

SOCHUM 1 briefing Paper

HABSMUN 2020

**The Question of the Effectiveness of Development Aid in Africa**

Background

The extent to which Development Aid is beneficial to Africa has been subject to debate.   It is a means by which MEDCs seeks to address the manifest global economic and social inequality.

Since the 1950s, African Countries have been receiving foriegn aid in the form of large donations to the government. The issue is that low level corruption in different areas of Africa has led to little distribution of the aid. Africa has received a vast amount of aid $133.7 Billion when measured in 2014 and has exponentially grown. However, despite this Africa is still the poorest continent in the world with the majority of countries have less than $1,500 per capita. Furthermore, Africa has a net loss of $85 billion a year due to lack of resources and stable governance. As a region, Africa accounts for around 20% of US aid, with Egypt, Kenya and South Sudan being the biggest beneficiaries.

In addition to corruption, the other issue with Development Aid is that LEDCs in Africa become over-dependent on it - aid does not promote their economic autonomy.  For example, if a country relies heavily on food imports delivered by foreign aid, then there is no incentive for local food production. In Africa this has meant that domestic food production is failing to keep up with the population growth rate.   Consequently, high levels of poverty and hunger persist and the cycle of dependence on this type of foreign aid continues.

The other harmful side effect is the almost inevitable link between Development Aid and ‘political dependency’ on the donor countries.  Institutions such as USAID and the World Bank have been known to bypass government service provision processes in order to ensure the establishment of their donor projects, arguably acting as an destabilising influence within the aforementioned corruption of local government. Some argue that Development Aid from the West as ‘neo-colonialism’ because it allows for the donor countries to control the economic systems of African LEDCs for their own benefit.

So is it possible to reap the benefits of Development Aid whilst promoting the economic and social autonomy, and long-term growth, of African beneficiaries?   Or is it a system that is outdated and wholly ineffective? Perhaps it needs to take a different form.

Africa has the youngest population in the world, with 200 million aged between 15 and 24 (doubling by 2045 according to African Development Bank), which means that job creation for the future working population of Africa is essential for its countries’ future economic developments.  To that end, a directed international project to help set up job creation schemes in those countries is the answer.

As part of the problem is over reliance on western assistance, then maybe the most effective form of ‘development aid’ that could be given by international actors would be to take a step back and encourage intra-African trade.  On average trade between African states is only 12%, in comparison to 60% for Europe, and 40% for North America. This disparity explains the continuing over-reliance of Africa on the West for its development.

Delegates must thenceforth decide on what exactly makes the status quo of development aid ineffective, and then design new ways in which this aid can be modified to ensure greater efficacy, or consider alternatives to Development Aid.

Timeline of key events

1958-63: Implementation of the 1st European Development Fund to send development aid to Africa.

1964: UN treaty for the creation of the African Development Bank.

2009: Protocol on the African Investment Bank

2014: Establishment of the African Monetary Fund

Relevant Stakeholders

The most developed countries play a significant role in the debate due to the fact they have contributed the most financially to the cause. Such as, The US and the EU, however, the African Union plays a part due to having autonomy over the aid they receive and how it is distributed. Moreover, although LICs will not be able to contribute financially, however, it is important to draw on the knowledge from receiving development aid and how effective it is in developing a nation.

Previous Measures to combat the issue

The UN has put in place measures to create sustainable development goals to help combat misplaced development. By 2030, By 2030, progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40 % of the population at a rate higher than the national average. Further to combat this issue the UN has enforced a democracy development goal to stop the corruption of the aid. Moreover the GDN, Global Development Network, promotes African research on key development issues on the continent, with the overarching goal of enhancing development effectiveness. It aims to build a thematic network of researchers-donors-policymakers by undertaking tailored activities, including research, capacity building and facilitating dialogue between researchers and policymakers, to promote African voices on aid effectiveness and its implications on the changing donor landscape in Africa.

With the financial support of USAID, GDN is working in cooperation with the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) on strengthening the capacities of African researchers and policy institutions to inform and advise the priorities of old and new donors, including USAID, new donors such as China, and other DAC countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Questions to consider

* If this committee endorses Development Aid, then what measures can the resolution implement to ensure that its benefits are not hampered by local corruption?
* Development Aid projects that focus on job creation might be an idea
* Is the concept of Development Aid itself the problem, or is it that we need to revise the way in which Development Aid is delivered to ensure its effectiveness?
* What criteria do we use to judge whether a country’s economy is being controlled by a donor state?  How should the UN address this?
* What steps can be undertaken to reduce gradually Western intervention in African economic and social affairs, when it has become a hindrance to long-term development?

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**The Question of the Treatment of Asylum Seekers**

**Background**

An asylum seeker is defined by the UN Refugee Agency as **someone who’s request for sanctuary is yet to be processed**. An individual obtains the status of an asylum seeker by making a formal application for the right to remain in another country, and retains this status until the application has been concluded. After their request has been processed by the new country, there are two outcomes: either the asylum application is accepted and the individual is granted asylum in this new country, or asylum is denied and the asylum seeker becomes an illegal immigrant who is deported or forced to leave the country. **Article** **14** of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that ‘Everyone has a right to seek, and to enjoy in other countries, asylum from **persecution**.’ The word persecution is significant as it establishes the grounds on which asylum can be claimed, and helps distinguish asylum seekers from other groups of peoples, such as economic migrants. Asylum seekers must show that there is reasonable possibility that they will suffer persecution if returned to their home country/country of origin. The issue in question focuses on the **treatment** of asylum seekers for the duration of the application process.

Whilst asylum is an international system, the individual adjudication of asylum applications is reserved for the member state in question. Some states have made an effort to adopt a uniform asylum system, such as the Council of the European Union with the **Qualification Directive**, but ultimately each nation has sovereignty over its own asylum process within the bounds of the original Refugee Convention. Whilst international guidelines do exist regarding the rights of asylum seekers and their treatment, these can be overlooked or disregarded by some member states, resulting in denied applications and deplorable quality of life for those seeking safety.

**Key Issues**

*The treatment of asylum seekers before they make their application*

It is noted that asylum seekers can often be deterred by tough immigration policies of industrialised countries, which make the process of applying for asylum difficult to access and successfully pass through. This can lead them to attempt to enter the country illegally via methods which are both expensive and dangerous, placing their lives at risk. In other cases, asylum seekers are unable to lodge applications due to the complexity of the system in some nations, as well as other factors such as little state assistance or difficulty in communication. Delegates could think about ways to improve asylum application, such as a suggested standardized system that would increase the accessibility and decrease the complexity of the application process, or greater collaboration with NGOs to ensure help is received wherever it is needed.

*The treatment of asylum seekers whilst their application is being processed*

Whilst asylum seekers have their application processed, they have **limited rights** within the host country. This often means they cannot work or volunteer, move freely within the host country, and may even have limited access to healthcare. Although they are given monetary support in most cases, this is often only small amounts that can mean they become destitute, living in squalid conditions with a very low quality of life. High levels of migrants and/or refugees can mean state resources and facilities for them can become over-burdened, resulting in the establishment of **refugee camps** which lack basic facilities and sanitary conditions, increasing chances of disease. Delegates need to think about the fact that asylum seekers should have access to sufficient health care and other basic resources, and could implement this via methods such as ensuring member states are well prepared for significant numbers of asylum seekers and other refugees, allowing them to maintain an appropriate quality of life whilst they wait for the results of their application.

*The treatment of asylum seekers once their application has been successful*

Although asylum seekers may be granted asylum in their host country, that does not mean they can immediately begin a new life. Delays in the process mean they may have to wait considerable lengths of time to receive necessary documentation, as well as struggle to settle socially with issues such as language barriers. The granting of asylum may be perceived as the end goal, but for many it does not result in an instant change in quality of life. Aspects such as social integration to ensure unhindered access to all facilities, as well as efficiency within the asylum applications and following processes, need to be carefully considered to ensure a satisfactory quality of life can be quickly installed and retained for all asylum seekers.

*The treatment of asylum seekers if their application fails*

This is the area of the issue where there is the greatest scope for the mistreatment of asylum seekers. Once an asylum application is rejected, there are multiple options. In some nations, such as the UK, the decision can be appealed (this is a viable option; nearly 1 in 4 application denials are overturned each year in the UK). Asylum seekers whose applications have been denied may still be allowed to temporarily reside in a nation, for example if they have a serious medical condition that means they cannot travel, or if they are granted humanitarian protection. However, asylum seekers are sometimes still incorrectly deported even though there is a risk to them back in their home country; they can also be separated from family who then continue to remain in the nation of asylum. If an asylum seekers application is totally rejected, they are viewed as illegitimate refugees, meaning they either voluntary return to their home country, or are forcibly returned. In the latter case, failed asylum seekers are often placed in immigration detention before they are deported, where they may be forced to stay for long periods of time in poor conditions, and may be subjected to traumas such as violence and drug abuse. Delegates should think about how every asylum seeker should be offered all available options before being deported, and how the process of deportation itself should be a civil and rapid process.

**Timeline of Key Events**

**1948: Universal Declaration of Human Rights –** Article 14 states ‘Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries **asylum** from persecution.’

**1951: Refugee Convention –** Ratified by 145 member states, the core principle of this is **non-refoulement**, which asserts that a refugee should not be returned to a country where they face serious threats to their life or freedom.

**1967: Protocol relating to the status of refugees –** Together with the 1951 Convention, these two documents guide national legislation concerning asylum.

**1990: Dublin Convention –** this is a [European Union (EU) law](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union_law) that determines which [EU Member State](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Member_State_of_the_European_Union) is responsible for the examination of an application for [asylum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right_of_asylum), submitted by persons seeking [international protection](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right_of_asylum) under the [Geneva Convention](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Convention_relating_to_the_Status_of_Refugees) and the EU Qualification Directive, within the [European Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Union). It applies to most European nations (those that are EU members) and significantly shapes their national legislation on asylum.

**Relevant Stakeholders**

**UNHCR -** The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is a United Nations agency with the mandate to protect refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people, and assist in their voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement to a third country.

**Member states who have signed the 1951 Refugee Convention or the following Protocol (1967) –** they have agreed to follow the guidelines laid out in the Convention or Protocol

**Member states who have not signed the 1951 Refugee Convention or the following Protocol (1967)-** Member states who have not signed these documents or who lack sufficient asylum processing infrastructure can still be host to large populations of refugees. In these cases, officers from the UNHCR adjudicate on asylum applications on behalf of the nation.

**For a list of relevant NGOs, including both legal and humanitarian NGOs, follow this link:** https://www.unhcr.org/uk/useful-links.html

**Previous Measures to combat the issue**

**June 2008 –** European Commission’s ‘Policy Plan on Asylum’ – This sets out ‘common high standards and stronger co-operation to ensure that asylum seekers are treated equally in an open and fair system’

**September 21st 2012** – UNHCR releases new international guidelines on the ‘detention of persons seeking asylum’. This seeks to assure good treatment of asylum seekers, as well as promote alternatives to their detention

Some individual member states have also introduced national legislation to increase the standards of treatment of asylum seekers, although most still use the system and standards set out in the 1951 Refugee Convention.

**Questions to consider**

*What can be done to ensure the rights of asylum seekers are upheld globally?*

*Is every asylum seeker granted a fair and unbiased adjudication on their application?*

*To what extent should member states have autonomy over the treatment of asylum seekers?*

**The Question of Artefact Repatriation**

**Background**

With a rich history of war, trade, colonization and perhaps thieving, many national treasures of artwork and history have been displaced. Many artefacts held in museums, especially in Europe and America, have been appropriated due to conquest and colonialism. Such as the thieving of African objects during wars, being held in British museums, or indeed the famed Elgin Marbles. The main question is whether these artefacts should be returned to their country of origin. It is believed that the repatriation of artefacts could benefit the countries of origin but also display justice. Throughout this century, advancements have been made with repatriation and more artefacts have been returned to their countries of origins. However, the issue of cultural internationalism and the right of the world to learn about the culture of any country comes into conflict with the issue of cultural nationalism. There

**Key Issues**

***Cultural Property***

This is a vague term which does not give a clear answer as to a country’s right over objects of heritage. UNESCO refers to cultural property as:

(a) movable or immovable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of every people, such as monuments of architecture, art or history, whether religious or secular; archaeological sites; groups of buildings which, as a whole, are of historical or artistic interest; works of art; manuscripts, books and other objects of artistic, historical or archaeological interest; as well as scientific collections and important collections of books or archives or of reproductions of the property defined above;

(b) buildings whose main and effective purpose is to preserve or exhibit the movable cultural property defined in sub-paragraph (a) such as museums, large libraries and depositories of archives, and refuges intended to shelter, in the event of armed conflict, the movable cultural property defined in sub-paragraph (a);

(c) centres containing a large amount of cultural property as defined in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b), to be known as `centres containing monuments'

***Art Crimes***

The illegal trafficking of artefacts gives great gains to the black market. Political instability and corruption only serve to increase this issue. The colonial era saw a great many art crimes, with many sacred artefacts being seized from places of worship. Nowadays, the issue of art crimes still preservers. The FBI figures on Art theft:

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| **ITEMS** | **NUMBERS** |
| **Pictures** | **89,019** |
| **Sculpture** | **21,865** |
| **Silver** | **12,390** |
| page6image3001051696**Stamps and Seals** | **383** |
| **Textiles**  page6image3001061296 | **3,101** |
| **Timepieces** | **25,016** |
| **Vehicles** | **95** |
| **Arms and Armor** | **1,482** |
| **Books and Manuscripts** | **4,653** |
| **Ceramics** | **10,668** |
| **Coins** | **860** |
| **Enamels** | **189** |
| **Furniture** | **8,197** |
| **Glass** | **1,801** |
| **Instruments** | **1,919** |
| **Jewellery** | **10,641** |
| **Lighting Appliances** | **2,334** |
| **Medals** | **page7image2998966496984** |
| **Memorabilia, Toys, Models** | **page7image29989527841,279** |
| **Objects of Art** | **7,997** |
| **Misc.** | **257** |

***The key issues of ‘returnism’:***

* Are the countries of origin safe, or are they currently threatened by terrorists or war, which would lead to a devastation of the artefacts?
* Should such historic delicate items be relocated, especially when they are used to educate the people of whatever country they’re in?
* Should we not be celebrating internationalism and globalism and the spread of cultures and histories around the globe?
* Are the artefacts fully representing their history by being in the wrong country?

**Timeline of Key Events**

2007 – UN article 11 – declaration on the rights of indigenous people – urging states to restore ‘cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property’ taken from indigenous people without their ‘free, prior, and informed consent or in violation of their laws, traditions and customs’

2009 – Egypt demanded that the Louvre return 5 fragments of a wall painting from the tomb of Tetaki, an 18th dynasty noble

2012 – Nigeria requested the return of 32 objects from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston that had been looted by the British army in 1897

2017 – Macron announced that African heritage could no longer be held prisoner in French museums

2018 – Brooklyn Museum hires a white scholar as a consulting curator of African art sparking debate

2018 – The British Museum announced it would return its collection of Benin Bronzed to Nigeria under a loan agreement

**Relevant Stakeholders**

The ***International Council of Museums*** celebrates museums every May 18. They believe in the importance of ‘cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding’ – although they argue that the display of African skulls in western museums don’t represent the history or the culture and thus should be returned

***Benin Dialogue Group*** – established 2007 – aim to get European museum curators talking to key representatives in Nigeria

***Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation*** – aim to help museums handle provenance research and repatriation of illegally acquired artworks in public collections

***Museum Detox*** – formed 2016 – a network for people of black, Asian, Arabic or dual heritage to build awareness about diversity in cultural organisations

***UNESCO*** – protects heritage and culture and uses the 1970 Convention to tackle the illicit trafficking of cultural property

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/illicit-trafficking-of-cultural-property/other-cases-of-return-or-restitution-of-cultural-objects/>

***EU*** – one of the primary goals is to achieve a free trade of goods within the internal market. However, it deeply protects the cultural heritage of each country-member of the EU. To prevent the illegal trafficking of art, the EU enacted the rules on the ‘European Union Regulation on the Export of Cultural goods’

***Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act*** (NAGPRA) which allowed indigenous communities in America to recover cultural artefacts

***UNESCO*** describes the destruction of archaeological sites in Syria and Iran by ISIS as war crimes

***ART Recovery International*** (ARI) is an organisation which is part of the Art Recovery Group (ARG). The goal is to develop strategies and advise private clients on how to identify and recover legally and ethically, the stolen, lost items of cultural property.

**UN Involvement**

**1954** – The convention for the *Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict*. This was mainly enacted by the alert of the loss of cultural artefacts during World War II

**1970** – *UNESCO Convention of the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property*. This establishes legal measures based on international cooperation, with the intention of preventing the illicit export and import of cultural goods.

**1995** – *UNIDROIT Convention on Stolen or Illegally Exported Cultural Objects*. This proposes more intense protection of cultural artefacts, through the expansion of the cultural property definition and the legislation of more expanded rights upon the claiming and reinstitution of such items.

**Questions to consider**

*What is the role of museums?*

*Are these artefacts fully displaying the history within them in different countries?*

*Do the appropriating countries have a right to return artefacts previously seized by their ancestors?*

*Should the security of the artefact be more important that returning it?*

*What are the arguments for the repatriation of cultural artefacts?*

*On what grounds are the retention of collections defended?*

*Who owns culture? and what is ‘cultural property’?*

*Is cultural internationalism or cultural nationalism more important?*