

A Gendered Analysis of the Evolution of Conflict Related Aid

A Thesis in Business

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Abstract

This thesis analyzes the transition of aid following conflict. This aid is targeted at promoting stability and development within a state while ensuring peace keeping in doing so. The thesis focuses on the impacts of conflict and aid following conflict on women. Feminist scholars such as Abu-Lughod, Goetz, Olmsted and Waring have analyzed the interaction of women, conflict and aid on a variety of levels with a multitude of perspectives. However, this thesis emphasizes the underlying ability of aid to promote gender equality in all aspects of aid. Through this thesis, education, sexual and reproductive health, the role of women in the economy and the role of women in government and politics are emphasized as key ways for women and the unique impacts conflict has on women can be addressed through aid. Organizations such as the United Nations have emphasized the relationship of women and conflict and acknowledged the need of incorporating women through strategies such as gender mainstreaming. However, this thesis acknowledges where aid needs to be improved upon in providing the proper rights and protections of women and provides suggestions on how improvements can be made. To contextualize gender, conflict and aid, the thesis includes a case study of contemporary Afghanistan. Afghanistan's history of conflict, dependency on aid and changes of gender roles and relations makes it an interesting and relevant case study.

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I. Introduction

The world has become a global community which involves the exchange of ideas and goods. The global network has expanded to contain numerous relationships such as countries participating in conflict. Conflict has disastrous effects, impacting all aspects of life. When a conflict ends, there is no guarantee that the issue which started the conflict is resolved let alone the many problems that conflict brings along with it. Instead, the infrastructure and the lives of the people who suffered through the conflict are left in ruin.

Similar to how the world has grown as a globalized network, post-conflict aid has also evolved in terms of how countries provide assistance. Ever since the development of post-conflict aid as a distinct tactic for providing aid following World War II, it has grown in its strategies to create change. Over time, post-conflict aid distributors have accumulated different responsibilities as part of providing relief and assistance in the post-conflict context. However, despite the increase of tasks covered by the massive umbrella of post-conflict aid, the capabilities of states and aid organizations to have the capabilities to provide effective change has been questioned.

Improvements in regards to post-conflict aid can be seen in all areas. Gender in particular has been a great focus on improving post-conflict aid. It was not until the twenty-first century that women were acknowledged for the gender specific ways that they are impacted by aid. Different Feminist scholars have assessed a variety of relationships between gender, conflict and post-conflict aid. These scholars have established different critiques in terms of strides towards gender equality. While improvements have been made, there still needs to be reform in the incorporation of women's rights and protections in post-conflict aid.

In the first section, this paper will navigate the historical background of the development of post-conflict aid. Predating World War II, the chapter discusses colonialism and colonial legacies and the transition into modern international relations through aid today. This transition is marked by the end of World War II and the Marshall Plan going into effect to help states rebuild after World War II. Following comes a series of developments and transitions that contribute to the development of post-conflict aid. The history and continuously growing role of the United Nations plays an important role not only in post-conflict aid but also the role and rights of women.

Second, a theoretical chapter provides the terminology and concepts necessary for a more thorough understanding of post-conflict aid and gender. The works of theorists such as Keynesian, Marxist, Liberal and Feminist theorists are discussed. Aid, development and the theoretical challenges that are faced are also outlined. Finally, a thorough discussion of gender explains relevant concepts such as the concept of unpaid work and gender mainstreaming. These terms are crucial in understanding the significance of gender in determining and applying post-conflict aid.

The third chapter, 'From Theory to Practice', provides a breakdown of how post-conflict aid is used and shows how post-conflict aid has changed over time. This chapter is organized by separating basic needs post-conflict aid and reconstructive post-conflict aid. Breaking down post-conflict aid in this way illustrates the two key differentiations of post-conflict aid: economic concerns and the protections of individual's well-being and rights. These distinct aid routes can be derived from the breakdown of the United Nation's engagement strategies to maintain peace. Santiso breaks these down into two stages for the "attainment" and "consolidation of peace" (2002, pg. 558).

The next chapter is a case study on post-conflict aid of Afghanistan. Specifically, the case study emphasizes the role of the United Nations and the United States within Afghanistan. Both of these entities had a significant impact in providing aid to improve the rights and protections of women in Afghanistan. A case study of Afghanistan is interesting because of the return to conflict that has been seen in Afghanistan in recent years.

Finally, the discussion and conclusion provides an assessment of the changes of post-conflict aid and whether or not these changes have aided or hindered the success of post-conflict aid for the states who are receiving aid. My own personal critiques and suggestions will be provided along with a summary of the findings.

There are various ways in which Feminist scholars debate solutions to gender inequality. These debating perspectives are highlighted by Feminist scholars such as Abu-Lughod, Goetz and Waring. However, underlying these debates, there are bridges that allow solutions to be achieved no matter what end of the debate scholars are on. These bridges are highlighted by the impact of conflict on women. Specifically, education, sexual and reproductive health, the economy and women's role in politics and government are important aspects of women lives that are impacted during conflict. Similarly, these aspects can be reformed significantly in the post-conflict setting.

II. History

Post-conflict aid is a contemporary concept. Predating post-conflict aid, wealthy developed states already had high levels of influence over developing states. The sphere of influence seen was a result of colonization in which nations conquered and controlled a state, its people and its resources for personal gain. Colonialism and colonial legacies were used to exploit the resources and the people living in colonized states establishing a long standing power hierarchy (Rondinelli and Montgomery 2005). Following a colonialist era, aid was provided through the exchange of goods, services and assistance where reciprocity was assumed because that was the standard of international aid (Markovits, Strange and Tingley 2019).

Post-World War II

The United States was the first to regularly use aid as a form of diplomacy for socioeconomic gain (Gulseven 2020). At the end of World War II, the Marshall Plan resulted in major change in regards to asserting power over the underdeveloped, economically unstable states. The Marshall Plan was a recovery program to help rebuild Western Europe after the mass destruction and uprooting of stability during World War II. Through industrialization leading to technological advancements, international trade and relations could be conducted more efficiently and the world became more globalized.

With a globalized war and Western Europe in ruins following World War II, the Marshall Plan shows the benefit of international ties to create for economic maximization while rebuilding the infrastructure. Economic stimulus creates economic growth. An example of this would be the New Deal which was the economic development plan that largely contributed to the economic recovery following World War II. During World War II the spending of individual

homes drastically declined as for all of the efforts went towards the war. In order to recover the post-conflict society, the United States government created new projects and programs, providing jobs and improving and creating infrastructure. By creating jobs, individual homes increased spending and increased demand within households (Davidson 2009). The New Deal grew the distressed economy following World War II. Growing the economy within one state, it stimulates the global economy making the world more prosperous (Jones 2015). The Marshall Plan exemplifies the capabilities of the multiplier effect. From this point on, economic development was a key justification for aid.

Conflict incites a crisis in multiple ways but one of the most prominent ways is economic crisis. Sustainable economic growth became the primary justification for post-conflict development following World War II (Jones 2015). The success of a state in a post-conflict setting is largely weighted on its ability to not fall back into conflict but a great priority of peacekeeping was based on the state's economic success following the conflict. Following World War II, the countries best able to recover all experienced "high annual growth per capita, low inflation, and... low unemployment" (Cocozzelli 2006, pg. 3). One way that this was achieved was by rebuilding infrastructure that may have deteriorated or been destroyed during the conflict, targeting the rebuilding of industrial plants (Varoufakis, Halevi and Theocarakis 2012). A lot of the focus is on the infrastructure of a state from its government structure to physical forms of infrastructure. Through this assistance, the state receiving aid should be able to develop into a prosperous state post-conflict (Cocozzelli 2006). Rebuilding infrastructure provides ease and appeal to the lives of people everyday and helps create a developed society.

Following World War II, urbanization and development has become a major priority in providing aid to states. The notion of urbanization derives from the concept of modernization

theory. Modernization theory describes the progression from an agricultural society to an industrial society. Throughout this transition, society as a whole is expected to improve in all aspects including education and the economy as a whole (Kongar, Olmsted and Shehabuddin 2014). While there are different ways to contribute to economic development, it is crucial to ensure that different forms of aid all still successfully contribute to the economic development of all people and receive benefits. Rural, agrarian states have mass potential for economic growth but if aid is concentrated instead of being efficiently disbursed, poverty will remain high and the people suffering the most will not be assisted (Mosley 2015). Through these economic improvements, it is argued that the well-being of society will improve and along with that, the status and rights of women (Kongar et. al 2014).

Considering economic stimulus was a primary concern in regards to post-conflict aid following World War II, reconstruction tended to focus on urban centers for the economic potential that they carry. In developing urban centers and urban markets, aid could be provided to large projects that were considered to be of low risk (Mosley 2015). Research from 1985 by the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development reviews trends in aid over the course of the previous twenty-five years. The data shows that all of the six major bi-lateral donors, besides the Netherlands, provided the majority of aid to the urban sector. The Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development shows on average aid allocated to urban areas was nine points higher than aid allocated to rural areas (Mosley 2015). Furthermore, urban centers were a large appeal to private investors and businesses. It is likely that private firms would invest in urban areas and have a high rate of return due to the high productivity that they have. While this hypothesis describes an ideal situation, it should not be assumed that it is always the case.

Many other factors besides urban planning are accounted for and considered in the investment process.

While urbanization was noted as a widespread priority, it was not universally applied to all states who received aid. In Europe following World War II, the United States focused on urbanization and rebuilding cities. In the Eastern hemisphere the United States decided not to urbanize and provided aid catered towards a primarily agricultural society. This could be seen with Japan after World War II. While Japan was not a key actor in regards to who the United States was trading with at the time, they did not receive as much aid as the European countries and therefore did not urbanize. Similarly, Vietnam did not receive aid in the form of rapid development and urbanization. Instead, USAID provided rural development and provided basic humanitarian aid, far from the extent of aid European countries received (Mosley 2015).

Furthermore, following World War II humanitarian aid also became of great importance. The United Nations Data standards defines humanitarian aid as assistance following a humanitarian crisis to “save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity” (United Nations Sustainable Development Group 2022, pg. 11). During World War II and throughout the twentieth century there have been horrific, mass violations of human rights. Violations to human rights indicate the immediate lack of protections and rights that humanitarian aid works for. These human rights violations increased the demand and need for human rights protections and the promotion of humanitarian aid (Kapur 2006).

The mass violations of human rights during the second world war showed the extent to which humanitarian assistance was needed to improve civilization (Kapur 2006). In order for states to be self-sustaining and sovereign entities, there are basic necessities that must be provided following conflict. Unlike reconstructive aid that is criticized for catering to the will of

the wealthy, humanitarian aid prioritizes the needs of the poor (Barakat and Zyck 2009). Also, reconstructive aid tends to focus on the conditions within an individual state, humanitarian aid looks to resolve cross-border issues (Bermeo 2017). There is a basic level of humanitarian aid in providing basic, immediate care such as providing food, clean water and shelter, there is also a more advanced version of humanitarian aid that provides humanitarian aid for a longer duration, especially in the post-conflict setting (Barakat and Zyck 2009). New developments of humanitarian aid increased the responsibilities and issues that humanitarian aid faces.

Through modernization and modernized states continuing to advance, the globe identifies new needs and standards for the survival and betterment of society. For example, environment, technology and gender have been recognized as protections necessary in society (Easterly 2008). Gender also became a major priority domestically and internationally. During World War II for the first time in the United States a considerable amount of women entered the workforce and worked industrial jobs. This was a major shift in the lives of women, the workforce and the war effort in the production of goods needed to win the war for example women having to run businesses (Goetz and Jenkins 2016). Furthermore, social policy also played a key role in helping European states recover from World War II. The development of national welfare programs allowed for security while stabilizing the homes and lives of citizens recovering from economic distress (Cocozzelli 2006). The UN Security Council passed the Security Council Resolution 1325 which acknowledged that women are uniquely impacted by conflict (Greenberg and Zuckerman 2015). SC 1325 streamlined the prioritization of putting women's needs as a distinct aspect of post-conflict aid. Also, the United Nations passed resolutions under the Women, Peace and Security resolutions to improve the involvement of women in conflict resolution and the post-conflict process. UNSCR 2122 increased the leadership roles of women

in the peace process (Goetz and Jenkins 2016). This shows the major change in the United States that led to women being recognized in the labor force and a major shift to women as paid labor.

Instead of solely providing immediate aid to provide relief and ease the transition into peacetime, humanitarian aid has expanded to be a multi-year practice to help maintain peace and prevent a state from falling back into conflict. While humanitarian aid has historically focused on providing relief to the basic needs of those suffering from the aftermath of a catastrophic event, the expansion of humanitarian aid has created a much longer time line for humanitarian assistance (Demekas, McHugh and Kosma 2002). Through humanitarian aid, the aid provided is supposed to develop tools and techniques to provide sustainable peace (Lotz 2011) This stems from the idea that stability in the lives of people within a state will contribute to stability within the state, leaving the state less prone to conflict (Cocozzelli 2006). Prior to World War II, the International Committee of the Red Cross established the standard of humanitarian universalism which resulted in humanitarian aid having a set format without taking a political stance and was applied in the same format. Today there is a more diversified take on humanitarian aid where there is a politicized and militarized side. Furthermore, diversified humanitarian aid provides donor states more opportunities to participate in providing humanitarian aid although they may do so based on what serves their needs and interests (Abiew 2012).

The United Nations

The United Nations is an international government organization with almost two-hundred member states committed to social and economic development along with maintaining peace. The United Nations does so through peace-building and peacekeeping missions in states that have been identified as in need of these practices (Santiso 2002). The United Nations has a

diplomatic role in achieving a peace agreement in the first place. The legitimacy of the United Nations allows the groups who were participating in conflict to come together and work under guidance of the United Nations (Santiso 2002). Within the major entity that is the United Nations are the many committees and organizations in charge of smaller projects and programs that encompass all that the United Nations represents. Sub-organizations within the United Nations are made up of combinations of different member states who work together for the mission of the organization. The United Nations has certain entities which strictly focus on conflict, achieving and maintaining peace and restoration following conflict such as the UN Security Council (Wood 2005). Some examples of different divisions that play a role in providing aid and post-conflict development are the World Bank, the World Trade Organization and Development and the United Nations Development Programme (Santiso 2002). These organizations are each specialized branches of the United Nations. The United Nations plays a key role in providing multilateral, specialized aid. By allocating different foci to organizations, it prevents the United Nations from overloading. If there were not multiple organizations working on specific tasks within the United Nations, there can be miscommunication, improper direction and a lack of focus on certain tasks. Also, the structure of the United Nations allows actors who have advanced knowledge in a particular area to implement that knowledge effectively. Also, the United Nations looks to solve the multi-donor problem. These states then must work together, cooperate, strategize and negotiate to provide aid in an effective manner.

Alongside the diplomatic role of the United Nations, it also maintains peace through providing aid and through aid projects. Many organizations within the United Nations assist in providing aid. The Development Assistance Committee and Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development are leaders within the United Nations in setting standards and

spearheading aid projects (Weishaupt 2020). There are a variety of organizations that assist in providing aid in a more general format, such as the World Bank, the United Nations also has programs committed to a specific country in providing aid in the development of a state. Examples of this are the United Nations Development Programme's Colombia branch that focuses on development in Colombia. Not only does this tactic clearly differentiate the aid mission for one state from another, it also allows clear identification of what state is receiving assistance and what states are responsible for providing aid and development assistance (Beardsley 2013). Similarly, UN organizations pass international agreements and standards in providing aid. One example of this is the World Health Organization's Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness established standards for the most effective use of aid and for efficient bridging of aid amongst states (Lotz 2011). This shows the comprehensiveness of aid being a part of all UN entities.

The United Nations has also directed major goals and strategies for aid. In 2000, the United Nations established the Millennium Declaration which set goals for all aid projects in the new millennium (Stokke 2009). In recent years the United Nations has developed a triple nexus approach as the organized pattern to provide aid. The triple nexus is the most modern approach to aid in an attempt to have a series of short, middle and long term goals that create sustainable solutions in the developed state. The three parts of the triple nexus are humanitarian aid, development aid and peacekeeping (Brown and Mena 2021). No matter the need, rate of disbursement, project size or budget and countries involved in an aid project, the United Nations created a system of aid that works to prevent any states from leaving holes in the development and peacekeeping process (Weishaupt 2020). The United Nations has done so by taking a nexus approach to providing aid to create an interweaving network of aid. The triple nexus, also known

as the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus, helps assure that all aspects necessary for peacekeeping and development are achieved (Weishaupt 2020). Peacekeeping is similar to and relates to post-conflict aid because it requires institutions and socioeconomic solutions to be established in order to prevent a state from falling back into conflict. Explicitly stating that peace is a goal ensures that it will remain a priority in hopes to prevent aid from becoming politicized (Weishaupt 2020). The triple nexus approach is used in crisis situations, such as a natural disaster, and in post-conflict situations.

Cold War Era

Furthermore, recipient countries that promote a political ideology are particularly vulnerable to donor countries providing aid. Aid donors may seek their own best interest instead of establishing a political ideology and government structure that best fits the needs of the recipient. During the Cold War, the United States and Soviet Union competed over countries to establish political ideology and established a competitive, globalized aid. The Soviet Union provided aid in attempts to spread communism as the United States of America did so to promote their interests under the claim of democracy. Instead of prioritizing socioeconomic growth as seen in the post-conflict setting, the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War used aid in a geo-political strategic manner (Bermeo 2017). In the case of the Soviet Union and the United States providing aid to promote political ideology, it exemplified the principal-agent theory. The Soviet Union and the United States mobilized aid as a strategy during the Cold War instead of acting in the best interest of the state receiving aid. Also, the new government and ideology must prove itself as legitimate in order for it to be effective. Oftentimes the new government is dependent on the input and influence of the state providing aid. Likewise, the state

providing aid can diminish the power of the state receiving aid and suppress their ability to make their own decisions. This is also seen when there are too many donors providing aid, seen with the multi-donor problem (Mosley 2015).

Humanitarian aid was always seen as a short term type of aid. Following the Cold War, different time frames of post-conflict humanitarian aid developed (Abiew 2012). This expansion of the meaning behind humanitarian aid also contributed to the development of different approaches to humanitarian aid that did not previously exist. While the short term approach to post-conflict humanitarian aid still tends to emergency situations and immediate relief, there is an aspect of the short-term humanitarian aid approach that takes opportunity presented in the post-conflict. There is an opportunity to promote rights and protections for humanity in the post-conflict state. Humanitarian aid has extended its presence in the post-conflict setting. In the long term, humanitarian aid works for the development of a state to grow a society and improve the overall wellbeing (Abiew 2012).

Aside from governments and intergovernmental organizations providing aid, there are non-governmental organizations that also provide aid. Non-governmental organizations are also known as NGOs. While non-profit organizations tend to be examples of non-government organizations, the most basic definition would be an organized group who provides work motivated by a specific political, social or economic goal (Barakat and Zyck 2009). From 1990 to 2000, with a sharp increase of conflicts that broke out, there was an exponential increase in the number of NGOs (Barakat and Zyck 2009). This shows the incredible importance of NGOs in providing aid, especially in post-conflict redevelopment.

III. Theoretical Framing

In order to have an effective discussion of the changes of post-conflict aid over time, it is necessary to define some of the theoretical terminology prior to doing so. These descriptions are important in the description and analysis of post-conflict aid and its impacts. Similarly, different institutions play a crucial role in providing aid and development assistance. Notably, the United Nations and its entities play a significant role.

The post-conflict context refers to a period following a conflict. The conflict may have come to an end on its own, through a cease fire or a formal peace agreement. Due to the conditions of a state in the post-conflict setting, there is mass opportunity for development, change and growth. The large opportunity for growth and rebuilding occurs because of the need to rebuild after the destruction of physical, state and societal infrastructure that occurs during conflict. Crucial needs for a state following a conflict are building or rebuilding of physical infrastructure, funding for the government to create stability and employment opportunities (Barakat and Zyck 2009). Similarly, social policy is also argued to be the most important aspect of post-conflict reconstruction (Collier and Hoeffler 2002). Social policy is especially significant because it improves the level of political stability within a state (Cocozzelli 2006).

Keynesian Macroeconomic Theory

The Keynesian approach to the political economy is crucial in analyzing aid. Based on the studies and findings of John Maynard Keynes, the theory of Keynesian economics comes from a classic and neo-classical economic approach (Caporaso and Levine 1992). Classical economists strongly believe in market self-regulation and a laissez-faire approach in terms of the role of government. While the market is said to be self-regulating where supply and demand

drive market prices and creates a competitive market, this is not true for all cases. Keynes does not fully believe in free, self-regulating markets and believes government intervention is necessary in economic crises. With Keynesian economics, the government steps in to aid the market system in special circumstances. These faults within the free market system are the inability to have full employment and the unequal distribution of wealth (Davidson 2009).

Keynes argued for government intervention into the economy when the market is being underutilized. Underutilization of the market is when the resources within the market are not being used to maximum production (Caporaso and Levine 1992). This can be measured through capacity utilization which compares the GDP of a country to its potential output. An underutilized economy will manifest a period of crisis. Following a conflict, the economy of a state has declined and there has been a collapse of revenue. Due to the severity of the economic crisis following a conflict, there are mass opportunities for economic growth (Collier and Hoeffler 2002). However, as a result of the economic decline and potential economic crisis that follows a conflict, individuals are facing insecurity and tend to save instead of spending money which leads to low demand, lowering production. This situation is known as the paradox of thrift (Caporaso and Levine 1992). Uncertainty and instability that comes with the different stages of conflict exemplify the paradox of thrift and underutilization.

In order to stimulate the economy, the public sector should enter the market and invest in productive ways (Shaw 1997). This being said, some strategies for economic stimulus are more efficient than others. An example of this is while financing unemployment policies, a program that creates jobs and contributes a good or service to the market that stimulates demand has a greater output (Shaw 1997). Furthermore, the post-conflict context can provide opportunities to effectively stimulate the economy compared to other contexts. While strategies may be similar,

there are obstacles and steps necessary to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of economic development.

Keynesian economics proposes economic development by sparking multiple stimuli creating a cyclical form of economic growth. The multiplier effect is when the expenditure of a dollar results in more than a dollar flowing through the economy, multiplying the magnitude of each dollar being spent (Institute for Economics & Peace 2021). The multiplier effect is particularly important in regards to post-conflict aid. When aid is provided in a way that exhibits the multiplier effect, it provides aid in the most efficient and impactful way to reconstruct a state socially and economically. When used properly, aid can greatly stimulate the economy through public sector investment and lead to mass development and growth (Shaw 1997). Considering the amount of destruction that occurs during conflict, aid in the post-conflict setting is the most needed and has the most potential to improve a state. An example of the multiplier effect is spending in ways that increase productivity which provide jobs instead of simply providing unemployment insurance (Shaw 1997). While both are ways to deal with unemployment, creating jobs which leads to increased economic productivity and stimulates the economy uses the multiplier effect for economic maximization. Recognizing the multiplier effect shows why economic development and financial literacy became a priority. While they did assist a state in creating a strong economy, post-conflict aid's focus on socioeconomic development also created global economic stimulus and growth.

Defining Aid

Aid is the redistribution funds, resources or services to assist those in need. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, also known as OECD, defined aid as

Official Development Assistance, or ODA, as aid for the economic development and welfare of a state. OECD identifies aid taking place in the forms of public funding, private funding, assistance for peace maintenance and refugee assistance (ODA PDF). Another definition of aid, 'Effective Development Assistance', adds another layer to aid in which aid interest rates should be kept low and are affordable for the states receiving aid (Easterly 2003).

Overall, there are three different types of aid foci. *Humanitarian aid* deals with the immediate, detrimental impacts of a conflict or disaster by providing immediate relief to issues such as sanitation, starvation and shelter. *Reconstructive aid* follows humanitarian aid and rebuilds infrastructure such as roads and buildings (Demekas et. al 2002). Physical infrastructure, government structure and institutions needed for a stable society may have been destroyed during a conflict. The reconstructive aspect of post-conflict aid looks to increase state assets (Demekas et. al 2002). Finally, *post-conflict aid* focuses on creating socioeconomic advancements within the state and peace maintenance (Barakat and Zyck 2009). Key features of post-conflict aid include economic stability and growth, financial literacy for citizens and the promotion of globalized trade (Barakat and Zyck 2009). Post-conflict aid itself has a strong connection to reconstructive aid and humanitarian aid. Within post-conflict aid, the subsection of humanitarian aid focuses on long-term social developments and the improvement of human rights. In the post-conflict lens of reconstructive aid, the goal is to increase the country's capital, the labor force and productivity in a stable (Demekas et. al 2002).

A country's government and international governmental organizations play a direct role in determining how aid is allocated and what is prioritized. Peace agreements outline the conditions that need to be met in order to maintain peace. Third parties, such as NGOs and outside states, provide aid through assisting and mediating throughout the process. Peace

conditionality and the role of other states and organizations providing assistance in the process provides a pathway to induce specific behavior. While it allows the state recovering from the conflict to receive guidance, it also allows the state providing the aid to push an agenda, such as transforming the political and economic structure of a state (Frerks 2006).

Justifications and Faults Associated with Aid

There are various reasons as to why a nation justifies providing aid. Mosley identifies three key reasons in justifying aid: compassion, political and military support and providing an entry point into third world markets (2015). Compassion is used to justify aid because it is seen as the responsibility of the wealthy to provide assistance to those who are not able to fend for themselves. Hoarding one's own wealth while others struggle to survive shows a faltering of humanity. There also is the expectation of reciprocity so states provide aid in case that one day one's own nation is struggling or must recover from conflict, they will experience compassion from another (Mosley 2015). Aid also uses economic power along with political power to infiltrate and influence poorer states. In providing aid, a state may reward its ally by providing the state goods and services that it typically would not be able to afford (Easterly 2003). Providing aid allows an underdeveloped or non-industrialized country to have access to a good or service that they would not have otherwise. This results in reaching a larger market, increasing demand and productivity and economic growth (Mosley 2015).

Similarly, political and military support is a reason behind providing aid. In providing aid, relationships and allies are formed because it creates a system of dependency and accountability when in need. This can be seen from a political perspective such as needing support in promoting or passing a policy or a militaristic perspective when needing more troops

or arms in battle (Mosley 2015). It is important to note that ODA does not include security aid or military assistance in its definition of aid (ODA PDF). However, in 1951 the United States passed the Mutual Security Act which linked military power and support with development assistance (Carbonnier 2010). Developed countries use aid as a tool to justify its presence and influence in a country. Critics argue that aid creates a dependency of developing states to developed states providing aid while states have no way to repay them (Carbonnier 2010). One way developed countries use aid to do so is through a claim that they are using aid to convert countries to be more accepting of democracy and democratic ideals is commonly seen by developed states, especially in the first three decades following World War II and during the Cold War (Barakat and Zyck 2009). Democracy is one gateway to provide human rights, create a capitalist system and establish a fair and free government structure and can be made easier through providing aid. However, providing aid to promote a political ideology is not always what occurs through these claims. By allowing the influence of governments to provide a significant amount of aid, creating a system of dependency. States provide aid and acquire the ability to “influence, reward or punish” states receiving aid by having all of the power (Carbonnier 2010). Instead aid is ineffective and only justifies a state’s presence in another country; or, even worse the democratization of a state may be being forced onto a country but it is not the best ideology for the state enabling an unstable government.

In doing so the country providing aid may input itself into the economy of the state receiving aid, this is critical in acknowledging the political nature of aid. Aid provides a state or organization the opportunity to act for its own self-interest by taking advantage of the desperate situation of another state (Carbonnier 2010). State investment can lead to private investors making investments as well. Private firms investing in urban areas allow more opportunities for

jobs, creates a less regulated market and allows for more competition and increases state revenue (Barakat and Zyck 2009). The case described above describes the “aid-investment-growth hypothesis” (Demekas et. al 2002, pg. 5). Through providing aid, countries influence and dictate the country that is receiving aid. In doing so, the country providing aid can promote its own agenda instead of allowing the country receiving aid to determine how to best meet the needs of its people.

Development and economic growth post-conflict can also be attained through redistribution. Redistribution is providing funds from sources of wealth to poorer groups of people to help provide with them what they need while growing the economy (Davidson 2009). One way this is done is by collecting taxes (DESA). Taxes can range from local taxes or the proposed idea of international tax. A key difficulty in collecting and distributing funds to provide redistribution is that it requires the infrastructure needed in order to do so. In order to redistribute wealth to stimulate an economy, the only meaningful way to do so is through effective government infrastructure. Voluntary redistribution or redistribution through NGOs does not provide enough funding or effectively redistribute the funds so that it stimulates the economy (Mosley 2015).

Furthermore, scholars have identified the best practices of aid. Easterly explains that there are four key factors that contribute to the best practices of aid (2008). The context in which aid is applied is crucial in providing aid that is effective and fitting to the post-conflict setting of a country. Specialization can assist in aid fitting a particular context. There is more than one way that an organization can be specialized in providing aid. An aid organization can have specialized knowledge in the type of aid they are to provide or the area or region and the needs of the area (Easterly 2008). Specialized aid identifies a goal and the actions derived from aid are done so in

order to achieve the goal (Easterly 2003). If aid is not formatted to a specific context, aid will be delivered in non-specialized ways and through general formatting (Easterly 2008). A general funding of aid fails to account for the specific needs of a country. When aid is provided in general terms and does not recognize that each country receiving aid has its own needs, cultures and issues, it is limited in its effectiveness (Weishaupt 2020). By specifying the goals of aid, aid becomes more efficient because there is less overlap and an easier time making decisions because of the narrowed focus.

Similarly, how selective an aid organization is contributes to the effectiveness of aid. Selectivity can refer to how critical the criteria of who aid is being provided to is and how closely the context and manner that aid is being provided is assessed. If a state provides aid to a corrupt government, the aid will not be used to create broad change and instead will only benefit those in power. This being said, the strategy at which an organization provides aid also affects the success the aid will bring. Different types of aid, such as food aid, have been identified as being ineffective in sustainably improving a country (Easterly 2008). If an aid provider were to continue to use strategies that fail to create a sustainable state, meaning the developments are long lasting, do not deteriorate over time and the company remains in peace time. If the state receiving aid and aid are not sustainable, the state providing aid may be the only one benefiting from the program. Finally, the overhead costs of an organization illustrates how effectively it is using its funding to assist those in need (Easterly 2008). If an organization spends more on providing for itself than those it is supposed to be assisting, there may be ineffective funding or the organization may not be accountable in representing and fulfilling its goals.

An important concept in business, economics and political science is the principal-agent theory. Principal-agent theory describes when a subject, the principal, has outcomes determined

by another, the agent. This allows the opportunity for the agent to act in its own best interest instead of prioritizing those who should be the primary concern and are directly impacted, the agent (Gaardner and Bartsch 2014). Principal-agent theory helps explain the relationship between the provider of post-conflict aid and the recipient of aid because it describes a situation where an entity that has the upper-hand uses their position to act in a way that benefits themselves by using the resources of the other (Easterly 2008). Donors of aid typically play a significant role or have complete say in the use of the aid. In this case, the provider of aid has a high sense of agency in regards to the principal, aid. On the other hand, the recipient has a low level of agency and has very little input on the policies or use of aid. The principal-agent theory seen when providing aid can result in a lot of policies and practices being put in place without understanding or considering the will or best action for the people that are being directly impacted.

International aid is susceptible to the principal-agent theory. The prevalence of the principal-agent theory in the international aid setting is because of the failure to hold states accountable in achieving their goals, especially in legal terms (Rauchhaus 2005). Rauchhaus identifies two types of principal-agent theory (2005). The first occurs when there is a lack of protections against abuses that may occur for one's self-interest when providing aid (Rauchhaus 2005). This can take place between two states or the state's government prioritizing its own needs over its people. On the other hand, the principal-agent theory can occur when expectations are not met. This is especially significant because the failure to meet expectations can push a state back into violence (Rauchhaus 2005). One strategy to hold states accountable and not succumb to the principal-agent problem is through providing incentives for states to act accordingly. It is likely that incentives will increase the responsiveness and accountability of

those providing aid because it aligns the best interests of the principal with the interests of the agent. One way this can be done is an agreement that only requires the state receiving aid and loans to be repaid for their debts by the state providing aid and funding the aid project's goals were met (Gaardner and Bartsch 2014). Another solution would be monitoring the business of those providing aid to ensure that actions align with and are efficient to achieve the goals of the aid recipient (Rauchhaus 2005). Observing and critiquing the aid process is likely to hold states accountable by making aid agencies contractually obligated (Gaardner and Bartsch 2014). However, a monitoring system may fail to be effective without a punishment to back up the observations. In denying states the benefits that they may receive through providing aid unless the goals of the recipient state are achieved, the state providing aid will be motivated to prioritize the needs of the principal state (Rauchhaus 2005).

There are certain measures that can help hold aid providers accountable for their actions and keep them on track such as surveys that provide feedback. There is a lack of feedback in regards to the impact of aid and the specific needs that may be overlooked (Easterly 2003). All throughout the aid process there are failures in the feedback loop where recipients and actors are unable to communicate on the impact and efficiency of the aid. Examples of a broken feedback loop in the context of providing aid are recipients inability to voice concerns or opinions, taxpayers funding aid having no contact or ability to know their impact from the recipients and development organizations having ineffective communications with those implementing the aid (Martens, Mummert, Murrell and Seabright 2002). In the state receiving aid there is a lack of opportunities for the people receiving aid to provide feedback as well. If there are elections that are fair and free within a state, there are underlying barriers to political participation such as low literacy rates. A lack of time to participate is commonly seen with women due to the mass

amount of time that is given to unpaid work (Sorosen 1998). A broken feedback loop perpetuates ignoring the will and wellbeing of the state receiving aid, whether they are aware of it or not.

Directly linked to principal-agent theory is the issue of corruption. Corruption is the unlawful use of power for one's own agenda or gain. Political leaders and governments abuse their power and position to gain status, wealth or to achieve an agenda. Oftentimes, corruption goes undetected or is explained instead as an undeveloped state and or a state with mass poverty. The reality of these circumstances is that the state may be well funded but the corrupt government holds the resources of the state. A state may be well financed while the people of the state live in distress and poverty because of aid being funded to corrupt regimes. While, today, multilateral agencies more actively attempt to not fund corrupt regimes, there are instances where corrupt regimes may still receive aid. Overtime, there has not been much change in the level of corruption within a state and the amount of aid a state receives (Easterly 2008). Often, providing aid to a corrupt regime is justified because it is an attempt to dismantle the corrupt regime. However, there is no guarantee that the aid will influence the change in government and is not the most effective way to act against corruption (Ferry, Hafner-Burton and Schneider 2020).

Critiques of Aid

One reason behind agent's not acting in the best interest of the state receiving aid is because of the military-industrial complex. While post-conflict aid does stimulate the economy as a result of the destruction and aftermath of war, the military-industrial complex describes the incredible profitability and economic stimulus that is warfare. In times of war, government spending and demand for arms increases from the pressure and necessity of winning the conflict

(Kaldor). The military-industrial complex explains how militarized nations experience an increase in spending in development in order to grow the country's military and therefore grow the economy (Monaghan 2017). Through warfare and political mobilization, new industries and markets are formed and others are stimulated through increased demand. The military-industrial complex can incentivise states to participate in conflict. In terms of major arms dealers and traders, these countries greatly benefit from providing security aid to other countries and promote the success of the military industry. In 2006, the global military expenditure was predicted to be fifteen times more than the global aid expenditure. The military-industrial complex is now a massive, global market which includes all corners of the world (Oxfam 2006). Wealthy countries who are major arms producers benefit from conflict and the profitability of the arms trade and do not have anything requiring them to be accountable for their role in the destruction (Olmsted 2020).

While these are some of the justifications behind aid, there are also critiques of aid. A dominant critique of aid is the Marxist critique. Through this critique, international aid is seen as a way to control and maintain power over poor, developing states (Carbonnier 2010). Through the claim of providing aid, the critique is that developed, capitalist states exploit the resources and labor of developing states (Kongar 2014). Due to the exemplary economic success that developed states have set, states receiving aid follow the instructions of developed nations and exemplify their ideals. Similarly, aid is provided through institutions such as the World Bank. By receiving aid from organizations and with aid being funded by organizations such as the World Bank, these institutions have the ability to promote capitalist ideals and, through the Marxist critique, contribute to the reigning control of developed states (Carbonnier 2010). The Marxist critique emphasizes the power and dependency that occurs within a capitalist system

such as unfair trade agreements, military presence creating pressure and aid . Aid is deeply rooted in providing wealth to develop and improve states. The strong connection between wealth and successful development constructs a depiction that development is not attainable without wealth. Therefore states receiving aid become dependent on the states providing aid to provide the wealth necessary for development (Carbonnier 2010). Instead of evolving on their own, states receiving aid may lean on aid as a ‘crutch’. Instead, the Marxist critique claims that while aid is said to assist in the development of a state, in reality it provides “misguided attempts towards ‘self-sufficiency’” (Mosley 2015, pg. 13). If a state is dependent on capitalism and the market, it becomes more difficult to rise against capitalism because the ties have been strengthened through aid (McGregor 2007). This means that through aid, developing states entered into a system where the funding of developed states is required in order to continue and maintain growth and economic success. The Marshall Plan exemplifies the binding and oppressive nature of aid agreements in fostering dependency (Varoufakis et. al 2012).

Similarly, there is a Liberal critique of aid which claims that aid fails to provide the freedoms crucial to the ideology. Every state has its own culture and identifiers that are unique to that state in itself. This is an important development in recognizing the importance of context in providing aid. Traditionally, humanitarian aid was based on a universal set of principles and was not contextualized (Abiew 2012). If aid was not contextualized for a case by case basis, aid would not represent the needs of the people receiving it, silencing the voices and the will of the people within the country, especially poorer individuals (Easterly 2003). Aid funds economic development through the production and trade of goods and services. Similarly, aid can prevent states that are receiving aid from innovating and developing their own goods, services and solutions. In doing so, states further lack freedoms because they are dependent on other states,

are not self-sustaining and have economic decision making decided upon by another country resulting from aid (Easterly 2008). Neo-Liberal scholars critique this system of establishing a market economy that ties the developing states to the global capitalist economy (Carbonnier 2010). In doing so, the market economy becomes the primary priority in providing aid instead of ensuring a system that allows the guarantee and protection of rights and liberties. Without these protections, aid fails to be effective (Carbonnier 2010).

Furthermore, there is a Feminist critique of aid that developed within feminist sphere of social science. The concerns expressed through the feminist lens largely have to do with power relations between men and women, the establishment and protection of women's rights, challenging gender norms and the inclusion and understanding of women (Tucker 2011). The critique on aid stems from the Feminist critique of economics. The Feminist critique of economics originates from challenging the role of men and women in the market. Specifically, where men work jobs where they are paid wages where on the other hand women have many jobs and responsibilities but they are not paid for their work (Olmsted 2020).

Feminist Perspective

Overall, feminists work towards gender equality. Gender equality refers to creating an established concept within a society that all genders are equal and deserve equal rights and protections (UNDP 2016). Gender can be an incredibly sensitive and contentious topic, especially in a post-conflict scenario (UN Women). Women are consistently disregarded in political, economic and social spheres despite their role in caring for their family and catering towards societies' betterment and survival (Waring and Steinem 1988). In regards to the feminist critique of international aid, there are different foci and approaches. Different states have

different levels of development, destruction from conflict and gender inequality. For example, a strategy for impoverished countries may be finding solutions for reducing maternal and child mortality rates, whereas more wealthy countries may not be facing this issue as severely (Olmsted 2020). Similarly, improving the accessibility of education following conflict has led to major improvements in improving political participation amongst women and allowing women to have the knowledge to effectively use their rights (Vinson 2008).

Following the Western colonial legacy, there has been the notion to protect women in the third world and to view them as women who need saving (Abiew 2012). This notion comes from the idea of the 'white savior' whose job is to come save the third world from suffering (Abu-Lughod 2002). The use of seeing women's rights as a way to promote Western culture and as a justification of war is commonly seen following the age of colonialism and in the intervention of third world countries. During this time, there is the promotion of the idea of 'saving brown women from brown men' (Abu-Lughod 2002). Through the comparison and victimization of 'Eastern women' compared to the idealistic 'Western women' this idea and colonial legacy is promoted (Kongar et. al 2014). For the alleged safety of women in these developing countries, Western states intervene and enforce their standards and cultural ideals to 'improve', or really create a social structure, to be more similar to their own. Instead of gaining understanding of cultural differences and recognition of different cultures, those providing aid see the differences as something that 'can be erased' (Kapur 2006). Despite the selfish manipulation of aid that may take place, the post-conflict context provides a unique opportunity to change gender norms and relations because society as a whole is being rebuilt and reformed. While gender roles allow women to occupy a space, gender relations focus on the interactions amongst gender and through these interactions, the level of effectiveness and improvement can

truly be determined (Abirafeh 2005). If women are not heard by their peers in the roles that they occupy, their occupation of that role is meaningless.

There have been many different attempts to improve gender relations and implement women's rights through post-conflict aid. The abundance of real-world examples show the different levels of success and failure of doing so through post-conflict aid. This variety of examples of post-conflict aid instances along with the variety of contexts and foci in which the post-conflict aid is taking place within. Typically, feminist post-conflict aid is directed in the manner following Liberal Feminism, wishing to provide equality amongst men and women and freedoms for women (Deb 2012). A lot of the push behind Liberal Feminism stems from the Western roots of Liberalism. However it is impossible to provide effective aid without taking into account the different Feminist theories such as and Postcolonial Feminism.

As previously stated, the root of feminist economics goes back to the issue of unpaid work. Unpaid work refers to the tasks and responsibilities women have within the household, tending to crops and in raising children, for example, that takes up the majority of a women's day yet there is no wage that women receive. The failure to recognize unpaid work as an economically productive task counts women out as a productive member of society because their jobs are not jobs that are recognized within the market (Waring and Steinem 1988). Women acquiring a role in the labor force empowers them and is an entry point for justifying their position in society. While feminists have worked to incorporate women into the economy and the labor force, the unpaid work that they do in their private lives does not go away. Today women who work in the labor force are often faced with the 'double burden' where they must complete the responsibilities of paid work and unpaid work (Olmsted 2020).

Failing to acknowledge gender differences leads to the complete disregard of the unpaid work of women and women's dominant role in the informal economy (Fukuda-Parr, Heintz and Seguíno 2013). Through this gender-blind approach, policy makers are trying to solve issues that inherently affect the status of gender (in)equality without acknowledging gender and gender reform will not be achieved (Baden and Goetz 1997). Gender mainstreaming is the term used to highlight the active efforts to include gender reform in all aspects of life and policy. Gender mainstreaming is an all encompassing approach to gender reform which values the daily lives of women and creating new legislation (UN Women). Gender mainstreaming acknowledges that there are differences in overall policies and policies that will grant women rights such as property rights leading to women being able to acquire credit. Specifically, gender mainstreaming actively acknowledges the inclusion of rights and protections of women in all aspects of reconstruction and assistance (Greenberg and Zuckerman 2015).

Due to gender norms, especially in a state where there is high gender discrimination, the typical depiction of women is one that stays in the house, nurturing and dependent. Gender mainstreaming leads to a major shift of gender norms within a state because it shows women play a role and are affected by all aspects of life. Whereas previously, women and girls may have been excluded or disregarded in different aspects of life, gender mainstreaming requires major reform so women are included and involved in every aspect of life (Abirafeh 2005). An example of this is historically women are not accounted for in the role that they play in conflict. Women can be combatants and assist on the front lines as nurses and technicians for example. Women often are not acknowledged or compensated for the effects of conflict because it does not align with their stereotypical feminine, nurturing nature (Sørensen 1998). Through the mechanisms of gender mainstreaming, the improvements in women's rights can be seen daily

(Abirafeh 2005). If there was not an application of gendered aid and reform, the most common aspects of women's lives would not be acknowledged and therefore women would be excluded from receiving assistance.

The effects of conflict are different for men and women. Societal norms and laws prevent women from having equal opportunities and rights compared to men. These differences are highlighted during a conflict and following a conflict. Military recruitment, has been linked to an increase in sexual violence against women (Olmsted and Killian forthcoming). Similarly, during and after a conflict, displacement for women may create increased difficulties because there is a lack of access to reproductive care facilities and treatment (Mitra 2021). There is also a high risk of fatalities during labor and while pregnant because of women having to do physical labor around the house while pregnant, a lack of healthcare and other environmental factors (Olmsted 2020). Following a conflict there is also often an increase in the number of women who are the head of a household (Gammage, Kabeer and Van der Meulen 2016). The increase of women at the head of households is because men are typically combatants and tend to suffer the most fatalities and casualties in war. However, women do not have the social status of men, which can be determined through being able to own property for example, and are not able to acquire the education that men have access to (Gammage et. al 2016). Policy reform can help level differences, creating a more gender-equal state, and provide additional protections where necessary. For example, if there is a lack of properly trained female teachers, the government can enforce policies that better integrate and train female teachers (Vinson 2008).

However, in establishing policies following a conflict, the needs and will of men tend to be favored over women. 'Spoilers' are men who were participants in conflict and due to their role, which in itself derives from the patriarchy, are prioritized in the policy process (Gammage

et. al 2016). In regards to redistribution and the distribution of aid in post-conflict states, the dominating role of the patriarchy in a state's socioeconomic structure results in unequal spending for men and women's needs, favoring the norms predetermined by the patriarchy (Kongar et al 2014). When countries allocate funding for the military instead of addressing sexual violence as a result of conflict, this perpetuates patriarchal values over the needs of women (Olmsted and Killian forthcoming). In reality, due to the unequal status of women, aid needs to be made with the needs of women and gender equality in mind in order to work towards gender equality (Olmsted 2020). Following a conflict, allowing women equal opportunity and access to peace agreements is crucial in maintaining peace yet it is not prioritized in the process (Greenberg and Zuckerman 2015).

IV. From Theory to Practice

Two approaches to providing aid to a country are bilateral and multilateral aid. Bilateral aid is when the relationship of aid is between a singular state donating aid and a singular state receiving aid. The relationship is between two distinct actors, providing a more simple aid approach in understanding the role of influence, motivations and power dynamics. However, due to the direct unfiltered relationship between the aid donor and aid recipient, bilateral aid is commonly criticized for being highly political (Mosley 2015). Furthermore, the transactional appearance of bilateral aid leads to the critique that it is not contextualized and is standardized instead (Martens et. al 2002). There are multiple strategies that states use to provide aid in the post-conflict context. One way states provide aid is through tied-aid. Tied-aid is the provision of aid on the basis that the recipient of aid is contractually obligated to partake in the trade of the good or service only with the provider of the tied-aid. The contract is an economic transaction between the leaders of the state. Therefore, the transaction may not represent the will of the people and fails to be receptive to the people who are receiving the aid (Easterly 2003). Tied-aid is an important aspect in hinting at the selfish motivations of aid. If tied-aid fails to represent the best interest of the people receiving aid, there must be other justifications for tied-aid such as stimulating the economy of the aid donating country.

If a state is receiving bilateral aid from multiple states, states must navigate different perspectives, plans and aid agreements that may not align. This scenario is defined as the multi-donor problem. The multi-donor problem explains how multiple aid sources and donors can reduce the efficiency and success of aid. Multi-donor programs take place for more than one reason. One reason is to align aid policies and programs to prevent different states and aid agencies from implementing new aid strategies and undoing previous aid strategies. Similarly,

the multi-donor problem can create a standstill from occurring due to conflicting conditions of aid, halting progress all together, by establishing mutually agreed upon aid strategies (Mosley 2015).

While the multi-donor problem identifies issues that derive from having multiple states not cooperating in their aid processes, the United Nations brings together multiple states. Multilateral aid is a more complicated system of aid that helps resolve the multi-donor problem. Multilateral aid consists of one agency providing aid that is made up of multiple states or organizations that are collectively providing aid to a state. Multilateral aid allows nations working together collectively and contributing for the best interest of the recipient country and swiftly agree on policies. Similarly, there is more freedom in the use of aid compared to bilateral aid which typically has strict restrictions on the use of aid (Mosley 2015). Multilateral approaches to aid provide a way for states to receive one aid package from multiple states and organizations without having to navigate different conditions and aid agreements.

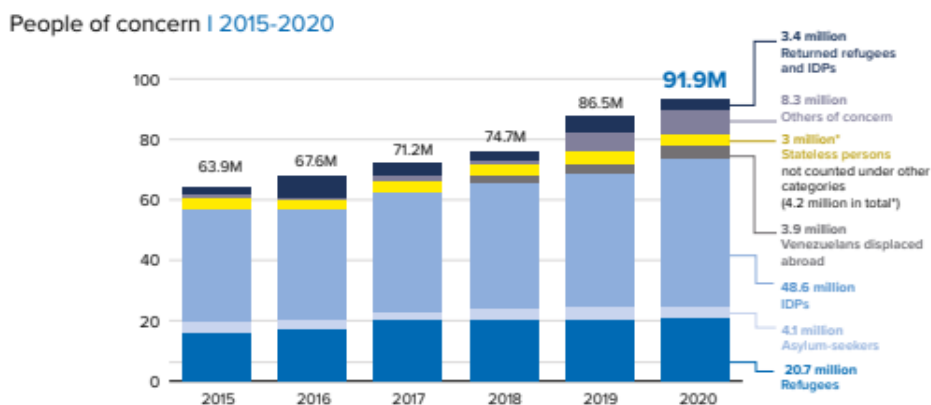
Addressing Basic Needs

Basic needs aid within the post-conflict setting, while having to care for the immediate effects of conflict such as caring for injuries and food. However, aid catering to basic needs following conflict has to do with long term solutions. A lot of the growth surrounding basic needs post-conflict aid also comes from the increase of NGOs and IGOs. These organizations provide specialized approaches to the various ways to implement aid for basic needs. Yet, they may not be specialized to the context that they are being implemented into, especially when the context is in the post-conflict setting. However, they have been crucial in improving the

efficiency of humanitarian aid and dispersing aid that fulfills aspects that were previously not included (Weishaupt 2020).

Aid for Displaced Peoples

As a direct result of conflict and the destruction that comes along with it, people within the conflict zone often evacuate based on the matter of life or death. Remaining within the conflict zone significantly and almost with complete certainty, people would witness the destruction of their homes, family and friends facing injuries and fatalities and most likely be injured or killed themselves. Displaced peoples are a massive part of our global population, an issue in all regions of the world, where almost one-hundred million people in the global population are displaced or have been displaced (UNHCR 2020). The types of people fleeing the conflict zone are categorized as either refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDPs) depending on whether they move to another country, IDPs are peoples who moved from their homes to another town or region of the country that their home is located in, while refugees are those who have crossed a border (UNHCR 2013). In 2020, the number of IDPs due to conflict was at a record high of about forty-nine-million people (UNHCR 2020). The evacuation process results in a complete uprooting of livelihood and brings an uncertainty in one's future nor a guarantee of safety. Also, refugees and IDPs illustrate the global implications of a conflict, even if the conflict is only occurring within one state (UNHCR 2020 Global Report).



Source: UNHCR Global Report 2020

The journey when fleeing a conflict zone is often long and dangerous (Film: It Will Be Chaos). There are basic needs that must be met despite the incapability of humans to carry all of the supplies while traveling. Malnutrition and dehydration are major risks in the journey of refugees because of the incapability of supplies. To combat this, there has been an increase of rations and improved accessibility of supplies to refugees (UNHCR 2020). Issues in regards to basic needs are not the only types of issues that face refugees and IDPs. Children are removed from schools, depriving them of education that can hinder their development and future success (UNHCR 2020). As a result of this it puts girls at an even greater deprivation from receiving an education because girls tend to be enrolled less or banned from receiving an education more than boys. A lack of contraception leads to an increase in the vulnerability of female health along with a higher risk of having many children despite the socioeconomic ability to provide for a large family. Considering in many underdeveloped states, women have a dominant role in managing the household bearing and raising children, there is a serious fault in women's rights with a lack of reproductive rights and health practices.(Olmsted and Killian forthcoming). More than ever, it is seen how prevalent the failure to provide medical assistance for refugees and IDPs was during

the time of COVID-19. By not being able to distribute protections against COVID-19, along with other illnesses and diseases, the spread and fatalities to disease increases (UNHCR 2020).

After arriving at the destination that will protect the refugees and IDPs there is another series of challenges. In today's world, global leaders and nations are seen publicly denouncing refugees. While refugees are already forced to leave their homes, they are frequently denied and are seen as outsiders in the state they are looking to seek refuge in. Refugees face xenophobia which brings physical attacks and violations of their humanity along with them (UNHCR 2020). Where xenophobic people within a state do not recognize refugees as equal people, they treat refugees poorly and deprive them of basic needs. Furthermore, the lack of protections for refugees leaves them incredibly vulnerable to attacks and sexual assault. Furthermore, they do not receive the care necessary for sexual or reproductive health leading to dangerous and potentially life threatening conditions (Olmsted and Killian forthcoming). Even beyond the physical vulnerabilities faced by refugees, in an attempt to create a lifestyle in their new home their labor may be exploited because of a lack of protections and rights (UNHCR 2020). The vulnerabilities refugees face within a state are similar to instances where refugees are denied and are instead stateless. One way international government organizations such as the United Nations has worked to register the status of refugees to help provide them with protections and assistance where individual states fail to do so (UNHCR 2020). Similarly, aid is also provided to states receiving mass influxes of refugees to maintain the influx of people and help refugees return to their own countries (Boyce 2008). Statelessness impacts all generations and if this is not recognized by global actors, intergenerational problems will occur.

Gender Focused Aid

Gender-based aid has been prioritized in humanitarian assistance. Many modern wars take place in societies where there is a lack of gender equality, like the world as a whole. It is not uncommon for women to have a lack of protections and rights severely impacting their daily lives (Kandiyoti 2007). Gender has been claimed as a justification for invasion of a country as commonly seen with the motivations of the United States of America in the late-twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (Kongar et al 2014). However, the state of a country or area being rebuilt post-conflict allows a major opportunity for the reconstruction of gender roles and rights. The process of gender equality is not one that could be applied to all situations in a basic template and it may not be a linear process. If there is a failure to take into account the conditions and circumstances, the 'systemic failures' of the trends of gender reconstruction are highlighted (Goetz and Jenkins 2016). Depending on the level of gender equality and lack thereof within a state, countries can have different starting points and pathways for gender reform.

Similarly, women commonly experience a lack of protections and inherent value during and following conflict. Women suffer significantly during conflict although women are not traditionally recognized as participants or victims of conflict. Women and girls experience an increase of sexual violence by combatants and are exposed to human trafficking, prostitution and 'gang rape' which is when they are assaulted by multiple attackers at the same time (Handrahan 2004). While the sexual assault of women is frequent during conflict, the suffering does not end there. 'Honor killings' may take place following the sexual assault in order to cleanse the family from a sense of shame of the woman being dishonored through sexual violence, the woman who was responsible for taking the honor of the family was murdered to restore the family honor (Fisk 2011). While it is known that women experience sexual violence during conflict, that

violence and abuse has become normalized following conflict. The prostitution of women has been cited by the people suffering as a necessary occupation for the economic recovery of the state following conflict (Handrahan 2004).

Also, women experience major changes to their livelihood and home life. This change in livelihood also occurs in the case where women are widowed as a result of her husband being killed in action. This is a significant change in the traditional family structure that was normalized at the time and required the widow to be the bearer of all responsibilities and sole owner, if possible, of property (Sorosen 1998). Today, humanitarian aid has taken an effort to prioritize the promotion of gender rights and equality.

Similarly, women rarely are involved in the peace process (Goetz and Jenkins 2016). As a result the priorities, values and voices of women are excluded from the establishment of what post-conflict life will be like. In doing so, protections against violence against women can be made a priority in the peace process considering how common violence against women and girls becomes during war time. However, there is a lack of specifics of how women should be involved and no system to hold governments accountable for the inclusion of women in the peace process (Goetz and Jenkins 2016).

One primary way to ensure the inclusion of women in society and the protection of their rights is through the inclusion of women in politics. Women's suffrage and fair and free elections are crucial in improving the political participation of women in politics. Quotas can be used to ensure a specified number of percentage of women to hold political positions. However, filling seats does not necessarily mean that women are actively participating in having their voices heard (Greenberg and Zuckerman 2015). This difference, as indicated by Greenberg and Zuckerman, can be highlighted by the difference of *de jure* and *de facto* (2015). *De jure* is the

law itself as written word whereas *de facto* is the reality of how the law is being incorporated in practice. If women are just seat fillers, their voices are not heard and therefore there is no actual progress towards gender equality where women's voices are valued and considered the same as men (Goetz and Jenkins 2016). Without 'purposeful participation', despite having women holding positions in government, women continue to go unrepresented by the government supposed to represent them (Abirafeh 2005). Too often in gender reform there are practices and protections put into place which are blanket practices without being effective and creating meaningful change and participation. Even with laws implemented to protect the political participation of women and grant women rights, these laws fail to be acted upon (Kandiyoti 2007).

However, there are also steps necessary to prepare women to participate in politics, the peace process and help legitimize women's participation in the minds of men who have failed to recognize their rights in the past. While having women in politics is a gigantic step to gain and protect rights, further social reforms are necessary to take advantage of women's opportunity to gain equality following conflict. Improving access to education and providing equal education gives women and girls the tools and knowledge necessary to make critical decisions that impact an entire society while having similar levels of knowledge as their peers. Failing to provide women access to education they cannot equally voice their opinions in a room of educated males who have been promoting a power hierarchy where they are above women (Greenberg and Zuckerman 2015).

Furthermore, educating women betters the education of future generations. At home, educated women have the ability to assist their children in their studies and share their knowledge with their children (UNDP 2016). Following conflict, the education of women and

education reform is a top priority in post-conflict aid (Vinson 2008). Education is cited as one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and is prioritized in all contexts (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021). Education is a priority because of all that education does to establish and protect the rights of people and its "means to build human capacity" (Sørensen 1998).

Studies show that higher education rates for women leads to higher literacy rates and increases the number of women with professional occupations and greater voter turnout (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021). The eventual improvement of society is guaranteed as long as there is the protection of women's rights and job protection for women. By having women in the labor force, there is an increase in the competition for job opportunities and with increased competition there will be increased productivity (UNDP 2016). However, this is not the case if there is no job protection for women. As a result of men typically being combatants in the conflict, women had to fulfill the job openings to provide supply for demand. When the male combatants return from the conflict, it is likely that their jobs were taken by a woman. Following conflict women are laid off and the jobs are returned to men. This occurs despite the fact that women have become skilled in the job as well. If women are fired to provide a job for the man returning from the conflict, it shows the failure to provide equal rights to women and men (Greenberg and Zuckerman 2015). In the changing of the makeup of the workforce it also establishes a change in the gender norms and relations (Abirafeh 2005).

Following conflict and the employment opportunities it provides women, women have the ability to actively play a role in the traditional form of the market. Typically prior to conflict, women's labor is part of the informal sector and is not traditionally calculated into the economy. By including women in the labor force and allowing them to earn a wage, women are accounted for in the economy. Considering men are typically the combatants of conflict, there is a chance

that the man who has ownership of the property does not return home from the conflict and creates a household where a woman is placed at the head (Greenberg and Zuckerman 2015). In this case, many issues arise such as where the family will be able to live and who receives the payment for the house or if the house will just be seized by the governing force. Property is a post-conflict issue because of changes to property, property titles and resettlement that may have occurred during war time (Greenberg and Zuckerman 2015). Considering women may have had a lack of property rights prior to conflict, post-conflict reforms provide opportunity for this to be changed. Governments providing aid promote the private property of women to increase their status in society for them to be recognized as equals and as independent peoples. Furthermore, by gaining property rights for women it also allows them to increase access and participation in the economy in other ways such as acquiring credit. By owning property, the property can now be used as collateral and increases the legitimacy that a woman can have credit and manage assets (Greenberg and Zuckerman 2015). While the gendered aspect of basic needs aid focuses on improving the rights and protections of women, it is crucial to incorporate and account for women in the market.

To achieve gender reform there must be societal changes that go against the mentality of the population, men and women, that most likely has lasted for generations. Due to the sensitivity of gender and the push-back experienced by those in power and the people themselves, the efforts for reform may be weakened and expectations lowered. To prevent a failure of gender reform, the United Nations established the approach of gender mainstreaming which provides the basis for what is considered achieving successful gender equality. Yet, gender mainstreaming is not entirely clear to all of those who are implementing it. Too often does gender mainstreaming come down to sex and providing protections against sexual violence in a

variety of circumstances and fail to provide opportunities or economic liberties to women (Goetz and Jenkins 2015). Furthermore, gender mainstreaming fails to provide women true freedom and equality of choice. Instead, women are directed by the patriarchy towards feminine roles and positions (Olmsted and Killian forthcoming). By requiring the inclusion of gender reform in aid and development and explicitly stating the areas to include, it promises a conscious effort to improve gender equality and equity (UN Women).

Reconstructive

Following conflict, a state's infrastructure and policies for governance may be completely dissolved. In doing so, it is the expectation that the state has the tools to maintain peace while growing as a state. Empirical evidence suggests that if there is no economic recovery in the first year following conflict, there is a high chance of a state falling back into conflict (Flores and Nooruddin 2009). In improving the finances of a state and stimulating the economy through sound governance and economic participation, evidence indicates that a state will successfully grow and not fall back into conflict.

Government Restructuring

The state which resumes power following a conflict has input on how aid is dispersed and used. When a conflict ends, the governing body that was in power before may or may not still be the governing force. Likewise, a country may need to completely restructure the government. Failure to create a strong government is the reason why half of the states fall back into conflict within five years (Randinelli and Montgomery 2005). The government structure or an authoritarian government could have been a cause driving the state into conflict. In this case, in order to prevent the state from falling back into conflict, there must be drastic changes in

government (Rondinelli and Montgomery 2005). Democracy is introduced to the post-conflict state as the ideal government to be implemented (Panic 2008). A new governing structure will replicate democratic principles such as free and fair elections, a legislative body. Elections that accurately reflect the will of all people are crucial in all groups receiving representation and being recognized as a valued member of society. Through the typical evolution of state processes, women achieving suffrage is a process. However, when achieved women are considered and represented in political decision making (Sorosen 1998).

Aid when provided properly can create tremendous growth but if it is not successful, it can result in great losses for the country receiving aid. Studies show that high levels of democracy contribute to greater stability, gender representation and social recovery following a conflict (Mitra 2021). Democratization is a common justification for aid even when it may not be the best fit for the state attempting to maintain peace and grow post-conflict. Without a natural transition within a population of willing participants, there will not be successful democratization of the state (Barakat and Zyck 2009). Alongside constructing a new government structure the government must also be able to incorporate and enforce new policies to allow other forms of aid to be effective (Frerks 2006). There must be an understanding of the needs of the state and if there is improper government development, it may lead to increased tensions and stress and increase the chances of the state falling back into conflict. Santiso identifies the practice of democracy in a post-conflict state as a secondary step in the post-conflict process (2002). Establishing democracy and where there is fair representation for all is a secondary process because society must recognize all people as equal beings to begin with. This reasoning is because if there is no societal acceptance on the informal level supporting practices, the formal protections will not have any true impact (Kandiyoti 2007). Without establishing components

within a state that allow democracy to be successful such as rights, securities and liberties, a state cannot be truly democratic (Santiso 2002).

Tax collection to redistribute wealth is a complicated system and with an unstable government structure following a conflict it proves even more difficult. Alternatively to taxation to help close the wealth gap, international states provide aid in the form of credit. Credit is provided to fund a state to improve finances, develop relief programs and create jobs. In doing so, this stimulates cash flow in a similar way that taxation does and leads to further developments and growth (Fukuda-Parr et. al 2013). However, with women failing to have property rights or voting rights, they will not be accounted for in redistribution practices from taxation. Conflict and rebuilding of a state following a conflict are major expenditures for a government. Along with purchasing armaments and other resources used by the military and improving infrastructure such as roads, a government must provide resources for the survival of its people. Since these states are not entirely developed, there is no concrete way to guarantee that they will be able to afford to pay the debt they owe. This can hinder the development of a state and even lead to a colonialist system where the state in debt owes the donor country.

However, the redistribution of funds tends to be emphasized as the sole input for the development of a country and targeted groups. Providing financial aid without providing the infrastructure, tools or identifying practical implications to make use of it does not lead to growth (Easterly 2003). Similarly, in the post-conflict setting, development and aid provided is not distributed equally amongst the needs of men and women. This inequality is evident because the needs of men and women in terms of post-conflict reconstruction are different (Olmsted 2020).

Economic Development and Reform

Another way that nations promoted their own economies by providing aid was through tied aid. Tied aid became increasingly popular in the late 1990s, especially in regards to aid provided by the United States. In 2006, fifty-four percent of aid provided by the United States was tied-aid (Easterly 2008). One reason there may have been such a strong use of tied-aid is because of the economic growth the state providing aid receives as a result of the tied-aid contract. With a stronger economy, states were more likely to be able to purchase goods and services. Despite the underlying political and economic implications of tied-aid, it still plays a role in economic development in the short term. With the goal of economic development and the promotion of globalized trade that is a major change seen with the development of post-conflict aid, providers of aid are able to ensure they also benefit from the projects pursued through the aid they distribute.

There are some issues that may occur as a result of tied aid and private sector investment. For example, the inputting country provides goods and services coming from an economically stable country. Prices are competitive within said country and are not inflated or deflated (Mosley 2015). These circumstances contribute to economic instability and therefore make it more difficult for a country to recover following conflict. At the same time, the donor country is a developed state which means production costs are lower because of industrial advancements, technological advancements and increased productivity. The price of the goods and services coming from the donor country can undermine the price set within the country receiving aid (Mosley 2015). As a result, the local producers may lower their prices to compete with the good. Yet, the local producers cannot afford these low prices and will eventually go out of business. This negative impact which restricts the development of the local economy is known as a

backwash effect (Mosley 2015). Especially when aid may be provided through as food aid, when women typically lead if not dominate the agricultural field, the disempowering of women can be seen and a heavy economic burden is placed upon women (Waring 1997). This shows how economic recovery processes can harm the local economy of the aid recipient, an extra disadvantage in post-conflict instances.

Furthermore, post-conflict aid stimulates an economy in ways that do not exist on their own during peacetime. Warfare creates a stimulus in the military-industrial complex for those producing and transporting arms. Military spending tends to be a major component of a nation's budget and when the needs of the military increase during warfare, there is a major economic stimulus considering all of the markets the military needs goods and resources from. The drivers behind the military-industrial complex and the military-industrial complex itself are the opposite of post-conflict aid. It seems strange that states would want to halt their economic growth as a result of warfare and instead spend money in restructuring states that were destroyed during war time (Monaghan 2017).

One way states are able to do this is by using the tools of the military-industrial complex to provide aid. Although the state receiving aid just ended a conflict, the country may still be militarized or in need of security to protect the peace, for example through security aid. Security aid is when a foreign government provides post-conflict protection (Monaghan 2017). There are multiple approaches to security aid, one of which being providing weapons to the state. Another way is by hiring security forces, such as contractors, or providing troops to survey and enforce new policies. Finally, security aid can also help develop the infrastructure necessary to ensure the protection of the people and that laws are upheld (Monaghan 2017). In the post-conflict setting, it is a special instance where development aid and security aid take place at the same timeframe.

It further shows the complexity in navigating the complex system which is post-conflict aid (Berrebi and Thelen 2011). Security and stability are crucial to allow a state to have sustainable growth and development. Security aid provides aid in a way that benefits the military-industrial complex of a country providing the resources (Monaghan 2017). Security aid appears to be paradoxical in the post-conflict setting but can have great importance in ensuring the stability of a developing state. Yet, it is important to recognize the perpetuation of the military-industrial complex to even the peaceful aspects of conflict.

The conflict that a state has just ended impacts all people and uproots society. If aid is delivered to a state that does not have the proper foundations to implement and distribute the aid (Nunnenkamp 2016). Also, the proper forms of socioeconomic aid must be provided. Before building massive cities and factories to grow the economy of the state, citizens must be trained in the skills required to be employed and actively participate in the economy (Barakat and Zyck 2009). Often, donor states see the ability to exploit a state that is receiving aid for their own gain and exploit a developing area (Gulseven 2020). Evidence of this could be seen following the Cold War when states who were receiving aid were left in debt to countries providing aid, leaving them in a worse off position than before receiving aid. In the years 2000 to 2007, Turkey's debt increased by ten-billion dollars from debt stemming from security aid in the Cold War era (Gilby 2009). In order for there to be sustainable socioeconomic development in a state the proper steps must be taken for solid foundations to be built. For example, forcing democracy is common because of the conceptions of fair representation but democracy is not effective without the proper foundation. Furthermore, if democracy deteriorates and fails there are substantial risks like falling back into conflict (Collier, Hoeffler and Söderbom 2008). For

post-conflict aid to truly create positively impactful socioeconomic development, aid cannot be (Weishaupt 2020).

One condition that may improve the chances of aid changing the government of a formerly corrupt regime is if the state is just coming out of a conflict. Corruption leading to harsh living conditions along with the oppression of the majority of people for the prosperity of an hegemony is a likely cause behind inciting conflict. The political instability within a state following conflict allows an opportunity for donor states to provide aid and improve the conditions of the state (Easterly 2003). A country may provide aid to a corrupt state in an attempt to overturn or reduce the level of corruption (Ferry et. al 2020). For example, there is a correlation between high poverty levels, high corruption and low democratic representation (Easterly 2008). Providing post-conflict aid creates an opportunity to change the levels of poverty, corruption and democracy within a state. However, states may be less likely to provide aid to corrupt states because of the backlash they may face and the lack of guarantee that the aid will be used effectively (Ferry et. al 2020). It is difficult for a country to provide effective aid because of potential barriers preventing aid from reaching the people who need it the most and instead aid is hoarded as a bubble at the top. The effectiveness of aid can be impinged upon by the level of corruption and/or the government structure.

Economic and political organizing and stability is crucial in rebuilding and maintaining peace within a state in the post-conflict stage. There are many errors and faulty practices that occur with the current strategies of applying post-conflict aid especially along the lines of contextualization and the timeline of providing aid. One way that is in the process of improving is the incorporation of women in these aid processes and increasing the rights and protections of

women, socially, politically and economically. Global leaders have the power to guide rebuilding states in the direction of gender equality and it is their responsibility to do so.

V. Case Study: Afghanistan, Gender and Post-Conflict Aid

When in conflict, women take on different roles, roles typically occupied by men, and gain responsibilities. Following conflict, there is the opportunity for women to continue the gains they have made in increasing their roles and rights in society. Post-conflict aid can assist in gender reform and gender equality.

Afghanistan is a country with significantly high levels of poverty where on average almost half of the country is in poverty (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021). The annual per capita income in Afghanistan is five-hundred US dollars, even less than in 2012 when it was six-hundred-fifty US dollars. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, forty-five percent of Afghanistan's population lived in poverty. Following the pandemic, which aligns with the resurgence of the Taliban, the poverty rate is now seventy percent (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021). Furthermore, Afghanistan's long history of conflict leading to economic destruction and the destruction of civilian life left it in a position where recovery without aid would be near impossible (Fayez 2012).

History of Contemporary Conflict

There have been attempts to improve women's rights in Afghanistan throughout its history. Contemporary history of conflict, post-conflict and the attempt to better gender equality in Afghanistan begins in the 1920s where the resistance to modernization and women's rights sparked violent internal conflicts in opposition to the reforms (Moghadam 2002). Forty years later, significant strides to improve women's rights and liberties in the political sphere took place with the establishment of organizations such as the Peoples Democratic Party of Afghanistan and the Democratic Organization of Afghan Women. Through democratic organization, in reforming

the constitution, women gained suffrage and could be elected into political positions (Moghadam 2002).

The Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in an attempt to seize its mineral rich lands. At this time, Afghanistan received aid in opposition to the Soviet Union's invasion (Fayez 2012). Following this, during the Cold War era, funding from the Soviet Union and the United States for opposing sides fueled a civil conflict in Afghanistan. One side of the conflict was arguing for Marxist beliefs promoting the equality of all, inciting change within Afghanistan (Moghadam 2002). The funding by the United States led to the end of the conflict, hindering change in gender equality, and eventually led to the rise of the Taliban. In the late 1990s, the Taliban came to power as a response to foreign influence of Afghan culture (Abirafeh 2005). The Soviet Union and the United States funding opposing forces of the conflict shows the military-industrial complex at work. Both sides provided armaments, of which both countries are major arms producers, to Afghanistan. In doing so, violence and the oppression of women was seen in Afghanistan. The Taliban enforces Sharia law to create a strict social order, severely limiting the liberties of women (Kandiyoti 2007).

Following the September 11th attacks that took place in America, the United States invaded Afghanistan in force against the Taliban. In 2001, following the United States' invasion of Afghanistan, the United Nations established a plan for the development of Afghanistan. The United States' invasion was partly justified by the need to save 'women of cover', referring to the women of Afghanistan (Abu-Lughod 2002). The new Afghanistan consisted of political reforms ensuring 'national sovereignty' for Afghanistan through The Bonn Agreement (Agreement 2001). However, these reforms were made under surveillance and orders of the United Nations and especially the United States. The Bonn Agreement made a pathway to

establish a democratic government in Afghanistan through a new constitution, national elections and creating a new governing structure (Abirafeh 2005). In doing so, the United Nations hoped to create a stable system of government to fight against the Taliban forces and political action (Kandiyoti 2007). The strategy taken to do so is referred to as Disarm, Demobilize and Reintegrate (Mitra 2021). The Bonn Agreement is another aspect that was a precursor to the post-conflict aid and its amount of success to come within Afghanistan.

Creation of a 'Reformed' Afghanistan

The new Constitution of Afghanistan was written in 2004 through the assistance of developed states, in the midst of the ongoing conflict in Afghanistan. The newly established government closely resembled those of developed states with a bicameral legislature and national elections. Also similar to developed states, it made many promises of equal rights and representation to women, but these rights were almost only seen on paper (Kandiyoti 2007). Abirafeh states that women were “used like dolls” to fill seats without taking political action (2005, pg.8). There was a quota established that a quarter of the seats in parliament must be held by women (Abirafeh 2005). This practice in Afghanistan exemplifies states providing aid in developing a state following conflict but the actual impact is not successful or sustainable. Instead of providing women the tools to build their political knowledge and expertise to validate their holding of political power, quotas were made to quickly allude to an improved gender dynamic. Women do not have the same access as their male colleagues to acquire the knowledge and thorough understanding of government or even the basic rights (UNDP 2019). This is an issue seen across the globe but is highlighted in this scenario in Afghanistan where practical gender equality is attempting to be achieved.

Similarly, the first national election took place a few years following the end of the conflict in Afghanistan. While women had the right to vote in national elections through legislation, systematic blocks still prohibited them from voting. One important way women were unable to vote despite having the right to is due to high levels of illiteracy (Sorosen 1998). This is due to women not being allowed to go to school and learn how to read. Also, women do not have the time to stop their unpaid labor in order to vote. This is because of women's work in the informal sector where there is no time that they clock out or receive time off to vote like a formal sector job may allow (Sorosen 1998). However, through efforts to improve education by registering over two million girls in school, thus improving literacy, there has been an increase in voting because women now feel empowered to use the tools provided to them (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021). While women appeared to have the rights that would grant them political participation, there were still many obstructions preventing them from doing so.

Post-Conflict Aid in Afghanistan

Afghanistan is a country that has received post-conflict aid and experienced major developments. Ever since the mid-twentieth century aid has been steadily flowing into Afghanistan (Fayez 2012). Post-conflict aid was a major source in Afghanistan's economy. Foreign aid makes up forty percent of Afghanistan's GDP (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021). Aid has been contributed for the improvement of education, increased security, the provision of food where it was unavailable and the development of infrastructure. One of the most notable aid projects was the Ring Road which improved the infrastructure of Afghanistan increasing efficiency and accessibility (Fayez 2012). These are some examples of how aid was provided to Afghanistan in the forms of humanitarian aid and development aid; the crucial

aspects of post-conflict aid. One way aid was directed to instill development was with the focus of gender, specifically women's rights. For a period of time, there was significant improvement in the lives of women in Afghanistan through providing them opportunities, rights and protections. This can even be seen by an increase of twenty-percent of women's life expectancy in Afghanistan within the past twenty years (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021).

However, these improvements failed to create sustainable change in Afghanistan's political, social and economic climates. At a rapid rate, women and girls lost equality and equity within their country. Today, Afghanistan is ranked last in the world for gender equality, a lower ranking than in previous years (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021).

Afghanistan has also received incredible amounts of aid from different entities including bilateral and multilateral aid agencies. In terms of bilateral agencies, Afghanistan received aid from individual states and NGOs. Whether it is states or NGOs, both aid sources have been heavily criticized for aid practices in Afghanistan. Bilateral aid between states has been criticized for being highly political and for catering in ways to benefit from the profitability of aid instead of helping to stimulate Afghanistan's economy in the most effective ways (Lutz and Desai 2015). The West, specifically the United States, attempted to change culture and instill ideas benefiting the United States in Afghanistan during war time. Americans and American women, including First Lady Laura Bush, often referred to the women of Afghanistan as 'women of cover' as in need of saving (Abu-Lughod 2002). This lack of understanding shows a lack of respect in the differences of a state outside of the West and the politicization of un-developed states. The lack of respect and recognition for other states is transferred to the post-conflict aid practices of the West.

It is important to note that a large majority of aid provided by the United States in Afghanistan was through tied-aid, taking away from the economic maximization that could have resulted from aid. Instead of hiring Afghan people or creating products in Afghanistan, the United States imported workers and resources to accomplish aid projects (Fayez 2012). As seen in the table below, which shows the annual revenues for contractors in billions of US dollars, key development contractors such as Fluor and Lockheed Martin DynCorp International, were incredibly profitable from their work in Afghanistan. They even remained profitable when there was not efficient progress in their projects in Afghanistan and even when their work was accused of being unethical and fraudulent (Lutz and Desai 2014). If the United States strictly carried out aid projects by using resources and labor in Afghanistan it would have led to greater productivity and economic stimulation within Afghanistan, as expressed through the multiplier effect.

Company	2001	2005	2009	2013
<i>Fluor</i>	8,972	13,161	21,990	27,351
<i>KBR</i>	--	10,146	12,105	7,280
<i>Halliburton</i>	13,046	20,994	14,675	29,402
<i>Lockheed Martin</i>	23,990	37,213	45,189	45,358
<i>DynCorp International</i>	--	1,920	3,572	3,287
<i>Black and Veatch</i>	--	1,600	2,700	3,600
<i>Chemonics</i>	--	--	256	522

Source: Lutz and Desai, 2014

Also, while large amounts of aid were promised to Afghanistan, the rate of disbursement could not keep up with the contributions and projects promised, as seen in the table below. With almost all aid providers failing to disburse the aid they agreed to, the practicality of aid was hindered and stopped projects from progressing (Fayez 2012). Similarly, NGOs have been accused of promoting their own agenda rather than contextualizing aid for Afghanistan. Often, this occurred because the ideology of the NGO contradicted the ideology that the Afghan government was promoting and was criticized for being too ‘Western’. This has dangerous

implications and could actually lead to the resurgence of conflict to oppose the aid practices of NGOs (Fayez 2012).

Donor	Aid Disbursed (2002-08)	Aid Committed (2002-08), but Not Disbursed	Aid Pledged (2002-11) but Neither Committed Nor Disbursed	Total	Disbursed (%)
Italy	424.41	0	0	424.41	100.00
UN agencies	171	0	0	171	100.00
Russian Fed	139	0	0	139	100.00
Aga Khan Foundation	119.3	0	0	119.3	100.00
Japan/JICA	1,393.52	16.9	0	1,410.42	98.80
Australia	194.81	0	27.55	222.36	87.61
UK	1,266.3	188.87	0	1,455.17	87.02
The Netherlands	407.1	85.5	0	492.6	82.64
Sweden	217.26	41.15	11.29	269.7	80.56
ECHO	207.68	2.23	58.29	268.2	77.43
France	79.93	29.47	0	109.4	73.06
Norway	277	122.3	0	399.3	69.37
Canada	730.72	48.12	338.85	1,117.69	65.38
Germany	767.84	458.2	0	1,226.04	62.63
EC	1,074.1	646.68	19.22	1,740	61.73
Iran	213.87	13.89	126.24	354	60.42
Finland	64.1	29.91	14.02	108.03	59.34
Denmark	152.79	59.38	63.03	275.2	55.52
Switzerland	51.55	43.96	0	95.51	53.97
Saudi Arabia	76.9	30	113.1	220	34.95
WB	852.72	750.72	1,023.76	2,627.2	32.46
ADB	547.8	1,009.7	183.08	1,740.58	31.47
China	41	20.35	84.15	145.5	28.18
Turkey	20.8	22.82	46.38	90	23.11
US/USAID	5,022.9	5377	12,389.1	2,2789	22.04
India	204.26	650.85	86.92	942.03	21.68
Spain	25.6	37.15	190.54	253.29	10.11

Source: Ministry of Finance, Afghanistan.

Source: Fayez, 2012

Developments coming from progress and concern of IGOs and multilateral aid agencies have contributed to better practices and effectiveness of aid in Afghanistan. United Nations entities have made exclusive projects to help fund and execute aid projects in Afghanistan. One example of this is UNDP's Afghan Interim Authority Fund to more accurately fund aid projects (Fayez 2012). Countries have also come together to coordinate and better allocate aid towards projects in Afghanistan. In 2006 the Afghanistan Compact Project was established to coordinate aid amongst different countries who were funneling aid into Afghanistan. Through the Afghanistan Compact Project, increased coordination helped projects work together to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of aid by having multiple countries work together on aid projects (Fayez 2012).

While women are often seen as non-combatants of conflict, their bodies are seized for incredible, horrific use in the time of war. This is undeniably true with the conflict in Afghanistan. While men were the ones recognized for their war efforts, “women’s bodies are used as ‘vehicles’ for the symbolic depiction of political purpose” (Handrahan 2004, pg. 437). Women were used as suicide bombers and proved to be a high value due to their clothing’s ability to easily conceal weapons (Handrahan 2004). The weaponization of the female body also includes the increase of sexual assaults of women that is correlated with on-going conflict in a country (Olmsted and Killian). Instead of valuing women during the war, women’s bodies were weaponized and manipulated for political and strategic purposes. This abuse of women during conflict leads to increased demand for medical care and treatment following conflict including sexual and reproductive health rights. Health has been used to promote peace and development in Afghanistan. Despite the need for providing women access to critical medical care, especially following conflict, in the years following the United States’ conflict in Afghanistan, only two percent of the aid received by post-conflict states was for sexual and reproductive health (Olmsted and Killian, forthcoming).

The women and girls in Afghanistan are experiencing a loss of rights and freedoms and are forced to act as dependent beings lacking free will. With the Taliban coming back into power, the female body has lost many of its protections and has been objectified and victimized. There have been blocks for post-conflict aid because of this resurgence. Instead of having intrinsic value, women have become a currency. Prostitution and human trafficking have become more frequent transactions to ‘settle debts’ in Afghanistan under rule of the Taliban (Kandiyoti 2007). This is expressed in every way possible including the inability of women to leave their homes

when they are not accompanied by a male. Within the past two years, the equalities and recognition for the rights of women has been reversed.

Due to the sexual violence that was faced by Afghan women, medical treatment and testing must be provided (Mitra 2021). Prior to the conflict and even during the conflict, women's health and prenatal care was far from priority number one for Afghanistan's Ministry of Public Health. Due to international funding post-conflict, Afghanistan has increased its funding for women's health, reproductive health and prenatal care (Caan 2005). This has allowed women, future mothers, and current mothers to receive the care they need to raise healthy children while providing care for themselves as well. This is a significant improvement because not only does it provide the care the mother needs, but it also reduces infant mortality helping the country grow. However, Afghanistan is only on the average rate towards reducing infant mortality and still has many more improvements to provide for women and mothers. In a report by the World Health Organization in 2013, Afghanistan was ranked the worst country in Asia for a child to be born in (EMHJ 2013). In order to have efficient use of the increase of funding, Afghanistan must build its medical infrastructure and increase accessibility to rural women.

The idea of women and girls receiving an education has been seen as radical but over time there has been an improvement in the amount of females able to participate in the education system. However, the number of girls registered for school peaked in 2003 and has declined since (Vinson 2008). There have been barriers preventing girls and women from receiving an education. When women first were allowed to receive an education and girls were allowed to go to school, there were still attempts to prevent them from receiving an education. Education for women was originally exclusionary for only wealthy women and families (Moghadam 2002). At the time, fees for education were required for girls or women to attend school (Vinson 2008).

While the education of women and girls was already not a priority, it became less of a priority because a lot of the time it was not seen as worth paying for and for poor families, paying for the education of women and girls became impossible.

Prior to women and girls being able to attend school in Afghanistan, the removal of barriers has incredibly improved the women and children who have received an education in Afghanistan. Over two and a half million girls have been put into school over the past two decades in Afghanistan allowing there to be more educated women, higher literacy rates and improved opportunities for professional level jobs. The literacy rate for women nearly doubled from 2013 to 2018 (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021). Furthermore, significant growth has been seen in the number of girls enrolled in education, improving from six percent to forty percent over a span of fifteen years (Batha 2022). Following initial years, growth in the number of girls enrolled in school remained consistent, however less than half of girls have been enrolled in school. The percent of girls attending school only increased by one percent in the years 2004 to 2011, changing from thirty-four percent to thirty-nine percent. (Shayan 2015). Likewise, with the resurgence of the Taliban back into power women and girls have been barred from receiving an education (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021).

As previously stated, the goal of post-conflict aid is to improve the economy of a recovering state, maintain peace and promote social policy that can assist in the maintenance of peace. Improving education levels amongst women in Afghanistan helped improve their workforce participation and increase participation in the formal sector along with economic rights. Even when not participating in the formal sector, educated women are able to better operate small-scale businesses and shops allowing them to make an income. Also, women are granted the knowledge necessary to run agricultural businesses and take over business

responsibilities of husbands who may have been lost or no longer able to work due to casualties in the conflict (Sorosen 1998). Through improvements achieved with the assistance of post-conflict aid, women can be accounted for for work that they were previously participating in and not being accounted for in the economy. The rate of return in female employees is two times higher than that of men in Afghanistan (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021). This means that businesses are earning twice as much through female employees than they do with male employees, showing that hiring women is a wise investment and that promoting their rights is valuable not only for humanity but in the best interest of Afghanistan's economy as well.

By not allowing women to work, there is a decline of economic growth as a whole, whether a business hires female workers or not. This is evident because of the multiplier effect. There is less cash flow circulating through the Afghan economy and all businesses will suffer because of the reduction of the workforce. The loss of cash flow is especially significant because of more and more women holding professional positions due to receiving higher education. It is estimated that the ban on female employment can reduce productivity by up to one-billion US dollars (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021). Furthermore, the unpaid labor of women continues while women are barred from employment. If women's unpaid labor was accounted for in the economy, there would not be a drastic decrease in economic growth with women being barred from employment but this has yet to be achieved anywhere in the world.

The Pushback and Downfall of Aid

All of these improvements in the rights and representation of women has not gone without backlash. As previously mentioned, the integration of women in Afghan society in ways that make them equal to men by providing them many rights and opportunities is different than

what is traditionally practiced in Islam. These recent backlashes have occurred in the past and are more likely than they are not in terms of attempts to change gender relations. While it is easy to place national mandates and regulations, having individuals or smaller communities not retaliate against the modern gender relations is where there has proven to be difficulty in Afghanistan. Individual or smaller scale accounts of backlash against women most commonly take place within the home (Abirafeh 2005). Privatized violence can take place in the form of physical assault, sexual assault or mental and emotional abuse where a woman's character and ego is attacked (Kandiyoti 2007).

The backlash and political and economic instability in Afghanistan led to the collapse of development and resurgence of the Taliban into power. Economic stagnation with rising political tensions along with uncertainty from COVID-19 led to the breakdown of unsustainable developments. Through this breakdown, the Taliban rose to power again. Constraints on liberties and rights, particularly for women, capture the abilities of not only citizens of Afghanistan but also states and IGOs contributing to the development of Afghanistan (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021). More than three-quarters of Afghanistan state that they are more fearful for their safety than in previous years (Institute for Economics & Peace 2021). When the Taliban rose to power again in August 2020, a lot of aid entities were unsure on delivering aid to the newly Taliban ruled country because there was a lack of trust that the aid being delivered would reach the people in need based on the lack of legitimacy in and history of the Taliban's actions (Cogan and Gill 2022). As a result, aid to Afghanistan was frozen, a severe impact considering the heavy dependence on aid in Afghanistan's economy (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021). Furthermore, many diplomats from countries providing aid and the United Nations were under threat of or actively faced violence within Afghanistan. This left their presence in

Afghanistan as no longer safe. Aid is now inputted in Afghanistan through humanitarian aid in an attempt to relieve the humanitarian crisis going on within Afghanistan (Cogan and Gill 2022). The United Nations and bilateral institutions such as USAID have provided humanitarian aid to provide relief to the people of Afghanistan who were already facing food insecurity before the rise of the Taliban (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021). While institutions are hesitant to provide aid to Afghanistan while under the rule of the Taliban, attempting to prevent the people of Afghanistan from starving is better than doing nothing at all. However, the Taliban has created significant concerns regarding the successful disbursement of aid with no guarantee that it will reach those in need.

Suggestions

Post-conflict aid in Afghanistan has massive potential. Afghanistan's high levels of poverty and weak government structure could allow aid to have incredibly significant impacts, as long as aid is used in practical and sustainable ways. Afghanistan received mass sums of aid from individual states and multilateral organizations in an attempt to restore its economy, promote the modernization of the state and improve the social structure and rights of all citizens. However, poor planning of aid, failing to thoroughly contextualize and integrate aid and the failure to obtain support for aid practices led to the failure of the use of post-conflict aid. Today, the Taliban has surged into power and instilled conflict and oppression as part of the daily lives of the people of Afghanistan. The group who predominantly faces this oppression is women who have lost liberties, rights and protections. Overall, Afghanistan faces an even greater crisis with extreme difficulty in receiving aid today.

Protecting the rights and liberties is crucial in upholding a new system. UNDP (2019) has argued that the number one priority in Afghanistan today is providing security aid. The rise of the Taliban significantly decreased the security levels for people within Afghanistan while hindering their rights. There must be an order that protects the rights of people for society to progress in the way that was outlined in post-conflict aid. The United States had soldiers stationed in Afghanistan following the conflict providing security aid. While the United States was providing security aid, security aid is a form of tied aid and therefore the United States was benefiting their own economy through the military-industrial complex (Fayez 2012). The United States also significantly contributed to Afghanistan's security forces. More than half of the United States' aid in Afghanistan was contributed to the Afghan Security Forces Fund (Fayez 2012). However, the United States providing security aid for their own benefits is evident in the lack of security aid that has had detrimental impacts in the resurgence of violence and oppression. This takes precedence over any gendered form of aid or even development aid.

Women may suffer violently as a form of rejection by men of the rights that they have won. Similarly, if women do not conform to the rules the Taliban has put back into place, denying women rights, women suffer violently. Public assaults are known to the community and help instill fear in people (Kandiyoti 2007). The assaults may take place domestically or publicly. Domestic assault occurs in private so it is difficult for action to be taken against it. Domestic assault takes place all over the world and it is relevant in the discussion of protecting the rights and liberties of women. With a sense of fear instilled into women for using or attempting to protect their rights, women are unable to truly and freely use their rights and protections. For the protections to be made, there needed to be security aid surveying and upholding the law.

The key strategy for the end of a conflict, disarm, demobilize and reintegration, does not create a strategy for long term peace. Many factors that play a role in conflict and allowing a state to recover post-conflict, such as psychology, are not addressed through disarm, demobilize and reintegration (Mitra 2021). These factors are specific to a conflict where a quick, generic solution will not resolve it; especially when issues are as complicated and deep rooted as they are in Afghanistan. In doing so, it is incredibly likely that a country will fall back into conflict. Furthermore, it shows that countries providing aid are not looking to develop long term security or peace and instead green wash themselves by briefly caring for those in need. In order for stronger solutions for peace keeping, disarm, demobilize and reintegration is not the best solution in protecting rights that are established through a reformed state.

Similarly, due to how alternative the views necessary for women's rights to be accepted and upheld are compared to the traditional societal principles of Afghanistan, there must be a form of education and integration. Integration means that the new perspective cannot only be inserted into a country but must be accepted and upheld by the people within the society. Following a conflict, a form of mediation occurs to help the opposing groups live in peace (Sorosen 1998). While men and women were not opposing forces within Afghanistan, the reforms and aid established new gender roles and relations. First, it is important that people are aware of the changes that are occurring. If the people within the society are not aware of the reforms taking place and do not have a thorough understanding behind the reforms, they will lack any significance. Furthermore, integrating these reforms into people's lives allows the reforms to create an active difference within society. The Afghan people must accept and uphold these reforms together. When this did not happen, the progressive gender relations fell through. On a related note, through recent bans on female employment with the resurgence of the Taliban,

it is illegal for women to work. This has caused a decline in Afghanistan's overall productivity and growth because there are fewer workers in the employment pool and fewer workers entering the workforce because of newly educated, aspiring female workers now being banned from working (UNDP Afghanistan Country Office 2021)

Furthermore, the literal education of girls in schools must be prioritized, especially given the current situation. The Taliban's ban on girls' education severely limits the capabilities of women in society, in politics and in the economy. As previously discussed, education provides opportunities for women and grants knowledge to legitimize their role counter to their male peers such as in politics. With the resurgence of the Taliban, there has been fluctuations in the decisions on girls being allowed to attend school. There are complexities in regards to the interpretation of Islamic law and many underlying rules in regards to gender that bar girls from receiving an education. An example of an underlying issue is the mandate of segregation based on gender (Batha 2022). By providing girls the tools and resources through education, there can also be the resolution of other barriers in the way of achieving gender equality.

Finally, aid and reform was put in place and measured with the short term in mind without effective planning. While humanitarian aid used to only focus on providing relief in the short term, *modern humanitarian aid* tries to implement long term solutions in a short term time frame. Measures in determining the impact of post-conflict aid are typically accounted for in the first few years following the conflict. NGOs in Afghanistan were often criticized by the Afghan government for their short term aid projects which failed to develop into sustainable practices (Fayez 2012). Furthermore, the rate of dispersion of aid into Afghanistan was not effectively planned out. Despite identifying goals for aid projects, only proportions of the aid required for the project were received (Fayez 2012). By not following through with pledged aid, it indicates

that aid is not prioritized for the well being of the state that is receiving it and instead is only relevant when the aid donor perceives it as so. In order for aid to be sustainable and of best practice, this simply cannot be the perspective of aid donors.

VI. Discussion

The vulnerability of people who have just experienced conflict provides an opening for foreign countries to influence and take advantage of the state that just experienced conflict. It is important to acknowledge the parallels between conflict and economic crisis that allow states to do so. Economic crises are examples of the market deteriorating due to major faults. While most of the time the market is self-regulating, failures in the market can have devastating impacts (Caporaso and Levine 1992). Mass conflict is not something personally experienced by the majority of the world. However, when it is experienced it is devastating and horribly destructive. Both economic crises and conflict have the ability to uproot a person's life. Keynes argued that a government should intervene to help end an economic crisis and provide relief to the economic suffering faced by its people (Caporaso and Levine 1992). A similar argument can be made for states intervening in the post-conflict setting to provide relief for the destruction and devastation that was experienced.

Post-conflict aid may initially appear to be a better solution to providing relief and helping to rebuild the destruction that occurred in all aspects of life during conflict. Yet, one key difference is government intervention in an economic crisis and in the post-conflict setting. In an economic crisis, it is the domestic government providing relief for its people and intervening in the situation. With post-conflict aid, a foreign government is intervening and making decisions impacting a country besides itself. As we have seen, post-conflict aid tends to be ineffective, does not establish stable governments and fails to reach those most in need. While Liberal, Marxist and Feminist scholars each criticize post-conflict aid with different arguments, it is not that one is wrong compared to the other but instead they are all right in addressing different

aspects of post-conflict aid. An overarching theme between them is that aid is about the establishment of power, mainly coming from developed countries.

As previously stated, recognition of women's role in conflict and how much women are impacted by conflict is a newer focus in the international community. It was not until recently that policies benefiting women and providing rights explicitly for women have taken place even though women are impacted the most by conflict. While it is a newer development in providing post-conflict aid, the international community is failing in providing women rights and protecting these rights in a way that women are able to effectively use them. Further showing that aid donors do not care as much of the effectiveness and impact of aid but instead promote blanket policies that have little to no impact.

During the colonial era there was North-South relations where the North had power and control over the South (Rondinelli and Montgomery 2005). While the legacy of colonialism and North-South relations can be seen today, the dominance of developed countries is more prominent around the world (Monaghan 2017). The promotion of the aid provider's self interest and the ignorance of their impacts on the developing countries is a major risk of post-conflict aid. Following World War II and the creation of post-conflict aid, there has not been a major conflict that has taken place in the West. However, no matter where conflict has taken place following World War II, there have always been Western states participating in the country's post-conflict redevelopment. This trend of entering foreign states through a rationalization from the perspective of the developed country is seen today. The depiction of women being in need of saving in underdeveloped countries is a justification by developed states. This occurs despite the actual need of women within the state itself (Abu-Lughod 2002). A failure to actually assess the

needs of people and women within a country receiving aid will never attribute to successful aid and instead displays an assertion of dominance over developing countries.

It is important to note that underdeveloped states may tend to have a lack of say or even understanding of the new political, economic and social constructs being imposed upon them. Even more so, the states are tied into the globalized, Western dominant, capital economy. As Marx argues, capitalism works for the benefit of the wealthy while maintaining power and oppression of the wealthy. By tying these developing countries in the global economy it is in question how these developing states are benefiting in the well-developed global economy (McGregor 2007). Aid sources like tied-aid are one way this is done. Tied-aid time and time again has been proven to be ineffective and harm the development of the state receiving aid. Forty percent of aid provided by the United States was through tied-aid (Chadwick 2020). Instead of properly developing and naturally progressing, developing states are thrown into the global economy and without the tools to be economically sustainable within their own country first.

Another example of the promotion of the developed states' ideals and how they benefit in developing states through aid is seen in security aid as a form of tied aid. As previously mentioned in discussion of the military-industrial complex, wealthy states and arms producers benefit from conflict in providing arms and military contractors. Following a conflict, states need security to maintain peace and uphold the new infrastructure. Through supplying foreign contractors and weaponry through security aid, developed states are promoting an agenda and creating sales that would not have taken place without the foreign interference in the post-conflict states' governance. Instead of providing stable security structures and the training

for the skills needed to maintain peace on its own, states receive aid that increases demand for goods and services of the country providing aid.

Another way the use of post-conflict aid exemplifies Marx's critique is through the lack of aid and support the poorest receive. Post-conflict aid is commonly allocated to urban centers, disregarding rural centers where the area is the least developed and experienced great suffering from the conflict. Aid donors provide aid to urban centers over rural areas because they recognize urban centers offer the highest rate of return with the lowest risk (Mosley 2015). Cities bring together mass amounts of people, leading to potentially high amounts of productivity. In restoring the city landscape, investors and businesses may begin placing factories and providing jobs in an area. The high levels of productivity and rapid growth that can occur within a city can provide large returns to aid providers. However, economic productivity does not necessarily mean the lives of the people within the city are well. The companies entering into these developing cities are often looking to take advantage of the low wages in the region that stem from the desperation of people to have a job and recover from the ills of post-conflict society. Similarly, following conflict women have entered into the labor force. While this is a great achievement for the equality of women, it provides foreign companies more competition for jobs and therefore potentially even lower wages. When aid allocation is determined based on profitability instead of need, it exposes itself as a country's or organizations business strategy instead of contributing to the global good and caring for those in need. Global actors and within the state receiving aid, aid is provided to create wealth and power even though the poorest people suffer from conflict the most.

Furthermore, the Liberal and Marxist perspective emphasize the lack of freedoms aid creates. While Marx emphasizes the oppression of the wealthy, Liberalism argues the sense of

dependency that aid creates. These arguments are even more so true in the post-conflict setting because of the suffering and destruction that occurred. Post-conflict states are fragile and vulnerable because on top of the lack of basic needs that they already face, they also experience the mass destruction and horrific violence that is war. Furthermore, freedoms relating to choice for one's own state are harshly limited depending on the aid agreement. Heavy regulation while implementing new policies and with the implementation of aid is necessary to ensure it is effective and correctly being applied (Panic 2009). However, after changes have stabilized, the donor country cannot regulate forever.

Aid that provides countries with goods and services instead of the knowledge and tools necessary to construct stable infrastructure and practices, develops a state into one that cannot be sustainable on its own. The systems and practices rely on foreign assistance and funding instead of one that is not dependent. Aid is not guaranteed and in times of crisis, foreign aid is one of the first expenditures retracted. This leaves a country that was relying on aid to be left without the resources needed or the ability to maintain it. In this way, aid can be 'counter cyclical' because the need for aid increases during the crisis as it is being taken away (Mosley 2015). Therefore, the state is left without the means to maintain stability and growth.

Furthermore, the practices established through aid struggle to be absorbed by the country receiving it without the proper tools, leading to the downfall of what was established without foreign reinforcement. Education is crucial in stimulating the uptake of significant social reform, that of which was seen with the introduction of women's rights in Afghanistan. While there may be security aid enforcing the public on upholding the new reforms, if societal reforms are not supported in the home and taught to future generations then there will be no progression. Women were given many rights and protections on paper but often in private they received backlash and

did not receive support from those closest to them. A lot of this is due to the radical changes that were being introduced into society opposing all that was previously known. As a result, there is a chance that the state will fall back into conflict without the resources that have been used to maintain peace. This scenario further proves that states providing aid only do so in a way that benefits them and not for the benefit of the state receiving aid.

The effects of post-conflict aid being delivered without the tools to maintain development and without aid being contextualized can be detrimental. The effects of such are exhibited through aid delivered in Afghanistan, where today the resurgence of the Taliban has led to violence and the oppression of women. There are several reasons why the developments in Afghanistan deteriorated. Incorporating an ideal, specifically the inclusion and protection of women in aid reform, does not guarantee the success or the uptake of the ideal by society. In order for aid and reforms to be truly successful in achieving goals and maintaining peace, the people must support and uphold the goals. With this being said, gender mainstreaming prioritizes policies and the incorporation of women and gender rights through legal protections. While this increases the potential for women to improve and increase their role in society, real change occurs through gender mainstreaming being a part of everyday life and being upheld. It is the conditions and barriers, or lack thereof, that determine the amount that women are able to play a role in society (Abirafeh 2005). There is no guarantee that policies will be supported or upheld (Kandiyoti 2014). If this does not occur, the pages of policy and promises of change are meaningless.

One major fault of post-conflict aid is the timeline in which it is issued in and measured under. Conflict and its effects have long term implications. A lot of policies and action plans are contractual or have a set time frame that they must act within. By placing a time constraint on the

aid process, it limits the impact of aid projects (Jones 2015). This leads to aid projects having a short time frame to achieve goals without thinking of the long term impact of the policies and programs. Short-term aid projects do not create long-term solutions and long-term solutions create a society that has experienced sustainable growth and is self-sufficient (Mosley 2015). Furthermore, groups that are not prioritized in the aid process more commonly face long term issues related to conflict. Most notably, women acquire many burdens following a conflict such as food scarcity and property ownership (Mitra 2021). Coupling short term solutions and groups that suffer without recognition creates an even bigger issue at hand.

However, aid programs tend to focus on one massive all encompassing aid project rather than an aid project that occurs in stages that tend to have the most sustainable impact (Mosley 2015). Often, due to the short term priority that aid projects receive, the minimum amount of time to collect data to determine the effectiveness of aid is given. Furthermore, there is less time to construct a way to collect data in rural areas and with those who are most difficult to acquire a response from. This leads to an underreporting in the effectiveness of aid and overall a lack of data (Mosley 2015). By not thinking of programs and solutions in the long term, poor planning and the failure of achieving goals can create instability and cause a state to fall back into conflict (Rauchhaus 2005).

With each instance there must be a thorough evaluation of the post-conflict setting, no matter the type of aid being provided. Some steps may appear obvious but too often are forgotten in the aid process such as the type of government structure if there is one and the socioeconomic makeup of a country or a particular area. Others are not as obvious but incredibly relevant in the post-conflict aid process such as the level of violence occurring, if there is an infrastructure in place to protect against violence, the political agenda of the country and the tools or structure

already in place and that are available (Kovach 2016). For example, taxes are commonly looked at as a solution to increase state revenue but there are many obstacles in the way of tax collection. A failure to contextualize aid is a failure to have truly successful aid because every state, every conflict and every post-conflict situation is unique and has its own needs. Furthermore, in assessing the context, the duration aid implementation is necessary is also crucial in addressing the specific needs of the state receiving aid.

Another way post-conflict aid must change in order to improve implementation and the effectiveness of aid, is by improving the feedback systems of aid. All too commonly is aid and its success determined by the organization or country that is providing aid. Yet, 'transformative participation evaluation' included those who are receiving aid and stakeholders (Ridde, Goossens and Shakir 2002). With post-conflict aid it is important to receive feedback from the people within the country receiving aid and have representation of all groups of people. If this does not occur, the will of the people who just fought a war for their needs may not be represented or they may even be oppressed due to tensions following a conflict by the victors. This can also be improved by improving the level of transparency between aid donors and the public, lessening the principal-agent problem. By increasing the level of transparency, there will be better knowledge and data on the actions of those implementing aid, make it aware of when they are not acting in the best interest of those receiving aid and make it known when aid projects fail (Gaardner and Bartsch 2014). Furthermore, it better holds aid providers accountable for their actions and helps prevent them from using aid solely for personal gain.

Improvements must be made in order to establish sustainable change and successfully maintain peace in post-conflict states. Empirical evidence shows that forty-percent of post-conflict states fall back into conflict within a decade (Collier et. al 2008). Without reform in

the manner that post-conflict aid is provided in, states will continue the cycle of conflict and be suffocated by conflict preventing them from developing. Furthermore, while the post-conflict context provides opportunities for gender reform, unsustainable aid practices perpetuate the patriarchy.

The United Nations and individual states, especially global leaders, have the responsibility of exemplifying rights and protections for all and ensuring women as equal members of the global community. This cannot be achieved without changing the strategies for aid, equality and development in the post-conflict setting. Aid must be contextualized to understand the history of the state and with understanding of the conflict that just occurred. Providing post-conflict aid is the bare minimum step and does not have any meaning behind it if it is not created for sustainability and to have a strong impact.

The failure in post-conflict aid to do so already and the continuous disregard for the rights, needs and inclusion of women shows the universal fault of state and global leaders. Patriarchal governments providing aid catering to patriarchal needs perpetuates male dominance socially, politically and economically all around the globe. While states provide post-conflict aid to help establish development, without correcting patriarchal systems within one's own state, the patriarchy will be perpetuated.

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