Vancouver Youth Model United Nations 2019

African Union
Background Guide

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My name is Emma-Jane Burns, and I am honoured to be your director of the African Union for VYMUN 2019. Throughout the 2019 conference, I strive to develop a professional, academic, and enlightening experience for delegates. This iteration of the African Union will be looking into two topics: Over-Reliance on Foreign Aid and Sustainable Agricultural Technology.

Our first topic, Over-Reliance on Foreign Aid, is a topic which has been heavily debated within the African since post-colonial times. The topic is complex and requires nations to evaluate their unique circumstances to resolve the issues facing their country; solutions must be comprehensive, as there is no one size fits all approach. The African Union's goal is to foster unity between African nations to grow the continent's political and social-economic growth. Throughout the past decade, it has proven difficult for African nations to find a balance between accepting foreign aid, and fostering long-term development. Delegates are encouraged to look at the long term impact foreign aid has had on their nation, and discover what has really helped or hindered their nation's development.

Our second topic, Sustainable Agricultural Technology, is broad. Agriculture has been a vital source for African people, economy, and prosperity since the beginning of the modern era. The issues that Africa faces in regard to agriculture are deep rooted, and require culture, social, and government changes to address. The African Union must look for comprehensive solutions and policies to address the issue at hand, as every region of Africa has its own specific agricultural system.

If any delegates have questions or concerns regarding the African Union, please feel free to contact me at au@vymun.com.

Sincerely,
Emma-Jane Burns
Director of AU | VYMUN 2019

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Topic 1: Over-Reliance on Foreign Aid

Questions to Consider

1. How has international aid helped your nation's social, political, and economic growth?
2. What could be done to make foreign aid more efficient?
3. Does foreign aid sacrifice a recipient nation's sovereignty and put their regimes under the influence of foriegn powers?
4. How can nations use foreign aid to promote long term growth?

Overview

Since the dawn of colonization, African countries have relied upon foreign aid to support and finance projects for economic growth, infrastructure, technical assistance, and basic commodities necessary for human existence. As postcolonial developing countries, African nations cannot currently be self-sustaining and, therefore, must rely on foreign aid. The developed world sees foreign aid as a tool for Africa to "catch up" with Western economies and society, yet the existence of international aid in Africa has seemed to come at a great cost. The current state of the West's influence on Africa has been called neo-colonialism: the economic, political, or social pressure from powerful foreign nations influencing smaller nation's sovereignty.

Throughout the past decade, foreign aid has not been able to amass enough funds to meet Africa's developmental needs. The development of Africa's infrastructure, energy, hospitals, social programs, education, is desperately needed, and critics say foreign aid is preventing this growth, as it allows African government systems to be replaced by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). African nations are falling into great debt from foreign loans, endangering the African economy and sovereignty. On the other hand, foreign aid has also brought relief to the continent, having saved 700 million lives in the past semi-century.[1] International economic aid cannot be categorized as either good or bad; it saves countless lives and is instrumental with its support during humanitarian crises, but it creates weaker regimes which cannot support themselves. As the African Union continues to make strides away from

[1] https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-global-progress/international-aid-saves-700-million-lives-but-gains-at-risk-report-idUSKCN1MO0W9

reliance on Western nations, the AU must realize that any resolution must be comprehensive and address each region of the continent specifically — a reflection of the widely-used United Nations' phrase "African Solutions to African problems"[2].

Different types of international aid have different capabilities and effectiveness. Foreign aid can come in the form of supply of funds, investment, loans, food, military, personnel for hospitals, schools, and resources. Furthermore, foreign aid could be provided as a donor nation's show of diplomatic approval of a recipient nation, or even as an act to strengthen military alliances or aid a humanitarian crisis and support citizens in suffering. Moreover, aid may also be provided to expand a benefactor's influence on the culture, military, or industry of the beneficiary: a clear example of how international aid can be used as a tool for developing nations to wield over developing nations. The six common forms of foreign aid: bilateral aid, multilateral aid, tied aid, project aid, military aid, and voluntary aid.[3]

Bilateral aid consists of assistance from one government directly to another, through the transfer of capital, typically from a developed nation to a developing nation. Bilateral aid is most often strategic political or humanitarian aid, directed to promote long term development. Multilateral aid is international aid pooled together by multiple governments into large organizations, such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The organization then takes the funds and supplies aid through its own programs. Tied aid in which the donor will either supply funds, loans, or grants to a recipient country to spend, but will set mandates on the where the funds may be spent. Project aid is when international aid is used to finance or build a particular project such as a school or hospital. Project aid overlaps with other types of aid, but is particular because the funding is going directly into a specific project. Military aid is either the flow of military equipment, arms, or personnel from a developed nation to a recipient country. Oftentimes, military aid entails a powerful nation selling a smaller nation arms or defense contracts. Voluntary aid is is charity international aid. The aid is funded to nations through NGOs or other charity organizations. For example, Doctors Without Borders supplies voluntary aid to African nations, such as when Doctors without Borders worked in Kenya in 2018 to treat 3,318 patients after incidents of sexual violence.[4]

The benefits of international aid include opportunities for immediate humanitarian relief, establishment of positive relationships between foreign governments, and promotion of peace, stability, and overall global harmony. Contrarily, the shortfalls of economic aid often include prevention of substitution for domestic savings and investments, possible interference with

[2] https://issafrica.org/iss-today/african-solutions-to-african-problems
[3] https://www.intelligenteconomist.com/foreign-aid/
[4] https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/what-we-do/countries/kenya

recipient nations' economic and political regimes, and potential delay of recipient nations' capital and infrastructure development.

Timeline

Late 15th century: Portugal lays claim to Cape Verde through the Treaty of Tordesillas, establishing Cape Verde as one of their colonies. The Portuguese colony is one of the first of many modern European colonies in Africa.

17th century: As Europe strives to create stronger economies in their colonies overseas, European colonies in Africa receive large sums of money from their conquerors to improve infrastructure. Colonizing nations reap the capital of their investments, such as improved trade, access to grains, fish, dried game and livestock, and access to the slave trade.

19th century: A popular ideology that encourages poorer nations to catch up economically to Western countries like the United States of America, Australia, and Canada, fuels an increase of funding from developed nations to developing nations.

1920s: Germany, France, and Britain regularly provide aid — monetary, military, and trade — to their respective African colonies to develop infrastructure. For example, 90% of the total British colonial government expenditures in its African colonies are on administration, public debt, military operations, security, health care, education, and public works[5]. However, oftentimes, to gain returns on the expenditures in these nations, colonial governments enforce strict taxation on its already impoverished colonies. In the case of British colonial rule, the British colonies force Africans living in Britsh colonies to pay a "Hut Tax"[6]. The "Hut Tax" forces anyone, rich or poor, to pay a tax for owning a hut[7].

1930s: Wealthy American industrialists give developmental aid to developing nations through public service foundations, such as the Ford and Rockefeller Foundations. In 1935, the Ford and Rockefeller Foundation funded 14 million USD (200 million USD with current inflation rates) on developing a preventative vaccine for yellow fever, a disease that crippled the globe, particularly Africa[8].

1950s: The decolonization of Africa takes place, causing precipitous and radical regime changes. Some nations gained independence through diplomacy, such as Ghana gaining independence

[5] https://www.ewoutfrankema.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Colonial_Taxation_Br.Africa.EEH_.2011.pdf
[6] https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/imperialism-and-socialism-context-africa
[7] Ibid.
[8] https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/about-us/our-history/

from Britain. However, in other countries, independence is gained through revolts and war, such as the Portueguse Colonial War in Angola[9].

September 1964: The African Development Bank (AfDB) is established to promote social and economic development of Africa.

October 1970: The United Nations General Assembly passes a resolution that includes a target of 0.7% of donor nations' GDP being delegated to foreign aid[10].

December 1971: In the wake of civil unrest in Nigeria, the humanitarian non-governmental organization (NGO), Doctors Without Borders, is established. Doctors Without Borders has consistently provided humanitarian aid in Africa to Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameron, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bisseu, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, for the past decade[11].

July 1985: Live Aid, a benefit concert initiative, is held to raise money for the Ethiopian famine. Nearly 1.9 billion people watch the initiative, raising 127 million USD[12]. The impact of the initiative is controversial, with some critics saying that foreign aid causes more harm than good.

April 1994: The United Nations Security Council votes to send in 5,000 UN Peacekeeping troops to Rwanda to aid an intervention in the Rwanda Genocide in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The troops arrive at the conflict, months after the genocide has ceased. The government of France also holds a separate intervention in which French troops create a "humanitarian zone", saving both the victims of the genocide, the Tutsi, and the genocide's plotters, Hutu extremists. The interventions prove that although foreign interventions often have good intentions, they are not always effective.

2005: Following the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) establishes the United Nations Mission (UNMIS) to promote human rights, protection, and peace in Sudan. Personnel are deployed in the region, but unfortunately, conflict breaks out in 2010.

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[9] https://www.sahistory.org.za/dated-event/ghana-demands-independence-britain
[10] https://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/the07odagnitarget-ahistory.htm
[11] https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/what-we-do/countries
[12] https://www.nationalgeographic.org/thisday/jul13/live-aid-raises-140-million-relieve-african-famine/

October 2014: The United Kingdom and other foreign donors suspend 490 million dollars worth of economic aid payments to Tanzania, in the wake of allegations that corrupt Tanzanian officials are stealing portions of funds[13].

2017: The Chinese government and affiliated banks and contracting firms loan more than 143 billion USD to African nations and African state-owned enterprises (SOEs) for developmental projects[14]. The majority of Chinese loans qualify as "official development aid".

2018: Sub-Saharan African economic growth is projected to reach 3.1% in 2018, and to average 3.6 per cent in 2019[15]. The economic growth — for the fourth year in a row — remains below population growth[16].

Historical Analysis

Historically, foreign aid began as a way for Western nations to invest in their colonies in order to gain capital. International aid in colonial Africa often appeared as development of infrastructures, programs, and agricultural systems simply for the colonizer's benefit, as described in the timeline. Colonizers could use foreign aid as a tool to assert dominance over their respective colonies. This tool allowed colonizers to decide the future of the colonized nations' social and economic development, keeping African countries more placated to their colonizer's will. During the movement to decolonize African states in the late-mid 1950s-60s, the purpose of supplying foreign aid changed, due to African nations gaining independence. The Western move to decolonize was sudden and unorganized, leading to political turmoil, revolts, and violence in nations that were already unstable. Many African states fell into deep civil unrest without any solid political regime or any ability to be self-sustaining. Violence broke out, particularly in the Sub-Saharan African states. Western powers pushed out various long term sustainment plans; however, these often failed, leaving African nations in severe poverty.

By the turn of the century, Western donor nations began to recognize the importance of the altruistic aspects of foreign aid. Many countries began donating large sums of money to humanitarian issues overseas, in an attempt to reach the UN's goal of 0.7% of each country's gross national income devoted to providing foreign aid[17]. Currently, humanitarian aid continues to focus on health care, food, humanitarian support, peacekeeping troops, and economic aid,

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[13] https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2014/oct/13/uk-and-international-donors-suspend-tanzania-aid-after-corruption-claims
[14] https://www.forbes.com/sites/panosmourdoukoutas/2018/12/13/america-not-china-is-the-largest-donor-to-africa/#17ade9f25af3
[15] https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/afr/overview
[16] Ibid.
[17] https://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/the07odagnitarget-ahistory.htm

which is often used as a last resort in severe crises. Although providing financial support seems noble, an increase in economic funding does not mean that all the money will be effectively used. Oftentimes, humanitarian aid degrades sovereign nation's democracy, as it can be siphoned off by corrupt governments, be allocated at the wrong time, and foster basic civil services to be dependent on foreign aid.

Throughout the past decade, overseas aid funds in Africa have been used to solve immediate issues, instead of creating plans for long term development. This means that many social service programs, such as health, crisis, and infrastructure programs, all rely merely on foreign investment. For the past few years, as Africa's economy begins to flourish, some African nations are beginning to turn away from short term aid and are looking towards long term development and economic growth.

Past UN Action

Africa and the United Nations have long had a strained relationship. Africa is the centre of attention when it comes to international issues; however, the viewpoints of African countries are seldom considered by the international community when it comes to finding solutions. The role of Africa itself in the UN can be discredited. When the UN Charter was established, few African nations were independent, as the majority remained under colonial power. The process of decolonization throughout the 1960s brought a transformation to the dynamic between African nations and the UN. African countries became members of the UN and gained a new platform to communicate their national issues and propose respective solutions. To date, the dynamic between Africa and the UN continues to be tense, with many believing ill-treatment from past colonization is to blame. To resolve this tension and lack of trust between the AU and the UN and strengthen dialogue between the two organizations, the UN, FES New York, and the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) held a conference from June 20-21st, 2008. Although there are still some levels of unease between the two organizations, the UN and AU now work together and cooperate to reach common goals. The UN advocates for the needs of African nations to foreign aid donors, and the AU works to decide where foreign funds are needed in Africa. The AU allocates the funds based off of the council's discretion. Generally, African nations run their own foreign aid policies due to the lack of clear African policies on the specifics of accepting aid.

Forming a quarter of all UN member nations, Africa makes up the largest regional group in the United Nations. Unfortunately, African nations have struggled to come to unified decisions and agree on a consolidated position. On June 20 2008, a conference was held by the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) in Capetown to build and reform African nations' relations with one another. The conference brought up policy recommendations from African diplomats and UN practitioners. Although seen as a widely successful meeting, the African nations still continue to struggle to put up a unified front and agree on resolutions.

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) was established in 1958 in a joint initiative by the UN and AU to promote economic growth and unity in Africa.[18] The ECA is a regional commission under the UN and is directed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The ECA aims to grow African economies and address developmental issues in Africa. Moreover, in 2005, the AU and the African Human Court of Human Rights and Justice formed a joint court initiative to review cases of war crimes, human trafficking, genocide, terrorism, and crimes against humanity.[19] The court has two different sections: a human rights section and general affairs section. This court aims to unify the African justice system and serve in times of pressing humanitarian issues when cooperation is necessary. Furthermore, the African Union and the United Nations established a joint task force in November 2017. This peacekeeping task force creates a partnership between the UN and AU to provide peace and security in Africa. Using the task force, the United Nations and the African Union work cooperate to provide emergency healthcare, food, and shelter to African citizens in crisis. Currently, it focuses on addressing humanitarian situations in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau, Libya, Mali, South Sudan.

Current Situation

According to the ONE Campaign report, foreign aid has saved almost 700 million lives in the past 25 years.[20] In sub-Saharan Africa, because of sufficient foreign aid, maternal mortality deaths declined by over 15 per cent, under-five deaths declined by 35 per cent, and death due to AIDS declined by 40 per cent.[21] Moreover, the Global Health Report found in 2017 that the United States' anti-malaria initiative alone has saved the lives of nearly two million African children.[22] The benefits of foreign aid are vast, and in a continent in which 19,000 children are dying daily because of preventable diseases, the need for it is apparent. According to UNICEF, approximately 27.4 percent of Africans do not have food security: the highest food insecurity rate in the world.[23] In 2018, the ONE Campaign released a report, which said that without the continuance of international aid, progress to reduce preventable deaths since the 1990s could stall, and even reverse.[24] Furthermore, access to education in Africa is strikingly limited and

[18] https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/37401/meeting-joint-au-eu-un-taskforce-address-migrant-situation-libya_en
[19] Ibid.
[20] https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/international-aid-donor-countries-more/
[21] https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg3
[22] https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/malaria
[23] https://www.worldhunger.org/africa-hunger-poverty-facts-2018/
[24] Ibid.

inadequate. In fact, nearly nine million young girls in Africa will never obtain the privilege to go to school, compared to approximately six million boys who face the same circumstances.[25] UNESCO has previously stated that Africa accounts for over half of the world's primary-aged children not attending school.[26] Unfortunately, aid to Africa continues to not match the continent's needs, with many Western nations unable to meet the UN's 0.7% of GDP donor goal. In less than half a century, Africa is expected to obtain a population larger than all the G20 countries combined. Foreign aid can allow for an African population that has proper medical and health care, has sufficient access to education, and, in turn, has the opportunity to flourish in the future.

Unfortunately, not all foreign aid provided to Africa is effective. Throughout the past decade, many funds have been siphoned off or embezzled by officials, allocated to wrong sections of government, or lost to corruption. For example, international aid which was initially meant to be allocated to the health sector can be relocated by corrupt governments to the military. Often, foreign aid funds are not put into place at the right time nor place, as seen in the timeline, thus rendering the aid futile. Due to loose enforcement taxes and regulations, aid repeatedly ends up in the wrong hands. Instead of being given to the poor who need it, the money is used to line the pockets of the elite. Indeed, the Center for Global Development declares billions of dollars of foreign aid—nearly ten per cent— is lost to corruption annually.

Many historians say that international aid has been failing Africa since the age of colonization. According to a 2014 report by the Minister of Peace and Disarmament, Africa gains approximately 134 billion USD in foreign aid yearly.[27] This sum includes humanitarian aid, foreign loans to both private and government sectors, and grants.[28] However, Africa pays foreign entities approximately 218 USD billion through debt repayments, company profits, illegal industrial activity and financing.[29] Furthermore, African nations suffer from massive brain drain which occurs when talent and skills developed in one area move to another part of the world with generally more opportunities. These figures suggest Africa suffers a net loss of $85 billion USD annually, most of which is going to the western world.[30] In the current era, aid is often the commodification of natural resources available for exploitation by transcontinental companies, privatization of public assets to private owners, and liberalization of economic markets.[31] These then use public funds to subsidize and promote the accumulation of wealth overseas to the rich while leaving the poor impoverished. This occurs especially in Africa — a

[25] http://uis.unesco.org/en/topic/education-africa
[26] Ibid.
[27] https://newint.org/features/2018/11/01/giving-aid-to-africa
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Ibid.

country which is not characterized as poor, yet has a substantial wealth gap between the upper and lower classes. Furthermore, the majority of foreign aid in Africa is not traditional voluntary aid, but instead leans toward project aid, which distributes wealth back to the donor country, rather than directly benefiting the recipient country. For example, China has financed approximately 143 billion USD worth of loans to African countries since 2000.[32] These Chinese loans are widely viewed as unsustainable for borrowers and are regarded as a ploy to debt-trap African nations. To illustrate, in Kenya, a $3.2 billion USD railroad was financed and built by China outside the country's capital, Nairobi, in 2014.[33] Although a Kenyan railroad, the infrastructure project was financed, designed, constructed, and managed completely by China, leaving Kenyan construction firms and workers on the sidelines without employment and instead giving China's construction firms business. In addition, the railroad is not forecasted to gain enough returns to pay off China, making this infrastructure project one of countless loans China has made to Africa that likely cannot be paid off. China, in particular, seems to employ debt-trap diplomacy, which exploits developing nations by financing high-rate loans which cannot repaid, in an attempt to coerce in-debted nations to align with China on foreign issues. By receiving a multitude of loans for development from foreign bodies, Africa has been launched into deep debt, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, risking individual nations' sovereignty.

International aid to Africa is commonly provided by big development agencies that add layers of bureaucracy between aid and the African people, deteriorating the efficacy of foreign aid. Funds being directed into communities by large Organizations, often do not understand the issues, or direct funds non-efficiently. In 2003, over 80 independent aid agencies were operating 35,000 individual projects across the continent.[34] Each aid agency practices its own procedures and requirements, has its own goals, and is run by separate business models or parliaments. Bilateral donors have their own procedure, and although donor agencies can work together, donors generally do not coordinate aid themselves. For example, in 2018, there were over fifteen agencies separately fighting malaria in Africa, some of which were based in the same regions. The lack of effectivity whilst administering aid in Africa has been a source of concern for the past 25 years, and fragmentation of aid can be to blame. Too many individual agencies, operations, and procedures are clearly responsible for the lack of success from these efforts. In the past decade the number of aid projects financed by bilateral donors has skyrocketed. With inadequate administrative abilities, the fragmentation of aid effortlessly swamps less developed African nations.

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[32] https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3020394/are-chinese-infrastructure-loans-putting-africa-debt-trap
[33] https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3019603/kenyas-chinese-built-railway-hit-travellers-safari-line
[34] https://www.un.org/en/sections/about-un/funds-programmes-specialized-agencies-and-others/

Foreign aid cannot be boiled down into simply good or bad. Instead, varying types of foreign aid have different levels of effectiveness and benefits to African citizens. As Africa has had a heavy reliance on overseas aid for decades, the continent, in its current state, would likely not be able to continue to grow and develop without foreign aid and investment. Africa's stagnant growth could be blamed on the economic disparity between the upper and lower classes, corrupt leaders, and reprobate legislation. The United Nations continues to affirm that there must be "African Solutions to African Problems".[35] For sustainable African development, aid that will be effective long-term should be prioritized. Indeed, certain African countries are looking to make a paradigm shift: to use their own resources instead of relying on those overseas. For example, in Africa, nearly sixty per cent of health care financing is from private foreign sources, and about half of the total health spending goes to private providers.[36] Instead of relying on public facilities, the majority of poorer Africans rely on private or NGO-run health clinics. This means that African public health facilities are never allowed to develop, as funds are placed into private sectors. Consequently, African health care becomes far too reliant on foreign sources. Moreover, according to the IMF, African nations makes up some of the world's fastest-growing economies in 2019.[37] Sub-Saharan countries such as Ethiopia, Rwanda, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Benin, Kenya, Uganda, and Burkina Faso have economies that continue to expand. Ultimately, Africa evidently must continue to develop and grow, and foreign aid, if used effectively, could aid Africa on its journey.

Possible Solutions

Africa's reliance on foreign aid is deeply rooted and ingrained in African regimes; any solution to the issue must be specific to the region at hand and comprehensively regard all issues governments face. Foreign aid in Africa arose centuries ago with the colonization of African nations, but now African nations are now striving to be completely independent from the West. African nations need sustainable and humane economic growth to accompany their rapidly growing population. Each nation must look into their resources, assets, and citizens to use to expand their economy. Foreign aid is a double-edged sword but can be a useful tool for African nations to stimulate their economies. Above all, solutions to Africa's reliance on foreign economies must look long term, to the benefit of Africa as a bright and prosperous continent.

Sustainable Use of Non-Governmental Organizations

NGOs pose two major problems to African nations: fragmentation of aid and potential replacement of government — particularly medical — institutions. Experts note that the most effective use of foreign aid is when recipient countries' ministries set their own framework and priorities and then ask donor nations to fund their plans. This allows African systems to develop

[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid.
[37] https://qz.com/africa/1522126/african-economies-to-watch-in-2019-and-looming-debt/

on their own. The systems are, thus, eventually able to fund themselves, whilst being functional immediately. For example, in Botswana, a government-funded program was successful in providing adequate HIV preventative care and helped reduce the number of infants contracting HIV from mothers. Contarily, Oxfam, a non profit group, continues to argue that aid must build and develop local capacity "rather than spawn parallel aid empires",[38] meaning that using donor experts to build, run, and evaluate all foreign aid operation, instead of local people, reduces the effectiveness and impact of foreign aid because the local people who are receiving the aid itself have little to no input. The Paris Development (PD) suggests that aid-recipient governments should establish aid development programs for foreign donors to use. Instead of aid being fragmented, the PD believes it should be directed to areas that are of lesser concern and replace local institutions and development.

Expanding Resources

Africa contains some of the world's most resource-rich ecosystems, which are largely untapped to this day. The continent is the last remaining energy frontier on the planet and contains oil and gas reserves which could establish Africa as the new global hub for energy. Experts say that oil and gas could create a tremendous profit for Africa. Currently, an estimated 57% of Africa's export earnings come solely from hydrocarbons[39]. To ensure steady profit, Africa should continue to sustainably diversify its markets. Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Libya, Nigeria, South Sudan, Sudan, Tunisia, and Mozambique all contain many natural gases which could be used to gain profit[40]. Oil reserves in these regions have grown by 150%, and in 2012, these reserves contained 130.3 billion barrels[41]. This is largely due to the $2 trillion USD of predicted investment in African nations by 2036[42]. Other resources remain untapped as well, as Angola, Botswana, Central African Republic, and the DRC all contain proven diamond reserves[43]. Similarly, Benin, Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Mali, South Africa, Tanzania are home to many gold sources[44]. Evidently, Africa has the capacity to grow a sustainable investment climate through resource use expansion, but nations must be careful to prioritize sustainability in economic growth and investment.

Reducing Corruption

An estimated eight per cent of foreign aid — 8 billion USD — is lost to corruption regularly, although the exact numbers lost to corruption are unknown[45]. Following

[38] https://www.africaportal.org/publications/overcoming-africas-addiction-to-foreign-aid-a-look-at-some-financial-engineering-to-mobilize-other-resources/
[39] https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/interactive/2016/10/mapping-africa-natural-resources-161020075811145.html
[40] Ibid.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.
[45] https://www.cgdev.org/blog/how-much-aid-really-lost-corruption

decolonization, Africa has struggled with corruption and in an attempt to combat the growing prevalence of corruption, has had many anti-corruption initiatives Comprising of 18 different anti-corruption member agencies, the Commonwealth Anti-corruption Centre is an existing example of Nations should put forward clear frameworks for how foreign aid is being used in their country. There should be more transparency between the transactions of foreign donors and government organizations, and each nation should employ sound fiscal and monetary policies which are specific to their region and regime. With the reduction of corruption, Africa's investment climate will flourish, not only in infrastructure, but also in technology and science.

Diversification of Financing

Currently, China has financed $75 billion USD on various projects in 50 African countries, an amount which likely cannot be paid off.[46] Nearly half of Africa's internationally contracted construction is carried out by China. Africa has fallen trap to political dependency and foreign influence on their governments due to deals with debt-trap nations. African nations should strive to put stricter and clearer policies in place when receiving foreign loans and aim to only engage in foreign interactions which do not risk their sovereignty.

Continental Trade

On May 30th 2019, the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) was officially inaugurated. The free trade agreement was signed by fifty-two of Africa's fifty-five nations, establishing the largest free-trade region in the world, second only to the World Trade Organization.[47] If successful, AfCFTA will connect 1.2 billion people and more than $3 trillion in trade and GDP.[48] Although the agreement has been put into force, AfCFTA still work to implement it. The agreement has yet to be ratified by Benin, Eritrea, and Nigeria due to worries that the free trade agreement would harm domestic manufacturing. Nigeria is the continent's most populous nation and is home to Africa's largest economy; its absence from AfCFTA reflects the issue continental trade in Africa faces: protectionism. Unfortunately, tariffs continue to be a key and an essential source of profit for African nations. African countries are hesitant to remove tariffs, demonstrated by past varying compliance levels to the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). AfCFTA would see a 90% fall of tariffs on trade that would thrive in Africa's local, regional, and continental areas.[49] If put in place, the AfCFTA would boost continental trade by more than 50% by 2022.[50] The agreement would shift Africa away from extractive exports, such as natural resources, and instead towards more industrial products, while creating jobs for African citizens in the process. Whilst free trade is on the decline in the West,

[46] Ibid.
[47] https://www.cfr.org/blog/african-continental-free-trade-area-new-horizon-trade-africa
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.

African nations should continue to expand their cooperation and trade with one another. Free trade may become a path to sustainable wealth and economy in Africa as a measure to prevent over-reliance on foreign aid.

Bloc Positions

As defined by UNICEF, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita is “gross domestic product divided by mid-year population”— essentially a measure of a nation’s economic growth and status. Currently, Africa’s poorest nations have a foreign aid shortfall of 125 billion USD in the education, health, and welfare sectors. According to a research paper from Virginia Tech, the majority of foreign funds tend to be invested into wealthier regions inside countries, instead of the poorer regions that gravely need funds. For example, Kenya’s poorest provinces, the Northern and North Eastern regions, receive fewer investment projects than wealthy provinces.[51] Poorer nations’ share of foreign aid has fallen in the last decade, while middle income nations’ share has risen.[52] Moreover, the Overseas Development Institute released a report detailing that generally, middle income nations are able to survive completely without foreign aid, especially with restored tax systems and controlled national expenditures.[53]

Developed African Nations

African nations with the highest GDPs per capita, such as Nigeria, South Africa, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, continue to request foreign aid, but are also beginning to advocate for foreign investment and trade agreements. Often, these nations are stable enough to have trade and a foreign investment climate, which less developed African nations lack. Nigeria, the African nation with the highest GDP in 2019, is one of the top recipients of foreign aid on the continent.[54] The nation, which historically received large sums of aid from the United States, is able to spend millions of USD annually on economic development, education, and social services, spurring the country forward with funds that encourage long term growth.[55] Foreign aid has also significantly advanced economic growth in Morocco. The United States is a prominent donor of Morocco; through bilateral foreign aid agreements and trade agreements between the two nations, Morocco’s exports have risen 119% since 2005, totalling to 977 million USD[56]. As a result of Morocco’s economic expansion and relations with the United States, the nation has become the apex of foreign investment in Africa. Although Morocco continues to receive nearly 20 million USD in foreign aid annually to put towards development of education systems, social services,

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[51] https://qz.com/africa/1167199/in-africa-development-aid-is-reaching-the-relatively-rich-in-urban-areas-and-not-the-poor/
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] https://www.concernusa.org/story/foreign-aid-by-country/
[55] Ibid.
[56] https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2017/04/20/making-africa-great-again-reducing-aid-dependency/

and democracy, the nation may be beginning to transition from receiving foreign aid in order to promote foreign trade and investment.

Intermediate GDP per Capita

Africa's intermediate GDP per Capita nations, such as Ethiopia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, require international aid resolve national issues, such as health, poverty, and education. Although these nations may strive to reduce foreign aid acceptance, they continue to rely on international aid. For example, Ethiopia has historically received tremendous amounts of foreign aid, estimated at several billion USD.[57] Ethiopia has stated that the country is aiming to move away from foreign aid and focusing on investment and trade with foreign nations. According to World Atlas, Ethiopia reduced its acceptance of foreign aid by 2 billion USD from 2013 to 2016, following substantial improvements to its economy.[58] However, despite progress to move towards independence from overseas aid, 78% of Ethiopians live off only 2 USD a day.[59] Subsequently, Ethiopia has requested 203.87 billion USD in foreign aid for 2020, planning to spend the majority of the funds on health care and implementation of economic programs.[60]

Undeveloped African Nations

As a result of high rates of poverty in these nations and a lack of solid government systems, these undeveloped African countries will continue to be reliant on foreign aid for the next decade.[61] For example, Malawi, a nation with a GDP per capita of 226 USD in 2015ー the lowest in Africaー relies on foreign aid to make up 40 percent of its national budget.[62] Malawi's already weak government facilities, hospitals, schools, and roads would collapse without aid. Although seemingly contradictory to the idea of international aid, the poorest African nations often receive the least foreign assistance. In 2016, less than twenty percent of traditional foreign aid was funded to the most undeveloped nations in the world, including Guinea, Burundi, Malawi, and the Central African Republic, all of which have GDPs per capita rounding out to less than 500 USD.[63] Furthermore, the amount of foreign aid provided to Côte D'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Mozambique, and Senegal have been sharply declining since 2010.[64] Nations with lower GDPs often devote their foreign aid to solve immediate issues, like food, humanitarian, or disease crises, and are often forced to request emergency aid over long term developmental aid.

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[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] https://borgenproject.org/tag/poverty-in-ethiopia/
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-030-04119-9_3
[63] https://theconversation.com/why-the-worlds-poorest-countries-dont-always-get-the-foreign-aid-they-need-94371
[64] Ibid.

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Topic 2: Sustainable Agricultural Technology

Questions to Consider

1. What government programs does your nation have to expand agricultural growth?

2. Why do farmers degrade their land, and how can nations facilitate the change of current agriculture farming practices?

3. How can the African Union implement new policies to successfully repair and revitalize the agrisystems to benefit farmers?

4. What investments can the African Union make to benefit small scale farmers across Africa?

Overview

Since the beginning of modern day Africa, agriculture and cultivation have been vital to the success of African communities. The agriculture industry has an extensive social and economic footprint in Africa. More than half of Africa's population relies on jobs that are connected, directly or indirectly, to agriculture, whether that be farming, marketing, transporting, or selling crops. In sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture accounts for approximately a quarter of the region's GDP.[65] Yet, the potential the African agriculture has to keep Africa fed and prosperous is largely untapped. Africa has only reached 15 percent of its agricultural potential, and many African nations, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, are not food secure and rely on expensive food imports to feed their impoverished populations.[66] During a time when African nations are facing extreme droughts, climate change, civil wars, and potential overpopulation, an agricultural transformation in Africa is key to the success of the continent. Agricultural transformation in Africa could look like the expansion of crop productiving, farmer security, and market efficiency.

The majority of African farmers live in rural areas, and farm using antiquated farming equipment and technologies. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAOSTAT) report that 61.4% of sub-Saharan Africans live in rural areas, and nearly 60% of these Africans work in the agricultural business.[67] The majority of these farmers do not have access to the necessary farming equipment — fertilizer, food silos, commercial crop networks — to have productive farming. Sub-saharan African farmers generally too poor to adopt long term sustainable

[65] https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/agriculture/our-insights/winning-in-africas-agricultural-market
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid.

cultivation strategies, forcing them to resort to negative, but cheaper, farming practices which degrade their land. For small-scale African farmers to thrive, there must be a governmental force to aid them to get access to necessary knowledge, technologies, and crops to farm with. African nations face many hurdles when it comes to developing their agricultural output, with the lack of investment in African farmers as one of the greatest issues. African farmers do not have the ability to grow, store, and transport their food easily due to underfunded agricultural programs. Without these programs, farmers are not provided with the necessary roads, silos, and climate-resistant seeds that can store food for extended periods of time so that their produce may eventually reach the commercial market.

Africa's population is on a steep incline; by 2050, the United Nations predicts that Africa will be home to nearly 30% of the global population, with 2.5 billion USD living on the continent.[68] This gives Africa two options: either to be a thriving agricultural work force which produces food for the global market, or have too many mouths to feed, with undernourishment rates higher than is seen today. In response to growing populations and low agricultural production rates, some African nations have established long-term programs to develop and promote agricultural growth, such as Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa, Ethiopia, Malawi, Tanzania, Algeria, and Mauritius. Each of these nations have specific programs to resolve their own agricultural issues and develop their agro-economy. Africa contains rich and varying climates, cultures, and crops, meaning that there is no one-size fits all agricultural policy which can resolve the deep rooted issues at play. Countries must focus on the strengths and pitfalls they contain within their region, and promote agricultural programs which help the issues they face.

Timeline

11000 BC: The agricultural development begins in Africa through the establishment of agricultural systems, domestic growing, and livestock herding.

9000 - 6000 BC: The African continent experiences a wet period that causes rivers to flow from mountains and the Sahara desert to become fertile. The Nile River rendered itself as a hub for cultivation of grain, game, fish, and shellfish. Regions with sustainably fertile lands became home to small community settlements; these communities cultivated methodologies to grow, dry, and store agriculture. Fishing settlements were established in areas spanning the Upper Nile, Lake Chad, and all the way to the Great Rift Valley in East Africa. During this time, North-East Africa domesticated flora and fauna, and enlisted the use of stone and bone tools to clear land for farming purposes, and to make weapons for hunting game.[69]

[68] https://www.un.org/en/sections/where-we-work/africa/
[69] https://www.thepatriot.co.zw/old_posts/history-of-land-and-agriculture-in-africa/

800 - 700 BC: Historians believe the practice of iron smelting is brought to North Africa by the Pheonicians around this time. The iron smelting process slowly moves across the continent, and is the catalyst for the Iron Age in the Zimbabwe region. The iron smelting is a key part of Africa's early agricultural development, as it allowed farmers to market farming tools and weapons, and with the introduction of iron smelting came the eventual dawn of industrialisation on the continent[70].

2002: A report from the Council on Foreign Relations reveals that 19 million tons of food products are transported to Sub-Saharan Africa annually.[71]

2008: The World Bank's Development 2008 Report states that Sub-Saharan Africa has eight key food staples: maize, wheat, millet, sorghum, cassava, bananas/plantains[72]. In comparison, Asia has merely two food staples: rice and wheat. A food staple is a food that comprises of a significant portion of the diet of a group of people, due to its regular consumption[73].

1980s: According to Jane Harrigan, a professor of Economics at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London, the 80s was when foreign aid began targeting the "social sectors such as health, education, and governance" rather than focusing on "productive sectors like agriculture and infrastructure", as it did previously.[74]

1981 - 2000: Sub-Saharan government funding for agricultural science declines by an average of 27 per cent, whereas the funding for agricultural science simultaneously increases by an average of 30% in the rest of the developing world.[75] The funding is said to have dropped due to a lack of political will to allocate budgets agriculture science over public-sector investment, budget cuts imposed by lenders such as the International Monetary Fund, and over-reliance on foreign aid as a crutch for food imports.

1990 - 2005: The World Bank is the largest donor to sub-Saharan African agriculture.

2003: With the creation of the Maputo Declaration, the African Union aims to allocate a minimum of 10 percent of government budgets to agriculture programs and development until

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[70] http://anthropology.msu.edu/anp264-ss13/2013/04/28/iron-age-kingdom-iron-smelting-in-africa-bonus-blog-post/

[71] https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/african-agriculture

[72] https://books.google.ca/books?id=MmDiWnqwBnIC&pg=PA229&lpg=PA229&dq=World+Bank+Development+2008+report+eight+major+food+staples+of+africa&source=bl&ots=Y38X8hJk-K&sig=ACfU3U2bumLXfZ9YJ1sNyeuH5o_mOn0Zrw&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjDztnqysLkAhW3GDQIHZlyDqQQ6AEwBnoECAkQAQ#v=onepage&q=World%20Bank%20Development%202008%20report%20eight%20major%20food%20staples%20of%20africa&f=false

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid.

2008. Out of fifty-four member nations, only two — Rwanda and Zambia — follow through with the agreement.[76]

2007: The World Bank releases a report that its agricultural donor strategy was ineffective, stating the bank had failed to meet its agricultural growth goals due to “weak political support and insufficient appreciation of reality on the ground.”[77]

2008: The financial crisis from 2007 to 2009 takes a toll on the agriculture and food sector, causing a world food price crisis in all global regions except Europe. Africa’s government expenditures on food fall by approximately 3 per cent.[78]

2014: The Malabo Declaration is presented by the African Union, in which signatory nations re-committed to the allocation of 10% of government budgets to agriculture.[79]

Historical Analysis

The introduction and development of agricultural practices, domestic agrology, and livestock herding between 11000 and 3500 BC was a catalyst to the dawn of modern day history in Africa.[80] The most recent hypothesis is that African plant cultivation either began in Egypt, Ethiopia, the Niger bend, the Sahel, Gambia, or the Zambezi River.[81] Despite this seemingly wide range of regions, historians collectively agree that by approximately 3000 BC, the practice of cultivation and animal domestication had spread across the entire African continent.[82] Farming communities broadened their plant stock bygrowing raffia, oil palm, palm, peas, groundnuts, and kola nuts. It is widely believed that rice was domesticated in Africa by 6000 BC; this brought many advantages to the Africans as rice is a stock that easily feeds many.[83] Furthermore, through cross fertilisation experimentation, ancient African farmers produced the cooking plantain, an African food staple to this day. Ancient farmers practised intercropping plants for upward of 5,000 years and 80% of farmers now still use a mixed intercropping system.[84] Africa traded crops with South-East Asia via the Indian ocean, bringing new produce to Africa. By the time the Ancient Greeks and Romans came to explore Africa, the continent had a thriving agricultural footing and had developed trade overseas.[85] It is important to note that each African region established its own growing crop cultivation system, as Africa is a large continent which

[76] https://au.int/
[77] https://www.worldbank.org/
[78] http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/investment/expenditure/en/
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.
[81] https://www.thepatriot.co.zw/old_posts/history-of-land-and-agriculture-in-africa/ .
[82] Ibid.
[83] https://www.irri.org/
[84] Ibid.
[85] https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history/ancient-greece

contains multiple climatic zones. The development and history of agriculture in Africa spans centuries, creating diverse and complex farming practices and systems which we see today.

During the late twentieth century, the Green Revolution began and the agricultural community across the globe benefited exponentially with the exception of Africa. In Asia in the 1960s, the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) was established, causing rice crop yields to double.[86] Comparably, Mexico developed high-yield disease-resistant wheat strains, bringing in a gain of six times more wheat yield than they experienced in the 1950s.[87] India and Pakistan also began growing modified wheat and rice which brought the two nations out of a near famine, and over the next half century, tripled wheat and rice yields. The high-yield wheat and rice crops produced in the Green Revolution brought global increases of crop productivity; however, in Africa, farming productivity fell greatly. Africa lacked a good climate, fertile soil, infrastructure to commercialize crop, governments who would subsidize inputs, and companies to research and sell farmers high-yield disease-resistant modified products such as seeds, fertilizer, and pesticide.[88] Contrarily, Asian and Latin American governments established government programs to teach new farming practices to farmers, provide credit, research new farming technologies, and to subsidize fertilizers, equipment, and farm land. For example, in India, the Food Corporation of India paid for and provided farmers with necessary grain at a guaranteed sustainable price.[89] African governments, distracted by corruption, humanitarian crises, and a range of other issues, did establish the same programs needed for agricultural productivity growth; however, they were remarkably ineffective. Today, Africa's farming yields are below half the global average and about 25% of what African farmers could potentially yield.[90] For example, efforts to relieve low crop yields due to wide-spread droughts were impeded due to dirty wars in Somalia, as the violence caused countless deaths.[91] In the 1980s, the same occurred in Ethiopia, despite attempts

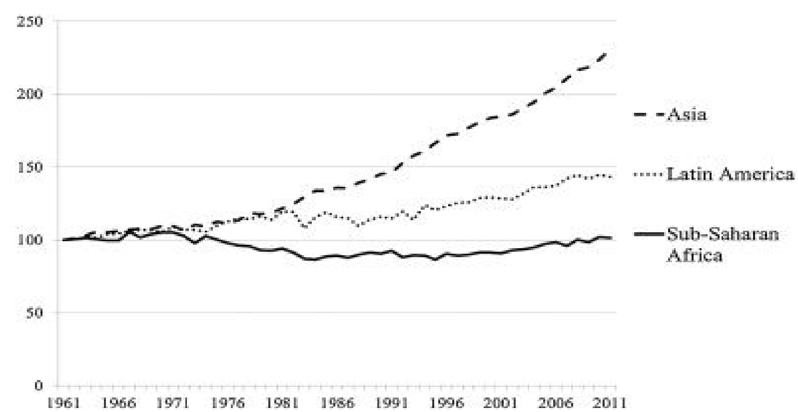

Fig. 1. The per capita production of food in Asia, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa, 1961-2011[92]

[86] http://www.fao.org/3/x6905e/x6905e04.htm
[87] https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/african-agriculture
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1573521414000116
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid.

by NGOs to provide food and seeds. The agricultural productivity on the continent is growing at approximately half the rate of the population, setting Africa up for widespread food shortages.[93]

Sub-Saharan African regimes arguably did not allocate enough resources and planning to the agricultural sector after the mid 1980s. Globally, the 1970s was a time when government spending on agriculture rose; nonetheless, average African spending on agricultural science declined by 27% between the 1980s to the 2000s.[94] Many governments historically, and even currently, spend less than one percent of their nation's national budgets on the sector. Considering the high risk of Africa's future inability to produce sufficient amounts of food to feed their population and stop food shortages, the lack of government funding is concerning.[95] This decline of spending on agricultural development across Africa is speculated to widely because of the depravity of African government led efforts to increase Africa's agricultural yield. For example, in the 1970s and 1980s, Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Nigeria established plans for agricultural reform, but the efforts failed, as regimes pulled funding for the sector. Unfortunately, some believe that African regimes are becoming too dependent on NGO international food aid and is partly to blame for African governments' reluctance to fund agricultural programs. The Food and Agriculture Organization office in Ethiopia states that African regimes do not pay for agricultural development, but instead, rely on the World Food Program to provide assistance.[96] Whatever the exact reason may be, Africa spends drastically less on agricultural development than other regions such as Asia, and while developing Asian nations reap the reward of higher agricultural yield, Africa continues to be unable to reach its full agricultural potential.

Past International Involvement

The African Union has established that the improvement of agricultural production is a pillar to continental growth and poverty reduction. In 2003, in an African Union Summit in Maputo, Mozambique, the first declaration on Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) as a key part of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was made. The CAADP is the continent's policy framework for agricultural transformation, food security,nutrition, and economic growth. Signed by 41 African Union members, CAADP is a pan-African framework that lays out strategies and principles to assist African countries to review their own situations and identity investment opportunities with "optimal" growth for the sustainable agricultural development of their nation.[97] The African Union prioritizes job creation and the expansion of opportunities, especially for women and youth in the agricultural sector.

[93] https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/08/30/business/chief-u-n-agricultural-fund-warns-africa-face-food-shortages-populations-grow/
[94] https://academic.oup.com/jae/article/26/suppl_1/i73/4062242
[95] https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/african-agriculture
[96] http://www.fao.org/home/en/
[97] https://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/peace/caadp.shtml

The AU also highlights the importance of food security, sustainable farming, and strengthening resilience against climate change. The CAADP has a goal of six percent annual growth in agricultural GDP, with this objective's facilitation and progress being monitored by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA).[98]

Moreover, to encourage African nations to pay for agricultural development efforts, the AU established the Maputo Declaration during the 2003 summit. The Maputo Declaration was an agreement in which governments promised to allocate a minimum of 10 percent of their respective government budgets to agricultural development.[99] Unfortunately, only two nations, Rwanda and Zambia, followed through. Soon after, in 2014, the African Union signed the Malabo Declaration, in which signatory nations re-committed to the original 10% allocation goal.[100] The international community remains hopeful that the nations will follow through with their promises. Agricultural development in Africa needs comprehensive resolutions, not simply the promise of money. Successful initiatives require funding, efficiency, and government cooperation.

Currently, thirty three AU signatories to CAADP have established formal national agriculture and food security investment plans, which have become said nation's medium term frameworks for agriculture, resulting in the first real improvement to sustainable agriculture planning since the 1980s in Africa.[101] Country level initiatives, such as the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency, have also been used to expand agricultural yields; national programs allow for long term development to a nation's economy. For example, the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA), founded in 2011 with the help from the Gates Foundation, have increased public investment in the adoption of organic fertilizer, chemical fertilizer and improved seeds, and have researched and published specialized fertilization maps to aid farmers in efficiency of tending to their land. The ATA continues to work on engaging women and youth in agriculture, giving more farmers access to mechanization, and building farms resilient to climate change. Between 2004 and 2014, the agricultural output in Ethiopia increased by nearly 8 percent annually, perhaps due to the renewed effort by the ATA to stimulate and improve the Ethipoian farming industry.[102] Every country in Africa has faces their own individual hurdles to overcome, and national government led efforts tend to focus on one country's issue and create an agency that can help the agricultural economy grow throughout the next decade. Oftentimes, direct funding to these agencies from NGOs, such as the funding provided by the Bill Gates foundation to the ATA, can help establish such government efforts.

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[98] https://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/peace/caadp.shtml
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid.
[102] https://www.csis.org/analysis/tracing-agricultural-transformation-ethiopia

A regional conference on Youth Employment in Agriculture in Africa, run by the Republic of Rwanda and the African Union, was staged in August 2018 in Rwanda and heavily emphasized “thinking beyond farm jobs” to grow Africa’s agricultural transformation.[103] The conference focused on the development of rural agriculture to involve digital skills across the agri-food chain, such as food processing, distribution, marketing, and retail technologies. As part of the CAADP, the conference focused on making farmers not only grow their produce more efficiently, but on how they should market the product before it has even grown, making farming a more commercial and planned out process. The Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization, Jose Graziano da Silva, encouraged African nations to see the agricultural industry as more than just growing produce: “In the coming years, more and more of the agricultural activities and employment will require digital skills...[this is] the best way to provide family farmers and young professionals with technical assistance, capacity building, and access to modern technologies.”[104] The conference stressed agricultural transformation of rural farming to include fertilizers, transportation, farming education, and internet access.

The African Union is also underlining the need for a comprehensive resolution which is unique to each nation’s specific needs. Unfortunately, in August 2019, the Chief of the International Agriculture Development (IFAD), Gilbert Houngbo, cautioned that without “improvement” of agricultural production, there will be a dangerous risk of food shortages in Africa. In 2019, the UN released a report, “The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019”, which found that the number of malnourished African citizens has been on the rise. Over 800 million did not have access to secure food sources and remain hungry.[105] Past international efforts have strived to improve the agricultural development and transformation in Africa, but simply have not done enough to eradicate hunger and malnutrition in citizens. Going forward, all African nations must revive their agricultural sectors, and create policies which are unique and effective to themselves to develop their agriculture to prevent widespread famine.

Current Situation

By 2050, the United Nations predicts that Africa will be home to a quarter of the global population, with a population of 2.5 billion living on the continent.[106] The population in Sub-Saharan Africa alone is expected to grow exponentially at a rate of 114 per cent.[107] This population growth creates a dilemma for African farmers: either pay massive dividends or struggle to feed the sizeable population. Nearly 20 percent of Africa’s population is

[103] Ibid.
[104] https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/08/1017492
[105] https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2019/08/30/business/chief-u-n-agricultural-fund-warns-africa-face-food-shortages-populations-grow/
[106] Ibid.
[107] http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/wsfs/docs/Issues_papers/HLEF2050_Global_Agriculture.pdf

undernourished, and the number has been on the rise since 2015.[108] The majority of farming in Africa takes place on small farms in rural areas; around 80 percent of all the food consumed in Africa is cultivated on farms with less than two hectares of land. Africa must focus on not only large scale operations, but also focus on writing policies which improve small scale farming and prevent land degradation of small farms. Currently, Africa is at 25 percent capacity of its production ability and has great potential to increase their agricultural output in order to feed their ever-growing population.[109]

Historically, Africa has faced a broad spectrum of environmental issues that prevented it from flourishing during the Green Revolution. Firstly, Sub-Saharan Africa contains sparse waterways for navigation and transportation of goods and lacks efficient and developed roads, decreasing potential for commercial development. The stark absence of developed industrialized transportation methods make transporting agricultural yields out of Africa difficult. Furthermore, to deepen complications, the majority of Africa's developed arable lands are endowed with tropical climates. The tropics have climates which are effective for growing crops —mostly fresh produce — but unfortunately, due to the moist atmospheres, it is difficult to store food. This means that many African regions can grow fresh produce, but are simply unable to store the produce and transport their products to commercial markets. With foreign investment on the rise in Africa, new transportation systems, such as high speed rails, are being built in Africa, allowing for new transportation methods for farmers to sell goods in more populated cities. Moreover, there are new technologies being invested in, like metal silos and climate-resistant seeds, that can store and process food over longer periods of time. Although these technologies are available, oftentimes, they are not being properly implemented or funded. In fact, a third of all food produced in sub-Saharan Africa is lost before it arrives to the commercial market.[110] The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) released a report which revealed that 30 million tonnes of grains and oilseeds are lost annually in sub-Saharan Africa, and 85 percent of the loss is in the production, storage, and processing stages of the agro-chain.[111]

The African tropical forest belt is home to a host of pests which degrade agricultural output for farmers. One of the main offenders is the tsetse fly, a pest that has made fertile land difficult for mixed farming systems. The fly endangers human lives and kills livestock by infecting its victim with trypanosomiasis, or sleeping sickness. The lack of livestock means animal manure that is critical for soil regeneration is then scarce. Furthermore, the limited livestock means that for small scale farmers, tasks which are typically performed by cattle or horses, such as soil preparation and porterage, must be supplied by limited human labour. Seeing

[108] Ibid.
[109] https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1573521414000116
[110] https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2015/jan/15/invest-local-food-storage-sub-saharan-africa
[111] Ibid.

these risks, the FOA is greatly concerned with eliminating trypanosomiasis. The Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign (PATTEC) was established by the AU Summit in Lomé Togo, in 2000 with the collaboration of the African Development Bank (ABD). Regrettably, the tsetse fly is one of many diseases which plagues African agriculture. Locusts, armyworm, fruit flies, banana diseases, cassava disease and wheat rusts are only a few of the disastrous plant pests and diseases which impact African agriculture.[112]

Sixty five percent of Africa's agricultural land has been degraded due to poor farming practices and climate change, making land that millions depend on infertile.[113] By 2050, a projected 375 million African youth will enter the job market; 200 million of these people will reside in rural communities.[114] In rural communities, the agricultural industry is responsible for 80 percent of employment.[115] Land degradation puts the jobs of millions at risk, promoting conflict, poverty, and general instability, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Farmers unintentionally degrade their land because of a lack of information; farmers are uninformed on the potential negative consequences of certain practices and are unaware sustainable technology. For example, farmers may aggressively use agro-chemical fertilizers as opposed to using organic fertilizers to reinvigorate land. Another issue farmers face is technology stagnation; many small scale farmers in rural communities lack access to technology such as tractors, irrigation methods, fertilizers, or drought-resistant seeds which can withstand tough climates. Unfortunately, the majority of farmers generally degrade their land because they are too poor to invest in conservation, and take part in myopic farming behaviours. For example, when uninformed farmers practice crop rotation, it causes a short term gain, but long term loss, of the land's fertility. African farmers are facing serious climate change and land degradation, and must gain access to sustainable technologies and government aid.

Possible Solutions

The African agricultural industry has great potential for growth and expansion in the next decade. With the development of technology, knowledge, and technology, Africa could potentially undergo its own Green Revolution, bringing prosperity to the continent and global agribusiness. The United Nations believes Africa is the "key" to feeding the world's nine billion people by 2050.[116] Africa is home to 65 percent of the world's uncultivated fertile land, and with the development of new agri-systems, could have thriving farmers and promote prosperity across

[112] http://www.fao.org/emergencies/emergency-types/plant-pests-and-diseases/en/?page=7&ipp=10&no_cache=1&tx_dynalist_pi1[par]=YToxOntzOjE6IkwiO3M6MToiMCI7fQ==
[113] http://www.ipsnews.net/2018/08/land-degradation-triple-threat-africa/
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.
[116] Ibid.

the continent.[117] That being said, African farmers face hurdles which remain difficult to overcome. The industry would benefit greatly from the advancement of long term government support and policies to help the agribusiness take root, and eventually bloom into a thriving market.

Agricultural Research and Advancement

Government support of agricultural research and extension could be used to stimulate technology generation and distribution to African farms. Without government support to research, generate, and distribute new farming technologies to rural farmers, such as agricultural tools, organic and inorganic fertilizer, modified seeds, and cures to plant and animal disease, it is likely that the underinvestment in technology will continue. If farmers are given improved technologies and are educated on proper farming practices, there is an increased incentive and ability to conserve land and increase crop output. Governments must be willing to invest in their agricultural sector's specific and unique needs in order to improve their current agricultural situation. Governments should first identify key constraints which currently degrade their farming systems, then identify suitable technologies to implement. The method to access to such technology is also important for governments to consider; institutional support policies for farmers to access technology can remedy tenure insecurity contrasints. For example, studies suggest that the 2005 11% decline in food production in Niger could have been stopped by a simple program that would distribute micro-doses of fertilizer to farms by the government.[118] The program not only would have cost 75 percent less than the aid emergency expenses, but also would have provided farmers with valuable knowledge to make more informed decisions in their farming.

Government Subsidies

Government subsidies for farmers could potentially allow farmers, especially those with tenure insecurity, to access farming materials to drastically improve their crop output. Many farmers do not have access to or cannot afford technologies to improve their crop growth — forcing many farmers cultivate their land using rudimentary farming practices. Technological innovations can be made, but unless farmers have access to these technologies, the innovations are useless; a farmer cannot plant a drought resistant plant if they cannot get the drought resistant seed. Policies which allow farmers to easily access vital technologies for farming in Africa can bring great growth to crop output. However, these policies can potentially negatively impact the private agricultural sector. For example, the 2004 Malawi drought devastated the maize harvest, causing more than a third of Malawi's population to be in urgent need of food aid. Malawi, with

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[117] https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Generic-Documents/%E2%80%9CBetting_on_Africa_to_Feed_the_World%E2%80%9D_-_The_Norman_Borlaug_Lecture_delivered_by_Dr._Akinwumi_A._Adesina__President_of_the_African_Development_Bank_and_World_Food_Prize_Laureate_2017.pdf

[118]https://www.semanticscholar.org/author/Chris-P.-Reij/87446265

nearly five million people without food, established a program which subsidized plant fertilizers and seeds. The program doubled agricultural output expeditiously, resolving the food crisis and eventually making the nation a food exporter to the World Food Program. Malawi agrologists believe that subsidies are a catalyst to agricultural growth, by giving farmers access to technology to cultivate crop effectively. Although subsidies were successful in Malawi's case, critics are hesitant to push subsidies, as calling them "short-term [fixes]", which hurt the growth of the agri-economy, particularly agribusiness dealers.

Improvement of Markets

Infrastructure investments improve the functioning of markets. For example, as mentioned before, nearly a third of all food produced in sub-Saharan Africa is lost before it reaches the market due to poor processing systems.[119] The investment in the food storage sector in sub-Saharan Africa is a key necessity, and can be achieved through the investment of three main technologies, with the first being sealed bags and small plastic/metal silos on small scale farms, or large silo holding centers. The UN predicted that just through the implementation of silos that are fully able to accommodate the yearly harvest, there would be a forty percent decline of food loss compared to current management practices.[120] Farmers are often unable to access these silos to store food because there has been no investment in silo holding centers, or because metal silos are simply too expensive. A potential solution is to encourage investment in seed storage units, or to place subsidies on silos to hold grain. For instance, in 2001, Ethiopia's harvest was abundant, but the country had no storage facilities for grain. Due to lack of storage, the containers to transport grain to the market were worth more than the grain itself. In response, the Ethiopian government heavily invested in infrastructure, extension agents, and the market. One of the nation's investments was a commodity exchange, which has aided the country grow its maize trade industry, allowing Ethiopia to have the second highest production per hectare in Africa.[121] Overall, countries' investment in the agricultural market can, in turn, help farmers and grow their agricultural output.

Bloc Positions

Countries with High Crop Output Rates

Countries with high crop output rates, such as Morocco and South Africa, are generally self-sufficient in food production. South Africa is unique in its agricultural system, as they are home to both commercial farming and small scale rural farming. For instance, the South African farming industry is vital to the nation's citizens, with an estimated 1.8 billion people directly or indirectly reliant on the industry for their income. The government is looking to expand the industry by establishing the New Growth Path, a plan to create 5 million new jobs in agriculture

[119] https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/2015/jan/15/invest-local-food-storage-sub-saharan-africa
[120] Ibid.
[121] https://www.csis.org/analysis/tracing-agricultural-transformation-ethiopia

in the next two years. The South African government is helping their farmers by funding and investing in providing financing and infrastructure to boost farming productivity and agro processing. Most nations in this bloc have developed and prosperous agricultural industry, but struggle to progress towards more sustainable farming technology.

Countries with Mid Crop Output Rates

Countries such as Nigeria, Ethiopia, and Malawi have agricultural branches which prioritize national subsidies and programs which invest in agro-dealership programs. In Malawi, the implementation of subsidies on new fertilizer has allowed farmers access to modern technologies that boost productivity. The same policy occurs in Nigeria; the government enforces heavy subsidies on fertilizers to give smaller farmers a chance to access technology that would normally be difficult to obtain. Both governments also built commercial agro-dealer networks. In Nigeria, the platform delivered subsidized inputs to six million farmers in two years.[122] Nations with developing agricultural sectors are moving towards sustainable technological advancements and mainly struggle with consistent funding.

Countries with Low Crop Output Rates

Niger, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Guinea have the lowest fertilizer usage and crop output rates in Africa, and each nation's farmers do not have access or information on modern farming technologies like fertilizers. The farming industry in these countries remains underdeveloped, despite the resources that exist, due to the fact that the cost of transporting, stocking, and distributing farming technologies, such as fertilizer, watering systems, and equipment ,is incredibly high. This leaves farmers with few modern tools to raise farming productivity. Unfortunately, the majority of nations whose agricultural sectors remain largely undeveloped are landlocked nations, who are unable to transport food and grapple with internal violence and crises. These nations struggle with corruption, violence, economic downturn, and extreme poverty, which then affects the ability to establish long term branches of government to plan sustainable agricultural growth.

[122] http://www.hubrural.org/IMG/pdf/csao_foncier_transformation_agriculture_conflits_phase1_eng.pdf

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