Development Aid: Africa's Dead end and Africa Beyond the End

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**Development Aid: Africa’s Dead End, and Africa beyond the End**

Since the 1980s Africa has received billions of dollars in development related aids and consequently pays up to $20 billion annually in debt service, sub-Sahara Africa alone pays about 4 times as much money as the countries in the region spend on education and health care annually. The result is that more than 50% of countries with most international debts are in Africa.

The effects of civil unrests are hitting Africa hard, up to 4 million people are at risk of hunger and starvation and more than a million people die annually from malaria, yet, huge amounts of government revenue are to be spent on debt repayment, Africa is in a socio-economic emergency no doubt. In light of this position, it is apparent that Africa needs immediate help and development aids seems imminent this will however effectively put Africa deeper in debt pit, a condition the continent cannot afford to find itself.

Is developmental aid a dead end?

Developmental aids have not effectively elevated Africa. Most African countries are still listed as poor despite a history of massive aid. The state of key sectors such as the economy, health and education in comparison with the inflow of aids are not harmonising. The IMF in its 2005 report on Africa Aid in Africa revealed that the influx of foreign aid into the African economy has not been met with tangible development, which is quite obvious, and that the billions of dollars in aid has not transformed into developments in the receiving countries with a 5.5% average growth.

Economically wise, developmental aid is actually a viable alternative but in Africa, it seems to be a dead end. For an example, the Marshall Plan was a defining step for Western Europe towards development after World War II; the European Recovery Program was aimed at rejuvenating Europe’s war-turned economy and to prevent the spread of communism. It was a major success primarily because of the well-structured development and recovery plans of recipient states and the desire of Europe to reposition its economic superiority. Africa on the contrary has received around 4 times an equivalent of the Marshall Plan since the 1980s, and a lasting legacy has yet to ensue, it is a disturbing fact since numerous factors hinder the translation of the billions of dollars into equitable development, factors such as endemic corruption, funds mismanagement and economic centralisation.

Corruption and funds mismanagement are a major reason aid has not lift Africa, corruption alone costs Africa over $150 billion annually. Funds intended for development are grossly mismanaged, this is not surprising since nearly every African government since 1985 has been indicted in at least a corruption scandal, corruption is a bane to any development agenda, and it cripples progression and nurtures uncertainties. Before the millennium, numerous African economies were much economically centralised especially as a legacy of the military swerve, presently, some aspects of Africa’s economy and business policies are still structured around state ownership of means of production, an economic positioning that negates modern demands.
A rose flower from the nursery needs fertile not harried soil to thrive, likewise, development aid needs a diverse economy rich in entrepreneurial initiatives to capacitate its economic intensions. In reality, governments cannot assure effective production in all sectors of the state since the basic functions of security and welfare are more comprehensive in the current world compared to previous centuries, nowadays governments worry more on national security, diplomacy and administration of justice, and business should not be inclusive.

Beyond the end

Africa is an ingeniously blessed continent. With dispersed abundant natural resources, millions of investment opportunities and over a billion populations, Africa logically should be the new frontier. African governments need to look inward. Agriculture is a sector analysts have echoed to be the oil well of Africa, a sector estimated to yield billions of dollars annually if well tapped but lies almost unproductive, only of recent that a few African governments has attempt innovative measures, agriculture aggregately suffer in Africa.

African governments should promote innate and indigenous business initiatives. With millions of Africa youths unemployed and a convincing percentage of them embracing entrepreneurial innovations, governments can promote economic development through provisions of incentives for entrepreneurs and by making capital available for small-scale businesses. Promotion of entrepreneurial ingenuities is a pathway to development for Africa if embraced. In substitution for development aids, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and an Open Market System could prove a alternative. Just as China, other established economies and lenders should invest massively in Africa’s key sectors; governments across the continent should also enact investment friendly policies to attract private investors.

In appreciation of these propositions, progressions will ensure and Africa would in no time go beyond the end.