Think of the Children in Africa

- a minor field study in The Gambia on the views of food aid recipients on the responsibility of food aid donors
Abstract
The purpose of this thesis is to contrast the academic discussion on whether the affluent countries have a responsibility or not to provide food aid for the LDCs, to the views of food aid recipients. In addition to the issue of responsibility I also discuss the responsibilities of individuals contra governments, and what type of aid (if any) that is best to ensure food security. In order to gather information on the recipients’ points of views I have conducted a minor field study in The Gambia and interviewed former food aid recipients. In the academic discussion Thomas Pogge, Peter Singer, Dale Jamieson and David Miller are represented. The results of the field study shows that most of the recipients argue that the affluent countries in the world have a moral responsibility to assist the LDCs since they have the ability to assist. In contrast to the academic discussion, it becomes clear that the interviewees base their arguments on a different moral foundation than some of the theorists, and that they have different perspective on how to eradicate poverty and ensure food security.

Keywords: Food aid, recipients, donors, affluent, LDC, Pogge, Singer, Jamieson, Miller, moral responsibility, food security

Word count: 16 212
Acronyms and abbreviations

EU: The European Union
FAO: The Food and Agricultural Organization
ICESCR: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
IFAD: International Fund for Agricultural Development
GDP: Gross Domestic Product
GRD: Global Resources Dividend
LDC: Least Developed Countries
PPP-dollar: Purchasing Power Parity
UN: The United Nations
US: The United States of America
USAID: The United States Agency for International Development
WTO: The World Trade Organization
WFP: The World Food Programme
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1. Introduction

“Think of the Children in Africa” is a common saying in Sweden that is often used as a tool for parents to encourage their children to finish their food. The message of the saying is that the children in affluent countries,¹ such as Sweden, should feel happy that they have food on their plates. However, by using the saying as such a tool, one could argue that one is also claiming that the affluent parts of the world have a responsibility towards the poorer parts of the world. If it is not a responsibility to provide food for the poorer parts, it is at least a responsibility to be grateful for what one has that others do not. In an academic context the discussion of the affluent countries responsibility towards the poor countries in the world, or the Least Developed Countries (LDC)², is not new. Nor is the discussion on how this support should be designed, if it should exist. However, one could argue that the academic discussion is lacking the voices of the people the discussion in the end concerns the most; the recipients. Recipients of food aid are receivers of perhaps one of the most controversial types of aid, a type of aid that might harm the prospects for long-term development and food security, while it at the same time is essential for people’s ability to live a healthy and active life.

My intention with this thesis is not to discuss whether the affluent countries have a responsibility or not to support the LDCs, but to provide input to such a discussion. In this thesis I am going to focus on the food aid recipients’ points of views, in contrast to the academic discussion in the affluent countries. I have chosen to do my field research in The Gambia. The Gambia gained its independence from Great Britain in 1965 and is today not only the smallest, but also one of the poorest countries in Africa.

1.1 Aim

The purpose of this thesis is to contrast the academic discussion on whether the affluent countries have a responsibility or not to provide food aid for the LDCs, using the views of food aid recipients as a contrast. My primary interest is to contribute an interesting perspective to the discussion on whether the affluent countries have a moral obligation to assist the LDCs, or not. By focusing on the views of food aid recipients I hope to be able to

¹ Affluent is defined by the Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2008) as: “having a lot of money or owning a lot of things; rich; affluent nations”.
² The LDCs are listed by the UN and 49 countries are defined as LDC. The list can be found at: http://www.un.org/esa/policy/devplan/profile/ldc_list.pdf
contribute with such a perspective. It is also my ambition to contribute an interesting perspective on what type of aid (if any) that should be given in order to ensure food security.

1.2 Research questions
The views of the food aid recipients will be contrasted to the academic discussion by applying the following research questions:

- What are the views of food aid recipients on donor’s responsibility to provide food aid?
- What are the views of food aid recipients on individuals contra governments responsibility to provide food aid?
- If the recipients argue that aid should be provided in order to ensure food security, should then humanitarian assistance or long term development assistance be the priority?

1.3 Theoretical perspectives
A minor field study executed in The Gambia in spring 2012 constitutes the major foundation of this thesis. In addition, theories concerning the affluent countries responsibility to why it might be a moral responsibility to provide aid for the LDCs, along with theories concerning what should be done, will constitute a theoretical foundation for the analysis and discussion.

1.4 Method and material
For the minor field study, I have used a qualitative research model with in depth-interviews. I have decided to conduct semi-structured interviews in which the interviewees themselves can formulate their answers to my questions. This will give the interviewees the opportunity to express their opinions freely so that no point is being missed. I chose semi-structured interviews since I believe that there is a risk that unstructured interviews would go off topic and therefore result in interview material that is difficult to analyze and discuss in relation to the theoretical framework. I did not choose to conduct a form of survey interviews since I believe that there is a risk that the recipients would not be able to fully resonate and express their opinions in these moral philosophical matters. In most of my interviews I have used a translator and I am aware of the extent of my dependence on the translator. The dependence is

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not only a question of words, but also perspectives. That is why it is recommended that the researcher is well aware of the translator’s intellectual biography.\textsuperscript{4} I believe that I got quite well aware of my translator’s intellectual biography during the field study. I did not come across any personal agendas from him and believe that he managed to stay objective. Another misgiving I had was that the women I would interview would not be able to freely express their opinions due to cultural barriers. In reflections over this I found that two of the five women I interviewed did not give as much eye contact as the others. I did however not experience any differences in how free the interviewees felt in expressing their opinions, no matter if they were a man or a woman.

I have interviewed five women and five men and categorized them thereafter. In addition, some of the interviewees have been categorized as displaced (which means that they have somehow been affected by a natural disaster), while others have been categorized as farmers, while others have been categorized as both displaced and farmers. The recipients who I have interviewed sometimes go under the title of “interviewees” and sometimes as “recipients”, this is not to confuse the reader but only to clarify if I am talking about recipients in general or the interviewees specifically.

In Chapter 2, I will focus on theories by Thomas Pogge, Professor of Philosophy and International Affairs at Yale University; Peter Singer, Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University; Dale Jamieson, Professor of Environmental Studies and Philosophy at New York University; and David Miller, Professor in Social and Political Theory at Nuffield College, Oxford. Pogge and Singer are well recognized when it comes to the issues of global responsibilities. Jamieson contributes with an interesting perspective to Singer’s theories while Miller contributes with a different way of perceiving the idea of global responsibility.

In Chapter 3, I will present an introduction to The Gambia, food aid and food security. The background information about The Gambia has been gathered from the Swedish encyclopedia “Nationalencyklopedin”, a source that is commonly seen as neutral and up to date. The facts about food as a human right, food aid and food security have been gathered from academic

literary sources and the United Nations, whom I all see as reliable sources. In the last part of the chapter, I will present the interview material.

In order to establish contact with food recipients, I have been in contact with the World Food Programme (WFP) in The Gambia. The WFP have provided me with lists of food aid recipients of 2011 and a contact list of people working for the local governments as regional disaster coordinators. While in the search for interviewees, I have outlined a few criteria except for the already mentioned categories on gender and farmer/displaced. The criteria are based on Robert Chambers’ theories on the risk for biases in perceiving poverty. Chambers argues that there are a number of biases that all can be a risk when a researcher attempts to conduct research in rural areas. Some of these biases I have found more central than others while conducting this field study. The most central types of biases are connected to the challenges to get in touch with a diverse group of interviewees. In this sense I am not talking about a diverse group of interviewees in terms of for instance gender and ethnicity. In this field research I would argue that it is of importance to get in touch with people who have different experiences, people who are of different social classes, and people who have different capabilities. It might be difficult to get in touch with such a diverse target group for a number of reasons. Chambers defines for instance roadside biases and person biases as central types of biases when it comes to getting in touch with the “right” people. Chambers argues that road side biases is common and argues that bad or sometimes close to non-existent roads makes it difficult for researchers to travel to more remote areas and that can give the researcher an incomplete image of the situation. In addition, people who are less poor in developing countries tend to live close to the main roads, while the poorest live in more remote areas. Chambers argues that person biases take many shapes. Two of these are elite biases and active, present and living biases. As for the elite biases, Chambers claims that local people who are less poor and more influential, such as village leaders or local coordinators, often are the main source of information and are those who articulate the locals’ opinions and interests. When it comes to the active, present and living types of biases, Chambers argues that the people one as a researcher tends to be exposed to often be the active people, such as fit and healthy people. People who are sick will perhaps not be subject for interviews, thus a big part of the full image of poverty rests on the people who are not seen. Chambers therefore argues that it is important to be aware of these types of biases in order to prevent them in the

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field work. In the search for interviewees I have tried to locate my interviews to both sites close to main roads and sites in more remote areas. I have randomly picked names from the WFP lists in order to avoid the person biases when someone else will choose who I will talk to. The regional disaster coordinators have thereafter assisted me with further contact information so that I will be able to get in contact with the interviewees. Representatives from the WFP or the local governments have not been influencing my choice of whom to interview, nor have they been present during the interviews.

1.5 Delimitations

In this thesis, I am going to focus on the food aid recipients’ points of views on aid, as a contrast to the academic discussion on the donors, or affluent countries, responsibility to provide aid. I will refrain from concluding whether the affluent countries have a responsibility or not to support the LDCs. If, however, the recipients argue that aid should be provided in order to ensure food security I will discuss whether humanitarian assistance or long term development assistance is to be preferred.

In Chapter 2, a number of theories are discussed in relation to my research questions. Arguably the gender aspect is an important factor to take into consideration when it comes to issues of poverty and societal structures in general. However, in this thesis I have refrained from applying the gender aspect through the use of theories and have focused on theories that I found most central in relation to my research questions.

In the analysis of the interviews I will focus on the interviewee’s backgrounds to why they are receiving food aid, and nevertheless their views on donor’s responsibility. I will also focus on what action(s) that the interviewees think should be taken in order to ensure food security. In the analysis, I will prioritize the interview material in each interview that is most related to these matters. I will not be able to account for every part of the interviews.

1.6 Disposition

In order to give the reader a solid theoretical foundation before proceeding with the field study, I have chosen to place the chapter on theory as Chapter 2, followed by the field study in Chapter 3. Paragraphs on The Gambia, food as a human right, food aid and food security

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6 Chambers, Robert. 1981: page 7-9
constitutes an introduction part of Chapter 3. The introduction part is followed by a presentation of the interview material. In Chapter 4, the recipients’ views on food aid donors’ responsibility to provide food aid, along with the theory in Chapter 2, is contrasted in an analysis and discussion. Finally, in Chapter 5, I will sum up the conclusion of this thesis.
2. Theoretical framework

A number of philosophers, such as Thomas Pogge, Peter Singer and Dale Jamieson, have argued that the affluent countries have a responsibility towards the LDCs. Pogge argues that the affluent countries have a responsibility towards the LDCs due to an unequal world order that is favoring the affluent countries. Singer argues that the affluent countries have a responsibility because they have the ability to assist the LDCs. Jamieson agrees with Singer’s conclusion, although he does not think it is as black and white as Singer may argue. Jamieson argues that the aid given by affluent countries is sometimes hurting more than it is actually helping. In addition, Pogge is arguing that there are not just certain things that the affluent countries should do for the LDCs, there is also a number of things that the affluent countries should refrain from doing. In common for Pogge, Singer and Jamieson is that they base their arguments for global justice on a foundation or idea of global equality, an idea that is contested by David Miller. Miller argues that global justice rather is an issue of not letting the countries individual economical strengths control the political power in the world. Miller argues that the issue of equality rather than being a global issue should be a national issue. Miller also argues that there is a bigger responsibility towards our fellow countrymen than towards people in other countries.

2.1 Thomas Pogge – the affluent countries responsibility towards the LDCs

According to Thomas Pogge, the affluent countries have a responsibility towards the LDCs. Pogge argues that the responsibility comes from how the affluent countries are benefiting from an unequal and unfair global economic system. Pogge argues that people in the affluent countries in general are experiencing the global economic order as fundamentally fair, while people in the LDCs perceive it as unfair. However, the global economic order would not be perceived as a fair, or just, economic order if it was the economic order at a national level in the affluent countries, Pogge argues. He describes two minimum requirements that people require in a national economic order: first, that decisions are made by a majority; second, that severe poverty, which can be a danger to human life, must be avoided. In the global economic order, Pogge argues, are the demands far from the same as on the national economic order in the affluent countries. In the global economic order it is more accepted that decisions are made by small elites, for instance by dictators, and that many people’s basic needs, such as food and water, are not satisfied. Pogge argues that such circumstances would not be accepted
in a national economic order. The result of the different requirements of economic orders has led to the existence of a perception in the affluent countries that it is acceptable that some countries are worse off than others. Pogge claims that it is a perception that makes it possible for the affluent countries to justify and force developing countries into an unjust global economic order. Therefore, Pogge argues, that same requirements for a just national economic order must be applied to the global economic order, something that needs to be done through global institutions.

The current global economic order is applied partly through global institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO). Pogge is critical towards WTO and its advocating of free trade and open markets in developing countries, while WTO at the same time has agreed to keep the affluent countries markets partially closed through applying high tariffs. WTO policies have resulted in a scenario where the affluent countries can benefit from free trade when they want to export goods to developing countries, while at the same time being able to protect their own agricultural sectors, Pogge argues. The agricultural sector is in many cases the largest production sector in developing countries; it is, therefore, an important sector for further economic development. However, the agricultural sector is at the same time one of the most protected sectors in the affluent countries. In a broader perspective, Pogge also highlights the uncompensated exclusion from the use of natural resources, and the effects of colonialism. Pogge argues that these factors also are part in why the affluent countries have a responsibility towards the LDCs. As for the exclusion from the use of natural resources, Pogge notes that a global elite, or the affluent countries, are using up the earth's resources while leaving the world's poor with nothing. Being able to use and sell natural resources are arguably important for development. Pogge claims that it is an unjust reality that the affluent countries are using up the earth’s resources, it is however a reality since it is accepted by the elite. In addition, the effects of a common and violent history, such as the colonial period, is why the affluent countries are able to justify such a reality without the LDCs being able to change the situation. In sum, Pogge claims that the affluent countries’ actions through global institutions, and the affluent countries’ special status, are keeping the LDCs in poverty. Therefore, is it a question of justice, rather than charity, to support the LDCs.

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7 Pogge, Thomas. *World Poverty and Human Rights*. 2008: page 100-123
8 Pogge, Thomas. 2008: page 18-32
9 Pogge, Thomas. 2008: page 207-210
Since the current global unjust economic order is applied through global institutions, Pogge suggests institutional reforms in order to combat the injustices. Pogge’s suggestions include three types of reforms: first, a redistribution of global resources; secondly, the changed loan conditions; and third, a reform of tariffs and other barriers. The first type of reform, redistribution of global resources, Pogge calls Global Resources Dividend (GRD). Central in GRD is that the current institutional arrangements are only unjust if a reallocation of resources can be done without leading to poverty in the affluent countries. However, Pogge argues that GRD would not pose any overwhelming changes on the standard of living in the affluent countries, as they already have an abundance of resources. In order to make GRD a realistic reform program Pogge claims that it is of importance to stay as close to the existing world order with the principle of sovereignty as possible. Therefore, it is of importance that states continue to control the natural resources. However, what Pogge proposes is the introduction of a global tax on the sale and use of natural resources. Critics argue that a global tax would most likely result in increased prices on natural resources, such as oil, though Pogge argues that the global tax would only result in a small increase. Pogge exemplifies this by claiming that a global tax on 3 US dollars per oil barrel, an increase which would be paid by oil producers, but probably ultimately paid by consumers’ purchases of gasoline and other fuels, would make a big difference. Pogge argues that with GRD it would be possible to stop world hunger within a few years.  

Pogge highlights some worries concerning dictatorships and loans, and, therefore, advocates changed loan conditions. According to Pogge, loans that dictators have taken in the name of a country might not always be in the best interest of that country’s population. Pogge argues that loans taken by dictators often primarily benefit the country’s elite, with little, or none, trickle down-effect. The responsibility for the loan, however, is not on the dictator but the country as a whole. Seeing that this might harm the population in dictatorships, Pogge, therefore, suggests that the responsibility for loans taken by dictators should not fall on the population and at the expense of other public expenditures. In Pogge’s third suggested reform, he highlights the paradox that the affluent countries, often through institutions such as

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10 Pogge, Thomas. 2008: page 210-214  
11 Pogge, Thomas. 2008: page 100-123  
12 Pogge, Thomas. 2008: page 159-161
the WTO, advocates global free trade, while they themselves adhere to specific barriers. Pogge argues that this has to change.\(^{13}\)

### 2.2 Peter Singer and Dale Jamieson – Morality and the demands of it

In resemblance to Thomas Pogge’s claims on responsibility, Peter Singer argues in the article “Famine, Affluence, and Morality” from 1972 that “if it is in our power to prevent something very bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything else morally significant, we ought, morally, to do it.”\(^{14}\) Singer exemplifies by arguing that it would be a moral obligation to save a child from drowning in a shallow pond if you are there to witness it, no matter if your clothes would get muddy wading out to the child or not. Such a situation would not just be classified as a situation where it is good if one saves the child, but it would, by most people, be classified as a situation where it is a moral obligation to save the child, Singer argues. No matter if other people are standing next to the pond without doing anything, Singer emphasizes that individuals still have an individual responsibility and that they are duty bearers. Therefore, Singer claims that it would not be morally defendable to not save the child, just because others do not. Singer argues that the same moral foundation should be applied to disasters and famines; just as it is a moral obligation to save the drowning child, it is a moral obligation to save people from starvation, if you have the ability to do so. Giving aid is, therefore, according to Singer, not a question of charity, but an obligation for the affluent people. Singer puts a lot of emphasis on individuals as duty bearers, he does however recognize the need for governmental aid and advocates new standards for both private and public aid. Aid should, according to Singer, not be ruled by for instance the 1 % of GNP policy, as by many governments is an accepted level of how much aid one should give. Aid should be given according to one’s ability. The ability is central in Singer’s arguments and he recognizes the difficulties in measuring exactly how much one is able to donate. As long as it is possible to assist someone else without it causing as much suffering for one as it might prevent for others, then it is, according to Singer, the morally right thing to do.\(^{15}\)

In relation to Singer’s article, Dale Jamieson accepts Singer’s claim that it is a moral obligation for affluent to save the starving. However, Jamieson discusses firstly how demanding Singer’s views on morality can be, and secondly, the consequences of aid.

\(^{13}\) Pogge, Thomas. 2008: page 18-32  
\(^{14}\) Singer, Peter. “Famine, Affluence and Morality”. 1972: page 231  
\(^{15}\) Singer, Peter. 1972: page 229-243
Jamieson argues that Singer’s example on the drowning child is a question about more than if one ought to save the child or not. Jamieson argues that there are a number of factors and questions that need to be included in Singer’s example. For instance, whose child is it and what will happen to the child after it has been rescued? The underlying factors to why the child is in the pond are not dealt with, just as the consequences of the rescue. Singer compares this to how famine is often perceived and combated. Jamieson claims that famine is rarely caused by a series of coincidences. Famine occurs repeatedly in the same areas of the world, perhaps seemingly caused by droughts, but actually primarily caused by war and conflicts. Jamieson argues for instance that governmental policies during conflicts often have been the cause of why certain minority groups repeatedly have been going through famine. Circumstances of why people are starving are important, perhaps not primarily in order to discuss whether it is a moral obligation or not to rescue someone from starving, but in order to see what affects the assistance will have, Jamieson argues. However, in discussing Singer’s example on the drowning child Jamieson also discusses whether it is reasonable to use that as an argument on the responsibility to help people who are suffering through famine. In Singer’s example it is one child that is about to drown, if one should compare it to how many people are suffering from famine in the world it would however be a question of saving a lot more than one drowning child. In addition, famine is not dealt with in one day, as an action of saving a child from drowning would be. However, if one were to assume that the affluent countries have a responsibility to support the LDCs, there are questions to be raised on the consequences of aid. Jamieson argues that humanitarian assistance has become an industry, rather than a “once in a while”-relief. He also argues that humanitarian assistance does not solve the underlying problems of famine. For instance, in Ethiopia people have suffered through famines on several occasions over the last decades. As a result, Ethiopia has received more humanitarian assistance in the last 20 years than any other developing country, while the development assistance during this time has been very little. The line between humanitarian assistance and development assistance might be thin or difficult to define, but Jamieson defines humanitarian assistance as a form of relief aid, and development assistance as a form of long-term development support. Studies have shown that people from the north-eastern highlands of Ethiopia are now worse off than ever, after receiving a lot of humanitarian assistance and little development assistance. Ethiopia is today depending on food aid on a continuous basis.¹⁶

Jamieson argues that it is no coincidence that there has been a focus on humanitarian assistance, rather than development assistance in Ethiopia. In 2001 about 40 % of all development aid was tied to benefit domestic firms in donor countries, while close to 80 % of the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) contracts and grants went to American firms. One stated mission for USAID has been to dispose US agricultural surpluses. It is clear, according to Jamieson, that aid as it is carried through today has negative consequences for recipient countries. However, Jamieson does not deny that the affluent countries have a responsibility to assist the poor in the world. On the contrary, Jamieson agrees with Singer on the affluent countries moral responsibility. He advocates, however, that the first step for the affluent countries ought to be to stop all the aid that has negative effects for the recipients. Jamieson advocates the importance of retracing the money for aid projects and of carefully analyzing the outcome of humanitarian assistance and development assistance. A second important step would be to abolish trade barriers imposed by the US and the EU, which are, according to Jamieson, making it difficult for developing countries to export and import on equal terms with the US and the EU. In sum, Jamieson argues that it is not enough to just give aid and think that one is doing the right thing. The consequences of aid can be fateful if not provided in a way that is not harming the recipients.  

2.3 David Miller – Global equality vs. global justice

David Miller argues against the view, advocated by Pogge, Singer and Jamieson, that global justice should be understood as global equality. Miller discusses in particular the global equality of opportunity. Miller recognizes that equality should be central in thinking about social justice on a nation-state level; he does, however, argue that global equality should not be a requirement for social justice on a global level. Miller is not in any sense against global equality, and he claims that the world is unequal in terms of assets and opportunities and argues that the inequality constitutes unequal power relations between states. Making global equality a synonym to global justice, he argues, would risk making global justice impossible to accomplish. Arguments that global equality is a requirement of global justice is often based primarily on two grounds, Miller claims. The first ground concerns a general cosmopolitan claim; the equal value of human beings. Miller argues that he can counter this idea by using the following example: imagine that a child goes missing, this is bad no matter whose child it is.  

17 Jamieson, Dale. 2005: page 159-170
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is, but if it is your child, then you are more likely to do everything in your power in order to locate the child again. In such a case you are also expected to take a bigger responsibility than if the child was a child from another community and when you would likely not feel the same responsibility, Miller argues. Thereby, he argues, we are valuing people in our close surroundings higher than people in the distant and we find this reasonable for everyone. The second ground is focused on a claim that national boundaries are morally arbitrary and therefore irrelevant to justice. By this claim, some would argue for an existing responsibility between people, no matter where one comes from, since a nationality, and all its consequences, is something you are given at birth and not something you can affect. Pogge, for instance, claims that the unequal world order and trade barriers that are sometimes forced upon poor countries more or less make the poor countries stay poor. Miller argues against this and claims that the risk that external factors, such as trade barriers, might have negative impacts on countries prospects for development is relatively small in comparison to the importance of domestic factors. Examples of domestic factors would be religion, political culture and domestic institutions. Miller argues that countries such as Malaysia and Ghana, who both gained their independence in 1957 and at that time had similar GDP per capita levels, have developed in various extents due to domestic factors, not external. The average incomes in Malaysia are today about ten times higher than in Ghana. Although a proper analysis of why Malaysia and Ghana have developed in so various extents would be rather complicated, Miller argues that one significant difference between them is the domestic factors. While Malaysia has been characterized by political stability, Ghana has during several decades been characterized by political instability. Although it is a matter of degree to what extent people can take responsibility for what their governments do, Miller argues that if people in the affluent countries are to take responsibility for what their governments do, then should people in poor countries do the same. Miller defends his statement that global justice should not be understood as global equality since how we value people is depending on our relation to those people, the responsibility towards others are bigger between people within communities, such as nation-states, rather than on a global level. Although the world is fairly unequal in terms of assets and opportunities this is something that has to do with domestic national factors rather than external global factors.

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Even if global equality would be synonym to global justice, Miller argues that there is no way of measuring global equality in a culturally plural world. Miller draws an example on two villages, where in one there is a school, and in the other there is a church. Although most people would agree that the school is more important than a church for peoples opportunities, some would argue the opposite. This goes both on a national level, but perhaps especially on an international level, Miller argues. While within a nation it is possible to find a few common variables that tell us what are more important than something else, this is difficult to do on an international level. There are ways of measuring and comparing opportunities for work, leisure and other factors, between different societies, but it is difficult to agree upon which variables are most important and should represent equality in the world. Miller claims that even the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) does not convey the whole truth on the subject of global inequality. The HDI shows clear distinctions between groups with the highest scores, for instance the member countries of EU, and groups with the lowest scores, for instance countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, Miller argues that although one can make comparisons on factors within the HDI, such as life expectancy and literacy, it is not possible to specify what equality of opportunity would mean. In a culturally plural world it is close to impossible to agree upon such requirements, he argues. In addition, if global equality would be a requirement of global justice, it would have negative effects on national self-determination. In order to achieve global equality, one would probably have to relocate and divide the world’s resources, and even if that would be done, there are no guarantees that the countries in the world would stay on an equal level of development. On the contrary, Miller argues, it is probably safe to assume that even if two countries were to start off at the same level, within a period of perhaps 30 years one country would probably be financially stronger than the other. See for instance again the example on Malaysia and Ghana. At that point, if resources would once again be relocated in order to establish an equal world, the incentives for national governments to work for a strong economy would vanish. Miller argues, however, as mentioned earlier, that the cause for injustice on a global level is not because of global inequality per se, but because of the unequal power relations that are constituted in wealth and military power. Such unequal power relations are the reason why affluent countries can refuse to certain things while poor countries have to go through with them. Global free trade is one example of such a case. Miller, therefore, advocates the importance of not letting material advantages control the political sphere, although he
acknowledges that such policies would be difficult, if not impossible, to get every country to agree upon.\textsuperscript{20}

Global inequality should be a concern on a national level, but not on a global level in the terms of a requirement for global justice. Miller advocates his conception of global justice with three requirements: “…the obligation to respect basic human rights world-wide; the obligation to refrain from exploiting vulnerable communities and individuals; and the obligation to provide all communities with the opportunity to achieve self-determination and social justice.”.\textsuperscript{21} In addition, Miller argues that affluent countries might have a positive responsibility to assist the poor and lift them above a global poverty line. He does however argue that such a responsibility is not an issue of justice, it is an issue of humanity and therefore more like charity.\textsuperscript{22}

\subsection*{2.4 Summary theoretical framework}

The three research questions on the responsibility of affluent towards the LDCs, the responsibility of individuals contra governments or institutions, and humanitarian assistance contra development assistance are discussed in relation to a theoretical framework. Pogge argues that the affluent have a moral responsibility towards the poor since they are partly responsible for why the poor are poor. Pogge focuses on structural changes and especially on reforms of global institutions, he also argues for programs in which resources would be equally divided. Singer and Jamieson argues that the affluent have a responsibility towards the LDCs since they have the ability to assist. Singer emphasizes the responsibility of individuals, although he also recognizes that governments should assist, and discusses primarily the need for humanitarian assistance. Jamieson, however, argues that the aid from affluent countries do have negative consequences for the LDCs since it is often designed in order to support the industries in donor countries. Jamieson is especially negative towards humanitarian assistance which he argues does not deal with the fundamental issues of poverty. While Pogge, Singer and Jamieson base their arguments for global justice on a foundation of global equality, Miller argues that global equality is nothing that can be agreed upon. Miller argues for the nation-states as the primary duty bearers and that the main responsibility to battle inequalities, such as poverty, is local. The world community does

\begin{footnotes}
\item Miller, David. 2005: page 71-79
\item Miller, David. 2005: page 58
\item Miller, David. 2008: page 389
\end{footnotes}
however have a responsibility to not take actions that might hinder the nation-states to achieve social justice, Miller argues.
3. Minor Field Study in The Gambia

In this chapter you will first of all find an introduction to The Gambia. I am aware that the introduction might have an evaluative tone but this is the way it is written in my source. In examination of additional sources I have found the information to be consistent with my source. The introduction is followed by parts on food as a human right, food aid and food security. In the last part of this chapter I summarize the interview material.

3.1 Background information The Gambia

From the 13th century until the 15th century the present territory of The Gambia was part of the Mali kingdom. In the year 1455, the Portuguese discovered the Gambia River and the area was soon occupied by traders, gold diggers and slave hunters. In 1588 the Portuguese gave British traders the trading rights of the area, and until the independence in 1965, the area was ruled by the British Empire. During this period of time, the Gambian territory changed several times, due to territorial deals with the French. In the 1870’s, the British on several occasions tried to trade The Gambia for other areas in the French West Africa, but resistance from Gambians as well as British traders made this impossible.23

Today, The Gambia is the smallest and one of the poorest countries on the continent of Africa. The area of The Gambia is 11 300 km² and the country is located in West Africa and is, except for the coastline facing the Atlantic Ocean, completely surrounded by Senegal. The Gambia River runs through the entire country with land strips on both sides of the river. On the north side of the river, as well as the Upper River and Lower River regions, about 65 per cent of the population is poor, although areas where poverty is severe can be found throughout the country. The Gambia River is fairly underused as a transport way and the road network is insufficient. The land in The Gambia is generally dry with groups of low trees, while the land in the north western parts generally is more fertile. The dry season lasts from November to May, while an intensive rainy season takes place during the summer. The dry seasons have been known to sometimes cause loss in harvest and thereby food shortage,24 sometimes with yields that fluctuate as much as 40 % from one harvest to the next.25

24 Nationalencyklopedin. Gambia. (2012-03-22)
However, when it comes to water supply, 90% of the Gambians have access to clean water, including the rural areas.²⁶

Nearly half of The Gambia’s 1.8 million large population live on less than 2 PPP-dollar²⁷ a day, with a BNP per capita on 620 US dollar. Poverty is widespread and predominantly rural; more than 60 per cent of the rural population is classified as poor. The financial crisis and soaring food and fuel prices have resulted in difficult times for poor rural household and The Gambia’s entire economy, with more people being pushed into extreme poverty. Women, being the group most affected by poverty, traditionally do not own land but normally stand for a large share of the labour.²⁸

The primary causes of rural poverty in The Gambia include:

- Low and decreasing soil fertility
- Low agricultural and labour productivity
- Poor access to productive assets such as land and water
- Poorly functioning input and output markets
- Low prices on world markets for products such as groundnuts and certain types of rice
- Poorly functioning rural institutions, including credit institutions, and lack of basic social services
- Irregular rains that frequently cause crop losses

²⁶ Nationalencyklopedin. Gambia. (2012-03-22)
²⁷ Definition: Purchasing power parity (PPP) allows you to compare the standard of living between countries by taking into account the impact of their exchange rates. http://useconomy.about.com/od/glossary/g/ppp.htm
²⁸ Nationalencyklopedin. Gambia. (2012-03-22)
²⁹ The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization. Rural Poverty in Gambia. (2012-03-22)
was estimated to 104 million US dollar, while the import at the same time was estimated to 336 million US dollar. Attempts have been made in order to push the Gambian rice production out on the domestic market, but due to the rudimentary technologies and practices used, the rice production is too low and the attempts have failed. Rice is, however, perhaps the most common type of food eaten in The Gambia, along with fish, chicken, peanuts and tomato pasta. It is quite common to cultivate rice but the harvest normally only covers the needs of the own family, if even that. Groundnuts are also a common crop to cultivate in The Gambia. Another important economic sector is the tourism sector, the income from tourism in 2008 was estimated to 83 million US dollar.30

The Gambia’s economy has been weak since the 1970’s, but The Gambia came to be known as a rather successful liberal democracy in Africa during Dawda K. Jawara’s 24 years of ruling (1970-1994), with for instance free elections and a free press. At this time African organizations for human rights and democracy, such as the African court of human rights, was localized in Banjul, the capitol city of The Gambia. In 1994, the lieutenant Yahya Jammeh led a military coup, which forced Jawara to flee the country. Directly after the military coup The Gambia was lead by militaries, other political parties than Jammeh’s *Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Reconstruction* was forbidden, and the press was controlled by the government. In addition the spread of newspapers is relatively limited and was in the year of 2000 two issues per 1000 inhabitants. In the year of 1996 political parties was once again allowed, and a presidential election was held, it was however an election shadowed by conflicts and several people got killed and injured. Since the election in 1996 Jammeh has been the president and he has held the power of the country in an iron fist, with most of the press controlled by the government. The political opposition and voters are, however, living under threats by Jammeh’s regime. When it comes to the issue of equality, only 7.5 % of the members in the national assembly are women. The Gambia is far from being an equal country, however, boys and girls participate in primary and secondary school in the same extent today. In 2008, 70 % of the children were in primary school, while the adult literacy rate was estimated to be 61.9 % in 2009 (70.7 % for men and 53.4 % for women).31

In 2011, 59 % of the Gambian population was living in cities. The population is 90 % Muslim and has its heritage mainly from tribes such as Mandinka, Fulani and Wolof. Mandinka is the

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largest group and represents 42% of the population. Fulani represents about 18% of the population, while 16% of the population in The Gambia is Wolof.  

3.2 Food as a human right

The right to live in dignity, free from hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition is a human right recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) Council adopted in November 2004 a set of guidelines, defined by the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights and endorsed by states, which explained the right to food as three types of state obligation. The obligations comprise the obligation to respect, protect and to fulfill the right to food. By respecting the right to food, governments are required to not act in a way that may deprive people of their right to food. By protecting the right to food, governments are required to constitute laws and other principles that prevent third parties from violating the right to food of others. By fulfilling the right to food, governments are required to take action in order to ensure food security, so that people are able to feed themselves on a continuous basis, or, if necessary, provide food for people. The right to food is therefore both a negative and a positive duty for states. In addition, under article 2(1), 11(1) and 23 of the ICESCR, states acknowledge the importance of international cooperation and assistance in order to prevent hunger. The Gambia has ratified both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and ICESCR.

3.3 Food aid & food security in general

Food aid constitutes an essential part of flow of goods from the affluent countries to the LDCs. The main part of the food aid is distributed on an inter-state level, while the forming of the United Nations (UN) organ WFP in 1961 resulted in a new dimension of food aid. WFP is today the biggest actor when it comes to distribution of food aid for development and in natural disasters.

33 Right to food.org. What is the right to food? (2012-03-22)
35 Potter, Robert B. et al. Geographies of Development: an introduction to development... 2008: page 375
Food aid can be divided into three categories:

- **Food aid through programs**: is a form of development assistance and is distributed on an inter-state level as a support to fill the gap between access and demand on domestic production and import of food.

- **Food aid through projects**: is a form of development assistance and is generally directed in order to satisfy the nutritional needs for poor, especially in rural areas or for especially weak groups. WFP is the biggest actor when it comes to this type of food aid.

- **Food aid in disasters**: is a form of humanitarian assistance and is a response to humanitarian and natural disasters. WFP is the biggest actor when it comes to this type of food aid.\(^{36}\)

Food is a controversial type of aid, partly due to political and economic motives that might be controlling how much and where the food aid should be distributed. This is because food aid might result in lower food prices and lower the incentives for domestic production in the recipient countries.\(^{37}\) However, food aid is in many cases a necessity and has often been described as the lesser evil. Food aid is important in order to avoid hunger and starvation, but is suspected to lower the incentives or possibilities for domestic food production.\(^{38}\)

A case study in Ethiopia has lead to the conclusion that food aid has resulted in lowered prices on food, although variations in how much the prices were lowered can occur. However, the price of food has only been lowered in cases where the food aid exceeds the capacity of the local markets. In the concluding remarks in the case study, it is suggested that food aid can, and should, be given in cases where, for instance, there has been a production shortfall or bad harvest season. Food aid should not exceed the local markets capacity.\(^{39}\)

In further critique towards food aid, critics argue that food aid might result in cases in which there is a loss of incentives for recipient countries to invest in their agricultural sectors. Such a loss of incentives could result in a situation where the recipient countries become dependent on imported food and food aid. Further research shows, however, that the consequences of food aid and the prospects for domestic food production in recipient countries are dependent

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\(^{36}\) Potter, Robert B. et al. 2008: page 375

\(^{37}\) Potter, Robert B. et al. 2008: page 375-376

\(^{38}\) Tadesse, Getaw & Shively, Gerald. “Food Aid and Producer Disincentives in Ethiopia”. 2009: page 943-945

\(^{39}\) Tadesse, Getaw & Shively, Gerald. 2009: page 943-945
on the access to the world market. The access to the world market is in its turn adjusted by transport costs, tariffs and other barriers,\(^{40}\) such as subsidies to the agricultural sectors in the affluent countries. The subsidies create a production surplus of food; a surplus that is later pushed out on the world market with the result of lowered food prices. Such subsidies make it difficult for farmers in the LDCs to compete with the food prices on both the world and domestic market. It has been estimated that for every US dollar the affluent countries spends on agricultural subsidies, it costs the farmers in the LDCs just as much.\(^{41}\)

The aim of food aid is to achieve food security. Food security was by the World Food Summit in 1996 defined as existing “when all people at all times have access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life”. The concept of food security is understood as a concept that includes both physical and economic access to food consistently. In addition, the food should meet people’s dietary needs as well as their food preferences. Within the concept of food security, clean water and sanitation are also important.\(^{42}\) Since there is enough food in the world to meet people’s nutritional needs,\(^{43}\) it has been argued by some member countries in the WTO that developing countries need to raise tariffs on key products in order to protect national food security. It is argued that free trade policies advocated by the WTO, along with the subsidies of agricultural sectors in the affluent countries, are one of the biggest threats to food security in developing countries.\(^{44}\)

3.4 Food aid & food security in The Gambia

In The Gambia, a two-to-four-month period during the rainy season, between July and September, is every year known as the “hungry season”. Household stocks are low due to insufficient harvest seasons, and high unemployment rates. The WFP, FAO and a number of governmental departments are working towards establishing food security in The Gambia. Food aid is not distributed all year round, but has over the last years been continuous for about three months every year.\(^{45}\)

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\(^{41}\) Timmer, Peter C. “Agriculture and Pro-Poor Growth: An Asian Perspective”. 2005: page 3-29

\(^{42}\) The World Health Organization. Food security. (2012-03-19)


\(^{44}\) The World Health Organization. Food security. (2012-03-19)

\(^{45}\) The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization. Rural Poverty in Gambia. (2012-03-22)
Think of the Children in Africa  
Daniel Wallinder

FAO has launched a number of programs in order to provide food security. Investments have been made in for instance integrated rice, horticulture, livestock, and inland fisheries. In addition, FAO and local authorities have worked towards improving infrastructure, water distribution facilities, and watering points for livestock. Despite this, it is far from everyone who can be said to have a constant access to sufficient food, as 19 percent of the population is undernourished.46

3.5 Interview procedure and interview questions

Each interview has been initiated in more or less the same procedure. My translator has first given a brief introduction, followed by an introduction explaining in more detail why I am there, followed by a few shorter questions on the interviewees’ backgrounds. The introduction and introduction questions have thereafter been followed by the interview questions. I have outlined the interview questions in order to; a) get a better understanding of the recipients’ situation, before, during and after receiving food aid; b) to answer my research questions, and; c) to function as a semi-structured interview where the interviewees feel free to express their opinions. Before initiating the first series of interviews, the questions were tested with one former recipient in a test interview. The test interview was analyzed and the questions were slightly changed in order to be clearer for the remaining interviews. In order to give the reader full disclosure of the interview procedure, the introduction and the interview questions are listed below:

Initial introduction by translator:

He is a student from Sweden doing a field study and he wishes to interview food aid beneficiaries. He is not working for the World Food Programme and what you say in this interview will have no impact whatsoever on whether you will receive any type of aid again in the future or not.

Introduction and introduction questions by author:

I’m doing a field study on donor and recipient relations. This will be a semi-structured interview, which means that I have a number of questions, but I encourage you to expand on a response and talk freely, the questions are not necessarily yes or no questions but are questions that you should elaborate on. What is important is that you feel free to freely

46 The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization. Rural Poverty in Gambia. (2012-03-22)
express your opinions, I have no expectations on your answers, I just want to hear your opinions. You should also be aware that you will be anonymous in my paper and I will give you a pseudonym. Before moving on to my research questions I have a couple of fact based questions, namely your: name, age, (gender), profession at the time of receiving food aid (if any), why did you receive food aid and for how long, your location (where you were staying) while receiving food aid, and your category (displaced, farmer or both).

Interview questions:
- How would you describe your possibilities to support yourself financially, in everyday life, just before you started to receive food aid?
- If it was; then why was it difficult to support yourself during that period of time?
- Do you think that the affluent countries (Europe and USA for instance) had a moral responsibility, or not, to provide food for you during the time that you received food aid?
- If yes, why? If no, why not?
- Is there a difference in the responsibilities of states (the governments) or the individual people (the citizens) in the states?
- If aid should be provided in order to ensure food security, for what should aid then be provided? (for what kind of specific project/projects)
- Would you say that this is done today?
- Do you think any certain international political strategies, or policies, could help in order to ensure food security? And if so, which strategies?
- Any final comments or something that you would like to add?

3.6 The views of food aid recipients on the responsibility of food aid donors
In this part I summarize the interview material. The summarize is based on my transcribed records from the interviews and consists of two parts for each interview. The first part is about the interviewee’s backgrounds, why they received food aid and a general description of their financial situations while receiving food aid. The second part deals with the interviews as a whole and constitutes a foundation for the discussion in the next chapter. I will in the second part focus on identifying the answers related to the research questions. The interviews have, as mentioned earlier, been semi-structured. In the material below you will find that some
interviewees have discussed certain things that others have not, this depends on the follow up questions that have been asked during the interviews and varied depending on the interviewees answers. Everyone who has been interviewed received food aid during three months last year (2011). All interviewees have been given a pseudonym and every interview has been conducted by the presence of only me, my translator and the interviewee.

**General facts: interview person 1**

Category: Farmer  
Name: Lamin  
Age: 53  
Gender: Male  
Profession/job or previous job: Used to be a businessman, focusing on the farm now

Summary of the interviewee’s background:  
Lamin claims that he is living under extreme conditions. He has a family of 27 people to support, and generally the harvest season last year was very poor. All the rice he cultivated got ruined, one of the reasons being that there was not enough water for the groundnuts they were cultivating. This year they experience the same losses as one year ago. Another problem he has been facing is that the week fence he has protecting his crops has not been sufficient enough in order to keep animals out, as a result animals have been eating his crops. Before receiving food aid Lamin’s income level was very low. In his house they were left with only one bag of rice, with 27 people depending on that one bag.

Summary of the interview:  
In the interview Lamin claims that the affluent should support the ones who are in need. By arguing that the affluent countries have the necessary resources in order to assist the ones in need, Lamin claims that the affluent have moral obligation to do so. He argues that if he and other poor in Gambia would have the necessary machines and tools to manufacture goods, within two, three years they would have been able to make a difference for themselves. Consequently, Lamin argues that if aid would be given in terms of the necessary tools, such as tractors, sewing machines and pumping machines, that would make it possible for them to become food secure. Lamin has not himself benefited from any other aid assistance than food aid, but he has heard of projects were the president have been giving out tractors and other farm implements. Lamin argues that the moral obligation for the affluent countries to assist
the poor is not just a moral obligation upon governments, but also on individual people. He argues that it is a moral obligation to help when you have the ability to help.

**General facts: interview person 2**

Category: Displaced and farmer

Name: Fatou

Age: 35

Gender: Female

Profession/job or previous job: No form of profession, have been depending on farming

Summary of the interviewee’s background:

Fatou received food aid last year since her house collapsed. Fatou claims that she was shocked at the time but relieved when she later received the food aid. In addition to food stuff she received mattresses, buckets, water boxes and blankets. Although the food is finished Fatou is still using the equipment that she received one year ago. At the time of receiving food aid Fatou described her situation as very tough since the harvest was really bad. This year the harvest has been better in her field, and although Fatou is still poor, she says they are managing better this year.

Summary of the interview:

Fatou argues that the affluent countries, and affluent individuals, have a moral responsibility to assist the poor, since they have the ability to do so. Fatou emphasizes that they were very happy to receive food aid and that they would be very happy for continued assistance in terms of food aid. In addition, Fatou argues that food aid should be distributed not only three months a year, but all year round. She argues that food is very essential and that without food the kids cannot concentrate in school. Fatou does however also argue that in order to ensure food security, aid in terms of equipment would really help her. She claims that there are people who can plow your field with a tractor for you, but they charge a lot of money for that. She says that one will end up in a situation where one has to prioritize between paying for the workers to plow your field, or to buy rice for the family. Fatou says that she would by the rice. Fatou also claims that she has never been in contact with any type of aid in terms of equipment, and that last year was the first time when she received food aid.
General facts: interview person 3
Category: Displaced
Name: Nancy
Age: 52
Gender: Female
Profession/job or previous job: Trading, small business

Summary of the interviewee’s background:
Nancy received food aid since her house got flooded. She claimed that the floor was filled with water, most of her belonging got ruined and the water caused her foot wounds. Sickness came with the water and mosquitoes that invaded the house. One older woman living in Nancy’s house one day passed out and fell down in the water. Although Nancy and others helped her up from the water right away, she was already dead. It is unclear why the woman died, but the water caused them all great pain, Nancy says. 20 people live in Nancy’s compound and the house got flooded since it is located too close to some rice fields. Heavy rain caused the water to come up through the ground. Nancy argues that even if one would clean the water out, within three or four minutes, the water would be back again. Due to the flooding Nancy got evacuated and at the moment she is renting a room in a compound for 1000 Dalasis per month (about 240 SEK), a rent she argues is quite expensive. Nancy says however that she rather pay that amount and have good health, than to save the money and stay in her old house. She also adds that she was quite sad to leave her old home, but that she felt that it was necessary. Nancy is happy about the assistance she received in terms of food aid, in addition she also received some mattresses, blankets and buckets.

Summary of the interview:
Nancy argues that is the humane, and right, thing to do to assist someone who is in as great pain as she was last year. Nancy argues that the affluent countries had a moral responsibility to assist her since they were in a position to do so. Nancy also argues that the affluent countries should assist in that extent they can without encountering any problems themselves. Equally, Nancy also argues, it is also important that the aid does not cause the recipients any further problems. Nancy could however not specify what any such problems could be. Nancy argues that states are the main duty bearers when it comes to assisting the ones in need. She does also point out that a situation could appear when the states aid is limited and not sufficient, in such a case do individual people have a responsibility to help. When it comes to
ensuring food security Nancy advocates that aid should be given in terms of equipment. She argues that if the agricultural sector was to be mechanized, and if enterprises were to be developed in the business sector, there would come a time when The Gambia would need no assistance from other countries. Nancy has not been in contact with any project like this and advocates partnerships between international organizations and local organizations to learn from each other.

**General facts: interview person 4**

Category: Displaced
Name: Aisa
Age: 45
Gender: Female
Profession/job or previous job: None

Summary of the interviewee’s background:
Aisa got affected by a flooding in her compound and thereby received food aid. Nancy reveals that the entire compound was soaked in water and that they had to evacuate and relocate. The compound got flooded since it is closely located to a rice field. Although the floor inside the house was made of concrete, the water came through. She explains that when it rained, the water did not come from above, it came up from the ground. Although Aisa was sad to leave her home, she says that it was the best alternative. At the time when Aisa received food aid she describes her possibilities to support herself in everyday life as difficult, due to the flooding in her house and her financial situation which was very low.

Summary of the interview:
Aisa argues that since she was in such a difficult situation at the time when she received food aid last year, it was a moral responsibility for the donors to assist her. She argues that they had such a responsibility since the donors, or the affluent countries, were in a better situation than her. She claims that both individual people and countries do have a responsibility to help, when they have the ability to do so. When it comes to the matter of ensuring food security Aisa advocates help to self-help. She says that help that can help one stand by oneself is better than to only come and provide food. Such help to self-help could be in terms of material, equipment and farm implements. Aisa is however not aware of any such assistance. In addition she argues that any type of aid that would not affect the recipients badly is something
that she argues would help. Upon request by the interviewer to specify which type of aid that could affect the recipients badly Aisa has no direct answer, but she believes that there should be strategies through which the necessary aid could be provided for her and others to be able to stand by themselves.

**General facts: interview person 5**

Category: Displaced
Name: Ebrima
Age: 37
Gender: Male
Profession/job or previous job: Business man

Summary of the interviewee’s background:
Ebrima’s house got flooded last year since it is located close to a rice field. He claims that every time it was raining, water would come up from the ground into the house. He argues that the one reason to the water coming in to the house is because there is no draining system. Ebrima did not get relocated, he is however trying to construct another house where he will concrete the floor. Since his house got flooded during the rainy season, Ebrima describes his financial situation as bad. According to him business is normally bad during the rainy season

Summary of the interview:
Ebrima claims that the food aid he received made him financially stronger since he could save the money he would normally have used to spend on buying food. Ebrima argues that the affluent countries in the world have a responsibility to help the ones who are in need of assistance. The nature of this responsibility lies in the fact that they have the ability to help. Ebrima argues that the same goes for individual people, if one has the ability to assist someone else who do not have the same resources, one has a moral responsibility to do so. Ebrima does however not only talk about affluent countries when it comes to the issue of responsibility. Ebrima argues that even poor countries have a responsibility to help other poor countries, when they are able to do so. When it comes to the issue of ensuring food security Ebrima believes that projects that will create jobs are more important than giving food aid three months a year. One example that Ebrima mentions is that if one could arrange with irrigation for the rice fields one would be able to cultivate rice all year round, instead of just
during the rainy season. Ebrima have heard about a community in The Gambia supported by Taiwan where they are able to cultivate rice all year round.

**General facts: interview person 6**

Category: Displaced and farmer  
Name: Ansumana  
Age: 33  
Gender: Male  
Profession/job or previous job: Was a student at the time of receiving food aid, Ansumana is now working as a nurse

Summary of the interviewee’s background:  
Ansumana received food aid since one of his rooms collapsed in his house. At the time of receiving food aid Ansumana was a student and his main source of income was a small stipend from the hospital where he had worked prior to his studies. Ansumana claims that it would have been very difficult to both being able to afford to fix the collapsed room and buy food at the same time. In addition to his studies Ansumana have a small garden where he can cultivate some crops. He has however experienced some problems in the garden, one problem is that the fence he used to protect his crops with was not stable enough and collapsed, another problem was that the two wells he had dug out in his garden collapsed during the rainy season.

Summary of the interview:  
Ansumana argues that the affluent countries do not have a moral responsibility to provide food for the ones in need, per se. He does however argue that it is the humane thing to do if you have resources that someone else does not. Ansumana argues that to assist the poor is something that the affluent can do, he does however not think that it should be forced upon the affluent to help. Ansumana claims that he is not counting on assistance from the affluent, but that all help are welcomed. Ansumana argues that they can manage without the assistance from the affluent. When it comes to the issue of individuals responsibilities Ansumana argues that it is up to the individuals. Some people feel that they have the ability to help, while others do not, or do not want to help. Ansumana claims that if one really wants to help the poor, one ought to provide them with the knowledge, materials and sustainable projects so that people can sustain themselves. Ansumana argues that help through such projects are better than food
aid in order to ensure food security. He argues that with the necessary equipment and knowledge they would be able to both cultivate, process, and export products. Ansumana have heard of projects were people were given seeds and equipment for rice cultivation. One area within the agricultural sector where the affluent countries could help would be irrigation. Ansumana advocates help through equipment to dig proper wells, which would make it a lot easier for the farmers. Ansumana finishes the interview by saying that he does not believe in depending on people, he want to work for himself and take care of his own problems.

**General facts: interview person 7**

Category: Farmer  
Name: Josef  
Age: 48  
Gender: Male  
Profession/job or previous job: Farmer and shop owner

Summary of the interviewee’s background:  
At the time of receiving food aid Josef describes his financial situation as difficult. All his incomes from the farming went to feed the family and there were no surplus. Normally Josef’s rice field provides his family with rice for seven to eight months, but last year they were not able to get any rice since there was almost no rain. According to Josef the harvest season has not been that bad for over 30 years. Except for the food aid, Josef received a credit from an individual person in order to establish a small shop. The credit he received is however a loan that he has to pay back.

Summary of the interview:  
Josef argues that it was a moral responsibility for the affluent countries to assist him last year since they were in a position and had the capacity to do so. Josef argues that if someone has the ability to assist someone who has less resources it becomes a moral responsibility to assist that person. Josef claims that both affluent countries and affluent individuals has a moral responsibility to assist the poor, he argues that some individuals even are financially stronger than some governments. When it comes to the matter of ensuring food security Josef claims that the immediate need today is food. He argues that if he were to receive any other type of assistance, such as farming equipment, he would at the moment go and sell that stuff so that he could buy food for his family. Josef argues that the affluent have a moral responsibility to
provide food for him and others like him. Josef says that if one has food, one can manage many other things. But if one does not have food, one will not be able to work effectively. Josef does however not close the door for the need of assistance in terms of farming equipment. Josef does for instance argue that if he were to receive help to build a fence around a plot of land that he owns he would be able to cultivate cashew nuts there. Josef claims that he has already received aid in terms of tools, but they have a shortage of food. Josef advocates the need for bilateral relations on an international level so that his government can communicate to the rest of the world when they need assistance.

General facts: interview person 8
Category: Farmer
Name: Sarah
Age: 30
Gender: Female
Profession/job or previous job: Farmer/produce a type of local jar

Summary of the interviewee’s background:
At the time of receiving food aid Sarah describes her situation as difficult. For a living she produces a local type of jar that is made from mud, the jar can however only be produced during the dry season since the mud will be too wet otherwise. At the time of receiving food aid Sarah therefore had no source of income, the rice was finished and she claims that her and her family had nothing at hand. Sarah has seven kids.

Summary of the interview:
Sarah argues that the affluent countries, as well as affluent individuals, have a moral responsibility to assist poor people if they have the ability to do so. She argues that even people in The Gambia have a moral responsibility to assist if they are better off finically than someone else. Sarah claims that since her income level is very low it is sometimes even difficult to be able to feed her children, and in such a case she definitely argues that the ones who have more resources ought to help. Sarah claims that when she received food aid some local people in her village who were not receiving food aid got jealous, and some people even stopped greeting here. Sarah thought that was quite tough but would not hesitate to receive food aid again since it was a huge relief for her and her family. When it comes to the matter of ensuring food security Sarah believes that a transformation of skills would be the right way to
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go. She argues that if people were to become more skilled they would be able to manage by themselves, in addition she argues that her profession and the fact that she has the skills to produce the local types of jars have really helped her. From what Sarah can recall most of the assistance given has so far been in terms of food stuff. Sarah advocates the importance of bilateral relationships between governments. She argues that if the governments are able to communicate with each other then it will also be easier for people like her to express their needs and ask for assistance. In addition she argues that it would also be easier for affluent individuals and governments who want to assist to do so if there are good communications with bilateral relations.

General facts: interview person 9
Category: Displaced
Name: Mary
Age: 35
Gender: Female
Profession/job or previous job: Trading, small business

Summary of the interviewee’s background:
Mary received food aid since parts of her house was flooded. At the time of receiving food aid Nancy describes her possibilities to support herself financially in everyday life as difficult. Since parts of the house were flooded she argues that she had to stay at home and try to prevent further flooding in the house, therefore she could not work. Normally Nancy works with selling small juice packs and water, the juice and water she stores in a fridge so it gets cold before she sells it. She saw a potential risk if the whole house would get flooded since she then would not dare to have the fridge in use, since electricity and water is not a good combination. Mary argues that the food she received made it possible for her to save the money she would normally have spent on food and spend it on concreting the floor, that way she is less likely to suffer from a flooding in the future.

Summary of the interview:
Mary argues that affluent countries and affluent individuals have a moral responsibility to assist the ones who have fewer resources. Mary argues that the affluent have a responsibility since they are in a position to help. In addition she argues that it was the humane thing to do to assist her when she was going through those difficult times due to the flooding last year.
She also argues that she herself gives help to the ones who are less fortunate than her. As an example she mentions some Arabic students who come around begging sometimes. If she is able to feed herself then she gives the surplus of food to the students. Although Mary argues that both affluent countries and individuals have a moral responsibility to help the poor, she claims that the governments have the greater responsibility. When it comes to the issue of food security Mary advocates aid in terms of skills and equipment. She argues that you will not receive food for a whole year, so then it is better to for instance receive equipment so that one can be self-sustaining. Examples of equipment could for instance be refrigerators or sewing machines. Mary has heard of assistance when people have received some equipment, such as mattresses and roofing materials, but she has never benefited from it herself.

**General facts: interview person 10**

Category: Displaced and farmer  
Name: Malik  
Age: 63  
Gender: Male  
Profession/job or previous job: Own a garden and work sometimes as a musician at naming ceremonies

Summary of the interviewee’s background:
Malik is a disaster victim and he and his family received food aid last year since the roof of their house got destroyed in the wind and rain. As a consequence of the spoiled roof the house got flooded. When the roof got destroyed in the wind parts of the roof fell in and a couple of members of Malik’s family got hurt and had to go to the hospital. Although they got hurt Malik was grateful they did not die. Malik and his family received food aid but he has been trying to get some assistance so that he can rebuild his house, so far Malik has not received such assistance and it does not seem like he will either. At the time of receiving food aid Malik describes his financial situation as poor. He is a musician and work at as many naming ceremonies as possible, although it does not pay much. It varies how many naming ceremonies there is in a month, but he mentions that it might be only a couple. In addition no one of Malik’s children works.
Summary of the interview:
Malik claims that he does not see it as a moral responsibility for affluent countries and individuals to assist the poor. Malik argues that it depends on the individual willingness and intentions. He argues that it is up to countries and individuals own judgments. If one does not have the heart to give, even though one is affluent, then that is the case and it is up to that individual to make that decision. However, Malik welcomes aid and when it comes to the case of food security he himself would prefer aid in terms of material support, such as a tractor. Malik has never heard of any case when people have received aid in terms of material support.
4. Analysis & Discussion

In this chapter I will analyze and discuss my findings in The Gambia in relation to my research questions and the theoretical framework.

4.1.1 Analysis of the findings in The Gambia and the theoretical framework

Out of the ten people I interviewed in The Gambia, eight argued that the affluent countries in the world have a moral responsibility to assist the LDCs. They based their arguments on the issue of ability. If one has the ability to assist someone else, then it becomes a moral responsibility to do so. Out of the eight people seven argued that both affluent individuals and states have a moral responsibility to assist the poor. The eighth person argued that states are the main duty bearers, but it is positive if also affluent individuals can assist. Consequently, only two people out of ten took another standpoint than the one that the affluent have a responsibility to assist if they have the ability to do so. One of these persons argued that assisting the poor is an issue of humanity, and in that sense a responsibility, but it is not something that should be forced upon affluent states. The same person argued that states are the main duty bearers, and that it is up to individuals if they have the ability and will to assist the poor. The second person who argued for an alternative standpoint argued that the affluent states and individuals do not have a moral responsibility to assist the poor, it is all an issue of individual willingness.

Pogge argues that the affluent countries have a moral responsibility towards the poor since, he claims, the affluent countries actions through global institutions are keeping the LDCs in poverty. Pogge argues that it is a question of global justice rather than charity to assist the LDCs and to abstain from actions that harm the LDCs. Pogge focuses on the responsibilities of states and institutions. Singer argues that the affluent countries, or especially the individuals, have a responsibility towards the poor since they have the ability to assist. Singer argues that the responsibility to assist the poor is a positive duty. He argues that it is morally wrong to choose not to assist if one has the ability to assist. Jamieson agrees that the affluent have a moral responsibility to assist the poor; however, Jamieson argues that a problem with aid today is that it is often based on the interests of the donor countries and its industries. He argues that the affluent countries interest to prevail their domestic industries through aid to developing countries’ is making it difficult for developing countries to develop their own industrial sectors. Miller advocates the importance of national self-determination and believes
that states are the actors that should battle poverty and inequality themselves, within themselves. Miller does however argue that the affluent countries in the world have a responsibility not to take actions that might hinder the nation-states to achieve social justice. In addition, he argues that the affluent countries have a responsibility to assist the poor in the world to climb above the poverty line; this is, however, an issue of humanity rather than social justice or global equality.

Everyone who I interviewed expressed a great amount of gratitude for receiving food aid last year; they all said that it helped them when they were going through difficult times. One central aspect of this thesis is, however, the issue of establishing and ensuring food security. In this matter it has been argued in Chapter 3.3 that food aid might be controversial and long term development assistance is to be preferred over food aid. When it comes to the views of the food aid recipients, eight out of ten of the interviewees advocated development assistance before humanitarian assistance in order to ensure food security. Out of the eight, three advocated aid in terms of equipment, such as farming tools. Two were discussing the importance of skill transformation and bilateral relations between governments, and also between international organizations and local organizations. Two advocated aid in terms of skill transformation and equipment. One person advocated projects that would be focused on building up an industrial manufacturing sector in The Gambia. The two people who argued for humanitarian assistance are not in any way against development assistance, on the contrary, they also argued for aid in terms of equipment and the importance of bilateral relations between governments. However, one of the two argued that food aid should be distributed all year round. The other person argued that long term development assistance is of no use if they have no food to feed themselves.

Pogge advocates structural changes and reforms when it comes to combating poverty. He suggests a redistribution of global resources, changed loan conditions and a reform of trade barriers. Singer is quite focused on humanitarian assistance, and this is first and foremost what he discusses in his article. Jamieson, on the other hand, is especially negative towards humanitarian assistance which he argues does not deal with the fundamental issues of poverty. He argues that humanitarian assistance has become something like an industry that serves on the interests of donor countries and therefore might cause more harm than good in the long run. In general he argues that aid has to be evaluated and that donor countries should abstain from actions that might harm the recipients. Miller is, as mentioned earlier, a
proponent for national responsibility and argues that combating poverty should be done on a national level. Miller argues, however, that aid should be provided for humanitarian purposes.

### 4.1.2 Analysis of results

My first research question reads: “What are the views of food aid recipients on donor’s responsibility to provide food aid?” Most of the interviewees argued that the affluent countries in the world have a moral responsibility to assist the poor and built their arguments on the same moral foundation as Singer did: if one has the ability to assist then it becomes a moral responsibility to do so. Not to assist would, therefore, be something that is morally wrong. Two of the interviewees argued that it is up to the individual willingness to assist; this argument should be seen in comparison to Miller’s arguments on national responsibility. It is up to the nation-states themselves to work for social justice, while giving aid might be a question of humanity rather than justice.

My second research question reads: “What are the views of food aid recipients on individuals’ contra governments’ responsibility to provide food aid? While two of the interviewees argued that states are the main duty bearers, eight people recognized affluent states and individuals as equal when it comes to the issue of moral responsibility to assist or not. Not one of the theorists recognizes the same responsibility for states and individuals. Pogge argues for states and institutions as the main duty bearers, while to some extent also recognizing that individuals have a responsibility. Singer takes the opposite side and argues for individual responsibility primarily, and state responsibility secondarily. It should, however, be mentioned that Pogge and Singer focus on different types of aid, while the interviewees discuss both humanitarian assistance and long term development assistance.

My third research question reads: “If the recipients argue that aid should be provided in order to ensure food security, should then humanitarian assistance or long term development assistance be the priority? Every interviewee expressed that the food aid they received helped them; however, most of the interviewees do not see food aid as a way to ensure food security. It is a clear distinction here: food aid is important in situations like the ones the interviewees has been going through, but food aid does not, by the interviewees, seem to be a preemptive solution to problems such as flooding, bad harvests, low harvest yield, unemployment, and the national focus on agricultural production rather than industrial manufacturing. The question
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is, however, if long term development assistance would be enough. As one of the interviewees expressed it; tractors and other types farming equipment is no good if one does not have any food to feed oneself. In the process to establish and ensure food security, one could argue that before one is able to get over that bump, food aid will still be essential. Food aid will probably also be essential in cases such as severe natural disasters when the national government in The Gambia might not be able to properly respond to the needs of the people. Closest to the views of the interviewees stands Jamieson. Jamieson recognizes the need for humanitarian assistance, but emphasizes the need for long term development assistance and to evaluate the consequences of all types of aid. Pogge, who discusses structural changes, is focusing on issues that the interviewees have given little attention. Nor does Singer focus on the issues that the interviewees gave most attention to when it comes to ensuring food security. Miller’s views on national responsibility are to some extent in line with some of the interviewees opinions. The most striking example is of one of the interviewees who argues that he does not believe in depending on others and advocates that one solves his own problems. Miller’s arguments do, however, lack the extensive need for international collaboration that is advocated by several of the interviewees.

4.2 Discussion of results
Arguably most of the interviewees agree with and base their arguments on the same moral foundation as Singer: if one has the ability to assist someone else, it becomes a moral responsibility to do so. While this conclusion is interesting for its part, it is also interesting to discuss why the interviewees do not base their arguments on the same moral foundation as for instance Pogge. Pogge argues that the current world order is holding the poor in a steady grip, and that the affluent countries thereby have a responsibility towards the poor. Pogge advocates structural reforms on a global institutional level, while the recipients focus on first and foremost aid in terms of equipment, the importance of bilateral relations, and, to some extent, also food aid in order to eradicate poverty and ensure food security. Pogge argues, and Jamieson and Miller, too, for that matter, that trade barriers invoked by the affluent countries are making it difficult for the LDCs to establish themselves on the world market. The perspective that the recipients are basing their arguments on is, however, a closer and more national perspective. What seems to be most important for the recipients is to get the right farming tools so that they are able to cultivate more and thereby create a surplus. This is step one for the recipients. But is it the case that the recipients are unaware of the international
trading situation? Or are they sure that if they could just cultivate enough rice that everything would work out? Regardless to what the answer to those questions might be, it is clear that there is a gap between the recipients’ and the theorists’ point of view. The recipients have a more narrow perspective, often not only expressed on what they personally would benefit from, but what the entire nation of The Gambia would benefit from. The theorists have a broader perspective, they focus on the international community as a whole and the consequences the affluent countries actions might have for others. One could possibly argue that factors such as the democratic situation, the low spread of news, the government controlled media, and that almost 38 % of the population are illiterate might contribute to a situation where the recipients are unaware of the global economic order. It is difficult to draw such a conclusion, and even if it was possible, it would be another question if it was the whole truth. What the recipients are not discussing in relation to the global economic order shows a gap between the recipients and the theorists. The gap itself is perhaps not necessarily a problem; there is, after all, also a gap between the theorists themselves. The gap shows however that the academic discussion in the affluent countries is not based upon the views of the people the discussion concerns perhaps the most: the poor. The absence of poor people’s voices in the academic discussion consequently leads to an incomplete image being presented to people who listen to the theorists, such as students and decision-makers, are given an image that is incomplete; it is an image that does not represent the poor.

The central issue of this thesis is not what actions should be taken in order to ensure food security. The central issue that has appeared throughout the work is that ethical and political ideas that very much are about the poor do not include the views of the poor. The ideas are formulated over the heads of the poor. I do not, however, not pretend that this thesis represent the views of the billions of poor people in the world. The views of the poor in for instance, Asia, or other African countries might be different from the views of the poor in The Gambia. The Gambia is, however, one of the poorest countries in Africa and most of the LDCs are located in Sub-Saharan Africa. The views of other poor people might be different from the ones portrayed in this thesis. The views of the poor portrayed in this thesis do, however, show the need for including the poor in discussions on combating poverty. For further research I would argue that it would be interesting to gather the views of more recipients, discuss the responsibilities of poor national governments towards the domestic poor, and to research why the recipients in The Gambia did not discuss the global economic order.
5. Conclusion

It is concluded in this thesis that most of the interviewees argued that the affluent countries in the world have a moral responsibility to assist the poor. The interviewees built their arguments on the same moral foundation as Singer did: if one has the ability to assist, then it becomes a moral responsibility to do so. Two of the interviewees argued that it is up to the individual willingness to assist, an argument that is in line with Miller’s arguments on national responsibility. It is up to the nation-states themselves to work for social justice, while giving aid might be a question of humanity rather than justice. Most of the interviewees recognized affluent states and individuals as equal when it comes to the issue of moral responsibility to assist or not, while the theorists either argue primarily for state responsibility or individual responsibility. Two of the interviewees argued that states are the main duty bearers. When it comes to the issue of ensuring food security, most of the interviewees do not see food aid as a way to ensure food security, although it helped them during the difficult times last year. Most of the interviewees argued for aid in terms of equipment, while some also argued that equipment is not enough if they do not have food so that they can first feed themselves. Jamieson recognizes, in resemblance to the interviewees, the need for humanitarian assistance, but emphasizes the need for long term development assistance, and to evaluate the consequences of all types of aid. Pogge, who discusses structural changes, is focusing on issues that the interviewees have given little attention. It is, therefore, clear that there is a gap between the interviewees and theorists such as Pogge.

Arguably, poor people, who are the target group for actions to eradicate poverty and ensure food security, should be included in discussions on how these actions should be strategized. It is, however, not certain that the strategies expressed by the poor in the end would be the most successful ones, but I would argue that both academics and poor have something to learn from each other. By reducing the gap between them one would not just be able to design development strategies that represent both the donors and the recipients, but development strategies that hopefully are effective and successful.
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