A BRIEF HISTORY OF UNITED STATES FOREIGN DEVELOPMENT
ASSISTANCE TO BENIN, THE GAMBIA, GUINEA-BISSAU, LIBERIA AND
SENEGAL SINCE 2000

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by
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A Brief History of United States Foreign Development Assistance to Benin, the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Senegal Since 2000

The use of United States foreign assistance dates back to the implementation of the Marshall Plan in 1945, after the Second World War ended and the majority of Europe remained in ruins (Killick, 2000, pp.114). As of today, foreign assistance is used in various countries worldwide for multiple reasons such as the eradication of HIV/AIDS, poverty, famine, unemployment and other problems. However, the effectiveness of foreign aid pertaining to development has come into question. Billions of dollars have been given to developing countries with the written intent of furthering the economic growth and development of each recipient country. However, the countries that receive this foreign development assistance tend to remain in the low development status according to various agencies such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. This project will investigate the actual motives of foreign development aid and whether or not this funding has helped to improve the economic development status in the recipient countries of my study. In order to narrow the scope of this project, I took different countries within West Africa and divided this research project into smaller sections. The first section is on Benin and Liberia. The second section focuses on the countries of the Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Senegal. Although the United States has given aid to Benin, the Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Senegal, the foreign
development assistance has not helped to improve the economic development status of any of the recipient countries in this study.

**Project Outline**

I will study a variety of economic factors and the historical relations between the United States and the nations of Benin, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Senegal. I will be examining the bilateral economic development aid to all five of the West African states by the United States. In order to look at the economic growth in each country, I will be observing each recipient country’s economic statistics. To gain understanding of the intent of the foreign assistance, I will investigate the relations between the United States and each donor country. In addition to discussing key arguments on the effectiveness of foreign aid, I will examine the amount of aid given to each country as well as different factors of economic development.

**Research Questions**

Here are the guiding questions of this research project:

- What are measurements of economic development?
- How is development status determined?
- How does development aid raise development status?
- What is the real intent of foreign aid?
- What are the relations between the donor country and the receiving country?
- How does foreign aid affect the development status of a country?
Literature Review

There are many different challenges that African states face regarding their economic development. Those challenges are based on the internal structure of their countries and the external relations they hold with western donor nations. Foreign aid is known for consistently compounding the underdevelopment of African states, but there are other factors such as economic development practices and strategies that have prevented economic improvements in these countries.

Underdevelopment on the African Continent

It seems to appear as a consistency in the economic literature that Africa has not developed regardless of any attempts or policy changes. In numerous studies, the renowned scholar, George Ayittey (1998) examined the main reason why Africa continually struggles to develop and grow politically and economically by analyzing statistics and historical events of various sub-Saharan countries (Ayittey, 1998). Through his rigorous investigations of the internal conditions of Africa, Ayittey found a variety of conclusions as to why Africa is in its current deteriorating shape. The key themes that Ayittey concentrated on pertained to understanding Africa’s standing in development, internal issues of African institutions, and implications of foreign aid, structural adjustment programs, and reactions from western states toward Africa (Ayittey 1998).
Ayittey first focused on determining where Africa stands regarding development. In order to determine what development is, the author used Gross National Product per Capita as the primary indicator (Ayittey, 1998). Gross National Product (GNP) focuses on the actual states productivity per person (“Gross National Product”). In this model, economic growth cannot occur without an increase in investment (Ayittey, 1998). In order to increase investment, a state must increase savings and income (Ayittey, 1998). The lack of income affects growth and living conditions within developing countries. Foreign aid leads to foreign debts that are owed to the lending countries, while the counterproductive environment regarding the infrastructure and other issues prevents progression and development (Ayittey, 1998). Africa is in crisis due to its need for immediate action (Ayittey, 1998).

Secondly, Ayittey explores the internal government functioning of African states. The primary issue is the corruption within the elite who are the recipients of the funding from western states (Ayittey, 1998). For Ayittey, in order to fully reach development in Africa, there are two primary goals that must be reached: reform the institution and abandon the current state sector (Ayittey, 1998). These proposals primarily focus on the reformation of internal factors such as foreign aid debt relief. The elites who give and receive the foreign aid are not fit to tackle institutional issues such as clientelism, which causes reformers to lack legitimacy (Ayittey, 1998). These inconsistencies stem primarily from internal conflict and the fact that funds are misappropriated. These actions have helped bail out these “vampire states” (Ayittey, 1998). However the recipient countries must improve their internal conditions before the west can give any more aid.
Lastly, Ayittey studies the reactions of western policies towards African countries. Statist models have been the primary basis of western policy towards developing African nations (Ayittey, 1998). These models that focus on a state controlled economy have caused selective concentration utilizing foreign direct investment along with the creation of inconsistencies in aid (Ayittey, 1998). This often comes from donor fatigue from giving vast amounts of money with little to no result as well as geopolitical interests (Ayittey, 1998). Western countries such as the United States tend to be paradoxical in regards to the prospective goals of giving aid due to ulterior motives (Ayittey, 1998). Most US goals align with democratization, governance improvement, transparency and accountability for African states (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2007, pp. 21). However, the actions speak differently. Three different interpretations come from the west regarding policy measures in Africa. These are based on the ideals of Better Governance, Civil Society and Recolonization (Ayittey, 1998). Better governance is important because the economic and political systems are infused in African states. The US thought they were helping by implementing democracy and promoting free markets. The reform of rights for civil society are necessary in order for rights to be clearly addressed (Ayittey, 1998).

However, current civil society faces many issues such as fragmented ideals which prevent it from working efficiently. But the western states that are giving assistance must understand the difference between the civil society and the leaders who have been claiming the assistance funds (Ayittey, 1998). Recolonization is seen as a last ditch effort after years of donor fatigue, but there are too many complexities such as economic
system differences, that prevent this idea from becoming reality (Ayittey, 1998). The commonalities that were found pointed towards African countries reforming their own states independently while the western donor states should still play a more passive role in the development of African states.

This similar sentiment seemed to also be found in the research of other economists and political scientists, regarding the reasons for dismal development in African states. Leonard and Straus (2003) looked at the commonalities of the internal structure of most sub-Saharan African states in order to understand why these states are not developing as planned (Leonard & Straus, 2003). Leonard and Strauss completed their project by analyzing the previous theories of past political scientists and economists that specialize in African Affairs here in the United States.

The internal institutions of African states have been counterproductive towards the goals of self-improvement. There are key factors regarding these issues, which are: the personal rule paradigm, the international system and enclave systems (Leonard & Straus, 2003). The personal rule paradigm relies upon patronage, clientelism and personalized relationships which weakens the state in return (Leonard & Straus, 2003). The international system provides a system of investment, legitimacy and foreign aid (Leonard & Straus, 2003). Foreign aid has begun to become the primary economic source instead of self-sufficiency. These actions have created in African countries a debt crisis which does not encourage African leaders to orient their policies outward and reform their institutions.
To further compound the debt crisis, many donor nations, such as the United States, are gradually becoming unforgiving in regard to foreign aid repayments. During this process, the donor countries add policy requirements that help western countries maintain leverage over the debtor countries (Leonard & Straus, 2003). The cancellation of this international debt is necessary in order to provide the African countries the opportunity of a clean slate of development in order to receive more ODA. Yet it cannot end up in the hands of the same leaders. This also tends to exacerbate enclave production (Leonard & Straus, 2003). Enclave production systems allow economic production to only occur in a small area, limiting economic profits from everyone else within that particular country (Leonard & Straus, 2003). This situation allows for predation and foster personal rule systems to occur. The combination of personal enclave systems, personal rule systems and international policy against African states are contributing to the underdevelopment of African states (Leonard & Straus, 2003).

**Economic Development Practices and Strategies for Africa**

In order to understand economic development on the African continent, one must be able to comprehend some of the economic development practices and strategies within Africa. While the other two sources focused primarily why most African states are currently struggling to develop, Ayittey (2005) examines the ways Africa’s development crisis is being currently addressed by the African states themselves and the international community (Ayittey, 2005). Ayittey studies the past resolutions that were previously proposed and implemented while targeting specific weaknesses in policy that must be addressed (Ayittey, 2005). Ayittey primarily focused on how the corrupted leadership
helped lead African countries to economic deterioration and how foreign aid has compounded those problems (Ayittey, 2005).

Economic deterioration has become a factor in the dismal developments in a place full of highly valued resources. In order to turn this around, there is a need for drastic need for domestic and international investment in critical institutions instead of focusing on the national image (Ayittey, 2005). These countries run an oppressive regime on every aspect of African institutions which causes the people to rebel economically (Ayittey, 2005). This rebellion hurts the state overall and compels it to rely on foreign aid due to a lack of investment. This foreign aid ends up in the hands of the same irresponsible rulers because western donor states struggle to make a distinction between the leaders and the people (Ayittey, 2005). The emphasis should be placed on institution building not necessarily on rhetoric. Foreign aid was supposed to fill financial gaps that the African states couldn’t initially fill themselves. However, the rationale for aid was originally out of guilt from colonialism and slavery (Dixon & et. al., 2015, pp. 392). This caused many African leaders to agree to structural adjustment programs that were supposed to decrease Statism and align currencies with their true values (Ayittey, 2005). Inconsistencies and bureaucratic red tape in foreign policy have prevented the aid from working effectively. Often these loans have been misappropriated for the wrong reasons and don’t return back to the people (Ayittey, 2005). The misuse of foreign aid has helped continue the cycle of economic deterioration by irresponsible leaders (Ayittey, 2005).

The remaining sources focus on the economic behavior between donor states and recipient states in relation to the underdevelopment in the African continent. However,
the cultural perspectives on development must also be taken into consideration. Berg (2014) argues that cultural relativism plays a strategic role in the international perceptions of economic development within West Africa (Berg, 2014). The conceptions of development in Global South Nations have been shaped with the ideals of western, colonizing countries during the post-industrial period. Development perceptions are rooted in the western development model in, which European countries have been the standard for economic development practices (Berg, 2014). Western biased perceptions of economic development pertaining to West Africa, have led to ineffective development approaches towards West Africa (Berg, 2014). Development strategies have been utilized to coincide with American morals such as free trade and democratization. Development tools such as the Millennium Challenge Accounts are driven to contribute to the capitalist greed of donor states through initiatives that justify limited impact on the middle class (Berg, 2014). Development tools such as those of the MCA, do not take into account previously existing cultural values that could be included in the restructuring of development agendas (Berg, 2014). Previously existing cultural values also challenge the attempt to balance modernity and cultural integrity in the attempt to create economic growth and development.

**Foreign Aid Practices towards Africa**

remained inconsistent in regards to the distribution of aid, which also comes with paradoxical statements. Western countries that have given foreign aid or development assistance have done so primarily within the hopes of having further western geopolitical interests and industrial expansion by the west (Ayittey, 1998). The utilization of a debt free zone in states that are struggling to pay for their balance is an alternative to the foreign aid (Ayittey, 1998). This strategy would allow for markets to open and increase investment opportunities for the creditors. This strategy allows for debt to be cancelled along with a host of other opportunities for the debtors.

Next, Ayittey observed a specific type of foreign aid called a structural adjustment program (SAP), which is commonly used by western entities. These SAPs are conditions necessary in order to receive aid; however, the aid itself has been counterproductive to solving the economic crisis of the country that is utilizing this program. These SAPs come with a variety of mandatory changes for the recipient country which lead to a multitude of malfunctions (Structural Adjustment, 2013). The issues that have been found in SAP’s are design flaws and sequencing (Ayittey, 1998). However, the author argues that the SAP’s have been implemented incorrectly by the wrong countries (Ayittey, 1998). SAP programs have the ability to give economic freedom, rationalize the state sector and privatize industries.

As time passes, the same sentiments did not remain completely agreeable for many scholars who focus on African affairs and political economy. In the book, *Africa: Opposing Viewpoints*, there are two different attitudes regarding the ideas on the effectiveness of foreign aid in Africa. Jallow (2012) looks at the various factors as to how
foreign has not benefitted African states (Jallow, 2012). Jallow came to this conclusion by observing the economic statistics and various statements regarding its effectiveness through foreign assistance policy such as structural adjustment programs.

Foreign aid has led to elitist corruption and underdevelopment (Offiong, 2013, pp.46). The consistency in foreign aid has led to reliance on foreign aid that becomes misappropriated with little to no returns for the aid recipient countries. Moreover, a large amount of aid has been shifted to offshore accounts or has been spent irresponsibly in a way that can’t be retrieved (Jallow, 2012). Originally, a western country such as the United States gave aid to developing African countries in hope of national interest alignments. However, the recipient country isn’t solely to blame. The funds given must be used for certain circumstances such as purchasing donor country services, which overall shifts the money back to the donor rather than the aid recipient (Jallow, 2012). These special circumstances of donor countries create donor pressures (Jallow, 2012). However, there’s no correlation between economic development and foreign aid. (Schabbel, 2007, pp. 9) Increasing aid amounts lead to dependency while fulfilling the ulterior motives of the donor country and the elites of the recipient country (Jallow, 2012). Besides, foreign aid, specifically food aid, has suppressed the need of production and certain sectors such as agriculture.

Yet, there is a counterargument against the sentiment that Africa benefits from foreign aid. Baldauf (2012) explains the reasoning why Africa is benefitting from foreign aid through the observations of humanitarian aid primarily (Baldauf, 2012). According to Baldauf, there are multiple benefits of foreign aid in Africa (Baldauf 2012). There are
misconstrued ideas about the actual use of foreign aid in regards to the donor and recipient countries. In this logic, foreign aid helps in promoting development such as the case of humanitarian aid that is given for covering medical supply costs (Baldauf, 2012). This aid is also used to stimulate private sector solutions while empowering local governments to lead their own development through know-how.

It seems as if there is a general consensus overtime on why most African states have not developed as expected. The majority of the sources point to the idea that most African states have internal issues to address such as the personal rule system and clientelism. Also, the common thread was the need for African states to develop independently due to the compounding issues and debt from foreign aid. However, there was dissent from one author who saw the use of humanitarian aid as an example for effective foreign aid. In his work, *Problems, Politics and Policy: A Reconsideration of US Foreign Aid Behavior towards Africa*, Travis (2010) challenges the trending notion that geopolitical objectives and rationality are the primary influences to US foreign aid behavior towards Africa (Travis 2010). The foreign aid decisions made by the United States are normally presumed as rational decisions with the intent of keeping either security or geopolitical goals in mind. However, US foreign policy decision making pertaining to foreign aid allotments is a combination of external stimuli and domestic partnership (Travis 2010). There is a domestic influence to the foreign aid allotment decisions by the United States towards African countries. The domestic influence of the United States in foreign aid decision is tied to the legislative and executive branches with a variety of attached complexities. Bureaucratic competition for funding, domestic spending priorities and
different political party motives behind foreign aid allotments influence the amounts which are allotted to African states (Travis 2010). In the United States, the political party motives are as split along similar lines as the divide between the objectives of realist and liberal objectives of International Relations. The Republican Party has overall favored foreign aid allotments in the support of United States nationalistic objectives of maintaining necessary alliances and focus on maintaining/improving security (Travis 2010). On the other hand, the Democratic Party has maintained the motive of foreign aid allotments for the installment of democratic principles and institutions abroad with intent of larger international cooperation (Travis 2010). In the results of his study, Travis found an overall trend that favored increases of economic development aid investment in correlation with democratic reforms more frequently than economic development aid increases with security objectives (Travis 2010).

The attempt at promoting democratic reforms has also been a significant aspect of foreign aid practices as mentioned in Dietrich and Wright’s study, *Foreign Aid Allocation Tactics and Democratic Change in Africa* (Dietrich & Wright, 2015). Foreign aid has been consistently linked with the movement towards democracy on the African continent (Quainoo, 2003, pp.5). Over the past twenty years, various countries on the African continent have moved towards the use of multiparty government systems and permission of opposition parties in their elections (Dietrich & Wright, 2015). Foreign aid donors have attached their desired political reforms onto economic aid packages in order to promote democracy and good governance (Dietrich & Wright, 2015). However, western donor states have attempted to do this with both authoritarian regimes and democratic
regimes on the African continent in a uniform fashion. This is completed through the allocation aid from the donor country to the civil society or from the donor country to the civil society of the recipient state (Dietrich & Wright, 2015). The initial focus is to promote the transitions to multiparty systems prior to moving towards fully democratic systems. Over the years, there has been a general increase in economic aid trends that correspond with a similar increase in democracy aid trends (Dietrich & Rich, 2015). Recipient governments and political opposition parties tend to be the primary recipients of democracy aid in the intent of improving the institutions/party legitimacy with the civil society of the recipient country. The overall civil society sees little to none of the democracy assistance from donor countries (Dietrich & Wright, 2015). In the overall results of their study, Dietrich and Wright (2015) found that foreign aid measures can assist democratic reform but are not the primary drivers of democratic reform within recipient countries (Dietrich & Wright, 2015).

**Bilateral Relations between the United States and Aid Recipient Countries**

However, the bilateral relations between recipient country and the donor country must also be examined to comprehend the motives behind foreign aid. Bilateral relations can influence the economic trade relationships between the donor country and the recipient country. Stronger bilateral diplomatic relations between the aid donor country and the aid recipient country can positively affect the aid apportionments and trade benefits for the recipient country.

**Benin.**
According to the US Department of State’s Bureau of African Affairs (2015), the bilateral relations between the United States and Benin have originated since 1960 (U.S. Relations with Benin, 2015). This was the year that Benin gained independence. However, these two countries did not have excellent relations until Benin embraced the ideals of democracy. Benin held peaceful and transparent elections in 2011, which has assisted in greater bilateral relationship between this nation and the United States (U.S. Relations with Benin, 2015). In regards to US assistance to Benin, the primary areas are in the defense and health sectors. The United States has been increasing its investment towards Benin in energy, transportation and communication while sparking interest in increasing trade within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region (U.S. Relations with Benin, 2015). Current economic trade with the United States remains fairly minimal, but the United States is looking forward to increasing trade with Benin (U.S. Relations with Benin, 2015). The Millennium Challenge Corporation has been increasing economic investment into the state of Benin for private sector development and infrastructure investments (U.S. Relations with Benin, 2015).

**Liberia.**

According to the US Department of State’s Bureau of African Affairs (2015), bilateral relations between the United States and Liberia originated when Liberia was a colony of freed slaves by the American Colonization Society (U.S. Relations with Liberia, 2015). Over time the state of relations between these two countries have been inconsistent due to the changing internal conditions of the state. As of recently, the Ebola crisis has remained a top concern for both the United States and Liberia (U.S. Relations...
with Liberia, 2015). The latter country is currently in the process of fully recovering from the Ebola crises as well as attempting to restart delayed development projects (U.S. Relations with Liberia, 2015). Liberia still utilizes U.S. assistance for its short term and long term development. Liberia has been moving towards free and fair elections as of 2005 and 2011 (U.S. Relations with Liberia, 2015). Currently, the United States’ assistance to Liberia has been primarily focused on continued development of good governance, economic growth and defense building (U.S. Relations with Liberia, 2015). With defense, education and health, these are the primary focus of the current allocations of aid to Liberia.

The Gambia.

According to the US Department of State (2016), the United States and The Gambia have relations dating back to World War II (U.S. Relations with the Gambia, 2016). The capital of The Gambia was utilized as an air stop for the United State Army Air Corp and a port of call for allied naval convoys. Multiple United States corporations such as Western Union and Coca-Cola have been expanding into The Gambia in order to create smaller local ventures within its rural areas as a means of creating economic development (U.S. Relations with The Gambia, 2016). Due to recent issues in the elections against the former president Yayah Jammeh, The Africa Growth and Opportunity Act trade benefits were suspended (U.S. Relations with the Gambia, 2016). The primary focus of the bilateral relationship between the United States and The Gambia is to improve human rights, eradicate HIV/AIDS, democratic reform, education reform and building refugee support services and infrastructure.
Guinea-Bissau.

The United States and Guinea Bissau have established bilateral diplomatic relations since Guinea-Bissau’s independence in 1975 as verified by the United States Department of State (US. Relations with Guinea-Bissau, 2016). However, the relations between the United States and Guinea-Bissau have been strained due to the internal conditions of Guinea Bissau. This country has faced a series of coups, civil wars, political assassinations and fraudulent elections since its independence in 1975 (U.S. Relations with Guinea-Bissau, 2016). As of 2012, the United States has lifted its foreign trade restrictions with Guinea-Bissau. The bilateral relationship between Guinea-Bissau and the United States aims to reduce drug trafficking, improve disease prevention and overall multi-sector reform (U.S. Relations with Guinea-Bissau, 2016). At this moment, there is not direct trade between Guinea-Bissau and the United States. However, there is a trade framework set between the United States and the West African Economic and Monetary Union.

Senegal.

The United States Department of State (2016) has a written record of a strong bilateral relationship with Senegal since its independence in 1960 (U.S. Relations with Senegal, 2016). The primary goal of this bilateral relationship is to focus on economic growth and development (U.S. Relations with Senegal, 2016) Aside from economic growth and development efforts, the United States and Senegal are intending to reform agriculture sector, healthcare, education and military expansion within Senegal (U.S.
Relations with Senegal, 2016). The consistent efforts towards good governance and transparency within the Senegalese government has been applauded by the United States. Moreover, Senegal maintains preferential trade benefits under the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (U.S. Relations with Senegal, 2016).

**Internal Conditions of Aid Recipient Countries**

The available sources suggest that the internal conditions of the aid recipient country affect the nation’s own economic development. Benin, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Senegal all have different internal conditions that influence their development. This includes the economy, civil society and transnational issues that affect the specific country. In addition, the functions of the country’s government affect the functions of the civil society. In this section, I will explore the internal conditions and historical background of each country to gain a better understanding of the internal factors that impede on economic development.

**Benin.**

The country of Benin has become one of Africa’s most stable democracies according to the BBC News Country Profile of Benin (Benin Country Profile, 2017). It has a population of 9.4 million people and has a predominant cotton industry. However, Benin has remained severely underdeveloped with a corrupted government system (Benin Country Profile, 2017). The CFA or West African franc is the primary current of Benin. The nation is still dealing with border disputes as a top priority of its security issues (Benin Country Profile, 2017). The President of Benin, Patrice Talon, is a major cotton
industry giant within the region. He intends to address terrorism and reduce the prevalence of cross-border crimes (Benin Country Profile, 2017). However, there are lingering internal issues that need to be addressed within the country of Benin which faces a combination of harsh libel laws, poverty and poor infrastructure (Benin Country Profile, 2017). Moreover, the current life expectancy in Benin is fifty-five years old for men and fifty-nine years old for women.

The Central Intelligence Agency Factbook (2017) has also created a profile of Benin as well as the country’s current issues (C.I.A. Factbook-Benin, 2017). Benin started off as the prominent kingdom of Dahomey until France conquered it in 1894. Dahomey remained under French control until its independence in 1960. Benin has faced a series of military coups until the presidency of its leader Kerekou, who adopted a Marxist-Leninist national ideology for the country (C.I.A. Factbook-Benin, 2017). In 1991, Benin moved towards democratic transition with the election of President Sogolo that year. His successor, Thomas Boni Yayi and the current president, Patrice Talon maintained those reforms during their prospective presidencies (C.I.A. Factbook-Benin, 2017).

Besides, the majority of the Beninese population remains under the age of twenty-five. Due to its predominantly young population, Benin has faced a series of other obstacles to its development (C.I.A. Factbook-Benin, 2017). The predominant industries within Benin are oil, timber, marble and limestone. Economically, Benin is heavily reliant on agriculture and natural resources. The cotton trade, sustenance agriculture and regional trade are the country’s primary sources of income. Its agricultural industry is
comprised of cotton, corn, cassava, yams, beans, palm oil, peanuts and cashews (C.I.A. Factbook-Benin, 2017). Foreign Direct Investment is minimal. China and the United States are Benin’s largest exporters. Development efforts in Benin are focused towards increasing tourism, food processing, electricity production and infrastructural improvement for its port city of Cotonou (C.I.A. Factbook-Benin, 2017). Yet Benin faces serious challenges, since there has been an influx of immigrants from neighboring states seeking political stability (C.I.A. Factbook-Benin, 2017). In addition, Benin is still dealing with issues of child labor, increasing living costs, limited health resources, poverty and unemployment (C.I.A. Factbook-Benin, 2017). Furthermore, Benin has transnational issues such as drug trafficking and border disputes.

The historical conjunctions of a country play a key role in understanding the internal conditions of the county. Benin has a significant history, which influences its current challenges and raising its status on the global stage. The BBC News Country Profile Timeline (2017) gives a historical summary of different events and shifts that have impacted Benin (Benin Profile Timeline, 2017). During the 1940s, Dahomey was still a part of the French colonies. In 1958, Dahomey was permitted self-governance while remaining part of the French departments. Dahomey became independent in 1960 and joined the United Nations. However, the 1960s were a tenuous period of military coups and elections within the nation (Benin Profile Timeline, 2017). In the 1970’s Dahomey was renamed as the People’s Republic of Benin and new government structures were formed (Benin Profile Timeline, 2017). Elections were abandoned and reinstated.
Its sole political party, La Partie de la Revolution Populaire was established during this time period.

The 1980s were a time of global expansionism and internal strife (Benin Profile Timeline, 2017). President Mathieu Kerekou, who was elected twice, between 1972-1991 and 1996-2006, had faced two coup attempts and attempted to expand presidential terms. The Marxist-Leninist beliefs were abandoned by the Beninese government (Benin Profile Timeline, 2017). Meanwhile, Benin had begun implementing International Monetary Fund and World Bank policies and measures while its civil society was protesting against the government (Benin Profile Timeline, 2017). Constitutional changes were the primary forces that brought a new government and multiparty system reforms within Benin during the 1990’s (Benin Profile Timeline, 2017).

Moreover, Benin faced a series of changes and backlash during the 2000s. Fortunately, the country has recently discovered its own oil reserves; and began to utilize World Bank and African Development Bank debt relief measures (Benin Profile Timeline, 2017). Sadly, the United States played a hand in fraudulent elections through a telecommunication company and the European Union placed a travel ban on any persons from Benin (Benin Profile Timeline, 2017). This ban sparked migration protests within Benin. Yayi Boni became the President of Benin and initiated efforts that showed democratic promise. Benin abolished the death penalty assisted Nigeria in the fight against Boko Haram (Benin Profile Timeline, 2017). The new President, Patrice Talon shows promise of trying to reduce terms for the promotion of more democratic transition of power.
Liberia.

According to the Liberia Country Profile (2017), Liberia has a population of 4.2 million people with an average lifespan of fifty-six year for men and fifty-nine years for women (Liberia Country Profile, 2017). Liberia has been heavily affected by the aftermath of its fourteen-year civil war. With the presidency of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberia is striving to maintain stability while moving to improve gender equality and economic development (Liberia Country Profile, 2017). Liberia’s currency is the Liberian dollar. Along with the rest of the country, Liberia’s media outlets are attempting to rebuild with little financial support while combatting libel case fines (Liberia Country Profile, 2017).

The CIA World Factbook page on Liberia (2017) also made observations regarding the state of Liberia (C.I.A Factbook-Liberia, 2017). According to this website, between 1944 and 1971, Liberia’s President Vacanarat Shadrach Tubman brought foreign investment in the country and focused on eliminating inequalities within the state (C.I.A. Factbook-Liberia, 2017). Yet, Samuel Doe’s military coup, on April 12, 1980, led to his ascendancy as President and the start of the Liberian Civil War. His successor, President Taylor resumed the second half of the Liberian civil war and contributed to the civil war in Sierra Leone (C.I.A. Factbook-Liberia, 2017). The election of President Sirleaf in 2006 as the 24th President of Liberia led the focus towards peace efforts and the ongoing promotion of economic development as well as the rebuilding of international ties (C.I.A. Factbook-Liberia, 2017). Furthermore, Liberia is still recovering from the Ebola
epidemic. Its primary natural resources are iron ore, timber, diamonds, gold and hydropower (C.I.A. Factbook-Liberia, 2017).

The population of Liberia faces a youth bulge, as its majority is under the age of twenty-five. Also, Liberia also has a high maternal mortality rate with limited reproductive health resources (C.I.A. Factbook-Liberia, 2017). Moreover, female genital cutting remains a prominent practice that has led to health complications of many young women in the country. Furthermore, Liberia suffers from large refugee movements in and out of the country which remains heavily reliant on foreign assistance, especially because of its attempts to restructure itself after the civil war (C.I.A. Factbook-Liberia, 2017). Besides, the Ebola crisis causes most of Liberia’s funds to be diverted to combat the disease. To face these challenges, Liberia is focusing on increasing investment and trade, building infrastructure, political stability and addressing foreign aid sustenance (C.I.A. Factbook-Liberia, 2017). Liberia also aims to address its transnational issues, such as refugee influxes, neighboring ethnic conflict, arms dealing, drug trafficking and money laundering (C.I.A. Factbook-Liberia, 2017).

The BBC timeline for Liberia (2017) observed important historical junctions over the course of the country’s history (Liberia Profile Timeline, 2017). During the 1800’s, Liberia modeled the United States constitution and declared its independence in 1847. More than a century later, Liberia played a crucial role in both World War I and World War II as part of the allied countries (Liberia Profile Timeline, 2017). During World War I, Liberia declared war against Germany and assisted in the Allied pushback against Germany. Also, Liberia fought alongside allied forces during World War II. At the same
time, Liberia had its own internal reforms such as abolishing forced labor, opening voting rights to women and indigenous peoples and beginning rubber production (Liberia Profile Timeline, 2017). In 1958, racial discrimination was declared illegal in Liberia. Sadly, Liberia began to face unrest in the 1970s with the beginning of various riots, while it was attempting to build better economic conditions and aid through the European Economic Community (Liberia Profile Timeline, 2017).

The 1980’s consisted of a series of military coups and the beginning of the Liberian Civil War (Liberia Profile Timeline, 2017). This also led to intervention efforts by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Due to the continuation of the Liberian Civil War, the 1990’s and early 2000’s were a period of backlash from the international community. During these decades, Liberia faced a series of embargoes, aid suspensions and travel bans from multiple countries (Liberia Profile Timeline, 2017). At the same time, Liberia was involved in the civil war in Sierra Leone through its assistance of the rebel forces. This lead ECOWAS and US peacekeeping efforts to intervene. The latter portion of the 2000s saw the previous bans lifted with the incoming presidency of Sirleaf and the end of the Liberian Civil War (Liberia Profile Timeline, 2017). The prosecution process for the former president of Liberia began as well.

During the 2010s, Liberia had a series of improvements up until the Ebola crisis. Liberia became involved with debt relief programs with the IMF and the World Bank and witnessed; oil discovery and electricity expansion (Liberia Profile Timeline, 2017). Refugees of the Liberian Civil war began to return to Liberia. Former President Charles
Taylor was sentenced for his war crimes (Liberia Profile Timeline, 2017). Liberia began its crackdown on fraud within its government and self-governed peacekeeping actions were implemented (Liberia Profile Timeline, 2017). Yet the Ebola Crisis caused an increase of death within Liberia and reduced most of its funding for economic development to combat Ebola.

**The Gambia.**

According to the BBC Country Profile for The Gambia (2017), The Gambia is an African country that has had long periods of stability. However, this stability has not guaranteed The Gambia prosperity (The Gambia Country Profile, 2017). The Gambia has poor land quality and its primary crop is peanuts. In order to raise revenues, the state is reliant on tourism. Recently, The Gambia had a contested election in 2016 with the forcible removal of former president Yahya Jammeh. The Gambia is home to 1.8 million people with a life expectancy of fifty-eight years for men and sixty years for women (The Gambia Country Profile, 2017). The new president of The Gambia, Adams Barrow, is focused on economic growth for the country (The Gambia Country Profile, 2017). The Gambian currency is the Dalasi. Media relations in the country are strict and state controlled with heavy jail time for libel and sedition.

The president, he banned political activity within the country (C.I.A. Factbook-The Gambia, 2017). The primary resources of The Gambia are fish, clay, silica sand, titanium, tin and zircon (C.I.A. Factbook-The Gambia, 2017). The Gambia has a youth bulge with over 60% of its population under the age of 25. The Gambia heavily relies on agriculture, although it has experienced crop failures due to drought (C.I.A. Factbook-The Gambia, 2017). This has led to food shortages and poverty. There has been high investment into agriculture with barely cultivated land.

The Gambia is also dealing with migration issues both in and out of the country. It serves as a host country for refugees, while its skilled workers leave for better opportunities. There is a small manufacturing base and limited agriculture in the country. Due to these issues, The Gambia has become heavily reliant on foreign aid (C.I.A. Factbook-The Gambia, 2017). Although The Gambia has utilized both bilateral and multilateral aid, its human rights practices have tarnished the country’s reputation with its donor states (C.I.A. Factbook-The Gambia, 2017). On top of these challenges, The Gambia deals with transnational issues of human trafficking, arms smuggling, border conflict and refugee support (C.I.A. Factbook-The Gambia, 2017).

The Gambia has had a turmoil filled history. The BBC News Timeline for The Gambia (2017) notes key historical conjunctions that are critical to understanding The Gambia’s past (The Gambia Profile Timeline, 2017). From 1455-1889, The Gambia was underneath Portuguese Control. The years 1889-1894 marked the period of British Control in The Gambia. The territory became independent in 1965, which brought the first president, Dawda Jawara to power, in 1970. The 1980s consisted of a series of coups...
as well as the Senegambia conflict (The Gambia Profile Timeline, 2017). The coups continued into the 1990’s while there was a shift towards a multiparty constitution and Jammeh became president. The 2000s were a time of unprecedented trials and tribulations for The Gambia. Although there was a recent discovery of oil reserves, President Jammeh was oppressive on the Gambian people. Jammeh implemented repressive media laws, banned homosexuality (sparking the gay rights movement in the country), harsh drug trafficking punishments (by death) and imprisonment of the opposition (The Gambia Profile Timeline, 2017). The 2010s witnessed an attempted coup by civilians, removed The Gambia from international institutions and political oppression (The Gambia Profile Timeline, 2017). Jammeh was removed from office by threat of military force.

Guinea-Bissau.

Guinea-Bissau was one a beacon model for African development that has become one of the poorest countries in the world, according to the Guinea-Bissau Country Profile (Guinea-Bissau Country Profile, 2017). Guinea-Bissau is home to 1.6 million people with an average life expectancy of 47 years for men and 50 years for women. Guinea-Bissau faces a large amount of foreign debt and heavy reliance on foreign aid programs (Guinea-Bissau Country Profile, 2017). Other revenues have been made through the illegal drug trade (Guinea-Bissau Country Profile, 2017). The currency of Guinea-Bissau is the CFA or the West African Franc. Cashews are the primary crop and currency at times. The country of Guinea-Bissau underwent cycles of political unrest. The current Prime Minister of Guinea-Bissau is Jose Vaz. During his term, there has been an escalation of
coup and chaos within the country (Guinea-Bissau Country Profile, 2017). Vaz has made attempts to eliminate any political opposition inside and outside of the government (Guinea-Bissau Country Profile, 2017). The media within Guinea-Bissau is scarcely financed but faces harsh treatment solely by associations with different groups (i.e. drug traffickers).

The CIA World Factbook shares similar perceptions pertaining to the overall condition of Guinea-Bissau (C.IA. Factbook-Guinea-Bissau, 2017). Guinea-Bissau has faced a pattern of military and civil unrest (C.IA. Factbook-Guinea-Bissau, 2017). There have been patterns of suppressed political opposition (C.IA. Factbook-Guinea-Bissau, 2017). A military coup led to the Bissau-Guinean Civil War. There was a rotation of five prime ministers in 2015 alone. The natural resources of Guinea-Bissau are fish, timber, phosphates, bauxite, clay, granite, limestone and petroleum. Within Guinea-Bissau, there is a large youth population under the age of twenty-five. Moreover, there is a high birth rate with limited health resources (C.IA. Factbook-Guinea-Bissau, 2017). The combination of coups, civil war and political stability have caused damage to the economic condition of Guinea-Bissau (C.IA. Factbook-Guinea-Bissau, 2017).

In addition, Guinea-Bissau is struggling with high unemployment, poverty, drug and human trafficking (C.IA. Factbook-Guinea-Bissau, 2017). This instability has contributed to the brain drain of Guinea-Bissau. Most of its youth leave to attend school in The Gambia or Senegal or end up participating in drug trafficking (C.IA. Factbook-Guinea-Bissau, 2017). Furthermore, although Guinea-Bissau is reliant on foreign assistance, cashews and sustenance agriculture the revenues from the illegal economy of
human trafficking and drug trafficking outweigh the fish and farming industries within the country (C.IA. Factbook-Guinea-Bissau, 2017). Internationally, Guinea-Bissau faces issues of human trafficking, arms dealing, refugee support and Senegambia conflicts (C.IA. Factbook-Guinea-Bissau, 2017). Fortunately, the nation of Guinea-Bissau has the possibility of becoming economically stable thorough the processing of natural resources and other resources (C.IA. Factbook-Guinea-Bissau, 2017).

In order to further understand the internal conditions of Guinea-Bissau, one can study the Guinea-Bissau Timeline (Guinea-Bissau Profile Timeline, 2017). This timeline gives an overview of pertinent historical episodes of Guinea-Bissau. The history of Guinea-Bissau began in the pre-15th century as a portion of the Mali Empire known as Gabu. The Portuguese colonized Gabu in the 1400s in a violent conflict (Guinea-Bissau Profile Timeline, 2017). Full colonization of Gabu occurred in 1879. From 1963 to 1974, the war for independence occurred and Guinea-Bissau was the victor (Guinea-Bissau Profile Timeline, 2017). However, the first major leader of Guinea-Bissau, Amilcar Cabral, was killed on January 20, 1973, a few years before his half-brother, Luis Severino de Almeida Cabral, was sworn in as the country’s first president, eight months later, on September 24, 1973 (Guinea-Bissau Profile Timeline, 2017). The 1980s consisted of military coups against President Cabral, eventually leading to the takeover of Prime Minister João Bernardo Viera by military force as the new president on November 14, 1980 (Guinea-Bissau Profile Timeline, 2017).

The 2000s was also a time of chaos within Guinea-Bissau which domestic tensions began. Guinea-Bissau was engaged in violent border conflicts with Senegal
while attempting to suppress political oppression (Guinea-Bissau Profile Timeline, 2017). The IMF and the World Bank suspended development funds to Guinea-Bissau (Guinea-Bissau Profile Timeline, 2017). The leaderships within Guinea-Bissau were in rotation as its efforts to combat human trafficking started. Yet internal conditions further deteriorated for Guinea-Bissau. The European Union stopped its security mission to Guinea-Bissau and suspended its aid to the nation (Guinea-Bissau Profile Timeline, 2017). Moreover, food riots usually occur throughout the country. The UN declared a travel ban from the country while there are more coup attempts. Due to coup attempts, there have been five prime ministers in and out of power. Yet, donor countries have begun to re-pledge their development aid amounts (Guinea-Bissau Profile Timeline, 2017).

**Senegal.**

The country of Senegal has remained a model of stable governance and civilian rule on the African continent, according to the BBC News Senegal Country Profile (Senegal Country Profile, 2017). The Casamance conflict has played a significant role in the affairs of Senegal. This nation has an agriculture based economy and has shifted away from its former trade of slaves, ivory and gold. Senegal is home to 13.1 million people with the average lifespan of fifty-nine years for men and sixty-one years for women (Senegal Country Profile, 2017). Senegal has seen a pattern of improvements within the country (Senegal Country Profile, 2017). Senegal is involved in various peacekeeping operations throughout the African continent. Under President Macky Sall, Senegal began a ceasefire agreement pertaining to the Casamance conflict. President Sall also seeks to
lower presidential term years. Meanwhile, Senegal has maintained a healthy, multiparty system (Senegal Country Profile, 2017). In regards to media relations, there is unrestricted press with the exception of the 2012 election season when government attempts to restrict freedom of speech were noted. Self-censorship is still prevalent but the privatized media remains critical of the Senegalese government (Senegal Country Profile, 2017).

The CIA World Factbook Senegal Page (2017) provides a brief history of the current conditions in Senegal (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017). This nation was merged with French Sudan under colonial rule as part of the French departments (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017). Senegal achieved independence in 1960. From 1982-1989, Senegal and the Gambia were merged as Senegambia due separatist insurgencies in both countries (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017). Fortunately, there has been a history of international peacekeeping efforts and regional mediation by Senegal (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017).

Senegal was a socialist country until the election of President Abdoulaye Wade in 2000. During his presidency, Wade attempted to increase executive powers while weakening any opposition (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017). The abundant natural resources with Senegal are fish, phosphates and iron ore. Senegal has a large youth population, with the majority being under the age of twenty-five. This has contributed to high unemployment and low literacy levels (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017). Senegalese youth have immigrated to other countries such as Libya and Mauritania for better employment and educational opportunities (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017).
Due to the Casamance conflict, there are Senegalese refugees who left for The Gambia or Guinea-Bissau. The major industries within Senegal are mining, construction, tourism, fisheries and agriculture (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017). Senegal has an improving economic growth rate, while it remains heavily reliant on foreign aid, donor assistance and foreign direct investment (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017). Its major exporting industries are phosphates mining, fertilizer production and commercial fishing. In the attempt to improve economic development, President Sall created the Economic Senegal Project (ESP). The ESP intends to focus on highway projects, electric supply and improving the family allowance program (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017). Currently the ESP program is meeting the goals of the IMF for development (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017). Yet, Senegal still faces transnational issues of arms smuggling, cross-border raids and separatist violence (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017).

The country of Senegal has a rich and influential history on its current affairs, as apparent in BBC News Senegal Timeline (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017). During the 8th century, Senegal was considered a part of the Ghana Empire. Later on, in the 11th century, there was the Tukulor occupation. After the Tukulor occupation, the Jolof Empire existed between the 12th and the 14th centuries (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017). From the 1400s to the 1700s, Senegal was under colonial occupation by the French, the British and the Portuguese (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017). France extended its territories into West Africa, including Senegal during the 1800s. Senegal became part of the French Union and formed its own national assembly during the 1940s and 1950s (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017). In 1960, Senegal became independent. During the
1960s, Senegal had its first president Leopold Senghor as well as a new constitution under the Progressive Union party (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017). There was also an attempted coup. But, the three party system emerged in the country in 1978.

The Senegambia Confederation was a binding security and political agreement that began and dissolved during the 1980s due to separatist conflicts. The 2000s were a time period of resolutions and tribulations in Senegal as the nation assisted in peace accords pertaining to the Casamance conflicts as well as undergoing domestic reform (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017). Domestically, Senegal was in the process of addressing immigration reform, ending socialism within the country, and establishing a new constitution with term limits and the rising prominence of opposition parties (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017). However, Senegal still dealt with border disputes and clashes within the Casamance region. The 2010’s are currently filled with mixed results. There were issues with nepotistic corruption under President Wade as well as the removal of the upper house of the legislature (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017). The Casamance conflict reached a ceasefire as well as Senegal’s involvement in the peaceful removal of Yahya Jammeh through ECOWAS (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017).

**Areas of Contention**

In addition, the current study aims to reveal areas of contention that have not been fully addressed. The first area of contention pertains to the indicators of development. Each source has multiple conceptions of what determines development patterns such as gross national income (GNI) and the human development index (HDI). The second area
of contention pertains to the specificity of the countries in my study. The majority of the extant studies pertain to foreign aid and economic development, and primarily focus on sub-Saharan Africa in general, not solely on the specific aid recipient countries of my study. The available sources currently do not even specify part of sub-Saharan Africa as West Africa, which is the section of Africa where the recipient countries of this research are located. Next, the studies regarding the bilateral relations between the United States and Benin as well as the United States and Liberia are written from the perspective of the United States government. In such sources, there is limited to no mention of bilateral relations from the perspectives of the aid recipient countries, unlike in the current study. The last piece of contention is the internal bureaucratic structure within African states. The majority of the available scholarship focuses on the internal conditions of African governments and their functioning rather than on the implications of foreign aid on the five recipient countries.
Methodology

In order to effectively answer my research questions and thoroughly analyze my data, I will use a mixed method that utilizes both qualitative and quantitative measures. The majority of scholars have observed the impact of foreign aid strictly from a quantitative or qualitative method. This has typically left the qualitative side or the empirical side unexplained. The observation of both the quantitative and qualitative measures is key to studying the evidence of United States’ aid to Benin, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Senegal along with the actual intent of the allocated foreign development assistance.

Regarding the qualitative measure of this project, the bilateral relations of the United States to Benin, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Senegal will be examined over the fiscal years of 2000-2017. The qualitative measures derive from the fields of political science and international relations, these perspectives focus on relations between countries as well as the internal structure of recipient nations. Significant events that occurred between 2000 and 2017 will be observed to see if they are related to any shifts in economic data. I will look at both the top down approach and the bottom up approach. The top down approach primarily examines the perspective of the governments receiving and donating the foreign assistance, while the bottom up approach observes the common people who are affected the most by the foreign development aid. A
combination of these two approaches allows us to holistically understand the real intent of foreign aid and its effectiveness on development.

The quantitative portion of this research project will be on the observation of the economic development statistics of Benin, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Senegal from fiscal year 2000 to fiscal year 2017. The archival research on these recipient countries’ economic development statistics as well as the monetary allocations of US bilateral development assistance will be observed from fiscal years 2000-2017. The economic statistics of Benin and Liberia were retrieved from economic data reports from various sources. The statistics on the recipient countries came from the World Bank Database.

However, there are multiple definitions and indicators of economic development which can lead to confusion. In order to fix this issue, I will specifically look at Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Per capita GDP, Human Development Index, Gross National Income (GNI) and GNI per capita. The Per capita Gross Domestic Product (Per capita GDP) helps to compare the economic performance of one country with another relatively. Gross Domestic Product is a combination of consumption, investment, government spending and net exports spending (Davis, 2009, pp.150). The Human Development Index or HDI, measures the non-economic factors of well-being such as health and education standards as a common indicator in the field of International Relations (Human Development Index, 2014). The Gross National Income (GNI) focuses on the average national income (Brux, 2010, pp. 224). The Gross National Income per capita (GNI per capita) measures the average income of a citizen within a country (Brux, 2010, pp. 240).
I choose the standards for GDP and GNI as “per capita” and gross measures to measure the average person in each recipient country as well as the overall status of a country. In regards to the dollar value, I will look at each of the above figures in relations to the constant United States dollar.

 Included in the quantitative measures is the foreign economic development aid allocated to countries through the United States government. Figures regarding allotted foreign development aid by the United States were retrieved from the online databases of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and the Congressional Research Service Reports. These sources were chosen because they are official reports that observe economics statistics from around the world. However, the quantitative source primarily come from an economist perspective, which primarily focuses on the economic statistics rather than the internal conditions and relations.
Findings

Economic Development Indicators

The findings regarding this project focused on the current apportionments of bilateral development assistance to Benin and Liberia from 2000-2017 as well as the economic development indicators of both recipient countries. Multiple graphs were compiled from World Bank in order to display the economic development statistics of Benin, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Senegal as well as their foreign aid apportionments from the United States (World Bank, World Development Indicators, 2016). All of these indicators and foreign aid apportionments have been converted to constant US dollar amounts. The first set of graphs focus on the economic statistics of Benin, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Senegal. The second set of graphs focus on the allocations of United States’ bilateral development aid to Benin, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Senegal.

In Figure 1, Gross Domestic Product Comparison of Recipient Countries, Benin went from an initial Gross Domestic Product of $2,569,186,643 to a most recent Gross Domestic Product of $8,290,986,805 (World Bank, Gross Domestic Product, 2016). There were decreases in Benin’s GDP during 2008-2010 and 2014-2015. The average GDP for Benin is $6,060,525,726. This amounts to a GDP of $505,043,810 monthly, $116,548,572 weekly and $16,604,180 daily.
The Gambia went from a Gross Domestic Product of $782,915,402 to a Gross Domestic Product of $938,794,719 in Figure 1 (World Bank, Gross Domestic Product, 2016). The average GDP for The Gambia is $782,490,910. The amount breaks down to $65,207,575 monthly, $15,047,902 weekly and $2,143,810 daily.

Guinea-Bissau has an initial Gross Domestic Product of $370,173,852 to a recent Gross Domestic Product of $1,056,776,884 as depicted in Figure 1 (World Bank, Gross Domestic Product, 2016). There were decreases in GDP for Guinea Bissau in 2008-2009, 2011-2012 and 2014-2015. The average GDP for Guinea-Bissau is $61,926,293 monthly, $14,240,683 weekly and $2,035,932 daily.

Liberia’s Gross Domestic Product went from $529,064,600 to $2,053,000,000 in Figure 1 (World Bank, Gross Domestic Product, 2016). Liberia had decreases in GDP amounts in 2000-2001. The average GDP for Liberia is $1,060,506,606. This amount breaks down to $88,375,550 monthly, $20,394,357 weekly and $2,905,498 daily.

Senegal began with a GDP of $4,679,604,754 and ended up with a GDP of $13,609,989,582 within this study in Figure 1 (World Bank, Gross Domestic Product, 2016). Senegal experienced decreases in GDP in 2008-2009, 2011-2012 and 2014-2015. The average GDP for Senegal is $1,065,254,005. This amounts to $88,771,167 monthly, $20,485,654 weekly and $291,850 daily.

The Gross Domestic Product per capita for Benin has moved from $686 to $805 as shown in Figure 2 (World Bank, Gross Domestic Product per Capita). Benin saw decreases in GDP per capita during 2004-2005 and during 2009-2010. The average GDP
per capita for Benin is $734. This average breaks down to $61.17 spent monthly per person. $14.12 spent weekly per person and $2.01 spent daily per person in the country.

By contrast, the GDP per capita for The Gambia went from $532 to $536 as verified in Figure 2 (World Bank, Gross Domestic Product per Capita, 2016). There were decreases in GDP per capita for the Gambia during 2001-2002, 2004-2006, 2010-2011 and 2013-2014. The Gambia has an average GDP per capita of $533. This average equates to $44.12 monthly, $10.25 weekly and $1.46 spent daily.

In Figure 2, the GDP per capita for Guinea-Bissau began at $502 and went to $534 (World Bank, Gross Domestic Product per Capita, 2016). Guinea-Bissau had decreases in GDP per capita during 2001-2003 and 2011-2013. $475 is the average GDP per capita for Guinea-Bissau. This spending average becomes $39.58 per month, $9.13 per week and $1.30 a day.

In Figure 2, Liberia has a GDP that went from an initial value of $392 to $367 (World Bank, Gross Domestic Product per Capita, 2016). Liberia saw decreases during 2000-2001, 2002-2003 and 2013-2014. The average GDP per capita is $336 which amounts to $28 monthly, $6.46 weekly and $0.92 daily. Senegal went from a GDP per capita of $877 to a GDP per capita of $1,043 as shown in Figure 2 (World Bank, Gross Domestic Product per Capita, 2016). The average GDP per capita for Senegal is $905. This average amounts to $75.41 monthly, $17.40 weekly and $2.48 daily.

The Gross National Income for Benin increased from $4,744,784,810 to a Gross National Income of $8,726,455,086 as displayed in Figure 3 (World Bank, Gross
National Income, 2016). Benin experienced a consistent increase in GNI with no decreases. The average GNI for Benin is $6,514,053,995. The average breaks down to $542,837,832 monthly, $125,270,269 weekly and $17,846,723 daily.


Guinea-Bissau had an initial Gross National Income of $357,773,158 and most recently has a GNI of $1,053,021,152 as exhibited in Figure 3 (World Bank, Gross National Income, 2016). There were decreases for Guinea-Bissau in 2008-2009, 2011-2012 and 2013-2015. Guinea-Bissau’s average GNI is $735,994,499. This amounts to $61,332,875 monthly, $14153740 weekly, $2016423 daily.

Liberia went from a GNI of $850,451,465 to a GNI of $1,387,122,689. Liberia experienced decreases in its national income during the years of 2001-2003. Liberia has an average GNI of $988,679,375. The average GNI for Liberia amounts to $82389948 monthly, $19013065 weekly and $2708711 daily.

Senegal had an initial GNI of $8,473,642,520 and a recent GNI of $15,512,153,901. Senegal had a constant increases without any drops in GNI. Senegal has an average GNI of $11,681,244,928. The average GNI for Senegal is $973,437,077 monthly, $224,634,325 weekly and $32,003,411 daily.
Benin went from a Gross National Income per capita of $683 to a Gross National Income per capita of $802 in Figure 4 (World Bank, Gross National Income per Capita, 2016). Benin experienced decreases in GNI per capita during 2004-2005, 2008-2010 and 2014-2015. The average GNI per capita in Benin is $731. The average income per person breaks down to $60.91 monthly, $14.06 weekly and $2.00 daily.


Guinea-Bissau’s GNI per capita went from $190 to $590 as present in Figure 4 (World Bank, Gross National Income per Capita, 2016). Guinea-Bissau saw decreases in GNI per capita during 2011-2012 and 2013-2014. The average GNI per capita in Guinea Bissau is $443. This breaks down to $36.91 monthly, $8.52 weekly and $1.21 daily.

Liberia’s GNI per capita went from $294 to $308 in Figure 4 (World Bank, Gross National Income per Capita, 2016). The GNI per capita for Liberia decreased during 2000-2003 and 2013-2015. Liberia’s average GNI per capita is $267. Liberia’s average GNI per capita becomes $22.25 monthly, $5.13 weekly and $0.73 daily.

As shown in Figure 4, Senegal had a GNI per capita of $859 that went up to $1,025 (World Bank, Gross National Income per Capita, 2016). Senegal had decreases in Gross National Income per capita in 2001-2002, 2008-2009, 2010-2011 and 2012-2013.
The average GNI per capita is $949. This equates to average income per person of $79.08 monthly, $18.25 weekly and $2.60 daily.

According to Figure 5, Benin’s human development index ranking have been consistently increasing (United Nations, Human Development Index, 2014). The Human Development Index rating for Benin went from 0.392 to 0.480. Benin has an average HDI rating of 0.456. The Gambia has moved from an initial Human Development Index rating of 0.385 to 0.441 (United Nations, Human Development Index, 2014). The average HDI rating for The Gambia is 0.429. However, the Gambia saw decreases in HDI ratings in 2011 and in 2014. Guinea-Bissau has seen a constantly increasing Human Development Index rating (United Nations, Human Development Index, 2014). The HDI rating for Guinea-Bissau went from 0.393 to 0.420. The average HDI rating for Guinea-Bissau is 0.413. Liberia’s HDI ratings began at 0.359 and went up to 0.430 (United Nations, Human Development Index, 2014). The average HDI rating for Liberia is 0.399.

Liberia saw a decrease in HDI ratings in 2005. Senegal has maintained a constant increase in Human Development Index ratings. The HDI ratings for Senegal went from 0.380 to 0.466 with an average HDI rating of 0.443 (United Nations, Human Development Index, 2014). Benin has the highest ratings within this study with Senegal following behind in second. The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau and Liberia all follow the previous two countries in the exact order they are listed. However, these countries are still classified underneath the category of low human development (United Nations, Human Development Index, 2014).
United States Economic Development Aid Allotments

Findings regarding foreign aid allocations to Benin and Liberia focused the subdivisions on the Economic Development category of foreign aid. The subdivisions are agriculture, private sector competitiveness, financial sector, infrastructure, economic opportunity, multisector, trade and investment and the macroeconomic foundations of economic growth. Agriculture has the purpose of aiding production, processing, marketing, utilization and trade of agricultural products (food). Private Sector Competitiveness pertains to improving laws, regulations, and policies that affect the economic ability to compete. Financial Sector focuses on support for financial mediation for agencies regarding investment. Infrastructure concentrates on the improvement in economic opportunity along with the physical and governmental infrastructure. Economic Opportunity has the purpose of helping poorer households gain connection to economic opportunities, raise their income and accumulate financial assets. Multi-sector is aid that has been spent without a specific purpose. Trade and Investment improve the exchange of goods and services through the support of the private and public sector. This is done by investing in the promotion of governmental trade policies favorable for free trade. Macroeconomic Foundations of Growth has the intention of creating stable fiscal and monetary policy to enhance productivity and growth by government means. The statistics for each aid recipient county have been compiled from the government foreign assistance database (foreignassistance.gov, 2017).

The United States government agencies that are responsible for foreign aid apportionments have a record of giving aid to Benin over the course of 11 years. There
has been economic development aid given to Benin from 2005-2016. Approximately $271,320,850 has been given to Benin in economic development assistance as shown in Figure 6 (foreignassistance.gov, Benin, 2017). The ranking for the economic development subdivisions are: Infrastructure, Agriculture, Private Sector Competitiveness, Economic Opportunity, Multisector, General Development, Financial Sector and Trade & Development. The top subdivisions in economic development aid amounts are Infrastructure, Agriculture and Private Sector Competitiveness.

Moreover, the United States’ government agencies which are responsible for apportioning aid to The Gambia have a written record of 2011-2016, a span of 5 years. During those five years, $708,400 has been given in economic development assistance to The Gambia as displayed in Figure 8 (foreignassistance.gov, The Gambia, 2017). The primary subsectors of The Gambia’s economic development assistance are Multisector (32%) and General Development (68%).

Liberia’s economic development assistance has a record of US foreign aid between the years of 2009-2016, a span of 7 years. During those 7 years, $140,201,350 was spent on economic development assistance as presented in Figure 8 (foreignassistance.gov, Liberia, 2017). The listing of economic development aid subcategories are: Agriculture, Infrastructure, Private Sector Competitiveness, Economic Opportunity, Trade & Investment, Financial Sector and General Development. The top three subsections of economic development aid for Liberia are Agriculture (37%), Infrastructure (32%) and Private Sector Competitiveness (23%).
The United States government agencies that are responsible for the allocation of foreign aid have records ranging from 2005-2016, a span of 11 years. Within the 11 years, approximately $451,496,760 have been spent on Senegal. The top three subcategories of economic development assistance for Senegal are Infrastructure (51%), Agriculture (40%) and General Development (3%). The ranking for the subcategories of Senegal’s economic development assistance are: Infrastructure, Agriculture, General Development, Economic Opportunity, Multisector, Private Sector Competitiveness, and Macroeconomic Foundations for Growth, Financial Sector and Trade & Investment.

Overall, each country has different economic development assistance totals as well as a different number of years of receiving economic development assistance. Benin and Senegal received economic development assistance for the longest periods of time of 11 years. Both of these countries also received the most funding out of all the recipient countries in this study. Benin had a total of roughly $271.32 million and Senegal had a total of approximately $451.50 million. The remaining countries had fewer than eight years of receiving economic development assistance while Guinea-Bissau received none. Liberia had an approximate total of $140.20 million and The Gambia had an approximate total of $708.40 thousand.
Further Discussions

There have been some data shifts in regards to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Gross Domestic Product per capita (GDP per capita) for each of the aid recipient countries within this study. Benin experienced a decrease in GDP during the years of 2008-2010 and 2014-2015. However, the GDP per capita for Benin only decreased from 2004-2005 and 2009-2010. The common decrease for Benin is from 2009-2010 for Benin. During these years, Benin experienced flooding issues throughout the country that left thousands homeless and the majority of cash crops destroyed (Benin Profile Timeline, 2017).


2013. The common period of decrease for the GDP measures was from 2011-2012
During this common decrease, Guinea-Bissau experienced a period of political
instability. There was a coup attempt that led to the assassination of President Sanha.
Economically, The EU and the United States suspended aid to Guinea-Bissau and food
prices rose (Guinea-Bissau Country Profile, 2017).

The UN launched an embargo on Liberia due to human rights violations in the Liberian
Civil War (Liberia Profile Timeline, 2017). Liberia was in a state of emergency and had a

The GDP amounts for Senegal decreased in 2008-2009, 2011-2012 and 2015-
2016. Senegal had decreases in GDP per capita during the years of 2005-2006, 2008-
During 2008-2009, Senegal dealt with clashes in the Casamance region, leading to
economic backlash in the international community (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017).

There have been some decreases in the Gross National Income (GNI) and Gross
National Income per capita (GNI per capita) of each recipient country within this study.
Benin had no decreases in GNI, but the country faced decreases in GNI per capita. The
were no common decrease years in GNI and GNI per capita for Benin. The nation had a
decrease in 2004-2005, due to fines regarding the bribery of Beninese officials by a United States telecommunications company (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017). In 2008-2010, Benin had a decrease in GNI per capita due to damage from major flooding which left cash crops destroyed and thousands homeless. The GNI per capita for Benin decreased in 2014-2015 when there was a lack of sufficient funds due to election staging (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017).


Minster Sanha (Guinea-Bissau Profile Timeline, 2017). In 2013-2014, Guinea-Bissau faced an increase in emigration to Portugal and the European country suspended its airline travel with Guinea-Bissau.


By contrast Senegal did not have any decreases in GNI, but it had decreases in GNI per capita. The GNI per capita for Senegal decreased in 2001-2002, 2008-2009, 2010-2011 and 2012-2013. During 2001-2002, Senegal had officially ended 40 years of Socialist rule. In 2008-2009, there was a continuation of conflict between troops and rebels in the Casamance region (Senegal Profile Timeline, 2017). Senegal had experienced a decrease in GNI and GNI per capita for unknown reasons. During the years of 2012-2013, Senegal had a decrease in GNI and GNI per capita for unknown reasons as well.

There were a few decreases in the Human Development Index ratings for some of the recipient countries in this study. The Human Development Index ratings for The Gambia decreased in 2011 and 2014. In 2011 and 2014, The Gambia began withdrawing from international institutions after accusations of human rights violations (The Gambia

There are some discrepancies in the data that I recorded. In regards to Gross Domestic Product and Gross Domestic Product per capita, all of the data for each of the aid recipient countries within this study only go up to the year of 2015. Currently, the World Bank is processing the economic data for 2016 and the 2017 fiscal year and has not completed the calculations yet. The same pattern did not occur for Gross National Income indicator. The Gross National Income and Gross National Income statistics only go up to 2015 for each aid recipient country with the exception of The Gambia. The Gambia only goes to 2014 for the Gross National Income indicator and the Gross National Income per capita indicator.

Moreover, there is an inconsistency in the data collection for the Human Development Index. The intended data range of this study is from 2000 to 2017. The Human Development Index is recorded every five years up until 2010, then the Human Development Index is recorded every year until 2014. Although there is no direct development standard regarding the economic measures for GDP, GDP per capita, GNI, GNI per capita, I did a monthly/weekly/daily breakdown for each aid recipient country in order to give a picture of what is spent and earned in each aid recipient country. Additionally, there is no universal set of economic indicators that directly determine the
development status of a country (Curri-Alder & et al., 2014, pp. 894). There are 60+ indicators of economic development and there is no consensus as to which indicators determine development status.

The allocation amounts of economic development assistance to each aid recipient country can be impacted by each individual state’s bilateral relation with the donor state. Each of these countries has a different bilateral and diplomatic relationship with the United States. Senegal had the highest totals of economic development assistance from the United States at $451,496,760 over the course of 11 years. Out of the foreign aid recipient countries within this study, Senegal has the strongest bilateral relationship with the United States. Roughly every year up until the United States financial recession of 2008-2009, America has increasingly given economic development assistance to Senegal. This country has remained a strong US ally and has been viewed as an example of democracy on the African continent (U.S.-Senegal Relations, 2017). The United States has been pushing for more domestic reform in Senegal and plans to help the nation expand its military capacity in order to be the primary state to address military conflict within West Africa.

Benin received the second highest amount of economic development assistance at a total of $271,320,850 over the course of eleven years. The United States and Benin have an amicable bilateral relationship since Benin has become a consolidated democracy. The US economic development assistance amounts have increased steadily up until the year of 2011. Overall, the United States is most concerned in maintaining peace and security as well as strengthening this country’s health system. Although the
United States and Benin have a good trading relationship, trade between the United States and Benin is on a much smaller scale than trade between the US and Senegal (U.S.-Benin Relations, 2017).

Liberia has the third highest amount of US economic development assistance within my study over a seven year span which totaled to $140,201,350. The U.S. economic development assistance amounts to Liberia have steadily increased up until 2014. Bilateral relations between the United States and Liberia were strained during the early 2000s due to the human rights violations during the Liberian Civil War. The United States is concerned with trying to achieve stability within Liberia in every sector from health to democratic progress (U.S.-Liberia Relations, 2017). Liberia and the United States both have a bilateral trade agreement established; however Liberia is still focusing its efforts on recovering from the Ebola epidemic.

The two aid recipient countries in my study with the lowest economic development assistance amounts are The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau. The Gambia received from the United States a total economic development assistance of $708,400 over the course of a six year period. The economic development assistance to The Gambia has increased consistently until 2014. Bilateral relations between The Gambia and the United States have been unstable since the military coup that put Jammeh to the presidency of The Gambia. The United States wants to build better relations with The Gambia to focus its r domestic efforts on promoting democracy and good governance (U.S.-The Gambia, 2017). However, the United States has suspended the Africa Growth
and Opportunity Act for The Gambia while more multinational companies have set up small businesses in the West African country.

Guinea-Bissau did not have any economic development assistance allocations from the United States over the course of this study. The United States established bilateral relations with this country in 1975 after its independence from Portugal. However, the United States is extremely hesitant regarding its relations with Guinea-Bissau (U.S.-Guinea-Bissau Relations, 2017). Due to multiple coups, civil war and assassinations of political leaders, the United States has not given Guinea-Bissau preferential trade benefits and is not part of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act.

In order to understand the aid amounts and development status of each recipient aid country in this study, one should consider observing the internal conditions of each country. The internal conditions of the country affect each aid recipient state internally and externally. Internal conditions affect the internal situations of the state in regards to the treatment of civil society, economic production and overall stability of the country. Internal conditions can affect the country externally as well by having impacts on the perception of the country as well as the investment that donor countries would make to aid recipient countries.

Senegal has received the largest amount of foreign development assistance from the United States. The internal conditions of Senegal play a role in the willingness of the United States to allocate these funds. Senegal maintains itself as one of the most stable democracies on the African continent. Senegal has also been involved in many
international peacekeeping and regional mediation efforts. Moreover, there are many emerging industries within Senegal that make investment seem profitable. However, there are some negative internal conditions in Senegal as well. Due to Senegal’s large youth population, there is high unemployment and limited schooling (C.I.A. Factbook-Senegal, 2017). These factors contribute to the brain drain. This phenomenon is a description of how many young Senegalese residents move in large emigration waves to Northern Africa and other places in the world to obtain a better education and gain employment. As part of the brain drain, there is a lack of educational infrastructure to keep Senegalese residents in Senegal.

Benin has similar internal conditions. After periods of military rule, Benin is now a consolidated democracy that is considered to be following in the same direction as Senegal. There is growing trade between Benin and the United States. Benin has a disciplined military with strategic objectives similar to those of the United States. The Beninese military has been active in combatting the terrorist organization Boko Haram alongside other West African militaries. Yet Benin faces infrastructural issues that affect the internal conditions of the country. Benin currently has a weak health care system, with issues such as high fertility and mortality rates affecting the economic production of the country (C.I.A. Factbook-Benin, 2017). Many areas in Benin are facing severe poverty due to immigration and emigration influxes. Another key issue pertaining to the internal conditions of Benin are border disputes with neighboring countries. Most of these border disputes relate to access to natural resources. Such natural resources have been a key focus of Benin’s industries.
Liberia has been significantly affected by its internal conditions. Liberia has gone through a long period of civil unrest and is trying to move forward. Since the Liberian Civil War, Liberia has improved with its internal peacekeeping efforts. Liberia has also moved to make amends on the international stage by prosecuting war criminals of the Liberian Civil war within the International Court of Justice. Liberia has also been making efforts to improve its own economy during this process (Liberia Country Profile, 2017). However, there have been some downsides to the internal conditions of Liberia and the received aid amounts. Currently, Liberia is trying to recover from the Ebola crisis as well as address the remnants of the 14-year period of civil unrest from the Liberian Civil War. Moreover, Liberia has a large illicit drug trade.

Likewise, the internal conditions of The Gambia have been bleak. The Gambia is in need of democratic reform, after ECOWAS security forces pushed Jammeh out of office. The Gambia has a large youth population that is heavily reliant on the farming industry (C.I.A. Factbook-The Gambia, 2017). Besides, there have been large patterns of emigration outside of The Gambia due to poverty from crop failures and drought as well as violence in Casamance.

Guinea-Bissau has very poor internal conditions that have detracted away investment from countries such as the United States. The government of Guinea-Bissau has been rampant with corruption as well as coups and assassinations. There is a lack of free and fair elections. Human trafficking and drug trafficking are serious issues as well as large industries within Guinea-Bissau (C.I.A. Factbook-Guinea-Bissau, 2017). Due to
these issues, Guinea-Bissau has an extremely weak economy and a poorly funded education system.

The difference in individual saving and spending amounts can tell a lot about the economic behavior of individuals within the aid recipient countries. I will use the statistics of GDP per capita to represent individual spending and GNI per capita to characterize individual saving. The difference between Senegal’s average individual spending and its average individual saving is -$13.00. The GNI per capita and the GDP per capita difference for Benin is -$3.00. Liberia has a difference in GNI per capita and GDP per capita of -$70.00. The difference between The Gambia’s GNI per capita and its GDP per capita is -$20.00. Lastly, Guinea-Bissau has a saving and spending difference of -$84.00.

However, there are suggestions that can be made to improve the economic conditions of each country. These countries could focus on import substitution industrialization or ISI for short. ISI relies on local production and trade to raise the growth of the country. This should be temporary, because the current economic state we live in is globalized which emphasizes a need for trade and economic interaction. There needs to be a change in the approach to development on the African continent by western countries such as the United State. Often, development is approached with a neoliberal perspective and a one-size-fits-all-application. Western countries should be careful to implement economic policies towards West African countries so that they fit the conditions and needs of each recipient state. Although foreign aid can be used as a tool for development, other investment projects for African countries are often the same
across the board. Countries such as the United States have pushed for democratization and neoliberalization of economic policies of their aid recipient states, often these measures do not consider the cultural climate of the states that they are affecting (Berg, 2007). Issues such as ethnic and religious conflicts originate from economic and political inequalities that stem from transitions during independence as well as lingering influences of multinational corporations on each economy.

The current allocations of economic development aid should be focused on the subdivisions of economic opportunity, private sector competitiveness and agriculture. By doing so, these allocations go toward the people directly for economic opportunity and private sector competitiveness by raising the income of households to invest into their own economic systems and increase productivity. Foreign development assistance can have crucial use temporarily, but can be counterproductive when it does not fully help countries develop in an independent manner that best adheres to the realities of the recipient country. The degree of reliance on foreign assistance is also a key component of development for aid recipient countries. Reliance on foreign aid can assist in compounding recessions within aid recipient states as well as increase each national governments debt (Ayittey, 2005). The less reliant a country is on foreign aid, the lesser will debt and government restrictions on African government regimes be.

The middle class of each country should be the primary catalyst for economic and political change within each country towards improving development. As Ayittey states, “African countries must be primarily responsible for saving themselves” (Ayittey, 1998). In many of the countries within this study there is a dualistic class divide. Dualism refers
to economic stratification in a country where one segment is primarily rich while the other portion remains poor with a practically non-existent middle class. Each country should focus on entering many of its poor into emerging industries in order to build a middle class.
Conclusion

In conclusion, economic development is the primary responsibility of the African states. Foreign aid can have advantages but is often misappropriated and does not directly benefit the people that it is intended to help. Overall the foreign aid measures in this study assisted in improving the economic statistics of each country; however these foreign aid amounts have not substantially improved the development status of any of the recipient countries within this study. All of the economic development indicators improved over the 17-year timespan; however the low development status of each recipient country remained. Foreign aid can play a crucial role in improving the economies of developing states, yet foreign aid has a very limited influence of the actual development standing of developing countries. The development status of a country is primarily based on non-economic factors such as education and health of one aid recipient country.

Foreign aid plays a role in the development of recipient countries, however the majority of economic and political decisions must be left to the recipient states themselves. Most of the development efforts need to come from the efforts of the recipient country’s civil society to improve their economies through their own private business ventures. Decisions such as economic public and private sector must be addressed by the people who are ignored in the implementation of development assistance. There are some recommendations to keep in mind regarding development in
the aid recipient countries of this study. Each of these countries can take the approach of utilizing import substitution industrialization as a means of improving domestic spending and production. The middle class is a key component to the development within the aid recipient studies. In order to raise investment, one must increase spending and saving of the middle class. Foreign aid can be a helpful tool for improving economies; however the use of foreign aid by each of the aid recipient countries should be temporary. On the hand, the United States should take a more individualized approach to foreign aid and development that takes into account cultural influences to development such as the spread of ethnic conflicts. Although the United States has given aid to Benin, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Liberia and Senegal, the foreign development assistance has not drastically helped to improve the economic development of none of the recipient countries.
Tables and Figures

Figure 1

Gross Domestic Product Comparison of Recipient Countries

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Note: Adapted from


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**Figure 3**

**Note:** Adapted from


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Figure 4

Gross National Income per Capita Comparison of Recipient Countries

Note: Adapted from


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Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Human Development Index Standards</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low Human Development</td>
<td>0.348-0.574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Human Development</td>
<td>0.574-0.724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Human Development</td>
<td>0.724-0.817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very High Human Development</td>
<td>0.817-0.944</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5

Human Development Index Comparison for Recipient States

Figure 6

Average U.S. Economic Development Assistance to Benin

- Multisector Average
- Infrastructure Average
- Financial Sector Average
- Trade and Investment Average
- Agriculture Average
- General Development Average
- Economic Opportunity Average
- Private Sector Competitiveness Average

Figure 7

Average US Economic Development Assistance to The Gambia

Note: Adapted from [http://beta.foreignassistance.gov/explore/country/Gambia,-The](http://beta.foreignassistance.gov/explore/country/Gambia,-The).

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Average US Economic Development Assistance to Liberia

- Economic Opportunity Average: $5,505,000.00
- General Development Average: $109,000.00
- Agriculture Average: $7,867,500.00
- Trade and Investment Average: $9,091,558.00
- Financial Sector Average: $44,850.00
- Private Sector Competitiveness Average: $461,048.00
- Infrastructure Average: $1,418,695.00

Note: Adapted from [http://beta.foreignassistance.gov/explore/country/Liberia](http://beta.foreignassistance.gov/explore/country/Liberia). Copyright 2017 by Foreign Assistance. Reprinted with permission.
Figure 9

Average US Economic Development Assistance to Senegal

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