

The Effects of Aid in Somalia: Unintended Consequences and Lessons Learned

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ABSTRACT

Prior to the collapse of the central government in 1991, Somalia received substantial aid for infrastructure development. However, concerns arose regarding the effectiveness and sustainability of these projects, as they were often driven by political interests rather than the genuine developmental needs of the country. The subsequent civil war and humanitarian crisis led to a surge in aid from the international community, primarily in the form of emergency relief and humanitarian assistance. However, the aid provided was fragmented, uncoordinated, and short-term, resulting in a lack of sustainable development in Somalia. While acknowledging the positive role of foreign aid in addressing humanitarian crises and developmental challenges, this research highlights the unintended consequences associated with aid interventions. These consequences include aid dependency, negative spillover effects, governance issues, environmental impact, and the perpetuation of poverty.

The research also recognizes the effectiveness of foreign aid in achieving its intended objectives, supported by extensive research and evidence-based practices. Sectors like health and education have demonstrated positive outcomes, while emerging sectors like information and communication technologies require further evidence-based interventions. Given the pressing global challenges of climate change, rising global inequality, and the emergence of autocratic regimes, evidence-based international development interventions are imperative. However, financial constraints, ideological clashes, and political hurdles pose significant obstacles to progress in the international development sector. The research concludes by emphasizing the need for a comprehensive and coordinated approach to aid in Somalia, addressing the underlying causes of aid dependency and mitigating the unintended negative consequences. It calls for careful planning, execution, and evaluation of aid interventions to maximize positive outcomes and minimize harm.

Key Words: Foreign aid, Somalia, unintended consequences, aid dependency, diversion of aid

JEL Classification: C23, R41 (up to 5 codes)

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