Generic: Africa Hopeless – no foreign aid can help

By Katherine Baker

***Resolved: The United States Federal Government should substantially reform its foreign aid***

Summary: This is a generic Negative brief that can be used against almost any AFF plan that tries to improve things in Africa using US foreign aid. There are so many other issues and so many other problems that the root causes of them all cannot be addressed by any foreign aid program. And those issues will defeat the solvency of any foreign aid program in the long run.

Generic: Africa is Hopeless – no foreign aid can help 3

OPENERS 3

“Do you expect me to lose money in the service of my people?” 3

INHERENCY 3

1. Already too much aid 3

Africa gets too much aid and interference from outsiders 3

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE 3

1. Africans don’t want aid 3

Africans don’t want aid: their economies are growing and they’re tired of aid workers pushing them around 3

SOLVENCY 4

1. Aid effectiveness dependent on recipient country 4

Aid only helps if the receiving country has effective governance and good public policy 4

2. Aid doesn’t buy influence or improvements in African governments 4

Aid doesn’t influence political leaders 4

African governments either don’t care or can’t do much 4

Not aid but the country, culture, government, economy, etc. 4

Aid useless when private investment blocked 5

3. Doesn’t increase economic development 5

Over $1 trillion of development aid has gone to Africa. Per-capita income is lower today than the 1970s and poverty doubled 5

After all that aid, poverty still increasing in Africa 5

Africans poorer now, despite aid 5

Large aid flow = lower economic growth 6

“Poverty reduced by aid” RESPONSE: Not aid. Over 99% of reduction from China economic growth 6

“Africa doing better” RESPONSE: More people equals less benefit 6

“Africa doing better” RESPONSE: Improvements slow 6

4. Even if it did increase economic development, Africans wouldn’t benefit 7

Economic growth, if it happens, makes no difference to most Africans. Education and agriculture is really what they need 7

5. Aid “business” model defeats its own solvency 7

Aid industry would go out of business if they solved the problem, so… their goal is merely to keep the money flowing 7

African aid is just a business to enrich the aid workers and their organizations 7

6. Ignorance of local conditions 8

Thousands of projects accomplish nothing because they are ignorant of local conditions 8

7. Politics takes priority 8

Aid is given based on political goals of donor countries – not by the actual needs 8

8. Reforms don’t work 8

Reforms don’t work: Governments will foul it up no matter how the aid is given 8

9. Corruption Siphons away the Cash 9

Corruption is entrenched in Africa. 25% of continent’s GDP is lost due to corruption 9

Corruption wastes as much as aid gives in Africa 9

Western countries turn “a blind eye” to corruption, so it gets worse 9

U.S. already tried and failed to solve African government corruption 9

10. Only solution is economic freedom 10

Economic freedom, not aid, brings people out of poverty 10

Aid ignores economic freedom and perpetuates poverty 10

Freedom, not aid, will help Africa 10

DISADVANTAGES 10

1. Promotes Bad Governance 10

Link: Governments waste their money, then beg for aid 10

Foreign aid increases corruption, not economy 11

Foreign aid weakens African governance 11

When government doesn’t rely on citizens, they work to their own interests 11

Bad Cycle: Aid donors are responsible for aid creating bad governance, and bad governance increases the negative effects of foreign aid 11

Impact: Civil wars. Aid strengthens corrupt governments leading to higher risk of civil wars 12

Impact: Citizens harmed. Bad governance promoted by aid hurts the common citizens of the recipient country 12

2. Negative Net Benefits: Less aid would be better 12

Less aid encouraged Kenya to fight bad tax practices 12

Reduction in aid gives Africa chance to be proactive 12

Reverse advocacy: Cutting aid, not increasing it, will likely improve things more than aid 13

Somalia: Aid workers created a famine 13

Even best aid takes purpose from lives of others 13

3. More poverty 13

Aid perpetuates cycle of poverty 13

4. Hubris (arrogant overconfidence) 14

Link: Who put us in charge? Instead of thinking we have the answers, we should just get out of the way 14

Link & Impact: Overconfident belief in a heavenly calling to do whatever it wants in the world leads a nation to catastrophic results. We’re already starting to see the consequences 14

5. White Savior Complex. 14

It’s degrading and counterproductive to say that Africans can’t solve their own problems and they need Westerners to come in and fix everything. It undermines Africans making progress toward their own solutions 14

Works Cited 15

Generic: Africa is Hopeless – no foreign aid can help

OPENERS

“Do you expect me to lose money in the service of my people?”

Robert Calderisi, 2010. (30 years of professional experience in international development, including senior positions at the World Bank. He writes for CNN as part of Africa 50, a special coverage looking at 17 African nations marking 50 years of independence this year.) “Why foreign aid and Africa don't mix” August 18, 2010. <http://www.cnn.com/2010/OPINION/08/12/africa.aid.calderisi/index.html>

I once asked a president of the Central African Republic, Ange-Félix Patassé, to give up a personal monopoly he held on the distribution of refined oil products in his country. He was unapologetic. "Do you expect me to lose money in the service of my people?" he replied. That, in a nutshell, has been the problem of Africa. Very few African governments have been on the same wavelength as Western providers of aid.

INHERENCY

1. Already too much aid

Africa gets too much aid and interference from outsiders

Robert Calderisi, 2010. (30 years of professional experience in international development, including senior positions at the World Bank. He writes for CNN as part of Africa 50, a special coverage looking at 17 African nations marking 50 years of independence this year.) “Why foreign aid and Africa don't mix” August 18, 2010. <http://www.cnn.com/2010/OPINION/08/12/africa.aid.calderisi/index.html>

Because of Africa's needs, and the stubborn nature of its poverty, the continent has attracted far too much aid and far too much interfering by outsiders.

HARMS / SIGNIFICANCE

1. Africans don’t want aid

Africans don’t want aid: their economies are growing, and they’re tired of aid workers pushing them around

Alex Perry, 2015. (Correspondent and author. His books include Falling Off the Edge, Lifeblood, and The Rift: A New Africa Breaks Free, published last week to widespread acclaim.) “‘Why I believe aid is bad for Africa’” 17 September 2015. <http://theday.co.uk/opinion/why-i-believe-aid-is-bad-for-africa>

Perhaps the strongest argument of all against aid is that Africans, increasingly, don’t want it. Today Africa’s economies are growing fast – many of them are among the fastest growing in the world – and money means Africans not only need less and less assistance, it gives them the means and authority to push back at those, like aid workers, who would push them around. Africa is standing up and the day when all men and women truly are created equal is approaching.

SOLVENCY

1. Aid effectiveness dependent on recipient country

Aid only helps if the receiving country has effective governance and good public policy

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Aid, by itself, has never developed anything, but where it has been allied to good public policy, sound economic management, and a strong determination to battle poverty, it has made an enormous difference in countries like India, Indonesia, and even China.

2. Aid doesn’t buy influence or improvements in African governments

Aid doesn’t influence political leaders

Simplice Asongu and Jacinta C. Nwachukwu, 2014. (Simplice A. Asongu: African Governance and Development Institute, Yaoundé, Cameroon. Jacinta C. Nwachukwu: Department of Accountancy and Finance, The Business School, University of Huddersfield.) “Foreign Aid and Governance in Africa” December 3, 2014. <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/65302/1/MPRA_paper_65302.pdf>

At least two policy implications are noteworthy. First, the use foreign aid as an instrument to influence the election and replacement of political leaders in Africa may have insignificant results. Second, it is time to solve the second tragedy of foreign aid together with high time economists and policy makers start rethinking the models and theories on which foreign aid is used to influence economic, institutional and political governance in recipient countries.

African governments either don’t care or can’t do much

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From the start, Western governments tried hard to work with public agencies, but fairly soon ran up against the obvious limitations of capacity and seriousness of African states.

Not aid but the country, culture, government, economy, etc.

Tom Dichter, 2017. (anthropologist, over 50 years of work with many aid agencies in over sixty developing countries on four continents.) “I’ve worked in foreign aid for 50 years—Trump is right to end it, even if his reasons are wrong” April 21, 2017. <https://qz.com/959416/time-to-end-foreign-aid-but-for-the-right-reasons/>

By far the most dramatic growth and consequent shift in poverty has occurred in China. The World Bank, looking at several countries during the quarter century between 1981 and 2005, concluded that poverty rates for China went from 84% to 16%—a drop of 81%, and for India from 60% to 42%—a drop of 30%. At the beginning of this period (1981) only four countries had a worse poverty rate than China—Cambodia, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Uganda. But decades later these four countries remain more or less where they were, while China moved ahead. Why? India began to move ahead rapidly after 1991. Why? The answer is complex—a mix of culture, changes in government policy, and changes in arrangements in the political economy. But what most of these dramatic changes don’t correlate with is foreign aid. Aid has resulted in remarkably few significant shifts in economic growth and poverty reduction. The truth is much of aid’s promise has come up empty.

Aid useless when private investment blocked

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Government callousness is one thing. Discouraging investors is even worse. No aid professional ever suggested that outside help was more important than private effort; on the contrary, foreign aid was intended to help lay the foundations for greater public confidence and private savings and investment. Few economists thought that aid would create wealth, although most hoped that it would help distribute the benefits of growth more evenly. It was plain that institutions, policy, and individual effort were more important than money. So, where -- despite decades of aid -- the conditions for private savings and investment are still forbidding, it is high time we ask ourselves why we are still trying to improve them. The Blair Commission Report on Africa in 2005 reported that 70,000 trained professionals leave Africa every year, and until they -- and the 40 percent of the continent's savings that are held abroad -- start coming home, we need to use aid more restrictively.

3. Doesn’t increase economic development

Over $1 trillion of development aid has gone to Africa. Per-capita income is lower today than the 1970s and poverty doubled

Dambisa Moyo 2009 (former economist at Goldman Sachs. She’s the author of "Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa") 21 Mar 2009, “Why Foreign Aid Is Hurting Africa,” <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB123758895999200083>

Over the past 60 years at least $1 trillion of development-related aid has been transferred from rich countries to Africa. Yet real per-capita income today is lower than it was in the 1970s, and more than 50% of the population -- over 350 million people -- live on less than a dollar a day, a figure that has nearly doubled in two decades.

After all that aid, poverty still increasing in Africa

Laurence Chandy, 2015. (Former Brookings Expert Director of Data, Research and Policy – UNICEF) “Why is the number of poor people in Africa increasing when Africa’s economies are growing?” May 4, 2015. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2015/05/04/why-is-the-number-of-poor-people-in-africa-increasing-when-africas-economies-are-growing/>

2015 marks the 20th year since sub-Saharan Africa started on a path of faster economic growth. During that period, growth has averaged 5.2 percent per year. Meanwhile, the number of people on the continent reportedly living under $1.25 a day has continued to creep upwards from 358 million in 1996 to 415 million in 2011—the most recent year for which official estimates exist.

Africans poorer now, despite aid

David Mcdonald, 2017. (founder of The Global Millennial: a think-tank giving millennials a platform to freely express their ideas on the world. Globalmillennial.org) “Does Foreign Aid To Africa Do More Harm Than Good?” Apr 29, 2017. <https://medium.com/@globalmillenial/does-foreign-aid-to-africa-do-more-harm-than-good-8066aa06975a>

In the meantime, more than a quarter of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa are poorer now than in 1960 — with no sign that foreign aid, however substantive, will end poverty there. Last year, perhaps the most striking illustration came from Liberia, which has received massive amounts of aid for a decade. In 2011, according to the OECD, official development aid to Liberia totalled $765 million, and made up 73 per cent of its gross national income. The sum was even larger in 2010. But last year every one of the 25,000 students who took the exam to enter the University of Liberia failed. All of the aid is still failing to provide a decent education to Liberians.

Large aid flow = lower economic growth

David Mcdonald, 2017. (David is the founder of The Global Millennial: a think-tank millennials a platform to freely express their ideas on the world. Globalmillennial.org) “Does Foreign Aid To Africa Do More Harm Than Good?” Apr 29, 2017. <https://medium.com/@globalmillenial/does-foreign-aid-to-africa-do-more-harm-than-good-8066aa06975a>

The USA and other global powers have been sending aid to Africa since the method became popularized in the 1950s. However, many economists were noticing that an influx of foreign aid did not seem to produce economic growth in countries around the world. Rather, lots of foreign aid flowing into a country tended to be correlated with lower economic growth. The countries that receive less aid, those on the left-hand side of the chart, tend to have higher growth — while those that receive more aid, on the right-hand side, have lower growth. Even as the level of foreign aid into Africa soared through the 1980s and 1990s, African economies were doing worse than ever, as the chart below, from a paper by economist Bill Easterly of New York University, shows.

“Poverty reduced by aid” RESPONSE: Not aid. Over 99% of reduction from China economic growth

David Mcdonald, 2017. (David is the founder of The Global Millennial: a think-tank millennials a platform to freely express their ideas on the world. Globalmillennial.org) “Does Foreign Aid To Africa Do More Harm Than Good?” Apr 29, 2017. <https://medium.com/@globalmillenial/does-foreign-aid-to-africa-do-more-harm-than-good-8066aa06975a>

Millions have moved out of poverty around the world over the past six decades, but that has had little to do with foreign aid. Rather, it is due to economic growth in countries in Asia which received little aid. The World Bank has calculated that between 1981 and 2010, the number of poor people in the world fell by about 700 million — and that in China over the same period, the number of poor people fell by 627 million.

“Africa doing better” RESPONSE: More people equals less benefit

Laurence Chandy, 2015. (Former Brookings Expert Director of Data, Research and Policy – UNICEF) “Why is the number of poor people in Africa increasing when Africa’s economies are growing?” May 4, 2015. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2015/05/04/why-is-the-number-of-poor-people-in-africa-increasing-when-africas-economies-are-growing/>

The first is the region’s rapid population growth of 2.6 percent a year. While African economies are generating more income, that income has to be shared among an ever-increasing number of people. Since the region’s income is growing faster than its population, average incomes are rising and the share of Africans living in extreme poverty is falling—from 60 percent in 1996 to 47 percent in 2011. But the rate at which poverty is falling is less than the rate at which the population is rising, so the number of people living in poverty continues to grow. More generally, sub-Saharan Africa’s record on economic growth looks much less impressive in per capita terms. The World Bank has just released a revised growth forecast for the region in 2015 of 4.0 percent. When you lop off 2.6 for population growth, you’re left with per capita income growth of only 1.4 percent. Compare that with the world average where projected economic growth of 2.9 percent combined with population growth of 1.1 percent results in per capita income growth of 1.8 percent in 2015. So, in per capita terms, Africa’s growth this year is expected to be below the global average.

“Africa doing better” RESPONSE: Improvements slow

Laurence Chandy, 2015. (Former Brookings Expert Director of Data, Research and Policy – UNICEF) “Why is the number of poor people in Africa increasing when Africa’s economies are growing?” May 4, 2015. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2015/05/04/why-is-the-number-of-poor-people-in-africa-increasing-when-africas-economies-are-growing/>

The same five factors can explain why this dissonance is unlikely to go away any time soon. The World Bank anticipates much of the same for the next few years: The number of poor people in Africa is expected to remain close to 400 million until 2020, despite a forecast of ongoing robust economic growth.

4. Even if it did increase economic development, Africans wouldn’t benefit

Economic growth, if it happens, makes no difference to most Africans. Education and agriculture is really what they need

Robert Calderisi, 2010. (30 years of professional experience in international development, including senior positions at the World Bank. He writes for CNN as part of Africa 50, a special coverage looking at 17 African nations marking 50 years of independence this year.) “Why foreign aid and Africa don't mix” August 18, 2010. <http://www.cnn.com/2010/OPINION/08/12/africa.aid.calderisi/index.html>

We must not be distracted by recent news of Africa's "spectacular" growth and its sudden attractiveness to private investment. Some basic things are changing on the continent, with real effects for the future; above all, Africans are speaking out and refusing to accept tired excuses from their governments. But the truth is that most of Africa's growth -- based on oil and mineral exports -- has not made a whit of difference to the lives of most Africans. Political freedoms shrank on the continent last year, according to the U.S.-based Freedom House index. A quarter of school-age children are still not enrolled, according to World Bank statistics; many of those that are, are receiving a very mediocre education. And agricultural productivity -- the key to reducing poverty -- is essentially stagnant.

5. Aid “business” model defeats its own solvency

Aid industry would go out of business if they solved the problem, so… their goal is merely to keep the money flowing

Tom Dichter, 2017. (anthropologist, over 50 years of work with many aid agencies in over sixty developing countries on four continents.) “I’ve worked in foreign aid for 50 years—Trump is right to end it, even if his reasons are wrong” April 21, 2017. <https://qz.com/959416/time-to-end-foreign-aid-but-for-the-right-reasons/>

The main reason there is so little change is that aid has become an industry, and is rapidly moving towards what a present day Eisenhower might call an “aid-industrial complex,” an interlocking set of players (NGOs, government agencies, and private contractors, among others) who have largely closed off outside criticism and internal learning and become self-referential and entrenched. The main goal of this complex is to keep the money flowing. In 2014, thirty-three of the top 40 USAID vendors were American non- and for-profit firms and their total business with USAID was $5.53 billion. And these are only the top vendors. There are scores of other US organizations that get a piece of the American aid pie in the form of contracts and agreements. If the aid industry were to listen to its critics, it would have to conclude that development aid ought to be less about money and more about collegial discourse, with “us” admitting that we really have very few answers. By far the most important conclusion to draw is that if the goal of development aid to poor countries is to be met, our agencies need to become smaller, not larger; we need to take a back seat and “do” less. Indeed someday soon, we need to prepare to go out of business. No industry wants to hear this, but aid is not like the auto industry. It was meant not to last. If there is a useful way forward for aid, it is to recall its original reason for being; As British scientist C.P. Snow said some sixty years ago, aid should be about people “who will muck in as colleagues, who will pass on what they know, do an honest technical job, and get out.”

African aid is just a business to enrich the aid workers and their organizations

Alex Perry, 2015. (Correspondent and author. His books include Falling Off The Edge, Lifeblood, and The Rift: A New Africa Breaks Free, published last week to widespread acclaim.) “‘Why I believe aid is bad for Africa’” 17 September 2015. <http://theday.co.uk/opinion/why-i-believe-aid-is-bad-for-africa>

The idea of giving is hard to fault. How can you criticise charity? How can you protest about against Saving the Children? But foreign aid to Africa isn’t charity any more, nor is it saving enough children. Today foreign aid is a mammoth global business worth $134.8 billion a year – $55.8 billion of that in Africa alone – whose managers often represent the very injustice they are pledged to address. To give one example, a middle manager for a UN agency in Congo or Somalia or South Sudan can earn more than almost anyone in those countries, or the US President or, for that matter, most people on earth.

6. Ignorance of local conditions

Thousands of projects accomplish nothing because they are ignorant of local conditions

Tom Dichter, 2017. (anthropologist, over 50 years of work with many aid agencies in over sixty developing countries on four continents.) “I’ve worked in foreign aid for 50 years—Trump is right to end it, even if his reasons are wrong” April 21, 2017. <https://qz.com/959416/time-to-end-foreign-aid-but-for-the-right-reasons/>

Not only does the aid establishment continue to ignore the critics, it has dumbed down much of its work. There are now thousands of ongoing projects that amount to band-aid solutions where the results of “our” interventions disappear almost immediately after the departure of our “expert” teams in their Land Cruisers: new water wells dug in villages where previous donor-built wells have failed; countless capacity-building workshops attended by poor people who are often motivated by the “sitting allowance”—a cash gift; tools given out to farmers who then sell them; projects that attempt to convert sex workers into sellers of samosas on the streets of Addis Ababa without realizing that the money they make in the sex trade is far greater than anything else they can do; microfinance projects in South Sudan where the economy is so bad that there is no money for anyone to buy what a “micro-entrepreneur” might have to sell. There are more ineffective projects like these than ever, all presented as world-changing in the aid agencies’ marketing campaigns (see the websites of USAID or of any major international NGO).

7. Politics takes priority

Aid is given based on political goals of donor countries – not by the actual needs

Simplice Asongu and Jacinta C. Nwachukwu, 2014. (Simplice A. Asongu: African Governance and Development Institute, Yaoundé, Cameroon. Jacinta C. Nwachukwu: Department of Accountancy and Finance, The Business School, University of Huddersfield.) “Foreign Aid and Governance in Africa” December 3, 2014. <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/65302/1/MPRA_paper_65302.pdf>

The unappealing relationship between development assistance and government quality could be traceable to the manner in which the allocation and results of aid are influenced by politics. In essence, aid supply is made contingent on the willingness of recipient countries to bow to conditions and political motivations of donor countries. Accordingly, the political economy perspective of development assistance is crucially relevant in understanding the results because the motives of aid are products of institutions, culture, dynamics of competitive interest and power distribution (Schraeder et al., 1998; Hopkins, 2000; Asongu, 2014a). Development assistance is also the result of bargaining in some type of political market that consists of donor aid bureaucracies, recipient government officials and multilateral aid agencies. In essence, the multiple motivations of donors vary over time. For example, to some extent, Japanese aid is motivated by economic gains, Nordic aid by global welfare improvements and French aid by political goals. Therefore, French motivations to maintain their colonial legacies could explain our findings to some extent.

8. Reforms don’t work

Reforms don’t work: Governments will foul it up no matter how the aid is given

Robert Calderisi, 2010. (30 years of professional experience in international development, including senior positions at the World Bank. He writes for CNN as part of Africa 50, a special coverage looking at 17 African nations marking 50 years of independence this year.) “Why foreign aid and Africa don't mix” August 18, 2010. http://www.cnn.com/2010/OPINION/08/12/africa.aid.calderisi/index.html

Early solutions were to pour in "technical assistance," i.e. foreign advisers who stayed on for years, or to try "enclave" or turn-key projects that would be independent of government action. More recently, Western agencies have worked with non-government organizations or the private sector. Or, making a virtue of necessity, they have poured large amounts of their assistance directly into government budgets, citing the need for "simplicity" and respect for local "sovereignty." Through all of this, the development challenge was always on somebody else's shoulders and governments have been eager receivers, rather than clear-headed managers of Western generosity.

9. Corruption Siphons away the Cash

Corruption is entrenched in Africa. 25% of continent’s GDP is lost due to corruption

Prof. Al Mariam 2017 (professor of political science at California State University, San Bernardino and a constitutional lawyer.) 9 March 2017 “Trump's suspicion of foreign aid to Africa is right on the money” <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/foreign-policy/323198-trumps-suspicion-of-foreign-aid-to-africa-is-right-on-the>

Indeed, corruption is the principal cause of poor governance and state failure in Africa. [According](https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2015/November/eliminating-corruption-is-crucial-to-sustainable-development.html) to the African Union, an “estimate(d) 25 percent of the continent’s GDP (nearly 150 billion dollars) is lost due to corruption.” In 2013, Global Financial Integrity [reported](http://www.gfintegrity.org/storage/gfip/documents/reports/AfricaNetResources/gfi_afdb_iffs_and_the_problem_of_net_resource_transfers_from_africa_1980-2009-web.pdf) between $1.2 trillion and $1.3 trillion has left Africa in illicit financial flows between 1980 and 2009”, roughly [equal](http://databank.worldbank.org/data/download/GDP.pdf) to Africa’s gross domestic product for 2014.

Corruption wastes as much as aid gives in Africa

Toby Shepard 2015 (Until March 2017, was a senior policy associate with the Washington, D.C., office of the Open Society Foundations. The Open Society Foundations work to build vibrant and tolerant societies whose governments are accountable and open to the participation of all people.) 18 August 2015 “How the United States Makes Corruption in Africa Worse” <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/how-united-states-makes-corruption-africa-worse>

Concrete progress on illicit financial flows is still lacking. Just days after Kenya joined the partnership, an [audit revealed](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/just-one-per-cent-of-kenyan-national-budget-spent-effectively-and-legally-audit-reveals-10424472.html) that only one percent of its national budget is spent effectively and legally. According to the African Union report and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Africa loses more than $50 billion every year to illicit financial flows. All in all, over the past 50 years, the continent has lost more than $1 trillion to corruption—roughly the amount of development assistance Africa received during the same period.

Western countries turn “a blind eye” to corruption, so it gets worse

Prof. Al Mariam 2017 (He is professor of political science at California State University, San Bernardino and a constitutional lawyer.) 9 March 2017 “Trump's suspicion of foreign aid to Africa is right on the money” <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/foreign-policy/323198-trumps-suspicion-of-foreign-aid-to-africa-is-right-on-the>

As of March 2014, 20 African [countries](http://www.africaranking.com/top-20-most-indebted-african-countries/) carried foreign debt of nearly $390 billion. One African [country](http://www.gfintegrity.org/press-release/illicit-financial-outflows-ethiopia-nearly-doubled-2009-us3-26-bln-says-new-gfi-report/) alone “lost U.S. $11.7 billion to illicit financial outflows between 2000 and 2009.” A 2016 United Nation’s Economic Commission for Africa [report](http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/PublicationFiles/agr4_eng_fin_web_11april.pdf) indicated that one of the major factors in the increasing levels of corruption in Africa has to do with the “the blind eye often turned to corruptors by Western countries.”

U.S. already tried and failed to solve African government corruption

Toby Shepard 2015 (Until March 2017, was a senior policy associate with the Washington, D.C., office of the Open Society Foundations. The Open Society Foundations work to build vibrant and tolerant societies whose governments are accountable and open to the participation of all people.) 18 August 2015 “How the United States Makes Corruption in Africa Worse” <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/voices/how-united-states-makes-corruption-africa-worse>

A year ago, the United States banded together with African governments to stop criminals and corrupt officials from evading taxes and stealing public funds. But already, that effort is floundering. Since August 2014, when President Obama and African leaders from more than 40 countries announced the Partnership on Illicit Finance at the U.S.–Africa Leaders Summit in Washington, D.C., little has been done to improve financial transparency and address other forms of corruption.

10. Only solution is economic freedom

Economic freedom, not aid, brings people out of poverty

Patrick Tyrrell, 2018. (research coordinator in The Heritage Foundation’s Center for International Trade and Economics.) “Foreign Aid Is Not the Answer to Global Poverty. Look to Freedom.” March 01, 2018. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2018/03/01/foreign-aid-not-answer-global-poverty-look-freedom/>

The 2018 Index of Economic Freedom, an annual study that ranks 180 countries for their economic freedom using hard data, has now been published by The Heritage Foundation. The results, when combined with poverty data from the World Bank, show that inhabitants of countries who enjoy high levels of economic freedom are far less likely to suffer from abject poverty. In fact, as seen in the chart, which reflects the 122 countries for which recent data on poverty is available, inhabitants of countries most lacking in economic freedom are about 30 times more likely to subsist on less than $1.90 per day than people in countries where people are most economically free.

Aid ignores economic freedom and perpetuates poverty

Patrick Tyrrell, 2018. (research coordinator in The Heritage Foundation’s Center for International Trade and Economics.) “Foreign Aid Is Not the Answer to Global Poverty. Look to Freedom.” March 01, 2018. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2018/03/01/foreign-aid-not-answer-global-poverty-look-freedom/>

Strongmen who disregard property rights or the rule of law to remain in power have been rewarded with billions of dollars in foreign aid from rich countries for decades. Despots and dictators have often used this aid to solidify their grips on power, for example by withholding food aid from groups that do not support them. These strongmen and dictators often take credit for bringing foreign aid to their countries while depriving their country’s people of the economic freedom they would need to end the dependence on foreign aid.

Freedom, not aid, will help Africa

Patrick Tyrrell, 2018. (research coordinator in The Heritage Foundation’s Center for International Trade and Economics.) “Foreign Aid Is Not the Answer to Global Poverty. Look to Freedom.” March 01, 2018. <https://www.dailysignal.com/2018/03/01/foreign-aid-not-answer-global-poverty-look-freedom/>

Those who give development funds to foreign countries should focus on securing individual rights and economic freedom for people, not on distributing supplies through the political machines of despots and dictators. Economic freedom—not financial aid—is the proven escape hatch from an otherwise never-ending loop of intergenerational poverty.

DISADVANTAGES

1. Promotes Bad Governance

Link: Governments waste their money, then beg for aid

Robert Calderisi, 2010. (30 years of professional experience in international development, including senior positions at the World Bank. He writes for CNN as part of Africa 50, a special coverage looking at 17 African nations marking 50 years of independence this year.) “Why foreign aid and Africa don't mix” August 18, 2010. <http://www.cnn.com/2010/OPINION/08/12/africa.aid.calderisi/index.html>

President Obama is being criticized for increasing U.S. contributions to the international fight against HIV/AIDS by only two percent, with the result that people in Uganda are already being turned away from clinics and condemned to die. When challenged, U.S. officials have had a fairly solid answer. Uganda has recently discovered oil and gas deposits but has gone on a spending spree, reportedly ordering fighter planes worth $300 million from Russia, according to a recent report in the New York Times. Does a government that shows such wanton disregard for common sense or even good taste really have the moral basis for insisting on more help with AIDS?

Foreign aid increases corruption, not economy

Marian L. Tupy, 2016. (Marian L. Tupy is the editor of HumanProgress.org and a senior policy analyst at the Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity.) Can the United States Help Africa? August 05, 2016. <https://fee.org/articles/can-the-united-states-help-africa/>

British economist Peter Bauer once described foreign aid as ‘‘taxing poor people in rich countries and passing it on to rich people in poor countries.’’ That is an especially accurate description of aid to Africa. Instead of stimulating private sector growth, aid has increased the size of government. It has enabled government officials to embezzle large amounts of money and misspend much on loss-making projects. Crucially, it served as a disincentive to economic and political reforms. Today, most researchers agree that economic growth depends on market-oriented domestic policies, not aid.

Foreign aid weakens African governance

Simplice Asongu and Jacinta C. Nwachukwu, 2014. (Simplice A. Asongu: African Governance and Development Institute, Yaoundé, Cameroon. Jacinta C. Nwachukwu: Department of Accountancy and Finance, The Business School, University of Huddersfield.) “Foreign Aid and Governance in Africa” December 3, 2014. <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/65302/1/MPRA_paper_65302.pdf>

The insignificant relationship with political governance is not broadly consistent the recommendations of Boone (1996) that, targeting liberal political regimes, could be more feasible in mitigating poverty. This inference is based on the theoretical underpinning that foreign aid is meant to improve political governance which ultimately leads to economic development. The conclusions of Tavares (2003) on the negative relationship between foreign aid and political governance are not apparent in the findings. Conversely, our results are in line with Rajan & Subramanian (2007) on the negative linkage between aid and governance and (Brautigam & Knack (2004, p. 266) on the negative effect of foreign aid on African governance.

When government doesn’t rely on citizens, they work to their own interests

David Mcdonald, 2017. (David is the founder of The Global Millennial: a think-tank millennials a platform to freely express their ideas on the world. Globalmillennial.org) “Does Foreign Aid To Africa Do More Harm Than Good?” Apr 29, 2017. <https://medium.com/@globalmillenial/does-foreign-aid-to-africa-do-more-harm-than-good-8066aa06975a>

Governments should in essence, rely on the citizens in which they govern for tax revenue so that they can build infrastructure and provide the institutions that their citizens need to lead productive lives. The problem with African states is that many of their governments have yet to provide their citizens with adequate facilities. We know that governments are not perfect — they can be downright evil at times — and we know that a governing body does not always act in the interest of its citizens, as we saw in Africa and Angola, where prejudicial commanders took authority on decisions that benefited the white elite rather than aiming to eradicate domestic inequality.

Bad Cycle: Aid donors are responsible for aid creating bad governance, and bad governance increases the negative effects of foreign aid

Simplice Asongu and Jacinta C. Nwachukwu, 2014. (Simplice A. Asongu: African Governance and Development Institute, Yaoundé, Cameroon. Jacinta C. Nwachukwu: Department of Accountancy and Finance, The Business School, University of Huddersfield.) “Foreign Aid and Governance in Africa” December 3, 2014. <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/65302/1/MPRA_paper_65302.pdf>

It is also interesting to note that not only donors could be responsible for the adverse consequences of foreign aid on good governance, initial conditions of bad governance in recipient countries could also play a crucial role, especially when such countries were already corrupt prior to receiving foreign aid. This means, the deterioration of governance standards by foreign aid could be a two-way street. Hence, efforts might need to come from both fronts (donors and recipients) in measures to mitigate the issue. This concern about initial conditions is an interesting future research direction.

Impact: Civil wars. Aid strengthens corrupt governments leading to higher risk of civil wars

David Mcdonald, 2017. (David is the founder of The Global Millennial: a think-tank millennials a platform to freely express their ideas on the world. Globalmillennial.org) “Does Foreign Aid To Africa Do More Harm Than Good?” Apr 29, 2017. <https://medium.com/@globalmillenial/does-foreign-aid-to-africa-do-more-harm-than-good-8066aa06975a>

It might seem counterintuitive that having more money would not help a poor country. Yet economists have long observed that countries that have an abundance of wealth from natural resources, like oil or diamonds, tend to be more unequal, less developed and more impoverished, as the chart below shows. Countries at the left-hand side of the chart have fewer fuels, ores and metals and higher growth, while those at the right-hand side have more natural resource wealth, yet slower growth. Economists postulate that this “natural resource curse” happens for a variety of reasons, but one is that such wealth can both strengthen and corrupt a government. Like revenue from oil or diamonds, wealth from foreign aid can be a corrupting influence on weak governments, turning what should be beneficial political institutions into toxic ones. This wealth can make governments more despotic, and it can also increase the risk of civil war, since there is less power sharing, as well as a lucrative prize worth fighting for.

Impact: Citizens harmed. Bad governance promoted by aid hurts the common citizens of the recipient country

Dambisa Moyo 2009 (former economist at Goldman Sachs. She’s the author of "Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa") 21 Mar 2009, “Why Foreign Aid Is Hurting Africa,” <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB123758895999200083>

A constant stream of "free" money is a perfect way to keep an inefficient or simply bad government in power. As aid flows in, there is nothing more for the government to do -- it doesn't need to raise taxes, and as long as it pays the army, it doesn't have to take account of its disgruntled citizens. No matter that its citizens are disenfranchised (as with no taxation there can be no representation). All the government really needs to do is to court and cater to its foreign donors to stay in power

2. Negative Net Benefits: Less aid would be better

Less aid encouraged Kenya to fight bad tax practices

Robert Calderisi, 2010. (30 years of professional experience in international development, including senior positions at the World Bank. He writes for CNN as part of Africa 50, a special coverage looking at 17 African nations marking 50 years of independence this year.) “Why foreign aid and Africa don't mix” August 18, 2010. <http://www.cnn.com/2010/OPINION/08/12/africa.aid.calderisi/index.html>

Five years ago, Kenya managed to double its tax revenues because a former businessman, appointed to head the national revenue agency, took a hatchet to the dishonest practices of many tax collectors. He had every reason to do so. Only five percent of Kenya's budget comes from foreign aid, compared with 40 percent in neighboring countries. This is a good example of the sometimes-perverse effects of aid, but also of the importance of imagination and individual initiative in promoting a better life for Africans.

Reduction in aid gives Africa chance to be proactive

Angelle B. Kwemo, 2017. (Angelle B. Kwemo is managing director for Africa of Washington Media Group, Founder, Believe in Africa, and other author of “Against All Odds: How to Stay on Top of the Game.”)“Making Africa Great Again: Reducing aid dependency” April 20, 2017. <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2017/04/20/making-africa-great-again-reducing-aid-dependency/>

As a region, Africa accounts for around 20 percent of U.S. aid, with Egypt, Kenya, and South Sudan being the biggest beneficiaries. Although critics argue that lowered public international spending will adversely affect development projects, this reduction should also be seen as an opportunity for the continent to rise and for the relationship between the U.S. and Africa to evolve. Africans must identify priorities, define, and implement them—not be reactionary to the politics of the West.

Reverse advocacy: Cutting aid, not increasing it, will likely improve things more than aid

Tom Dichter, 2017. (anthropologist, 50 years of work with many aid agencies in over sixty developing countries on four continents.) “I’ve worked in foreign aid for 50 years—Trump is right to end it, even if his reasons are wrong” April 21, 2017. <https://qz.com/959416/time-to-end-foreign-aid-but-for-the-right-reasons/>

It is too bad that the Trump administration wants to keep those parts of our foreign assistance that have nothing to do with development (the billions to Israel and Egypt, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan), but if aid is cut—even for the wrong reasons—to those nations where the evidence of its ineffectiveness goes back decades (almost half of the 48 countries on the UN’s Least Developed Countries list have been on it since the list began in 1971, e.g., Haiti, Malawi, Guinea, Benin, Niger, and others), there is a good chance that at least some of these countries will have a real incentive to take charge of their own future.

Somalia: Aid workers created a famine

Alex Perry, 2015. (Correspondent and author. His books include Falling Off the Edge, Lifeblood, and The Rift: A New Africa Breaks Free, published last week to widespread acclaim.) “‘Why I believe aid is bad for Africa’” 17 September 2015. <http://theday.co.uk/opinion/why-i-believe-aid-is-bad-for-africa>

To take another, as a foreign correspondent I’ve seen how in Congo and South Sudan, at any sign of trouble, UN peacekeepers routinely abandon the people they were sent to protect and shut themselves in well-fortified bases. And Somalia was worse than that. In 2011 in Somalia, I saw emergency aid workers help create a famine in which a quarter of a million Africans died.

Even best aid takes purpose from lives of others

Alex Perry, 2015. (Correspondent and author. His books include Falling Off the Edge, Lifeblood, and The Rift: A New Africa Breaks Free, published last week to widespread acclaim.) “‘Why I believe aid is bad for Africa’” 17 September 2015. <http://theday.co.uk/opinion/why-i-believe-aid-is-bad-for-africa>

It’s an attitude that is reprehensible but, more even than that, counter-productive. Even the best aid suffers from the flaw that finding noble purpose in the lives of others very often means subtracting that very purpose from those lives; the very act of trying to help someone can diminish them. The same attitude can also invest aid with a venal and deadly capriciousness of the kind that allows aid workers to pay themselves a fortune while telling the world they are doing it for the poor.

3. More poverty

Aid perpetuates cycle of poverty

David Mcdonald, 2017. (David is the founder of The Global Millennial: a think-tank millennials a platform to freely express their ideas on the world. Globalmillennial.org) “Does Foreign Aid To Africa Do More Harm Than Good?” Apr 29, 2017. <https://medium.com/@globalmillenial/does-foreign-aid-to-africa-do-more-harm-than-good-8066aa06975a>

One could imagine that many factors have kept sub-Saharan Africa poor — famines, civil wars, political corruption. But huge aid flows appear to have done little to change the development trajectories of poor countries, particularly in Africa. Why? This is not to do with a vicious circle of poverty, waiting to be broken by foreign money. Poverty is instead created by economic institutions that systematically block the incentives and opportunities of poor people to make things better for themselves, their neighbours and their country.

4. Hubris (arrogant overconfidence)

Link: Who put us in charge? Instead of thinking we have the answers, we should just get out of the way

David Mcdonald, 2017. (David is the founder of The Global Millennial: a think-tank millennials a platform to freely express their ideas on the world. Globalmillennial.org) “Does Foreign Aid To Africa Do More Harm Than Good?” Apr 29, 2017. <https://medium.com/@globalmillenial/does-foreign-aid-to-africa-do-more-harm-than-good-8066aa06975a> (brackets added)

Instead, many of the positive things that are happening in Africa — the huge adoption in cell phones over the past decade, for example — are totally homegrown. He points out that, while the world has made huge strides in reducing poverty in recent decades, almost none of this has been due to aid. Most has been due to development in countries like China, which have received very little aid as a proportion of gross domestic product and have “had to work it out for themselves.” Ultimately, [Nobel Prize in economics winner Angus] Deaton argues that we should stand aside and let poorer countries develop in their own ways. “Who put us in charge?” he asks.

Link & Impact: Overconfident belief in a heavenly calling to do whatever it wants in the world leads a nation to catastrophic results. We’re already starting to see the consequences

Prof. Stephen M. Walt 2011. (professor of international relations at Harvard Univ. ) 11 Oct 2011 FOREIGN POLICY “The Myth of American Exceptionalism” <https://foreignpolicy.com/2011/10/11/the-myth-of-american-exceptionalism/>

Confidence is a valuable commodity for any country. But when a nation starts to think it enjoys the mandate of heaven and becomes convinced that it cannot fail or be led astray by scoundrels or incompetents, then reality is likely to deliver a swift rebuke. Ancient Athens, Napoleonic France, imperial Japan, and countless other countries have succumbed to this sort of hubris, and nearly always with catastrophic results. Despite America’s many successes, the country is hardly immune from setbacks, follies, and boneheaded blunders. If you have any doubts about that, just reflect on how a decade of ill-advised tax cuts, two costly and unsuccessful wars, and a financial meltdown driven mostly by greed and corruption have managed to squander the privileged position the United States enjoyed at the end of the 20th century.

5. White Savior Complex.

It’s degrading and counterproductive to say that Africans can’t solve their own problems and they need Westerners to come in and fix everything. It undermines Africans making progress toward their own solutions

Prof. Kathryn Mathers 2014 (visiting assistant professor in the Department of International Comparative Studies at Duke University) Op-Ed: Why Won’t White Savior Complex Go Away?23 July 2014 <http://www.takepart.com/article/2014/07/22/why-wont-white-savior-complex-go-away>

One of the most intrinsic characteristics of the white savior complex is its ability to ingrain and spread the notion that Westerners are the solution to African problems. This requires portraying the latter as helpless and endlessly recirculating images only of abandonment and violence, or innocence and primitivism. Another trait of the white savior complex is that unlike the imperial, top-down "white man's burden," it takes place in a virtual space shared by the savior and the people being saved and in a world in which the goals, personalities, and projects of white saviors can be immediately beamed out, commented on, "liked," or retweeted into the worlds of Africans themselves. This can undermine the work of Africans in their own communities. Africans are, after all, actively mobilizing new technologies and social media to shape their own worlds and engage directly with the ways that others represent them. So why, even in these shared spaces, do narratives in which Africans are just the backdrop to American saviors' stories still persist?

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