



AU
COMMITTEE GUIDE

HORIZONS V

Director's Letter

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of our dais team I'd like to warmly welcome you to the African Union at Horizons 2024. My name is Mia Rafii and it is my distinct honour to serve as your director alongside your chairs Eric Tao and Elise Liu. I'm eagerly anticipating the captivating and sophisticated debate that our committee will no doubt foster, and I hope that each and every one of you will have an unforgettable experience at this year's iteration of Horizons.

My model UN journey began in grade 9 quite unintentionally, as I stumbled into my school's club as a new student at Crofton House. I never could have imagined developing such a passion for the enthralling conversations that MUN nurtures. As a beginner delegate, I was thoroughly self-conscious and nervous giving speeches, especially in front of my already experienced peers. However, as I discovered Model UN's intention of problem-solving and collaboration, I feared it less and less. Instead of fighting against each other, model UN encourages delegates to collaborate, which creates an inclusive and harmonious environment that's rare to most forms of debate.

As we discuss our topic-the overdependence on international aid, I encourage all delegates to strive for collaboration rather than competition, in order to find creative and impactful solutions. On behalf of the dais team, we look forward to creating an unforgettable experience filled with lifelong memories.

As a reminder, your dais team's duty is to support you so if any questions or concerns arise, please reach out at horizons-au@cahsmun.org. I wish you luck in your research and I'm eager to meet all of you in the committee room.

Best Wishes,

Mia Rafii
Director of African Union
CAHSMUN Horizons 2023

Committee Description

The African Union (AU) consists of 54 member states, containing every nation on the African continent.¹ African alliances aimed at achieving continental unity have existed well before the founding of the AU, including the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) during the 1960s.² However, similar to many African countries, the OAU was nicknamed the “Dictators’ Club, due to the lack of action by the alliance to address the concerns of African citizens, such as education and unemployment.³ The lack of progress led to the eventual dissolution of the OAU, and the founding of the African Union in the following years. The Libyan head of state, Muammar al-Gaddafi was the original marshal of the AU, as he sought an ameliorated union to uphold democratic principles by ensuring decisions were made in the interest of African citizens instead of appealing to the agendas of elites. To achieve this, the AU provided a forum for countries to send delegates to discuss issues, in contrast to the OAU which consisted entirely of leaders.⁴ The AU also strives to uphold scientific research, international cooperation, and the protection of human rights.⁵ To accomplish these goals, the AU holds the power to utilize military forces, including the deployment of peacekeepers, as the union strives for continental peace.⁶ Furthermore, the Union frequently advises African heads of state, having a reputable 21 year history of providing policy suggestions and effectuating change. A common example of the African Union’s actions are continental treaties created to advance the economic development of member states, such as the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance that encourages African states to reject cultural oppression towards African citizens.⁷ ⁸ Moreover, the AU has spearheaded efforts to increase both inter-continental and international trade, improve access to quality education, and uplift African women.⁹

The intention of the AU is similar to that of the European Union (EU), as both bodies aim to unite their continents in the face of world issues.¹⁰ However, a significant barrier preventing the AU from reaching the same level of success as the EU is the lack of economic support and the need to source funds internationally.¹¹ Unfortunately, without consistent funding, the AU is often unable to implement significant change and are forced to operate

¹ https://au.int/en/member_states/countryprofiles2

² <https://clintonwhitehouse4.archives.gov/Africa/organization.html>

³ <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/10-development-issues-africans-care-about-most/>

⁴ <https://sarpn.org/documents/d0000608/page1.php>

⁵ <https://au.int/en/overview>

⁶ <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/role-peacekeeping-africa>

⁷ <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/african-union-and-regional-economic-integration>

⁸ http://www.dac.gov.za/sites/default/files/Charter%20for%20African%20Renaissance_1.pdf

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ <https://mg.co.za/article/2011-03-25-au-and-eu-poor-rich-mans-club/>

¹¹ <https://au.int/en/aureforms/financing>

under a more limited scope.¹² These constraints have proven detrimental for the AU's attempts to accomplish their stated goals.

Additionally, the AU consists of a diverse array of governments which makes it difficult to negotiate and to reach a consensus. For example, the AU has recently developed methods to increase accountability in leadership to combat corruption.¹³ One such method was the African Peer Review Mechanism, intended to assess member states on their success and potential failures at addressing key issues within their country.¹⁴ However, only 42 out of 55 member states have signed up to submit themselves to review, indicating that many African countries are resistant to eliminating major income and power disparities.¹⁵ Furthermore, the AU often pardons African leaders for crimes they have committed, as recently, the president of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir, was permitted to attend the AU summit despite the international warrant for his arrest.¹⁶ ¹⁷ Therefore, it's evident that although the AU strives for continental unity, it often becomes a barrier in the way of accomplishing their goals. With member states observing such a wide range of beliefs, it is important for delegates to grapple with balancing the achievement of goals with preserving continental unity.

Topic Overview

International aid, also referred to as foreign aid, are in the form of donations and resources from the international community to help alleviate issues in struggling nations. This aid is usually in the form of monetary funds, natural resources, technical aid, and military reinforcement.¹⁸ As many African nations are still considered to be developing states, meaning their standard of living, economy, and infrastructure are still below global standards, it heavily relies on foreign aid for provisional support.¹⁹ Therefore, Africa as a whole is entrenched in an economic model that is reliant on international aid.²⁰ For example, many countries rely on tourism industries, such as Cabo Verde where the tourism employment sector composes 21 percent of the country's workforce, which are often

¹² <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/2/10/is-the-african-union-fulfilling-its-mandate>

¹³ <https://au.int/en/democracy-law-human-rights>

¹⁴ <https://www.aprm-au.org/>

¹⁵ <https://saiia.org.za/research/aprm-19-how-far-so-far/>

¹⁶ [https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/op-ed/2014-04-](https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/op-ed/2014-04-09.Adama%20Dieng.The%20African%20Union%20on%20Accountability%20in%20South%20Sudan%20(op%20e)

[09.Adama%20Dieng.The%20African%20Union%20on%20Accountability%20in%20South%20Sudan%20\(op%20e](https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/op-ed/2014-04-09.Adama%20Dieng.The%20African%20Union%20on%20Accountability%20in%20South%20Sudan%20(op%20e)

[d\).pdf](https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/op-ed/2014-04-09.Adama%20Dieng.The%20African%20Union%20on%20Accountability%20in%20South%20Sudan%20(op%20e)

¹⁷ <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2015/6/15/why-south-africa-let-bashir-get-away>

¹⁸ <https://thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/foreign-aid>

¹⁹ [https://reliefweb.int/report/world/international-aid-africa-needs-overhaul-tips-what-needs-](https://reliefweb.int/report/world/international-aid-africa-needs-overhaul-tips-what-needs-change#:~:text=Many%20African%20countries%20still%20rely,is%20clear%20from%20the%20data.)

[change#:~:text=Many%20African%20countries%20still%20rely,is%20clear%20from%20the%20data.](https://reliefweb.int/report/world/international-aid-africa-needs-overhaul-tips-what-needs-change#:~:text=Many%20African%20countries%20still%20rely,is%20clear%20from%20the%20data.)

²⁰ [https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/prolaw/documents/volume-](https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/prolaw/documents/volume-5/2020%20PROLAW%20Journal%20Mary%20Izobo.pdf)

geared towards bringing visitors from more developed regions.²¹ Furthermore, international aid makes up 12.5 percent of Africa's GDP, a significant portion of the continent's economy and an indicator of its overreliance on external aid.²²

Although foreign aid has been beneficial to Africa, research has shown that over a quarter of sub-Saharan African countries have become poorer since the influx of international aid in the 1960s.²³ For example, in Liberia, although international aid accounts for approximately 73 percent of their gross international income, issues such as low labour productivity and poverty continue to paralyze the country.²⁴ ²⁵ Despite African independence from colonization, the overdependence on foreign nations for aid undermines their sovereignty, agency, and solidarity.²⁶ Overdependence on aid deters governments from seeking long-term solutions and improving the economic foundation as the default solution is to request foreign aid.²⁷ Furthermore, foreign aid funds are easier to conceal than tax-payer dollars, meaning that the government is more likely to reappropriate foreign aid.²⁸ This provides ample opportunity for governments to evade legal and ethical obligations, with an estimated 20 percent of foreign aid going to corrupt sources.²⁹ Finally, foreign aid increases the risks of foreign exploitation towards Africa as external nations can leverage this dependency for their self interests. Ultimately, the ramifications of foreign aid are detrimental and prevents Africa from reaching its long-term goals.³⁰

Africa currently experiences a plethora of problems that exacerbate Africa's dependency on foreign aid. Critically, Africa is experiencing several humanitarian issues that are motivating an increase in foreign aid. WHO estimates that 43 million people in Kenya, Ethiopia, and Somalia are in need of humanitarian assistance, and 32 million are food insecure.³¹ Without the support of international organizations, like WHO, Africa has been largely incapable of resolving continental challenges independently. Additionally, Africa loses a significant amount of funds each year to corruption. Illicit financial flows (IFFs) are responsible for the loss of approximately 120 billion CAD, with the majority originating from foreign aid.³² Because foreign aid is difficult to monitor, the funds are often

²¹<https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries-2017/capeverde2017.pdf>

²² http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2222-34362015000400001

²³<https://www.spectator.co.uk/>

²⁴ <https://www.devex.com/news/a-decade-of-aid-dependence-in-liberia-81634>

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶<https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/prolaw/documents/volume-5/2020%20PROLAW%20Journal%20Mary%20Izobo.pdf>

²⁷ <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/international-aid-africa-needs-overhaul-tips-what-needs-change>

²⁸<https://fullfact.org/economy/uk-spending-foreign-aid/>

²⁹<https://blog.gitnux.com/foreign-aid-corruption-statistics/>

³⁰ <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/international-aid-africa-needs-overhaul-tips-what-needs-change>

³¹ <https://www.unfpa.org/crisis-horn-africa>

³² <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/7/2/corruption-africas-undeclared-pandemic>

distributed unevenly among the population, being used on military or white elephant projects that solely benefit corrupt government officials.³³

Solutions exist to address an overdependence in aid. However, it requires thoughtful planning and committed execution, which many African governments have been reluctant to adopt.³⁴ One important factor is the approach of NGO funding. Currently, NGO aid promotes dependency as it provides indefinite relief for African governments, reducing the incentive to create innovative and necessary policies to improve Africa's economy in the long term.³⁵ One possible solution would be for NGO support to become precise and heavily regulated. Another viable solution is to increase efforts in improving resource independence and developing stronger domestic economies. Intra-continental trading consists of only 13 percent of Africa's trade, meaning that Africa's resources aren't utilized efficiently within the continent.³⁶ To rectify this, removing financial and logistical barriers in African trading would be incredibly beneficial.³⁷ This could include reducing trade tariffs, improving transportation and manufacturing infrastructure, and establishing free trade within the continent.³⁸ Ultimately, foreign aid poses a significant problem to the African continent and is a complex topic which requires consideration on all its factors.

³³ https://www.lejournalinternational.fr/Foreign-aid-is-hurting-not-helping-Sub-Saharan-Africa_a2085.html

³⁴ <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/7/2/corruption-africas-undeclared-pandemic>

³⁵ <https://www.lse.ac.uk/ideas/Assets/Documents/updates/LSE-IDEAS-How-International-Aid-Can-Do-More-Harm-Than-Good.pdf>

³⁶ <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/news/2023/african-continental-free-trade-area-afcfta-intra-continental-trade-still-lowest-globally>

³⁷ <https://www.mondaq.com/international-trade-and-investment/1322084/the-purpose-and-benefits-of-the-african-continental-free-trade-agreement-afcfta-to-investors>

³⁸ <https://www.mondaq.com/international-trade-and-investment/1322084/the-purpose-and-benefits-of-the-african-continental-free-trade-agreement-afcfta-to-investors>

Timeline

15th century – The first European colonies are established as Spain, Portugal, France, and Britain begin claiming territory in North and South America.³⁹ To develop and profit off their colonies, these European nations provide significant economic support to establish infrastructure.⁴⁰

April 3, 1948 – The Marshall Plan is introduced as a foreign aid model for the United States to assist Western European countries in rebuilding infrastructure and strengthening economies following the devastation of World War Two.⁴¹ The Marshall Plan remains one of the most prominent historical cases of foreign aid models and African states have tried to repeat its success.

1960s – With the Human Rights Movement in the 1960s, the United States becomes the primary foreign aid donor to Sub-Saharan Africa, providing 3.4 billion CAD in infrastructure development and other forms of developmental aid.⁴²

October 24, 1970 – The UN General Assembly passes resolution “0.7% aid target,” stating that developed countries should increase their international aid donations.⁴³ The resolution recommends that countries should dedicate at least 0.7 percent of their gross national product to foreign aid.⁴⁴

December 22, 1971– Médecins Sans Frontières (MDF), or Doctors Without Borders, a NGO is founded, dedicated to providing medical care in the aftermath of the Nigerian Civil War.⁴⁵ The MDF remains a transparent and ethical organisation with commendable intentions, winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 1999.⁴⁶

August, 1992 – The United States leads the creation of Operation Provide Relief which is dedicated to supporting Somalians in response to a famine. However, although the

³⁹ <https://www.britannica.com/place/British-Empire>

⁴⁰ <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/british-journal-of-political-science/article/abs/origins-of-colonial-investments-in-former-british-and-french-africa/3C0185F5CD4D8755944E9D741757F9F3>

⁴¹ <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/marshall-plan>

⁴² <https://world101.cfr.org/global-era-issues/development/brief-history-us-foreign-aid>

⁴³ [https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn03714/#:~:text=The%20United%20Nations%20has%20a,and%20Development%20\(OECD\)%20rules.](https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn03714/#:~:text=The%20United%20Nations%20has%20a,and%20Development%20(OECD)%20rules.)

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ <https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/who-we-are/our-history>

⁴⁶ Ibid.

operation was ultimately a success, widespread corruption and misuse of aid from the Somalian government led to many complications.⁴⁷

2015 – Developmental aid to refugees from developed nations increases by 6.9 percent, reaching CAD 16 billion.⁴⁸ This increase was partially prompted by the Syrian Refugee Crisis, which saw four million refugees flee to nations throughout the Mediterranean and beyond that year.⁴⁹

2020s – The hunger crisis over the last five years is the worst in 40 years, with 45 percent of children under the age of five deaths being due to malnutrition.⁵⁰ This is prompted by COVID-19, increase of food prices, extreme droughts, and climate change.

2023 – East African countries such as Ethiopia and Kenya have increased starvation rates, encouraging foreign aid donations and drawing the attention of many humanitarian organizations such as UNHRC.⁵¹

July 26, 2023 – Niger’s government is overthrown in a coup by the military and the former elected president Mohamed Bazoum is taken hostage in a violent coup.⁵² With the military refusing to cooperate with the international community, the UN becomes involved, developing plans to resolve conflict.⁵³

Historical Analysis

Ostensibly, international aid is a charitable act, given with the intention of humanitarian benefit. In the case of Africa, foreign aid is primarily donated to address issues such as food insecurity. However, foreign aid also carries a colonial undertone and has often been used as a method for neo-colonialism. Africa’s reliance on foreign aid can be traced to colonial times, as colonizing countries supplied substantial funding to their colonies to develop only particular economic sectors. This has caused African economies to become as a whole to be underdeveloped and reliant on foreign aid. During the 16th century, the first instances of foreign aid were motivated by colonial pursuits. In order for European countries to develop industries overseas they provided developmental funding to their colonies. These forms of aid were usually unethical and manipulative as people in need of aid were likely to accept

⁴⁷ <https://www.britannica.com/event/Somalia-intervention>

⁴⁸ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/development-aid-rises-again-in-2015-spending-on-refugees-doubles.htm>

⁴⁹ <https://cases.open.ubc.ca/the-canadian-governments-response-to-the-2015-syrian-refugee-crisis/>

⁵⁰ <https://www.gavi.org/vaccineswork/qa-how-fix-worst-malnutrition-crisis-more-40-years>

⁵¹ <https://press.un.org/en/2022/sc14894.doc.htm>

⁵² <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/08/31/niger-coup-s-outsized-global-impact-pub-90463>

⁵³ <https://www.voanews.com/a/niger-political-crisis-risks-humanitarian-crisis/7246154.html>

deals that were short sighted or impossible to repay out of need and desperation. Because of this, colonizing countries not only held political power over their colonies, but also financial power as their colonies are indebted to them. Originally, European conquerors devoted funding to developing and increasing the economic output of their colonies. This was necessary to utilize colonies as major production centres of critical products and resources and investing funds into improving infrastructure would provide a return for the colonizing country.

Humanitarian motivation is a more modern concept with foreign aid. To avoid the misuse of funds, countries are opting to provide aid in the forms of resources. For example, peacekeepers, doctors, medical supplies, and other specifically needed resources. The primary reasons for these resources are to address conflicts, food insecurity, and disease prevention. In the hopes of promoting democracy in the continent, aid is also used to supervise elections and policy creation. However, human rights in Africa are still remarkably unprotected compared to Western Democracies, despite the humanitarian surge in Africa following the Cold War in the 1960s. Countries such as the United States wanted to spread their influence to countries vulnerable to communist influence, and foreign aid proved to be a valuable tool in doing such.⁵⁴ The International Monetary Fund (IMF) serves as an additional example of western powers attempting to spread their reach internationally, as, stationed in Washington, D.C., it has prompted reforms in African markets directly promoting capitalism. Therefore, historically foreign aid has often been used as a tool by the provider to satisfy their personal agenda, often with the intention of spreading a western culture.

However, malevolent incentives are present in both the provisionary and recipient sides of aid transactions, embodying the entire process of corruption. In 2015, continental Africa received an estimated total of 222 billion CAD in aid, with 82 billion CAD of that never reaching its intended use. It was also found that 278 billion CAD left the country that same year at the fault of tax-evasion and illicit trading. Moreover, African countries are commonly crippled with debts they owe to foreign entities and governments from past arrangements, with Somalia and Sudan being two examples of nations that face irreparable debt to organizations such as the International Fund.⁵⁵ Many agreements have been made under the assumption that with assistance of international aid, Africa would soon be thriving and could repay its dues. However, the continent remains submerged in poverty. Ultimately, though foreign aid in the form of resources has been greatly beneficial to the African population, mass funding directed toward African governments often yield more harms than benefits.

⁵⁴ https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1057/9780230372139_3

⁵⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2017/oct/15/world-bank-and-imf-put-your-money-where-your-mouth-is-on-somalia>

Researchers have studied the Marshall Plan in Europe to learn from its methods in searching for strategies to implement healthy foreign aid distribution. The plan was mainly successful due to 4 main points. Firstly, the plan provided a critical mass of funding at around 3% of GDP, which is significantly more than most African countries receive. However, the plan was crucially limited to four years, unlike African countries relying on foreign aid for half a century. Providing a short surge of money that allows countries to have the necessary funding to improve the country, while putting time pressure on countries to use money wisely and not depend on it long-term. Additionally, the aid was explicitly conditional on the reconstruction of open markets, which controls the direction in which aid is spent. Most significantly, the Marshall Plan was developed by the recipients and not by the US, ensuring the funding went to valid causes. Therefore, the Marshall Plan was so successful because it required aid to be precise and deliberate that discouraged dependency. Although all aspects of the Marshall Plan cannot necessarily be applied to the case of developing Africa, a similarly strategic approach must be considered.

Current Situation

Africa currently suffers from a plethora of humanitarian issues. In 2019, approximately 5.2 million children under five died of preventable diseases.⁵⁶ Furthermore, Sub-Saharan Africa alone has approximately 460 million people who live in extreme poverty, with 40 million cases being attributed to COVID-19 in the last three years.⁵⁷ National governments have been unable to manage and distribute sufficient resources to each crisis, with millions of children in Sub-Saharan Africa only alive due to the containment of measles in a foreign aid effort led by WHO and UNICEF.⁵⁸ These two UN bodies brought immunizations, healthcare workers, and medical supplies to the struggling African healthcare systems that could not be supported with domestic resources.⁵⁹ This project was largely successful as it was mainly in the form of material aid rather than monetary aid. As such, WHO, UNICEF, and other UN workers were able to specifically roll out vaccinations and other medical materials, without the possibility of funding misuse.

The United States is by far the biggest funding contributor, having donated an estimated 16 billion CAD in 2022.⁶⁰ The donations of the entire European Union followed at a distant

⁵⁶ <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/children-reducing-mortality>

⁵⁷ https://www.eib.org/attachments/lucalli/finance_in_africa_2022_en.pdf

⁵⁸ <https://www.who.int/news/item/27-04-2022-unicef-and-who-warn-of--perfect-storm--of-conditions-for-measles-outbreaks--affecting-children>

⁵⁹ <https://www.who.int/news/item/27-04-2022-unicef-and-who-warn-of--perfect-storm--of-conditions-for-measles-outbreaks--affecting-children>

⁶⁰ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/275597/largers-donor-countries-of-aid-worldwide/>

second at 8 billion CAD.⁶¹ Although the United States has no colonial history in Africa, they remain by far the largest foreign aid donor to the continent due to how Western democracies, like the United States, have a political incentive to provide foreign aid.⁶² For example, providing aid and relief to countries in need may provide political alliances, spreading the reach of Western ideologies. Additionally, 43 of the top 50 purchasers of American agricultural products have received foreign aid from the US, demonstrating that international aid also provides opportunities to expand trade.⁶³

Particular concerns include the systematic and large-scale corruption that causes a significant loss of funds which harms already strained African economies.⁶⁴ In fact, the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) estimates that 3.7 percent of Africa's gross GDP is lost to illicit financial flows (IFFs).⁶⁵ IFFs undermine public trust, drain critical funding, fuel the wealth disparity, and impair efforts to solve global challenges.⁶⁶ They remain a rampant issue in Africa for several reasons. Primarily, there are few measures in place for tracking and identifying these flows and the lack of a punitive definition of IFFs in most African legislatures.⁶⁷ ⁶⁸ Furthermore, there has been a lack of action from leaders to rectify these shortcomings.⁶⁹ As these leaders are primary benefactors of corruption, they benefit from inaction, so the continent remains a breeding ground for illicit activity. For instance, former President of South Africa Jacob Zuma along with several former ministers and CEOs of local companies carried out state capture, the influence of state policies by private individuals, to benefit the wealthy Gupta family.⁷⁰ Zuma's former vice president and current president Cyril Ramaphosa is also at fault for failing to act, as he also took part in state capture.⁷¹ Moreover, South Africa has lost billions of dollars to deceitful contracts relating to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.⁷²

African countries have faced backlash in the past from attempting to nationalize resources and escape from corrupt dealings. Politicians, activists, and innocent citizens have been killed by private corporations and opposing governments over the distribution of Africa's valuable resources. Although difficult to pin the precise threats, danger exists for those who

⁶¹ https://transport.ec.europa.eu/news-events/news/eu-invests-eu62-billion-sustainable-safe-and-efficient-transport-infrastructure-2023-06-22_en

⁶² <https://humanitariancareers.com/why-countries-give-aid/>

⁶³ <https://www.rand.org/blog/2020/12/why-we-send-them-money.html>

⁶⁴ <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/7/2/corruption-africas-undeclared-pandemic>

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/july-2021/tackling-illicit-financial-flows-matter-survival-africas-development>

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/7/2/corruption-africas-undeclared-pandemic>

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/7/2/corruption-africas-undeclared-pandemic>

oppose colonial ties and foreign involvement. Examples of this include the execution of activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, who opposed Shell and foreign enterprises influencing the land of the Ogoni people.⁷³ Additionally, the first democratically elected leader of the Congo, Patrice Lumumba, was beaten and murdered by Belgian forces for his pan-African beliefs.⁷⁴

Having said this, foreign aid cannot be viewed as black and white, as different sources of aid provide varying levels of effectiveness.⁷⁵ Africa has shown rapid development over the past decade and foreign aid has played a crucial role in that process. For example, despite Africa failing to reach its poverty reduction targets, the percentage of children attending primary school has risen from 58 to 76 percent in the last decade alone.⁷⁶ Although this cannot be entirely attributed to foreign aid, it's reassuring that the continent has exhibited such progress. Many internationally funded projects have been overwhelmingly successful such as Botswana's mission to increase the availability of HIV medications.⁷⁷ The projects in Botswana are a prominent instance of successful foreign aid. It succeeded in increasing HIV tests for pregnant women which resulted in a 15 percent reduction of infants with HIV.⁷⁸ Furthermore, despite being funded internationally, the project was organized by NGOs in collaboration with the Botswana government; therefore, local experts were responsible for distributing funding, ensuring resource allocation is appropriate and efficient.⁷⁹ This suggests that aid is largely ineffective without a stable government committed to its people. For example, to reduce the child mortality rate in Bangladesh, BRAC, a local NGO, along with the Bangladesh government were able to increase child vaccination rates.⁸⁰ Through the NGOs funding and the government's expertise, child mortality has decreased from 180 deaths per 1,000 births in the 1980s to 53 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2011.⁸¹

Although Africa is a resource rich continent, the massive wealth gap between the rich and poor prevents the continent from achieving the growth it needs to sustain itself.⁸² The IMF suggests that opportunity inequality depresses the economy by oppressing the crucial working class.⁸³ When money and power solely lies in the hands of the elite, mainly corporations and governments, they are able to use their immense economic influence to

⁷³<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Ken-Saro-Wiwa>

⁷⁴<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Patrice-Lumumba>

⁷⁵ <https://academic.oup.com/book/8966/chapter-abstract/155302327?redirectedFrom=fulltext>

⁷⁶<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/too-little-access-not-enough-learning-africas-twin-deficit-in-education/>

⁷⁷<https://www.beintheknow.org/living-hiv/hiv-treatment/hiv-treatment-children>

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2015/01/12/demystifying-science-of-delivery-learning-bangladesh-reduced-child-mortality>

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² <https://wid.world/document/income-inequality-in-africa-1990-2017-wid-world-issue-brief-2019-06/>

⁸³ <https://www.imf.org/en/Blogs/Articles/2019/11/07/the-threat-of-inequality-of-opportunity>

further widen the economic disparity. African industries require local investment to flourish, but with inequitable wealth distribution it is often difficult to obtain such sourcing within the continent.⁸⁴ Instead, they turn to international tax-havens or launder money abroad, which ends up further draining Africa's economy. Therefore, Africa is caught in a vicious cycle where they are required to use foreign aid as their local industries are unable to support the demand, but, by seeking international aid, Africa is directly investing in foreign markets rather than their own. For example, Africa particularly lacks medical resources for the inundation of patients so they request for supplies to be donated by other countries.⁸⁵ However, by utilizing the donated supplies instead of local supplies, the local pharmacies can lose profit and can potentially shut down their business.⁸⁶ Therefore, Africa must begin the transition to support local economies rather than relying on foreign aid and indirectly benefiting foreign businesses.

As the globe notices the consequences of foreign aid, global leaders have begun distancing from consistent monetary donations given how it tends to cause overreliance.⁸⁷ Kenyan Industrialization Assistant Minister Ndiritu Muriithi claims that many African countries experience a confidence crisis, leading to an over-reliance on foreign aid despite having natural resources, fertile soils, and well-trained professionals.⁸⁸ Additionally, BBC News reported that "the UK has announced that it will stop giving direct aid to South Africa in 2015, arguing that the progress made since the end of apartheid means it no longer needs aid currently worth £19m a year" (Akwayyiram 2013).⁸⁹ Therefore, it is clear that current global trends indicate that the international community is taking steps to reduce foreign aid to Africa, a trend which the AU must evaluate to support or oppose.

UN/International Involvement

Considering Africa's colonial past, foreign aid has a history of being given to further the donating country's national interests.⁹⁰ Hardly any aid initiatives has been from African countries, leading to large sums of foreign aid to be wasted on initiatives developed by foreigners rather than locals.⁹¹ The same is true for historic UN involvement; the majority of foreign aid diverted to Africa is initiated by foreign nations.⁹² However, there have been

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9844387/>

⁸⁷ <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/making-africa-great-again-reducing-aid-dependency/>

⁸⁸ <https://allafrica.com/stories/201206280561.html>

⁸⁹ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-22270164>

⁹⁰ <https://www.britannica.com/money/topic/foreign-aid>

⁹¹ <https://www.cato.org/economic-development-bulletin/african-perspectives-aid-foreign-assistance-will-not-pull-africa-out>

⁹² Ibid.

recent international efforts that break this mold. For example, a notable project to deploy a joint peacekeeper task force to protect the 37 million displaced African refugees is manned by the United Nations, European Union and the African Union.⁹³ The primary role of the African Union and the United Nations is to allocate aid resources; therefore, consulting with local opinions as to where peacekeepers are most needed, and ensuring funding is used efficiently.^{94 95} Furthermore, in 2007, the African Union directed the deployment of 60,000 UN peacekeeping troops to the continent, demonstrating the heavy involvement of peacekeepers in conflict zones.⁹⁶

Another organisation committed to improving Africa's economy is the Pan-African Parliament (PAP). The parliament was founded to ensure the commitment of African peoples in economic development within the continent.⁹⁷ Within the PAP, there exists a committee that examines trade and international monetary transactions and a committee that monitors internal financial affairs.⁹⁸ These committees monitor the AU policies regarding their respective topic, and advise on future policies.⁹⁹ They primarily serve as an advisor to the AU on how Africa can develop economically and use its funding, including foreign aid, efficiently.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore, in 2006 the AU constructed a Post-Conflict Reconstruction Framework.¹⁰¹ Although the resolution framework doesn't directly address Africa's overdependence on foreign aid, the proactive planning helped improve Africa's response to crises that might otherwise require foreign aid. Moreover, developmental assistance programs such as the Millenium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and the Africa Developmental Foundation have made notable strides in making African economies independent through fostering sustainable agriculture, entrepreneurship, and increasing accessibility to high-salary positions.^{102 103}

Finally, Africa's Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) is another African-based intergovernmental organization dedicated to reducing the AU's overreliance on foreign aid. The CFTA is a trade agreement that established free trade throughout the continent; however, pan-African trade still remains a pressing challenge. Currently, trade between African states is a feeble 12 percent compared to 40 percent for North America and 60 with Europe.¹⁰⁴ To rectify this, the CFTA set out to establish free trade with all 54 African states

⁹³<https://www.unhcr.org/about-unhcr/who-we-are/figures-glance>

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid

⁹⁶<https://www.forbes.com/sites/ewelinaochab/2018/05/09/the-religious-war-in-central-african-republic-continues/?sh=47aef51b3c0d>

⁹⁷ <https://au.int/en/pap>

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/pcrd-policy-framwamework-eng.pdf>

¹⁰² <https://www.mcc.gov/>

¹⁰³ <https://www.usadf.gov/>

¹⁰⁴<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2018/3/20/african-continental-free-trade-area-what-you-need-to-know>

by 2017, and achieve a continental union by the end of 2019.¹⁰⁵ However, this initiative is falling behind their intended goals of increasing continental trading by an estimated 50 percent.¹⁰⁶ As previously established, continental trading along with resource nationalisation have the promise to significantly raise the African GDP along with solidifying the African economy as self-sufficient.

Possible Solutions

Foreign aid's primary purpose is to secure and ameliorate the life quality of citizens, ensuring that countries observe basic human rights.¹⁰⁷ Many African countries such as Nigeria and South Africa contain dense populations and abundant natural resources.¹⁰⁸ Therefore, the continent's economic potential is extremely high with many valuable resources, and delegates should understand the potential of their respective countries.¹⁰⁹ Ultimately, the primary goal for the AU is for Africa to be economically independent and prosperous, a goal which faces challenges such as aid embezzlement and fund diversion as mentioned above, so proper proactive measures must be taken to prevent it.¹¹⁰

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

Africa's complex reliance on foreign aid has been ingrained over decades of consistent international involvement.¹¹¹ However, it is unrealistic to assume that all internationally sourced funding can be immediately pulled to rectify the issue, as Africa would face economic collapse with the drastic loss of funding. As such, it may be advantageous to consider how foreign aid can be sourced healthily, reducing overdependence.¹¹² NGOs are critical in providing vital funding as well as personnel to human rights issues in Africa, while being intended to be a short term solution to relieve some of the government's financial burdens so it can eventually strengthen.¹¹³ ¹¹⁴ However, it's necessary to be provided and managed by local governments and organizations to ensure the proper use of funds, as international organizations may not fully grasp the needs of African communities.¹¹⁵ NGO support should also not be a major source of funding, as this fosters

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ <https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/importance-of-foreign-aid-programme/>

¹⁰⁸ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/2/20/mapping-africas-natural-resources>

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ <https://www.mcc.gov/news-and-events/release/release-100810-mccsignsmemorandum>

¹¹¹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/international-aid-africa-needs-overhaul-tips-what-needs-change>

¹¹² <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/08/13/think-again-a-marshall-plan-for-africa/>

¹¹³ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/human-rights-activism-and-the-role-of-ngos>

¹¹⁴ <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/08/13/think-again-a-marshall-plan-for-africa/>

¹¹⁵ <https://insight.kellogg.northwestern.edu/article/international-aid-development-ngos-crowding-out-government>

reliance, instead, NGO funding should be precise and last a set period of time.¹¹⁶ Therefore, NGOs provide a source of aid which is detached from any political entity and can be used to alleviate the economic burdens of crises throughout the continent.

Natural Resource Independence

Africa, while financially poor, is incredibly abundant in natural resources. West Africa has a plethora of valuable elements such as uranium that are critical for more technical markets, while Southern countries like Tanzania are rich in gold and North Africa is a major supplier of coal.¹¹⁷ ¹¹⁸ As Africa has enormous trade potential, a viable solution is to further invest in local markets to promote inter-continental trading.¹¹⁹ This would decrease foreign influence in African trade, which encourages local markets to be more competitive and thereby increasing the GDP.¹²⁰ To achieve this, establishing free trade agreements and infrastructure would help significantly facilitate trade within Africa.¹²¹ By removing trade barriers such as tariffs, trade within the continent becomes less expensive, encouraging local trade and business.¹²² Delegates may also consider policies aimed at boosting local infrastructure investment to expedite manufacturing and shipping processes.¹²³ However, it's necessary to note that developing local trade requires significant investment in trade relationships, routes, and infrastructure.¹²⁴

It's also necessary to recognize that nationalizing resources has been difficult for African countries as many foreign countries rely on their goods and have involved themselves deeply in their markets.¹²⁵ For example, France depends on Niger's uranium supply to power a third of its light bulbs. This means that nationalizing these resources by reducing international trade would likely cause significant global economic ramifications and foreign intervention from France.¹²⁶ Although natural resource independence is a valid solution and necessary to ensure the long-term strength of African economies, delegates should note this difficulty of separating from the Western World. As colonial relationships are ingrained into Africa's economy, independence, if done improperly, would reduce Africa's

¹¹⁶ <https://africanarguments.org/2022/08/how-useful-is-aid-to-africa/>

¹¹⁷ <https://www.unep.org/regions/africa/our-work-africa>

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/august-november-2018/africa-has-phenomenal-potential-intra-continental-trade>

¹²⁰ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/07/27/africa-competition>

¹²¹ <https://www.mondaq.com/international-trade-amp-investment/1322084/the-purpose-and-benefits-of-the-african-continental-free-trade-agreement-afcfta-to-investors>

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ <https://unctad.org/publication/economic-development-africa-report-2023>

¹²⁴ <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/why-africa-talks-so-much-about-infrastructure>

¹²⁵ https://www.lemonde.fr/en/les-decodeurs/article/2023/08/04/how-dependent-is-france-on-niger-s-uranium_6080772_8.html

¹²⁶ Ibid.

trade revenue and could cause more active forms of foreign intervention. As such, this separation must begin with local investments in industry and trade instead of suddenly cutting all international connections. Breaking colonial ties is a slow and complex process that requires commitment and cooperation across the continent.

Bloc Positions

While the AU was formed with the intention of upholding democratic principles, a variety of positions exists within the body. Furthermore, delegates should note that not all delegations intend to best address the needs of their citizens and may have selfish intentions.

East Africa

East Africa has the highest population in all of continental Africa, which, combined with the high rates of extreme poverty, makes the region a significant recipient of international aid.¹²⁷ East Africa has also faced extreme environmental disasters in recent years. As previously mentioned, the region experienced its most severe drought in 40 years in April, 2023.¹²⁸ ¹²⁹ Ethiopia and Kenya, the two most populated countries in the region, are the two primary foreign aid recipients on the continent, receiving a combined total of over 9 billion CAD.¹³⁰ ¹³¹ Furthermore, the region's poverty rate has only risen in the past few years from 33 percent in 2019 to 35 percent in 2021.¹³² Although the COVID-19 pandemic may partially account for this result, the billions of dollars in foreign aid that have been consistently provided to East Africa since the 1960s has seemingly yielded little result. In the face of such an immediate crisis, East African countries will most likely strive for solutions that provide quick relief. Although the region needs to begin the path toward independence, it's unrealistic that these countries will be able to fund developmental projects for the long term. East African delegations should consider strategies towards resource independence, while also attending to present issues.

¹²⁷ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1225732/population-of-africa-by-region/>

¹²⁸ <https://www.usaid.gov/east-africa-regional/environment>

¹²⁹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2023/04/27/climate-change-drought-east-africa/>

¹³⁰ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ALLD.CD?locations=TZ>

¹³¹ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ALLD.CD?locations=ET>

¹³² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1200550/extreme-poverty-rate-in-east-africa-by-country/>

Zimbabwe and Uganda

Zimbabwe and Uganda have been reported to commonly misuse foreign aid funds. The United Kingdom has even recently suspended their foreign aid donations to Uganda, prompted by the discovery of 10 million CAD being misused in recent years.¹³³ Funds are commonly rapidly discarded, either being spent or transformed into monetary bursaries. Regardless of how the money is moved, it's nearly impossible to trace, nevertheless recover. These illicitly moved funds further exacerbate economic issues by uplifting foreign or illegal economies, distracting and out-competing local markets. Zimbabwe, Uganda, and all other African countries with high levels of corruption, within their government, need to increase monitorization of international funds. This could look like increased involvement from UN bodies such as the PAP, or minimizing monetary aid that can be easily misused. However, not all delegations are prepared to make these changes, and each delegate's stance on corruption will vary depending on the specific political context of their nation.

North Africa

North Africa does not receive the same quantity of foreign aid as nations in neighbouring Sub-Saharan Africa. This is largely due to political factors that largely determine aid flows. Donor motivation is partially determined by considerations such as social and political factors, meaning that donors are less likely to donate if the recipient country does not align with their beliefs. As the United States is the number one aid donor to Africa, accounting for approximately 40 percent of aid between 1980 and 2006, aid flows are primarily determined by American participation.¹³⁴ American and Western ideologies contrast with those in Northern Africa, which more so align with Middle Eastern and Islamic countries in terms of values and policies. Therefore, funding to the region fluctuates with the political landscape and its congruence with American politics. This bloc is likely to prioritize increasing intercontinental trade and African economic independence, in order to make them more resilient against foreign influences.

African Island States

African island states rely heavily on the tourism industry. For instance, the tourism sector makes up 62 percent of the Seychelles' GDP, while the tourism sector makes up 43 percent of Cabo Verde's GDP.¹³⁵ Additionally, the island population of Africa is especially vulnerable to natural disasters and the effects of global warming, such as floods and droughts.¹³⁶

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ <https://www.wider.unu.edu/publication/aid-north-africa-after-%E2%80%98arab-spring%E2%80%99>

¹³⁵ <https://unctad.org/press-material/facts-and-figures-3>

¹³⁶ <https://www.afro.who.int/news/tackling-common-health-challenges-african-small-island-developing-states>

Extreme weather events and isolation make poverty common on island nations.¹³⁷ Furthermore, the cost of living is elevated as maritime trade with these island states are costly, which leads to high inflation.¹³⁸ This, combined with work shortages during COVID-19 due to the decline of tourism, has made a high quality of life standard unaffordable for the working class.¹³⁹ Because of this, islands remain reliant on foreign tourism revenue to sustain themselves and aren't able to develop local industries. Island delegations should consider strategies to increase accessibility to continental trading. Removing expensive tariffs and improving trade-related infrastructure would drastically decrease living costs and prevent the heavy need for foreign funds.

Discussion Questions

1. How has foreign aid affected infrastructure development in African countries?
2. Does foreign aid benefit economic development?
3. What causes necessitate foreign aid?
4. How does foreign aid benefit citizens of varying socioeconomic statuses?
5. How is your country regulating foreign funding distribution?
6. When should foreign aid be restricted?

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¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/Departmental-Papers-Policy-Papers/Issues/2023/05/03/Trade-Integration-in-Africa-Unleashing-the-Continent-s-Potential-in-a-Changing-World-529215>

¹³⁹ <https://www.afro.who.int/news/tackling-common-health-challenges-african-small-island-developing-states>

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