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## **Developmental Effects of Food Aid**

Evidence on the Social Capital situation of rural villages  
in Northern Ethiopia

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Institute Institut Für Lebensmittel und Ressourcenökonomik (ILR)  
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Developmental Effects of Food Aid  
Evidence on the Social Capital situation of rural villages in Northern  
Ethiopia

**I n a u g u r a l – D i s s e r t a t i o n**  
zur

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von

**Ermias Habte Bulgu**

aus

**Addis Ababa, Äthiopia**

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July 18 2008, Bonn Ermias Habte

## Kurzfassung

Aktuell sind ungefähr 800 Millionen Menschen auf der Erde von Hunger betroffen. Unterstützung von anderen Ländern ist im Rahmen der Selbstverpflichtung (wie z. B. der Millenniumserklärung) zu einem wichtigen Bestandteil im Kampf gegen den Hunger geworden. In diesem Zusammenhang rückt die Effizienz der Hilfeleistungen immer wieder in den Fokus der Betrachtung. Nahrungsmittelhilfe ist vermutlich die Form von Hilfeleistung, die das größte wissenschaftliche Interesse hinsichtlich der Folgen für die Empfänger auf sich zieht. In den vergangenen Jahren hatte diese Diskussion um die Nahrungsmittelhilfe zur Folge, dass ihre Bedeutung im Verhältnis zur gesamten Hilfe auf globaler Ebene rückläufig wurde. Für Länder wie Äthiopien hingegen stellt Nahrungsmittelhilfe nach wie vor eine wichtige und immer noch zunehmende Form der Unterstützung dar, deren Auswirkung in Studien untersucht werden muss. Maßnahmen der Nahrungsmittelhilfe verfolgen kurz- oder langfristige Ziele: zu den kurzfristigen zählen v. a. die Überbrückung kritischer Situationen, hingegen sollen langfristige Ziele dazu dienen, den Teilnehmern dauerhaft zur Selbstversorgung zu verhelfen bzw. den Weg aus der Armut zu erleichtern. Nahrungsmittelhilfe soll – so die Rechtfertigung – den teilnehmenden Haushalten nach einem Produktionseinbruch ermöglichen, ihren Kapitalstock insoweit zu regenerieren, dass in Notsituationen die zum nachhaltigen (Über-)Leben benötigten Produktivitätsressourcen nicht verbraucht werden müssen. In der vorliegenden Studie wird erörtert, ob Nahrungsmittelhilfe zwangsläufig den Kapitalstock der Teilnehmer erhöht oder ob darüber hinaus hierdurch andere Bereiche des Haushalts unbeabsichtigt beeinflusst werden. Das Forschungsvorhaben ermittelt diese unbeabsichtigten Effekte der Nahrungsmittelhilfe im Bereich des Sozialkapitals, indem eine vergleichende Analyse zweier Dörfer durchgeführt wird: Die Bewohner des einen Dorfes erhalten Nahrungshilfe, die Bewohner des anderen Dorfes hingegen nicht.

Sozialkapital beeinflusst wesentlich die Fähigkeit einer Gesellschaft, positiv miteinander umzugehen und gemeinsam eine Veränderung der Lebensbedingungen hervorzurufen. Die Ermittlung des Sozialkapitals erfolgt in dieser Studie, indem die Präsenz und die Eigenschaften der verschiedenen Formen von Sozialkapital nach ausgewählten Indikatoren (Netzwerke, Normen, gemeinschaftliche Handlungen) erhoben werden. Hierzu wurden Daten von 175 ländlichen Haushalten mithilfe von Leitfadeninterviews der beiden ausgewählten Dörfer im Norden Äthiopiens erhoben. Des Weiteren wurden Gruppendiskussionen mit Autoritäten von formellen und informellen Institutionen durchgeführt.

Ergebnisse dieser Studie zeigen, dass Nahrungsmittelhilfe den Empfängern weder eine höhere Produktivität ermöglicht noch dabei hilft, durch Diversifizierung des Einkommens, Engpässe und Notzeiten zu überwinden. Bewohner des Dorfes, das keine Nahrungsmittelhilfe empfängt, scheinen belastbarere und effektivere Mechanismen entwickelt zu haben, mit unvorhersehbaren Ereignissen bei der Produktion und der Versorgung mit Nahrungsmitteln umzugehen (z. B. Naturkatastrophen wie Dürre etc.). Des Weiteren zeigt sich, dass uneingeschränktes Vertrauen auf Nahrungsmittelhilfe andere Formen von zwischenmenschlichen, sozialen Vertrauen zu ersetzen scheint. Im Hinblick auf die Indikatoren des Sozialkapitals wurde deutlich, dass Haushalte, die längerfristig Nahrungsmittelhilfe erhalten, mit niedrigerem Sozialkapital ausgestattet sind als die Haushalte, denen keine Nahrungsmittelhilfe zuteil wird. Während beide Dörfer über ähnliche Netzwerktypen und -dichte verfügen, wird dennoch deutlich, dass die Bewohner des Dorfes, das nicht mit Nahrungsmittelhilfe versorgt wird, in einigen Bereichen sozial-interaktiver sind sowie über ein höheres Maß an Vertrauen gegenüber Gruppen und Personen verfügen. In den Empfänger-Dörfern sind darüber hinaus die Vorsitzenden traditioneller Institutionen weniger gut geeignet, Konflikte zu lösen und andere Aktivitäten in der Gemeinschaft zu initiieren. Zusammenfassend lässt sich sagen, dass das Dorf, das



Unterstützung durch Nahrungsmittelhilfe erhält, weniger Kompetenzen in der Lösung eigener kommunaler Probleme aufweisen kann.

Die empirischen Ergebnisse weisen darauf hin, dass sowohl die Nahrungsmittelhilfepolitik im allgemeinen, als auch deren konkreten Ausgestaltung in Form von Programmen, kritisch hinterfragt werden muss. Politiken und Programme sollten umsichtig gestaltet werden, insbesondere im Hinblick auf das Sozialkapital. Eine mögliche Alternative wäre die Unterstützung bereits bestehender, traditioneller Netzwerke. Diese Netzwerke sollten eine größere Rolle bei der Umsetzung nahrungspolitischer Ziele spielen. Ferner wäre es sinnvoll, weitere Untersuchungen durchzuführen, die sich mit möglichen Effekten von Nahrungsmittelhilfen auf politischer und administrativer Ebene beschäftigen.

### Abstract

In today's world around 800 million people are estimated to live in a state of hunger. External aid is the major component in the menu of incentives made available by donors in their recent commitment such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). However aid effectiveness has been in the spotlight for the several reasons. Food aid is perhaps the one form of aid that has attracted the largest share of scrutiny for its supposedly controversial impact on recipients. In recent years the controversy surrounding food aid seemed to have subsided with its decreasing importance as proportion of total aid flow at a global level. But for countries like Ethiopia, Food aid constitutes an important and yet increasing form of aid that makes it necessary for any study that aims at investigating its impact.

Food aid provision aims at achieving either short-term consumption smoothing effect or serving as long-term developmental resource that helps participants attain food self-sufficiency or facilitating their way out of poverty. The normative argument is that participation in FFW enhances the capital stock of households by rebuilding their asset in the aftermath of production shock and (when pre-emptive arrangements are made) food aid guards' households from depleting their productive asset. However, this study argues, food aid does not necessarily enhance participant's capital stock; it could even adversely affect parts of household asset to which it is not intended. The research particularly attempts to gauge the unintended effects of food aid on social capital by making comparative analysis between food aid recipient and non-recipient villages.

Social capital, defined by the networks and norms, determines an essential component of society's capacity to positively interact and collectively change their living environment. There is a growing consensus that high level of social capital transforms into functional capital. Measuring the presence or lack of social capital can be done by looking at the nature and presence of the various "forms" and "outcomes" of social capital that comprise indicators of networks, norms and collective action. This study uses a framework that makes use of selected indicators to see these aspects Social capital. The study draws information from a structured survey in 175 rural households of selected two villages in northern Ethiopia and several focus group discussions held with leaders of formal and informal institutions.

Results of the study showed that food aid has helped recipients neither to attain higher productivity nor to diversify their livelihood mechanism that ultimately helps them to endure shocks. In both measure's, members of the non-receiving community appeared to be doing well. Besides, non-recipient households appear to have adopted more resilient and effective ways of coping with production and consumption shocks. These findings also bring evidences that

reinforce reliance on food aid has a tendency to replace other forms of social inter-reliance. Results on the social capital indicators also indicated that long-term food aid recipient households are endowed with less social capital compared with their non-food aid receiving counterparts. While both villages experience similar levels of network type and density, in specific measures, the non-recipients are socially better interactive, less conflictive and exhibit higher group and personal trust. In the receiving community, leaders of traditional institutions are less functional in their roles of conflict resolution and other community mobilization activities. As a result, the community as a whole is less forthcoming in solving its own communal problems.

The empirical work is indicative of the need to have a second look at food aid policy in general and its operational programming in particular. Policies and programs on food aid need to be wary of its effect on social capital. A possible way forward could be empowering the traditionally existing networks to play more roles in food aid targeting and delivery activities. It is also necessary to see the other possible effects of food aid on the political and administrative sphere of the local government.

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