The Relevance of Human Security Approach in Assessing the Causes and Solutions to Food Insecurity in South Sudan (Case Study: South Sudan 2017 Famine)

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ABSTRACT

Despite South Sudan's high potential in agriculture and cultivation, food insecurity brought dire consequences to the people's well-being throughout 2017. The previous research mostly points to the South Sudan ongoing civil war as the main cause of food insecurity but has yet to sufficiently explore the case study using a human security approach. This paper will attempt to analyze the relevance of the human security approach in explaining the primary factor of food insecurity for the South Sudan people during 2017 and how the approach can be used to mitigate the issue. The author argues that the human security approach can reveal the South Sudan government's lack of prioritization for their people's well-being in decision-making as the primary factor of food insecurity, which can be mitigated by a people-centered approach in the future decisions of all the relevant actors. The author utilized Ken Booth's security as emancipation theory as the main perspective in the study alongside Sabine Alkire's human security concept and Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) food security indicators. The main findings confirm the importance of the human security approach in the decision-making of governments and other relevant actors, especially in the context of ensuring food security.

Keywords: South Sudan; Food Security; Human Security; Emancipation

ABSTRAK

Pada tahun 2017, Sudan Selatan mengalami kerawanan pangan yang berdampak terhadap kesehatan warga negara Sudan Selatan. Sebagian besar penelitian yang mengkaji penyebab utama kerawanan pangan tersebut menghubungkannya dengan kejadian perang saudara, tetapi masih terdapat kekosongan literatur yang menggunakan perspektif *human security*. Studi ini akan mencoba menganalisis relevansi pendekatan *human security* dalam menjelaskan penyebab utama kerawanan pangan bagi warga negara Sudan Selatan selama tahun 2017. Selain itu, studi ini akan menjelaskan bagaimana pendekatan tersebut dapat digunakan untuk menyelesaikan masalah tersebut. Penulis berpendapat bahwa penyebab utama kerawanan pangan berdasarkan pendekatan *human security* adalah kelalaian pemerintah Sudan Selatan dalam memprioritaskan keamanan warga negaranya. Oleh karena itu, aktor-aktor yang terlibat dalam isu kerawanan pangan ini perlu menggunakan pendekatan *people-centered* dalam kebijakan-kebijakan di kedepannya. Penulis menggunakan teori *security as emancipation* oleh Ken Booth sebagai perspektif utama dalam studi ini, ditambah dengan konsep *human security* dari Sabine Alkire, serta indikator *food security* dari Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Temuan-temuan dalam studi ini mengkonfirmasi pentingnya penggunaan pendekatan *human security* dalam proses pengambilan keputusan pemerintah dan aktor-aktor lainnya yang relevan, terutama dalam konteks menjaga ketahanan pangan.

Kata Kunci: Sudan Selatan; *Food Security*; *Human Security*; *Emancipation*

Introduction

In the post-Cold War era, there were increasing calls for the widening and deepening of the security concept which was previously state-centric and more focused on handling external military threats. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), one of the ardent advocates for a people-centered approach to security, released the landmark Human Development Report in 1994 which led to the inclusion of human security concerns in governments' policy agenda.[1] For instance, in the 1997 United Nations (UN) General Assembly, Japan's Prime Minister encouraged governments to respect human security by ensuring their citizens' ability to live free from threats like violence and poverty.[2] Canada also urged the global implementation of a human security approach in its foreign policy, such as by forming coalitions with like minded states and transnational civil society actors.[3]

One of the threats to human security that have increasingly gained attention is food insecurity which is defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) as the lack of access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food required for people to live a healthy and active life.[4] In 2015, UN member states recognized the importance of ending hunger as a part of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030.[5] Since food security is seen as vital for the pursuance of peoples' long-term development, it is also tied to a country's prosperity and development. One of the countries recently experiencing severe food insecurity is South Sudan. In early 2017, famine was officially announced in parts of the country which means that food insecurity has resulted in mass starvation, death, and acute malnutrition.[6] The Global Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Emergency Review Committee discovered that high levels of food insecurity affected 42% of South Sudan's population or 4,9 million people.[7] Such food insecurity also perpetuated the cycle of poverty in South Sudan. It was estimated that 82% of South Sudan's population plunged into poverty.[8] The severity of food insecurity in South Sudan for both its people's well-being and South Sudan's development suggests that the matter of food insecurity cannot be overlooked.

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[1] Gary King and Christopher J.L Murray, "Rethinking Human Security," *Political Science Quarterly* (2002): 587, https://gking.harvard.edu/files/abs/hs-abs.shtml.

[2] Sascha Wethes and David Bosold, "Human Security in Practice: Canadian and Japanese Experiences," in *Human Security*, ed. Taylor Owens (California: Sage Publishing, 2013), 87-89. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237671115_Human_Security_in_Practice_Canadian_and_Japanese_Experiences.

[3] Ibid, 93-96.

[4] FAO, IFAD and WFP, The State of Food Security in the World: The multiple dimensions of food security (Rome: FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2013), 16, http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3434e.pdf.

[5] "The 17 Goals," United Nations, accessed August 6, 2021, https://sdgs.un.org/goals.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, *South Sudan Key IPC Findings: January - July 2017* (South Sudan: IPC, 2017), 1, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IPC_South_Sudan_Key%20Messages_Feb2017.pdf.; "The IPC Famine: Fact Sheet," Integrated Food security Phase Classification (IPC), 2020, 1, https://www.fsinplatform.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/IPC_Famine_Factsheet_2020Nov.pdf.

[8] William Avis, *Coping mechanisms in South Sudan in relation to different types of shock* (United Kingdom: K4D helpdesk service, 2020), 3, https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/15301/801_Coping_Mechanism_in_South_Sudan_in_relation_to_Different_Types_of_Shock.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.; The World Bank, South Sudan Economic Update (Washington, D.C.: The World Bank, 2018), https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/30294/129303-WP-PUBLIC-SouthSudanEconomicUpdateJuly.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

The severity of food insecurity in South Sudan can be considered an anomaly seeing as experts in the FAO have pointed out that South Sudan has the potential to provide food for not only itself, but the entire continent of Africa.[9] The facts on the ground also show that South Sudan has an abundance of fertile land and climate that is suitable for both agriculture and cultivation.[10] In fact, 75% of total land in the country can support agricultural production and around 50% can support cultivation.[11] Hence, the author aims to answer the question, why did food insecurity happen in South Sudan throughout 2017? Using the human security approach, the author argues that the main cause was the state' negligence of the people's well-being in its decision-making.

Literature Review

The previous literatures have mainly attributed the food insecurity in South Sudan to the civil war between South Sudan's government forces led by President Salva Kiir and the opposition forces led by former Vice President Riek Machar. In one article, authors Lotje de Vries and Mareike Schomerus viewed that food insecurity in South Sudan will only get worse as long as the fighting continues.[12] Author Ray Murphy also supported this view but added that the government had significant contributions in worsening food insecurity by prolonging the civil war through violent measures.[13]

Similarly, to the previous author, Daniel Akech Thiong explains that the South Sudan government under the authority of President Salva Kiir purposely prolonged the civil war, despite exacerbating the conditions of food insecurity, due to the President's personal interest in maintaining power over the South Sudan people.[14] As for the limitations of the past literatures, none have sufficiently considered the lacking human security approach in the South Sudan government's decision-making as the primary factor behind South Sudan's severe food insecurity in 2017 and the importance of the human security approach in the context of food security.

Vries and Schomerus focused more on analyzing why the peace process in South Sudan's Civil War for the past three years has yet to successfully prevent further violence.[15] Meanwhile, Murphy explains more about the mistakes of the United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission in South Sudan when it comes to protecting the South Sudan people from the ongoing and violent civil war.[16] Thiong's article also explains how the South Sudan civil war was purposely orchestrated by political

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[9] African Development Bank (AfDB) Group, "Development of Agriculture," in *South Sudan in Infrastructure Action Plan in South Sudan: A Program for Sustained Strong Economic Growth* (Tunisia: AfDB Group, 2013), 133, https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/South%20Sudan%20Infrastructure%20Action%20Plan%20-%20%20A%20Program%20for%20Sustained%20Strong%20Economic%20Growth%20-%20Chapter%206%20-%20Development%20of%20Agriculture%20in%20South%20Sudan.pdf.

[10] Ibid.

[11] African Development Bank (AfDB) Group, "Development of Agriculture," 133.; Xinshen Diao, Liangzhi You, Vida Alpuerto, and Renato Folledo, "Assessing Agricultural Potential in South Sudan – A Spatial Analysis Method," in *Application of Geographic Information Systems*, ed. Bhuiyan Monwar Alam (London: IntechOpen, 2012), 139.

[12] Lotje de Vries and Mareike Schomerus, "South Sudan's Civil War Will Not End with a Peace Deal," *Peace Review* 29, no. 3 (July 3, 2017): 333–40, https://doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2017.1344533.

[13] Ray Murphy, "The United Nations Mission in South Sudan and the Protection of Civilians," *Journal of Conflict and Security Law* 22, no. 3 (December 1, 2017): 367–94, https://doi.org/10.1093/jcsl/krx016.

[14] Daniel Akech Thiong, "How the Politics of Fear Generated Chaos in South Sudan," *African Affairs* 117, no. 469 (July 20, 2018): 613-635, https://doi.org/10.1093/afraf/ady031.

[15] de Vries and Schomerus, "South Sudan's Civil War Will Not End with a Peace Deal."

[16] Murphy, "The United Nations Mission in South Sudan and the Protection of Civilians."

elites.[17] Hence, this paper aims to fill in the gaps of the previous literatures by explaining the case of South Sudan's severe food insecurity in 2017 based on a human security approach that takes into account the flaws of South Sudan government's decision-making in ensuring the South Sudan people's food security. Filling this gap is important as it will show that the human security approach is relevant in decision-making for governments, especially in regard to food security.

Theory

In order to create a comprehensive and structured analysis, there needs to be a clear framework. Here the author will conceptualize human security to determine the referent object of security in the analysis, followed by food security to determine the existential threat, and lastly the main points from Ken Booth's security as emancipation theory is used as the main perspective in the analysis.

Firstly, Sabina Alkire's conception of human security will be used as it provides analytical value for this essay.[18] Human security is defined here as the preservation of humans' vital core from threats that are critical and pervasive, while still allowing for the pursuance of human development. This definition calls for a remaking of security that prioritizes individuals as the referent object of security. Moreover, the vital core refers to essential components of human lives that must be guaranteed such as survival, livelihood, and basic dignity. An example of a survival criterion is the Freedom from Premature Preventable Death which can happen due to issues like food insecurity. Then, critical threats are threats that halt human activities and functions, while pervasive threats are threats that are far-reaching and/or recurrent. Widespread hunger can be considered a critical and pervasive threat. Alkire's conception of human security also recognizes the role of individuals, corporations, and institutions to provide human security by identifying, preventing, mitigating, and responding to the threats, and also respecting the vital core. Lastly, the preservation of the vital core should be conducted in support of humans' ability to develop themselves in the long-run. For instance, food security can be pursued by implementing agricultural programs that promote people participation and lead toward self-sufficiency.

Next, food security is defined according to the FAO as the condition where safe, nutritious, and sufficient food is accessible to everyone to the point that it allows them to live a healthy and active life.[19] This definition entails four dimensions of food security that must be fulfilled which are food availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability. Food availability refers to the quantity and quality in production and supply of food that can either be imported or produced within the country. Then, food accessibility refers to the ability to obtain food through economic or physical means. Economic means include money, the price of food, and government support, while physical means include infrastructure like roads and food storage. The third dimension, food utilization, refers to whether the food and water consumed are hygienic and contains sufficient nutritional value. The last

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[17] Thiong, "How the Politics of Fear Generated Chaos in South Sudan."

[18] Sabina Alkire, "A Conceptual Framework for Human Security," (working paper, Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security
and Ethnicity (CRISE), 2003), 1-51, https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.580.2805&rep=rep1&type=pdf.

[19] FAO, IFAD and WFP, The State of Food Security in the World: The multiple dimensions of food security (Rome: FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2013), 16, http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3434e.pdf.; FAO, Food Security (Rome: FAO's Agriculture and Development Economics Division (ESA), 2006), 1, http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/faoitaly/documents/pdf/pdf_Food_Security_Cocept_Note.pdf.

dimension, food stability, refers to whether the food production and supply are resilient enough to endure disturbances from human-made or natural disasters.

Last but not least, Ken Booth's security as emancipation theory provides an interesting perspective for the analysis. There are several important points in Ken Booth's article, "Security and Emancipation".[20] Firstly, Booth proposes that the referent object of security should be individual human beings. According to Booth, the traditional security concept is too minimalist in its scope and fails to regard that the individuals' security are just as important as the state's. By acknowledging that the security of individuals matters, then security becomes a wider and deeper goal to ensure the security of human beings from threats that are not only external but also internal. The external threats include traditional threats like military invasion from other countries. Meanwhile, the internal threats, which Booth argues are more common, are threats such as food scarcity and economic crisis. Unlike the traditional security concept, this acknowledges that states can cause security threats to their own people due to faulty policies and weak governance.

Secondly according to Booth, states should be the means to security instead of the ends.[21] This means that states still serve the purpose of ensuring security, though Booth admits that at times they may fail to do so. In addition, Booth argues that states should fulfill this responsibility without oppressing individuals and overusing power and order. This is because real security entails that there are no constraints on humans' autonomy. Thirdly, Booth proposes that security can be achieved through emancipation which refers to the process of freeing individuals from limitations that restrict their ability to live a fulfilling life.[22] This can be done through agenda-setting and gradual reformation of the current oppressive structures. Moreover, emancipatory security entails "survival plus" which means that security should go beyond the matter of survival and ensure that these individuals have the freedom to live a life full of choices.[23] The limitations that must be removed are diverse and can include food insecurity.[24] Finally, within Booth's idea of emancipation there is the principle of reciprocity of rights.[25] This principle means that humanity serves a common purpose in emancipation. Hence, emancipation is a global project that everyone deserves to benefit from.

This study uses qualitative desk-based research which means that the information and data used come from secondary data in the form of journals, official reports, working paper, books, and web sources.[26] Secondary data refers to data that has been compiled and processed by other parties. The analysis will begin by evaluating the conditions of food insecurity in South Sudan throughout 2017, followed by the government of South Sudan's role in ensuring the people's food security, then gauging the extent that the people are prioritized as the referent object of security, and finally seeing the concept of emancipatory security in practice including its limitations and recommendations for South Sudan.

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[20] Ken Booth, "Security and Emancipation," *Review of International Studies* 17, no. 4 (October 1991): 313-326, https://www.jstor.org/stable/20097269.

[21] Booth, "Security and Emancipation."

[22] Booth, "Security and Emancipation," 313-326.

[23] Ken Booth, *Theory of World Security,* ed. Steve Smith (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 102.; Booth, "Security and Emancipation," 319.

[24] Booth, "Security and Emancipation," 313-326.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Mestika Zed, "Apakah Metode Kepustakaan?" in *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan* (Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2014), 1-28.; David Stewart and Michael A. Kamins, "Introduction," in *Secondary Research: Information Sources and Methods* (Amerika Serikat: SAGE Publications, 1993), 1-4.

Analysis

a.   The Conditions of Severe Food Insecurity in South Sudan throughout 2017

Regarding food availability, firstly South Sudan's food quantity and quality in production and supply is insufficient for the population according to reports by the African Development Bank (AfDB), Joint Policy Advisory Team (JPAT), and FAO/World Food Programme (WFP), and the Institute of Development Studies.[27] Despite having more than half of its total land fertile enough for agriculture and cultivation, only 4% of it is cultivated regularly. This means that land use is not maximum enough to support high production and supply of food. On top of the ineffective land use, around half of the total labor needed to produce food to supply the markets and personal consumption lacked access to farmland due to the ongoing political and ethnic conflict. This is also made worse by the fact that methods of farming are too inefficient to support high production and supply of food. As for the food that was able to be cultivated, there was a decrease in 2017. For instance, the harvest of cereals, which is one of the staple foods in South Sudan, was at a deficit of as much as 380,000 tonnes. This occurrence is quite severe since during the harvest time in that same year, there were as many as 70% of the total population was food insecure. Secondly, South Sudan relies on food imports. In fact, it imports as much as 50% of its required food supply. Unfortunately, food imports were delayed at customs and were subjected to restrictions which worsened food availability. Altogether, this has unsurprisingly contributed to a low supply of food in the markets. Lastly, the quality of crops has experienced a significant decrease due to irregular rains and flooding.

In terms of food accessibility, there are also several difficulties as stated in the report by the Institute of Development Studies.[28] Firstly, household purchasing power experienced a significant decrease due to high inflation from an ongoing economic crisis of as much as 800% in 2017. The situation was so severe that as much as 97% of the households that were surveyed could only afford one meal each day in Juba, South Sudan's capital city. In addition, food prices have soared due to disruptions in production and supply and the ongoing ethnic and political conflict. Thirdly, there have been some policies drafted to improve food security. For example, there is the Agriculture Policy

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[27] African Development Bank (AfDB) Group, "Development of Agriculture," 131-133.; Joint Policy Advisory Team (JPAT), *Food Security and Initiatives for Resilience In South Sudan* (Juba: South Sudan United Nations Country Team Joint Policy Advisory Team, 2017), 9-10, https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/SSD/DLD396%20JPAT%20Food%20Security_3.pdf.; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and World Food Programme, Special Report: FAO/WFP Crop And Food Security Assessment Mission To South Sudan (Rome: FAO and WFP, 2018), 34, 42m http://www.fao.org/3/i8702EN/i8702en.pdf.; Dylan O'Driscoll, *Drivers of Malnutrition in South Sudan* (Brighton: K4D Research Helpdesk, Institute of Development Studies, 2018), 12, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5c6ec76ded915d4a3d3b23eb/466_Drivers_of_Malnutrition_in_South_Sudan.pdf.

[28] Dylan O'Driscoll, *Drivers of Malnutrition in South Sudan* (Brighton: K4D Research Helpdesk, Institute of Development Studies, 2018), 8, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5c6ec76ded915d4a3d3b23eb/466_Drivers_of_Malnutrition_in_South_Sudan.pdf.

Framework 2006 and Animal Resource Framework 2006.[29] However, none of these policies have been implemented to date since most resources are directed at funding the security sector to help the ongoing civil war.[30] Another difficulty is transportation due to poor road infrastructure that is vulnerable to weather, high transportation costs, and the presence of illegal activities along the road like looting.[31] Moreover, food aid to conflict zones were purposefully restricted by the South Sudan government as a way to gain leverage in the ongoing civil war.[32]

Then in terms of food utilization, firstly there is a lack of hygiene as reported by the Institute of Development Studies.[33] The people of South Sudan have mostly consumed food and water which come from polluted sources and this made them vulnerable to illnesses that reduce nutrients absorption like diarrhea. Moreover, the food is distributed among family members which further reduces the amount of consumption for each person. Lastly, the people of South Sudan are consuming wild plants with low nutrients because the ongoing civil war has limited their food options. The Institute of Development Studies also mentions several difficulties in terms of food stability. The first is that food sources are vulnerable to weather changes and diseases. In South Sudan, irregular rains easily damaged the quantity and quality of crops since most depend on rain, and the livestock was impacted by endemic diseases. Moreover, food stability is easily disturbed by other events like the ongoing civil war which narrowed the harvesting time for the farmers. Thirdly, harvest loss is an issue as there is a lack of sufficient food storage. Overall, it is apparent that all four dimensions of food security in South Sudan during 2017 have not been fulfilled. This means that food insecurity is an existential threat to the well-being of the people of South Sudan who are the referent object of security in this matter. The data also shows that severe food insecurity has directly affected 100,000 people who are dying as a result of starvation.[34]

b.   The State's Role in Ensuring the South Sudan People's Food Security

According to Booth, the state has a purpose of ensuring security in a way that does not oppress its people.[35] When looking into the case study, it is apparent that the state of South Sudan has not fulfilled its role of ensuring the South Sudan people's food security. This is evident across the four dimensions of food security where the state's role has been minimal and even damaging. Firstly, the state has actually contributed to a decrease in food availability. It was found that the military states and elites are taking advantage of the ongoing conflict for their own personal gains. For instance, illegal land-grabbing has long been conducted on occupied farmlands which ceased food

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[29] "Food Security and Land Governance Factsheet: South Sudan," Land Governance for Equitable and Sustainable Development, 2016, 6, https://www.landgovernance.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/20160627-Factsheet-SouthSudan.pdf.

[30] Land Governance for Equitable and Sustainable Development, "Food Security and Land Governance Factsheet: South Sudan," 6.

[31] Joint Policy Advisory Team (JPAT), *Food Security and Initiatives for Resilience In South Sudan*, 9.

[32] Hannah Barry, "Starving Out the Enemy: Withholding Food Aid as a Tactic of War in South Sudan," *Mapping Politics* 8, no. 2 (2017): 59, https://journals.library.mun.ca/ojs/index.php/MP/article/view/1778.

[33] O'Driscoll, *Drivers of Malnutrition in South Sudan*, 11.; Joint Policy Advisory Team (JPAT), *Food Security and Initiatives for Resilience In South Sudan*, 7-13.

[34] United Nations Security Council, Final report of the South Sudan Sanctions Committee's Panel of Experts S/2017/326 (New York: United Nations Security Council, 2017), 30, https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2017_326.pdf. .

[35] Booth, "Security and Emancipation," 318-319.

availability.[36] Secondly, the government has also disturbed food accessibility according to studies by Hannah Barry and Dylan O'Driscoll.[37] As proof of this, the state has purposely blocked food aid to areas containing political opposition forces and sold it, which has negatively impacted innocent civilians. Thirdly, the state has not ensured food safety since hygiene services are limited and have been disturbed by the economic crisis. Then on food stability, the state has purposely prolonged the ongoing political and ethnic conflict since it allows them to collect economic benefits. Unsurprisingly, this has negatively impacted the food production and supply system. Moreover, the state lack the capacity to control diseases against livestock that 65% of its people depend on. Overall, it is apparent here that the state has oppressed the people of South Sudan and failed to fulfill its responsibility of ensuring their food security.

c.   The South Sudan people as the referent object of security

To Booth, individual human beings should be the referent object of security since security needed to move past its minimalist definition that was proposed in the traditional security concept.[38] By applying this to the case study, it is clear that unfortunately, the state does not consider the South Sudan people as the referent object of security. This explains why the state has wrongfully formulated policies for personal gains rather than for public good. Firstly, as proof, the state has spent a majority of its national budget in the security sector for the sole purpose of consolidating its power. In fact, it was reported that despite the famine problem in 2017, that same year it allocated almost two-thirds of all its budget to the security sector for obtaining weapons.[39] Meanwhile, spending for the social sector such as health, education, and agriculture only reached less than 10% on average.[40] Secondly, most of the government spending was directed towards paying wages for government officials and the armed forces. The percentage of government spending towards their wages reached 55%, compared to 14% in procurement of public goods and services.[41] Thirdly, the state is also profiting from the ongoing political and ethnic conflict. This was done by charging humanitarian workers high work permit fees of as much as US$10,000 for each person and selling food aid.[42] In short, the state policies have disregarded the people of South Sudan because they are not considered as the referent object of security by the state.

d.   Emancipation of the South Sudan People from Food Insecurity

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[36] Land Governance for Equitable and Sustainable Development, "Food Security and Land Governance Factsheet: South Sudan," 6.

[37] Barry, "Starving Out the Enemy: Withholding Food Aid as a Tactic of War in South Sudan," 58-59.; O'Driscoll, *Drivers of Malnutrition in South Sudan*, 11-13

[38] Booth, "Security and Emancipation," 318-319.

[39] United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, *National Budget Brief Fiscal Year* 2017/18: *Republic of South Sudan* (South Sudan: UNICEF South Sudan, 2017), 7, https://www.unicef.org/esaro/UNICEF_South_Sudan_--_2017_--_National_Budget_Brief.pdf.

[40] Augustino Ting Mayai, "Security Sector Spending and Public Safety in South Sudan, 2006–2018," *African Security Review* 29, no.3 (2020): 10, https://doi.org/10.1080/10246029.2020.1813784.

[41] United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, National Budget Brief Fiscal Year 2017/18: Republic of South Sudan, 8.

[42] Barry, "Starving Out the Enemy: Withholding Food Aid as a Tactic of War in South Sudan," 59.

Booth argues that security can be achieved by emancipating or freeing individuals from conditions that restrict their ability to live fulfilling life.[43] Referring back to the case study, it is clear that the condition of food insecurity has limited the South Sudan people's ability to not only survive but exercise their freedom to live a life full of choices.[44] For instance, the famine has made more than 70% of schoolgirls unable to pursue their primary school education.[45] This makes emancipation vital which can be achieved by institutions and individuals through agenda-setting and gradually reforming the current repressive structures.[46] Prior to the 2017 famine, the government of South Sudan have attempted to create a comprehensive policy framework for agriculture and food security development. The Agriculture Sector Policy Framework (ASPF) was formulated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Cooperatives and Rural Development from 2011-2012 with the objective of reaching food self-sufficiency by 2017.[47] The document outlined several strategies to raise agricultural productivity, one of them being the provision of agricultural capacity-building to increase the skills of men and women employed in agriculture. To do this, the government plans to bring back the Farmer Training Centres (FTCs), government training institutes, and prepare college graduates with training in agriculture careers. In addition, the government aims to tackle social and economic problems in rural and urban areas by funding economic development projects and creating capacity development programs targeted towards government officers and community leaders.

However, in practice there has been numerous challenges in translating the strategies stated in ASPF into actual policies.[48] First, the policies have not been approved yet to this day by the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs who have the authority to monitor and implement them. There is also a lack of dissemination of the initiatives to the public and relevant actors at the state and county levels whose involvement is crucial to the realization of the policies. Thirdly, there is a need to reformulate the ASPF's strategies to consider the recent emergence of conflict. The ASPF needs to adapt to the situation at hand and extend the lifespan of its plan. There are also institutional and political constraints to implement the strategies seeing as the state is facing a crisis of legitimacy since the outbreak of the conflict. The accumulation of the government's mismanagement of funds and resources, repression against dissidence, alongside the lack of political space have severely deteriorated public trust. Without political legitimacy, the government also lacks the power to enforce the policies and their absence leaves room for insurgency.

Using the emancipatory security conceptual framework, the South Sudan people need to be prioritized as the referent object of security in the government's policies.[49] This means that more state resources should be allocated towards underfunded social sectors such as health, education, and agriculture, and the procurement of public goods and services. By doing so, the people's basic rights

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[43] Booth, "Security and Emancipation," 319.

[44] United Nations Security Council, *Final report of the South Sudan Sanctions Committee's Panel of* Experts S/2017/326, 30.; Booth, "Security and Emancipation," 319.

[45] "South Sudan Crisis Forces Girls Out of School," Plan International, accessed February 1, 2021, https://plan-international.org/news/2017-04-25-south-sudan-crisis-forces-girls-out-school.

[46] Booth, "Security and Emancipation," 324.

[47] Ministry of Agriculture, "AGRICULTURE SECTOR POLICY FRAMEWORK (ASPF): 2012-2017," (Republic of South Sudan, 2012), 1-71, https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/ssd149325.pdf.

[48] FAO and World Bank, "Transforming Agriculture in South Sudan from Humanitarian Aid to a Development Oriented Growth Path," Country Investment Highlights, (Rome: FAO, World Bank, 2022), 1-159, https://reliefweb.int/report/south-sudan/transforming-agriculture-south-sudan-humanitarian-aid-development-oriented-growth-path.

[49] Booth, "Security and Emancipation," 318-319.

can be ensured which is fundamental for their long-term development. Once the people's basic rights are fulfilled, the government should also start their plans for agricultural capacity-building programs. These capacity-building programs is one way to make sure that the people have autonomy over their livelihood, and fulfills the survival plus criteria in emancipatory security that entails individuals to both be security from threats and freedom to live a life full of choices.[50]

Furthermore, the people should be facilitated to voice out their ideas, concerns, and actively participate in government projects. Respecting the agency of the people is a way of freeing individuals from the limitations that restrict their ability to live a fulfilling life as stated in the criteria of emancipatory security.[51] This can be done by pursuing a consultative process in the reformulation of the ASPF and including actors on the grassroots level such as the traditional chiefs and leaders who can support the implementation and monitoring from the bottom-up. However, peace must be established before the emancipation project can be achieved. This is because the presence of conflicts exacerbates existing insecurities including food insecurity. Rather than through military approaches which could fuel the conflicts even further, the South Sudan government could collaborate with traditional leaders who have legitimacy at the local level even among insurgents. In South Sudan, communities operate within indigenous cultural systems and traditional leaders are acknowledged as mediators in local conflicts.[52]

Moreover, Booth adds that emancipation entails the principle of reciprocity of rights where humanity serves as the common purpose.[53] When applied to the case study, then the emancipation of the South Sudan people is not only a domestic matter. Instead, it is a part of a global project of emancipation where everyone's food security is worth pursuing. This implies the role of non-state actors like International Organizations in ensuring the South Sudan people's and all people's food security. Again, this can be done by agenda-setting in which the matter of food security is included in global forums to raise its level of importance. In addition to food aid initiatives by international organizations, there should also be investments in agricultural capacity-building projects to raise the people's abilities to be food self-sufficient. That way, the principle of survival plus in emancipatory security is fulfilled which means that tackling the issue of food security is not just about making sure the people can eat, but also making sure they are not dependent on external forces in the long-term and have the capacity to make life choices. Overall, states and non-state actors have the responsibility to ensure the food security of the South Sudan people by emancipating them from repressive conditions that impede upon their ability to survive and autonomy.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to fill in the gaps from the previous literatures by explaining the relevancy of the human security approach in assessing the primary factor of severe food insecurity for the South Sudan people in 2017 and how to mitigate food insecurity in South Sudan through the human security approach. The answer to the research question was that the human security approach is able to reveal the South Sudan government's disregard towards the South Sudan people's well-

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[50] Booth, Theory of World Security, 319.

[51] Booth, "Security and Emancipation," 313-326.

[52] FAO and World Bank, "Transforming Agriculture in South Sudan from Humanitarian Aid to a Development Oriented Growth Path," 1-159.

[53] Booth, "Security and Emancipation," 322-324.

being in decision-making as the main factor of food insecurity, and that mitigating this situation requires all relevant actors to take responsibility by prioritizing the South Sudan people in future decisions.

There are several main findings in this essay which supports the arguments put forward by the author. The first main finding is that food insecurity in South Sudan throughout 2017 is considered as an existential threat to the South Sudan people's well-being. This was proven by measuring four dimensions of food security: availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability. The results showed that all four dimensions of food security were not fulfilled in South Sudan throughout 2017. The second main finding is that the state has failed to fulfill its role of preserving the people's food security. This is evident in several of its actions that undermine all four dimensions of food security. The third main finding is that the South Sudan people have not been prioritized within the state policies because they are not the referent object of security for the state actors. The evidence of this can be seen in the way the personal gains of state actors dominate the state's policies. The last main finding is that the people of South Sudan need to be emancipated from the conditions of food insecurity to be truly secure. This emancipation process can be pursued by both domestic and global actors through conducting agenda-setting on the topic of food security and a reformation of the current repressive structures that allow food insecurity to occur. This paper's results imply that security of the individual is just as important as state security and demands prioritization in the decision-making of governments and other relevant actors.

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