of household labor and the access and distribution of economic resources within the household (Isaković, 2018: 5). However, it does not explicitly detail what 'household labor' entails nor does it define what economic resources are in this context. Due to the vague explanation of what 'household labor' entails, it leaves much to interpretation and a far stretch to connect internal conflict's impact on food security in the DRC. On the other hand, considering the economic component of Feminist Political Economy's investigation of possible gender patterns in wages, there is a viable consideration in the analysis of how one's economic situation could potentially impact the accessibility to food. The economic component pays attention to the different factors of access and distribution and how it may highlight inequality in wages (Isaković, 2018: 5). This research

finds this consideration to be fruitful in its analysis if it can conclude that the ‘different factors’ are internal conflict or issues of food insecurity. It is however forced as the economic component of Feminist Political Economy does not clearly state what these factors are that could impact inequality in wages. Therefore, the economic component is ruled weak in its explanation of how gender and inequality impacts food insecurity.

The economic component of Feminist Political Economy investigates how the distribution of power and decision making may impact societies. The economic component succeeds at highlighting how the imbalance of power may be the reason for the DRC’s lack of formal institutions. Considering that the possible lack of DRC’s formal institutions may have consequences in protecting their citizens from not only internal conflict, but also the ramifications of it, such as food insecurity. Furthermore, the economic component of Feminist Political Economy succeeds in highlighting the implications to domestic ideologies of civilians in regards to ‘class’, ‘work’ and the development of ‘value’ (Davis in Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 93). The connection to the economic significance both for the country but also for the individual family, if an individual’s ‘class’ is impacted because they have a poor personal economy, or ‘work’ is affected due to internal conflicts and one’s ‘value’ if they are not able to provide for their family. Though, the economic component of Feminist Political Economy is not explicit as to which economic variables may instigate these changes to domestic ideologies.

Feminist Food Justice on Internal Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Analysis of Supporting Food Production at Multiple Scales

In 2020, the WFP claimed that the DRC is battling the largest hunger crisis in the world, second after the crisis in Yemen (WFP, 2020). At the same time, the country has been experiencing internal conflict. The component of supporting food production at multiple scales within Feminist Food Justice, emphasizes the protective mechanisms that provide safety for women and children (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 405). Though, the component does not specify what kind of protective mechanisms or who should be responsible for implementing these protective mechanisms. One could argue that the component is referring to state governments or local governments to provide security mechanisms.

Furthermore, the component of supporting food production at multiple scales states that gender is essential, especially when considering production and decision making (Sachs &

Patel-Campillo, 2014: 406). This is because the component of supporting food production at multiple scales deems it likely that women and marginalized groups will be involved in small scale farming. Therefore, the component includes women and marginalized groups by highlighting that there is a need for them to be a part of production and decision making. For example, managing the inventory, the planning and planting of the fields and managing farm equipment and crops.

In areas where conflict is rampant, cultivating land may be difficult or even dangerous. For example, in the DRC, there is conflict and poor infrastructure, and conflict may disrupt infrastructure while at the same time poor infrastructure can lead to conflict. Poor infrastructure and internal conflict can have negative effects on food security in the DRC. In areas of internal conflict, women and marginalized groups could in fact be targeted, as conflict-related gender violence remains a leading problem where brutal sex crimes and assaults are targeted against marginalized groups (*on page 33*). The component recommends that by including women and marginalized groups in decision making and production it may strengthen their position in society and make them less vulnerable in a situation of internal conflict.

The component of supporting food at multiple scales, recommends that in order to eradicate hunger, land reforms and redistribution of land is necessary (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 406). The component is vague in this recommendation and does not specify who or how land reforms and redistribution of land should be conducted. A concern is that in the DRC, internal conflict has had devastating effects on the infrastructure of the country. Amongst others, it may be challenging for the ones in charge of implementing new land reforms and redistribution of land as this could fuel further internal conflict in the country, which could have further implications for the country's food security.

The Discussion of Supporting Food Production at Multiple Scales

It will now be discussed if the component of supporting food production at multiple scales has the explanatory power to highlight how internal conflict may impact food insecurity in the DRC. This discussion will also take into consideration where the approach succeeds and is weak in its explanation. Furthermore, the discussion will consider possible policy recommendations within the discourse of food insecurity and internal conflict in the DRC.

After learning more about the component of supporting food production at multiple scales, it became clear that this particular component does not set out to investigate internal conflict. For this reason, the component of supporting food production at multiple scales cannot be applied to the case of food insecurity and internal conflict in the DRC. This research finds that in order for the component of supporting food production at multiple scales to be able to highlight the effects of internal conflict on food insecurity it requires the support from another supplementary theory or approach.

The DRC struggles with protective mechanisms. This may be partly due to internal conflict, weak infrastructure and frail protective mechanisms for marginalized groups. These are elements that the component of supporting food production at multiple scales does not set out to investigate. Thus, the component is not suitable to test on the case of internal conflict in the DRC and how internal conflict may affect food security.

The component of supporting food production at multiple scales recommends gender as essential in production and decision making, women and marginalized groups are partakers in small farms, and they should be a part of the production and decision making. Often small farms are located in rural areas, where lack of protective mechanisms may lead to conflict. The component of supporting food production at multiple scales does not set out to explain how the lack of protective mechanisms or dealing with challenges in farming may affect food security, nor the consequences of being dependent upon agriculture for survival in a conflict zone.

In order to eradicate hunger, the component of supporting food production at multiple scales recommends that policy makers work towards the same goals. The component proposes that in order to reach the goal of eradicating hunger, implementing land reforms and redistribution of land is necessary. A concern may be that by redistributing land and implementing land reforms it may cause further internal conflict, as many of the conflicts have relation to land and resources connected to land (*on page 33*). On one side, redistributing land and implementing land rights could lead to a downsizing in the internal conflict as rebel groups may be able to lay down their weapons and cultivate their own land instead. On the other side, it can also cause a flare up in conflict as the country is rich in natural resources and different groups and tribes are in conflict over the resourceful land. In this case, the component of

supporting food production at multiple scales is not set up to uncover these various deep challenges that the DRC struggles with.

Analysis of Revaluing Food Work that Feeds Families

Internal conflict affects both the livelihoods and safety of the Congolese people. Conflict can also disrupt transportation of food sources over borders domestically and internationally (*on page 34*). This can affect the food security of the country, if there are cases where areas are dependent on food supplies. The component of revaluing food work that feeds families recommends that improving the rights of farmers and food workers may lead to standards that allow for benefits and steady incomes (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 407). Improving the rights of farmers and food workers may lead to increased investment in farms and steady incomes. However, as the lack of infrastructure can make implementing law and order difficult in areas that struggle with internal conflicts, food security may consequently be at risk as people could be forced to leave because their rights and lives are at risk.

The Discussion of Revaluing Food Work that Feeds Families

After testing the component of revaluing food work that feeds families within Feminist Food Justice, it became clear that this particular component does not set out to investigate internal conflict. For this reason, the component cannot be applied to the case of food insecurity and internal conflict in the DRC. This research finds that in order for the component of revaluing food work that feeds families to help in answering this thesis' research question it needs a supplementary theory or approach.

The component of revaluing food work that feeds families observes the facilitation of participation in food as important. In order to illuminate the importance of food and access to food for families, family members need to be engaged in the food preparation. In addition, the component emphasizes that women are often the core workers and foundation of the food production and food provision in homes (Allen & Sachs, 2007: 2).

Furthermore, the component of revaluing food work that feeds families recommends improving the rights of farmers and food workers and claims that this may lead to steady incomes and benefits for all. The component does not consider the issues that may occur in an environment where internal conflict may cause instability and as a result, threaten the security

of individuals and food. The component does not have the ability to illuminate internal conflict and the consequences on food security because it does not set out to do so.

Analysis of Providing Good Food for All

The component of providing good food for all recommends that on all levels, food for all should be provided, no matter income, gender, race, ethnicity or age. Moreover, the component of providing good food for all states that food for all should be provided by governments and or organizations (Sachs & Patel-Campillo, 2014: 408).

Internal conflict in the DRC is estimated to have internally displaced around 4.5 million Congolese (UNHCR, 2020 n. p) and has forced more than 800,000 Congolese to cross borders into neighboring countries (Council on Foreign Relations, 2020: n. p). It is likely that more individuals than these 5.3 million have been internally displaced or crossed borders, but have not notified organizations or governments for various reasons. In the case of these 5.3 million displaced people, internal conflict may have caused a dangerous living environment for some of them, and perhaps their food sources have also been threatened. One could argue that for these people, safety has not been provided, nor has food for all been secured.

In many cases women are responsible for preparing and making the food that feeds the family. The component of providing good food for all advocates for developing gender equal tasks that will illuminate the 'private sphere' so the 'domestic tasks' will be equal.

The Discussion of Providing Good Food for All

After testing the component of providing good food for all within Feminist Food Justice, it will now be discussed whether the approach has the explanatory power to shed light on how internal conflict may impact food insecurity in the DRC. This discussion will also take into consideration where the component of providing good food for all succeeds and falls short in its explanation. Furthermore, the discussion will highlight possible policy recommendations within the discourse of food insecurity in the DRC.

It became clear that the particular component of providing good food for all does not set out to investigate internal conflict. For this reason, the component of providing good food for all cannot be applied to the case of food insecurity and internal conflict in the DRC. This

research finds that in order for the component to help in answering this thesis' research question it needs a supplementary theory or approach.

The component of providing good food for all proclaims that it is the responsibility of governments and organizations to be supplying food sources for all. However, the component does not highlight in which capacity the governments and organizations should do this. In the case of food insecurity in the DRC the government and organizations are not capable for various reasons of executing this task, where approximately 64 percent of the population is considered to be extremely poor and lives on less than \$1.90 a day (*on page 30*).

The component of providing good food for all states that it is important to include men, women and children in the private sphere. The component defines the private sphere as where domestic work is carried out, which is usually in the home. The component of providing good food for all highlights the private sphere so it can be an inclusive arena. This is both because it can allow boys and men to obtain skills that can help them survive. Additionally, it has the potential to showcase care work and emphasize how much work is being done in the domestic sphere, which is often unpaid labor. The component recommends that domestic work be equally delegated tasks between all household members.

The component of providing good food for all is not set out to explain the consequences of internal conflict nor its ripple effects on food security. This is because the component is aimed at highlighting what can bring about gender equality in relation to providing good food for all. There are many important issues this component promotes, but it needs to be supplemented by another approach in order to view the bigger picture of food insecurity and internal conflict in the DRC.

In the following section, part three of this analysis, Feminist Political Economy and Feminist Food Justice will be tested to see how and to what extent they can be used as a tool to explain land right's as a factor of food insecurity in the DRC.

Part Three: Feminist Political Economy on Land Rights in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Analysis of the Social Component of Feminist Political Economy

As previously mentioned in the land rights context (*on page 34*) access to land in the DRC has been seen as either an investment, credit or a source for resources that has been used as a currency of power (Vlassenroot & Huggins, 2004: 120). The social component points out that inequalities within society are often “root cases of war” (Isaković, 2018: 2). This point showcases how unequal access to land, whether land is used as credit, a source for resources or a currency of power may lead to conflict and thereafter provoke unequal access to food sources. The social component of Feminist Political Economy additionally highlights how conflict may negatively impact access over economic and political decision making (Isaković, 2018: 2). Financial and political decision making can be impacted by external factors like conflict and war which may have consequences on people’s access to land and food security.

In the DRC, access to land may provide food and water for many and it can also be used to acquire resources that can be sold or traded. Furthermore, land can provide nutrition, income and the possibility to conduct trade (Tarimo, 2014: v- xi). The social component of Feminist Political Economy states that gender inequality in a sector, such as agriculture or land cultivation in this example, could reduce the gender gap and could potentially be a positive move for communities, by increasing productivity and reducing food insecurity (Isaković, 2018: 2).

As previously discussed (*on page 36*), women in the DRC do not have the same access to land rights as men. The social component of Feminist Political Economy investigates what possible benefits would arise if both genders shared equal access to land. Furthermore, the social component of states how both public and private divisions of labor and socially imbalanced power relations affect human rights (True, 2010: 41). This research considers balanced power relations and equal human rights important in the context of food security as a lack of may cause food insecurity. Access to land impacts the ability to be self-sustainable. Conjointly, land rights provide security and an additional element of security, which enables individuals to have stable and safe places of residence and potentially a balanced source of income and nutritional base. Equal access to land rights and the possibility of owning the land

allows an individual to give attention to other socio-economic elements of the household and to improve their quality of life (Platteau, 1992: 1).

The social component of Feminist Political Economy recommends that gender equality in a sector, such as agriculture, could reduce the gender gap and potentially be a positive move for communities (Isaković, 2018: 2), by increasing productivity and reducing food insecurity. Moreover, the social component of Feminist Political Economy links public and private gender divisions and socially imbalanced power relations (Isaković, 2018: 2). One could argue that women not having the opportunity to inherit land from parents, may consequently affect their liberty and human rights. Having the right to own and cultivate land, may also have a positive contribution to families and maintaining their cultural heritage, race or class (Isaković, 2018: 2).

As previously discussed (*on page 34*), “land ownership problems have become a source of the increasing inequality and food insecurity among the vulnerable sections of the rural population” (Platteau, 1992: 1). The social component of Feminist Political Economy outlines that inequalities within society are often “root causes of war” (Isaković, 2018: 2). Inequalities such as not having access to land rights, may provoke conflict within society, and may eventuate to issues of food insecurity.

The Discussion of the Social Component of Feminist Political Economy

After testing the social component of Feminist Political Economy, it will now be discussed whether the approach has the explanatory power to shed light on how land rights may impact food insecurity in the DRC. This discussion will also take into consideration where the approach succeeds and falls short in its explanation. Furthermore, the discussion will highlight possible policy recommendations within the discourse of food insecurity and land rights in the DRC.

The social component of Feminist Political Economy succeeds at addressing how inequalities can provoke unrest and lead to war. As discussed in the context section, women do enjoy equal access to the same rights as men in the DRC when ownership is concerned. In the analysis of land rights this thesis discussed how conflict within communities may lead to issues of food insecurity. Though the social component of Feminist Political Economy acknowledges that inequalities can lead to conflict, it cannot explicitly explain what the

inequalities are and what the consequences of conflict are. Based on this, this research draws a connection between the unequal access to land, the internal conflict that may arise from the unequal access and the impact this unequal access may have on food sources.

The social component of Feminist Political Economy has the ability to acknowledge gender inequality in sectors and how it may be constructive for society in regards to productivity and the reduction of food insecurity if gender inequality was abolished. However, this explanation is partial as it does not go into detail about the exact inequalities nor does it advise on how to go about reducing gender inequalities. The social component of Feminist Political Economy has the explanatory power to highlight how public and private gender divisions of labor and socially imbalanced power relations can affect women's liberty and human rights (True, 2010: 41). This is a critical focus and has been discussed at length in this research paper, specifically how unequal gender rights may create barriers for women and marginalized groups in society.

Family responsibilities can impact women according to their cultural heritage, race or class can be illuminated through the social component of Feminist Political Economy. This is a relevant perspective on the case of land rights as a lack of land rights may impact the woman's role within the family. This may implicate the cultivation of food sources, as well as have negative repercussions on a female's cultural heritage because it may harm the family's reputation, or create problems for her ethnic tribe, and ultimately affect her class. Though considering this link of family responsibilities, land rights and food security, it is a stretch to make these connections as the social component of Feminist Political Economy does not explicitly mention the link between family responsibilities, land rights and food security.

The social component of Feminist Political Economy has the explanatory power to outline the need for gender equality in sectors to potentially benefit communities, increase productivity and reduce food security. There is not a direct link to land rights in this example, though there is a link to food security and therefore this research makes a connection by considering land cultivation as a sector. In another example, the social component of Feminist Political Economy associates inequalities within society to the 'root causes of war'. The social component is partial in this explanation, as it does not specify what exact inequalities may provoke war.

Analysis of the Political Component of Feminist Political Economy

After colonial powers drew the borders of the African continent, and the area of the DRC was under Belgian rule (1908- 1960), land became a state asset. After 1960, access to land in the DRC has been seen as either an investment, credit or a source for resources that has been used as a currency of power (Vlassenroot & Huggins, 2004: 120). The political component of Feminist Political Economy states here that there is room for equal distribution of power and resources (Isaković, 2018: 5). Hereabouts, this research recommends that in the context of land rights, men and women should have equal access to land and resource distribution. If land is seen as either an investment, credit or a source for resources and used as a currency for power, that may only make it possible for wealthier Congolese to have access to land. What would be of the citizens who cannot afford to own their own land? Would it lead to food insecurity? It is possible, as access to land is often crucial to provide food and water and can be used to acquire resources that can be sold or traded.

Land can provide nutrition and income (Tarimo, 2014: v- xi). The political component of Feminist Political Economy highlights that there should be room for equal distribution of resources (Isaković, 2018: 5), especially since land titles are commonly given to the man which consequently renounces the women from the right to cultivate her own land or opportunity to sell her own produce (Apodaca 1998: 147). Access to land is equally important to men and women and they should both have access to resources such as food and water, and income from trade opportunities.

As many rural communities in the DRC struggle with access to land due to internal conflicts and new infrastructures for industrial scale agribusinesses, the identities of rural citizens are often negatively impacted by the loss of land access (International Union for Conservation of Nature, 2016: 1), (Vlassenroot, 2005: 120). In this example, the political component of Feminist Political Economy investigates the need for equal distribution of power and resources. If rural residents of the DRC had protective mechanisms to land rights then they may be protected in the situation of internal conflicts or industrial agribusiness construction. However, for the reason that they do not have protective land rights, especially women, they may be at risk. This uncertainty may cause a decrease in land investments and render the land useless for cultivation purposes for years to come (Vlassenroot, 2005: 1). Here, this research considers land as a resource and therefore makes a link to the political component of Feminist Political Economy and the urge for equal distribution of power and resources (Isaković, 2018: 5).

Discussion of the Political Component of Feminist Political Economy

After testing the political component of Feminist Political Economy, it will now be discussed whether the approach has the explanatory power to shed light on how land rights may impact food insecurity in the DRC. This discussion will also take into consideration where the approach succeeds and falls short in its explanation. Moreover, the discussion will highlight possible policy recommendations within the discourse of food insecurity and land rights in the DRC.

This research finds the political component of Feminist Political Economy is partial in its explanatory power connecting the possible impact of land rights to food insecurity. As previously mentioned in the analysis of the political component of Feminist Political Economy, since the 1960's land access in the DRC has either been seen as an investment, credit or a source for resources that has been used as a currency of power (Vlassenroot & Huggins, 2004: 120). The political component of Feminist Political Economy investigates the need for equal distribution of power and resources. Access to land as a distribution of power, can be considered a resource and a connection to food security. Without access to land and the ability to cultivate food sources, there may be a likely threat of food insecurity. Drawing on this, the political component of Feminist Political Economy is not able to link land rights and food insecurity based on the reason that the political component does not set out to observe matters of land rights and food insecurity.

The political component of Feminist Political Economy does not explicitly go into detail of what resources should be distributed evenly and therefore leaves much to interpretation. In the event of civilians in rural areas losing their access to land for new infrastructure developments, such as industrial scale agribusinesses, the political component cannot provide further analytical tools on how to approach the loss of land access. This research attempts to make the link between investments in land agribusiness and the political component's observation of the resource links between different institutions. Therefore, the political component of Feminist Political Economy cannot contribute to this analysis as it cannot explain which resources impact what institutions. In addition, the political component does not address any connection to food security or food insecurity because it is not designed to do so.

Analysis of the Economic Component of Feminist Political Economy

In the DRC there is uncertainty about the access to land and investments which often result in a decrease in land investments. “These elements lead to a shift in the qualitative use of land and put food security mechanisms under stress “(Vlassenroot, 2005: 1). In this case, in the future if the land is not tended to, it can be rendered useless for cultivation purposes for years (Vlassenroot, 2005: 1). The economic component of Feminist Political Economy explains the distribution of wealth and power and how these decisions affect societies (Isaković, 2018: 2). The economic component investigates who is investing in land and how the lack of investments may affect communities. Furthermore, it can also shine light on civilians losing access to land to other wealthier investment groups and how this threat may have a negative effect on civilian ideologies (Davis in Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 93).

The loss of land and inability to cultivate the land may have a potentially negative impact on civilians' determination of class, their work and their own value (Davis in Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 93). As previously discussed (*on page 34*) access to land in rural areas of the DRC is often crucial in order to provide food and water and it can additionally be used to acquire resources that can be sold or traded. The economic component of Feminist Political Economy highlights the different factors of access and distribution, gender patterns in wages and the decency in wages (Isaković, 2018: 5). Though it is not explained in detail, it is interpreted that access and distribution, in this example, means access to food, water, and the resources that can be sold or traded. In addition, the economic component states that gender patterns in wages are important. If the ‘decency of wages’ is to be understood as equal pay, then this research draws a link from the access to land rights to being more food secure, as a ‘decent wage’ allows for a better socio-economic situation. This research acknowledges this a viable consideration for example, when selling and trading food.

Though the DRC gained its independence many years ago, land ownership remains challenging and many rural communities continue to struggle with access to land due to conflicts, industrial scale agribusinesses and the building of new infrastructures (Vlassenroot, 2005: 120), (International Union for Conservation of Nature, 2016: 1). The economic component of Feminist Political Economy recognizes that there may be struggles in land access in situations of conflict or new developments. This may have great implications on civilians’ ‘class’, ‘work’, and ‘value’ within society (Davis in Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 93).

The Discussion of the Economic Component of Feminist Political Economy

After testing the economic component of Feminist Political Economy, it will now be discussed whether the approach has the explanatory power to shed light on land rights and its impact on food insecurity in the DRC. This discussion will also take into consideration where the approach succeeds and falls short in its explanation. This research did not find any policy recommendations in the analysis section of the economic component so therefore no discussion will be included in this section.

The economic component of Feminist Political Economy is capable of explaining how different wealth and power sources may impact investments in land agribusiness and land developments and how this may affect surrounding communities. The inability for rural citizens to access land, may lead to challenges in finding food sources. Although the economic component of Feminist Political Economy states how wealth and power can affect communities, it cannot provide an explanation of how this happens.

The economic component of Feminist Political Economy acknowledges how economic variables, such as loss of land rights, may have great implications for the determination of 'class', 'work' and development of 'value' (Davis in Mutari & Boushey, 1997: 93). However, the economic component of Feminist Political Economy again, cannot highlight which economic variables may have great implications for citizens. Furthermore, it does not mention how class, work and value are affected in the situation of loss of land. The case of land rights can be linked to the loss of access to land as an economic variable, yet this research acknowledges that the economic component of Feminist Political Economy is not set out to observe situations of food insecurity so can therefore not be used as a tool to connect food insecurity and land rights.

Feminist Food Justice on Land Rights in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Analysis of Supporting Food Production at Multiple Scales

The component of supporting food production at multiple scales within Feminist Food Justice considers gender as essential when it comes to production and decision making. This is for the reason that women and marginalized groups are often the ones running small scale farms or

production. In order to cultivate land, having access to land is crucial. Access can be obtained either by leasing a plot of land or by buying land. Access to land can not only provide food and water, but also allow an individual or family to sell or trade what is produced on the farm which can result in an income or access to goods (Tarimo, 2014: v- xi).

The component of supporting food production at multiple scales within Feminist Food Justice suggests that institutions of public governance and civil society should have an active role in encouraging the cultivation of land for food purposes. Furthermore, local and national levels of governance should legitimize the process of land development for food purposes. This can be achieved by establishing supportive environments for women and marginalized groups who are interested and engaged in farming. By suggesting this, the component of supporting food production at multiple scales emphasizes that by establishing supportive environments for women and marginalized groups, it can lead to food security. This research recommends that if women and marginalized groups have access to supportive environments this can increase knowledge of farming which can lead to food security.

Access to land may have an impact on the ability to be self-sustainable. It may also allow individuals to trade produce which is a means to either to obtain financial security or other necessary products. The component of supporting food production at multiple scales within Feminist Food Justice recommends that there should be protective mechanisms in place in order to provide safety for women and children. The component highlights the importance of providing and equipping urban areas with spaces where farming is encouraged. The protective mechanisms the component of supporting food production at multiple scales refers to is not specified, in this case one could argue that a possible protective mechanism could be land rights and access to land. Access to land and land rights may provide safety for women and marginalized groups (*on page 35*) and may also be a secure source for food, as it has the ability to improve the chance of food security.

The component of supporting food production at multiple scales emphasizes the importance of ending hunger. In order to do so, the component recommends land reforms and the redistribution of land. Furthermore, it identifies policy makers on international, national, regional and local levels to work towards the same goal of ending hunger. Ending hunger by using land reforms and redistribution of land may be an intrusive measure. This research considers that the redistribution of land and land reforms may provide people with access to

land that in turn can provide those individuals with food security. As stated previously, many rural communities in the DRC struggle with access to land due to, amongst others; conflict and agribusiness, therefore the redistribution of land may have a positive outcome for food security in these rural areas.

The Discussion of Supporting Food Production at Multiple Scales

The component of supporting food production at multiple scales is not designed to investigate land rights. For this reason, the component of supporting food production at multiple scales cannot be applied to the case of food insecurity and land rights in the DRC. In order for the component of supporting food production at multiple scales to highlight the effects of land rights on food insecurity it needs a supplementary theory or approach for support. This discussion will now review the findings and possible policy recommendations within the discourse of food insecurity and land rights in the DRC.

The component of supporting food production at multiple scales within Feminist Food Justice recommends the support of women and marginalized groups in the production and decision making of food. This may illuminate the situation of women and marginalized groups in food production and highlight their roles in production and decision making which can contribute to food security. In order to partake in food production and decision-making access to land is paramount, whether it is access to land through leasing, owning or working the land.

In order to establish supportive environments for women and marginalized groups, the component suggests that local and national levels of governance legitimize the process of farming and that institutions of public governance and civil society should have an active role in this effort. For example, support roof-top gardens, where farming property is scarce, such as in urban areas. These efforts may lead to food security if supportive environments are established and individuals have the opportunity to engage in farming.

The component emphasizes that protective mechanisms should be in place in order to provide safety for women and children. As the 'protective mechanisms' the component refers to is not specified, one could argue that a possible protective mechanism could be land rights and access to land. Access to land and or land rights have the ability to secure food production, of course if there are no other factors that impact food security such as internal conflict or climate change.

The component of supporting food production at multiple scales within Feminist Food Justice, recommends using land reforms and redistribution in order to eradicate hunger. This may be quite the intrusive measure, where the government most likely has to partake in the redistribution of land. However, in order to arrive at a destination where individuals have food security it might be a necessary measure to take.

Analysis of Revaluing Food Work that Feeds Families

The component of revaluing food work that feeds families within Feminist Food Justice recommends that improving the rights of farmers and food workers will potentially lead to standards that allow for benefits and steady incomes. For many, it is crucial to have access to land in the DRC, as land can provide food and water (*on page 34*). The component of revaluing food work that feeds families does not specify farmer's rights. Whether they are human rights or land rights, it is not clear. Land rights are beneficial to farmers and food workers as it may provide stability and can lead to better food security. Additionally, uncertainty about the access to land tends to decrease the investment in the land (Vlassenroot, 2005: 1). When land rights are not an issue and the land can be cultivated and taken care of, the results can be beneficial for both for farmers and the ability to feed their family.

Moreover, the component of revaluing food work that feeds families considers women as core workers as they often are the foundation of food production and food provision in households (Allen & Sachs, 2007: 2). In the event of internal conflict or climate change, women can benefit from having land rights as they form the core of workers on small farms and small farms could be potentially at great risk in a situation of conflict or climate change. Furthermore, in some cases in the DRC women are not able to inherit land, and if the land belongs to the spouse, women are more vulnerable in a case of sudden death or divorce, therefore access to land rights can be crucial for women.

The Discussion of Revaluing Food Work that Feeds Families

After learning about the explanatory power of the component of revaluing food work that feeds families, it became clear, that this particular component does not set out to investigate land rights. In order for the component of revaluing food work that feeds families to showcase the effects of land rights on food insecurity it requires the support of a supplementary theory

or approach. This discussion will take into consideration where the approach succeeds and falls short in its explanation. In addition, the discussion will suggest possible policy recommendations.

The component of revaluing food work that feeds families within Feminist Food Justice recommends that by improving the rights of farmers and food workers it will potentially lead to standards that allow for benefits and steady incomes. The component does not specify which rights they refer to. This research interprets rights in this example as human rights and land rights. Taking a starting point with land rights, these are in some ways the essence of farmers, as ownership of land may provide safety. The combination of safety and the right to land may increase the farmers interest and investment in the land because the outcome is beneficial to the farmer cultivating the land. This can lead to food security because the land can be cultivated and tended to and there is no uncertainty about the access to land.

Women are important because they are the core workers and the foundation of food production and food provision in households according to the component of revaluing food work that feeds families. Traditionally, it is assumed that women will marry and thus take part of their spouse's land therefore in many rural areas women in the DRC do not inherit land. However, if these core workers do not have the rights to land or access to land this can potentially threaten their food security.

Analysis of Providing Good Food for All

The component of providing good food for all within Feminist Food Justice focuses on the engagement of governments and organizations on all levels to commit to provide good food for all. Today, the most common food source is the agriculture sector in the DRC. Although there has been scientific progress in producing 'clean meat' in laboratories, agriculture is still considered the most important source to produce good food for all. In the DRC, producing good food for all has been a challenge as only 10 percent of arable land has been cultivated for food purposes.

According to the component of providing good food for all within Feminist Food Justice, it is critical to engage men and boys in the preparation of food. By doing so the component illuminates the 'private sphere', where the domestic tasks are done in the home, and attempts to facilitate an environment that is engaged in and recognizes the benefits of the life skill in

food preparation. It is not necessary to own land nor have access to land to engage someone in the preparation and cooking food, but what is necessary is having a place to cook. Only 10 percent of women in the DRC own land. As women often are responsible for preparing and cooking the food, illuminating the ‘private sphere’ allows for the task of preparing food to be highlighted and possibly performed equally by men and women.

The Discussion of Providing Good Food for All

After learning more about the component of providing good food for all, it became clear that this particular component does not set out to investigate land rights. For this reason, the component cannot be applied to the case of food insecurity and land rights in the DRC. In order for the component of providing good food for all to highlight the effects of land rights on food insecurity it requires the support of a supplementary theory or approach. This discussion will highlight the possible policy recommendations within the discourse of food insecurity and land rights in the DRC and review the findings of the analysis.

By having governments and organizations committed to providing good food for all, which is a recommendation of the component, the emphasis should be put on both having access to land and land rights. The right to own land gives economic security and potential for a stable source of food especially if the land can be used for cultivation. Whether it be a large plot of land, a rooftop garden, or a small backyard garden, having access to a place where one can grow food can provide a stable food source.

Climate change, internal conflict and land rights have the ability to negatively impact vulnerable groups in the DRC which can have disastrous consequences on their food security. These groups are often defined as women and children, but men are also targeted in conflict and may face difficulties obtaining access to land based on amongst others their ethnicity (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2015: 42).

The analysis and discussion sections are now complete and a summary of this research’s findings will be presented in the following conclusion section.

Conclusion

The purpose of conducting this research has been to test the two feminist theories; Feminist Political Economy and Feminist Food Justice, and investigate whether they could be applied as a tool to explain the problem of food insecurity in the DRC. This thesis had the following research question: *How and to what extent can feminist theories be used as a tool to explain food insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo?* It was the goal of this research to review how the selected feminist theories could be applied to give reason for the likely factors of climate change, internal conflict and land rights on food insecurity. Furthermore, this research has attempted to increase the understanding of and how these factors may contribute to food insecurity in the DRC.

After testing the feminist theories in the analysis, we realized that the theories had particular components that were better for observing internal conflict over climate change, for example. On one hand, when working with the theories and the case of food insecurity, we became conscious of the fact that occasionally, the theories were not able to contribute to this thesis' case. On the other hand, we interpreted that the theories could contribute in another way, namely; by proposing possible policy recommendations instead. Therefore, this thesis presented a sub-research question: *How can the analysis of feminist theories highlight possible policy recommendations within the discussion of food insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo?*

The Answering of the Thesis' Research and Sub-Research Questions

Based on the results of this thesis' analysis, we are able to answer the research question and sub-research question in two parts.

How and to what extent can feminist theories be used as a tool to explain food insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo?

The theory of Feminist Political Economy has only partial explanatory power in explaining climate changes role in food insecurity as the theory does not set out to explain matters of climate change. The theory can outline how inequalities in a society cause war, however,

there is no indication that climate change can be an instigator of societal inequalities through the lens of Feminist Political Economy.

Similarly, Feminist Food Justice does not have the ability to explain food insecurity through the factor of climate change because the theory does not set out to investigate climate change. Feminist Food Justice needs to be supplemented by another theory or approach.

Feminist Political Economy has the explanatory power, and can be used as a tool to explain internal conflict as a factor of food insecurity. This is because the theory outlines how war and conflict impact a person's access to natural resources and therefore threatens food security.

Feminist Food Justice cannot be used as a tool to explain internal conflict role in the issues of food insecurity in the DRC. This is due to the reason that the theory does not set out to investigate the factor of internal conflict.

Feminist Political Economy acknowledges that inequalities such as unequal access to land can lead to conflict and how different wealth and power sources impact investments in land ownership which can lead to food insecurity, therefore, the theory can be applied as a tool in explaining land rights and food security.

Feminist Food Justice cannot be used as a tool in the case of food insecurity and land rights, because the theory does not set out to investigate the factor of land rights.

In attempting to answer the sub-research question,

How can the analysis of feminist theories highlight possible policy recommendations within the discussion of food insecurity in the Democratic Republic of Congo?

The theory of Feminist Political Economy highlights two policy recommendations in the case of climate change and internal conflict within the discussion of food insecurity in the DRC. First, the need for equal access to natural ecosystems which will benefit communities and

secure food sources. And second, a call for gender equality, meaning equal rights to jobs, wages, human rights, food security and protection from security institutions.

The theory does not highlight possible policy recommendations within the discussion of food insecurity and land rights, nor does this research have contributing recommendations.

The theory of Feminist Food Justice highlights six policy recommendations in the case of climate change, internal conflict and land rights within the discussion of food insecurity in the DRC. First, farmers and food workers should have essential rights. Second, food quality can improve food insecurity. Third, international, national, regional and local policy makers should work towards the same goals in order to eradicate hunger. Fourth, there should be implementation of land reforms and the redistribution of land. Fifth, safety and land rights should be introduced to increase farmers' interests and investments in land. Lastly, Feminist Food Justice recommends that institutions of public governance and civil society have an active role in supportive environments such as community gardens. All of these recommendations are deemed essential policy recommendations in the discussion of food insecurity in the DRC.

This research aims to contribute to the discussion of specific factors impacting food security from a feminist perspective. Based on this, we can conclude that the theory of Feminist Political Economy can only partially be used as a tool to explain food insecurity in the DRC. This is because it was necessary for this research to draw its own links between the factors of climate change, internal conflict and land rights in the context of food insecurity. The theory of Feminist Food Justice therefore cannot be used as a tool to explain the factors of climate change, internal conflict and land rights on the discussion of food security in the DRC because it is not designed to do so.

The analysis of our selected feminist theories has indicated that there are few recommendations for Feminist Political Economy, however the theory of Feminist Food Justice has the ability to highlight many policy recommendations. We consider this fruitful for our research and contribution on the discussion of food insecurity in the DRC.

In Retrospect

The conclusion of this research, cannot say anything about how our findings would have been different if we would have chosen a different theoretical framework. In retrospect, if we would have included a different theory or approach, it may have had explanatory power to support the shortcomings of Feminist Political Economy and Feminist Food Justice. As a result, this could have had a constructive influence on the analysis of this thesis and therefore, contributed to different findings.

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