Is UNFPA working for a better food security in the future?

How women’s empowerment and use of contraception can assure food for future generations

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to explore if UNFPA’s work mission and methods direct for greater food security in the future. The analysis is based on one of UNFPA’s main frameworks; ICPD Programme of Action 1994. The analysis is based upon different themes that are recognized as tools for change; family planning, women’s empowerment and gender equality, education and child marriage. The theoretical frame of the analysis is liberalism which has been complemented with social constructivism, and has provided an insight to the discussion. The essay will also investigate whether the different theories can explain UNFPA’s framework, mission and methods. The method used is a describing qualitative content analysis.

The research shows that UNFPA indirectly implement or propose a great deal that can have an impact on food security. In order to regulate population growth, which is one of the major trends threatening food security, different measures are proposed in the framework. Focus is on governments efforts and gender equality through SRH education. The liberal view put emphasis on human rights and the individuals right to freedom, as well as equality, which was obtained by a greater or lesser degree throughout the framework. Social constructivism could explain ICPD where liberalism failed to do so, such as the lack of emphasis on child marriage due to many societies identity and traditions.

Key words: Food security, population growth, Millennium Development Goals, liberalism, social constructivism, UNFPA, family planning, gender equality, education, child marriage
# Table of Contents

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 Transformation of the concept of security .................................. 6
  1.1.1 Human security ........................................... 6-7
  1.1.2 Definition of food security ................................ 7

1.2 Population growth ......................................................... 8-10
  1.2.1 Earlier research ............................................. 8
  1.2.2 Why is population growth a problem? ......................... 9-10

1.3 Measures to stabilize population growth .................................. 10-12
  1.3.1 Family planning and contraception ......................... 10-11
  1.3.2 Gender equality and women’s empowerment .................. 11
  1.3.3 Education ..................................................... 11
  1.3.4 Child marriage ............................................ 12

1.4 Millennium Development Goals ........................................ 13-14

## 2.0 Theory

2.1 Liberalism .............................................................. 14-16

2.2 Social constructivism .................................................... 16-17

2.3 Indicators for analysis ................................................. 17

## 3.0 Research problem

3.1 Research problem ........................................................ 17-18
3.2 UNFPA ................................................................. 19
3.3 Research question .................................................. 19

4.0 Method and material .................................................. 19-21
4.1 Method ................................................................. 19-20
4.2 Material ............................................................... 20
4.2.1 ICPD Programme of Action ..................................... 21
4.2.2 Model for analysis ................................................ 22

5.0 Analysis ............................................................... 22-29
5.1 ICPD Programme of Action ........................................... 22-29

6.0 Conclusion ............................................................ 29-34
6.1 Conclusion ............................................................. 29-34
6.2 Future research ...................................................... 34

7.0 References ........................................................... 35-37
### List of abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agricultural Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICPD</td>
<td>International Conference on Population and Development</td>
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<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>SRH</td>
<td>Sexual and Reproductive Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nation Population Fund</td>
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Transformation of security

In our future scientists and academics predicts new threats to security rising above the horizon. These threats are far from the traditional threats to security that have been discussed and analyzed over the past decades. Amongst these threats to security we see food and land scarcity, pollution, hunger, and rising sea level amongst many other trends and phenomena\(^1\). Dannreuther explains that these threats are far from new, but that our perspective of security changed when the Cold War ended\(^2\). Analysts’, academics and governments had up until then focused the discussions regarding security to states and their actions of violence. When the Cold War suddenly ended the traditional view on security slowly transformed in order to give other aspects a place in the spotlight. Naturally, violent conflicts still has attention, but other aspects of society that could be seen as a threat to individual’s security achieved more awareness. AIDS, environment, poverty and hunger are a few examples of new areas that has taken place on the new agenda\(^3\).

1.1.1 Human Security

In 1994 UNDP discussed the concept on human security\(^4\). The report argued that the traditional view with focus on states neglects and excludes individual’s and what they perceive as threat. The expansion of the concept of security was a necessity to better represent this perception. Human security has two main aspects; protection from chronic diseases, such as hunger, and protection from sudden and harmful disruptions in every day life\(^5\). In these two aspects we find different main components such as environmental-, economic- and food security. UNDP states food security as that everyone should have physical and economic access to basic nutrition\(^6\). The access to food is therefore a necessity in order to reach food security. Today there is enough food to accomplish food security and eradicate hunger for everyone on earth, but we still cannot provide it\(^7\). Several theories

\(^1\) Dodds & Pippard, 2006:104, Hough, 2008:98, 147
\(^2\) Dannreuther, 2013:3
\(^3\) Dannreuther, 2013:1
\(^4\) Peoples et al, 2010:121
\(^5\) UNDP, 1994:22, 23
have tried to profess the reasons to this, and one of the arguments are that the unequal distribution of food is one of the reasons as to one in eight of the world’s population still goes hungry every day\(^8\). As contrary to popular belief, this is not a problem excluded to less developed countries. In 2010 one of seven households in the United States had become food insecure\(^9\).

### 1.1.2 Definition of Food Security

Discussions and debates regarding which definition on food security is the correct and most suitable has taken place in the past decades. The definition adopted by FAO is: “Food security is a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”\(^{10}\). It is this definition that will be referred to in this essay.

There is no lack of theories and predictions about what will become of food security in the future. Analysis's of this kind are interesting since we today fail to provide food security for all, despite our resources. Researchers such as Lester Brown argues that there are several trends that will weaken future food security. Trends such as population growth, a growing welfare and increasing food prices will result in great challenges for future decision-makers in order to provide food security for their nations\(^{11}\).

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\(^8\) UN, 2013:6

\(^9\) Dorling, 2013:353

\(^{10}\) Conway, 2012:66

\(^{11}\) Brown, 2012:3
1.2 Population growth

This essay cannot cover all the trends that can affect food security. The focus will be on population growth and how it can affect the access to food in the future, based on several researcher’s theories.

1.2.1 Earlier research

Earlier research show that the trend of population growth is one of the most disturbing trends that can relate to food security. Conway and Brown are two researchers that have been recognized for their contribution in this field. Conway, in his book *One Billion Hungry*, discuss fertility rate as an important indicator that relates to the increasing demand of food in the world. One of Conway’s argument on how to lower the fertility rate, and decline population growth, is to raise living standards. Despite common belief, if we aid poor and large families to access assets such as food and money, the families will not grow larger - au contraire. The families will become smaller as they become more prosperous.

While Conway leant towards an optimistic view on how to solve the issues of mankind, Brown is more pessimistic. Brown discusses the different trends that affect our food security: population growth, climate change, raising the living standards and fuel. Food as the weak link is the common denominator that connects these trends and therefore threatens food security. In his praised book, *Plan B*, Brown presents these trends and possible solutions in order to "save civilization". However, it is no easy task to stabilize the climate, stabilize the population growth, and to eradicate poverty. Brown argues that we can reach food security by using the technology and economic instruments we have today and fundamentally restructure the global economy. What we need is the right decisions, such as shifting taxes, from decision makers all over the world, which is not very likely to happen any time soon.

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12 Brown, 2012:3,9
13 Earth Policy Institute, 2013, IFAD, 2013
14 Conway, 2012:9
15 Brown, 2012:4, 9, 11
16 Brown, 2009:261
17 Brown, 2009:261
18 Brown, 2009:266
1.2.2 Why is population growth a problem?

Population growth is one of the largest challenges to food security, providing 79 million more mouths to feed a year, wherein 97% of these are found in the developing countries. If we want to ensure food security and eradicate hunger for all, we must apply the brakes on population growth\textsuperscript{19}. UN has estimated three projections on population growth to 2050; the low projection is 7.7, medium is 9.15 and the high projection is 10.6 billion people. The most likely to occur is the medium projection, which means a raise of 2 billion people, compared to the population today\textsuperscript{20}. As a consequence to this population growth we have to double our present food production, if we are to ensure food security for all\textsuperscript{21}.

Since population growth is one of the larger trends threatening food security, fertility rate is one of the major indicators that can allow us to understand the issue at hand. Today we see over 40% of the world’s population in countries with a fertility rate at or under 2.1, which is enough to slow down and stabilize the growth-rate. However, this means that 60% of the world’s population lives in countries with a higher fertility rate. Some developing countries have a fertility rate as high as 4.39. A fertility rate at 2 is recommended, or argued necessary, in order to stabilize the fertility rate. Otherwise, the population will double\textsuperscript{22}. Countries have to strive for not more than two children per couple, in order to effectively deal with this disturbing trend\textsuperscript{23}.

Estimations tell that in the future we are to see the greatest increase in population growth in the least developed countries, such as Subsaharan Africa\textsuperscript{24}. Along with the increase in population growth we will see the people in these countries struggle for food even more than they are already. This struggle could easily escalate into conflicts and war over resources\textsuperscript{25}. What we need to enable food security for all is to slow down the population growth, which can be achieved through


\textsuperscript{20} Seitz, 2008:40, 67, Brown, 2012:16

\textsuperscript{21} Conway, 2012:330

\textsuperscript{22} Dasgupta, 2007:21,22, Sachs, 2006:84, 85


\textsuperscript{24} Dorling, 2013: 284, 340, Seitz, 2008:39, Todardo & Smith, 2011:269

\textsuperscript{25} Dorling, 2013:284, Brown, 2009:9
different means. The key here is to lower the fertility rate\textsuperscript{26}, since high fertility rate can be both a cause and a consequence of underdevelopment\textsuperscript{27}. Different measures can have an effect on a drop in fertility rate, such as empowerment of women, gender equality, access for girls to education as well as discouraging harmful traditions such as child marriage.

1.3 Measures for stabilizing population growth
One of the most effective ways to prevent a high increase in population growth is enabling access to family planning and contraception for women\textsuperscript{28}. By offering women contraception we could prevent around 50 million unwanted pregnancies each year, thus reducing the number of unintended pregnancies from 75 million a year, down to 22 million\textsuperscript{29}. Better education is another measure that would prove efficient. Education results in a higher likelihood to use contraception, as well as delaying marriages and obtaining jobs. If a women can obtain work opportunities, it often becomes more beneficiary to the family than creating a larger family\textsuperscript{30}. An educated women is also often the first to make a move towards smaller families\textsuperscript{31}. If young girls and adolescents were helped to prevent a pregnancy, these girls could then instead become a part of the work force, contributing to economic development and reducing poverty in the nation\textsuperscript{32}.

1.3.1 Family planning and contraception
Estimations tell us that around 222 million women all over the world would like to either avoid or delay pregnancies, but due to lack of contraception or family planning they do not currently have a choice\textsuperscript{33}. With the right measures in place, millions of unwanted and unintended pregnancies could be prevented each year. Access to contraception can depend on many factors, such as norms,

\textsuperscript{26}Dorling, 2013:284

\textsuperscript{27}Todaro\&Smith, 2011:46, 295, Sachs, 2006:86


\textsuperscript{29}Brown, 2009:184, UNFPA, 2013a, UNFPA, 2008

\textsuperscript{30}Seitz, 2008:57

\textsuperscript{31}Dasgupta, 2007:62

\textsuperscript{32}UNFPA, 2013b

\textsuperscript{33}UNFPA, 2013a, UNFPA, 2013c:36

\textsuperscript{34}UNFPA, 2013a:36
attitudes and beliefs in society\textsuperscript{34}, or lack of knowledge of where to obtain them, or a lack of infrastructure that limits reproductive care\textsuperscript{35}.

1.3.2 Gender equality and women’s empowerment

High fertility rate is also strongly linked to gender equality. Each year over 7 million girls under the age of 18 give birth, often not by choice. One of the main underlying causes to this is gender inequality and obstacles to human rights\textsuperscript{36}. In many societies women experience low status and often receive little education, especially so in SRH. Women in these areas experience difficulty to take control of their own fertility. Measures to change these social norms are necessary but they come slowly\textsuperscript{37}.

1.3.3 Education

Tools to empower women is needed if we want to lower the fertility rate. Education can be one such powerful tool. Education has been stated as “a major protective factor for early pregnancy”\textsuperscript{38}. Girls that get access to education not only affect the choice of how many children she will conceive, but it will also raise her ability to provide for their society and their families. The cost to let her stay at home and raise a family will therefore be higher\textsuperscript{39}. If girls are allowed to stay in school longer they are less likely to become pregnant, and they are also being enabled to gain a higher status in society. Through education women can achieve higher paid jobs, gain higher self-esteem and reach a more equal position in society. Leaving school can jeopardize their future economic prospects, as well as their households living standard\textsuperscript{40}. Another positive effect that derives from education is that it reduces the likelihood of child marriage, and therefore delays childbearing\textsuperscript{41}.

\textsuperscript{35} UNFPA, 2013c:35, 70
\textsuperscript{36} UNFPA, 2013c:7
\textsuperscript{37} UNFPA, 2008:4
\textsuperscript{38} UNFPA, 2013c:42
\textsuperscript{39} Sachs, 2006:85
\textsuperscript{40} UNFPA, 2013c:8,18, 25, 26
\textsuperscript{41} UNFPA, 2013c:25, 48, 60
1.3.4 Child marriage

Child marriage is a relatively large reason as to why the population is growing. Each year 7.3 million girls under 18 in developing countries give birth, which is equivalent of 20 000 new babies every day. Two million out of these births are to girls 14 or younger, and 95% of these births are found in developing countries. A majority of these births could have been prevented if the mother had equal rights to the father, since one of the main underlying causes to these births are due to child marriage.

In developing countries many girls are forced into marriage at a young age. Estimations reveal that over the next decade we can expect over 14 million child marriages annually, 38 000 girls every day, only in developing countries. This problem can most often not be solved through aid or money, but focusing on changing attitudes in societies should be in place. What needs to be changed are the policies of families, communities and governments, leaving the girl with a choice of her own.

As discussed, there are several ways to stabilize or stop population growth, not excluded nor limited to the topics discussed in this essay. Hand in hand with using contraception is changing the role of the woman in society. Societies with empowered women tend to have lower birth rates. Social equality allows girls to stay in school and get an education, which will result in better job opportunities, and abstain from child marriage and unintended pregnancies. At the core of changing a society and moving it towards development, we find empowering women.

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42 UNFPA, 2013b, UNFPA, 2013c:6
43 UNFPA, 2013c:6
44 UNFPA, 2013b
45 UNFPA, 2013c:7
46 UNFPA, 2013c:10, 48
47 UNFPA, 2013c:9, 48
48 UNFPA, 2013b
49 Dasgupta, 2007:103
1.4 Millennium Development Goals

The MDG:s were established by the UN in 2001. It is eight goals that emphasize social, economic and environmental sustainability. The goals have targets as well as indicators to enable the process to be followed. They are designed to track development progress and most goals are set to be achieved by 2015. It is so far the strongest international commitment made to end global poverty, and they are unique considering the global consensus that support them. The goals have provided a unified focus on different, interdependent, issues through which we can reach development and raising living standards. Cynics argued that the goals were too ambitious, but they have instead helped prioritize global and national efforts and achieved remarkable results. They give the international community important directions and guidelines, and have raised awareness of many issues.

In table 1 the MDG:s, as well as the targets, related to this essay are presented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Target</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MDG 1</td>
<td>Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) Reduce extreme poverty by half</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Productive and decent employment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Reduce hunger by half</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDG 2</td>
<td>Achieve universal primary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Universal primary schooling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG 3</td>
<td>Promote gender equality and empower women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) Equal girls’ enrollment in primary school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Women’s share of paid employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Women’s equal representation in national parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDG 5</td>
<td>Improve maternal health</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By 2015 achieve universal access to reproductive health</td>
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</table>

Table 1. The goals and targets related to the issues presented in this essay.
However, Brown argues that it is not a possibility for the world community to achieve these goals as long as we continue with business as usual. Neither will we achieve them with the current population growth we see today. Succeeding with the MDGs would, naturally, have an impact on the population growth, and in the long run, an impact on the food security we see in 2050.

For this essay four of the MDGs can be emphasized and deserve our attention, as shown in Table 1. The goals show a great commitment and consensus, and by acknowledging the MDGs on the agenda of international politics, the topics touched in this essay are certainly proven relevant. Several of the MDGs are directly included in the issues discussed in this essay, which strengthen the reason to further discuss and analyze them and their impact.

2.0 Theory

2.1 Liberalism

The aim of this essay is not to test nor develop the theory itself, but instead provide a better insight to the discussion. Liberalism as an approach will therefore provide us with tools to better understand the issue.

John Locke and John Stuart Mill are two great thinkers that are closely related to the theory, which strongly promotes peace, equality and freedom. Since peace and welfare are seen as positive values that we should strive for, liberalism is known to have a certain normative aspect. These traits, argue liberalism, can only be achieved through cooperation in international politics. As opposed to realism, focus is not exclusive to states in the international arena, but other actors such as organizations and civil society can play a crucial and contributing part. Opportunities and freedom for the individual should determine the states’ and organizations’ function in society. Institutions are perceived as a structure created by people in order to handle common interests and protect the

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57 Weiss & Daws, 2007:643, Veres, 2013:3

58 Esaiasson et al, 2012:37


60 Gustavsson & Tallberg, 2009:51, O’Brien & Williams, 2010:23

61 Gustavsson & Tallberg, 2009:51, Marsh & Stoker, 2010:158, 159
individual’s freedom, and should therefore not in any way oppress people or hinder the individual’s freedom and development.

The liberal theory is characterized by an optimism towards development. As with most theories there are several subtypes with some minor differences. Liberalism can be divided into (at least) three main areas: norms and rights; interdependency and institutions; and conflict of interests and foreign policy.

The normative liberal perspective reflects in an approach called cosmopolitanism. Cosmopolitanism is critical to states and their functions, and claims that the state is separating a united people. Every man and woman on earth have equal value and rights, regardless of origin and ethnicity, and the flourishing and wellbeing of all individuals’ is a matter of concern for all of us. The approach argues that states are too weak to distribute equal rights which results in, apart from separation of peoples, unethical and unequal treatment, as well as poverty. States are overestimated, and international forums are better suited to represent all individuals. A genuine global forum would be a better representation of the individuals, since states are failing in protecting the individual. Naturally, these institutions and forums should be guided and founded upon by the human rights. Cosmopolitanism sees human rights as a universal approach that includes all individuals. Critique towards cosmopolitanism mainly focuses on the emphasis of human rights, since the concept of human rights is controversy in many countries, and have been accused of being an invention from the West.

One of the core concepts in liberalism is equality, and that every individual must be treated as an equal. Being born as a woman should not interfere in your rights as a human being, neither should your place of birth determine how far you can go in life. Therefore, social equality and

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62 Gustavsson & Tallberg, 2009:51,52
63 Gustavsson & Tallberg, 2009:53
64 Gustavsson & Tallberg, 2009:53
65 Ramsbotham et al, 2010:251
68 Roberts & Sutch, 2011:255
empowerment of women is one of the pillars that can create a sustainable and rich society.

2.2 Social constructivism

Constructivism is a relatively new perspective that focuses on culture, identity, interests and ideas as a social construction. All immaterial things are constructed and shaped to implicate different and various things to a range of individuals and societies. Emphasis is on the relation between actors and their surrounding social structures. Social constructivism claims that actors identities and interests can change over time and depend on context, and should never be taken for granted. It also claims that ideas and norms can define and shape an organization.

Actors and structures can shape a nations interest, or even a national identity. A nations history, ethnicity, ideology and leaders can together create a national identity that individuals can relate to and sympathize for. When one such idea has formed in society it can become a power-broker and be used to control the citizens or the nation itself.

Social norms are a great part of the approach and make people behave in the same way, or make traditions persist, since they have become a part of the social construction of society. Identities, cultures and interests are never presumed, and can always change or adapt.

One of the main subdivisions in social constructivism is the conventional constructivism, which claims that there are some hard facts about the world, that will always persist regardless of what people think or feel. A hard fact can be how many people that died in a war, or which country has the most citizens in the world. Conventional constructivism also claims that social reality, such as norms and language, are tools for power. It acknowledges that norms can become reality, such as the concept of human rights. Human rights are just a social constriction, but a construction with power. Human rights have forced states to accept critique on an international scale, and even military intervention. Social norms and constructions can change politics, nations and traditions. A society cannot develop without actors that agree upon the change, and neither can it be explained.

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69 Gustavsson & Tallberg, 2009:89
70 Marsh & Stoker, 2010:80
71 Gustavsson & Tallberg, 2009:90
72 Gustavsson & Tallberg, 2009:91
without making allowances to the structure and the actors involved. Norms, what is right and what is wrong, is also in focus, and can shape identities and interests.

Two thinkers that are closely related to social constructivism are Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann. They have contributed to the reasoning that a social construction or a norm is not less real or of less importance than a hard fact, and can have just as strong of an impact on human lives. Constructivism also emphasizes that no single approach can explain all different phenomenons and relations, and that in order to understand our world we need to take on different perspectives. The task for constructivism is, argue Weldes, to study how an interest is developed, through identities, norms and ideas.

2.3 Indicators for analysis

The indicators for analysis will derive from liberalism and its core values and will be used to interpret the material. The three indicators used will be equality, human rights and freedom for all individuals. The three values should exclude no one is what every society should strive for in order to gain progress, social growth and development. Social constructivism will be used as a complement to liberalism, and will be used to explain where liberalism fails. Indicators here are norms, traditions and interests and how they shape identity.

3.0 Research problem

3.1 Research problem

There are several forecasts regarding what will, and can, happen in the future and which trends can become threats to food security. However, what is lacking is a clear appreciation on which actor should take on a leading role in order to prevent and prepare for these threats. Is it the state? Is it regional organizations? Liberalism argue that the best actor to deal with issues on this scale is the UN, since it is the most expanded international forum the world community has.

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73 Gustavsson & Tallberg, 2009:92
74 Gustavsson & Tallberg, 2009:100
75 Gustavsson & Tallberg, 2009:93,94
76 Kennedy, 2006:246
There is one problem though - how can the UN prepare for these challenges ahead? The organization has received heavy criticism regarding their incapability to act fast and efficiently, whilst holding a very traditional view on security\textsuperscript{77}. Therefore, critics of the UN might argue that other international or regional organizations can be more suitable to prepare for the possible disasters to come. The critics can also argue that states can play a major role. It can however be argued that the challenge to prevent trends on this global scale and border-crossing issues would be too vast for states, according to liberalism. Kofi Annan often referred to "problems without passports"\textsuperscript{78}; that is, challenges that simply require cooperation between states and across borders if they are to be solved. The UN, even with its many skeptics, is the best organizational structure we have that can deal with these "problems without passports", argue Weiss\textsuperscript{79}. UN is the only international forum we have today that include a majority of states in the world, and can protect individuals against the state. Also, it is today the most used forum for solving international crisis and to encourage political cooperation. It is therefore likely that the UN can play a major role in regards to prevent and prepare for trends on this scale\textsuperscript{80}.

This essay will identify how the UN is presently working to assure food security in the future, assuming that the scientists are correct in their predictions regarding the population growth and its effect on food security. It is not relevant to speculate on how the UN might look in the future, and neither is it possible to examine the whole organization that is the UN, with hundreds of different programs and bodies. Therefore, due to limitations, only one organization from the UN-family will be analyzed in this essay: UNFPA.

\textsuperscript{77} Kennedy, 2006:246, 247

\textsuperscript{78} Weiss, 2012:4

\textsuperscript{79} Weiss, 2012:4

\textsuperscript{80} Kennedy, 2006:244, Dorling, 2013:220
3.2 UNFPA
UNFPA is a Fund that focuses on population activities and dynamics, including population growth and women’s empowerment\(^81\). UNFPA promotes gender equality and women’s empowerment, as well as the understanding of population dynamics, and has become one of the strongest advocates for women’s rights\(^82\). This includes fertility rate, and the effect this has in every aspect of social and economic progress. The Fund has mainly two frameworks to guide its efforts: The Programme of Action adopted in 1994 at the ICPD, and the MDG:s. UNFPA partners with governments, other UN agencies and civil society to advance its mission\(^83\). UNFPA is relevant to the analysis since its main work is closely related to fertility rate, women’s empowerment and gender equality, through SRH.

3.3 Research question
In what ways are UNFPA working towards food security?
Does UNFPA take on a liberal approach?
Can social constructivism be used to explain UNFPA’s work mission and methods?

4.0 Method and material

4.1 Method
This essay is a case of analysis of an organizations framework. Through a describing qualitative content analysis this essay will explore how the UNFPA directly, and indirectly, focus their work towards higher food security. Direct focus is whether the organization explicitly acknowledges food security. Indirect focus can be expressed through gender equality, women’s empowerment and SRH.

A content analysis suits the thesis since it first of all provides a possibility to get a clear and profound understanding of the trends threatening food security, the UN-organization and its frameworks. The content analysis will allow me to systematically describe and understand the text, which is suitable since the objective cannot be achieved through quantitative methods\(^84\). It is a

\(^{81}\) Weiss&Daws, 2007:645, UNFPA, 2013a


\(^{83}\) UNFPA, 2013a

\(^{84}\) Bergström & Boréus, 2012:50
describing study, which is preferable when to ask questions such as "how?" and "who?" to the material, in order to find answers to the research questions. This can show me which main actor UNFPA wants to act on the trends, and which focus it puts on values such as human rights. Indicators for the analysis has been developed through the theory, liberalism, which will assist and guide me through the material. The essence of this essay is not to test nor develop the theory, but rather to give an insight to the interpretation of the material. The method will, therefore, help to explore whether the theory can explain the UN-organization, its framework, its missions and its method. It will do so by analyzing the main points and actors that the UN-organization are focusing on, by asking questions such as "how?" and "who?" to the text.

The limitations of the chosen method, qualitative content analysis, that has to be considered are related to validity and reliability. Assuring the validity will be done by measuring what is intended, in order to answer the research questions. That is, focus needs to be on subjects and parts that are related to the issue. Reliability might also be a problem, since it acquires accuracy in all the steps in the process. This can be hard since it requires consistent interpretation of the material. Intrasubjectivity will be assured by going through the material several times as to assure the interpretation of it. This is done as to guarantee the consistency of the interpretation of the material.

4.2 Material
For this essay one of UNFPA’s main frameworks will be used as a foundation to the analysis, in order to answer the objective of the essay. The framework will be analysed in order to see how they are acknowledging the disturbing trend that is population growth, with focus on gender equality, women’s empowerment and SRH. The framework and the respective chapter that will be in focus can be found in table 2. The framework was chosen due to its relevance to the topic as well as the weight the content has on UNFPA and its’ work. Despite options that could offer an insight into

\[85\] Esaiasson et al, 2012:36
\[86\] Bergström & Boréus, 2012:41, 42
\[87\] Bergström & Boréus, 2012: 42, 43
\[88\] UNFPA, 2013a
possible future focus areas, it was of more relevance to see how UNFPA has worked so far in the field, as to indirectly strengthen food security.

Table 2. Material for the analysis of UNFPA. Note: ICPD Programme of Action will be analyzed as a framework since it is referred to as one of the two main frameworks UNFPA derives from. Hence, despite its name, it is regarded as a framework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Framework</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Paragraph</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICPD Programme of Action</td>
<td>IV. Gender Equality, Equity and Empowerment of Women</td>
<td>A. Empowerment of the women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B. The Girl Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VI. Population Growth and Structure</td>
<td>A. Fertility, mortality and population growth rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B. Children and Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>VII. Reproductive rights and reproductive health</td>
<td>A. Reproductive rights and reproductive health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B. Family planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E. Adolescents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XI. Population, development and education</td>
<td>A. Education, population and sustainable development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.1 ICPD Programme of Action

The Programme of Action was adopted in 1994. It is a 20-year Programme that is known for recognizing reproductive health and rights, women’s empowerment and gender equality as cornerstones for population and development programmes. The Programme solidly bases itself on the concept of human rights, as well as respect for religious and cultural backgrounds as well as national sovereignty. It is one of the main frameworks that guide UNFPA through its efforts. Presently the ICPD is under review, due to its expansion in 2014. The review will acknowledge the challenges that were met, and will identify the programmes progress and achievements. This will however, not be included in this essay.

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59 UNFPA, 2013a
60 UNFPA, 2013d
61 UNFPA, 2013a
62 ICPD, 2012
4.2.2 Model for analysis

The table shows which unit will be used for the analysis, as well as the different indicators that will be used as variables. The variables will be recognized throughout the framework in order to acknowledge how the UNFPA's framework are related to the theories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit for analysis</th>
<th>Liberalism</th>
<th>Social Constructivism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICPD Programme of Action 1994</td>
<td>Equality</td>
<td>Norms and traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freedom of the individual</td>
<td>Identity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3. Model for analysis.*

5.0 Analysis

The chosen framework from UNFPA, seen under 4.2 Material, will be analyzed here. Focus is on the measures to stabilize or stop population growth as discussed earlier, while the indicators will be used as tools to gain a perspective.

5.1 ICPD Programme of Action

The ICPD encourage countries to give greater attention to the importance of population growth, and take necessary steps to optimize their demographic trends. This includes ensuring reproductive health and family-planning services. ICPD urges that adolescents should be given stronger support and have access to family planning and methods that prevent unwanted pregnancies. The international community should protect and promote the rights of adolescents, and their special needs should be acknowledged. Appropriate programmes should be implemented to deal with these special needs, including responsible family planning practice. Youth should be involved in important issues such as information, education and communication regarding SRH, including sex education and prevention of early pregnancies.

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93 UNFPA, 1995:6.4
94 UNFPA, 1995:7.44, 7.47
95 UNFPA, 1995: 7.46, 7.47
96 UNFPA, 1995:6.15
Youth should actively be involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of development activities that have a direct impact on their daily lives. This is especially important with respect to information, education and […] concerning reproductive and sexual health, including the prevention of early pregnancies. 

By involving youth actively in the different steps so that they themselves can make an impact on their daily lives, is according to liberalism something we should naturally strive towards. Freedom of choice is for all individuals, youth and adolescents included. To enable youths’ access to information and education concerning SRH so that they can make their own choice, speaks of human rights for the individual in society. It also implies equality for all since girls are not excluded. Therefore, both boys and girls have the right to make their own choice regarding SRH and are both empowered concerning a planned pregnancy. The international community has a responsibility to meet the needs of all individuals to ensure that they reach their highest potential in life. ICPD also states that the empowerment and autonomy of women is highly important, and can be reached through SRH as well as ensuring girls education. This should be achieved by policy and programme actions.

ICPD states that all individuals should have access to reproductive health-care systems, including family planning and prevention of abortion, before 2015. These health care programs should be developed and designed to fit and serve the needs of women, and must also involve women in the leadership, planning and decision-making and implementation of these services. ICPD here clearly speaks of equality - equality for young and old, equality for men and women. No one should be excluded from the programs, and should therefore be enabled to make a choice on their own. It also speaks of education, which is an important tool to understand your own freedom and your rights as a human being. ICPD states that all women, as well as men, should be provided with education necessary to understand and exercise their human rights. By focusing on the inclusion of women in leadership, planning and decision-making, ICPD directly empower women, which is

97 UNFPA, 1995:6.15
98 UNFPA, 1995:4.1, 4.2
99 UNFA, 1995:7.2, 7.6
100 UNFPA, 1995:7.7
101 UNFPA, 1995:4.3
an important factor if we want to stop population growth. Empowering women can also give them human rights they are entitled to by nature, but might have been excluded from.

ICPD also encourage governments and the international community to use their full means to support the voluntary choice in family planning. NGOs should be able to play a role for further access to SRH and to ensure that services are being opened and accessible to all groups in the community\textsuperscript{102}. Governments should make it easier for individuals and couples to reach the services, and any legal hinders to this must be changed. Leaders of the community and nation are encouraged to play a pivotal role in advocating family-planning and reproductive services\textsuperscript{103}.

Governments should take appropriate steps to help women avoid abortion, which in no case should be promoted as a method of family planning […]\textsuperscript{104}.

According to liberalism, governments are founded to protect the people and to enable all individuals to live out their freedom. ICPD here takes a strong hold from liberalism, since it clearly states that the governments should not be a hinder to its peoples’ human rights and freedom, but should rather act as a protector. A society should be free from oppressing institutions, and ICPD reminds the governments which values a society should be built upon, which is one of liberalism’s core values; freedom. Individuals should be enabled to reach the services that enable their freedom. If the institution of the state cannot offer this, the institution should not be in place. Social constructivism would argue that even if the state is currently not able to enable individuals their freedom and their human rights, it can be a result of the state’s identity and interest. As long as it is not in the state’s interest or identity, and neither a norm in society, it will not occur. However, that does not mean that the state will not change, and that the state cannot protect their individuals in the future. Everything is able to change - norms and institutions as well, and institutions might not be so easily dismissed as liberalism would argue.

ICPD also states that family planning services should make a significant improvement, that they should recognize the different needs and appropriate methods for different age groups as well as

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item UNFPA, 1995:7.9, 7.15, 7.18
\item UNFPA, 1995:7.21
\item UNFPA, 1995:7.24
\end{thebibliography}

24
gender. Family planning services should be safer, affordable and correct in their information\textsuperscript{105}. Governments should also take appropriate steps to prevent the need for abortion\textsuperscript{106}. By improving the family planning services, the state would enable the individual’s in society to make their own choice. ICPD also strongly speaks of equality, which is of great importance, not only for human rights, but also for each individual to reach their fullest potential. Equality for all - age groups as well as gender - would mean a developing, growing and nurturing society, and it is one of the corner stones of liberalism.

ICPD claims that countries should empower women and take steps to eliminate inequalities between men and women by establishing mechanisms and implementing policies. Women should be allowed and enabled equal participation, and be represented at all levels in the political and social sphere in society. Women should also be able to combine child-bearing and still have access to the labour market, through laws and regulations\textsuperscript{107}, while men should also be more responsible for the duties at home. Women should also be ensured the right to own, sell and rent property. Women should be able to access education in order to reach their full potential and contribute to society, which will also eliminate poverty and illiteracy amongst women\textsuperscript{108}. In all circumstances women should be equal to men in the work force, and receive proper education, pay and work hours\textsuperscript{109}.

Countries should act to empower women and should take steps to eliminate inequalities between men and women as soon as possible […]\textsuperscript{110}.

The liberal approach shines brights in the statement where ICPD urges empowering of women. Equality by law is encouraged, as to ensure three of the core values of liberalism; freedom for the individual, equality and human rights. By implementing laws and mechanisms for equality, the state will be protecting one of the most vulnerable groups in society, and will let the society develop and

\textsuperscript{105} UNFPA, 1995:7.23
\textsuperscript{106} UNFPA, 1995: 7.24
\textsuperscript{107} UNFPA, 1995:4.1, 4.4
\textsuperscript{108} UNFPA, 1995:4.2, 4.3, 4.9
\textsuperscript{109} UNFPA, 1995:4.6, 4.7
\textsuperscript{110} UNFPA, 1995:4.4
grow. By including women in the workforce, by assuring women’s own choice regarding pregnancies, and by including men in the duties in the household, a more equal society would thrive. Ensuring women the right to own, sell and rent property can also mean a large difference for the economic development for the state.

[...] promote equal treatment of girls and boys with respect to nutrition, health care, education and social, economic and political activity [...]^{111}.

ICPD also emphasize the value of the girl and that they should be seen as more than just child-bearers and caretakers^{112}. Educational and social policies should therefore be implemented that allows the girl child to fully participate in society. Public information and special education might be suitable to promote equal treatment of girls and boys^{113}. The liberal value of human rights can be seen in that ICPD emphasize the value of girls at an early age. The right of the child is protected, and by ensuring the inclusion of girls they will also be able to contribute more to society at a later stage. The equality of boys and girls through policies is important, but by complementing with social education and public information, the chance for reaching out and changing norms in society grows larger. Social constructivism would argue that these changes might be more, or at least of equal, importance than focus on governments and policies. It is not necessarily policies that form identity and norms, and also the ideas of how a community should be, is rooted in all parts of the society. Therefore, it is important to support norm- and value-changing approaches that would have a more cogent result. The value of the girl child might be part of a nation’s and communities identity and be such a strong norm, that changing policies might not be enough. Align with liberalism, social constructivism would also urge social education and public information in order to change norms and identities and promote human rights for all.

All countries should further strive to ensure the complete access to primary school or an equivalent level of education by both girls and boys as quickly as possible [...]^{114}.

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^{111} UNFPA, 1995: 4.17

^{112} UNFPA, 1995:4.17

^{113} UNFPA, 1995:4.17, 4.18, 4.20

^{114} UNFPA, 1995: 11.6
ICPD states that girls are to be ensured universal access to primary education in all countries before 2015, and are highly urged to also ensure the widest and earliest possible access to secondary and higher levels of education\textsuperscript{115}. Countries should work for a more including school, and should take steps to ensure girls and adolescents rights to participate in education\textsuperscript{116}. While at school, girls and boys should be taught equality and meet the needs of the girl child as well as eliminate stereotypes. Teachers should be gender sensitive and more community schools should be built, so that the value of girls should spread throughout the community\textsuperscript{117}.

Countries should also ensure that women, and adolescents, are taught in reproductive health\textsuperscript{118}. Countries should give greater attention to the importance of population growth, and take necessary steps to optimize their demographic trends. This includes ensuring universal access to primary education. Equal educational opportunities must be ensured for both boys and girls at every level\textsuperscript{119}.

Countries should take affirmative steps to keep girls […] in school\textsuperscript{120}.

Teaching boys and girls alike in primary education will in itself show the importance of freedom for the individual and the importance of equality. Supplementing access to primary education with classes regarding equality and eliminating stereotypes can have a long-term effect on the status of women in society. By being enabled the same choices and opportunities as boys, girls will, eventually, be treated as equal value and can contribute equally to society.

The framework argues that literacy is acknowledged as a major contributor to development, which is why all countries should establish programmes that consolidate the practice of universal access to primary education. Both girls and boys should be allowed to take part in the process, which is urged to start immediately. Investments in education should take high priority in budgets at all levels\textsuperscript{121}.

\textsuperscript{115} UNFPA, 1995:4.18
\textsuperscript{116} UNFPA, 1995: 11.9, 11.9
\textsuperscript{117} UNFPA, 1995:11.8, 11.9
\textsuperscript{118} UNFPA, 1995:4.18, 4.20
\textsuperscript{119} UNFPA, 1995:6.4
\textsuperscript{120} UNFPA, 1995: 11.7
\textsuperscript{121} UNFPA, 1995:11.6
Through a liberal perspective, investing in education for all can result in not only equality for all, but also development. If more individuals are included in the work force and could move the country towards an economic development, many countries would also be able to become equal with other countries. The gap between rich and poor countries could become smaller by enabling access to education and promoting equality for all at a local level.

UNFPA strictly urges governments to enforce laws that will ensure that marriage is only entered into with free will, and with full consent of the intending spouses. Governments should also look over the proper minimum legal age for marriage, and raise it where necessary\textsuperscript{122}.

Countries should create a socio-economic conducive to the elimination of all child marriages and other unions as a matter of urgency, and should discourage early marriage\textsuperscript{123}.

Countries should strongly discourage early marriage. Highly related to this, UNFPA also urges countries to eliminate discrimination against all young women\textsuperscript{124}. Sadly, many societies today do not only allow discrimination against vulnerable groups; they encourage it. Liberalism takes a strong hold against child marriage, since it eliminates the freedom of the individual, breaches the human rights, and therefore eradicates equality in society. Child marriage is discrimination in one of its strongest forms, and leaves many individuals without a choice of their own. Child marriage is a case where the state or institution has clearly oppressed the individual instead of protecting it, and should therefore not continue in place. Liberalism clearly states that individuals’ freedom should be protected, and that institutions can never be allowed to oppress groups or individuals. The institutions in countries that allow child marriage is therefore misusing their power and it can be argued that a global community would be better suited to take over the responsibility. A global institution based on human rights would better protect the individual than the states, in cases where child marriage is allowed or encouraged. Once more, we see norms and identities so strong that they overpower universal access to human rights, equality and freedom of the individual. What is

\textsuperscript{122} UNFPA, 1995:4.21
\textsuperscript{123} UNFPA, 1995:6.11
\textsuperscript{124} UNFPA, 1995:6.11
necessary is a change in norms and values, which, even though it is possible, cannot happen over night.

ICPD takes on a clear liberal approach regarding girls access to education, and right to family planning. Equality is promoted and should be met through different laws and mechanisms, as well as public information and special education. Implementation of laws such as, will result in a flourishing of liberal core values. Freedom for the individual can be met, since individual’s can make their own choice, through access to education and SRH. Governments were in focus, rather than involving the civil society, which could be more emphasized. Governments do not have exclusive access to power, and to neglect NGOs can mean a slower progress towards equality. However, what is lacking is a stronger commitment to end child marriage. Despite the message that was clear and strong, it took up a very small section of the framework. In the view of the other measures and statements from the framework, it is almost surprising how little space was given to child marriage, since it is a crime against the liberal values and is strongly oppressing the individual. As a result, according to liberalism, a global forum might be better suited to protect the girl in this regard, and can better offer her, her right to education, her right to her own choices and to her entitled human rights.

6.0 Conclusion
6.1 Conclusion
The thought that food security is strongly correlated to the use of contraception or child marriage might not be self-explicated at a first glance. It is however, as shown, both related and of importance to future food security. For us to assure food security in the future we need to understand the trends that threaten it. Population growth is one of these large trends, as identified by several academics and researchers, that has a major impact on food security. If we are to ensure the availability as well as the economic opportunity to provide food to everyone on earth, we need to know how much food we have, and we need to know how many people we have to feed. The hard bit is to find the balance - when do have enough food for the amount of people on earth, and when can we expect food to become scarce? Projections states that food will surely become a scarcity in the future, and even if we improved at distributing resources, we will not be able to assure food security. In order for that disaster to be averted, we need to act now.
Population growth is the result of many different causes. The causes and trends presented in this paper is not close to covering the full explanation of population growth, but it can provide some answers and some possible solutions to stop it. Equal access to family planning and contraception is an axiomatic contribution that can slow down population growth. However, it is also shown that if we empower women and exhort women’s rights population growth can be slowed down. Education is a strong key to how to deal with this issue, while respecting human rights and the individuals freedom to make their own decisions. Education will also result in less births every year since educated women are shown to want a smaller family. Education can also prevent child marriage and therefore indirectly postpone child-bearing. Education can empower women, strengthen the household as well as the community, and help an economic development.

UNFPA is one of the UN agencies that work with issues of gender equality, women’s empowerment, the right to family planning and contraception, and the abolishment of child marriage. In this paper one of UNFPA’s main frameworks are presented and analyzed in order to understand how they work for equality, freedom of the individual and human rights. Emphasis for the thesis was on gender equality, education, gender-based violence and family planning, since it had earlier been identified as possible strong indicators for population growth.

Three of the core values of liberalism are at heart and shine through in many of UNFPA’s arguments and proposals. Equality, freedom of the individual and human rights are all at the centre, sometimes more than less. Despite the focus on these core values, liberalism cannot fully explain UNFPA’s mission and methods, since focus is on the government as an actor. The framework focused on the government as a main actor, and argued that policies and implemented programmes were appropriate measures to deal with issues. From a liberal point of view other actors should have deserved larger attention, and therefore liberalism cannot explain the institution in full. It can provide with some insight to its mission, and the core values of liberalism are well represented, but their method unfortunately cannot be explained by liberalism only.

Liberalism claim that the institution of the state is only present as to protect the individuals in society, but if it fails to do so, a global forum would be better suited in order to protect the freedom and rights of the individual. If more focus and help were on actors from the civil society, the effort
could be more efficient and established. Human rights and women’s empowerment would gain from different sectors cooperation. By neglecting these different sectors and their importance, UNFPA fail to have a more efficient path towards success, and liberalism also fails to explain the organization.

Social constructivism might help us to explain some blanks that liberalism could not fill, or complement some of UNFPA’s arguments. Surely other actors can make a great difference, and the government should not necessarily be the main actor. However, despite the liberalisms focus on governments duties and failures, social constructivism argue that an actors identity and interest can always change over time, or depend on the context. In this case, the government might not be thrown out of the window due to its failures, but rather a change of norms and interests should be in place. If the international community can change the norms and values of states, in order to protect human rights and promote equality, the state might as well stay in place. As long as the norms are becoming a part of reality, changes can occur, just as the phenomenon with the norm of human rights has done over the past decades. Focus on the governments, as in ICPD, must therefore not be a mistake, but rather used as a cooperative actor together with other different organizations and actors.

The underlying causes, determinants and drivers need to be addressed, which they partly are in the framework. A stronger depart with harmful traditions such as child marriage could be wished for. Child marriage is only modestly discussed, and should take up a larger part of the framework due to its violation on individual’s freedom and human rights. Liberalism would not accept a tradition such as child marriage since it breaches girls rights and freedom of her own body. A stronger commitment to end these violations against human rights needs to take place, and where all three frameworks disappoint. Despite the religious tradition many claim it to be, it is still an abusive and harmful tradition, which disregards human rights and should therefore be abolished. Again, liberalism fail to fully explain UNFPA’s mission and methods, since discouraging child marriage deserve a larger part in the frameworks, according to liberalism.

Social constructivism would argue that child marriage is such a deep-rooted norm, that quick changes might not be possible. Despite liberalism’s failure to ICPD’s lack of focus on child marriage, social constructivism might be able to explain more. Lack of emphasis on the matter can
either imply that it is not a part of UNFPA’s own identity yet. It was not in UNFPA’s interest or identity and at the time to focus on the issue, which could be for several reasons. It was mentioned, and discouraged, which would imply that the matter was known to UNFPA, as well as perceived as a harmful tradition. The other focus areas could have been perceived as a larger threat to human rights and equality, the extent of the tradition might not have been understood, or it was simply not part of UNFPA’s identity at the time. However, identity and interest can change over time and context, and might be in focus in the next main framework, which is under progress as this essay is written.

Since child marriage and lack of education is strongly correlated in the way they effect population growth, education would be one way to avoid the tradition and at the same time slow down population growth. Equality for all in education - young and old, boy and girl - could indirectly have a positive impact on the abolishment of child marriage. Gender equality can achieve greater focus by allowing access to family planning and contraception, which all three frameworks promoted. Family planning can have great consequences and effects on society, not only on population growth. It enables equality, empowers women, and individuals freedom of choice. Education in SRH will allow not only women to make their own choices and perhaps economically contribute to society, but it will also enable a stronger food security in the future. Since this was in focus in ICPD, it could also mean that discouraging child marriage was part of UNFPA already in 1994, but that some or a majority of the member states might not have been ready to openly acknowledge the tradition as harmful, due to the strong norms in their countries. If such a strong hold against the norm were taken without implementing the other policies and programmes to protect human rights first, the citizens and governments in the countries might have backed out of UNFPA. UNFPA might have wanted a part of their identity in disguise until the norm of human rights, which have been claimed to be a western invention, were more accepted across the world.

As we have seen, social constructivism can give several explanations as to why UNFPA does not take a larger distance from child marriage in its framework. Norms and traditions can be so strong in a society, that they do not automatically fade out as soon as human rights and equality are spoken of. The question is whether discouraging of child marriage has become a part of UNFPA’s identity, or if it is still hard for the organization to take a stand on the matter. If the tradition is such a strong
norm and part of many individual’s traditions and beliefs, it will be hard to promote human rights for the girl child by ending child marriage.

It seems like a liberal foundation in organizations such as UNFPA can have a great impact on the state of the world’s population. So why have we not got any further? How come that even though we recognize a strong liberal line in the organization’s main framework, human rights are still not promoted or protected? Social constructivism can give us some answers to that question. The perspective argue that states can officially accept norms to “belong to the same club” as others. It can be in the interest of the state to support the symbol of human rights, such as equality and freedom, due to the higher status it might give the state in international relations. However, it does not mean that it has truly become a part of the state’s identity, which could explain why human rights have not spread further today. It can be argued, that if the concept of equality and women’s empowerment would have been implemented when the ICPD was put in place, we would not see the population growth we have today. Since the state’s interest are already fulfilled by only officially joining the club, the implementation of these programs and policies might have been slower to come into place.

As we have seen, many measures can prevent population growth and at the same time promote human rights and stronger gender equality. Different ways to accomplish a goal does not have to be a shortcoming, but can make for a faster time to reach a desirable result. Liberalism promotes several actors to be included in the process, and that civil society and the international community play a large part as to enable gender equality and implement universal access to human rights. However, liberalism has received some critique regarding their approach regarding human rights. Liberalism claims that human rights are universal and includes all, but at the same time it dismisses many lifestyles that have become rooted in society, through religion or tradition. That child marriage should be discouraged since it breaches human rights may not be a natural statement for some societies, and therefore, liberalism has to be careful in its approach. One cannot simply say ”You are wrong, because I am right”, but has to implement the concept of human rights and equality more carefully. In this regard, UNFPA’s frameworks have a relatively tentative approach. It discourages and encourages the same values and tradition as liberalism, but perhaps with a different

125 Baylis & Smith, 2005:265
126 Baylis & Smith, 2005:265
and more indirect approach. Social constructivism can explain to us why UNFPA takes on such a calm approach on the matter. Instead of dismissing the concept of child marriage due to only the violation of human rights, it also provides the societies with reasons to why it is more beneficiary to let the girl stay in school. By providing such further explanation it is more likely that the tradition will cease, and human rights might come more naturally. In this case, it might prove more successful over time if norms are changed slowly, rather than to take on a strong and perhaps aggressive liberal approach openly.

There are many methods to work towards a greater food security, and UNFPA certainly has one unique, perhaps surprising, approach. Even though they do not acknowledge it through their frameworks, they indirectly do a great amount to assure future and present food security. By identifying methods to regulate population growth and offer individuals tools that will naturally lower population growth, UNFPA does a great deal of future food security. This essay shows that not only will education, equality and access to family planning stabilize or stop population growth - it can also make a society prosper and individuals flourish. However, if we are to achieve food security through slowing down population growth, one thing is sure - we have to start acting now. Despite the measures and proposals suggested by UNFPA, we need a combined effort from the population on earth, and we need it now.

**6.2 Future research**

Future research would be recommended to focus more on alternative ways to address disturbing trends that can threaten food security. Many trends that can affect food security have been identified, but we miss clear direction on which actor is most suitable for this task, and we miss creative and indirect solutions to the problem. If only we could connect the dots and show the links between different sectors in life, we might be able to make the problem more understandable. If so, the chances are high that we reach out to more people and bring about faster change. Drawing upon the conclusion of this essay, more focus and research on how to combine human rights with population growth and fertility rate would be in place. Indirect measures as to address the issues can contribute to a greater food security, raised living standards and a life where individuals entitled human rights are protected.
7.0 References


