**CON- We have no obligation to aid poor nations**

Some ethicists argue that rich nations have no obligation to aid poor nations. Our moral duty, they claim, is always to act in ways that will maximize human happiness and minimize human suffering. In the long run, aiding poor nations will produce far more suffering than it will alleviate. Nations with the highest incidence of poverty also have the highest birthrates. One report estimates that more than 90% of the world's total population growth between now and the year 2025 will occur in developing countries. Providing aid to people in such countries will only allow more of them to survive and reproduce, placing ever greater demands on the world's limited food supply. And as the populations of these countries swell, more people will be forced onto marginal and environmentally fragile lands, leading to widespread land degradation, further reducing the land available for food production. The increase in demands on the limited food supply combined with a decrease in the production of food will threaten the survival of future generations of all peoples, rich and poor.

Other prominent critics of aid, such as [William Easterly](http://williameasterly.org/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank) and [Dambisa Moyo](http://www.dambisamoyo.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), recite many studies’ findings about aid ineffectiveness. These studies have come to mixed conclusions, and debate still rages over whether aid can effectively promote economic development, human rights, democracy, or countless other outcomes. Easterly and others attribute a good share of aid’s failings to the lack of feedback and accountability. As Easterly says, “The needs of the poor don’t get met because the poor have little political power with which to make their needs known and they cannot hold anyone accountable to meet those needs.”

Others claim that, even in the short-run, little benefit is derived from aiding poor nations. Aid sent to developing countries rarely reaches the people it was intended to benefit. Instead, it is used by oppressive governments to subsidize their military or spent on projects that benefit local elites, or ends up on the black market. Between 1978 and 1984, more than 80% of 596 million of food aid sent to Somalia went to the military and other public institutions. In El Salvador, 80% of U.S. aid in dry milk ended up on the black market. Furthermore, giving aid to poor countries undermines any incentive on the part of these countries to become self-sufficient through programs that would benefit the poor, such as those that would increase food production or control population growth. Food aid, for example, depresses local food prices, discouraging local food production and agricultural development. Poor dairy farmers in El Salvador have found themselves competing against free milk from the U.S. As a result of aid, many countries, such as Haiti, Sudan, and Zaire, have become aid dependent.

Some ethicists maintain that the principle of justice also dictates against aiding poor nations. Justice requires that benefits and burdens be distributed fairly among peoples. Nations that have planned for the needs of their citizens by regulating food production to ensure an adequate food supply for the present, as well as a surplus for emergencies, and nations that have implemented programs to limit population growth, should enjoy the benefits of their foresight. Many poor nations have irresponsibly failed to adopt policies that would stimulate food production and development. Instead, resources are spent on lavish projects or military regimes. Such nations that have failed to act responsibly should bear the consequences. It is unjust to ask nations that have acted responsibly to now assume the burdens of those nations that have not.

Finally, it is argued, all persons have a basic right to freedom, which includes the right to use the resources they have legitimately acquired as they freely choose. To oblige people in wealthy nations to give aid to poor nations violates this right. Aiding poor nations may be praiseworthy, but not obligatory.