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Analysis of the Achievements and the
Failures of the United Nations' Actions in
the Greater Horn of Africa Region (GHR)
and the Search for Supplemental Effective
Approaches.

Prof. Marco Massoni

Ester Santini Matr.102832

SUPERVISOR

CANDIDATE

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Ringraziamenti

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INTRODUCTION:

In the intricate tapestry of African politics, the notion of development aid presents both an enigmatic challenge and a beacon of hope. This aid, historically perceived as a vital catalyst for socio-economic advancement, has evolved into a core element within the political and social landscape of Africa. The concept of development aid is as diverse in its definitions as it is complex in its implementation. The United Nations, through its multifaceted approach, has often found itself at the nexus of this complexity. The contested nature of development aid as a concept, reflects the multitude of expectations, interpretations, and outcomes associated with UN interventions. Africa, a continent with over 1.2 billion inhabitants communicating in approximately 3,000 languages, comprises fifty-four countries recognized by the United Nations (UN). Its history, deeply rooted in pre-colonial times, showcases a rich scheme of political systems and sovereignties, significantly influencing contemporary discussions and analyses. This thesis stems from an historical journey of Africa from pre-colonial eras, through the tumultuous period of colonization, to reach and evaluation of international aid and development efforts.

This thesis aims to dissect the intricate layers of aid, scrutinizing its impact on the political and social environment within Africa. The primary objective is to unravel the tangled web of United Nations' actions in the Greater Horn of Africa Region, highlighting both triumphs and shortcomings. The main objective is advocating for the exploration of alternative, more efficacious approaches.

The first chapter provides a comprehensive background and literature review, detailing Africa's political and social structures before and during colonization. It delves into the intricate history of various African empires and kingdoms, such as the Ethiopian monarchy, the Empire of Mali under Mansa Musa, and the Ashanti Kingdom. This section sets the stage for understanding the profound changes brought about by European colonization, which began in the early 15th century with Portugal's conquest of Ceuta. The examination leans on the seminal works of Dambisa Moyo, particularly her insights on 'dead aid', as we navigate the complex relationship between international aid and the

spectre of underdevelopment. Additionally, the scholarship of Carlos Lopes offers a critical lens through which it assess the transformative potential of aid within the African context.

The second chapter shifts focus to the achievements of the United Nations in Africa. It examines the multifaceted role of the UN, highlighting its contributions to humanitarian aid, peacekeeping, and development programmes. The chapter underscores the UN's involvement in supporting newly independent African nations post-World War II, aiding in establishing democratic institutions, and providing essential infrastructure. The UN's efforts in addressing food security, healthcare, and refugee crises are critically analysed, presenting a nuanced view of its successes.

In contrast, the third chapter critically assesses the failures of the UN in Africa. It provides case studies of significant peacekeeping failures, such as the interventions in Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the tragic non-intervention during the Rwandan genocide. This section delves into the systemic issues within the UN's approach, including mismanagement, corruption, and the unintended consequences of aid dependency. The thesis explores the economic and political dynamics influenced by international aid, emphasizing the complex relationship between foreign aid and Africa's development. It critically examines how aid, while intended to support growth, often perpetuates a cycle of poverty and dependence, exacerbated by corruption and mismanagement.

The methodology of this analysis is anchored in a robust engagement with authoritative sources, presenting a balanced exploration of the United Nations' interventions and their varied impacts on the African political milieu. The discourse will unfold through a meticulous presentation of arguments and counterarguments, illuminating the multifaceted nature of UN activities in the region. The thesis anticipates an in-depth investigation into alternatives that could mitigate the adverse effects of development aid, proposing strategies that resonate with the unique socio-economic fabric of African societies. Through a detailed analysis of historical contexts, UN interventions, and the broader implications of international aid, this thesis aims to provide a holistic understanding of Africa's developmental trajectory. It seeks to contribute to the discourse

on effective strategies for sustainable development, offering insights into the successes and pitfalls of international efforts in shaping Africa's future. This introduction sets the stage for a nuanced discussion on the role of the United Nations in the GHR.

Structured in four substantive chapters, each addressing critical questions surrounding development aid, the thesis will culminate in a conclusion that synthesizes the insights gained and articulates the path forward for UN actions in Africa.

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND AND LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Historical Overview of Africa pre, during and post-colonialism: the road to aid

Africa hosts over 1.2 billion inhabitants, communicating in approximately 3,000 languages, according to various estimates. The continent comprises fifty-four countries acknowledged by the United Nations (UN). Africa's history before colonial influence is profoundly diverse and significant, not solely because it is believed to be the cradle of humankind. The Golden Ages, the precolonial period, although there are limited historical traces, has left enduring marks that continue to be crucial for the ongoing discussions and analyses in the postcolonial context¹. Prior to the advent of colonial rule, the African continent was characterized by a rich tapestry of political systems and sovereignties, akin to those found in other parts of the globe. Among these, the Ethiopian monarchy stands out as one of the most enduring political entities in human history, with a lineage of 237 monarchs spanning approximately 3,000 years until the monarchy's dissolution in 1974 by a communist regime. Similarly, the Empire of Mali, existing from the 13th to the 17th centuries, is renowned for its ruler Mansa Musa I, who is often cited as the wealthiest individual in recorded history.

Furthermore, the Jolof Empire, situated in the territories now known as Senegal and Gambia, maintained its sovereignty from approximately 1530 to 1890, exemplifying the region's political structure. The Ashanti Kingdom, upon which modern-day Ghana is partly founded, thrived for more than two centuries beginning around 1680. The archaeological site of Great Zimbabwe stands as a testament to the Munhumutapa Empire, which flourished between the 11th and 15th centuries in contemporary Zimbabwe.

The Luba Empire, located in present-day Congo-Kinshasa and Zambia, persisted from circa 1585 to 1889, and the Kingdom of Congo from approximately 1390 to 1857, showcasing the region's complex political landscapes. Established in 1300, the Kingdom

¹ François-Xavier Fauvelle, *The Golden Rhinoceros: Histories of the African Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018)

of Buganda continues to exist within the modern borders of Uganda. In Zanzibar, the reign of the Omani Sultans from the Middle Ages until the 19th century, and their control over extensive areas of Eastern Africa, prefigured the onset of European colonial dominion. Their enduring influence, particularly in the continued use of Swahili in contemporary eastern Congo, underscores the profound impact of Africa's precolonial political entities on the continent's historical and cultural trajectory². Certain of these entities bore resemblance to the state structures familiar within Europe, while others were of a more restricted scope and organized on a markedly informal basis³. Numerous societies were characterized by a decentralized organization, wherein authority was dispersed rather than centralized.

The organization of these societies was dynamic, rendering the frequently utilized descriptor "traditional" as somewhat problematic due to the ambiguity regarding the specific historical period it references⁴. The social structures within Africa varied significantly, ranging from hierarchical to stateless, with instances of both forms coexisting within certain regions. It is also well-documented that Africans maintained interactions with individuals from other continents. Notably, several hundred Africans visited Europe between 1650 and 1850⁵. Prior to this, territories in Northern Africa along the Mediterranean were integrated into European markets through connections established by entities such as the Roman Empire. In Eastern Africa, communities engaged in the trade of spices and tropical commodities with the Arabian Peninsula and India. Furthermore, commencing in the sixteenth century, African entities participated in the transatlantic slave trade with European powers, indicating a complex web of interaction and exchange that transcended continental boundaries⁶. While European nations were significant participants in the slave trade until the mid-19th century, they subsequently leveraged their involvement in this trade as a justification for imposing their control over Africa, purportedly in the pursuit of "civilization and progress."

² John C. Wilkinson, *The Arabs and the Scramble for Africa* (London: Equinox Publishing, 2015)

³ Jones, *Afrika bis 1850*, 107–122 [own translation].

⁴ Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, "The Political Economy of the African Peasantry and Modes of Production," in *The Political Economy of Contemporary Africa*, eds. Peter C. W. Gutkind and Immanuel Wallerstein (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1976), 90–111.

⁵ Georges Balandier, *Political Anthropology* (London: Allen Lane, 1970).

⁶ Hans W. Debrunner, *Presence and Prestige: Africans in Europe – A History of Africans in Europe before 1918* (Basel: Basler Afrika Bibliographien, 1979).

In 1414, Portugal initiated the colonization of Africa by crossing the Strait of Gibraltar and conquering Ceuta on the strait's southern coast. This marked the beginning of a process characterized by land acquisition and colonization. Initially, Europeans, particularly the Portuguese, focused on establishing commercial outposts along African coasts. By 1830, France embarked on the conquest of present-day Algeria and began to assert control over what is now Senegal. Spain secured territories such as the enclave of Ifni and Bioko Island in the Gulf of Guinea. Meanwhile, Britain acquired strategic locations including the coastlines of present-day Gambia, Ghana, Sierra Leone, the area around Lagos in Nigeria, Walvis Bay in Namibia, Cape Town and its surrounding regions in South Africa, and the island of Mauritius. Following the independence of most American colonies in the 19th century, European interest increasingly turned towards Africa and Asia. The late 19th century saw a concerted effort by European states, trading companies, and missionaries to penetrate the African continent in what became known as the "Scramble for Africa," beginning in the 1880s⁷. This period was characterized by an intensified claim and colonization effort, involving various European powers.

Prominent entities such as Cecil Rhodes' British South Africa Company exemplify the application of David Livingstone's three "Cs" - Commerce, Christianity, and Civilization. However, their actions effectively introduced a fourth "C": Conquest. The motivations behind the colonization of Africa were multifaceted⁸. European nations sought prestige and an increase in geopolitical influence through colonial acquisitions, driven by a concern over the recognition of their claims by other European powers and a belief in their superiority. Expansion served to enhance their stature within Europe and safeguard their national interests and the authority of their leaders both externally and internally⁹. Additionally, the lure of Africa's abundant resources and the potential for economic gain were compelling incentives. The Industrial Revolution escalated the demand for raw materials, with Africa becoming a crucial source of palm oil, a key commodity of the time.

⁷ David B. Abernethy, *The Dynamics of Global Dominance: European Overseas Empires 1415–1980* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).

⁸ Abernethy, *The Dynamics of Global Dominance*; Osterhammel and Jansen, *Kolonialismus*; Andreas Eckert, *Kolonialismus* (Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 2006).

⁹ Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa, 1876–1912* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1991).

The German Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, convened the Berlin Conference (1884–1885), a significant event resulting from the Scramble for Africa. The outcomes of this conference profoundly altered Africa's long-term landscape and have continued to influence the continent's future, leading to the concept of the "curse of Berlin."¹⁰ European powers established the principle that territory must be effectively controlled by a colonial power to be recognized as a colony. This emphasis on actual territorial control marked a pivotal shift in colonial policy.

Numerous African leaders lost their lives in conflict with invading forces, while others were deposed or assassinated. Those who entered protection treaties with European powers frequently found their status diminished from kings to chiefs¹¹. Ultimately, European colonial powers succeeded in quelling all forms of resistance encountered. In the early stages of the Scramble for Africa, not all Africans resisted European colonization; many local chiefs and communities cooperated with Europeans, often signing "protection treaties" in exchange for weapons and industrial goods, without fully understanding these agreements¹². This ease of treaty-making facilitated the European establishment of colonies. Local leaders rarely utilized their available means to resist, as Europeans had already secured their position with the support of selected local allies, leaving the wider population without a voice in domestic or international affairs. Colonization was seen as a victory for European powers and a source of humiliation for African peoples, establishing a clear hierarchy between the conquerors and the conquered. The colonial regime not only emphasized the subordination of indigenous populations but also actively obstructed their development by denying requests for educational facilities, infrastructure, and other means of progress, thus ensuring the continued dependence and subjugation of the colonized¹³.

The process of decolonization can be categorized into three distinct phases. The initial phase, spanning 1910 to 1922, saw only South Africa and Egypt achieving independence. During the primary phase, from 1951 to 1974, the bulk of African nations secured their

¹⁰ Adekeye Adebajo, *The Curse of Berlin: Africa after the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

¹¹ Patrick Manning, *Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa 1880–1995* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 57.

¹² Femi J. Kolapo and Kwabena O. Akurang-Parry, eds., *African Agency and European Colonialism: Latitudes of Negotiation and Containment* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2007).

¹³ Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 16.

independence. The final phase, commencing in 1975, was marked predominantly by the dissolution of the Portuguese colonial empire and the termination of white minority rule in Southern Africa. By the close of the twentieth century, the once vast global empires of European powers had been reduced to mere "confetti."¹⁴ The Eurocentric view of decolonization credits colonial powers with voluntarily granting independence to educated colonies, framing this as an inevitable transition to modernity. This perspective also suggests that economic exploitation by multinational corporations rendered direct control unnecessary, and that colonies became financially unsustainable and damaging to the colonial powers' global standing.

In various colonies, populations began to resist foreign rule early on, primarily advocating for reforms within the colonial system. This resistance was not in isolation; the colonial state and power were influenced by global events, some of which delayed the process of decolonization¹⁵. World War I exposed the vulnerabilities of European powers, affecting colonies directly and those where soldiers were conscripted for overseas battles. Despite rising dissatisfaction, the post-World War I era saw colonial powers solidify their control in Africa, marking a phase of intensified colonial rule¹⁶.

World War II had a more profound impact, particularly through the disillusionment of African soldiers who witnessed European vulnerabilities first-hand, undermining the myth of European moral superiority. This experience fuelled independence movements, notably in North Africa. The emergence of the USA and the Soviet Union as superpowers post-World War II, advocating for self-determination and human rights, further supported decolonization efforts. The Atlantic Charter and the UN's Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 underscored this support. The new global context of the Cold War and the anti-imperial stance of the superpowers created conditions conducive to resistance against colonial rule, leading to a heightened demand for autonomy within the African colonies.

¹⁴ Jan C. Jansen and Jürgen Osterhammel, *Decolonization: A Short History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), 111.

¹⁵ David McIntyre, *The Commonwealth of Nations: Origins and Impact, 1869–1971* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977); Brian Lapping, *End of Empire* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1985); David Strang, "Global Patterns of Decolonization, 1500–1987," *International Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (1991), 429–454.

¹⁶ Melvin E. Page, ed., *Africa and the First World War* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987).

The creation of the League of Nations in 1920 and the United Nations (UN) in 1945 played crucial roles in the decolonization process in parts of Africa. The League of Nations introduced the concept of mandate territories, which included former German colonies like Cameroon and German Southwest Africa (now Namibia), as well as Italian colonies like Somalia. Following World War II, with the establishment of the UN, these mandate territories were transformed into trust territories. The UN, under significant influence from the USA, advocated for the independence of these trust territories, marking the beginning of their decolonization in 1951¹⁷.

The following section will provide in-depth analysis of how the UN started its rooting in the continent and the motives behind the development aid inclination.

1.2 The arrival of Aid: Historical Overview of UN Involvement in Africa

The origins of modern aid can be traced back to July 1944, during a conference at the Mount Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, USA. Amid the Second World War, over 700 delegates from 44 countries convened to create a global financial and monetary system, laying the groundwork for the development aid framework that dominates today. Large-scale aid transfers, however, have a longer history, dating to the 19th century, with notable instances such as the US providing food aid in 1896. Furthermore, the British government, through the Colonial Development Act of 1929, funded infrastructure projects in poorer countries, marking early instances of international assistance¹⁸. According to Dambisa Moyo, a Zambian Economist and Member of the Chamber of Lords, post-war aid has evolved through seven distinct phases: the inception at Bretton Woods in the 1940s, the Marshall Plan era in the 1950s, the focus on industrialization during the 1960s, the pivot to addressing poverty in the 1970s, the use of aid for stabilization and structural adjustment in the 1980s, the support of democracy and governance in the 1990s, and the current view of aid as the primary solution to Africa's numerous challenges.

¹⁷ Welz, M. (2021). 1,2,3,4,5. In *Africa Since Decolonization, The History and Politics of a Diverse Continent* (pp. 9–108). essay, Cambridge University.

¹⁸ Moyo, D. (2010). 1,2,3. In *Dead Aid Why Aid Makes Things Worse and How There is Another Way for Africa* (pp. 3–36). essay, Penguin.

The Marshall Plan, celebrated for its success in reviving Western Europe's economy post-World War II by restoring infrastructure and political stability, set a precedent for the use of aid in development. Its achievements led to the belief that similar financial aid could foster economic growth in other regions, particularly in Africa during the late 1950s. Africa, with its educational deficits, low-wage employment, minimal tax revenue, limited market access, and poor infrastructure, was viewed as a prime candidate for such aid. Inspired by the Marshall Plan, the notion that investment capital was essential for economic development gained traction, especially given the continent's lack of domestic savings and inadequate resources to attract private investment. Foreign aid was seen as the sole means to stimulate investment and, consequently, economic growth. The attention of countries like Britain, America, and France turned towards Africa for additional reasons. The period between 1956 and 1966 saw numerous African nations, including Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, and Zambia, achieving independence. The Cold War era further influenced the deployment of aid as a strategic tool by the US and the USSR, aiming to extend their economic and ideological influences across the globe, including Africa. Aid was utilized not just based on need or governance quality, but often as leverage to secure political alliances, irrespective of the regime's character. Thus, the distribution of foreign aid to Africa was influenced by a complex interplay of motivations, including economic recovery models, strategic geopolitical considerations, and the emerging independence movements across the continent.

By the early 1960s, approximately \$100 million in aid had been transferred to Africa, with a significant portion allocated to large-scale industrial projects. By 1965, as nearly half of Sub-Saharan Africa's states gained independence, aid inflows had escalated to at least \$950 million. Notably, Ghana received around \$90 million since its independence in 1957, while Zambia, Kenya, and Malawi, independent by 1964, received an average of about \$315 million each by the decade's end. This influx of aid resulted in very low or negative real interest rates, prompting poorer economies to incur further debt. Subsequent food and commodity price shocks, exacerbated by rising oil prices, necessitated a shift towards a poverty-focused approach to development. Under Robert McNamara, the World Bank pivoted towards prioritizing poverty alleviation, reallocating funds from

large infrastructure projects to initiatives aimed at improving agriculture, rural development, social services, and direct poverty mitigation efforts. Despite the emphasis on poverty reduction, the programmes often involved costs, leading to increased absolute poverty, unemployment, income inequality, and deteriorating trade balances in recipient countries, notably Zambia, where poverty levels surged, and growth rates fell despite the aid received.

By the late 1970s, Africa had received approximately \$36 billion in foreign aid, leading to a significant increase in the continent's debt service, which soared from \$2 billion in 1975 to about \$8 billion by 1982. The inability of emerging nations to manage their escalating debts resulted in defaults by eleven African countries, posing a substantial risk to global financial stability. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) responded by establishing the Structural Adjustment Facility, and later the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility, to assist these countries in restructuring their debts¹⁹. Although intended to alleviate the debt crisis, these measures often deepened aid dependency and indebtedness, leaving many African nations in a state of dependency and economic distress.

This period also marked a shift in economic policy thinking towards neoliberalism, advocating for economies to adopt free-market principles and reduce government intervention. Inspired by the economic success of the Asian Tigers, which achieved growth and poverty reduction through open market policies, the World Bank and the IMF initiated aggressive aid programmes focused on stabilization and structural adjustment in Africa. These programmes aimed to correct imbalances, encourage trade liberalization, and implement reforms like subsidy removal, privatization, and trade liberalization. Between 1986 and 1996, six African countries reduced their civil service workforce by over 10%, in line with the push towards minimizing state involvement and embracing market-driven development strategies. Despite the freedom granted by free markets for potential success, they also exposed African economies to the risk of failure²⁰. During

¹⁹ Sturzenegger and Zettelmeyer, 'Sovereign Defaults and Debt Restructurings'.

²⁰ Lienert, 'Civil Service Reform in Africa'.

this era, both bilateral and multilateral aid flows increased, with institutions like the World Bank and the IMF playing pivotal roles in shaping development policy.

By the late 1980s, emerging markets were burdened with over \$1 trillion in debt, leading to a significant net financial loss for developing countries, as the colossal debt service costs outpaced the inflow of foreign aid. This situation led to an annual net outflow of \$15 billion from these countries to the developed world between 1987 and 1989. Concurrently, Africa was experiencing a decline in economic growth, an increase in poverty, and escalating corruption. Donors attributed these issues to inadequate governance and institutional weaknesses, despite the continuous flow of aid to regimes known for corruption. Post-Cold War, the international aid landscape shifted, focusing more on governance and democracy as essential elements for development, moving away from the geopolitical motivations that previously influenced aid distribution. This period saw the rise of multilateral agencies like the World Bank and UNDP as primary donors, with an increase in aid grants. Despite this, the 1990s witnessed growing donor fatigue, leading to reduced aid to Africa, which did not see an increase in private investments as aid declined²¹. The discussion around debt relief highlighted the role of Western policies in Africa's economic challenges, integrating moral considerations into development strategies.

In 2000, Africa became the centre of global compassion, attracting attention from celebrities, new philanthropists, and influential figures like Pope John Paul II, who advocated for increased aid to the continent even after significant debt cancellation. This shift led to a new wave of aid, raising concerns about the potential for accruing new debts. The campaign for more development aid expanded beyond emergency aid, hampering genuine, critical discussions about the effectiveness of aid. Rwandan President Kagame highlighted that much of the over \$300 billion in aid to Africa since 1970 was used for maintaining geopolitical alliances rather than for meaningful development, with little concern for the actual developmental impact on the continent²². This approach has not led

²¹ Meredith, Martin, *The State of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence*, New York: Free Press, 2006

²² Interview with Rwanda's President Kagame, *Time*, September 2007

to growth but rather has been associated with slower economic progress, increased poverty, and Africa's continued marginalization in the global economy.

Over the last five decades, more than \$2 trillion in foreign aid has been sent from wealthy to poorer nations, with Africa receiving the largest share. Despite this, aid has not fulfilled its promise of fostering sustainable economic growth and reducing poverty. Critics argue that aid maintains the cycle of poverty and hinders sustainable economic progress. Rwandan President Paul Kagame has observed that despite the aid Africa has received, there is minimal evidence of its effectiveness in promoting economic growth or improving human development. This has led to a growing consensus that the current approach to aid is not effective²³.

1.3 What is Aid?

Aid can be categorized into three primary types: humanitarian or emergency aid, delivered in response to disasters; charity-based aid, provided by charitable organizations directly to institutions or individuals; and systematic aid, involving direct financial assistance to governments either through bilateral government-to-government transfers or multilateral transfers via institutions like the World Bank. Systematic aid to African governments often comes in the form of concessional loans, offered at below-market interest rates and with extended repayment periods, or as grants, which are funds provided without any expectation of repayment. The aggregate of concessional loans and grants constitutes what is commonly referred to as aid.

The choice and implementation of a development strategy, encompassing a coherent set of policies, are based on three fundamental elements: (1) the current development goals, which are shaped by the dominant understanding and definition of the development process, (2) the existing knowledge in the field, including development theories, hypotheses, and models, and (3) the data infrastructure in place to assess the current state and track progress.

²³ From Brenthurst Foundation July 2007 Discussion Paper: 'Speech by His Excellency President Paul Kagame'.

1.3.1 Models from 1950 to 2000

In the 1950s the main objective of development aid was GNP growth, as the prevalent assumption was that economic growth and modernization alone would eradicate dualism along with the income and social inequalities that accompanied it. In the 1950s, the arsenal of development economists was equipped with theories and concepts including Rosenstein-Rodan's²⁴ 'big push' (1943), Nurkse's²⁵ 'balanced growth' (1953), Rostow's²⁶ 'take-off into sustained growth' (1956), and Leibenstein's²⁷ 'critical minimum effort thesis' (1957). These theories, unified by their aggregate approach, equate growth with development, suggesting that growth in less developed countries is not continuous but requires significant, one-time investments. The 'big push' theory highlights the necessity of economies of scale in essential industries. The 'take-off' concept, drawing on the Harrod-Domar model, posits that to surpass population growth rates and achieve positive per capita income growth, a certain investment-to-GNP ratio is needed, given the capital-output ratio. The 'critical minimum effort thesis' advocates for substantial investment to kickstart a self-sustaining growth process where growth dynamics outweigh any negative impacts. Nurkse's 'balanced growth' stresses the demand-side benefits of simultaneously expanding complementary sectors to broaden the market. This focus on substantial investment in the 1950s was partly inspired by the Soviet Union's development success from 1928 to 1940.

Literature from the 1950s on investment criteria further underscores investment's pivotal role in driving growth, highlighting three main contributions: the 'social marginal production' criterion²⁸, focusing on the optimal allocation of resources for societal benefit²⁹; the 'marginal per capita investment quotient' criterion³⁰, which examines investment's impact on per capita income; and the 'marginal growth contribution' criterion³¹, assessing investment's direct contribution to economic growth. The policies

²⁴ Rosenstein-Rodan, P.N. (1943) 'Problems of Industrialisation of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe', *Economic Journal* 53(210):202–11.

²⁵ Nurkse, R. (1953) *Problems of Capital Formation in Underdeveloped Countries*, New York: Oxford University Press.

²⁶ Rostow, W.W. (1956) 'The Take-Off into Self-Sustained Growth', *Economic Journal* 66(March):25–48.

²⁷ Leibenstein, H. (1957) *Economic Backwardness and Economic Growth*, New York: Wiley.

²⁸ Khan, A.E. (1951) 'Investment Criteria in Development Programs', *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 65(February): 38–61.

²⁹ Chenery, H.B. (1953) 'Application of Investment Criteria', *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 67(February):76–96.

³⁰ Galenson, W. and Leibenstein, H. (1955) 'Investment Criteria, Productivity and Economic Development', *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 69(3):343–70.

³¹ Eckstein, A. (1957) 'Investment Criteria for Economic Development and the Theory of Intertemporal Welfare Economics', *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 71(1):56–85.

and strategies derived from these models were import substitution, industrialization, social overhead capital, and infrastructure investment with particular emphasis on the urban sector. To do so the primary economic justification for foreign aid was to facilitate a transfer of capital resources to developing countries, enabling them to reach a savings rate conducive to self-sustaining growth. Aid was primarily viewed to stimulate economic growth by boosting investment. Given the low-income levels in these countries, households struggled to save enough to support growth. As noted by Ruttan in 1996³², the lack of physical and human capital in developing regions made attracting private investment difficult, leaving foreign aid as the sole capital source.

Two additional factors underscored the appeal of aid for growth: the confidence in governmental ability to conduct successful macroeconomic planning, as illustrated by numerous five-year plans, and the Harrod-Domar model's straightforward approach to determining the foreign aid needed for achieving specific growth targets. However, this aggregate planning approach and an emphasis on industrialization often resulted in the agricultural sector's oversight. Regardless of the developmental logic behind aid in the 1950s, it was ultimately secondary to the strategic and security goals of the United States and possibly Western Europe. U.S. aid was strategically deployed to counter the threat of communism's expansion, according to Ruttan³³.

The 1960s saw still a firm belief that the main objective was GNP growth but this decade saw also the wish for a balance of payments equilibrium and increased employment. The most significant shift in development thinking was the growing interest in comprehensively understanding the inter-sectoral dynamics and mechanisms of the development process, as highlighted by the prior review of conceptual advancements. The role of foreign aid was initially seen as crucial for compensating for shortages in domestic savings by augmenting foreign savings or addressing current account deficits in the balance of payments through the provision of necessary foreign exchange. However, the optimism regarding foreign aid's ability to alleviate these constraints has been reconsidered, especially given the long-term balance-of-payments challenges arising

³² Ruttan, V.W. (1996) *United States Development Assistance Policy*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

³³ *Ibis* 1996:70

from servicing foreign loans, even those with concessional terms. Initially, the focus was on overcoming domestic savings deficits and foreign exchange earnings shortages, which were viewed as growth impediments, leading to the adoption of programme-type lending to address these gaps in developing countries. The 1960s also saw an emphasis on sectoral development, particularly agriculture, influenced by dual-economy theories. This period marked a growing recognition of the significance of investing in human capital and implementing policies for technical assistance to address resource shortages, as understanding of sectoral development processes improved.

By the 1970s, the recognition of various development challenges, coupled with the inadequacy of GNP-focused strategies in addressing these issues across numerous developing countries, prompted a comprehensive reassessment of economic and social development processes. Key problems that became pronounced during this period include (i) rising un- and underemployment rates, (ii) worsening or persistently high-income inequality within countries, (iii) a significant portion of the population living in poverty, defined as falling below a minimum income level or standard of living, (iv) increasing rural-urban migration leading to urban overcrowding, and (v) deteriorating external financial positions of many developing nations, evidenced by growing balance-of-payments difficulties and escalating foreign debt and debt service obligations. Therefore, the objectives and consequent strategies shifted.

Most generally, the role of aid was to alleviate poverty and increase employment and income distribution. The initiation of the World Employment Programme by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1969 marked a pivotal shift in the focus of aid, emphasizing the enhancement of living standards for the impoverished through the creation of more employment opportunities. This approach scrutinized various factors including the impact of population growth on employment, the application of labour-intensive technologies, the interplay between education and labour markets, income distribution, the informal sector, rural-urban migration, and the role of traditional agriculture in development. Consequently, the perception of aid evolved from being primarily a means of supplementing domestic and external savings to a tool aimed at directly improving poverty and overall welfare. This led to significant alterations in

foreign aid strategies, notably a move from funding large infrastructure projects to investing in agriculture, rural development, and social services such as housing, education, and health³⁴. Direct interventions targeting the poor, like nutrition programmes, vaccination campaigns, adult literacy initiatives, and financial support for small-scale farmers, gained prominence. These efforts, particularly integrated rural development strategies enhanced by green revolution technologies, highlighted the importance of the impoverished population's participation in sustainability.

This reorientation towards poverty alleviation in aid strategies saw poverty-focused lending increase from 5% of total aid in 1968-70 to 30% in 1981-83. Additionally, sector loans, especially in agriculture and education, emerged as a key method of aid delivery, reflecting a broader commitment to directly addressing poverty and promoting sustainable development. The onset of the debt crisis and subsequent debt overhang of the 1980s significantly altered the role and perception of foreign aid. Its main objectives shifted to acting as an interim solution to stabilize the faltering international financial system—enabling debtor countries in the developing world to manage portions of their public and private debt obligations and thereby sustain their creditors—and to promote the adoption of suitable adjustment policies by attaching conditions to programme lending. This transition in aid strategy served to momentarily prevent the financial system's collapse, although the effectiveness of using conditionality to enforce policy improvements was only partially successful, a topic explored further in subsequent discussions³⁵.

During the early 1980s, the Reagan administration's policies provided a conducive atmosphere for conservative critiques of foreign aid, who argued that economic assistance disrupts market operations and hinders the growth of the private sector. Additionally, it was recognized that private capital would not flow into African and Latin American nations, without achieving some level of macroeconomic stability. In response, there was a movement in many donor countries towards the privatization of aid, directing increased funding towards non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector,

³⁴ Sakue-Collins, Y. (2020). (UN)doing development: A postcolonial enquiry of the agenda and agency of NGOs in Africa. *Third World Quarterly*, 42(5), 976–995. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2020.1791698>

³⁵ Andrews, N. (2009). Foreign aid and development in Africa: What the literature says and what the reality is. *Journal of African Studies and Development*, Vol. 1(1) pp. 008-015(Department of Political Science, Brock University).

reflecting a broader trend towards leveraging aid to support private sector development and economic stabilization efforts.

During the early 1990s, stabilization and adjustment remained the primary goals. It was evident to the development community that substantial institutional reforms aimed at reducing corruption and enabling a smooth transition from socialism and command economies to market economies were essential for effective adjustment and the revival of development in Sub-Saharan Africa. The theoretical discourse on development during this period built upon and expanded previous ideas, with a key focus on delineating the respective roles of the state and the market in fostering development. The 1990s experienced a noticeable 'aid fatigue,' as evidenced by a decline in net Official Development Assistance (ODA)³⁶ disbursements post-1992 and a reduction in net ODA as a percentage of donor GNP from 0.38% in 1982 to 0.22% in 1997. During this period, private capital flows increasingly supplanted aid, with their share rising from 26% in 1987–92 to 55% in 1993–97³⁷. Concurrently, there was a shift in the allocation of foreign aid towards social and economic infrastructure (such as education, health, water supply, and sanitation) at the expense of productive sectors. This shift risks perpetuating dependency, which could undermine sustainable development strategies, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. The debate over conditionality spurred numerous econometric studies assessing aid's efficacy, with Burnside and Dollar's 1997³⁸ study being particularly impactful. They found that aid is most effective in promoting growth and reducing poverty in countries that implement growth-oriented policies.

In synthesis, over the decades, the perception and objectives of foreign aid have significantly evolved. In the 1950s, aid was primarily viewed as a capital source for spurring economic growth via increased investment, with a strong belief in the recipient governments' ability to utilize aid effectively. The 1960s expanded this view by addressing savings gaps or balance-of-payments deficits through foreign assistance, highlighting its role in economic stabilization. By the 1970s, the focus shifted towards

³⁶ Official development assistance (ODA) is defined as government aid that promotes and specifically targets the economic development and welfare of developing countries.

³⁷ ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT. (1993). AID REVIEW 1992/93. General distribution OCDE/GD(93). [https://one.oecd.org/document/OCDE/GD\(93\)77/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/OCDE/GD(93)77/en/pdf)

³⁸ Burnside, C. and Dollar, D. (1997) *Aid, Policies and Growth*, Policy Research Working Papers 1777, Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

improving the poor's living standards through employment, necessitating novel investment approaches and interventions for poverty alleviation.

The 1980s experienced a paradigm shift due to the debt crisis, positioning aid as crucial for stabilizing the global financial system and promoting policy adjustments in developing countries via conditionality. This period also saw a push towards reducing aid in favour of private capital flows amidst a pro-market atmosphere.

The 1990s were characterized by 'aid fatigue,' stemming from concerns over aid dependency and the efficacy of conditionality. The Asian financial crisis prompted a re-evaluation of aid's role, leading to a critical view of the Bretton Woods system and the Washington Consensus. The World Bank emerged as a proponent of redefining aid's primary goals towards poverty alleviation and enhancing human welfare, marking a shift towards addressing the deeper socioeconomic challenges in developing countries³⁹.

1.4 Challenges in UN-African Relations

The evolving relationship between Africa and the United Nations (UN) has been marked by significant milestones and challenges that reflect the continent's shifting dynamics on the global stage. From the inception of the UN, when only a few African states were sovereign, the African continent has utilized the UN as a pivotal platform for advocating economic development and decolonization. The surge in African nations gaining independence during the 1960s heralded a new era of engagement, culminating in African countries now representing the largest regional group within the UN⁴⁰. Despite this growth, the struggle to forge a unified voice has hindered effective decision-making, reflecting internal challenges such as the need for more focused decision follow-up and implementation of treaties highlighted in audits of the African Union (AU)⁴¹. Building on this evolving relationship, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) emerged as a fundamental player. Established in 1958 by the UN's Economic

³⁹ Tarp, F., & Hjertholm, P. (2006). *Foreign aid and development: Lessons learnt and directions for the future*. Routledge.

⁴⁰ Lehmann, V. (2008). "The Relationship between Africa and the UN: From Disenchantment to a more Effective Cooperation." Dialogue on Globalization (Conference Report), (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung).

⁴¹ NAGAR, D., & NGANJE, F. (2016). The AU's Relations with the United Nations, the European Union, and China. In *THE AFRICAN UNION: REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES* (pp. 37–42). Centre for Conflict Resolution. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep05178.13>

and Social Council (ECOSOC), UNECA's mandate revolves around stimulating economic and social progress among its 54 member states, fostering regional integration, and advocating for global collaboration aimed at advancing Africa's prosperity. As both an extension of the UN and a pivotal part of Africa's governance framework, UNECA stands in a unique position to influence the continent's developmental path. The Commission's distinctive capacity comes from its exclusive mandate to engage at both regional and sub-regional levels, coordinating efforts and directing resources towards Africa's central objectives⁴². UNECA commits to delivering timely and accurate regional data to inform its policy analysis and recommendations, ensuring that its strategies are underpinned by solid empirical evidence. It spearheads the formation of policy consensus, offers substantial capacity-building programmes, and extends expert advisory services in various critical sectors, all aimed at propelling Africa toward a future defined by sustainable and inclusive growth.

Economic integration is underscored as a critical avenue for Africa's development, emphasizing the need for open borders, people-centric governance, and infrastructural advancements. Yet, the transition towards these goals has been complex, with economic and social development debates indicating the Millennium Development Goals' (MDGs) inadequacy in holistically addressing growth, employment, and poverty. This underscores a broader critique of international frameworks' effectiveness in grappling with Africa's nuanced challenges, including sustainable agriculture and labour utilization.

Peacekeeping emerges as another formidable challenge, with the basic tenets of successful operations—broadly supported peace agreements, credible mandates, and sustainable resources—often remaining unfulfilled. The reliance on external funding, particularly for the AU's peace operations, exemplifies the unsustainable nature of current mechanisms and underscores the pressing need for a more self-reliant security architecture⁴³. The division of labour in peacekeeping, as outlined in the UN's Chapter VIII⁴⁴, further illustrates the underdeveloped collaboration between the AU, Regional

⁴² ECA.. The History. The History | United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. <https://www.uneca.org/africa-hall/the-history>

⁴³ Williams, P. D., & Boutellis, A. (2014). PARTNERSHIP PEACEKEEPING: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE UNITED NATIONS-AFRICAN UNION RELATIONSHIP. *African Affairs*, 113(451), 254–278. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43817311>

⁴⁴ African Union, AU doc. PSC/PR/COMM(CCCLXXI), 25 April 2013,

Economic Communities (RECs), and the UN, highlighting a gap in recognizing and operationalizing the AU's role in regional peace and security.

The partnership between the AU and UN has seen advancements, such as the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, yet the effectiveness and added value of such initiatives remain subjects of debate. Notably, Africa's quest for equitable representation in the UN Security Council exemplifies the broader struggles for influence and recognition on the international stage, with the continent's lack of a permanent seat and veto power being a focal point of contention⁴⁵.

Financial and material dependencies on external actors such as the European Union (EU), have further complicated Africa's international agency, casting shadows over partnerships and negotiations aimed at fostering a more balanced engagement. The push towards financial autonomy within the AU, aiming to fund a larger portion of its operations independently, signifies a critical step towards reducing external reliance but faces substantial obstacles in implementation and international support⁴⁶.

The relationship between Africa and the UN, characterized by a blend of cooperation and tension, reflects both organizations' internal dysfunctions and the broader challenges of global governance and representation. The future of UN-AU cooperation may increasingly necessitate 'African solutions to African problems', yet the indispensable role of the UN in supporting these endeavours remains unequivocal. This complex interplay underscores the need for strong political leadership, genuine democratization at the national level, and a redefined, more equitable international partnership to navigate the intricate dynamics of Africa's global engagements.

⁴⁵ DANIEL, R., & NAGAR, D. (2016). Africa's Key Multilateral Relations: The United Nations and the European Union. In *AFRICA AND EXTERNAL ACTORS* (pp. 22–25). Centre for Conflict Resolution. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep05137.10>

⁴⁶ Daniel, R., & Nagar, D. (2016). *AFRICA AND EXTERNAL ACTORS* (A. Adebajo & J. Cook, Eds.). Centre for Conflict Resolution. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep05099>

CHAPTER 2: UNITED NATIONS' ACHIEVEMENTS IN AFRICA

The continent of Africa is rich in resources, diverse in cultures, and brimming with potential. However, it also faces numerous challenges, including poverty, conflict, and disease. Throughout history, the United Nations (UN) has played a significant role in supporting African nations in overcoming these obstacles and achieving sustainable development. This chapter explores the UN's multifaceted achievements in Africa, highlighting its contributions to humanitarian aid, peacekeeping and conflict resolution, and development programmes. As also seen in the previous chapter, the UN's involvement in Africa dates back to the organization's inception in 1945. The UN Charter enshrines the principle of self-determination, a right that resonated deeply with many newly independent African states in the mid-20th century (UN, 2024)⁴⁷. The UN provided crucial support to these emerging nations, assisting them in establishing democratic institutions, crafting constitutions, and developing essential infrastructure. Throughout the Cold War, Africa unfortunately became a battleground for ideological proxy conflicts. The UN Security Council, tasked with maintaining international peace and security, authorized several peacekeeping missions on the continent. These missions aimed to create space for diplomacy, protect civilians caught in the crossfire, and foster conditions conducive to long-term peace (UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations [DPKO], 2024)⁴⁸.

Beyond peacekeeping, the UN has also played a vital role in coordinating humanitarian aid in Africa. The continent has faced numerous humanitarian crises over the decades, from natural disasters like famines and droughts to complex emergencies arising from internal conflicts. UN agencies like the World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) have been at the forefront of delivering life-saving food assistance, medical care, and educational opportunities to those in need (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA], 2024)⁴⁹. As Africa entered the post-Cold War era, the UN's focus shifted towards supporting sustainable development on the

⁴⁷ United Nations. Peace, dignity and equality on a healthy planet. United Nations. <https://www.un.org/en>

⁴⁸ United Nations. United Nations Peacekeeping. United Nations. <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en>

⁴⁹ OCHA. Front page. (2024, April 17). <https://www.unocha.org/>

continent. The 1990s saw the establishment of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and other agencies dedicated to bolstering economic growth, strengthening governance, and promoting human rights across Africa (UNDP, 2024). A significant development in the early 21st century was the launch of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in 2001. NEPAD, a strategic framework spearheaded by African leaders themselves, outlined a vision for the continent's development based on good governance, peace and security, and sustainable development (African Union, 2024). The UN played a critical role in supporting NEPAD's goals, providing technical assistance and facilitating international cooperation. In 2018, NEPAD was transformed into the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), the development agency of the African Union (African Union, 2024).

The UN's partnership with Africa is multifaceted and ever-evolving. As explored in the previous chapter, development aid has not always been successful nor entirely beneficial to the recipients, but this chapter aims at highlighting these achievements, examining specific examples of how the UN's work has made a tangible difference in the lives of Africans. It will explore the ways in which the UN has addressed challenges in humanitarian aid, peacekeeping and conflict resolution, and development programmes. The remainder of this chapter is organized in three macro areas, which are: section 2.1 explores the UN's contributions to humanitarian aid in Africa, focusing on food security, refugee support, and healthcare initiatives. Section 2.2 examines the UN's role in peacekeeping and conflict resolution, with a focus on UN peacekeeping missions and their impact, and finally section 2.3 will delve into the UN's involvement in development programmes in Africa, including initiatives in education, infrastructure, and economic development.

2.1 Humanitarian Aid: Food security, refugee support, healthcare initiatives.

Despite significant progress, achieving food security for all remains a critical challenge for the international community. In 2019, an estimated 690 million people, or 8.9% of the global population, suffered from hunger, while an additional 2 billion lacked consistent

access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food [FAO et al., 2020]⁵⁰. This disparity is particularly pronounced in developing regions, with Sub-Saharan Africa projected to experience a concerning rise in hunger by 2030 [FAO et al., 2020].

In recognition of this critical issue, the United Nations established Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2, also known as Zero Hunger. This goal underscores the importance of food security and nutrition within the broader development agenda. Specifically, SDG 2 calls upon member states to "end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture" by 2030 [UN, 2017]⁵¹. To achieve this ambitious target, the UN has identified five key areas for action:

1. Eradicating hunger and ensuring access to safe, nutritious, and sufficient food
2. Eliminating all forms of malnutrition
3. Doubling the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers
4. Enhancing sustainable food production systems and implementing resilient agricultural practices
5. Preserving the genetic diversity of seeds, plants, and animals

Achieving these objectives hinges on effective implementation strategies. The UN emphasizes three key mechanisms:

1. Boosting investment through strengthened international cooperation
2. Addressing and preventing trade restrictions in global agricultural markets
3. Implementing measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and facilitating access to market information [UN, 2017]⁵²

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defines hunger as "an uncomfortable or painful physical sensation caused by insufficient consumption of dietary energy." Chronic hunger occurs when individuals lack the necessary caloric intake to maintain an active and healthy life on a regular basis [FAO et al., 2019]⁵³. The Zero Hunger target goes

⁵⁰ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, WHO. 2020. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020. Transforming Food Systems for Affordable Healthy Diets. Rome, FAO. <http://www.fao.org/publications/sofi/2020/en/>

⁵¹ UN. 2017b. Sustainable Development Goal 2. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal2>

⁵² UN (United Nations). 2017a. Sustainable Development Goals. <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

⁵³ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2019. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019. Safeguarding against economic slowdowns and downturns. Rome, FAO.

beyond simply eradicating hunger. It aims to "ensure access by all people to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round" (SDG Target 2.1) and to "eradicate all forms of malnutrition" (SDG Target 2.2) [FAO et al., 2019].

Hunger remains a persistent challenge across Sub-Saharan Africa, with the prevalence of undernourishment (POU) serving as the primary indicator for monitoring progress towards global hunger eradication. Unfortunately, the POU rate in Africa has risen steadily in recent years, with projections indicating a further increase by 2030 [FAO et al., 2020]. East and West Africa have witnessed particularly alarming surges in the number of undernourished people.

The Global Hunger Index, launched in 2006, provides valuable data for tracking progress towards achieving food security at national, regional, and global levels. Continued monitoring and effective implementation of evidence-based strategies are essential to ensure that everyone has access to the safe, nutritious, and sufficient food necessary for a healthy and fulfilling life.

For the purposes of this thesis the real interest relies on the data. In terms of battles against famine there are specifically three agencies of the UN with the sole purpose of supporting African communities with increasing food security and reducing world hunger. Sub-Saharan Africa faces a significant challenge in achieving food security and adequate nutrition. According to recent data, nearly 20% of the African population, or roughly 282 million people, are undernourished. This figure represents a concerning increase of 57 million since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2023)⁵⁴. Furthermore, over a billion individuals lack the financial resources to secure a healthy diet, and malnutrition contributes to stunting in approximately 30% of African children [Food and Agriculture Organization, 2023]. These statistics underscore the urgency of addressing this critical issue. The current trajectory indicates that Africa will fall short of achieving the food security and nutrition targets established by both the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and the Malabo Declaration's goals of eradicating hunger and malnutrition by 2025 (AU, ECA, FAO, 2023)⁵⁵. The issue lays in

⁵⁴ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2023. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2023. Urbanization, agrifood systems transformation and healthy diets across the rural–urban continuum. Rome, FAO.

⁵⁵ FAO, AUC, ECA and WFP. 2023. Africa - Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2023: Statistics and trends. Accra.

the fact that in 2010, the statistics of people suffering from hunger counted 239 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa, a number 50 million people short, compared to the 2024 figures⁵⁶. This supports the argument that although the strategies actualized by the UN agencies are attempting to support African countries, the outcomes are to be considered marginal⁵⁷.

A significant barrier to achieving food security in Africa is the affordability of healthy diets. Data indicates that a substantial portion of the African population – approximately 78%, or over one billion people – cannot afford a healthy diet. This figure stands in stark contrast to the global average of 42%, highlighting the particular challenge faced by the African continent [Food and Agriculture Organization, 2023]⁵⁸. Furthermore, the situation is likely to worsen, as the cost of healthy diets in Africa continues to rise.

The average cost of a healthy diet in Africa was estimated at 3.57 purchasing power parity (PPP) dollars per person per day in 2021. This figure significantly exceeds the established extreme poverty threshold of USD 2.15 per person per day [World Bank, 2024]⁵⁹. This disparity underscores the fact that not only the poorest populations in Africa struggle to afford healthy diets, but also a significant portion of those classified as non-poor. The issue is particularly pronounced in Western and Eastern Africa, where the cost of healthy diets has witnessed the most significant cumulative increases between 2019 and 2021 (Food and Agriculture Organization, 2023). These trends necessitate the development and implementation of effective strategies to improve access to affordable and nutritious food across Africa.

Eradicating hunger and malnutrition in Africa is a critical objective, and with dedicated efforts from governments, this goal can be achieved. The UN has proven to be effective to a very limited extent, and their intervention seems unable to keep up with the global trends. The Malabo Montpellier Panel (2017) offers a valuable roadmap for African leadership, outlining key strategies to implement the nutrition targets established by the

⁵⁶ Sasson, A. Food security for Africa: an urgent global challenge. *Agric & Food Secur* 1, 2 (2012). <https://doi.org/10.1186/2048-7010-1-2>

⁵⁷ Otekunrin, O. A., Otekunrin, O. A., Sawicka, B., & Ayinde, I. A. (2020). Three decades of fighting against hunger in Africa: Progress, challenges and opportunities. *World Nutrition*, 11(3), 86–111. <https://doi.org/10.26596/wn.202011386-111>

⁵⁸ Africa - regional overview of food security and Nutrition 2023 - World. ReliefWeb. (2023, December 7). <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/africa-regional-overview-food-security-and-nutrition-2023#:~:text=Nearly%20282%20million%20people%20in,are%20stunted%20because%20of%20malnutrition.>

⁵⁹ *Poverty*. World Bank. (2024). <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty>

Malabo Declaration and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [Malabo Montpellier Report, 2017]⁶⁰. These strategies emphasize the need for different measures such as: elevation of food and nutrition security, stakeholder collaboration, government cooperation, adoption of Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) or the Resilient Food Systems. By implementing these multifaceted strategies, African governments can significantly advance progress towards achieving food security and eradicating hunger and malnutrition on the continent.

In regard to the evident refugee crisis, the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) Africa grapples with a substantial displacement crisis, hosting around 50 million internally displaced persons, refugees, and asylum seekers. This staggering number translates to nearly one-third of the world's entire refugee population, highlighting the continent's critical role in addressing global displacement challenges. More specifically, according to the UNHCR Global Appeal 2023 the numbers are: East and Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes have 21.1 million forcibly displaced and stateless people, which represent the 18% of global total; Southern Africa 10.2 million people, representing the 9% of global total; West and Central Africa 12.7 million people, representing the 11% of the global total⁶¹. Similarly to food security and famine, the data from 2010-2011 show concerning figures. Data from early 2009 indicates that Sub-Saharan Africa was host to over 10 million individuals considered "of concern" by the UNHCR. This population included approximately 2.1 million refugees, 305,000 asylum seekers, and an estimated 100,000 stateless persons. Notably, the number of refugees in the region diverged from global trends by exhibiting a decline⁶². Therefore, in the past 15 years, the UN specialized agencies registered an increase of 40 million people in impetuous life conditions. Undoubtedly, these numbers cannot all be attributed to the intricate system of UN funding and the malfeasance of the development aid scheme. As previously considered, our world is everchanging, and humanitarian crises are worsened not only by the exploitation of African governments but also by internal, external conflicts, the global market,

⁶⁰ Malabo Montpellier Panel. 2017. Nourished: How Africa can build a future free from hunger and malnutrition. Pp. 1-36. <https://www.ifpri.org/publication/nourished-how-africa-can-build-future-free-hunger-and-malnutrition>

⁶¹ UN Refugee Agency. (2023). Global Appeal 2023. Global Focus UNHCR. <https://reporting.unhcr.org/globalappeal-2023>

⁶² UNHCR UN Refugee Agency. (2011). (rep.). UNHCR Global Appeal 2010-2011 - Africa summary. Retrieved from <https://www.unhcr.org/media/unhcr-global-appeal-2010-2011-africa-summary>.

capitalism, and globalization. All these variables are extremely difficult to control and manage.

Undoubtedly, the greatest achievements of the United Nations system are in the healthcare and medical sphere. According to the latest weekly bulletin on outbreaks and other emergencies of the World Health Organization regional office for Africa⁶³ there are currently 109 outbreaks in the entire region, with 24 different viruses, bacteria, fevers, and diseases. The most prominent as of March 2024 are: measles, cholera, polio, dengue fever, and HIV. The Universal Health Coverage, Communicable and Noncommunicable Diseases (UCN) Cluster WHO Regional Office for Africa 2024⁶⁴ gives a detailed explanation of all the achievements obtained the past year. In 2022, there were about 380,000 HIV-related deaths, which is a 56% drop compared to 2010⁶⁵. Africa is also making strides against tuberculosis (TB). The first milestone of the End TB Strategy has been achieved in the region, with new TB cases falling by 23% between 2015 and 2022. Another success story comes from Guinea worm disease. Several countries, including Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Ethiopia, Mali, and South Sudan, have eliminated this disease, marking a remarkable accomplishment. Vaccination efforts are also picking up pace after the pandemic. Over 117 million children were vaccinated in mass campaigns conducted between 2022 and October 2023. These campaigns achieved high coverage rates, with 14 out of 28 reaching over 95%. Six of these campaigns even targeted outbreaks. The trends just proposed are completely in contrast with those analysed before. In terms of healthcare, the UN system has proven to be a crucial presence, because of its constant and broad-reach accomplishments

2.2 Development Programmes: Education, infrastructure, economic development.

Africa's economies have been on a positive upswing for the past few decades. This economic boom has led to considerable development across the continent, with many citizens experiencing a better quality of life. Furthermore, Africa is pushing forward with

⁶³ World Health Organization. (n.d.). Weekly Bulletin on Outbreak and other Emergencies: Week 13: 25 - 31 March 2024. World Health Organization. <https://www.afro.who.int/health-topics/disease-outbreaks/outbreaks-and-other-emergencies-updates>

⁶⁴ Universal Health Coverage, Communicable and Noncommunicable Diseases (UCN) Cluster WHO Regional Office for Africa 2024. (n.d.). Ending Disease in Africa Responding to Communicable and Noncommunicable Diseases 2023. Retrieved from https://www.afro.who.int/sites/default/files/2024-04/UCN%20Cluster%20Report_2023.pdf.

⁶⁵ The Work of WHO in the African Region 2010. (n.d.). Annual Report of the Regional Director . Retrieved from <https://www.afro.who.int/sites/default/files/2018-03/RDReport-2010-en.pdf>.

regional integration through initiatives like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), which holds promise for continued growth. Africa's recent development gains are undeniable. However, a significant challenge persists: Sub-Saharan Africa carries a disproportionate burden of global poverty. While the world grapples with multidimensional poverty affecting approximately 1.1 billion people, a staggering 48% (or 534 million) reside in this region⁶⁶. Furthermore, extreme poverty within Sub-Saharan Africa remains alarmingly high. Despite progress, 2023 estimates indicate that 38% of the population (approximately 462 million people) live in extreme poverty⁶⁷. This figure represents a slight increase from 2022 data and is projected to rise at least until 2030⁶⁸. Numbers attaining to education are not more promising, according to the UNESCO 58% of upper secondary level age children in Sub-Saharan Africa do not attend School⁶⁹. In 2015 in Sub-Saharan Africa, only seven countries achieved the gross enrolment ratio target of 80 percent or more students enrolled in pre-primary education programmes⁷⁰.

2.2.1 Economic Development

Africa faces a growing challenge with its external debt. The continent's debt stock has ballooned to an estimated \$1.13 trillion in 2023, putting 25 countries at risk of or already experiencing high debt distress. This situation is particularly concerning in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the average government debt ratio has doubled in a decade, reaching 51% of GDP by 2023. While a slight decrease to 46% is projected in the next five years, the burden remains significant⁷¹.

Furthermore, the cost of servicing this debt is straining African economies. The interest payments to revenue ratio has more than doubled since the 2010s and is now four times higher than what advanced economies typically face. This translates to a hefty bill of \$363 billion in debt service payments expected from African countries between 2024 and 2028. In 2024 alone, these payments are projected to consume a substantial 12% of the

⁶⁶ Global Multidimensional Poverty Index, OPHI.

⁶⁷ The World Bank in Africa, World Bank (2023)

⁶⁸ Africa Sustainable Development Report, UNDP (2023)

⁶⁹ UNESCO. (2023). Education in Africa: placing equity at the heart of policy. Continental Report. <https://doi.org/https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000384479>

⁷⁰ The Africa-America Institute. (2015). A report card on the progress, opportunities and challenges confronting the African education sector. State of Education in Africa Report 2015. <https://doi.org/https://www.aaionline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/AAI-SOE-report-2015-final.pdf>

⁷¹ AFRICA GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OUTLOOK United Nations Development Programme 2024. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2024-03/outlook2024_v6_0.pdf.

continent's GDP. Sub-Saharan Africa faces a growing challenge of mounting external debt. An International Monetary Fund (IMF) analysis reveals a significant rise in public debt ratios over the past decade. The median ratio in the region has jumped from 28.8% of GDP in 2012 to 59.1% in 2022, reflecting a 30-percentage point increase.

This situation is further compounded by a weakening of local currencies against the US dollar. As a result, debt servicing costs are becoming increasingly burdensome, forcing governments to implement austerity measures⁷².

The composition of Africa's creditors has also undergone a shift. Notably, debt owed to China and private lenders has risen rapidly. China, in particular, stands as the largest single lender to African countries, holding over \$87 billion in both bilateral and private debt across the continent. The figures just explained paint a worrying picture and follow precisely the trends previously brought forward. In fact, in the UNDP regional report of 2010, it clearly states that between the periods comprised between 1996 to 2005 poverty rates fell 59%, development and independence rates were positively growing. This is clearly no longer the case⁷³. Paradoxically, from an African perspective, China's foreign direct investments in the region have played a more important role for development compared to the UN. China's FDI contribution in Sub-Saharan Africa has consistently accounted for a noteworthy share of the region's total annual FDI inflows, ranging from 6 to 12 percent. In 2021 alone, China's FDI reached a significant amount of approximately \$4.8 billion. Chinese ODI⁷⁴ in Africa is concentrated in specific sectors, including construction, mining, and manufacturing. China is also not a member of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), and it classifies itself as a South-South cooperation development partner or provider rather than a "donor"⁷⁵. According to the international monetary fund the difference between the UN support and the Chinese is that a significant portion of China's financial support takes the form of export credits and market-rate or near market-rate loans. This places the burden of repayment squarely on the borrower, who must return the full amount of the loan with interest set at

⁷² Africa: trends to watch in 2024, miningreview.com.

⁷³ Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals. (2010). MDG Report 2010. Retrieved from <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/publications/2010%20Regional%20Report%20Africa.pdf>.

⁷⁴ Overseas development Institute

⁷⁵ Chen, W. (2024). Navigating the evolving landscape between China and Africa's economic engagements. IMF Working Papers, 2024(037), 1. <https://doi.org/10.5089/9798400267840.001>

commercially competitive rates. In contrast, Western nations typically offer development finance on terms that are far more concessional. These loans often come with significantly lower interest rates, extended repayment schedules, or even include grant elements where a portion of the loan essentially functions as a gift.

Independently from the donor and the aid modalities, it remains relevant that the UN has not been able to maintain a sustained rise in development and what is the most concerning is that more actors are getting involved. Their implication may bring Africa into an even more complex situation, especially in terms of independence. Evidence may be found in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) of 2013. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) presents a significant opportunity for African nations to tackle their critical infrastructure deficiencies. This is evidenced by the high Chinese involvement in BRI projects, which has led to job creation and increased foreign direct investment from Chinese companies.

China's growing investment in Africa has demonstrably facilitated the expansion of Chinese construction companies on the continent. Annual revenue figures for these companies involved in African engineering and construction projects have shown consistent growth, peaking in 2015. While there has been a slight decline since then, with revenues reaching \$37 billion in 2021, Chinese construction firms continue to be a major presence in Africa. This economic footprint is further bolstered by the presence of Chinese immigrant workers who contribute to these projects. This is problematic because, as also explored by Zambian economist Dambisa Moyo, the revenue obtained through Chinese investments like the Nairobi highway do not flow back into African banks but is entirely gained by China which then reinvests in Africa, creating once again a vicious cycle of poverty and exploitation of people and resources. In simpler terms, history might be repeating, due to the failing international system, but in an even stricter modality.

CHAPTER 3: UNITED NATIONS' FAILURES IN AFRICA

The premises of the United Nations and the UN Charter are undoubtedly noble, they preach world peace, harmonious cooperation, and justice for all. The reality is that the resolutions are non-binding and represent no real legal constraint to member states. This inevitably proves that the extent and concreteness of their work can be severely marginal, especially without a country's direct compliance. Although Chapter 2 also sheds light on the "shortcomings" of such institutions, the following section will analyse some of the most notable failures and impactful failures of UN interventions most of which attain to peace-keeping operations.

3.1 Ineffectiveness in Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping Failures

3.1.1 Case Study 1: UN Intervention in Somalia

The United Nations Operation in Somalia I (UNOSOM I) marked the initial phase of a UN-led intervention in Somalia during the early 1990s. This intervention aimed to deliver humanitarian aid, facilitate its distribution, and ensure security for relief efforts. Additionally, UNOSOM I played a role in monitoring the first ceasefire agreement established by the UN in the context of the Somali Civil War.

Situated at the strategic juncture of the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, Somalia occupies the Horn of Africa. Bordering Djibouti to the north, Ethiopia to the west, and Kenya to the south, Somalia boasts a population of roughly 8.5 million. Remarkably homogeneous, over 98% of Somalis share a common ethnicity. The nation exhibits a youthful demographic, with over 45% of its population falling under the age of 15. Notably, around 70% of Somalis pursue a nomadic lifestyle, migrating with their livestock across the borders of Somalia, Kenya, and Ethiopia. This nomadic tradition contributes to ongoing land disputes with neighbouring countries due to the lack of clearly defined borders⁷⁶.

⁷⁶ United Nations, 2003, United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNSOM I) Background (Full Text) Archived January 10, 2007, https://web.archive.org/web/20070110063150/http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/co_mission/unosom1backgr2.html

The Somali Civil War emerged during the 1980s as a response to growing opposition against the authoritarian military regime led by Siad Barre. Following the regime's collapse, a power vacuum emerged, plunging the nation into turmoil. This instability fuelled competition for influence among various armed factions, particularly in the southern regions⁷⁷. The fragile customary law system, which previously maintained order, disintegrated during the early 1990s, leading to a proliferation of factional fighting⁷⁸. Bereft of a central governing authority, Somalia descended into a state of political and social disarray, commonly referred to as a "failed state." The year 1991 witnessed a devastating escalation of civil war in Somalia. This conflict, coupled with severe drought conditions, prompted intervention from the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The intervention aimed to address the dire humanitarian crisis unfolding within the country. A staggering number of Somalis, exceeding half the population (over 5 million people), faced imminent starvation and malnutrition-related illnesses, particularly in drought-stricken rural areas. An additional 1.5 million were deemed at moderate risk of malnutrition. The early months of 1992 witnessed a tragic loss of life, with an estimated 300,000 perishing and another 3 million displaced as refugees.

The UN actively engaged in Somalia from the outset of the civil war in 1991. However, sporadic outbreaks of violence necessitated the temporary withdrawal of UN personnel on several occasions. Through a series of Security Council resolutions (733 and 746) and diplomatic efforts, a ceasefire agreement was ultimately brokered between the two main warring factions by the end of March 1992. Despite the ambitious planning the mission ultimately fell short of expectations due to a confluence of shortcomings. UN resolutions authorizing the operation lacked clarity, failing to adequately address strategies for fostering lasting ceasefires and preventing minor escalations. Furthermore, a critical misstep was the inadequate acquisition of consent from Somali factions, a factor that demonstrably hindered progress. The UN, under the assumption that its insignia would ensure troop safety, deployed a lightly-armed contingent lacking essential equipment for a war-torn environment. These deficiencies were tragically exposed when UN troops

⁷⁷ Ken Menkhaus, 'Local Security Systems in Somali East Africa,' in Andersen/Moller/Stepputat (eds.), *Fragile States and Insecure People*, Palgrave, 2007, 73.

⁷⁸ Central Intelligence Agency (2011). "Somalia - Government - Judicial branch". *The World Factbook*. Langley, Virginia: Central Intelligence Agency. Archived from the original on May 19, 2015. Retrieved May 2, 2015.

faced a series of attacks from Somali militia groups, culminating in a Mogadishu battle that resulted in the deaths of 18 American soldiers. This event served as a tipping point, prompting the withdrawal of US and European forces by March 1994. The UN Security Council acknowledged these setbacks by revising UNOSOM's mandate in February 1994, removing its ability to compel cooperation through forceful means. The mission, while not without merit, ultimately yielded a tragic cost. Over 140 UN personnel lost their lives to hostile acts. UNOSOM concluded in March 1995. While successful in safeguarding a significant number of civilians and delivering humanitarian aid, the mission demonstrably fell short of its overarching goals. The Somali people continued to grapple with the devastating consequences that began in 1992. To compound these issues, the mission was marred by allegations of rampant mismanagement and corruption. The misappropriation of funds, including millions lost to theft and wasted on overpriced and inadequate supplies, further undermined the mission's effectiveness. The shortcomings of UNOSOM had lasting repercussions, impacting both Somalia and future UN peacekeeping endeavours. Somalia remained trapped in a cycle of internal conflict despite the peacekeepers' presence. The mission also gave rise to the "Mogadishu syndrome," an aversion to politically costly casualties within UN operations, which subsequently influenced planning for future peacekeeping missions. Finally, the Somalia intervention fostered a reluctance among the international community to intervene in other civil conflicts, raising concerns about the future of international peacekeeping efforts.

The biggest failure is that to this day, in Somalia, fights are still ongoing. There are hundreds of civilian casualties, as the armed group Al-Shabab specifically targets ordinary citizens. Additionally, almost 70,000 people had to flee⁷⁹. Somalia serves as a cautionary tale, highlighting how external interventions can inadvertently exacerbate internal conflicts within a nation. This case study leaves ultimately space for questioning the effectiveness in restoring stability within failed states. The unique challenges Somalia presents, characterized by widespread societal breakdown, pose immense difficulties for any external intervention⁸⁰. The entire nation becomes a perilous environment not only for its citizens but also for intervening forces. The case of the United Task Force

⁷⁹ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2014, August 14). UNOSOM. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/UNOSOM>

⁸⁰ Newman, E. (2010) 'Peacebuilding as Security in 'Failing' and Conflict-Prone States', Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding 4(3): 305-322

(UNITAF) offers a nuanced perspective. While its large, unconstrained troop deployment demonstrably improved security and infrastructure, it suggests a troubling correlation: successful intervention hinges on overwhelming the power of local warlords⁸¹. This raises a critical question: is such a forceful approach a sustainable or ethical solution for fostering long-term peace? Undeniably, interventions like UNITAF have saved countless lives, a primary objective of such endeavours⁸². However, these gains come at a cost, as evidenced by the casualties sustained during military operations. Yet, the potential to save even a single life compels us to re-evaluate the success criteria for interventions. Perhaps a broader definition of success that acknowledges both immediate humanitarian relief and the establishment of sustainable peacebuilding mechanisms is necessary.

3.1.2 Case Study 2: UN Peacekeeping in the Democratic Republic of Congo

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been mired in internal conflict since gaining independence from Belgium in 1960. The roots of this persistent violence can be traced back to the Second Congo War (1998-2003), a brutal civil war ignited by rebel movements – the Rwandan-backed Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (RCD) and the Ugandan-backed Mouvement de Libération du Congo (MLC). The influx of nearly two million Hutu refugees from Rwanda into the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) during and after the Rwandan genocide significantly impacted the region's stability. These refugees primarily settled in refugee camps located in the North and South Kivu provinces. However, a concerning element within this refugee population was a smaller contingent of Hutu extremists. These individuals began to organize armed militias within Congolese territory. As these Hutu extremist groups established themselves, tensions escalated. Tutsi militias formed in opposition to the Hutu presence, and foreign powers increasingly aligned themselves with one side or the other, further fuelling the regional instability⁸³. While the war itself unfolded within Congolese borders, its reach extended far beyond. Forces from nine nations became embroiled in the conflict, with "up to fourteen armies actively fighting on Congolese territory, each supporting one or more of the many Congolese armed groups" (Autesserre 2010, 49). This complex interplay of

⁸¹ Helman, G. B. and Ratner, S. R. (1992) 'Saving failed states', *Foreign Policy* (89): 3-20.

⁸² USIP (1995) 'Restoring Hope: The Real Lessons of Somalia for the Future of Intervention', United States Institute of Peace, Special Report.

⁸³ Conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo | Global Conflict Tracker. (n.d.). Global Conflict Tracker. <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/violence-democratic-republic-congo>

international actors has been cited as a key factor in the war's devastating impact. Described as "the most lethal on any continent in most people's lifetimes," the Second Congo War is estimated to have claimed the lives of four million people (Coghlan, Brennan, Ngoy, et al. 2006). This analysis will not go into any more depth on the stages of the conflict, as it is comprised of four periods over a spread of 25 years and it is not complementary to the purpose of this study.

Despite the signing of multiple peace agreements in 2002, signifying a formal conclusion to the Second Congo War, violence continues to plague the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), particularly in the eastern provinces of Ituri, North Kivu, and South Kivu. This ongoing violence encompasses both armed clashes and targeted attacks against civilians, posing a significant challenge for UN peacekeeping forces (The Economist 2018; Stearns & Vogel 2015; Council on Foreign Relations 2018). Numerous rebel groups remain active, routinely engaging the Congolese armed forces (FARDC) and inflicting harm on civilians⁸⁴.

Furthermore, the FARDC itself has been widely criticized for corruption and brutality (The Economist 2018). Reports indicate the FARDC's continued involvement in violence and sexual abuse against civilians in eastern Congo (Doss 2015b). According to the United Nations, state actors, including the FARDC, were responsible for a staggering 61% of human rights violations documented in 2017 and 2018, with over 1,176 extrajudicial killings attributed to them (MONUSCO 2018). The situation has deteriorated significantly, with the latest Secretary-General's report highlighting that 13.1 million people require humanitarian assistance, a number that doubled between 2017 and 2018. The displacement crisis has also worsened, with over two million Congolese fleeing their homes in 2017, bringing the total number of internally displaced persons to a staggering 4.5 million. In March 2018, the head of the UN peacekeeping mission delivered a stark assessment to the Security Council, describing the humanitarian situation in the DRC as "shocking" (UN News 2018). If establishing a sustainable, long-term peace is considered the primary measure of success, then the effectiveness of the

⁸⁴ Hultman, Lisa, Jacob D. Kathman, and Megan Shannon, 'Successes and Failures in Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of Congo', *Peacekeeping in the Midst of War* (Oxford, 2019; online edn, Oxford Academic, 23 Jan. 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198845577.003.0006>

United Nations peacekeeping mission in the DRC remains subject to debate. The ongoing violence within the country stands as a stark reminder that complete cessation of hostilities has not been achieved. The main failures surrounding this case study are the following. While some argue the UN lacked sufficient resources, several high-profile incidents raise questions about the mission's effectiveness. A 2002 massacre in Kisangani claimed the lives of at least 103 civilians near a UN compound (Holt, Taylor, and Kelly 2009: 248). Peacekeepers were accused of inaction during the incident. Similar accusations followed a 2003 attack in Bunia, Ituri, where 563 civilians were killed. Allegedly, peacekeepers failed to intervene against the perpetrators operating near a UN compound. Likewise, MONUC's response to a 2004 armed attack on Bukavu, North Kivu, resulting in at least 88 civilian deaths, has been deemed insufficient. More recently, the 2008 massacre of over 150 civilians by CNDP rebels in Kiwanja, North Kivu, less than a kilometre from MONUC troops, exposed further limitations. Human Rights Watch (HRW, 2008) documented the incident. Finally, the extensive rape of over 300 people in a 2010 militia attack on North Kivu villages, despite MONUSCO patrols being present, highlighted the mission's shortcomings. The UN Secretary-General himself acknowledged the patrol's failure to grasp the severity of the violence (UNSC 2010c).

As of May 2024, the clashes are still ongoing. After the controversial elections of December 2023, the region is rife with over a hundred armed groups not affiliated with any government. The Democratic Republic of Congo faces a deepening humanitarian crisis as a result of a dramatic escalation in violence in February 2024. This surge in conflict has provoked international outrage and created desperate conditions for millions of civilians⁸⁵. While the eastern regions have historically been the most affected by violence, recent political unrest following the December elections has contributed to a nationwide climate of disorder and insecurity. The United Nations reported a record high of 6.9 million internally displaced people in the DRC in October 2023, highlighting the devastating impact of this protracted conflict⁸⁶. While discussions in the Security Council are still evolving, the time dilatation is detrimental and the UN system is failing to cease

⁸⁵ African Union, "Communique of the 1203rd meeting of the PSC held on 4 March 2024, on Consideration of the Situation in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Deployment of the Southern African Development Community Mission in the DRC (SAMIDRC) -African Union – Peace and Security Department (peaceau.org)" 9 March 2024.

⁸⁶ Record high displacement in DRC at nearly 7 million. (2023, October 30). International Organization for Migration. <https://www.iom.int/news/record-high-displacement-drc-nearly-7-million>

the postponement. New adjournments on the matter are awaited June 2024, but past practices do not provide hope for decisive action⁸⁷.

3.1.3 Case study 3: UN non-intervention in the Rwandan genocide

The Rwandan genocide stands as one of the most horrific chapters in 20th century history. Human Rights Watch has meticulously documented the systematic massacre of at least 850,000 individuals in Rwanda, a campaign of violence that unfolded over a period of approximately 100 days, commencing in April 1994 and continuing through mid-July of that year⁸⁸. European colonialism significantly exacerbated existing ethnic tensions within Rwandan society. Prior to colonial rule, the Hutu and Tutsi groups, while distinct, coexisted in a social hierarchy with the Tutsis holding political power and the Hutus primarily engaged in agriculture and religious practice.

The arrival of first German and then Belgian colonial administrators in the late 19th century fundamentally reshaped this dynamic. The Belgians, seeking to solidify control, strategically aligned themselves with the Tutsi elite, further marginalizing the Hutu majority. This manipulation extended to historical revisionism, with the Belgians fabricating a narrative of racial difference between the groups. They falsely portrayed the Tutsis as a Hamitic people, supposedly linked to Europeans, while simultaneously undermining the Hutus' religious authority.

The introduction of identity cards in the 1930s further solidified this artificial ethnic divide. These cards rigidly categorized Rwandans based on social status and physical characteristics, explicitly distinguishing Hutu from Tutsi. This system, coupled with racist anthropological theories that positioned Tutsis as inherently superior due to their alleged proximity to the Caucasian race, created a foundation for future conflict. The Belgians' colonial policies effectively fostered resentment and a distorted sense of ethnic identity within Rwandan society, ultimately contributing to the horrific events of the 1994 genocide⁸⁹. The scale of the killings there was staggering. One particularly horrific

⁸⁷ In hindsight: the escalating conflict in eastern DRC and UN support of regional forces, April 2024 monthly forecast : Security Council report. (n.d.). <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/monthly-forecast/2024-04/in-hindsight-the-escalating-conflict-in-eastern-drc-and-un-support-of-regional-forces.php>

⁸⁸ Des Forges, Alison (1999). *Leave None to Tell the Story: Genocide in Rwanda*, New York, NY: Human Rights Watch.

⁸⁹ Mahmood Mamdani, *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2002, p. 69, ISBN 978-0-691-10280-1.

episode occurred in Gikongoro, where more than 27,000 Tutsis were slaughtered at the Murambi Technical College: an estimated eight thousand people were massacred in a single day, translating to a horrific rate of roughly 333 deaths per hour, or five lives taken every minute. Notably, these atrocities were perpetrated not with sophisticated weaponry, but with the most basic and chillingly efficient tool - the machete. This marks one of the most appalling failures of the UN and the International system.

In fact, the Rwandan genocide was fuelled by an insidious combination of readily available weapons and deliberate state action. While some militia members obtained AK-47 assault rifles through a disturbingly bureaucratic process, the government ensured the widespread distribution of even more lethal weapons like grenades, circumventing any formal paperwork⁹⁰. Notably, machetes were a prevalent weapon of choice for many within the Interahamwe and Impuzamugambi militias, a testament to their brutal efficiency and low cost. Despite the 1993 Arusha peace agreement⁹¹, efforts to arm the Hutu majority continued. Businessmen with close ties to General Habyarimana facilitated the import of a staggering 581,000 machetes from China, highlighting their perceived cost-effectiveness compared to firearms⁹². Additionally, allegations surfaced in 2000 by The Guardian regarding the potential role of Boutros Boutros-Ghali, the then-UN Secretary-General, in supplying weapons to the Hutu regime⁹³. These accusations raise serious concerns about the international community's response to the escalating crisis in Rwanda.

The United Nations' response to the escalating violence in Rwanda proved tragically inadequate. Despite the presence of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) peacekeeping force, attempts to mediate a ceasefire were unsuccessful. In a move that would later be heavily criticized, the UN voted to dramatically reduce UNAMIR's troop presence from 2,500 to a meager 270 on April 21st, 1994⁹⁴. This decision stemmed from a combination of factors. UNAMIR's mandate was predicated on

⁹⁰ Ex-Rwandan PM reveals genocide planning, 26 march 2004.

⁹¹ Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Rwanda and the Rwandese Patriotic Front | UN Peacemaker. (n.d). <https://peacemaker.un.org/rwanda-peaceagreementtrp93>

⁹² Diamond, Jared. Collapse, Penguin Books, New York, NY, 2005, pp. 316

⁹³ Reporter, G. S. (2000, September 3). UN chief helped Rwanda killers arm themselves. The Guardian. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2000/sep/03/unitednations1?CMP=share_btn_url

⁹⁴ Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia (2024, April 7). Rwanda genocide of 1994. Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/event/Rwanda-genocide-of-1994>

the existence of a functioning ceasefire, a condition demonstrably absent. The military head was Roméo Dallaire. The Force Commander was left alone with few troops, of mainly volunteers among the blue betterers to try and protect civilians⁹⁵. Not only was the UN support completely insufficient but multiple allegations are cornering the main actors in the fuelling of the crimes. Wistfully, the UN agencies demonstrated their power and action too late, only after the end of the genocide with the establishment of the International Criminal tribunal for Rwanda⁹⁶.

3.2 Critiques on the UN moves in Africa politics and the Vicious Cycle of poverty

As Dambisa Moyo explores in her book “Dead Aid”, prominent failures of the UN and the International system is corruption and bribery at the micro and macro levels of society. These factors culminate in an overall feeding to the vicious cycle of poverty, already explored in Chapter 1. Instances of egregious corruption within African governments have been well documented. In 2004, a British diplomat in Kenya utilized a colourful metaphor to describe the situation, likening corrupt ministers to "gluttons" who plunder resources with reckless abandon⁹⁷. Transparency International's estimates paint a similarly concerning picture, highlighting the billions of dollars embezzled by leaders like Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire and Sani Abacha of Nigeria⁹⁸. These examples illustrate the pervasiveness of corrupt practices within the continent.

However, a critical analysis of foreign aid reveals a potentially paradoxical outcome. While intended to alleviate poverty, aid can inadvertently exacerbate the very issue it seeks to address. This occurs when readily available funds from external sources become a crutch for corrupt governments, allowing them to divert resources away from productive investments. The resulting lack of transparency and reduced private sector participation can stifle economic growth, leading to fewer job opportunities and a worsening of poverty. In response to this deepening crisis, donors often feel compelled to increase aid

⁹⁵ Dallaire, Roméo. (2003). *Shake hands with the devil : the failure of humanity in Rwanda*. Toronto :Random House Canada,

⁹⁶ The ICTR in brief | United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. (n.d.). <https://unictr.irmct.org/en/tribunal>

⁹⁷ BBC NEWS | World | Africa | UK envoy's speech on Kenyan corruption. (n.d.). <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/3893625.stm>

⁹⁸ BBC News. (2021, January 28). Sani Abacha - the hunt for the billions stolen by Nigeria's ex-leader. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-54929254>

disbursements, perpetuating a vicious cycle where aid becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy of continued poverty. The following subsections will provide a more detailed analysis of the effects of corruption on the various societal levels and will prove the inevitability of the vicious cycle.

3.2.1 Corruption

Development agencies often promote the notion that foreign aid strengthens civil service institutions, fostering a credible and lasting bureaucracy. The World Bank, for instance, contends that increased aid from wealthy nations can contribute to the fight against corruption. However, a closer examination reveals a potentially counterintuitive outcome.

Unfettered access to substantial external resources can be demonstrably detrimental. The prospect of significant personal gain through misappropriation of funds fosters a corrosive environment. In such aid-dependent contexts, talented individuals may be more readily drawn away from productive endeavours and towards illicit activities. This undermines the very institutions that foreign aid seeks to strengthen.

To illustrate this point, Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), published annually since 1995, provides a valuable tool for assessing the impact of opaque governance structures. Research by Joel Kurtzman suggests a direct correlation between higher opacity scores (indicating less transparency) and lower per capita income levels⁹⁹. Furthermore, a decrease in net foreign direct investment as a share of GDP is also associated with increased opacity. These findings highlight the negative consequences of unbridled corruption on the region's economic well-being.

Concerns regarding the misuse of development assistance are increasingly voiced within the donor community. There are allegations that funds designated for crucial social and economic sectors are being diverted, directly or indirectly, to support unproductive and corrupt activities. Experts have raised serious concerns about the World Bank's role in this dynamic. Some argue for the Bank's passive participation in the misappropriation of

⁹⁹ Kurtzman, J., Yago, G., & Phumiwasana, T. (2004). The global costs of opacity. MIT Sloan Management Review, 46(1), 87. <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A124187628/AONE?u=anon~c8e49f41&sid=googleScholar&xid=425ae8e2>

approximately US\$100 billion in loan funds intended for development purposes. When considering corruption associated with loans from other multilateral development banks, this figure is estimated to double. Further estimates suggest that at least 25% (US\$130 billion) of the US\$525 billion loaned by the World Bank to developing nations since 1946 might have been misused¹⁰⁰.

The notion that large volumes of aid not only enable corruption but actively foster it is a critical point. A fundamental example is the scenario where a government official entrusted with managing aid for public welfare misappropriates the funds for personal gain. Furthermore, the fungibility of foreign aid ("rent") – its ease of theft, redirection, or extraction – simplifies corrupt practices. Additionally, foreign aid programmes lacking robust accountability measures and checks and balances can create a disincentive for tax collection. Consequently, tax revenue that could be directed towards essential public expenditures like education or healthcare infrastructure gets diverted to unproductive or wasteful purposes¹⁰¹. This undermines the very objectives of foreign aid. The case of Uganda in the 1990s serves as a stark illustration. Rampant aid-fuelled corruption resulted in estimates suggesting that only a meager 20 cents of every dollar allocated by the government for primary education reached its intended beneficiaries.

Beyond the previously discussed motivations for foreign aid – economic, political, and moral – there exist two additional, more pragmatic explanations for its continued prevalence. Firstly, a significant driving force is the institutional pressure to disburse funds. Large international organizations like the World Bank, the IMF, and various UN agencies employ tens of thousands of individuals. Furthermore, countless personnel work within registered NGOs, private charities, and government aid agencies. These individuals essentially rely on the continued flow of aid for their professional livelihoods. Consequently, a strong institutional incentive exists within these organizations to maintain lending practices, even to demonstrably corrupt nations. Failure to disburse allocated funds can lead to reductions in future aid programmes, potentially jeopardizing

¹⁰⁰ Combating corruption in the multilateral development banks | United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. (2004, May 13). United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. <https://www.foreign.senate.gov/hearings/combating-corruption-in-the-multilateral-development-banks>

¹⁰¹ World Bank. (2003). Case Study 5 - Uganda: Participatory Approaches in Budgeting and public Expenditure management. In Social Development Notes. e Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development Network. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/pt/789761468779156948/pdf/2746500PAPER0Snd74.pdf>

the very existence of these organizations. Moreover, donor nations often harbour a fear of default. They worry that withholding financial assistance could cripple developing countries' ability to repay existing debts. Supporting this concern is a 1992 World Bank study by its Operations Evaluation Department. The study revealed that nearly all aid tranches were released, even in situations where recipient countries failed to meet even half of the established conditions for receiving the aid. Further bolstering this argument, another World Bank study conducted in 1997 found that over 70% of adjustment lending allocated between 1980 and 1996 went to nations with poor compliance records regarding aid conditionality. These findings highlight the complex interplay between institutional self-preservation and the fear of bad debts, which can perpetuate the cycle of foreign aid even in questionable circumstances.

Another factor hindering effective foreign aid allocation is the apparent lack of consensus among donors regarding corruption within recipient countries. This inconsistency can lead to questionable selections. For instance, Malawi was included in a competition by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for a US\$5 billion foreign aid grant despite a very public altercation between the Malawian Ministry of Agriculture and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) – an institution often involved in identifying and addressing corruption. Furthermore, a critical figure in two corruption cases involving Malawi's state-run grain marketing board mysteriously disappeared. Despite these red flags, the US government did not exclude Malawi from the qualifying list for the Millennium Challenge Account, an American programme designed to reward good governance, now known as the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). A substantial portion of foreign aid intended for Africa is estimated to be diverted, with corruption analysts suggesting that at least US\$10 billion leaves the continent annually¹⁰².

3.2.2 Civil society

An environment heavily reliant on foreign aid can foster perverse incentives for recipient governments. The allure of readily available external resources may shift priorities away from supporting domestic entrepreneurship and fostering the growth of a strong middle class. This emerging middle class, historically a crucial driver of economic and political

¹⁰² UK's Africa All Party Parliamentary Group, 'The Other Side of the Coin: The UK and Corruption in Africa', March 2006, p. 14.

progress, struggles to develop its voice and hold governments accountable when such governments are primarily answerable to (and often only nominally) external aid donors. Consequently, the middle class remains stunted, unable to reach the critical mass necessary for a nation's long-term success¹⁰³.

The reduced dependence of a government on its citizens' tax revenue can weaken its accountability and responsibility towards the people. A well-functioning civil society and an engaged citizenry are cornerstones of sustainable development, yet foreign aid can inadvertently undermine these vital elements¹⁰⁴. By increasing the burden of managing external aid resources, it can overburden governments, diverting their focus from fostering civic participation and individual freedoms.

Also, an aid-dependent economy carries the risk of politicization. The influx of external resources can divert citizens' focus from productive economic activities towards political manoeuvring, potentially weakening the social fabric of the nation¹⁰⁵. In essence, excessive foreign aid can create a situation where "aid diverts people's attention from productive economic activity to political life."

Social capital, the intricate network of relationships that underpins a nation's economic, political, and social well-being, is widely recognized as fundamental to development. Development practitioners increasingly acknowledge the critical role of "soft" factors like good governance, rule of law, and robust institutions in fostering economic prosperity and sustainable development. However, these factors are meaningless without a foundation of trust. Foreign aid, while intended to be beneficial, can inadvertently undermine this essential social capital. In highly aid-dependent countries, aid often serves as a substitute for domestic resource mobilization and social trust building. With a guaranteed influx of external resources, the incentive to cultivate trust with one's neighbours or develop strong institutions weakens. This can create a vicious cycle where weak social capital perpetuates dependence on aid, further hindering internal

¹⁰³ Kingombe, C. (2014). Africa's rising middle class amid plenty and extreme poverty. European Centre for Development Policy Management Discussion Paper, 167.

¹⁰⁴ Fowler, A. (2013). Civil Society and Aid in Africa: A case of mistaken identity?. In *The handbook of civil society in Africa* (pp. 417-438). New York, NY: Springer New York.

¹⁰⁵ Novelli, M., & Robertson, S. (2010). The politicization of development aid to education after September 11. In *Schooling and the Politics of Disaster* (pp. 249-268). Routledge.

development efforts. In essence, foreign aid, in a world where it becomes the primary source of resources, can erode the essential fabric of trust within a society. Aid is intended to help, yet its presence can diminish the very social capital necessary for long-term success.

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Africa remains the world's most conflict-ridden region, with an alarming trend of increasing internal strife. Understanding the root causes of this complex issue is critical¹⁰⁶. Scholars have identified three fundamental truths about contemporary conflicts:

1. Competition for control of resources often serves as a breeding ground for violence.
2. These conflicts disproportionately impact poorer nations.
3. Internal conflicts are becoming increasingly prevalent.

This posits a potential link between foreign aid and the risk of conflict. It argues that aid, intended to alleviate poverty, can have unintended consequences. By potentially hindering economic growth and fuelling competition for resources, aid might inadvertently make conflict more likely. Dambisa Moyo cites the case of Somalia, where some scholars have attributed the civil wars to competition for control of large-scale food aid deliveries. It suggests that aid can exacerbate political tensions and contribute to a "military culture." In situations of political instability, leaders facing internal pressures might be inclined to prioritize the military to maintain power¹⁰⁷. This can divert resources away from productive sectors and create a situation where loyalty is bought through military spending, potentially exacerbating the risk of conflict.

¹⁰⁶ SIPRI Yearbook (2023), Armaments, Disarmament and International Security

¹⁰⁷ Savage, J. D., & Caverley, J. D. (2017). When human capital threatens the Capitol: Foreign aid in the form of military training and coups. *Journal of Peace Research*, 54(4), 542-557.

3.2.3 Economics

The influx of substantial and unrestricted aid can exacerbate existing problems in weak economies. These economies are often already characterized by poor governance, limited internal capacity, and vulnerability to external pressures. Domestic policymakers may have little control over the management or allocation of such resources.

Here are four key economic challenges associated with unfettered aid that can be deduced¹⁰⁸:

1. **Disincentive for Domestic Investment:** a steady stream of external aid can discourage domestic savings and investment. Recipients may prioritize consumption over long-term investments in productive sectors.
2. **Inflationary Pressures:** large aid inflows can lead to inflation, particularly in economies with limited capacity to absorb the additional liquidity. This can erode purchasing power and hinder economic stability.
3. **Reduced Export Competitiveness:** foreign aid can sometimes unintentionally undermine a country's export competitiveness. This can occur if an influx of aid strengthens the local currency, making exports more expensive in the global market.
4. **Absorption Challenges:** weak institutions and governance structures can struggle to effectively manage and absorb large volumes of aid. This can lead to inefficiencies and mismanagement.

A potential drawback of foreign aid lies in its unintended impact on domestic savings and investment. The influx of readily available external resources can disincentivize domestic saving. With access to "fungible" aid money (easily redirected for various uses), some individuals may prioritize immediate consumption over long-term savings¹⁰⁹. This

108 Wangwe, S. (2006, November). Foreign aid in Africa: Role, experiences and challenges. In Background paper for the AfDB conference in Tunis (Vol. 22).

109 Devarajan, S., & Swaroop, V. (1998). The implications of foreign aid fungibility for development assistance. Washington, DC: World Bank.

decline in domestic savings translates to fewer resources available for local banks to lend for domestic investment, potentially hindering economic growth. Empirical studies support this hypothesis, demonstrating a correlation between rising foreign aid and declining domestic savings rates. Subsidizing investment and co-financing arrangements with private investors may, in practice, discourage the inflow of high-quality private investment. Some studies suggest an inverse relationship between foreign aid and private foreign capital, implying that aid can crowd out private investment. Large influxes of foreign aid can contribute to inflationary pressures¹¹⁰. The increased liquidity within the economy, without a corresponding rise in productivity, can lead to price hikes, potentially eroding purchasing power and undermining economic stability.

Foreign aid can have unintended consequences that impede long-term economic growth. An influx of aid can lead to increased demand for both locally produced and imported goods and services. To combat the resulting inflationary pressures, policymakers may resort to raising interest rates. However, higher interest rates make borrowing for investment more expensive, potentially leading to a decrease in investment, job creation, and economic activity. This can create a vicious cycle where reduced growth necessitates further aid dependence. On the other hand, aid inflows can strengthen a recipient country's currency, making exports less competitive on the international market. Economists have argued that a stronger currency can hinder the development of labour-intensive export sectors, which are often considered crucial for initial growth in developing economies. Studies have shown that in countries receiving high levels of aid, export sectors tend to grow more slowly compared to capital-intensive and non-exportable sectors¹¹¹. The adverse effects of aid on export competitiveness can have broader implications. The traded-goods sector, particularly manufacturing exports, is often seen as a key driver of productivity improvements and knowledge transfer within an economy. By hindering export competitiveness, aid can potentially retard growth across the entire economy.

¹¹⁰ Bbale, J. M., & Nnyanzi, J. B. (2016). How do liberalization, institutions and human capital development affect the nexus between domestic private investment and foreign direct investment? Evidence from Sub-Saharan Africa. *Global Economy Journal*, 16(3), 569-598.

¹¹¹ Omotola, J. S., & Saliu, H. (2009). Foreign aid, debt relief and Africa's development: problems and prospects. *South African Journal of International Affairs*, 16(1), 87-102.

Paradoxically, the very factors that undermine competitiveness can create a situation of heightened aid dependence. Reduced export earnings can leave a country reliant on continued aid inflows, further exacerbating the negative consequences of aid dependency. It is also noteworthy that private capital flows, like remittances, do not appear to have the same detrimental effects as foreign aid. However, policymakers often prioritize aid over these alternative sources of financing. In the face of inflationary pressures, policymakers in recipient countries may have limited options. Under a fixed exchange rate system, they can either raise interest rates, potentially harming the economy, or implement "sterilization" measures¹¹². Sterilization involves issuing government bonds to mop up the excess liquidity injected by aid inflows.

Research suggests that a nation's financial development level significantly impacts its ability to effectively utilize foreign aid. Countries with weak financial systems may struggle to absorb large aid inflows, hindering the desired growth of financially dependent industries. The inability to productively utilize these resources increases the likelihood that aid will be consumed rather than invested, potentially leading to inflationary pressures, as discussed earlier¹¹³. This challenge creates a dilemma for policymakers in recipient countries like those in Africa. To mitigate the negative effects of excess liquidity, they may resort to "sterilization" measures. However, this process of mopping up aid money often incurs additional costs. The situation is further complicated when a government's debt service payments outweigh the interest earned on the sterilized aid funds. This ongoing dependence on aid in Africa, with official aid constituting a significant portion of public expenditure and GDP, has been linked to a series of broader challenges across the continent. These include corruption, inflation, the weakening of social capital and institutions, and a decline in crucial domestic investment.

While foreign intervention and aid is intended to uplift developing nations, this chapter has explored potential unintended consequences. Unfettered aid can weaken domestic investment, fuel inflation, and erode competitiveness. Weak institutions may struggle to

¹¹² Berg, A., Portillo, R., & Zanna, L. F. (2015). Policy responses to aid surges in countries with limited international capital mobility: The role of the exchange rate regime. *World Development*, 69, 116-129.

¹¹³ Appiah-Otoo, I., Acheampong, A. O., Song, N., Obeng, C. K., & Appiah, I. K. (2022). Foreign aid—economic growth nexus in Africa: does financial development matter?. *International Economic Journal*, 36(3), 418-444.

manage violent reprisals and absorb large influxes that create a vicious cycle. Recognizing these challenges is crucial for designing and implementing more effective development strategies. Which will be explored in the final chapter.

CHAPTER 4: THE SEARCH FOR SUPPLEMENTAL WAYS

As Chapter 3 explored, much work is needed to perfectly act in Africa's interest without interfering negatively. The aim of the current analysis does not need to be mistaken for a gentle invite towards a not united global front but more so towards a more specific and mistake learning plan of action. If 79 years haven't taught us anything on the desired action plans to support the African region there is not much room for improvement, or better, for salvation. On the contrary if mistakes are used as tools of measurement for bettering the impact and adjusting the UN interventions the future of this global collaboration may prosper in a more equitable manner. The following sections wish to propose supplemental effective approaches that could potentially support an advancement in the efficacy of the international system.

4.1 The importance of remittances

Migrant remittances are financial transfers sent home by individuals working abroad, often to support their families. There has been significant growth of remittances in recent years, highlighting their emergence as the primary source of external income for many developing economies. Not all economists are aligned with the view that remittances are the main drivers of economic growth in the African Region, but the most up-to-date research done by the International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues (2024) shows otherwise¹¹⁴. It is therefore clear that the most effective support to Africa has been done by Africans themselves. In fact, Africa's development has come to rely heavily on remittances, which have seen a significant rise from \$67 billion in 2016 to an estimated \$91 billion in 2021. While the COVID-19 pandemic caused a temporary dip in 2020, these flows have proven more resilient than other external financing sources¹¹⁵. Remittances tend to flow countercyclically, acting as a stabilizing force during economic downturns, pandemics, and natural disasters.

¹¹⁴ Amir, M. Z. B., & Amir, M. K. B. (2024). Impact of Remittances on Economic Growth in Africa: An Econometric Analysis. *International Journal of Economics and Financial Issues*, 14(1), 64–72. <https://doi.org/10.32479/ijefi.14867>

¹¹⁵ Handoo, A. (2024, January 31). Remittances from African diaspora grew in 2023, set to exceed US\$100 billion in 2024 - GFRID. GFRID. <https://gfrid.org/remittances-from-african-diaspora-grew-in-2023-set-to-exceed-us100-billion-in-2024/>

Projections in Sub-Saharan Africa indicate continued growth of 7.1%, attributed to factors like increased use of formal transfer channels in Nigeria due to government initiatives and migrants' ongoing support for families facing rising staple food prices¹¹⁶. It's important to note that this data only captures formal channels, and estimates suggest the true figure could be as high as \$200 billion annually if informal and in-kind remittances were included. The prevalence of informal channels, exceeding half of all remittance transactions, highlights limitations related to safety, timeliness, and service access, particularly in remote areas¹¹⁷. The overall trend across most regions reflects a strong rebound following the 2020 decline caused by the COVID-19 surge and a significant milestone is expected for African development as annual remittances from the diaspora are projected to surpass the \$100 billion mark¹¹⁸.

It remains clear therefore, that a way to better the UN system is to facilitate remittances and break down eventual boundaries that may limit the flows. This will not only make the UN a simple supporter and no longer the main character, but it will also allow for a better allocation of time and resources across the overall system. How to achieve this in practical terms? In a typical remittance transaction, the process unfolds in three stages. First, the migrant sending the money utilizes a sending agent. This payment can be made through various methods, including credit card, check or even online instructions¹¹⁹. Once the sending agent receives the funds, they then communicate with a partner agent located in the recipient's country. Finally, this receiving agent facilitates the final step by delivering the remittance to the designated beneficiary¹²⁰.

The first barrier arises which is the cost of transactions. There is a persistent disparity between the growth of remittance flows to Africa and the associated costs. Despite rising remittance volumes, sending money to Africa remains considerably more expensive than

¹¹⁶ Strengthening the developmental impact of remittances and diaspora finance in Africa | Канцелярия Специального советника по Африке. (n.d.). <https://www.un.org/osaa/ru/content/strengthening-developmental-impact-remittances-and-diaspora-finance-africa>

¹¹⁷ Mohapatra, S., & Ratha, D. (2011). Remittance markets in Africa /: Sanket Mohapatra and Dilip Ratha, editors. United Nations Digital Library System. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/704478>

¹¹⁸ World Bank Group. (2023, September 19). Defying predictions, remittance flows remain strong during COVID-19 crisis. World Bank. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/05/12/defying-predictions-remittance-flows-remain-strong-during-covid-19-crisis>

¹¹⁹ Remittances: funds for the folks back home. (2019, February 5). IMF. <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/Series/Back-to-Basics/Remittances>

¹²⁰ 2023 SEPA Credit Transfer rulebook version 1.0. (n.d.). European Payments Council. <https://www.europeanpaymentscouncil.eu/document-library/rulebooks/2023-sepa-credit-transfer-rulebook-version-10>

anywhere else globally. On average, the first three quarters of 2021 saw remittance costs in Africa reach 7.9%, significantly exceeding the Sustainable Development Goal target of 3%¹²¹. This cost is not only higher than the global average of 6.4% but also surpasses other regions like Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) at 5.5% and East Asia and the Pacific at 6.7%. Angola stands out as the most expensive country for receiving remittances, with transfer costs exceeding 20%¹²². Several factors might explain the high remittance costs in Africa. Limited competition in remittance corridors or a lack of a substantial migrant population could be contributing factors¹²³. Additionally, the continued use of informal transfer channels, potentially preferred by some customers, might also play a role. The price tag for sending money back home isn't a one-size-fits-all deal. Several moving parts can influence the final cost a sender pays. On one hand, competition can be a game-changer. When multiple remittance service providers vie for business in a particular corridor, it often leads to more competitive rates for those sending money¹²⁴. But if information about these different options is murky, senders might end up overpaying simply because they're unaware of the cost variations¹²⁵. Another factor to consider is the size of the migrant community. Larger populations sending money back to a specific region can create economies of scale, potentially driving remittance costs down. However, currency fluctuations can throw a wrench into the equation. If the exchange rate in the recipient country is volatile, it can affect the final amount received by the beneficiary, impacting the overall cost-effectiveness of the transfer. Financial infrastructure also plays a role. Developed financial systems in both the sending and receiving countries can streamline remittance processes, potentially leading to lower fees. But the chosen method of sending the money itself can have an impact. Opting for cash pickup might be cheaper than a bank transfer, for example. However, it's important to remember that formal channels, while potentially more expensive, often come with added security and transparency benefits compared to informal methods.

¹²¹ Remittance costs have fallen but still don't meet SDG target. (2021, August 24). Migration Data Portal. <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/blog/remittance-costs-have-fallen-still-dont-meet-sdg-target>

¹²² Global Remittance Flows in 2021: A Year of Recovery and Surprises. World Bank blogs <https://blogs.worldbank.org/peoplemove/global-remittance-flows2021-year-recovery-and-surprises>

¹²³ Gupta, Sanjeev, Catherine Pattillo, and Smita Wagh. 2009. "Impact of Remittances on Poverty and Financial Development in Sub-Saharan Africa." *World Development*. 31 (1): 104–15.

¹²⁴ Bourenane, N. (2011). Reducing the cost of migrant remittances to optimize their impact on development: Financial products and tools for the Maghreb region and the Franc zone. https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Reducing_the_Cost_of_Migrant_Remittances_to_Optimize_their_Impact_on_Development.pdf

¹²⁵ Beck, Thorsten, and Soledad Martínez Peria, Maria (2009). What Explains the Cost of Remittances? World Bank Policy Research Paper.

It is evident from the foregoing that the UN needs to actuate strategies to enhance the developmental impact of Remittances in Africa. Recommendations are the following:

Enhancing Competition: facilitating the entry of new players in the remittance industry is crucial and can be achieved by streamlining regulations and reducing capital requirements for money transfer services. International cooperation plays a vital role in harmonizing regulations and ensuring compliance with anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism measures, while avoiding overregulation that stifles competition¹²⁶. Additionally, discouraging exclusive arrangements between money transfer agents, particularly in corridors with smaller migrant populations, can foster a more competitive market and lower remittance costs¹²⁷.

Promoting Financial Inclusion: expanding financial access for underserved populations is essential. Encouraging the use of mobile banking, which offers the most cost-effective remittance option, can significantly increase financial inclusion and boost the developmental impact of remittances.

Developing the African Financial Sector: African national banks should be encouraged to establish a presence in migrant host countries. This would facilitate financial services and allow for the mobilization of diaspora savings toward African development goals. Easing capital requirements for establishing these banks is critical for their success. Furthermore, financial institutions can develop ecosystems around remittance-related services in both sending and receiving countries.

Supporting African Leadership: African-led initiatives, such as the African Institute for Remittances, are crucial for ensuring ownership and commitment to successful implementation of remittance-related programmes. Increased technical and financial support from the international community can help these institutions fulfil their mandates

¹²⁶ Diburga, L. S. (2023). Unlocking Interoperability: Overcoming regulatory frictions in Cross-Border Payments. World Economic Forum.

¹²⁷ IFAD (2017). Financing Facility for Remittances: a migration and development programme available at: https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/39269250/ffr_brochure.pdf/0a570874-ee95-4e93-9c0c-c02968747215?t=1502965885000

and address the research gap on the developmental effects of remittances on African countries, particularly regarding diaspora finance.

Nurturing Partnerships: building upon existing partnerships between African countries and their diaspora communities is essential. Enhancing institutional governance, transparency, and trust are key to fostering successful partnerships. The international community can play a role in supporting the African diaspora in structuring itself more effectively for meaningful engagement with policymakers¹²⁸. Furthermore, partnerships should be inclusive of private sector actors, researchers, and civil society leaders in both receiving and sending countries.

Establishing a Research Agenda: a deeper understanding of remittance dynamics and their developmental impact in Africa is needed, including potential risks associated with overdependence on remittance flows. The international community can support a collaborative response by mobilizing various actors, including multilateral financial institutions, the UN, African institutions, academia, and think tanks, to address this research gap.

Creating an Alliance: exploring the creation of an international alliance focused on remittances in Africa holds promise. By pooling resources and capacities around a comprehensive agenda, such an alliance could address the shortcomings of existing initiatives and lead to the adoption of a roadmap for maximizing the developmental potential of remittances in Africa. Increased global visibility for this issue could ultimately result in a more coordinated approach to leveraging remittances for positive change.

4.2 Strengthening Cooperation: Regional and International Organizations

As expressed in section 4.1, one of the compelling issues of the United Nations scheme is the order of powers, the scale of importance and the layer of confusion that fogs country

¹²⁸ S. Plaza and D. Ratha (2011). Harnessing Diaspora Resources for Africa. In *Diaspora for Development in Africa*, ed. S. Plaza and D. Ratha, 1-54. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

representatives when trying to understand who is the protagonist and who plays the supporting role. A successful way to kill this “saviour” ideology is to strengthen internally regional organizations to then strengthen their position in the international arena.

4.2.1 AU-UN

It may be unknown to many that the African Union has an almost identical structure to the UN one in terms of fields, headquarters and member states. The UN has the Security Council and the AU has the Peace and Security Council; the UN has the General Assembly, the AU has the assembly of heads of states; the UN has a secretary general, the AU has a commission chairperson and so on. The pattern is easily noticeable. Given their uncanny similarity, there needs to be improved cooperation. For this purpose, in 2010, the United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) was established by UN General Assembly Resolution 64/288 in 2010¹²⁹.

Enhancing the relationship and collaboration between the African Union (AU) and the United Nations (UN) is crucial for addressing power inequalities and mitigating the negative effects of the UN’s interventions in Africa, such as the persistent cycle of poverty. A key step in this direction is advocating for greater representation of African countries in the decision-making bodies of the UN, particularly the Security Council. This could involve the push for permanent African seats, which would provide a stronger voice for the continent in global governance. Strengthening the presence of the AU within the UN is equally important¹³⁰. A more robust and permanent AU representation would facilitate better advocacy and ensure that African interests are more effectively represented in international policy discussions. Increasing autonomy and ownership over development initiatives is another vital aspect. It is imperative that the UN supports and funds African-led initiatives rather than imposing external programmes. This approach ensures that interventions are culturally relevant, locally accepted, and tailored to the specific needs of African communities¹³¹. Investing in capacity building for African

¹²⁹ <https://unoau.unmissions.org/about>

¹³⁰ Security Council Calls for Strengthening Africa’s Role in Addressing Global Security, Development Challenges, Adopting Presidential Statement ahead of Day-long Debate | Meetings Coverage and Press Releases. (2024, May 23). <https://press.un.org/en/2024/sc15706.doc.htm>

¹³¹ Peacekeeping in Africa: from UN to regional Peace Support Operations. (n.d.). IISS. <https://www.iiss.org/online-analysis/online-analysis/2024/03/peacekeeping-in-africa-from-un-to-regional-peace-support-operations/>

institutions is also essential, as it empowers these institutions with the necessary skills and resources to lead development projects effectively¹³².

The dynamic between the AU and the UN should evolve from a donor-recipient relationship to one of equal partnership. This shift would allow the AU and African states to have significant input in how funds are utilized and programmes are implemented. Developing joint planning and implementation frameworks where both organizations co-create strategies and projects can ensure that both parties are equally invested and responsible for the outcomes. This collaborative approach fosters a sense of ownership and accountability, enhancing the effectiveness of development efforts. Coordination and communication between the AU and various UN agencies must be improved to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure that strategies are coherent and aligned with Africa's development priorities. Establishing robust coordination mechanisms and institutionalizing regular high-level dialogues and consultations between the AU and the UN can help continuously assess and address emerging challenges and opportunities for collaboration. These measures can lead to more synchronized and efficient implementation of development initiatives.

Addressing systemic issues such as unfair trade practices, debt relief, and economic policies that disproportionately affect African countries is also critical. The UN can play a significant role in advocating for more equitable global economic policies that benefit African nations¹³³. Ensuring that the AU's Agenda 2063 and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are aligned, and that efforts to achieve these goals are synchronized, can leverage each organization's strengths and resources for greater impact. Finally, implementing joint monitoring and evaluation mechanisms is crucial for assessing the effectiveness of collaborative efforts. Such mechanisms ensure accountability and facilitate continuous improvement in the implementation of projects. Promoting transparency and accountability in the use of funds and implementation of projects is equally important. This includes public reporting and the inclusive

¹³² Moving beyond a donor-recipient relationship? Assessing the principle of partnership in the joint Africa–EU strategy. (2023, January 1). ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/345010725_Moving_beyond_a_donor-recipient_relationship_Assessing_the_principle_of_partnership_in_the_joint_Africa-EU_strategy/citations

¹³³ Kirimi Sindi, PhD. (2024, April 21). Echoes of the Past, Cries of the Present: An African perspective on global antiracism discourses. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/echoes-past-cries-present-african-perspective-global-sindi-ph-d-guxsf>

participation of civil society in oversight processes, which can enhance trust and ensure that development efforts are responsive to the needs of African communities¹³⁴.

By addressing these areas, the relationship between the AU and UN can be significantly improved, leading to more equitable power dynamics and better outcomes for poverty reduction and sustainable development in Africa.

4.2.2 Relations with BRICS

Africa's relationship with the BRICS nations presents a unique opportunity to redefine its position on the global stage and chart a course towards sustainable development. Moving beyond a purely transactional approach, Africa can forge a strategic partnership with the BRICS built on mutual respect and shared interests. This partnership has the potential to unlock Africa's vast potential and reduce its dependence on traditional Western powers.

A crucial step in this direction involves diversifying economic partnerships within the BRICS framework. Negotiating trade agreements that prioritize value-added exports over raw materials is essential. Similar to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), this approach can create jobs, foster industrialization, and reduce Africa's economic vulnerability¹³⁵. For instance, collaborative efforts modelled after the successful India-Africa Forum Summit initiatives can establish manufacturing plants and technology hubs within Africa. Establishing Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in partnership with BRICS countries, where both African and BRICS firms can benefit from tax incentives and infrastructure support, can also be an effective strategy¹³⁶. This strategy ensures Africa captures a greater share of the value chain and benefits from skills transfer and technological advancement.

Building political alliances with the BRICS nations can also significantly bolster Africa's global standing. Strategic alignment on issues like global governance reform offers Africa

¹³⁴ KAMPALA PRINCIPLE 4:PGCS_SUBP 4.C | Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation. (n.d.). <https://www.effectivecooperation.org/landing-page/kampala-principle-4pgcssubp-4c>

¹³⁵ Simola, A. M., Boysen, O., Ferrari, E., Nechifor, V. V., & Boulanger, P. (n.d.). Potential effects of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) on African agri-food sectors and food security. JRC Publications Repository. <https://doi.org/10.2760/531308>

¹³⁶ Leveraging special economic zones for growth. (2023, December 13). ISI. <https://www.inclusivesociety.org.za/post/leveraging-special-economic-zones-for-growth>

a chance to advocate for a more equitable world order¹³⁷. This includes pushing for fairer representation in institutions like the UN Security Council and international financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank. Additionally, supporting BRICS initiatives like the New Development Bank (NDB) can provide access to critical financing for infrastructure projects, a key driver of economic growth¹³⁸. African nations can also join the BRICS Plus initiative, which aims to expand BRICS cooperation to other emerging economies, thus enhancing their influence in global economic affairs.

However, a strong partnership goes beyond economic and political considerations. Fostering mutual respect and understanding is critical for building bridges and dismantling historical narratives of exploitation. Regular high-level meetings, cultural exchanges, and diplomatic initiatives, similar to the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), can create a foundation for more empathetic relationships. Establishing an Africa-BRICS Cultural Exchange Programme could promote cultural understanding and people-to-people connections¹³⁹. Open dialogue that addresses these historical narratives can pave the way for equitable partnerships. Germany's collaborative efforts with Africa on development goals, fostered through forums like the Germany-Africa Conference, offer a successful example of this approach.

It goes without saying that there needs to be increased attention on China's involvements in Africa. When speaking of enhanced collaboration, the Asian leader is the first thought in terms of bettering the boundaries and creating more coordination between the various actors. Many experts are quite concerned about China's involvement in the continent. China's intensifying engagement with Africa over the past decades presents a complex picture, marked by both potential benefits and inherent risks¹⁴⁰. At the forefront of this engagement lies the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a colossal infrastructure development programme that has seen China investing heavily in African roads, railways, ports, and energy facilities. A concrete example is the Nairobi Highway, which has now halved the

¹³⁷ Expansion of BRICS: A quest for greater global influence? | Think Tank | European Parliament. (n.d.). [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI\(2024\)760368](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI(2024)760368)

¹³⁸ New Development Bank. (2023, February 16). About NDB - New Development Bank. <https://www.ndb.int/about-ndb/>

¹³⁹ Officials call for strengthening China-Africa cooperation under FOCAC platform. (n.d.). <https://english.news.cn/20240522/d62fabda9fc84b7e99e60fcfa942ff8/c.html>

¹⁴⁰ China's foreign policies today: Who is in charge of what | ISPI. (2023, February 12). ISPI. <https://www.ispionline.it/en/publication/chinas-foreign-policies-today-who-charge-what-34630>

travel time and traffic. These projects have demonstrably improved Africa's physical connectivity, fostering the potential for significant economic growth across the continent. China's financial commitment to African infrastructure offers several promising avenues for continental development. The newly established transportation networks facilitate regional integration, streamlining trade and collaboration between African nations. This enhanced connectivity can create a more vibrant and interconnected African market, fostering economic prosperity. Chinese investments have directly translated into job creation and a boost for local economies, empowering African entrepreneurs and businesses to flourish within a more robust economic environment. However, China's growing presence in Africa is not without its challenges. A primary concern revolves around the burgeoning debt burden shouldered by some African nations as a consequence of Chinese loans. The inability to service these debts could lead to a scenario where African countries are forced to relinquish control over strategic assets or compromise their sovereignty. Secondly, Chinese diasporas have started appear all over the continent limiting to a certain extent employment. Additionally, concerns regarding the transparency and accountability surrounding certain Chinese-led projects raise the spectre of corruption and potential environmental degradation. For example, the state in workers in coal mines in DRC, which ¼ are Chinese owned. Finally, going back to the instance brought forward before of the Nairobi Highway, the Chinese FDI doesn't go without its limitation. Most of the transportation routes have high, and most of the time hardly affordable for an African salary, cost of use. The charge circles back to China limiting the actual gain for African governments. Addressing these concerns through open dialogue and implementing robust governance frameworks is crucial to ensure that China's engagement with Africa translates into sustainable and mutually beneficial development¹⁴¹. This is of utmost importance to avoid the vicious cycle explored in Chapter 3 but most of all to get Africa out of the scheme explored in chapter 1.

China's intensifying involvement in Africa presents a multifaceted reality. While the BRI offers the potential for significant economic growth and improved connectivity, concerns regarding debt burdens and a lack of transparency necessitate careful consideration. By

¹⁴¹ Nantulya, P. (2023, April 17). Africa's role in China's multilateralism strategy. Africa Center for Strategic Studies. <https://africacenter.org/spotlight/africa-china-multilateralism/>

fostering open communication and prioritizing good governance practices, both Africa and China can navigate a path towards a more sustainable and mutually beneficial partnership¹⁴². Collaboration with the BRICS on sustainable development challenges presents another avenue for mutual benefit. By harnessing the knowledge, technology, and resources of the BRICS nations, Africa can tackle issues like poverty, inequality, and climate change. This aligns perfectly with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and can be highly beneficial, as evidenced by the success of Brazil-Africa Cooperation projects on renewable energy. Joint research and development efforts in these critical areas hold immense potential for Africa's future. Africa can also partner with BRICS countries on specific projects, such as establishing a pan-African renewable energy research centre with support from Brazil and China or launching joint agricultural technology initiatives with India to enhance food security and sustainable farming practices; further examples will be explored in section 4.3.

Africa should also leverage its strategic geographic and demographic advantages in its dealings with BRICS. As a continent rich in natural resources and with a young and growing population, Africa has much to offer. African nations can use these assets to negotiate better terms in their partnerships with BRICS countries, ensuring that they receive fair compensation for their resources and that any development projects genuinely benefit the local populations¹⁴³. Establishing transparent and fair resource management practices, supported by BRICS partners, can help ensure that resource wealth translates into broad-based economic development.

By learning from successful examples of regional cooperation and global partnerships, Africa can forge a new path, one that reduces dependence on traditional powers, fosters equitable partnerships, and secures a more influential position on the global stage¹⁴⁴. Concrete actions, such as establishing SEZs, joining the BRICS Plus initiative, creating

¹⁴² Hickson, A. (2024, March 26). A Roadmap for Strategically Countering China's development influence in Africa - New Lines Institute. New Lines Institute. <https://newlinesinstitute.org/state-resilience-fragility/a-roadmap-for-strategically-countering-chinas-development-influence-in-africa/>

¹⁴³ Aka. (2019, July 15). Africa and the BRICS: A Win-Win Partnership? Our Africa, Our Thoughts. <https://blogs.afdb.org/fr/afdb-championing-inclusive-growth-across-africa/post/africa-and-the-brics-a-win-win-partnership-12098>

¹⁴⁴ The Belt and Road Initiative Progress, Contributions and Prospects - BELT AND ROAD PORTAL. (n.d.). <https://eng.yidaiyilu.gov.cn/p/86739.html>

cultural exchange programmes, partnering on renewable energy and agricultural projects, and ensuring fair resource management, can help realize this vision.

4.2.3 Peacekeeping Operations

The nature itself of foreign intervention in conflicts is problematic. In the history, not one conflict has been resolved thanks to international cooperation. As section 3.1 proves, the contrary has happened, the more inappropriate foreign action intercedes the more conflicts expand and escalate. It is clear that a strengthening of the system is needed. The obvious answer would be to find an alternative tool to the veto power of the 5 permanent members, as it is undeniably the biggest limit to proper and just intervention. This section will not deal with the functioning of the Security Council as it does not fit with the purpose of the analysis.

The first suggestion is to create a higher quality military troops. Ensuring the safety of civilians during and after civil war remains the paramount objective of any peacekeeping operation. While a robust troop presence is undoubtedly essential¹⁴⁵, historical evidence suggests an additional crucial factor: the quality of deployed forces¹⁴⁶. Securing troop contributions has become a central concern for the international community¹⁴⁷. However, the size of a peacekeeping mission alone does not guarantee success. A comparative analysis of the Central African Republic (CAR) and Mali missions exemplifies this point. The Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) boasted a sizeable force of 9,000 troops in September 2015. Despite this numerical advantage, MINUSCA demonstrably failed to prevent civilian casualties. Conversely, the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) operated with a significantly smaller force of 5,000 troops. Yet, MINUSMA achieved greater success in stabilizing the situation and monitoring Mali's elections. What explains this contrasting performance? An Amnesty International (2016) report on the CAR offers key insights. The report highlights deficiencies in troop training and equipment within MINUSCA. Limited access to essential resources like operational armoured vehicles

¹⁴⁵ Fjelde, Hanne, Lisa Hultman, and Desirée Nilsson (2019), Protection Through Presence: UN Peacekeeping and the Costs of Targeting Civilians, in: *International Organization*, 73, 1, 103–131.

¹⁴⁶ Hultman, Lisa, Jacob Kathman, and Megan Shannon (2013), United Nations Peacekeeping and Civilian Protection in Civil War, in: *American Journal of Political Science*, 57, 4, 875–891.

¹⁴⁷ Smith, Adam C., and Arthur Boutellis (2013), *Rethinking Force Generation: Filling the Capability Gaps in UN Peacekeeping*, New York: International Peace Institute.

hampered their ability to intervene effectively during outbreaks of violence. These shortcomings in troop quality severely limited MINUSCA's capacity to fulfil its core mandate of civilian protection. In contrast, MINUSMA in Mali benefited from a force comprised of highly trained troops from countries with advanced militaries. These high-quality troop contributions demonstrably enhanced MINUSMA's capacity to protect civilians.

The contrasting experiences in the CAR and Mali underscore the paramount importance of troop quality alongside troop quantity in ensuring the effectiveness of peacekeeping operations. A focus on securing well-trained and well-equipped forces is crucial for maximizing the success of peacekeeping missions and safeguarding civilian lives.

Peacekeeping in Africa presents a complex landscape, where the prominence of regional actors requires careful consideration. While the vast majority of peacekeeping missions occur on the African continent, and African nations contribute the bulk of troops to both UN and regionally organized operations¹⁴⁸, there are inherent advantages and disadvantages to this regional emphasis¹⁴⁹. The UN Charter explicitly encourages cooperation with regional organizations in Chapter VIII, and its strong engagement with the African Union (AU) reflects the continent's specific needs¹⁵⁰. The AU's adoption of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) principle further distinguishes it in terms of intervention during violent conflicts and major crises. The UN, EU, and bilateral partners generally support the AU in strengthening its African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The increased participation of African peacekeepers on the continent signifies a devolution of peacekeeping tasks. This shift towards regional organizations and affected countries taking ownership of regional crises offers several benefits. Firstly, it enhances the legitimacy of operations, as peacekeepers possess local knowledge of languages, customs, and political dynamics. Secondly, faster deployment and stronger political commitment from neighbouring countries contribute to effectiveness. This division of labour allows for a more efficient allocation of resources between regional and

¹⁴⁸ Ansorg, Nadine, and Felix Haass (2013), *Multilaterale Friedenssicherung in Afrika*, GIGA Focus Afrika, 6, December, www.giga-hamburg.de/en/publication/multilaterale-friedenssicherung-in-afrika (21 October 2019).

¹⁴⁹ UN Peacekeeping (n.d.), *Troop and Police Contributors*, United Nations, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors> (21 October 2019).

¹⁵⁰ Haysom, Simone, and Jens Pedersen (2015), *Robust Peacekeeping in Africa: The Challenge for Humanitarians*, Humanitarian Practice Network, <https://odihpn.org/magazine/robust-peacekeeping-in-africa-the-challenge-for-humanitarians/> (21 October 2019).

international organizations. The UN could then prioritize its efforts on more severe crises. Troop contributions provide participating nations with improved access to international forums and stronger bilateral relationships with other troop-contributing countries¹⁵¹.

However, regional peacekeeping also presents potential drawbacks for civilians. Missions may be staffed by poorly trained and underpaid troops with inadequate adherence to humanitarian principles. For instance, Chad's withdrawal from the Central African Republic mission in 2014 stemmed from accusations of unprovoked firing on a civilian market¹⁵². Inadequate funding further complicates regional peacekeeping initiatives. AMISOM, for example, has consistently lacked sufficient resources to sustain its large force, relying heavily on the EU for troop salaries. This funding crisis directly impacts the ability of missions to fulfil their mandates, as sufficient resources for troops, equipment, and training are critical to success. The lack of funding and a robust APSA hinders regional initiatives from achieving their full potential. The Malian crisis of 2012 exemplifies this, prompting the Sahelian states to establish the G5 Sahel – a novel security initiative. This emergence suggests the potential for smaller, more flexible responses to pressing regional issues, such as the threat posed by jihadist organizations.

Beyond troop quality, funding, and political support, ensuring mission success in peacekeeping operations necessitates a critical but often overlooked factor: the conduct of peacekeepers towards the populations they are mandated to protect. One particularly egregious form of misconduct in this context is sexual exploitation by peacekeepers. This exploitation manifests in various forms, ranging from transactional sex (e.g., sex for money or gifts) to rape. The UN's Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) has faced repeated allegations of such abuse against civilians. Studies reveal the widespread nature of sexual exploitation by peacekeepers. Research in Liberia indicates that a significant portion of surveyed individuals engaged in transactional sex with UN personnel following the country's civil

¹⁵¹ Haysom, Simone, and Jens Pedersen (2015), *Robust Peacekeeping in Africa: The Challenge for Humanitarians*, Humanitarian Practice Network, <https://odihpn.org/magazine/robust-peacekeeping-in-africa-the-challenge-for-humanitarians/> (21 October 2019).

¹⁵² Ibis 13

war¹⁵³. Further studies correlate the presence of UN peacekeepers with a rise in sex trafficking within host countries.

The problem is compounded by the jurisdictional immunity typically granted to peacekeeping troops. Since troop-contributing countries hold jurisdiction over their personnel, the UN's ability to prosecute violations often remains limited. This misconduct poses a multifaceted threat to successful peacekeeping. Firstly, peacekeepers' sexual exploitation inflicts profound suffering on a population already vulnerable and traumatized by conflict. Ending this suffering must be the paramount guiding principle for every peacekeeping operation. Peacekeeping efforts cannot be confined solely to preventing physical violence against civilians; personnel must adhere to the highest moral standards. Secondly, sexual misconduct undermines the legitimacy of a peace operation in the eyes of the local population. When peacekeepers violate those they are entrusted to protect, even if perpetrated by a minority, civilian cooperation – a vital component of success¹⁵⁴ – is likely to erode. Finally, on a broader scale, the persistence of such misconduct weakens the foundation of a rules-based international order centred on universally recognized human rights, a principle championed by the European Union and German foreign policy¹⁵⁵. Tolerating sexual abuse by peacekeepers casts doubt on the credibility of a foreign policy dedicated to promoting human rights.

4.3 Civil Society Non-Governmental Actors

4.3.1 Microfinance institutions: mimicking Asia

Microfinance institutions (MFIs) share a core function with traditional banks: providing credit. However, MFIs specialize in extending smaller loans, known as microcredit, to a specific clientele – microentrepreneurs¹⁵⁶. These individuals, often operating within the informal sector of the economy, are deemed too high-risk for conventional banks due to their limited access to formal collateral and established financial history. Despite facing

¹⁵³ Beber, Bernd, Michael J. Gilligan, Jenny Guardado, and Sabrina Karim (2017), Peacekeeping, Compliance with International Norms, and Transactional Sex in Monrovia, Liberia, in: *International Organization*, 71, 1, 1–30.

¹⁵⁴ Ruggeri, Andrea, Theodora-Ismene Gizelis, and Han Dorussen (2013), Managing Mistrust: An Analysis of Cooperation with UN Peacekeeping in Africa, in: *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 57, 3, 387–409.

¹⁵⁵ Bundesregierung der BRD (2017), *Krisen Verhindern, Konflikte Bewältigen, Frieden Fördern. Leitlinien Der Bundesregierung*, Berlin: Regierung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland,

¹⁵⁶ Sulemana, M., Fuseini, M. N., & Abdulai, I. A. (2023). Effects of microfinance and small loans centre on poverty reduction in Wa West District, Ghana. *Heliyon*, 9(12).

numerous challenges, microfinance institutions (MFIs) have witnessed remarkable growth¹⁵⁷, demonstrably contributing to both economic and social progress¹⁵⁸. This expansion has solidified MFIs' position as a leading development tool with a vast global reach¹⁵⁹. Given the centrality of poverty alleviation in the global development agenda, a critical evaluation of the microfinance sector's impact on economic conditions is essential.

However, the effectiveness of microfinance varies geographically (Hermes & Hudon, 2018). Lacalle-Calderon et al. (2018) suggest that microfinance holds greater promise in nations with deeper and broader poverty – a characteristic prevalent in many African countries¹⁶⁰. The United Nations (UN) defines poverty as a multi-faceted issue, encompassing not just material deprivation but a fundamental violation of human dignity. The UN further emphasizes that "economic deprivation – lack of income – is a standard feature of most definitions of poverty". Previously, the World Bank adopted a purely quantitative approach, defining poverty as living on less than US\$1.90 per day¹⁶¹. However, the World Bank has shifted towards a more comprehensive approach in 2018, incorporating factors beyond income, such as access to infrastructure, education, and healthcare – areas of critical concern in Africa. Microfinance institutions (MFIs) have garnered significant attention for their potential to alleviate poverty. As the Asian Development Bank and Beisland et al. (2018) highlight, MFIs address the financial needs of low-income populations by providing essential financial services. Beyond financial inclusion, research by Iqbal et al. (2019) suggests that MFIs can extend their reach by incorporating social services into their offerings¹⁶². Microfinance has emerged as a beacon of hope for the poor, demonstrably contributing to increased income, consumption levels, and asset accumulation.

¹⁵⁷ van Rooyen, C., Stewart, R. and de Wet, T. (2012), "The impact of microfinance in sub-Saharan Africa: a systematic review of the evidence", *World Development*, Pergamon, Vol. 40 No. 11, pp. 2249-2262, doi: 10.1016/j.worlddev.2012.03.012.

¹⁵⁸ Mckernan, S. (2002), "The impact of microcredit programs on self-employment profits: do noncredit program aspects matter?", *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, Vol. 84 No. 1, pp. 93-115.

¹⁵⁹ Beisland, L.A., Mersland, R. and Strøm, Ø. (2018), "Use of big four auditors and fund raising: evidence from developing and emerging markets", *International Journal of Emerging Markets*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 371-390, doi: 10.1108/IJoEM-11-2016-0321.

¹⁶⁰ Lacalle-Calderon, M., Perez-Trujillo, M. and Neira, I. (2018), "Does microfinance reduce poverty among the poorest? A macro quantile regression approach", *The Developing Economies*, Wiley/Blackwell, Vol. 56 No. 1, pp. 51-65, doi: 10.1111/deve.12159.

¹⁶¹ Pati, A.P. (2017), "Contribution of microfinance in achieving millennium development goals: evidences from global pool data", *International Journal of Rural Management*, Vol. 13 No. 2, pp. 182-198, doi: 10.1177/0973005217725412.

¹⁶² Iqbal, S., Nawaz, A. and Ehsan, S. (2019), "Financial performance and corporate governance in microfinance: evidence from Asia", *Journal of Asian Economics*, Elsevier, Vol. 60, pp. 1-13, doi: 10.1016/j.asieco.2018.10.002.

A study was carried out in the Wa West District, Ghana, mimicking the model of microfinancing utilized in countries such as India and Afghanistan. The study found that microfinance and small loans do in fact alleviate poverty, increase income, improve consumption and provides access to necessities¹⁶³. At the same time, it shifts the role of lenders from the international sphere to a national one, avoiding the “escape” of revenue to western powers. As any other development intervention, it does not come without its limitations. Concerns revolve around the usage of loans, some beneficiaries use them for consumption rather than investments, so the micro and macro-economical cycle effect for development remains quite limited¹⁶⁴. To enhance the efficacy of this tool it is essential to implement a comprehensive education and sensitization programme for beneficiaries. Microfinance institutions should underscore that the loan is a financial commitment that must be repaid, rather than a gift or political favour. Additionally, collaborating with credit facilities to reinforce the message of responsible borrowing and repayment behaviour is crucial¹⁶⁵. This collaborative effort can encourage beneficiaries to view loans as financial tools for business development, promoting responsible financial practices and finally empowering small or medium business owners. This method could encourage more people to start a business, invest, and trade internationally even. The implementation of such recommendations via the United Nations agencies would be a facilitation and a more successful way to reach developmental stability. In the next section, an example of the most suitable sector to invest in will be explored.

4.3.2 Agribusiness

In Africa, agribusiness and agro-industries constitute over 30% of national income, while also representing the majority of export earnings and employment. Expanding agribusiness has the potential to become the next significant area for economic growth. This concept has been explored by maximum experts in the field like Carlos Lopes and Ibrahim Hassane Mayaki as it gives a concrete and successful path away from dependency and heading toward stable development. Investing and Incentivizing agribusinesses is particularly important as it does not estrange nor diverge completely from the strengths

¹⁶³ Sulemana M, Fuseini MN, Abdulai IA. Effects of microfinance and small loans centre on poverty reduction in Wa West District, Ghana. *Heliyon*. 2023 Nov 22;9(12):e22685. doi: 10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e22685. PMID: 38107329; PMCID: PMC10724661.

¹⁶⁴ Chikwira C., Vengesai E., Mandude P. The impact of microfinance institutions on poverty alleviation. *J. Risk Financ. Manag.* 2022;15(9):393.

¹⁶⁵ Gassner A., Harris D., Mausch K., Terheggen A., Lopes C., Finlayson R.F., Dobie P. Poverty eradication and food security through agriculture in Africa: rethinking objectives and entry points. *Outlook Agric.* 2019;48(4):309–315. - PMC - PubMed

of the continent¹⁶⁶. Many, as Carlos Lopes, believe that in order for Africa to have a significant jump in development, there needs to be a faster movement toward industrialization. Industrialization is pivotal for Africa's development, as it reduces reliance on primary commodities and agriculture, fostering a more diversified and resilient economy. This diversification enhances stability against global market fluctuations, promoting sustained economic growth. Additionally, industrialization generates substantial employment opportunities, crucial for addressing high unemployment rates, particularly among the youth. Increased job creation through industrial development leads to improved living standards and poverty reduction, contributing to social stability and economic progress. Industrialization facilitates the addition of value to raw materials, significantly boosting export revenues. Instead of exporting raw materials at low prices, African countries can export finished goods, capturing greater economic value within the continent and stimulating local industries¹⁶⁷. Technological innovation and infrastructure development are also driven by industrialization, with technological progress spilling over into other sectors, boosting overall productivity and comprehensive economic development.

This necessary process promotes regional trade and economic integration by creating regional value chains, leading to larger, more efficient markets and strengthened economic cooperation among African nations. The regional approach is crucial for building economies of scale and enhancing the continent's collective economic strength. As per the other supplemental ways proposed prior, the United nation system has to follow these trends and facilitate the transitions in order for its work to be successful and not counterproductive. Developing a robust industrial base is also instrumental in reducing dependency on foreign aid and imports, contributing to greater economic sovereignty and resilience. By cultivating local industries and achieving self-reliance, Africa can build a more independent and sustainable economic future¹⁶⁸. An example of concrete initiatives that can serve as facilitators to agribusiness are Farmshine and AflaZero. Farmshine is a Nairobi-based enterprise that created a global agricultural

¹⁶⁶ Onougou, O. (2024). Agribusiness: a New Way to Do Agriculture Not Really New. Available at SSRN 4824890.

¹⁶⁷ Emeka, E. T., Okenyi, C. N., & Ibrahim, A. (2024). Development effects of industrialization, labor force participation and electrification on productive capacity in Africa: A panel data investigation. *The Journal of International Trade & Economic Development*, 1-21.

¹⁶⁸ Oluoch, M. ADVANCING AGRICULTURE EXTENSION MODELS IN AFRICA: BRIDGING THE GAP FOR EFFECTIVE DELIVERY OF TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIONS.

platform where farmers, buyers, and service providers engage in trade under terms that are advantageous for all parties involved¹⁶⁹. Their technical field agents offer farmers advice and support throughout the growing season and assist in aggregating crops for sale to large buyers. Farmshine's platform links farmers with the necessary information, suppliers, and service providers to minimize costs and maximize harvests. As the purpose of this thesis dictates, the UN should take inspiration from these sorts of projects. Solid measures programmes should focus on are the removal of multiple layers of intermediaries to connect low-cost producers directly with end buyers; consolidation of farmers to secure favourable rates on seeds and other inputs, small loans, and crop insurance; guarantee traceability of farmers' production, enhancing value chain transparency and improving farmers' access to markets and credit. Aflazero is the next step, keeping the focus on the primary sector but moving more towards and industrialization of the latter. AflaZero is another Nairobi-based enterprise, funded by ex-UN workers, which aims at introducing in the agribusiness technological machinery to avoid toxins in crops all over Africa¹⁷⁰. This is particularly important for a number of reasons. First, it reduces food insecurity, and by doing so it makes sure that all crops are marketable and therefore increases trade, but importantly international one, lastly it starts to familiarize workers with more advanced components which will serve to create a more highly skilled labour force¹⁷¹. As per previous suggestions, the focus is to take out UN agencies from the protagonist position, making states, governments, and civil society the main actors. The UN presence should be limited to the role of, as it should have always been, promoter and supporter of state-led actions and not as a commander.

4.3.3 Mobile Payments

Connection and communication are important for developmental success. Contrary to popular belief some countries in the African continent are way ahead compared to some Western countries in terms of financial services. The main example of this is mobile payments. Mobile payments are transactions, under financial control, via a mobile device. In Europe the most common ones are most certainly Apple Pay and Google Pay, the latter and many others are present in Africa, but what diversifies telematic wallets from the

¹⁶⁹Farmshine – Market Based Solutions for Smallholder farmers. (n.d). <https://www.farmshine.io/>

¹⁷⁰ Aflazero - Zero aflatoxin in the world's food. (n.d.). <https://www.aflazero.com/>

¹⁷¹ Gali, S. P., Subhashini, M., & Meenatchi, R. (2024). Food Security Through Farming Subsistence Crops. In Food Production, Diversity, and Safety Under Climate Change (pp. 63-76). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.

“African” alternative is accessibility. The last-mentioned telecommunications company-driven mobile money wallets. It operates by establishing a wallet linked to a mobile phone number. This service is integrated into the SIM card and becomes accessible upon purchasing a line from a mobile network provider¹⁷². Upon activation, the mobile phone number can receive funds, which can be either withdrawn through an agent or utilized for the payment of goods and services. A satisfying example of this is Safaricom M-Pesa, with more than 37 million active customers and 11 billion transactions only in 2018. This can be a revolutionary solution for African internal and regional markets. These kinds of services support and break down many of the barriers to trade and aids indirectly the battle against the informal markets. Experts have argued that this approach is undoubtedly innovative but could penalize those farmers and agribusinessmen in not highly connected areas and exclude them from a potential online market. The concern is understandable although, according to GSMA Intelligence (global system for mobile communication), more than 50% of African citizens have a mobile phone and coverage, the number is set to increase exponentially every year¹⁷³. In 2025, an increase of 66% is predicted. Linking back to this intriguing addition, the United Nations should open discussions on the application of these methods and support their point of reach. As of 2024, there is no mention of measures or even discussions, in the international aid arena, on this promising tool.

4.4 Non-Governmental Actors

For the final invitation to the UN that this analysis aims at proposing, a project has been selected: Still I Rise. This is the most fitted derivative that the international institution should take because of its honesty, transparency, modesty and honour. It is hardly arguable that the most prominent work of agencies such as UNHCR, IFAD, UNDP and UNICEF is humanitarian aid in terms of primary support of people in terms of basic needs like education. As section 2.2 explored their successes have been limited but the gains and profit have been countless. As also mentioned in said chapter the aims and premises

¹⁷² Chiegboka, I. (2021, February 9). Understanding Mobile Payments in Africa: Digital Mobile Wallet, Telco led Mobile Money Wallet, USSD Payment and Direct Carrier Billing. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/understanding-mobile-payments-africa-digital-wallet-payments-ccpp>

¹⁷³ GSMA. (2019). State of the Industry Report on Mobile Money. Mobile Money. <https://www.gsma.com/r/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/GSMA-State-of-the-Industry-Report-on-Mobile-Money-2018-1.pdf>

have always been noble, but their benevolence, through the years, has slowly vanished and has been replaced by a façade of ethics and principles to sweep all the rotten pieces under the rug. The following cases will provide a simplistic frame of what and NGO should do to truly support a population.

4.4.1 Still I Rise: Nicolo Govoni

Still I Rise is an autonomous organization founded to deliver education and protection in the most underserved areas worldwide. It establishes schools of international calibre for refugee and vulnerable children across the globe. The organization is dedicated to securing their future, which also contributes to the future of other generations and those to come. Still I Rise delivers education, safety, and security to refugee, disadvantaged, orphaned, and marginalized children in key areas of global migration. The organization operates Emergency and Rehabilitation Schools, as well as International Schools, in locations such as, Syria, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Colombia¹⁷⁴. Entirely independent, Still I Rise relies solely on private donations and does not receive any funding from governments, the European Union, or supranational entities. The reason, this NGO has been able to receive funds, sufficient enough to open eight schools, in the most desolated areas of the world, and help in only four years more than 50 thousand people is thanks to the honesty and fair collaboration of its founders with local governments.

The founder Nicolo Govoni, at only 20 years of age, started a series of negotiations with governments in order to lawfully and in respect of state sovereignty, open a school in the Nairobi Slams¹⁷⁵. The project respects the culture of Kenyans, does not impose foreign powers on them and most importantly does not lead to dependency. On the contrary, it makes sure that children have equal opportunities which one day will help them to be high skilled workers, economically develop their country, and therefore support the decline in dependency. What the UN can learn from these kinds of enterprises is two concepts on different levels. The first level is more philosophical, which is to get back to the real goal of the UN: helping those in need. The ultimate goal is not salary, is not a

¹⁷⁴ Le nostre scuole | Still I Rise. (2024, April 25). Still I Rise. <https://www.stillirise.org/le-nostre-scuole/>

¹⁷⁵ CHI SONO | Nicolò Govoni. (n.d.). Nicolò Govoni. <https://www.nicologovoni.com/chi-sono>

promotion but making sure people living at unbearable standards get the necessary support in terms of basic human needs and rights. The second is on a practical level, there needs to be more conversation with supported countries and governments. The “aiders” need to start putting the “aided state” on the same level, during these confrontations, otherwise the risk of falling into the negative effects of this globalizing rhetoric is extremely high and most of all counterproductive. The help has to be of support, behind the scenes not overstepping and disregarding on-field institutions. Finally, this is just one of the many instances, present in the African continent, that have shown unconditional support to local communities. Some NGOs have fallen in the business trap of the international system while others have tried to remain as faithful to their aims as possible. There is much more that can be done and much that can be taught, but it is particularly important to know where to start.

CONCLUSION

This thesis undertook a comprehensive examination of the United Nations' (UN) involvement in the Greater Horn of Africa Region (GHR), critically assessing its achievements and shortcomings while proposing alternative approaches for enhanced efficacy. Through an extensive analysis of historical contexts, UN interventions, and the broader implications of international aid, this study has elucidated both the successes and the inherent challenges of international efforts in shaping Africa's developmental trajectory.

The initial chapters provided a robust historical foundation, tracing Africa's complex journey from pre-colonial times, through the colonial era, to its present post-colonial state. Understanding this history is imperative for contextualizing the contemporary socio-political and economic landscapes. The legacy of colonialism has indelibly influenced current governance structures, economic policies, and social dynamics. The arrival of development aid and the subsequent involvement of the UN were pivotal in addressing the continent's myriad challenges, albeit with mixed outcomes.

The UN's contributions to Africa, particularly in humanitarian aid, peacekeeping, and development programmes, have been substantial. Humanitarian efforts have tackled critical issues such as food security, healthcare, and refugee support. Initiatives like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and programmes by agencies such as the World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) have provided essential services and support to millions. In peacekeeping, the UN has played a crucial role in conflict zones, striving to create space for diplomacy and protect civilians. Despite numerous challenges, these missions have undoubtedly saved some lives and offered a semblance of stability in war-torn regions. Development programmes have attempted to yield success, particularly in enhancing infrastructure, education, and economic development. The transformation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) into the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) exemplifies how the UN has supported African-led initiatives aimed at sustainable development. The chapter's aim is to reflect on what can be really seen as a success, as contrasting numbers

have shown that, the glory halo proposed by the UN isn't as rosy as it seems. On the contrary, although this section's purpose was to show the positive works of the UN, the underlying message, was that, contrary to the framing of results shown in official annual reports, the UN reach has not been eminent. Worrying numbers are spiking and plummeting. Nevertheless, the analysis explored how, not all blames can be laid on the international system. The reality is that poor management and the carelessness of welfare states in effective and culturally respectful action plans of the UN, together with, all the negative effects of globalization on the global south and the scars from the colonial past created a situation such as the one now presented in Africa. The continent is on the verge, either of an economic boom that will confirm its position as a global power, or either of a definite fall in the poverty cycle.

Despite some successes, the UN's efforts have frequently fallen short. The case studies of Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Rwanda highlight significant failures in peacekeeping and conflict prevention. These missions exposed critical flaws in the UN's approach, including insufficient resources, inadequate planning, and a lack of robust engagement with local realities. The tragic non-intervention during the Rwandan genocide remains one of the most profound failures, underscoring the severe consequences of inaction and the limitations of the UN's mandate. The solution to further problems created by the Security Council and the blue betters are a difficult matter to tackle. To eradicate the negative implication of such measures means changing the core of the UN security system, from the "Veto Power" to the principle of non-intervention but most importantly the peacekeeping refrainment. In the third chapter, a more in-depth analysis of the economic interventions and their unintended consequences is also explored. Critiques by scholars such as Dambisa Moyo and analyses of the economic and political dynamics of aid dependency reveal how international aid, despite its noble intentions, often exacerbates the very problems it aims to resolve.

This thesis advocates for exploring alternative approaches that are more efficacious and better suited to Africa's unique socio-economic fabric. One recommendation is to enhance local engagement by increasing the involvement of local communities and leaders in the planning and implementation of aid programmes to ensure they are

contextually relevant and sustainable. Strengthening governance is another critical area, focusing on improving governance structures and reducing corruption to ensure that aid reaches its intended beneficiaries and is utilized effectively. Another important recommendation is diversifying aid models. Shifting away from a one-size-fits-all approach to more tailored aid strategies that consider the specific needs and circumstances of different regions and countries can lead to more effective outcomes. Promoting economic independence by encouraging initiatives that foster economic resilience, such as supporting local industries, improving education systems, and investing in sustainable agricultural practices, is also crucial. Finally, enhancing regional cooperation through intergovernmental organizations like the African Union (AU) and fostering partnerships with regional organizations can improve collective action and resource-sharing. These strategies aim to address the root causes of the challenges faced and promote sustainable development tailored to the unique socio-economic fabric of African societies.

FINAL REMARKS

It goes without saying that the United Nations system cannot be cancelled. The reason being not, because of its importance and successful action, but because too many people would be left jobless. Imagine only in the FAO was to close down, only in Rome, more than 6.000 people with become unemployed. But the reasoning behind this thesis was never to disincentivize UN action and advocate for its closure. The reasoning was simple. Trying to show that, not all numbers, not all call to action, posts, report and so on are truthful, or better they cannot be read unless there is a contextualization of the past. When the average interested internet user sees a call to action tweet (now X) from a UN agency it doesn't question him/herself about how is it possible that they have been using the same exact words, posts, numbers, emotionally challenging language for the past 75 years? Why doesn't this average user wonder and stops to reflect on this stillness, on how many years he or she has been hearing the same exact messages and nothing has changed. Another reason behind my thesis is the disturbing fact that, especially in the past few years, you either support something all the way or you don't, there is no in-between. No matter the good or the bad actions, if you support something you cannot criticize it. I find this wrong, the UN system is noble in its intent but becoming worse and worse in the factual act. We should be able to criticize constructively even the biggest institutions, even those with peaceful and respectful values. We should be able to say that the managerial level of these institutions has become completely detached with the work goals. We should be able to complain about the fact that too much money is spent every year on headquarters and sponsored events. The UN should be able to admit that certain modalities have done no good, by being proactive better ways can be found and more people can be helped, after all this is the purpose of unity among the world, work together, learning from the mistakes for a better and more humane planet. People like Nicolo Govoni should inspire everyone, that change can be done without exploitation. Businesses like Farshire show how there can be real cooperation and no overpowering. There is room for successful action, I do believe in the international system, although it failed the world many times, I do believe in cooperation and country to country support. I do believe that one day, people will look at this beautiful continent, Africa, and see it as equal, not as a pit full of pity and sorrow that yearns for Western powers to save it and

rich people to mindlessly send their checks because they ran out of ideas for this season's latest fancy charity dinner.

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