

Comparative Study of the Influence of Humanitarian Aid and Developmental Aid in the Preservation of Human Dignity



By: Ali Salehi
MS in International Relations

During the occurrence of humanitarian disasters caused by conflict or natural disasters, every human being has a moral duty to rush towards helping fellow human beings in need. Fortunately, today, Mankind has reached mental maturity and not only it rushes towards helping people in need. Fortunately, today, Mankind has reached mental maturity and not only through adoption of rules of war, but also rushes to the assistance of fellow human beings through humanitarian aid. To this aim, following the founding of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), humanitarian aid has had a key role in the promotion of the characters of people in international armed conflicts. Furthermore, following the end of the Cold War, and the importance of public consensus and their reactions towards the shameful imperialism period, poverty in other words, developed countries and the UN conducted various programmes under the heading of “developmental aid” took steps towards strengthening countries of the South so that perhaps these countries could to an extent get relieved of their terrible conditions. In this study, through the use of comparative research an inquiry has been made in the issue, which of the humanitarian aid and developmental aid programmes have played a more highlighted role in the promotion and protection of human dignity, so that through this path make the international community reach the belief towards more successful plans.

Introduction

Throughout the history of Mankind people have always fled from wars and conflicts and their effects. But this had not become official until the founding of the ICRC. With the expansion of the duties of this international organization towards natural disasters, humanitarian aid transformed. Furthermore, following the end of the Second World War, in the fight against the expansion of Communism in the poor regions of the western block, the United States came up with the Marshall Plan so that through the development of war-torn countries, prevent the advancement of Soviet influence. But following the end of the Cold War and affected by public consensus, initially the countries of the North and in the next stage, nongovernmental organizations, multilateral and regional organizations, multinational companies and military establishments in the form of various technical, agricultural, economic, investment project

provide assistance and aid to the countries of the South (OECD 2012). The international community had reached the belief that the best way to prevent suffering and destruction from war was to provide developmental aid. Thus researchers believed that through presentation of development aid prevent crisis from happening and there would no longer be a need to send humanitarian aid.¹

It must be reminded that the definition of “human dignity” which is brought in laws, conventions and the UN Charter is natural rights, Natural human rights does not have any other meaning, the observation of which will fulfill a more humane and logical living, and will gift security and welfare without any prejudice for all of Mankind. Thus developmental aid become more necessary than before. But with the passage of two decades from the notion of development aid and also pursuing humanitarian aid not only wars are not a thing of the past, but we have witnessed their escalation.

In this study an attempt has been made to deal with the effect of these two aid models to Mankind, through a comparative method. Nevertheless evidence shows that these two types of aid are intertwined with each other and in most instances they complement each other (Mahitab Marzouk, 2007). Even some researchers go a step further and believe that these models must be more mixed than before and the gap between these two types of aid has created problems.² But in this study, an attempt has been made to look into the subject through comparative research, which is to say, how successful have each of these two methods been for the promotion and protection of human status (which is the objective of both of these methods).

The main assumption of this project is each of these two models have different

characteristics each of which in their own way have managed to serve Mankind. Thus, at first the effects of humanitarian and development aid in the promotion of human dignity will be reviewed separately and in the next step, the comparative approach will be used.



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¹ (www.humanitariancoalition.ca/from-humanitarian-to-development-aid)

² (<https://nzinitiative.org.noz/reports-and-media/opinion/humanitarian-aid-versus-development-aid>)

Humanitarian Aid

Humanitarian aid is designed to save lives and alleviate suffering during and in the immediate aftermath of emergencies ³.

As it can be seen from the above definition, the main objective of humanitarian aid is the protection of people's lives. Thus, both in natural disasters and armed conflicts humanitarian aid rushes towards humanitarian assistance. A large volume of these types of aids are given by developed countries during crises to countries in crisis. Of course it is not just developing countries that need these types of aids, but any state during emergency situations needs these types of support; because no state has the ability and capacity to foresee all natural and unnatural disasters' occurrence. Humanitarian aid usually takes place within a short period of time and thematically. Thus the basis of international cooperation does not become very deep.



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Development Aid

Development aid responds to ongoing structural issues, particularly systemic poverty, that may hinder economic, institutional and social development in any given society, and assists in building capacity to ensure resilient communities and sustainable livelihood.⁴

Also, the activities of organizations who present development aid during the time mentioned above is very extensive. The cooperation period during these aids is usually longer than humanitarian aid, and in fact the time period of these aids depends on the contents of the

agreements between countries accepting aid and those providing aid.

In this regard it must be said that development aid is provided for various objectives, according to WTO figures, in 2008 more than 80 percent of countries who provided development aid, said their intentions were humanitarian sentiments.⁵ This is while studies conducted in 2004 showed that the first reason for rich governments' sending development aid was self-interest, and the second reason was humanitarian duties (German Marshall Fund Trade and Poverty Reduction Survey Report, 2007).

It is natural that this fact gives countries of the North an open hand for political approach with the critical matter of development aid which has been deemed their duty by the UN and in the framework of the UN Charter. Almost all

³ www.definitions.net/definition/humanitarian+aid

⁴ (www.definitions.net/definition/development+aid)

⁵ (www.worldpublicopinion.org/2008)

developed countries state that they support the development of the countries of the South. They claim that the development of these countries not only is their human duty, but believe that their development will expand the global trade and create stability and security in the international community. Furthermore, these development aids cause the spread of democracy and a method for the fight against international terrorism, but in practice in most instances, concepts such as democracy, human rights and fight against corruption become a tool for superpowers to put pressure on other governments. The clearest of examples are the US imposed unilateral sanctions against Iran in the Middle East which prevents Iran from accessing international assistance in the fight against drugs, climate change and other development and humanitarian aid projects.

Furthermore, in the recent years the international community has seen a new phenomenon, where not only countries of the North but other countries who are not fully developed take steps in providing development aid. Just as the researchers of the book “Why Do Countries Become Donors?” have studies in fact the concept of development aids has been exploited by countries (Nilima Gulrajani and Liam Swiss, 2017). Because these countries do not have high level technology, social education, medical services etc. and are even one of the main accused of violation of human rights and dignity. Nevertheless, through payments of large sums of money they try to mend their global image and this is another example of the double-standard behaviour of countries in development aid.



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One of the fundamental problems in development aid is that its technical structure is not designed and defined in a way in order to prevent wars. Thus, some scholars argue that foreign aid does harm than good to developing countries contending that foreign aid is not an effective tool for growth and development. (Peter Boone,1996, pp. 289–329)Additionally, it is argued that it creates dependency, keeps authoritarian governments in power and encourages corruption. Dambisa Moyo argues that aid has been a disaster for Africa. (Dambisa Moyo, 2009, pp. 1–5) For Moyo, the notion that aid brings growth is a “myth” as aid has been and continues to be, an unmitigated political, economic and humanitarian disaster” for most developing countries. The weak points in the development aid model are not limited to political security, but it also includes the economic field, because some economists argue

that aid is only effective in a good macroeconomic policy environment .⁶
In fact, evidence lies in total contradiction with the main objective of the said plan, because they have not managed to create the necessary infrastructures and also the economy of the country accepting aid becomes dependent on development aid donor countries and are more vulnerable from outside their national economic system, because large investments are not made in the infrastructures of the development aid accepting countries, and attention is made only on the surface of the economic-social structure, which is a reminder of the colonialism period (Ali Mohamed Farah, 2018, pp15).

Comparison of Humanitarian Aid with Development Aid

Following the 1970s and 80s, development aid providing organizations very quickly and without conditions grew. They ignored many of the mechanisms of the previous years (Slim, 2000, 220pp). But humanitarian aid organizations have been formed in accordance with international law, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Geneva Four Convention (1949) and a large number of international conventions and covenants. This is while almost all development aid presenting organizations refer to the following 1992 convention (see Global Trend 2000, 1999).

At the same time, the number of personnel the organizations maintain in the field varies substantially. The large international NGOs easily reach

numbers in the hundreds if not thousands. One typical difference between aid and development organizations is that the former works in larger, specialized teams, while the latter often send single experts to work as consultants in a local environment. These single experts are typically Northerners sent to the South, although some organization (e.g. United Nations Volunteers) try successfully to avoid such a relationship that prompts images of colonial times.⁷

Dambisa Moyo, a Zambian-born economist who has written extensively on the impact of foreign development aid on developing nations, argues that unlike humanitarian aid, which addresses a temporary spike in resource demand, development aid can lock impoverished nations into a never-ending cycle of corruption, disease, poverty and aid-dependency. In Moyo's own words: "[Development] aid has been, and continues to be, an unmitigated political,

⁷ www.beyondintractability.org/essay/humanitarian_aid

⁶ www.humanitariancoalition.ca/from-humanitarian-to-development-aid



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economic, and humanitarian disaster for most parts of the developing world.” (Khyaati Acharya, 22 November 2013)

In fact the said organizations have developed less, but based on the international economic structure they have not been able to increase their services quality and function and cause fundamental changes in the development aid accepting countries (Stephen Browne, 1997, pp19-22).

Another point to note is that although humanitarian aid takes place in a certain time frame and is limited, but in spite of all the development aid that is provided by countries and NGOs for countries in need, on the scale there is still a big gap with the UN Millennium Goals.

In this study it is good for us to always remember that the range of activities of these two types of international aids are different, because on one hand emergency aid provides relief to victims who are unable to deal on their own with the emergency situation - food, medical aid, shelter, etc. In a later stage, it might mean assistance with physical reconstruction, resettlement of refugees and reintegration of former combatants. And on the other hand, development co-operation entails many activities, for example: technological support, rural development, livelihood support projects and the like, which may have only an indirect impact on conflict. In regard to conflict and peace, some fields of activities for development organizations have been described by the OECD in their recommendations on conflict, peace and



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development co-operation. Thus it is predictable that they have different functions. In any event, one of the fundamental problems of development aid is that these types of aids (fully opposite humanitarian aid) are conflicted by accepting countries, because firstly from the political logic it is predictable that the cash assistance of another country, will bring about its economic and political presence in the governance sphere of the accepting country. Its clear example is the development aid the United States gave to Europe in the form of the Marshall Plan. Secondly, the shrewd behaviours of some organizations and countries providing development aid which in the scientific community is referred to as “organized hypocrisy” be reminded.⁸

Thirdly, to receive foreign aid some countries have set complex and difficult laws which in themselves prevent aid from developed countries to the country in need, such as the laws of Iran which condition the receiving of any foreign

⁸ <https://nzinitiative.org.nz/reports-and-media/opinion/humanitarian-aid-versus-development-aid/>

aid to the submission of a draft by the government and its ratification by the parliament. This is while humanitarian aid does not face the same problems, and is provided per case and speed compared to development aid.

Conclusion

As observed, the humanitarian aid model is very simple, fast and clear, but its implementation method had structural problems. Opposed to this, development aid is very complex, lengthy and conditional to a contract between parties, which itself in many instances gets selective, political and profit seeking approaches of the aid providing countries in their main objective which is sending services to people in need and raise the living quality of humanity has been left behind.

It is recommended that in the organizational structure and or allocation structure of development and humanitarian aid, the UN is significant more than before and in a way these procedures must be reviewed so that outbreaks of wars and or their prolonging and the double-standard behaviours of governments are prevented.

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