

# Danish aid to africa: implication for civil society and democracy research paper

[Politics](#), [Democracy](#)



Denmark has put in place initiatives, policies, and programs aimed at improving the welfare of the developing and undeveloped countries in the world. As a result, Denmark is ranked as the world's largest donor country for offering the highest aid to third world countries. The main beneficiaries of this donor aid are the countries in Africa.

Africa is characterized by high poverty levels, poor democratic systems, and bad governance. All these have led to the need by western nations to offer aid to Africa. The country has had a long standing relationship, interest, and commitment to the welfare of Africa (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2008B2, p. 12).

Danish aid is regulated and controlled by more than fifteen humanitarian organizations with origin in Denmark (Buchanan-Smith & Rhode, 2002, p. 1).

To avert the risks associated with corruption and embezzlement of funds, the Danish government has put in place systems that oversee the distribution, management, and usage of the aid (Buchanan-Smith & Rhode, 2002, p. 2). These systems also oversee the implementation of policies and proposed programs for assisting African nations.

Danish aid is usually offered in four major forms. According to the Economic and Social Research Foundation (1997, p. 5) these methods include capital goods, Danish commodities (BOP support), technical assistance, and international knowhow. The latter is administered through contracting and financing to the United Nations agencies (Africa Commission 2009).

In the 1960s and 1970s, Danish aid was geared towards improving the transport and the agricultural sectors (Economic and Social Research Foundation, 1997, p. 5). Because of Denmark's reputation in emphasizing on poverty reduction through aid programs and projects, it has been termed as a humane internationalist and " a front-runner in aid giving" (Lancaster, 2006, p. 190).

However, aid and humanistic nature has not always been the driving forces for Denmark; it has also been driven by commercial reasons, achieved through bilateral aid. Currently, the largest recipients of Denmark's bilateral aid are Ghana, Tanzania, and Kenya.

The research on Danish aid in Africa is based on past studies, reports from the Denmark government, and past observations made in different countries within the African continent. The literature from these materials will be used to expound on the implications of the Danish aid on civil society and democracy in Africa.

Basically, because it is impossible to draw research information all over Africa, the research is categorically based on few case studies where Danish aid has been awarded to the donor nation.

The research study confines itself to Africa, drawing nations from southern Africa, Eastern Africa, central Africa, and West Africa. It limits itself specifically to regions where Danish aid has been applied.

It also confines itself to two major issues that form the basis for the current study. These are democratization and civil society promotion. In delimiting the study to these areas, this makes it possible to answer the research questions more accurately and effectively.

The research study draws its analysis from political theory and the big push theory with regard to foreign aid. Based on the big push theory, foreign aid is believed to be a catalyst for development (Abuzeid, 2009, p. 17).

The author adds that the aid is seen as a way for solving some of the social economic problems that have afflicted the society. With respect to the current research study, these aspects are democratization and civil society enhancement.

Economic development forms the platform for realizing democracy through the civil society. However, the big push theory adds that foreign aid does not always lead to economic development owing to the enhancement of some of the social and economic attributes; it sometimes lead to corruption, dependency, and lack of self reliance.

On the other hand, the political theory holds that foreign aid is usually politically motivated. The major reason why aid is given is for purposes of humanitarian relief, social transitions, promoting democracy, and mitigating conflict (Lancaster, 2007, p. 5). Domestic politics determines the purpose for giving aid. In this case, the international relations between the donor and the recipient play a great role (Lönqvist, 2008).

The Danish aid is predominantly used for policy implementation in developing nations (Lancaster, 2007, p. 20). “ The dynamics of the aid relationship determines the extent to which a PRS process has effected, shifts in the social relations of governance and changes in the structure of political opportunity” (Gould & Ojanen 2003, p. 141).

Therefore, poverty reduction strategy (PRS) has influence on the country that gets an aid (Robinson & Friedman 2005). For example, Tanzania is one of the African nations that have maintained a close relationship with donors (Holtom, 2007: 233).

However, a restructuring of the relationship between the country and the donors has created tension. Drawing upon the push and the political theories, we can be able to analyze the implications of Danish aid on democracy and civil society.

This part of the research study looks at the concept of civil society and the term democracy in relation to foreign aid, or from a donors’ perspective.

Different scholars have defined civil society differently. According to Hearn (1999, p. 3) the concept is notoriously slippery as it has become a common donor terminology. However, he has not emphasized on its definition. On the other hand, the current definitions have merged to share common key characteristics.

Some of these characteristics are “ multiplicity, autonomy and organisational diversity” (Robison & Friedman, 2005, p. 5). As defined by Cheema and

Shabbir (2010, p. 3), a civil society is seen as a body or space formed by private individuals who coherently share premeditated reasoned arguments that are made for the benefit of the public.

A group of people share common goals with the aim of fulfilling some public good, thus forming a public sphere.

Hearn (1999, p. 3) supplements this definition by noting that it has occasionally been used to present “ a set of ideas related to participation, good government, human rights, privatization, and the public sector reform.” Therefore, civil society is a wide range term that with many definitions depending on the agenda of the donor.

The commonly applied definition is that a civil society forms the immediate sector found “ between the family and the state where people associate across ties of kinship” (Cheema & Shabbir, 2010, p. 3).

Therefore, civil society constitutes organizations and people who are not dependent on the state, are voluntarily formed, and enjoy autonomy. According to Carothers (1999, p. 20), civil society is concerned with governance and democracy.

The major aspects concerned with democracy are its development and practice in the society. Based on the democratic aspect, a civil society is basically a voluntary organized life with shared rules (Cheema & Popovski, 2010, p. 3). It also implies that they are self-governing and self-generating.

The difference between a society and civil society is that civil society involves citizens in collective mode from where they share their interests, ways of achieving mutual goals, exchange ideas, “ and make demands on the state, and hold state officials accountable” (Cheema & Shabbir , 2010, p. 3).

The US assistance towards the civil society is in the form of NGOs advocacy and organizations that foresee and monitor the electoral processes (Hearn, 1999, p. 3-4). What makes a civil society unique according to the U. S is the ability to have influence over governmental issues.

Another definition of civil society based on the UN is that a civil society is composed of NGOs, faith based organizations, labour unions, charitable organizations and foundations among other organizations (Carothers, 1999, p. 21; Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark, 2008A, p. 27).

Others that have emerged include religious nongovernmental organizations which play roles like fighting for human rights and governance in governments (Berger, 2003, p. 30). Based on this last definition, donor agencies have been able to engage civil societies in the implementation of policies that are concerned with democracy and poverty eradication (Howell & Pierce, 2001, p. 2).

However, the operations of the civil society in the 21st century are threatened by the capitalistic platform from where it operates. For instance, the civil society is expected to operate where markets and power interact. For example, a number of countries in Africa are led by dictators, or lack

proper political mechanisms. In essence, poor political systems threaten the existence of civil societies.

Generally, civil society offers a platform for donors to provide assistance in the form of aid to the developing and the third world nations. However, the civil society is supposed to represent the interests of these groups, and express the needs between the state and the market without any financial gain (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark 2008A, p. 27).

It should be noted that a civil society should never overshadow the existing democratic institutions and public authorities. The functionality of the civil society is based on the relationship that exists among different stakeholders in the society. For instance, it should collaborate effectively with the press, the state, donors, the local people, and other organizations, in order to achieve its goals.

Nonetheless, the civil society has been accused of opposing the power, policies, and functionality of the state (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark 2009 A, p. 27).

Civil society has benefited immensely from the Danish aid over the past years in terms of governance, democracy, poverty eradication, and enhancement of human rights, among other undertakings. Civil society has played a great role in Uganda, Ghana, and South Africa Robison & Friedman, 2005, p. 7).



The term democracy is ambiguous contested (Hearn, 1999, p. 14). The word resonates in the minds of people as they keep struggling to gain freedom or better living conditions. Democracy has many meanings but it all depends on the context in which it is being applied. For instance, its definition of polyarchy lies on a political sphere (Hearn, 1999, p. 15).

In this context, democracy addresses the issues of inequality, unjust, unequal distribution of resources, and political freedom. It also implies a scenario where accountability, multi-parties, political and civil, and open political contesting is realised or practiced.

But this kind of democracy need to be build and developed. The social society comes in to ensure that the power existing between the society and the states is destabilized, accountability is improved, and liberal democracy values are promoted into the political system. In addition, the social society assumes the position of a mediator between the society and the state (Hearn, 1999: 15).

The views of democracy or what results from it is reflected differently by various donors (Newberg & Carothers, 1996, p. 98). This is because each donor has different objectives and goals and their predetermined interests occasionally influence its applicability and meaning.

Some see democracy as an end or a process through aid or support to electoral mechanisms, political parties, and institutions of the government (Newberg & Carothers, 1996, p. 98). The support to educational systems,

promotion of minority voices, or the dissemination of information to the masses qualifies as democracy.

The assistance of the civil society through technical expertise, information, and funding is believed to be the inception of democracy. In this context, the civil society empowerment pressures the government to develop and implement policies that are either related to good governance, human rights, and equitable power sharing. The ideology of pluralism ensures that the power of the government is reduced or limited.

The definition of democracy is more pronounced where non state organizations like NGOs or media that enjoys freedom, challenge the governmental policies, represent the ideology of pluralism and occasionally challenge the power of a state (Newberg & Carothers, 1996, p. 98).

Some of the African countries where democracy has been necessitated by the presence of donors include South Africa, Uganda, and, Ghana, among other countries. Based on a report by Julie Hearn, all these have been carried through donor intervention in Ghana, South Africa, and Uganda. For example, South Africa achieved its democracy through the initiatives international civil society that was funded by donors.

NGOs are part of the civil society and play a great role in the realization of democracy in developing nations (Carothers, 1999, p. 20). They aid in shaping policies through the exertion of pressure on several governments. It is also realized through furnishings of the policymakers by technical experts.

Leadership training democracy is achieved by the involvement of people in civil education.

Because of the lack of expertise and funds, the Danish aid has been used to propel the civil society in ensuring the realization of democratic efforts and initiatives. Most of the authoritarian regimes have been overpowered by the driving force of the civil society to initiate democracy.

Chandhoke (2007, p. 608) note that donor agencies and the multilateral agencies have accoladed the civil society as the recipe for ensuring democracy and good governance.

Donors give aid to developing or third world nations with the intention of achieving development and eradicating eradication. Africa is one of the largest recipients of foreign aid from the western donors. However, the major driving force for donors has been to fulfill their interests and goals.

Therefore, it is important to analyze whether foreign aid is offered with the interests of the recipients at heart.

With regard to Danish aid in Africa, it would be necessary to determine whether donors just fulfill their needs or have the interests of the continent in their agenda.

Since Denmark is one of the largest donors in Africa, there is need to determine the implications of the aid it offers the African continent on civil society and the democratization process. The following research question has been formulated to justify the study problem. The research question is “

Has Danish aid in Africa enhanced democratization and empowerment of the civil society or not?"

The research study is based on a case study drawing on several countries in Africa. The countries of the case study have been chosen based on the level of application of the Danish aid. The countries form the basis for the discussion, analysis, and the conclusion of the case study.

The countries that have been extensively analysed in the case study are Tanzania, Ethiopia, Uganda, Ghana, and southern Africa. Kenya and the Democratic Republic of Congo have been used for reference purposes. The discussion entails the major arguments on the issues of democratization and civil society from these case study examples.

The decision by the Danish government to offer aid to Africa has been informed by increase poverty levels, wars, unequal distribution of natural resources, and poor practice and acknowledgement of human rights. These social and economic problems require a platform and funding to ensure that they are eliminated or minimized.

Through the collaboration of the civil society, Denmark has been in a position to offer aid through the support of the civil society (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark, 2008A, p. 2). The assistance offered by Denmark to the African civil societies has led to their empowerment. For example, the involvement of Denmark in Ethiopia made it possible to fight poverty and famine.

Through the Danish Joint Programme in Ethiopia, health issues, agriculture and education were to be promoted with the aim of enabling the involved parties to acquire food security and improve their livelihoods (Sorensen, 2004, p. 3). However, to achieve these objectives, Danish aid had to empower several civil society organizations.

For example, a number of Ethiopian NGOs, DANIDA, and other civil societies who were involved in support of the initiatives. The reason why NGOs have been preferred more than governments is because of the bureaucratic systems and corruption associated with governments (Lewis & Kanji, 2009, p. 17).

In the 1990s, the civil society was actively involved in enhancing African policies through democratic consolidation (Hearn, 1999, p. 14). During this period, western governments were seen to have greater interests on the civil society in Africa (Hearn, 1999, p. 2). This was necessitated by the fact that civil society had been liberated from the hegemonic grip of the African states.

The major role that civil society can play in widening democracy is through the promotion of pluralism. Democracy can be deepened by the civil society by embedding liberal democracy in institutions. Denmark policy has been geared towards the achievement of the interest of the civil society (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark, 2008B, p. 15).

The emergence of civil society was seen a symbol of antistatism, democracy, and a mechanism to defend democracy (Howell & Pearce, 2001, p. 2).

Donors saw this as a key factor that was required for governance. The belief led to the development of programs that were meant to promote the existence of civil society (Howell & Pearce, 2001, p. 2).

To bring development to societies, the involvement of civil societies was necessary because of their autonomy and separation from the governments. Civil societies can work independently without interference from the state. For example, NGOs have high public exposure and have credibility because they can be more accountable than the state (Lewis & Kanji, 2009, p. 21; Mitlin, Hickey & Bebbington, 2007, p. 1700).

In a way, the funding of the civil society has led to democratization of many states in the world. The civil society is known for the initiation and the restoration of some norms and values to the society (Howell & Pearce, 2001: 29).

For instance, the concept of civil society has been embedded deeply in the grassroots through the formation and funding of actively involved grassroots organizations and foundations. However, this begs the question, has Danish aid to Africa enhanced or demented the growth of civil society in Africa or it has it played both roles?

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2008B1, p. 91), the establishment of the Denmark embassy in Ghana has led to support of civil society. It has “ become more vocal during this period, with at least some impact on transparency and accountability” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2008B1, p. 91).

Through the support of Danida, initiatives to bring together the civil society and other donors have been put in place. Policies have benefited the social society with the help of Danida. Ethiopia is a country that has been characterized by poverty, famine, and poor governance.

Although the atmosphere in Ethiopia hardly allows the formation of civil society as seen after Mengistu Haile Mariam regime was overthrown in 1991 (Wilson, 2004, p. 16), Danish NGOs have been actively involved in civil society enhancement. Through programs like the Joint Ethio-Danish development programme in North Wollo, NGOs and other CSOs have had a common voice and agenda (Wilson, 2004, p. 19).

Because of the complexity in the country, the developed programmes were geared towards the achievement of achievement of a common agenda. Through the Danish aid, Denmark has been able to promote civil societies.

Danish NGOs have been actively involved in channeling funds to projects designed by the Ethiopian NGOs (Wilson, 2004, p. 16-24). The NGOs have been used because “operational control which bureaucracies or NGOs have over events and practices in development is always constrained and often quite limited” (Mosse, 2004, p. 646).

Not all the NGOs involved in donor aid to Africa have had a positive impact in enhancing the growth of the civil society. As it was the norm in other nations where civil societies played a great role in donor related activities, Denmark’s involvement in Tanzania had the opposite effect.

Both the civil society and the government were not involved in policy making or lobbying for the policies whose implementation needed to be prioritized. According to Knack (2004, p. 251) the involvement of donors or foreign aid in developing countries lead to the development of civil society organizations and the empowerment of the legislature.

Basically, Denmark had a sympathetic view over Tanzania and as such, the control of the Danish aid was not left to the locals (Bagachwa et al., 1997, p. 179). This prohibited the development and participation of the civil society in the development agenda. Based on the strategies of the Denmark on aid, the civil society should act as an intermediary between the state and the society.

However, in the case of Tanzania, neither the government nor the civil society was involved in the policy making, planning, and implementation process. In one way, Danish aid to Tanzania did not develop the civil society; instead the civil society was suppressed and never recognized.

Based on the attitudes of the Danish donors, it is clear that Tanzania donor relations were poor and the development agenda was entirely controlled by the donors (Bagachwa et al., 1997, p. 180). The behaviour of donors was contrary to the Danish aid policy that requires the recipient country and Denmark to prioritize dialogue and the policy on how the aid should be managed (Bagachwa et al., 1997, p. 180).

In most cases, the civil society is involved in ensuring that policies are implemented based on the priorities of the people; however, in the case of



Tanzania, the aid beneficiaries were never involved in the decision making process. This left a very weak civil society in the country as it had no voice, power, will.

A weak government is not accountable, meaning that it is only accountable to the donors (Knack, 2004, p. 253) and at no time would this allow civil society development or expression. According to Robison and Friedman (2005, p. 1) for democracy to prevail, dialogue between the civil society, donors, and the different institutions is crucial. The dialogue lacked in the case of Tanzania hence the low levels of democratization.

The driving force of the Tanzanian scenario was driven by the fact that the Danish aid was geared towards the areas Denmark had interest in (Bagachwa et al., 1997, p. 180). This implies that the areas that the government or the civil society saw as important and needed immediate aid attention were never considered.

The international paradigm on development downplayed the needs of the civil society and the Tanzanian government. In other words, donors intruded the policy making process in Tanzania, exposing it to dependence thus reducing the self-reliance aspect of a sovereign nation.

This observation can be supported by a report released by the IMF that states that the use of resources by the IMF controlled the recipient nations thus undermining the democratic processes and the sovereignty of those nations. Power is shifted from the recipient nation to the nation offering its aid.

In a way, this reduced the confidence in negotiators who are the civil society. The Danish aid in Tanzania was basically geared towards the fulfillment of the donors' commercial interests (Bagachwa et al., 1997, p. 181).

For example, instead of promoting the locals, the aid was given in terms of tied and untied loans and grants. This implies that the Denmark government had to import 25% of the required commodities from its country and dump them in Tanzania no matter the price.

Currently, Danish NGOs operate from a platform that is under the civil society strategy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2009B, p. 17). The Danish based NGOs have been included in the new strategy that ensures that the civil society is involved in the development process.

Based on a 2009 synthesis report released by the Ministry of foreign affairs of Denmark, Danish aid has been instrumental in the installation and realization of democracy in some parts of Africa. For example, according to the report, Denmark has over the years supported Ghana in economic development and in democracy enhancement.

For instance, the donor has been supporting several policy changes that strengthen the civil society (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2009A, p. 35). Through the Denmark embassy and Ghana civil society funding, some bilateral programmes have been sponsored that promote self governance in the country.

Some of the strongest civil society groups in Ghana are the trade unions, INGOs, think tanks, media and the political parties (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2009A, p. 37). The civil society organizations have been involved in policy making and the development agenda processes in Ghana.

In the same report, it emerges that in Ethiopia, Denmark has been less involved in promoting the civil society and democracy. The circumstances in the ground do not allow the Danish NGOs, and other civil society organizations to get involved in the governance and democracy related issues and agendas (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2009A, p. 38).

For example, a civil society that gets more than 10% funding is not supposed to engage in democratic or governance issues in Ethiopia. However, during the 2005 national elections, Danish aid was channeled to democratization through some civil society organizations like the CRDA. Some of the engagements included voter registration awareness and civic education as well as the inclusion of NGO activists.

Subsequently, the confrontational approach led to political chaos and upsurge in the country (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2009A, p. 38). Several people were wounded and others killed, resulting in chaos. This outcome supports Knack's (2005, p. 51) claim that some scholars have deduced that foreign aids assistance may led to chaos or coup attempts.

Because of the funding and the violence experienced, the civil society organizations presence has been diminished and democracy not prevailed. In

one way or another, it can be opinionated that Danish aid in Ethiopia reduced the participation of CSOs and enhancement of democracy.

However, it cannot be blamed for this because the social sphere created in the country does not allow democracy or civil society growth.

Compared to Ghana, it is important to note that the civil society strategy (CSS) can only be realised in a nation that allows a civil society sphere to engage in development, governance, and democratic issues. Capacity building is a necessary part that ensures realization of policy advocacy in the civil society.

Foreign aid has the capacity to install democracy to recipient nations. Some of the major ways include a focus on the electoral process where the civil society is empowered (Knack, 2004, p. 251). This helps in keeping check of the power held by the legislature. Through the funding of educational programs and investing in economic based programs that would increase the GDP, then democracy would be seen.

These sentiments of democracy achieved through foreign aid have been echoed by Newberg and (Carothers, 1996, p. 99). Newberg and Carothers (1996, p. 99) observe that democracy can be developed through democratic conditions, free and fair elections on regular basis, and the emergence of civil society organizations. Most of these have been achieved in many of the African states through foreign aids.

However, based on some authors, foreign aid has the capacity to undermine the government's accountability levels which lead to the absence of democracy, or even facilitate the emergence of violent coup attempts (Knack, 2005, p. 251).

Overreliance on foreign aid subjects the government to donor accountability syndrome instead of being accountable to the tax payers. Violence and social strife is fueled by negligence of people's woes and problems.

Through Danish aid in Africa, the civil society has managed to promote democracy. One of the main objectives of Danish support is to reduce poverty. The plan for the poverty reduction is through democratization where the civil society would be used to promote the rights of the people (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2008A, p. 7).

To create a cohesive society that promotes democracy, civil societies need some backing in the form of aid. Civil societies cannot manage the roles and attributes they believe in on their own. For example, in countries with weak institutions, social inequities and scarce resources Africa, the civil society requires aid.

In such instances, Denmark supports the civil society to ensure that democracy is prevailed (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2008A, p. 7). The aid is used to strengthen the policies development and programs that are required to empower the people at the grassroots.

The financial aid given is “channeled to civil advocacy groups working on behalf of minorities, peripheral populations, and issues beyond political mainstream” (Newberg & Carothers, 1996, p. 104). Most of these issues are usually beyond the ability of the state to be attentive on them.

In Africa, and particularly in Uganda, Denmark has played a great role in ensuring that its objectives are realized. For example, the Uganda Human Rights Education and Documentation Centre (UHEDOC), was supported by the Danish government to discuss prime issues related to good governance and democracy (Hearn, 1999, p. 18).

Other funding went to the organization of seminars and symposiums that discussed the issues of multipartism in Uganda. The civil society played a great role in ensuring that the goals and the objectives of Danish aid were realized. The major reason why donors offer their support to the civil society is to build democracy (Hearn, 1999, p. 19).

Donors like Denmark use the civil society because of the closer link they hold with both the society and the state (the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2008A, p. 27). They also rely on the belief that society functionality is based on the society’s own good and development. Through the Danish aid, Denmark has put in place a mechanism to build an effective civil society.

Denmark has developed strategies that uphold the principle of the Paris Declaration (PD) especially in the developing countries. One of the strategies

is the “ Promotion of civil society support in Danish bilateral and multilateral assistance” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2008A, p. 15).

Based on this strategy, the Danish aid would assist the civil society to plan, formulate, implement, and monitor bilateral assistance offered to them.

Some civil society organization like the FBO participate a lot in education and health intervention since most of the nations in developing countries lack the political resolve, resources, and capacity.

Through the Danish aid, organizations under the civil society will be in a position to carry out their programmes as anticipated. The support would ensure that the civil society plays its role in the society. The collaboration between the civil society and the Danish organizations has ensured that policies gave been developed and implemented.

Donors are required to carry out capacity building on the locals to ensure that they can take control and initiatives of the projects being carried or implemented. However, the Danish aid to Tanzania prohibited capacity building (Bagachwa et al., 1997, p. 182). Although aid was given and policies planned and implemented, the locals had no idea what the policies entailed.

It can be concluded that lack of capacity building “ suffocated the civil society” as no room was given for it to grow and play its role in development and policy making. Fear for aid withdrawal left the country with low levels of confidence, ownership of projects as well as limiting democratization. In this case democracy was never prevailed because of the asymmetric relationship between Denmark and Tanzania.

In such instances, transparency and accountability do not prevail at the end of the day. If the government has no voice over the donors, then the civil society and democracy are nonexistent. This is attributed to the fact that the governments pay much attention to the donors and do not account themselves to the tax-payers (Knack, 2004, p. 253). The institutions were incapacitated leaving them weak and powerless.

This claim can be supported by Knack (2004, p. 253) who notes that foreign aid has a way of weakening the governments accountability which retards the development of civil society. The authors further add that the rule of law and democracy in these instances are underpinned.

The anomalies experienced in Tanzania do not give room for democracy and civil society to develop. Instead, they suppress their ability to grow and even own the aid programmes as expected.

Other than the negative picture of democracy and civil society building by the Danish aid in Africa, its priorities have changed. Based on the Paris Declaration, it has now emerged that donor recipients can plan on their priorities (Hyden, 2008, p. 259).

According to an agenda plan, Denmark would be willing to initiate dialogue in developing nations and in ensuring the creation of democratic societies with freedom and administrative powers (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2009B, p. 4).



In fact, it has set aside financial aid that would ensure that these priorities are realised in a bit of Middle East states and African nations inclusive of Tanzania which was left in a detrimental state. Other prioritized agendas of the Denmark aid programs to Africa would be accomplishment and support of women human rights in Africa (Africa Commission, 2009).

It also has plans for ensuring gender equality is achieved in Africa by ensuring that women are empowered and have the same voice as men. For example, in 2011, DKK 430 million were planned to assist women in Kenya especially through the promotion of the health sector (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2009B, p. 5).

The intention was to ensure that women have access to family planning methods, modern contraception, and health information. The program would target the rural regions of Kenya. Based on the agendas it can be concluded that Danish aid in some way would promote democracy in Africa.

History can be revisited on the role that Denmark played in Ghana's democratization process. A report by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2008B, p. 70) notes that Danish aid was used to support the process of democratization.

For example, various programs were trained on civil rights groups, and support given to civic groups and the electoral commission. In addition, the initiative also supported voter registration process. Denmark was actively involved in the campaigns to monitor and ensure that democracy prevailed in the country.

Through the Danish aid, self help projects and other civil society organization like the Danish -Ghanaian Friendship Association were able to initiate programs in 1987 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark 2008B, p. 70). The latest strategy corporation was initiated in 2004 to 2008, and the policies touched on the areas of gender and human rights.

The programs led to the empowerment of the civil society as well as the development of governance in the country. Unlike in the case of Tanzania as earlier witnessed, Denmark was involved in the Ghanaian civil society and the government in the dialogue and harmonization process.

The community based organizations (CBOs) in Ghana have been empowered and as a result, they have been active players in various development programs (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2008B2, p. 79).

The program ensures that good governance, democratization, and human rights are observed and realized in the country. Based on the analysis it is clear that Danish aid has led to democratization and the support of the civil society in Ghana.

Because of the peace and the stability in southern Africa, Denmark has had exemplary support in the region. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2008B2, p. 36) report, the Danish five year development plan has focused on human rights, democracy, and good governance. The country aims at developing democratic frameworks in the region.

It has also involved and promoted civil society organizations in the region like the SADC which oversees elections and other legislative issues in the Southern Africa. So far, the region has had no coup compared to central Africa which has been had to penetrate. Lack of democracy and political stability has reluctantly affected the democratization process in the central Africa (Gould, 2005).

For instance, Grega (2007, p. 4) note that the Democratic Republic of Congo is regarded as the worst country in Africa in terms of democracy and good governance. However the country has been battling with the need to instill democracy and good governance in order to play a participatory role in civil society. Compared to southern Africa, democracy in the DRC is worse.

Ethiopia was hit by one of the worst famines in history between 1984 and 1985. As a result, Denmark established itself in the Wollo region and with the aid of Ethiopian NGOs and other organization it was able to offer its aid. However, the space offered by the Ethiopian regime does not allow for a lot of involvement by donors in the region.

For example, most of the Danish aid in Ethiopia has been in the form of relief food only and not democracy promotion or civil society enhancement. Because of the high aid dependency ratio, Ethiopia planned to escape this trend in the early 1990s (Wilson, 2004, p. 16). During this period the Danish aid organization Danida was also planning to withdraw from the country and end its aid programs.

However, sooner than later, a coup overthrew the Marxist regime of the then president Mengistu Haile Mariam in 1991 (Wilson, 2004, p. 16). Knack (2005, p. 251) observed that foreign aid can lead to coup attempts and violence. The immediate government kept a closer watch on NGOs and other civil organizations.

The state's relationship with the NGOs was reduced as the government concentrated on ethnic federalism and less on democracy. Democracy was not practical at the period as civic organizations were required to renew their registrations on a monthly basis (Wilson, 2005, p. 16).

Democracy and the civil society were not enhanced by the Danish aid in Ethiopia as the space for their enhancement did not prevail. This can be reflected by the 2005 attempts by the Danish aid agency Danida that led to riots, violence and death of Ethiopians (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, 2009A, p. 38).

Based on the definition of democracy with respect to equal human rights, Danish aid assisted in the formulation and implementation of democracy in Northern Ethiopia. For instance, Danish NGOs have been involved in the formulation of some human rights based on the 1989 UN convention (Wilson, 2004, p. 41).

The rights include the protection from human violation, child rights, and the rights to provision. Based on these rights, the government has the obligation to safeguard its citizens against their abuse, especially the child's rights. The

DanChurch Aid is part of the Danish aid agencies that was involved in the democratization process (Wilson, 200, p. 41).

The DCA believes that “ a dimension of empowerment and democratization becomes increasingly prominent in all rural development projects” (Wilson, 2004, p. 41). This could be achieved through the rights based approach that has been adopted by the DCA. The approach removes obstacles that obscure the Ethiopians from enjoying the basic human rights.

The approach was adopted after the realization that the political and the civil rights in Ethiopia were problematic. Although the current regime has given the intention of achieving political and civil rights, nothing has been achieved.

Although Danish aid agencies like the DAC and the Danish NGOs have been involved in calling and lobbying for democracy, it still remains difficult for the autonomous movements to voice their opinions in a country where basic human rights are never practiced.

If the state cannot make it possible for political and civil rights to be of existence, the CSO are incapacitated. The CSOs based in Ethiopia fear losing their licenses as licenses are renewed on a yearly basis.

By and large, Danish aid to Africa has had a positive implicit in as far as civil society and democracy is concerned. However, in some instances (like in the case of Tanzania), the humanitarian and aid agency was not able to enhance the development of civil society and the realization of democracy. The

commercial part of their bilateral aid to Africa propelled its urge and went off some of the requirements of the Denmark policy.

For democracy to be realized, the civil society need to be active and so is the government. When a country's sovereignty is compromised for fear of losing aid, then democracy is suppressed.

The case of Tanzania clearly shows what foreign aid can lead to if the government becomes attached to the donors and complies with all its demands. With no proper transparency and accountability mechanism in which a state can claim its involvement in a project then it is next to impossible to have democracy or operational civil society.

Donors need to involve the recipients of the aid in policy making and implementation processes. They should not subject the recipient to reliance syndrome where all the decisions and actions are carried out by the donors. The recipients of the aids know better the projects that need priority.

Thus, the involvement of the state and the civil society in itself portrays the level of democracy that the donor has. Self reliance created by foreign aids leads to coup attempts, riots, violence, and deaths as witnessed in Ethiopia.

Other than the negative side of Danish aid in Africa, it has a positive side as well. In countries like Ghana, Uganda, and Kenya as well as in Southern Africa's region Danish aid has necessitated the development and enhancement of democracy. It has collaborated with the local civil society and made them vocal.

In other instances, it has collaborated to initiate the formation and support of civil society in countries like Ethiopia, Uganda, and Ghana. On matters of democracy, the aid has been used to support several projects geared towards democracy. For example, the advocacy for basic human rights, political, and civil rights in Ethiopia. It has also overseen elections to ensure democratic voting and competition.

In other instances, governance and democracy has been demonstrated through voter registration, conducting civic education, and creating awareness and educating the masses on voting process and their rights. The promotion of democracy, good governance and the observation of human rights is a part of the Denmark's agenda.

Generally, it can be concluded that based on the analysis of the few countries where Danish aid has been applied, democracy and civil society have been enhanced. They have been aided financial, through technical knowhow, and support of their views.

Collaboration of the Danish aid agencies and civil society is the road to achieving democracy. Lastly, the negative side has been averted as the country has adopted new agenda and portfolio to aid in dissemination of its aid in African nations.

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