

HUMANITARIAN AID IN THE DARFUR GENOCIDE AND SOUTH SUDANESE CIVIL WAR: A CASE STUDY

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This paper explores the subject of the impact of humanitarian aid and its influence on violence in conflicts. I start by exploring the literature on whether support helps reduce violence or furthers it. Then, by using the Darfur Genocide and South Sudanese Civil war as a case study on the issue because of their similarities. I conclude that humanitarian aid highlights the two factors that make the question difficult to answer. The first being that foreign assistance adds uncertainty to the question of whether aid will end conflict sooner, and demonstrates that current theories about how aid increases violence aren't always applicable.

INTRODUCTION

The question I asked in this research paper was “When comparing the cases of the Darfur Genocide and South Sudanese Civil War, did increased humanitarian aid in the South Sudanese Civil War help or hurt the conflict situation?” I found that comparing these two cases furthers our understanding of why it is hard to determine the impact of humanitarian aid in two ways: it adds uncertainty to the discussion of whether reducing aid will end violence sooner, and demonstrates that current theories about aid's relationship with violence are not applicable to all situations.

My motivation for shedding light on this question stemmed from the current debate about the effectiveness of humanitarian aid in preventing violence. In Linda Polman's article “The Crisis Caravan: What's Wrong with Humanitarian Aid?” she juxtaposes two types of humanitarians: the “Henri Dunants,” who believe that there is always an obligation to help in conflicts, and the “Florence Nightingales,” who believe that aid should not always be given, as costly wars tend to resolve themselves quickly (Polman 2010, 2; Polman 2010, 5). Determining the effectiveness of humanitarian aid is a pressing topic, as genocide may result from an incorrect policy response to a humanitarian crisis. This question is particularly relevant to Sudan, a country which has been torn apart by a humanitarian conflict for decades. While there is a lot of research on the lack of aid for the Darfur genocide and on the effectiveness of aid within the South Sudanese Civil War, there has been little research comparing the different uses of aid in these two cases, leading me to my final research question.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on humanitarian aid identifies a key debate about whether global actors are obligated to give aid if there is potential that it will be used to increase violence and cause more harm than good. There are three general positions within this debate: that giving aid is universally helpful and important, that it increases violence and is ultimately harmful, and that it is worth pursuing, but needs more thought and

caution in its implementation. The first category, that it is always important to pursue aid, has both a moral and a practical side. Peter Singer demonstrates the moral side of giving aid at a personal level in his book *The Life You Can Save*, where he argues that if you are not donating to aid agencies to prevent suffering and death when you have the spare money to do so, you are doing something morally wrong (Singer 2009). Benjamin Valentino believes that, with regard to humanitarian aid specifically, the United States should fulfill its promises of aid. After analyzing the Rwandan genocide, why the United States did not intervene more rapidly, and the potential pitfalls of humanitarian intervention, Valentino concludes that “the obstacles to intervention should not be allowed to serve as an excuse for the failure of the United States and the international community to live up to its pledge to prevent genocide” (Valentino 2003, 575–756). One potential flaw of these examples is that, while talking about the obligation to give aid, these arguments do not fully account for potential downsides of giving aid.

At a more practical level, scholars find that aid can do tangible good for communities during periods of conflict. Focusing on a case study in Afghanistan, Andrew Beath, Fotini Christia, and Ruben Enikolopov argue that development programs improve levels of security during program implementation (Beath, Christia, and Enikolopov, 2015). Another study that focused on the Rwandan genocide indicates that humanitarian aid in Africa plays a positive role in reducing conflict rather than exacerbating it, although the authors acknowledged that sometimes conflict is made worse due to humanitarian aid (Minyi et al., 2016). However, because both of these investigations are case studies, they may not be generalizable to humanitarian conflicts everywhere. Additionally, in the Afghanistan case, the results were not found to be significant in villages where there were already high levels of violence (Beath, Christia, and Enikolopov, 2015).

A second camp argues that humanitarian aid often increases violence and that giving aid might be the wrong response to conflict situations. Michael Desch argues that a pragmatic and “cold-blooded” approach to conflicts, where no humanitarian aid is given, would improve the quality of human life around the world (Desch 2003, 421). As support for why aid can end up causing harm, Desch gives the example of the ethnic conflict in the Balkans, where between seven and eight thousand Bosnians were killed in 1995 when Serbs overran the UN-protected safe area Srebrenica. He concludes that perhaps it is “kind to be cruel” (Desch 2003, 426). Michael Weintraub argues that there is empirical support for the argument that development assistance frequently produces welfare gains, but also may lead to increased insurgent violence, through studying a specific conditional cash transfer program in Columbia (Weintraub 2016). Reed Wood and Christopher Sullivan use statistical analysis of conflict violence in two dozen post-Cold War African countries to determine that humanitarian aid is associated with increased rebel violence, but has a much weaker association with heightened government violence (Wood and Sullivan, 2015). Although Desch and Weintraub’s arguments are case-specific, they reach conclusions similar to those of Wood and Sullivan, whose data is aggregated from multiple case studies and thus is more generally applicable.

A study by Neil Narang using panel data on cross-national humanitarian aid expenditures directly supports the “Nightingale” position laid out by Polman, finding that wars that receive greater amounts of humanitarian relief appear to last longer than those that receive little or no assistance (Narang, 2014). However, Narang himself warns readers to not view his results as a negation of the moral imperative of giving aid, as the tendency for aid to prolong conflict is “far from empirical law” and the “short-term consequences of not providing relief are oftentimes more devastatingly predictable than its future influence on the duration of war.” Therefore, he argues that an “imperative to act quickly to reduce human suffering may prevail” (Narang 2014, 11).

The caveat Narang offers to his own argument highlights the third, more middle-ground position in the literature: that humanitarian aid can do good, but needs to be used and thought about carefully. Polman ends up taking this middle ground after discussing a personal experience seeing aid exploited in post-Rwandan Genocide refugee camps by Hutus, the very people who caused the genocide. She acknowledges that doing nothing is not always the right answer, but believes that the benefits of aid need to be weighed against its potential exploitation by warring parties, asking “at what point do humanitarian principles cease to be ethical?” (Polman 2010, 173). She states that to “Have the audacity to ask whether doing something is always better than doing nothing.” When aid organizations are sent to conflict situations, Polman claims that “we should demand they explain exactly what they’re going to do and how” (Polman 2010, 179).

One example of implementing humanitarian aid carefully is through the use of peacekeepers. Wood and Sullivan end their paper by arguing that “robust multidimensional peacekeeping missions can effectively reduce violence against civilians by actively defending vulnerable citizens and humanitarian targets from belligerents,” and that greater coordination among donor states, aid agencies, and peacekeeping organizations may lead to improved protection of refugees and citizens located around sites of aid distribution (Wood and Sullivan, 2015). Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler similarly find that “peace appears to depend upon an external military presence sustaining a gradual economic recovery,” using analysis from two data sets about armed conflicts from 1960 to 2002 (Collier and Hoeffler 2008, 461). Lisa Hultman, Jacob Kathman, and Megan Shannon use data on UN personnel in peacekeeping operations and civilian deaths for armed conflicts in Africa from 1991 to 2008 to find that the more military and police forces the UN commits to a peacekeeping mission, the fewer citizens are targeted with violence, and that thus UN peacekeeping is an effective mechanism of civilian protection (Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon, 2013). The incorporation of a broad span of data into the analyses of these last two studies strengthens their arguments, yet these results still may not be applicable all specific humanitarian aid cases.

Overall, the literature touches on three perspectives regarding humanitarian aid in conflict situations: that aid is helpful and important to pursue, that it increases violence and is harmful, and that it is worth pursuing with thoughtfulness and caution. This paper uses a case study of the Darfur genocide and South Sudanese Civil War to help add nuance to this debate through comparing aspects of the Darfur and South Sudan

conflicts to literature from all three categories. Ultimately this will highlight how these theories are not mutually exclusive, and one case can embody aspects of multiple theories.

CASE STUDY

NATURE OF THE CONFLICT

In order to understand how the Darfur genocide and South Sudanese Civil War shed light onto the three literature perspectives, it is important to first understand the background of the two conflicts. Both the Darfur and South Sudan cases are part of a long history of conflict in Sudan. Sudan was a British colony, with a policy of separate governance for the North and South that was formalized in 1930 by the British Civil Secretary because of many religious and cultural differences of the area (Sudan Backgrounder n.d.). The North (including Khartoum, the Sudanese capital) was predominantly Muslim, while the South was predominantly Christian (Stern and Sundberg, 2007). After World War II, Britain decided to merge the two into a single administrative region, which then gained independence in 1956. A war was fought from 1955 to 1972 between the Northern government and Southern rebels, who demanded a return to the 1930s division that had given them greater regional autonomy. A peace agreement signed in 1972 led to an eleven-year cease-fire, but a second war broke out in 1983 that lasted until 2005 (Sudan Backgrounder n.d.).



MAP OF SUDAN AND SOUTH SUDAN, HIGHLIGHTING THE DARFUR REGION AND CAPITAL CITIES KHARTOUM AND JUBA.

DARFUR

Until 2005, the Sudanese conflict had primarily focused on the North and South of Sudan, ignoring the Darfur region to the West. The people of Darfur wanted aspects of what the South had been promised in the ceasefire, including some of Khartoum's wealth and resources. They also wanted to be able to play a larger role in the government. Two main rebel groups, the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), began fighting for what they viewed as equality for the people of Darfur. In April 2003, they attacked an airport and killed around

75 people. The government of Khartoum closed off the Darfur region, kicked out all foreigners, and mobilized troops in retaliation. They trained Arab militias, called the Janjaweed, to murder Darfur civilians and loot, rape, and burn villages. Although the government of Khartoum still denies having connection to the Janjaweed, the militias were armed by the central authorities and given tactical support from government aircrafts. The attacks were racially charged—the Janjaweed were taught to think of the citizens of Darfur as “slaves” because they were typically black while the Janjaweed and government in the north were Arab (Stern and Sundberg 2007). There have also been inquiries about whether natural resources were involved in the violence, as large gold deposits were discovered in North Darfur’s Jebel Amir hills in 2012. The existence of oil in Darfur, which was revealed in 2005 when Sudan’s Advanced Petroleum Company began drilling there, has led analysts to speculate whether oil could have been a factor guiding Khartoum’s actions as well (Thomas Reuters Foundation 2014).

One of the reoccurring themes of the Darfur genocide has been the passive international response to it. In 2004, the African Union assumed the leading role in international efforts to broker a resolution to the conflict, resulting in a cease-fire agreement in April 2004 between the government, SLA, and JEM. Eighty African Union monitors were supposed to observe the ceasefire, yet ultimately failed to do so. In May 2004, the UN Security Council made its first statement about the conflict, expressing concern for the humanitarian crisis and supporting the African Union’s mediation efforts. The international debate was slow to characterize the violence as a genocide. In September 2004, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell announced that the U.S. administration believed that genocide had been committed in Darfur, with both the government of Sudan and the Janjaweed bearing responsibility. He said that this genocide “may” still be occurring. However, Powell also said that U.S. policy towards Sudan would not change. Other international actors, including the European Parliament, African Union, and Arab League did not accept the characterization of the violence in Darfur as a genocide (Eyes on Darfur n.d.).

Eventually, international actors began taking passive action against the events in Darfur in the form of resolutions and ground troops. In late 2004, the UN Security Council passed three resolutions calling for a political agreement to end fighting, giving the government of Sudan 30 days to disarm the Janjaweed and establishing a commission to determine whether genocide had occurred. In January 2005, they passed another three authorizing a UN peacekeeping operation, calling on the government to stop their military action, and referring the situation in Darfur from July 2002 onwards to the ICC. The Darfur Peace Agreement was signed by the government of Sudan and the SLA after many rounds of talks in May 2006. The UN passed more resolutions, expanding troops in Darfur and calling for the establishment of officers in Chad due to the growing security threat in eastern Chad resulting from cross-border attacks from Darfur. In 2007, the official United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) was implemented, with around 26,000 troops and police. Omar al-Bashir, the Sudanese President, repeatedly re-

jected UN Peacekeepers, and created roadblocks and restricted equipment for UN-AMID (Eyes on Darfur n.d.). In January 2009, the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants against al-Bashir for crimes against humanity and war crimes. Despite a further arrest warrant in 2010 for genocide, Bashir has yet to be arrested by the ICC (Hagan and Rymond-Richmond, n.d.). Meanwhile, civilians in Darfur and refugees in eastern Chad and the Central African Republic continue to suffer from egregious mass human rights violations (Eyes on Darfur n.d.). In 2014 alone, there were over 400,000 newly displaced individuals. (Sudan Backgrounder n.d.).

SOUTH SUDAN

The civil war in South Sudan stemmed out of the original Sudanese conflict as well. Part of the 2005 peace agreement between Khartoum and the southern rebels was a referendum on whether the South should remain part of Sudan, or become its own country. In February 2011, the referendum showed that almost 99 percent of Southern Sudan voted for independence, and by July 2011, South Sudan was an independent state (Sudan Backgrounder n.d.). However, in 2013, civil war broke out when President Salva Kiir accused Vice President Riek Machar of planning a coup (BBC 2016). This conflict has mostly involved the country's two biggest ethnic groups—the Dinka being led by Kiir, and the Nuer being led by Machar—and has evolved from a political struggle for power into an ethnic conflict (Lynch 2016). Alan Boswell, a researcher for the Small Arms Survey who recently returned from South Sudan, even said that “ethnic cleansing has characterized this entire war,” (Lynch 2016).

In August 2015, President Kiir signed a peace deal with the rebels after the UN threatened sanctions, and in April 2016, Machar returned to take back his job as Vice President in a new unity government led by Kiir (BBC 2016). However, this new government collapsed in July 2016 after a surge of fighting led to the deaths of hundreds of civilians. In December 2016, a U.N. warning of possible genocide motivated the United States to finally embrace an arms embargo against South Sudan, a threat they had held out on for over two years. During the last two months of 2016 alone, at least 1,901 homes were destroyed. Like Sudan, South Sudan has fiercely resisted U.N. peacekeepers. Also, like in the Darfur conflict, UN expert on peacekeeping Richard Gowan said that the combined effort of the United States and Security Council “feels more like symbolic diplomacy than anything real,” (Lynch 2016). Although the conflicts in Darfur and South Sudan are not identical, both conflicts possess many similarities that allow for them to be analyzed together in a case study. Although the genocide in Darfur is racially charged, and the conflict in South Sudan is not, the two both stem from ethnic motivations. Both have resulted in similar numbers of displaced people (over 2.8 million in Darfur, and over 2.2 million in South Sudan), produced speculation over the importance of natural resources in motivating violence, and are still occurring today, making the conflicts even more relevant to understand the impact of humanitarian aid.

HUMANITARIAN AID RESPONSE

Although the two conflicts are similar in a baseline comparison, the story of humanitarian aid differs drastically between the two, giving further insight into how the amount of aid given to a humanitarian conflict can influence its levels of violence and damage.

DARFUR

In the case of the Darfur genocide, most of the literature focuses on a general lack of humanitarian aid and timely response to the conflict. Gerald Prunier offers a nuanced political explanation for why the international community did not intervene more in Darfur. From the United States' perspective, the situation presented President George Bush with a dilemma: the public was clamoring for action, and the intelligence community was saying Khartoum was too vital to be treated harshly. As a result, the Bush administration compromised on all fronts. Additionally, after Bush won the reelection, less interest was paid in general by his administration to the conflict. The result of this all was a purely humanitarian approach to the crisis with \$301 million in aid given during his administration, but no military intervention—which Prunier argues everyone knew was the only option that could have had a drastic effect (Prunier 2006). Scott Straus adds that much of the initial debate in the United States was about whether to call what occurred in Darfur a genocide in the first place, arguing that the energy spent on this debate overshadowed more critical questions about how to craft a proper response to the conflict (Straus 2005).

Other international bodies were equally slow and ineffective in their responses. The Secretary-General of the UN knew that the US did not favor him, and was afraid of making a potentially fatal false move, leading to him appearing weak and irresolute on the issue. The African Union, in addition to having low funding, also tried to minimize the racial angle of the conflict and would not condemn Khartoum or put responsibilities for the massacres on the Janjaweed (Prunier 2006). “Despite the AU’s adoption of a more interventionist charter than its predecessor the Organization of African Unity, the norm of non-interference continues to trump human rights concerns,” P.D. Williams said (Williams 2005 42–43). The League of Arab States—which Sudan is also a part of—explicitly supported the Sudanese government, stating that there was no evidence that the government was directly involved in human rights violations, condemning the use of the term “genocide”, and opposing threats of sanctions and military interventions (Williams 2005). Williams adds that three main factors explain why strong Western advocates of “sovereignty of responsibility,” such as NATO and the EU, did not intervene: increased skepticism about the West’s humanitarian interventionism (especially after the invasion of Iraq), Western strategic interests in Sudan, and the relationship between the crisis in Darfur and Sudan’s other civil wars. (Williams 2005, 42). Ultimately, Williams argues that while Darfur’s geography, sparse population, and low-level nature of militias gave Western intervention the capacity to be effective, the situation suggests that Western states were not prepared to “match their bold words

about the responsibility to protect with concomitant actions” (Williams 2005, 44).

This political inaction and low institutional donor interest, in addition to ongoing insecurity and governmental restrictions on the entrance of international aid staff, led to a dire absence of international relief organizations on the ground that made it difficult to accurately estimate casualty numbers from the genocide (Depoortere et al. 2004). Depoortere et al. concluded that while Darfur demonstrated a typical trend of insufficient and late aid, it had unusually high crude mortality rates due to the combination of international neglect and warring parties that did not grant humanitarian access to affected populations, highlighting the damage that a lack of humanitarian aid can cause (Depoortere et al. 2004).

Oliver Degomme and Debarati Guha-Sapir conducted one of the few studies focusing on humanitarian aid during the genocide, which helps to explain these unusually high mortality rates. Degomme and Guha-Sapir found that increased aid could potentially have prevented outbreaks of diarrhea-related deaths associated with poor displacement camp conditions. First, the authors broke down the violence and mortality in the conflict between 2003 and 2008 into different periods of time. During the first period, from September 2003 to March 2004, the fighting intensified, leading to large-scale displacement and little humanitarian action. Between April and December 2004, the number of humanitarian workers increased from 200 individuals (three per 10,000 affected) to 8,500 (40 per 10,000 affected). From January 2005 to June 2006, the number of affected civilians tripled, and the number of workers increased at a constant rate. However, from July 2007 to September 2007, while the amount of internally displaced people increased by 40 percent, the number of aid workers decreased to only around 29 per 10,000 affected. Finally, from October 2007 to December 2008, the number of workers and displaced people both increased, with a final ratio of about 37 workers per 10,000 affected (Degomme and Guha-Sapir 2010). In general, although crude mortality rates went below the emergency level of one death per 10,000 people per day in early 2005, there were some spikes in July 2006 and September 2007, and the rates remained high until at least the end of 2007 (Degomme and Guha-Sapir 2010). The authors determined that around 80 percent of the excess deaths were not the result of violence, but rather diseases such as diarrhea, which could have been easily prevented with aid (Degomme and Guha-Sapir 2010).

The authors focus specifically on the July 2006 to September 2007 period, when although violence-related deaths decreased, the diarrhea-related mortality rate increased. They state that a possible explanation for this is the eighteen percent reduction of humanitarian workers during that period as the number of affected people increased from 3.5 million to 4.2 million, with the ratio of affected people to aid worker increasing almost 50 percent from 237 to 346 affected people per staff member. The authors ultimately conclude that the decreased humanitarian aid, as a consequence of budget reductions such as UNICEF’s and the World Food Program’s, led to the rise in disease-related deaths during this period. (Degomme and Guha-Sapir, 2010).

In the end, Degomme and Guha-Sapir determine that while patterns of

mortality rates over time were typical in Darfur, displaced people were particularly affected in the Darfur conflict by living in conditions of poor sanitary infrastructure. They state that “adequate humanitarian assistance to prevent and treat these potentially fatal diseases is essential. The full effect of the expulsion of non-governmental organizations from Darfur is still not known, but the increased mortality rate during a period of reduced humanitarian deployment in 2006–07 suggests that we should fear the worst” (Degomme and Guha-Sapir 2010, 299). This point highlights how although it is uncertain what the overall effects of increased aid would be, it is likely that more humanitarian deployment would reduce refugee mortality rates. However, the article does hint at the potential for humanitarian aid to do harm as well, citing the expulsion of humanitarian non-governmental organizations from Darfur after the issue of an arrest warrant from the ICC on President Bashir as an example of humanitarian aid sidetracked by political actions (Degomme and Guha-Sapir, 2010).

Today, there is more information on the dire state of the refugee camps related to the conflict. Violence still happening, both in Darfur and in displacement camps in Chad and the Central African Republic, where thousands of people are still fleeing. Around 360,000 refugees reside in Chad at this point. During their ten plus years of living in refugee camps, there have been tight resources (Jewish World Watch n.d.). Eastern Chad is not a hospitable place to live. There is a significant strain on firewood, and refugees often face violence when foraging for wood. More than a third of the local population is undernourished, and water levels are perpetually low (Red Cross n.d.). Recently, rations have been cut by 60 percent due to funding shortfalls and budget impacts. There are insufficient abilities to generate income, making refugees’ ability to supplement food rations difficult. These hardships have led to what the UN Refugee Agency calls “negative coping mechanisms,” such as children dropping out of school, exploitation and prostitution of female refugees, increased stress and domestic violence within families, and higher incidences of theft (Jewish World Watch n.d.). The Jewish World Watch said they have “little hope” that things will get better without significant international effort (Jewish World Watch n.d.). The opposite seems to have occurred, with the total amount of aid workers in Darfur halved between 2009 and 2013 (Thomas Reuters Foundation 2014).

Ultimately, the “aid timeline” for Darfur is unique because the international community gave very little aid to Darfur during the height of the conflict. Most literature focuses on the inability to prevent the genocide sooner, and how the international community dealt with the politics regarding humanitarian intervention instead of helping prevent violence and save lives. Now that there is more information about the aid given in refugee camps, there is a sense that more help is desperately needed. Overall, there is a wide consensus that the international community provided “too little, too late,” for the Darfur genocide.

SOUTH SUDAN

South Sudan, in comparison, has received much stronger humanitarian aid during the entirety of its civil war. The United States Agency for International Development has consistently provided updated information and assistance since the beginning of the conflict. This year alone, the government donated \$520 million, with around \$1 million coming from USAID. USAID has provided nutrition, water, sanitation, and hygiene assistance to populations in need from the beginning of the conflict as well (USAID 2016). Other groups, such as the World Food Programme, have also been consistently active in providing aid to prevent famine (New York Times 2014). In 2015, in addition to 13,000 UN peacekeepers, there were tens of thousands of other workers in South Sudan supporting hundreds of domestic, international, and UN-affiliated groups. The conflict has caused international agencies to need to provide for virtually every basic need of those seeking refuge, the New York Times reported. (Santora 2015).

However, organizations and governments have not been able to easily distribute aid to South Sudan as there have been many violent attacks on the villages where aid is provided, and on humanitarian aid workers and peacekeepers themselves. Violent groups have subjected humanitarian workers to gunfire, looted deposits, and ransacked aid their offices. Where the fighting has been heaviest, at times aid workers need to evacuate the area, and the potential danger has canceled several trips at the last minute (Santora 2015). This July, South Sudanese government forces looted a UN warehouse where food for 220,000 people was kept, according to UN officials (Sieff 2016). More than 100 South Sudanese soldiers looted the compound of the World Food Programme as well, ransacking the agency's warehouse and logistics base and seizing 4,500 tons of food and around 20,000 gallons of diesel, the Wall Street Journal reported (Stavis 2016).

In October 2016, an attack on aid workers in the capital of Juba left one person dead and several NGO staff members assaulted and raped. The UN peacekeeping force stationed less than a mile away failed to respond to calls for help, as did all embassies, including the US embassy. These events have led NGOs to question whether they should consider pulling out of the region, despite the fact that South Sudan is still in dire need of assistance (Grant 2016). In response to the incident, The Washington Post questioned, "is the UN mission there failing to act because it is undermanned or because of a deeper set of systemic flaws?" arguing that an investigation of another recent massacre in Malakal seemed to indicate the latter. In February 2016, fighters broke into a displaced persons camp in the town of Malakal, killing 50 civilians by shooting them or burning them alive, while UN peacekeepers fled their posts. More importantly, according to The Washington Post article, the peacekeepers did not heed warnings that violence was brewing and were not prepared to act, a "lack of foresight and risk management" repeated from the October attack. However, the article did give credit to the "almost impossible" task given to these peacekeepers. UN camps are routinely raided, often by government-backed troops. "It is rare for UN peacekeepers to be tasked with protecting civilians against their own government's troops," The Washington Post said (Bearak 2016), highlighting the uniqueness of this civil war in a failed state.

The United States has not responded effectively to situations like these. In a press conference in August, Secretary of State John Kerry warned that U.S. taxpayers would not continue to help South Sudan if its leaders did not stop the atrocities, but he also announced an extra \$138 million in assistance, *The Wall Street Journal Reported* (Stevis 2016). The package will be provided through the UN and non-governmental partners and include food aid and nutrition programs, drinking water, emergency health services, hygiene supplies, and cholera treatment. (USAID 2016). Other intervention aid efforts into South Sudan have been inconsistent between words and actions as well. Recently, a three-member U.N. commission on human rights declared that South Sudan was on the “brink of catastrophe,” with the chairman warning of a repeat of the Rwandan genocide, a steady process of ethnic cleansing, gang rape, and the burning of villages as examples. According to *The Washington Post*, “the world responded with a shrug” (*Washington Post Editorial Board* 2016).

Some people are beginning to question these potentially ineffective responses to the war. Mukesh Kapila, a former UN director removed as the resident representative in Sudan after pulling out his staff and calling what was happening in Darfur a genocide, stated that he thinks the best thing to do would be to leave South Sudan. “By providing that modicum of a fig leaf, we encourage the local authorities. We are condoning their actions by remaining silent and not speaking up,” Kapila said in *The Wall Street Journal* (Stevis 2016). *Foreign Policy’s* analysis of the situation was similar. Foreign nations have poured billions of dollars of development aid into the south with “little to show for it today,” *Foreign Policy* reported. “We need to do some soul-searching and see where things could be done better,” said Jort Hemmer, a senior researcher at the Dutch Clingendael Institute’s Conflict Research Unit (Patinkin 2015). Thus, while aid has been more consistently present in the South Sudanese Civil War than it has been in the Darfur Genocide, its results demonstrate uncertainty about its effectiveness.

DISCUSSION

Despite the drastic differences in the aid given to Darfur and South Sudan, there are no sweeping conclusions gained from this case study about the effectiveness of humanitarian aid on violence. However, analyzing these two cases can still shed light the current literature debate about humanitarian aid by furthering our understanding of why its answer is so unclear. On the one hand, there is the Darfur Genocide as an example of a humanitarian crisis where the international community gave very little aid and barely intervened. Seeing that the violence in Darfur has lasted fourteen years with very little humanitarian interference, and much of the humanitarian aid given has been in refugee camps outside of Darfur itself, this case is a potential counter to Narang’s findings that humanitarian aid can prolong violence (Narang 2014). In fact, analysis of the Darfur case seems to bolster the argument that more humanitarian aid would have stopped the conflict sooner. Williams suggests that substantial humanitarian intervention effort done early on could have been very achievable, possibly stopping a decade of ethnic cleansing (Williams

2005). Similarly, the conclusions drawn by Degomme and Guha-Sapir suggest that during times where deaths increased during the genocide, they were not from violence, but rather from refugee camps with poor health conditions as a result of a reduction in humanitarian aid. Although it is impossible to know for sure without a counterfactual, these conclusions seem to support the first literature camp, that aid can have a meaningful effect on reducing violence (Degomme and Guha-Sapir, 2010).

Compared to the clear conclusion that the lack of aid in Darfur's genocide illustrates, the civil war in South Sudan contributes a more varied set of conclusions, ultimately providing evidence for all three broad categories of literature I identified at the start of this paper. First, South Sudan demonstrates that Wood and Sullivan's "second camp" theory that aid increases rebel violence is not necessarily applicable in the case of a failed state (Wood and Sullivan, 2015). When a civil war is fought between the supporters of the President and the supporters of the Vice President in a failed state, it is difficult to determine who is the government and who are the rebels. This confusion makes Wood and Sullivan's theory that humanitarian aid is associated with increased rebel violence, but not with increased government violence limited in its application. Additionally, South Sudan's case makes both Wood and Sullivan and Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon's "third camp" conclusions about UN peacekeeping as an effective form of civilian protection less persuasive (Wood and Sullivan, 2015; Hultman, Kathman, and Shannon, 2013). Within the South Sudanese Civil War, peacekeepers were both attacked themselves and did a poor job of responding to attacks on aid workers and supply storages. As these two examples demonstrate, the case study of South Sudan refutes general theories on the relationship between violence and aid that the literature had identified.

Despite illustrating that these specific second and third camp theories are not always applicable, the aid given to South Sudan during its civil war has seemed to perpetuate violence in many ways. However, I believe that in regard to the first camp, which argues that humanitarian aid is helpful in mitigating humanitarian conflicts, there is still ambiguity in South Sudan's case. Similar to in the case of Darfur, it is clear that the refugee population is so dependent on humanitarian aid for all their basic needs that it would be hard to say it is not worth providing help to the population despite the costs. Additionally, the case of Darfur brings up the important question of whether a reduction in aid would actually lead to a more rapid ending of violence in South Sudan.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this case study furthers our understanding of why the answer to "does aid help or hurt conflict situations" is so unclear, both supporting and refuting arguments on all sides of the debate. In a situation where the international community provides minimal aid, there is evidence suggesting that more assistance would have ended the conflict sooner, or at least decreased refugee death rates. In a situation where the international community provides significant aid, the support often did lead to attacks on civilians, aid workers, and supplies. However, this in-

crease in violence did not line up with what existing theories predicted — the increase in aid correlated with an increase in government violence in addition to rebel violence, and the addition of peacekeepers did not reduce violence. Additionally, it is apparent that without humanitarian aid, the civilians of South Sudan would not survive, and when reflecting on the Darfur genocide, it is not obvious that reducing aid would necessarily make the civil war end any sooner. Thus, ultimately, this case study creates nuance in our understanding of the humanitarian aid debate by adding uncertainty to the question of whether aid will end conflict sooner, and demonstrating that current theories about how aid increases violence are not always applicable.

NOTES

1. The war in South Sudan has not yet been officially deemed a genocide, but on December 8, 2016, a UN Commission on human rights warned that the situation could turn into a repeat of the Rwandan genocide, highlighting the ethnic cleansing that has occurred so far (Washington Post Editorial Board 2016).

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