

The Motives Behind Development Aid



- an interdisciplinary study -

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Introduction

Throughout the developed world, governments and people are sharing a part of what they have with those in less fortunate countries. Such Development Aid comes in a lot of different forms, varying from structural amounts given from one government to another, so called bilateral aid, to aid provided by Non Governmental Organizations (NGO's) and individuals raising and giving money.

The last couple of years there has been a lot of debate on Development Aid. Scholars like Dambisa Moyo openly question the workings of aid (e.g. Moyo, 2009) and several governments (e.g. the Dutch government; Radio Netherlands Worldwide, 2011) have decided to decrease their aid budgets. In his book "Does Foreign Aid Really Work" (Riddell, 2009), British development specialist Riddell looks at the way aid works – and sometimes does not work – and while doing so provides a overview of the important literature and scholarly opinions on this topic. He sums up that aid it is not yet living up to its full potential and that there's a wide array of reasons for this, pointing at different directions, blaming different parties.

Critique on aid can focus on the quality of aid or on its quantity, whereby those in favor of aid propose that the latter is something that should be increased. Whether they are right is worth a debate in its own right, but the argumentation from here on will be built on the assumption that increasing the quantity of aid is something we should aspire to do.

In order to raise the quantity of aid, it is important to know why aid is given in the first place. This thesis looks into the different motives behind giving aid and by doing so, the critique there is on donor's motives for giving aid can be examined as well. In order to research the question why people support aid as completely as possible, it is necessary to position this research outside the disciplinary borders. Several disciplines have looked at this same topic, but due to disciplinary restrictions or preferences they have only covered it partially. The complexity of the research question and the fact that aid-giving takes place on several levels call for a different approach.

Covering the field of human geography, psychology and ethics and combining the findings from these disciplines, this thesis aims to give an integrative, and more comprehensive understanding, than any of this disciplines has been able to provide by itself. It needs to be acknowledged that this understanding is by no means complete: economy and cultural anthropology are only two examples of disciplines that can add additional useful insights. However, taking into account the time limits, the choice was made to include the three disciplines that are the most relevant to this question.

Human geography provides the necessary background information about foreign aid to create a context. With respect to the the motives behind aid-giving, it focuses mainly on the institutions, such as governments, that give Development Aid. Psychology, on the other hand, answers the research question from a different point of view as it focuses on the individual level. The field of ethics takes society as its focus and gives several theories on whether or not there is a moral case to give aid and on which principles society bases its aid-giving tendencies.

The first chapter of this thesis consists of a brief introduction on the specifics of Development Aid. After that, two chapters follow that each answer a part of the research question from a disciplinary point of view. Chapter two looks at the moral case for aid and gives an overview of several theories that explain why we should help. Chapter three focuses on why we do help and is divided in two parts: the first one looks at institutional aid-giving, whereas the second one has the individual at the core of its argumentation. The fourth chapter puts together all the information and looks for conflicts between them. Since the question answered in each chapter is slightly different and disciplines tend to base their theories on different concepts or assumptions, it is important to take a moment to carefully examine the insights before they're put together. After the conflicts are resolved, chapter five finally gives an integrative answer to the question what the motives are behind development aid. The conclusion discusses the implications of this research and proposes ideas for future research.

From a broad base working towards explicit motives and actions, encompassing different levels, this thesis combines and adapts insights in such a manner that they give way to a new, interdisciplinary, inclusive answer to the question why people support foreign aid.

1. Defining Development Aid

Aid comes in many forms, is given by many donors and distributed to a lot of recipients. This makes defining Development Aid a hard task. Depending on the definition used, some aid flows are included in one analysis and excluded in another. Terms like Official Developmental Aid, Official Aid, Development Aid, Foreign Aid, Humanitarian Aid can all refer to the same concept or one just slightly different. Quite often they're used interchangeably, further complicating a proper analysis.

Trying to tackle the problem of defining aid, Riddell has given an overview of the most common terms and their designated meaning. Foreign Aid is the broadest term and Riddell defines it as 'all resources (...) transferred by donors to recipients' (Riddell, 2008: 17). As Riddell points out, this term does not say anything about who the donors or the recipients are, the reasons behind the transfer and whether the transaction is voluntarily or not. Development Aid further narrows this down, as it consists of the part of Foreign Aid that goes from rich to poor countries, aims to reduce poverty and focuses on human welfare and development (Riddell, 2008: 17). The term Official Development Aid [ODA] was first used by the Development Assistance Committee [DAC] of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] and is to be seen different from Official Aid [OA]. Simply put, the difference between the two lies in the recipients of the aid: aid going to the poorest developing countries or the lower and upper middle-income countries is termed ODA, whereas OA is aid targeted at more 'advanced developing nations and countries and territories in transition' (Riddell, 2008: 18).

Arguably the motives for giving aid to a country with a population living in extreme poverty can be different from those for giving aid to a country with an economy that is already starting to grow at a fast rate. Since most sources do not specify what form of aid they're discussing, the picture here will not be as detailed as preferred and some generalizations have to be made to be able to draw any conclusion at all. From here on, the term Development Aid will be used with its definition as proposed by Riddell, unless stated otherwise.

Development Aid is distributed through several types of donors. Bilateral aid is ODA given from the government of one donor country to the government of a recipient country (Riddell, 2008: 51). Multilateral Aid is ODA distributed through an international organization, such as the different bodies of the United Nations [UN] (Riddell, 2008: 82). Non-governmental organizations [NGOs] are becoming increasingly important as a player in the field of Development Aid (Riddell, 2008: 53). NGOs can be locally based or acting on a global level and are based in both donor and recipient countries (Riddell, 2008: 259). The term can refer to an agency consisting of hundreds of people handling dozens of projects or a small group

carrying out one small-scale project. Those that are relevant in the world of Development Aid do however have some characteristics in common. According to Riddell, those are the following three: they are in some way involved in humanitarian and development work; the nature of their activities is 'not-for-profit'; and they are distinct from both governmental and private for-profit organizations (Riddell, 2008: 259,260).

Although aid is generally distributed on an institutional level, the importance of individuals should not be overlooked, since government budgets for Development Aid are to a great extent depending on public support. In addition, every organization, be it governmental or non-governmental, consists of individual people who, although they're part of a larger institution, still have their own minds.

3. The Moral Case for Aid: Why Should We Help?

One of the most often reported reasons for supporting aid is the moral case for providing it (Riddell, 2008: 119). Individuals, NGOs and governments have repeatedly argued that they give or support aid out of a sense of responsibility or duty to help those in need. Although, as will be discussed later, this is by no means the only reason for aid-giving, it shows the importance of the ethical aspect in the argument for Development Aid.

The question why we should or shouldn't help those that are less fortunate than ourselves has been asked and answered abundantly in the field of ethics. One of the central concepts in this debate is the concept of altruism, which in this context can be defined as an ethical principle holding that every individual is morally obliged to help or benefit others (Russell, 2000: 450). There's no consensus on this topic: according to some, we are indeed obliged to help those around us, while others state we should live our lives purely for ourselves. Ayn Rand, for example, a 20th century philosopher, stated that altruism was an "evil moral philosophy" (Rand, 1964). Nietzsche, although believing we have a duty to help those who are weaker, considered the idea that we should treat others as more important than ourselves to be outright demeaning (Russell, 2000: 799).

Since this thesis aims to shed light on the motives for giving aid, the ethical theories that help to explain this will be discussed. Therefore, the theories here by no means give a complete overview of the ethical debate on altruism, since only those who explain why we should help – and thus by definition argue in favor of giving aid – are elaborated upon.

Altruism and Utilitarianism

On the side of those in favor of altruism, several influential theories can be found. On one extreme, there's James Fisher whose version of altruism dictates that an action is morally right if its consequences are favorable for everybody except the actor (Russell, 2000: 458). This holds a close link to utilitarianism, which states that whether an action is morally right or not is solely determined by its capability of maximizing satisfaction for all (Riddell, 2008: 129-130). For both theories there's a close link between moral conduct and the extent to which its consequences are seen as beneficial. An important difference is that utilitarianism prescribes that we should maximize good consequences for all, while Fisher's altruism prescribes maximizing good consequences for everybody *except the actor*.

For both utilitarianism and Fisher's altruism, as long as an action is actually helpful, you do not just should help: it is your obligation to do this whenever and for whomever you can. The famous defender of utilitarianism Peter Singer further underlines this when he says that "it makes no moral difference whether the person I help is a neighbor's child 10 yards from me or

a Bengali whose name I shall never know, 10.000 miles away" (Singer, 2004: 7).

A World of Societies vs. a World of People

A much cited theory in the argument for aid is one formulated by John Rawls, an American philosopher. His Theory of Justice (Rawls, 1971, in: Riddell, 2008) is, according to the Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy, regarded as "one of the primary texts in political philosophy" (1999, in: Miller et al., 1991). In short, John Rawls argues that the conduct of people needs to be guided by principles of justice. When a group of rational, neither altruistic nor egoistic, individuals were to hypothetically choose such principles, they would agree that "liberty, opportunity, income, wealth and the bases for self respect (...) should be distributed equally unless an unequal distribution of any or all of these is to the advantage of the least favored in society" (Riddell, 2008: 131). It should be emphasized that this applies to moral obligation within a society and should not be generalized to interaction between different societies across the world. In his Law of People, however, Rawls does say that 'well-ordered' societies have the duty to help 'burdened' societies.

Where Rawls divides the world in societies, a more cosmopolitan point of view takes the world as its core moral unit. In such a worldview, national boundaries are transcended and principles that guide human conduct, as well as the notion of human solidarity, apply to everyone (Riddell, 2008: 133). According to Cosmopolitanism, human beings should be seen foremost as inhabitants of the Earth instead of as belonging to different countries or societies. We should therefore not just look after the people within our national boundaries, but after everyone living in this world.

An Obligation to Help

Thomas Pogge, a German philosopher currently living in America, believes that we have a responsibility to help, because we are responsible for the suffering we aim to alleviate. Pogge states that the debate whether or not we ought to assist those in need is insufficient because it ignores the issue of causality. In his book World Poverty and Human Rights, he says "we must stop thinking about world poverty in terms of helping the poor (...) they need help only because of the terrible injustices we have inflicted upon them" (Pogge, 2008: 30). Since the rich countries behave in such a way that they are directly responsible for the cause and continuation of suffering in poor countries, it is our duty to eradicate this severe poverty (Pogge, 2008: 31).

3. Why Do We Help?

A case has been made as to why we ought to help, but this does not explain why people actually do help. Why do we act the way we do? Surely morality can not be the sole reason for our behavior. In answering the question why we should help, ethical theories have put forward why society has the moral obligation to help, thereby encompassing both institutions and individuals. With regard to why we do help, it is however important to make a distinction between those two levels. Discussing first the reasons for giving aid on an institutional level and then the motives that apply to individuals, the differences between the two, and thus the need for such a division, will become apparent.

3.1 Why institutions give aid

The motives for giving aid are different from donor to donor and are changing over time. Donors themselves often emphasize that they provide aid for humanitarian reasons, for helping recipients develop themselves. Some critics on the other hand state that donors generally only have their own interest in mind when giving aid (Riddell, 2008: 91-93). In reality, when giving aid, donors often seek win-win situations, where the criteria used for providing aid reflect both the recipient country's needs and the donor's interests and are beneficial for both.

The reasons for giving aid are different from donor to donor, but in general several clusters of motives can be identified. Riddell proposes these seven: (1) to address emergency needs; (2) to assist recipients with achieving their development goals; (3) to show solidarity; (4) to further their own political and strategic interests; (5) to help promote donor-country commercial interests; (6) because of historical ties; (7) to provide and strengthen global public goods (Riddell, 2008: 91). Degnbol-Martinussen and Engberg-Pedersen have further narrowed the motives down to the following four clusters: (1) economic motives, (2) motives concerning national security, (3) environmental motives and (4) moral and humanitarian motives (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003: 17). Following a combination of these two proposed sets of clusters, so as to reach the preferred level of detail, five different clusters of motives are identified and elaborated upon.

A lot of the research on this topic has focused on aid allocation, answering the question to which recipients the donors give aid. Although this is a different question than the one this thesis seeks to answer, the results are useful nonetheless. It might not say why donors are providing aid in the first place, since it doesn't look into the way aid programs are brought into life. However, looking at the way donors decide who gets which amount of aid reveals a lot about what they consider important when giving aid and, albeit indirectly, the driving factors behind Development Aid.

Political and Strategic Interests

Political interests are the oldest motive for allocating Development Aid. Examples of political motives are security concerns, showing power and preventing migration flows.

After the Second World War, the United States came with a plan to rebuild the Western European Countries. This Marshall Plan, named after the Minister of Foreign Affairs George C. Marshall, chiefly provided funds to Western Europe to boost their economy. The United States didn't care so much about their economic interests though: a prosperous Europe would be a buffer against the expansion of Communism (Todaro, 2006: 721). Later, a large part of aid given by the government of the United States was targeted at Middle and Eastern Europe, at those countries who could possibly be influenced by the Communist threat. In the 1990s, the focus on these countries was renewed as the issue of refugees and migrants became important with respect to allocating development aid (Forsyth, 2007: 37). The United States and the European Union sought to halt the unwanted flow of immigrants to their regions (Leisinger, 2000: 12), which translated to a shift in aid flows to Eastern and Central European countries (Forsyth, 2007: 37). According to Todaro, since 2001 aid flows have shifted towards Islamist countries, again presumably with the donor's own security in mind (Todaro, 2006: 722).

Providing aid can also be a means to support allies or bond with other states. It can be used as a reward or as a leverage. It is a means to show power as well as gain power. With respect to showing power, the main objectives for bilateral aid are to exert influence and to obtain a voice in international institutions. Alesina and Dollar found that the countries whose votes in the United Nations were in line with those of the major donors on average received more aid, which shows how aid can be used to buy political support (Alesina & Dollar, 1998: 16). Although it seems contradictory, aid often flows to those countries who are either involved in a conflict or are performing very well in terms of their political policies and protection of human rights. With respect to the latter, aid is used as an incentive, as a reward to strengthen policies the donor agrees with. Alesina and Dollar found that more open and democratic countries receive more aid than autocratic ones (Alesina & Dollar, 1998: 12). The same goes for countries who are more open with respect to their economy.

On the other hand, aid is targeted at countries who are performing poorly in terms of safety for their citizens and the protection of their rights. Balla finds that practically all donor countries are more likely to direct aid to countries bordering or containing conflict than to those far from it (Balla, 2008: 2570). Aid is targeted at these countries, Leisinger explains, because social inequalities, political polarization and peaceful co-existence are highly correlated (Leisinger, 2000: 13). Development in these conflict-loaded regions is much needed to promote safety not only for the people there, but for the world in general.

Historical Ties

At the end of the colonial era, the newly independent countries faced a lot of problems, but lacked the expertise, the infrastructure and the money to confront them. To relieve feelings of guilt, sooth their bad conscience and provide some sort of compensation, Leisinger argues, the former colonial powers provided large sums of development assistance (Leisinger, 2000: 1). The influence of the colonial past varies from donor to donor. In general holds that the longer the colonial history, the stronger the ties are nowadays (Alesina & Dollar, 1998: 7). Alesina and Dollar found that for Belgium, France and the United Kingdom in the period from 1970 to 1994 99.6 percent of aid flows was determined by their colonial past (Alesina & Dollar, 1998: 28), but the link between former colonial powers and their old colonies is waning (Riddell, 2008: p.). To the extent that such a strong link still exists, instead of looking at history, the motives for giving aid to these regions can often be found in current economic interests.

Donor Economic Interests

Many authors argue that aid always flows to countries that can somehow satisfy a donor's interest. This does not necessarily mean that this is by definition negative for the recipients, as there are often positive consequences for them as well, but it sheds a different light on the idea of Development Aid as 'helping the recipient' (Nath & Sobhee, 2005: 2).

A lot of investment in developing countries comes in the form of loans instead of grants. For this to be considered Development Aid it has to include a grant element of at least 25% (Thirlwall, 1994: 327). In theory, both donor and recipient are winning by these investments: while the former acquires interests, the latter can stimulate its economic growth.

Developmental aid is also often used to open markets to a donor's product, to promote the donor's own firms and enhance employment in the donor country (Riddell, 2008: 99-101). One of the ways to do this is through the tying of aid. The implications of this are profound and going into detail goes beyond the scope of this thesis, but it should be noted that in general, human geographers see this as very detrimental for the recipients. In the case of formal tying, the aid provided is a form of trade as the recipient is obliged to purchase goods and services from the donor country. Donors thereby have direct financial gain through the orders placed by the recipient country. In addition, by participating in these development projects, companies in the donor country hope to gain access to the markets in recipient countries (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003: 13). There are also less rigid forms of aid tying, but in each case it is important to note that the donor is winning much more by this than the recipient.

Providing aid can enhance the economy in the donor country as well by increasing donor exports because of either a growing economy in the recipient country, and thus increasing

imports from the donor, or because aid reinforces already established economic and political ties (Lloyd et al., 1998: 3). Aid is also used by donors to secure scarce materials. This is another reason why former colonial powers still have strong ties with their old colonies: they want to maintain privileged access to their resources and markets (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003: 13.).

Environmental Motives

Environmental considerations have come to play an increasingly important role ever since the 1980s. The Brundtland Commission's Report in 1987 placed protecting the environment on the agenda, where it still features prominently to this day (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003: 15). The Brundtland Report underlined the interdependency of the world's countries and the common global interest to protect the environment. It stressed that we must take action and implement a new strategy of growth based on sustainability.

Three years later, in 1990, the South Commission's Report stated that continued and widespread poverty contributes to the degradation of the environment, since poverty causes large population growth. More kids means more family income and more social security, but it also puts more pressure on the Earth's resources (Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen, 2003: 15). In 1995 the Commission on Global Governance went as far as to say that aid should no longer be seen as charity but as a payment for the services provided, such as protecting natural resources, biodiversity and growth areas for tropical forests.

Developed nations sometimes feel helpless when observing environmental degradation in developing countries as they can not simply prohibit environmentally harmful conduct, even though it affects them as well. Sustainable development is expensive and developing countries often do not have the resources to invest in green technologies (Meier, 1995: 231). It is thus up to the developed donor countries to make these investments. Leisinger says that the only way they can limit resource exploitation this far from home is by providing aid to halt or slow down the destruction of tropical forests and limit the emissions of greenhouse gases (Leisinger, 2000: 13). It is of course not only in the interest of the donors, as Meier argues that for the development of the recipient countries themselves it's bad as well to ignore environmental quality (Meier, 1995: 232). This is a typical case of a win-win situation, where both donor and recipient are benefiting from the aid provided.

Humanitarian and Emergency Motives

The major donors often assert that aid is motivated by a humanitarian concern to promote development. Degnbol-Martinussen & Engberg-Pedersen however point out that there's often a discrepancy between what donors say their motives are and what they really are (2003: 17). Isopi and Mavrotas state that 'donors pursue political, economic and strategic interests in

inter-country aid allocation (..) and developmental concerns such as reduction of poverty receive relatively low or even zero weight in this process” (Isopi & Mavrotas, 2006: 1). Although the extent to which humanitarian motives are important for donors aid allocation is often exaggerated, over the years the protection of human rights has become an increasingly important motive for Developmental Aid. Empirical studies support this shift: greater respect for human rights by recipient results in them receiving more aid. Respect of human rights is usually measured by indexes on political and civil rights (Younas, 2008: 668).

The formulation of the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] has played a major role in this. By committing themselves to the MDGs, the donors have openly dedicated themselves to tackle extreme poverty in several ways. There are eight MDGs, and they are set to be achieved by 2015. The eight goals are: (1) eradicate extreme hunger and poverty, (2) achieve universal primary education, (3) promote gender equality and empower women, (4) reduce child mortality, (5) improve maternal health, (6) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, (7) ensure environmental sustainability, (8) develop a Global Partnership for Development (United Nations Development Department, 2011). It is believed that these goals have led to a more strategic approach to recipient country selection (OECD, 2006: 1). Committing to them has provided donors - multilateral, bilateral and NGOs - with a framework which has made it easier to distribute aid for humanitarian purposes, since progress can be measured and there are clear targets.

Humanitarian motives are relatively speaking more important with respect to multilateral aid than with respect to bilateral aid. This is especially true for aid distributed through the United Nations, but holds for other multilateral institutions as well. Donor countries often look after their own, national interests, which is not the case with a more neutral multilateral institution such as one of the UN bodies (Riddell, 2008: 77). It is important to note that multilateral aid can not be seen as separate from bilateral aid, since a large part of the aid budget of different governments is going to multilateral institutions to be distributed from there (Riddell, 2008: 81). Therefore, donor countries are ensuring that part of the aid they're providing is distributed in a more neutral way. Multilateral institutions have their own interest in mind as well, but compared to bilateral institutions, the nationalistic tendency is nearly absent.

3.2 Why People Give Aid

The field of social psychology concerns itself with the question why we engage in such behaviors as helping others. The most obvious reason for supporting aid is 'because we want to', yet this is too vague an explanation and only covers the top of the iceberg.

The term 'altruism' was already introduced when discussing the moral case for aid in chapter two. In the field of psychology the term is used as well, albeit with a different meaning. Here, its designated definition according to Gazzaniga and Heatherton in their book on the basic psychological principles, is "the providing of help when it is needed, without any apparent reward for doing so" (Gazzaniga & Heatherton, 2006: G-1).

Ananth coins the term human psychological altruism, which he distinguishes from kin selected altruism, which occurs between blood relatives (Ananth, 2005: 218). An important element of human psychological altruism is the absence of reciprocity: when one person helps another he or she does so without expecting the recipient to do the same thing back. According to Ananth, psychological altruists have in common that they all have minds and that their altruistic behavior is not driven by concerns of their own reproductive success (Ananth, 2005: 221).

Whether or not a person engages in such altruistic behavior can to a certain extent be predicted by his attitudes. The concept of attitude refers to one's evaluation of something and it is one of the central ideas of social psychology (Gazzaniga & Heatherton, 2006: 620). Some of these attitudes are explicit, in that we are aware of them, while others are implicit, operating on a subconscious level. Attitudes differ with respect to their consistency over time, their resistance to change and their likelihood to predict behavior. All of these factors increase with the strength and personal relevance of the attitude.

Attitudes are however not the only explanation for the way people behave. Quite often, people engage in behaviors even though they do not necessarily feel positive towards them, for example because of situational circumstances. When explaining other people's behavior, we tend to overemphasize the importance of personality traits and underestimate the importance of situation. This tendency is so pervasive that it has been called the fundamental attribution error (Gazzaniga & Heatherton, 2006: 609). Factors other than attitude can be far more important in explaining and predicting behavior, often without us knowing it since a great deal of mental activity occurs automatically and without conscious awareness or intent.

The Decision Making Process

Bekkers & Wiepking have written several articles about generosity, philanthropy and other behaviors that regard giving or helping. They have studied a large body of literature on the mechanisms of giving and in their meta-study concluded that the following determinants are involved with its decision making process: (1) awareness of need; (2) solicitation; (3) costs and benefits; (4) altruism; (5) reputation; (6) psychological benefits; (7) values and (8) efficacy (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007: 20). As they say, the order in which these eight are presented "does not reflect the importance or causal strength of the mechanisms. Rather, the order corresponds to the chronological order in which they affect giving in the typical act of donation." (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007: 20).

In the next section, these eight mechanisms are explained in further detail to the extent that they apply to this research, and whilst doing so, some additional factors will be elaborated upon as well. Persuasion, for example, is an important influence on the decision making process and when talking about solicitation, this process will be looked at in more depth. Religion is also an important influence on the act of giving. Although it could arguably affect multiple principles of the decision making process, it most notably concerns values and it will therefore be discussed in relation to that subject.

Awareness of Need

According to Bekkers & Wiepking, awareness of need is, chronologically speaking, the first factor that determines the act of giving. As early as 1969, Wagner and Wheeler (1969) stated that it is not the objective need but the subjective perception of need that is crucial to helping. This subjective awareness of need is to a great extent facilitated by the mass media. The amount of attention that the media pay to a certain 'need' depends on the number of those affected, and the demographic and psychological distance between the donors and the place of need (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007: 22). This is however only true up to a certain point, as shown by the fact that there's very little coverage of the widespread, ongoing poverty around the world. As Riddell points out, over 18 million people die from poverty related causes each year, yet although they're known, they remain largely unnoticed and are invisible in the media (Riddell, 2008: 121). To put things in perspective, Riddell says that this amount "is equivalent to 100 average-sized jumbo jets - each carrying 500 passengers - crashing each day, leaving no survivors". Yet, the regularity of these deaths means they're not considered 'news' and the immense scale makes it hard to really grasp the problem.

Emergencies, such as natural disasters, are well covered by the media. Although Development Aid is not the same as emergency relief (see: Riddell, 2008: 123; 352-354), the awareness of need stemming from the media coverage of emergencies is beneficial to the support for Development Aid. There is a lot of ignorance about what Development Aid exactly is and most

people confuse Development Aid with the more short term emergency relief. When those who first stated they support Development Aid were asked what they meant by that, they mentioned actions that like handing out food and clothing after natural disasters (Riddell, 2008: 111). The awareness of need might thus not be of the problems Development Aid is targeted at, but, although indirectly, it is helping create public support for it.

Solicitation and Persuasion

Solicitation refers to actively asking for donations instead of merely creating the opportunity to do so (Becker & Wiepking, 2007: 23). Lindsfold et al. (1977) found in their study that the more often people encounter a possibility to make a donation, the more likely they are to give. Just asking people to do something makes it more likely they'll do it. According to the psychologist Cialdini, people are more likely to comply when people are given a reason for a request, even if the request makes little sense (Gazzaniga & Heatherton, 2006: 638).

Even more effective than just asking, is persuasion: the active effort to change an attitude. There are two fundamental ways in which persuasion can lead to attitude change. According to the elaboration likelihood model, as formulated by psychologists Richard Petty and John Cacioppo (1986, in: Gazzaniga & Heatherton, 2006: 624), there's a central route to persuasion and a peripheral route to persuasion. The central route is used when people pay attention to an argument and rationally consider all the information; this route leads to strong attitudes that are long lasting and resistant to change. In the peripheral route, people process the information only minimally and persuasion is dependent on peripheral cues (Gazzaniga & Heatherton, 2006: 625).

Cialdini has done a lot of research on the process of persuasion and found that there are six fundamental principles of persuasion: Liking, reciprocity, social proof, consistency, authority and scarcity. The latter ('people want more of what they can have less of'), is with respect to supporting aid not very relevant. These principles are similar to the cues Petty and Cacioppo were talking about, in that they have little to do with the actual message yet are very important in persuading someone. An in-depth discussion of each principle would be out of scope, but a brief overview is in place as to illustrate the way persuasion works – and how peripheral those cues can be indeed.

The first principle, 'liking', holds that persuasion works when people like the person who's trying to persuade them, which is facilitated by similarity and praise (Cialdini, 2001: 77). 'Reciprocity' predicts that people will treat others like they are treated themselves. For example, when the Disabled American Veterans enclosed a small gift in the envelope with the fund-raising letter, the response rate nearly doubled (Cialdini, 2001: 78).

The 'social proof' principle states that people follow the lead of similar others. Such social influences will be touched upon in later paragraphs as well, but regarding persuasion it implies that when one is asked to support or give aid and it is made clear that friends and family already do so, a positive response is much more likely.

The fourth principle, 'consistency', is with respect to Development Aid, perhaps the most important principle of persuasion and it means that people have the tendency to align with their commitments. Evidence indicates that a choice made actively, one that's being written down or spoken aloud, is more likely to predict future actions than a choice that has not been made explicit (Cialdini, 2001: 78). This is very important because one of the basic premises of Development Aid is that for it to be effective, aid has to be well-structured and long term (Riddell, 2008: 359-360). Given the fact that the size of government's aid programs correlates positively with public support for aid (Riddell, 2008: 109), if that support were to fluctuate, aid budgets would be less consistent as well.

Cialdini's last principle, the principle of 'Authority', holds that people are much more easily persuaded by someone they perceive as an authority on the topic at hand (Cialdini, 2008: 80).

Solicitation, and the accompanied persuasion, is with respect to aid-giving a very important determinant in the decision making process, especially with the current critique on Development Aid. If the content of the message is under debate, even more effort should be targeted at asking people and doing so effectively.

Costs and Benefits

As Becker and Wiepking aptly say: "Obviously giving money costs money" (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007: 23). This means that there are always costs associated with giving or supporting Development Aid. In his research on altruistic behavior, Stewart-Williams compared altruism towards relatives with altruism towards non-relatives and found that especially the latter form decreased when the cost it bared on the donor increased (Stewart-Williams, 2008: 423). This works the other way around as well: when the cost of a donation is lower, the number of donations increases (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007: 24). Turning this principle even further around, some researchers believe that providing material benefits in return for giving or supporting aid will increase the likelihood or amount of donations (Becker and Wiepking, 2007: 26). This effect could however also be explained by the principle of reciprocity – giving something will make people want to give something themselves too.

There is a danger in offering materials in exchange for money or support, since giving such external motivations could undermine and decrease internal motivations, which are in general stronger and lasting over time (Gazzaniga & Heatherton, 2006: 349).

Altruism

It is quite obvious that people will give or support aid because they care about Development Aid. These people have an altruistic attitude. Both the concepts of psychological altruism and attitudes have already been discussed in more details above.

Reputation

According to the fifth determinant of the decision making process, the decision to give is influenced by concerns about one's reputation. People tend to conform to group norms and are easily influenced by their peers. The desire to fit in with the group is so strong that under certain circumstances, people are willing to engage in behaviors they would normally condemn (Gazzaniga & Heatherton, 2006: 634).

The psychological concept of social facilitation means that being surrounded by people leads to increased arousal, which favors someone's dominant response: in this case either to give or not to give. If this is the response seen as 'correct' by those around you, this response is enhanced. If it isn't however, the normal reaction is repressed (Gazzaniga & Heatherton, 2006: 635). The effect of a group on one's response thus depends on the topic and whether or not this is seen as something favorable by his environment.

Giving to charitable causes will generally make you look better in the eyes of those around you as it is valued in society; you will most likely receive recognition and approval (Bekkers and Wiepking, 2007: 29). Conversely, not giving or supporting will make you look bad. Andreoni and Petrie (2004) found in their study that, when given the opportunity, people prefer their donations to be publicly known. This effect is particularly strong with regard to people who are close to the potential donor. Such so called 'strong ties' put a far greater amount of social pressure on someone than mere strangers.

Not giving in this context would not only do damage to one's reputation, but also to future relations with these friends, family or others close to him (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007: 29). However, even someone just slightly closer than a stranger can enhance the feeling of social pressure. Dolinski et al. found in two studies that even as little as a brief, unrelated dialogue increases the likelihood of a donation (Dolinski et al., 2001; Dolinski et al., 2005). Bekkers and Wiepking add that this result possibly stems from the fact that familiarity increases liking (Bekkers and Wiepking, 2007: 30) and, as pointed out earlier, liking is one of Cialdini's principles of persuasion.

Psychological Benefits

Besides the social benefits, giving also brings psychological benefits. It may contribute to one's self-image of being an altruistic, empathic and socially responsible person (Bekkers &

Wiepking, 2007; 31). In addition, the act of giving produces in most cases an automatic, positive emotional response. Neuropsychological studies suggest that donations for charitable causes “elicit neural activity in areas linked to reward processing” (Harbaugh et al, 2007, in: Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007; 31), thus producing a positive mood. Giving alleviates feelings of guilt and satisfies a human desire to be a morally just person. In addition, acting in line with social norms and one’s own values brings about pleasurable feelings (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007: 32).

Values and Religion

Through giving, donors can express their wish to change the world and make it a more ‘ideal’ place (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007: 35). What that ideal world looks like differs from donor to donor and depends on one’s value system. By giving or supporting aid, a donor may wish to distribute wealth and health more equally, reduce poverty, promote the position of women, protect human rights and so on. Bekkers & Wiepking point out that giving as motivated by one’s values has received very little attention in the literature. One study, by Bennett (2003), did find that a similarity between the values of the organization and someone’s personal values increases the probability that a donation is made.

What someone sees as valuable is influenced by several factors, such as one's education, culture and, very importantly, one's religion. Religion in turn influences the decision making process in two ways: through the system of values embedded in the specific religion and through the pressure the religious community puts on you to behave in accordance with these values. The effect of religion on aid giving varies for members of different religious groups (Berger, 2006). Some details of the three largest religions are discussed here. In terms of number of followers, in descending order, these three are Christianity, Islam and Hinduism (Berger, 2006: 117).

All three religions promote philanthropic behavior in some way. The Islam knows two important types of charitable giving: the zakat and the sadaga (Rippin, 2005: 111-112). Zakat, one of the five pillars of Islam, is the obligatory giving of 2.5% of one’s possessions to charity. Sadaga is the name for a voluntary charitable gift. In Hinduism, giving is referred to as Dana, which encompasses nearly all non-reciprocal giving. In Christianity, caring for other is a value that is emphasized often, and the Bible has a lot of examples of such behaviors (Regnerus et al., 1998).

Differences between the religions become very apparent with respect to who is to be helped: those that share the same religion, those who have another religion, those that don’t have any religious beliefs at all? Christian teachings often use the parable of the Good Samaritan to set an example and promote helpfulness towards strangers (Carabain & Bekkers, 2010: 8).

Conversely, Islamic teachings focus more on helping fellow Muslims. The recipients of zakat need to be Muslim; this isn't obligatory in case of sadaga (Senturk, 2007).

In Hinduism, giving is aimed foremost towards direct family and is then extended to society, the world and all those who inhabit it (Carabain & Bekkers, 2010: 10). Hinduism thus has an intermediate position between the two other religions: it focuses more on its own group compared to Christianity, but its giving is aimed at those outside this group far more than in the case of the Islam.

Efficacy

Bekkers & Wiepking state that from a chronological point of view, the last factor influencing the decision making process is efficacy (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007: 36). This principle refers to the donor's perception that their donation or their contribution makes a difference. In the world of Development Aid, it is indeed a widely shared assumption that "support for aid rises to the extent it is known to work, and falls to the extent there is evidence that it doesn't" (Riddell, 2008: 114). This is why donor organizations give a lot of publicity to stories of successes, regardless of whether they paint a representative picture of all aid (Riddell, 2008: 115). It is therefore interesting that, as Riddell points out, there is actually a high level of support among people who believe aid doesn't achieve its objectives. With respect to Development Aid, clearly other factors have to be more important.

Becker and Wiepking stress that the relative influence of each of the aforementioned mechanisms is still unclear (Bekkers & Wiepking, 2007: 38). For each person, and in each situation, the decision making process is different. Some motives might operate simultaneously and it is likely that there are interactive effects. For Development Aid, it is clear that some factors, such as efficacy, are less important than for the act of giving as discussed by Bekkers and Wiepking in general.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory

The concept of attitudes is so important because, when there are little other factors influencing their behavior, people tend to act in line with how they feel towards something. When they do act differently, due to the factors discussed in earlier paragraphs, this causes cognitive dissonance. The psychologist Festinger was interested in how people resolved situations in which they held conflicting attitudes. According to Festinger, when there is a contradiction between two attitudes or between attitudes and conduct, cognitive dissonance occurs (Gazzaniga & Heatherton, 2006: 622-623).

A basic assumption of his theory is that dissonance causes negative feelings and thus motivates people to reduce it and relieve displeasure. Reducing this dissonance can occur by

changing attitudes or behavior. Post-decisional dissonance motivates someone to focus on the positive characteristics of his choice and the negative aspects of the option he did not choose.

An important implication of cognitive dissonance theory is that you can change someone's attitude by changing their behavior first. After that, the attitude will likely be changed by itself. Persuading someone to support Development Aid, even though it is done by peripheral cues, can therefore change attitudes and increase public support in the long run as well.

4. Conflicts & Common Ground: Linking The Pieces Together

The question of why we support Development Aid has been answered using insight from three disciplines – ethics, human geography and psychology – and has led to a division in why we should help and why we do help. Several concepts and theories have been introduced and before an integration of the different insights can take place, it is necessary to look at any underlying differences among them.

A concept that has been used in different forms is altruism. In ethics it is defined as a principle holding that every individual is morally obliged to help or benefit others. A more narrow version of altruism has been used by the philosopher James Fisher who added that altruistic acts should not just benefit others, but should specifically not be of any benefit to the donor. Psychology uses the concept of altruism as well, but does not mention any moral obligation. Instead, it is defined as helping someone when needed without expecting anything in return. They are both concerned with the act of helping someone, but where psychology is merely descriptive, the definition used by ethics is prescribing the way things should be. It is value loaded and talks of obligations.

This can be traced back to the origins of both disciplines, since the field of ethics is in general more concerned with prescribing the way things should be. Psychology on the other hand aims to describe, and predict, the way people act. This is an inert difference between being normative and descriptive.

To be able to use the concept of altruism, its definition should be altered to encompass both disciplines.¹ The common factors in both definitions are that altruism is about helping someone and that to be considered altruistic, there has to be an absence of reciprocity. Thus, the common ground of altruism is: the act of helping another without the idea of reciprocity. Since the normative character of the ethical definition is inert to the discipline, it is not necessary to include that part of the definition. This difference can be made explicit by using the same definition of altruism, but asking a slightly different question. Psychology thus concerns itself with why we do behave altruistic and ethics with why we should behave altruistic.

Human geography and psychology are answering the same question from two entirely different points of view. Psychology and ethics research altruism as a concept and are interested in where it's coming from, whereas human geography looks more at the impact of aid and sees altruistic behavior as a given fact.

¹This integrative technique is called 'redefinition' (Repko, 2008: 283).

Where human geography, in answering the question, concerns itself more with societies, countries and groups of people, and therefore gives a broad picture. Psychology focuses mostly on the individual and personal differences, making the picture more detailed.

The fact that psychology and human geography focus on such different levels is actually not a weakness but a strength. Combining insights from these disciplines will result in a more complete picture than any of the two by themselves could provide.

The consequences of the insight from the three disciplines are different as well: ethics provide insights that are prescriptive, the insights of human geography are mainly descriptive and psychology is in addition to being descriptive also predictive. Since the research question is a broad one, together the disciplines have been able to cover the entire chain of processes.

The discrepancy between the different motives and between what donors say and what is actually true can be explained by using what we know about attitudes and cognitive dissonance theory. Cognitive dissonance theory applies to individuals, not to institutions. Since institutions are themselves made up of different individuals, expanding this theory² and applying it to groups of individuals makes it possible to use it outside the discipline of psychology as well. As said, it is common that there's a difference between stated motives and actual ones or, in other words, between attitudes and behavior. The reasons for this are numerous, but what's important is that this means that the shift that has been seen in aid rhetoric can be followed by a shift in behavior.

Despite the differences mentioned above, the several insights can be integrated without much problems. They do not discuss the same process, but each focuses on one part of the chain. The disciplines are for the most part not contradicting each other. Rather, they complement each other and combining them leads to a complete picture of the entire chain.

² This integrative technique is called 'extension' (Repko, 2008: 286).

5. An Integrative Answer: The Chain of Aid-Giving

In society, there's an underlying assumption that aid is something good, that helping is something we should do. The extent to which this is true is different for everyone, but we all see helping as good. Some say it is our duty to help those far away, some say it would merely be nice to help every now and then. When we give or support Development Aid, the people around us will look at us with approving eyes. It benefits our reputation. When governments give a part of their budget to poor countries it gives them influence in international organizations. It is on this assumption that aid rhetoric is based, it are the altruistic motives that donors emphasize when explaining why they help.

In addition, supporting Development Aid is good for us too. When you're giving or helping, it makes you feel good about yourself, it strengthens bonds with the people around you who are supportive of your altruistic behavior and we feel like we are contributing to the world. On an institutional level, there are personal benefits as well, although they're not concerned with emotions or feelings, but mostly with political and economic gain. It is a way to boost markets in the donor countries, gain and exert power and have privileged access to resources.

All motives for supporting or giving Development Aid can be brought back to two clusters:

- Altruistic motives
- Self-interested motives

Altruistic motives roughly translate to "because they need our help". It concerns benefits on behalf of the recipient. Self-interested motives mean that we help "because we've got something to gain", thus focusing on benefits for the donor.

These motives do not contradict each other, as on all levels aid-giving can be motivated by a combination of the two is. Sometimes this combination takes place across levels. When an NGO, for example, state that they provide aid solely out of altruistic motives, granted that this is true, self-interested motives can still play their part on the individual level. An organization consists of several individuals who's perhaps purely altruistic motives can still make them feel good about themselves on a personal level. There is always a something to give and always something to take. What is different is the extent to which is given and taken and the balance between the two.

As justified when creating the common ground, cognitive dissonance theory as formulated by Festinger can be used to explain the discrepancy between stated motives and actual ones. A lot of scholars have criticized the fact that donors often act out of self-interest. They say they

help out of altruistic motives, since this is what is valued in society and it is in line with the basic assumption that helping is something we should do.

Partly because of external pressure, on the surface, the motives for their behavior conform to the values in society. Even institutions merely consist of human beings and as human beings, we like to look good in the eyes of those around us.

The implications of cognitive dissonance theory are that the real motives of why we help can actually change because of the stated motives. Cognitive dissonance theory predicts that the discrepancy between the two will cause negative feelings that we, both individuals and institutions, want to relieve. The two options to do this are to change the attitude, in this case the real, more self-interested motives, or to change the behavior, the stated motive. Given the fact that, as explained, there's a trend towards more and more humanitarian motives in official statements, it appears that the behavior has not been changed to match the attitude. It can thus be concluded that to relieve discrepancy, attitudes will change to match the behavior. Such conclusions have to be drawn carefully, as human behavior is complex and influenced by a wide range of factors of which this is only one.

In short, there are two sets of clusters motivating aid giving: those that focus on benefits for the donor and those that focus on benefits for the recipient. The latter are more in line with what's valued by society and thus are often used to explain the giving or supporting of aid. Self-interested motives are however still very important in giving aid, which is not necessarily bad for the recipient as he is still getting more than without any aid at all. In general, donors seek for a win-win situation, but the fact that there's a trend in rhetoric towards altruistic motives is promising for recipients, as it might actually prelude more benefits on the recipients-end.

Conclusion

This thesis did not seek to make a judgment about Developmental Aid or formulate an opinion about which motives for providing aid are and are not good. Rather, it sought to research what motives there are and how they relate to each other. When speaking of norms and values, it discussed these as objectively as possible, merely reflecting the opinions as put forward by the different theories rather than those of the author.

The research question however arose from the fact that aid is still lacking in terms of both quantity and quality. We are still far behind on achieving the Millennium Development Goals and although improvements have been made, there is still much to be done. The insights as presented by this thesis could, and in my opinion should, be used for new research. What does it mean that there are two clusters of motives for giving aid and there's often a discrepancy between the two? How does that translate to raising more funds and increasing the amount of development aid?

This thesis' most important implication for the future is that getting donors to commit to more development-oriented goals could actually change the way they think of giving aid.

The adoption of the Millennium Development Goals has been an important theme the last decade. All the members of the United Nations have committed to these goals, thus creating external social pressure from each member the others. This has already lead to a shift towards more altruistic motives, yet to come even near to achieving the MDGs, this shift should be far greater.

To put the insights of this paper into practice and use them to improve both the quality and quantity of Development Aid, researchers should focus on how exactly cognitive dissonance theory applies to institutions. A group of people does not just consist of several individuals, since each person influences the other which creates a group-specific dynamic. Therefore, the precise workings of cognitive dissonance theory could be different for a group of people.

In addition, fundraisers and governments seeking to increase the amount of aid should develop and use more effective ways to persuade people, thereby changing their attitude. Knowing what motives there are and which ones are most prominent, they can either use these or change them.

That there are so many different motives and different processes at hand in aid giving makes it a complicated issue. Yet even more so, it means that there are a lot of different ways people and institutions can be motivated to give aid. This should not be seen as a problem, but as an opportunity to which further research should be dedicated.

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