TURKIYE’S APPROACH TOWARDS AFRICA: SOLUTIONS AND CHALLENGES

Abstract. With 15% of the global population, Africa is the second-largest and second-most-populous continent. Given the continent’s size and people, it stands to reason that aid would be helpful on a continent plagued by conflicts and war, political unrest, and the effects of natural disasters, to name a few. Africa had and continues to need aid from nations on other continents, like Türkiye, across its 54 recognized sovereign countries divided into North, West, Central, East, and South.

According to UN data, the African region, the second-largest continent, has experienced deplorable living conditions and extreme poverty for a long time. These issues include humanitarian requirements, a lack of physical and educational infrastructure, and a lack of state authority in some sub-regions. Turkish foreign policy during the Cold War was constrained by bloc politics, in which the USSR vs. US competition dominated. Türkiye was required to formulate and implement its foreign policy following the Western Block's overarching philosophy as a Western Bloc partner. As a result, Türkiye's foreign policy was tied to the US/NATO axis and could not be expanded to include other areas, such as the African continent. Following the collapse of the USSR, Türkiye began to broaden the scope of her foreign policy to include different continents like Africa. However, the Justice and Development Party (AK Party/AKP) represents the total turning point in Turkish policy toward Africa. For instance, Türkiye's declaration of 2005 as the "African Year" encouraged the continent's relations with the country to grow and be strengthened. This paper aims to evaluate Türkiye-Africa relations to determine the impacts of Türkiye’s foreign aid and approach in Africa. By assessing the solutions and challenges of the relations and determinants of foreign aid provided by Türkiye, this paper discusses its implications for Türkiye and Africa.

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Keywords: Türkiye-Africa Relations, Humanitarian Assistance, Foreign Aids, Africa.

Акіллі Ерман доцент, професор, доктор, Відділ міжнародних зв’язків, Університет Кіршехір Ахі Евран, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7782-0881

Факуаде Долапо PhD, запрошений співробітник, Університет Південного Уельсу, Велика Британія, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6521-1533

ПОЗИЦІЯ ТУРЕЧЧИНІ ЩОДО АФРИКИ: РІШЕННЯ ТА ПРОБЛЕМИ

Анотація. Маючи 15% світового населення, Африка є другим за величиною та другим за кількістю населення континентом. Враховуючи розміри континенту та населення, цілком зрозуміло, що допомога буде корисною на континенті, який страждає від конфліктів і війн, політичних заворушень, наслідків стихійних лих тощо. 54 визнані суверенні країни Африки, поділені на Північ, Захід, Центр, Схід і Південь, отримували і далі потребують допомоги від країн з інших континентів, наприклад, Туреччини.

За даними ООН, Африканський регіон, другий за величиною континент, дуже довго перебував у жахливих життєвих умовах і крайній бідності. Гуманітарні умови, відсутність фізичної та освітньої інфраструктури, а також відсутність державної влади в деяких субрегіонах є частиною цих проблем. Зовнішня політика Туреччини під час холодної війни була обмежена блоковою політикою, в якій домінувало змагання між СРСР і США. Від Туреччини, як партнера Західного блоку, вимагалося сформулювати та реалізувати свою зовнішню політику відповідно до головної філософії Західного блоку. У результаті зовнішня політика Туреччини була прив’язана до осі США/НАТО і не могла бути пошиrenoю на інші території, такі як Африканський континент. Після розпаду СРСР Туреччина почала розширювати сферу своєї зовнішньої політики, щоб охопити різні континенти, такі як Африка. Однак Партия справедливості та розвитку (AK Party/AKP) започаткувала корінний перелом у турецькій політиці щодо Африки. Наприклад, проголошення Туреччиною 2005 року «Роком Африки» сприяло розвитку та зміцненню відносин континенту з цією країною. Чей документ має на меті оцінити турецько-африканські відносини, щоб визначити вплив зовнішньої допомоги, недана Туреччиною, у цій статті обговорюються її наслідки для Туреччини щодо Африки.

Цей документ має на меті оцінити турецько-африканські відносини, щоб визначити вплив зовнішньої допомоги на позицію Туреччини щодо Африки.
Оцінюючи рішення та виклики відносин і детермінанти зовнішньої допомоги, яку надає Туреччина, у цій статті обговорюються її наслідки для Туреччини та Африки.

**Ключові слова:** Турецько-африканські відносини, гуманітарна допомога, іноземна допомога, Африка.

**Introduction.** Africa is known for being the second largest continent in the World and the second-most populous, claiming 15% of the human population in the World [1]. Such a vast expanse of land and population suggests aid would be beneficial in a continent troubled by conflicts and war [2], political upheaval [3][4], and impacts of natural hazards [5], to mention a few. Across its 54 recognized sovereign countries classified into North, West, Central, East, and South, Africa has and continues to require assistance from countries in other continents, Türkiye inclusive.

This paper aims to evaluate Türkiye-Africa relations to determine the impacts of Türkiye’s foreign aid and approach in Africa. By assessing the solutions and challenges of the relations and determinants of foreign aid provided by Türkiye, this paper discusses its implications for Türkiye and Africa. The African region, the second biggest continent, regarding the UN statistics, has been suffering from inhumane conditions and poverty for long years. These conditions consist of humanitarian needs, lack of educational and physical infrastructure, and in some sub-regions, lack of state authority [6]. As colonial states controlled the continent until the 1960s, Türkiye’s interaction with the region was limited. Of course, this limitation was not only about the colonial states’ existence and their control of African politics [7] but also the orientation of the Turkish foreign policy, which was solely locked to the West (US/NATO and Europe) during the Cold War era [8].

After that time, 52 sovereign states emerged in the region, and in 1985 Türkiye started its first foreign aid expansion toward Africa. Türkiye, officially for the first time in 1985, has provided 10 million dollars of food aid to Sub-Saharan African countries experiencing drought problems. Türkiye’s active role in development cooperation is undoubtedly closely related to its institutionalization in development cooperation. The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA) was established in 1992 under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ensure the Turkic Republics’ economic development as independent nations following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Another critical turning point in the field of development cooperation in Türkiye is the political stability and economic development process that started in 2003 [9]. Thanks to the paradigm shift in Turkish foreign policy, Türkiye extend her foreign policy actions all around the World. Especially during the Cold War era, Türkiye’s foreign policy was limited to Western Bloc politics; thus, Türkiye could not have been effective as desired in the African region from that time on. But after 2003, there was an apparent breakthrough in Turkish foreign policy based on extension and dynamism. It was declared that 2005 would be “the Year of Africa” due to Türkiye’s dynamism,
which stimulated Türkiye’s expansion of the African continent [10]. After this announcement, Türkiye-Africa relations were gradually enhanced by state-level diplomatic ties and Türkiye’s soft power presence with state institutions in the region. In the central part of the article, we will expand and explain Türkiye’s soft power presence in Africa. Apart from that, the Covid-19 pandemic and providing humanitarian aid for combating the virus became essential to Türkiye’s foreign policy approach. During the Covid-19 pandemic, 47 countries were affected by the virus, there were 8,659,127 cumulative cases, and 172,512 deaths occurred in Africa [11].

**The objective of the study.** This paper aims to evaluate Türkiye-Africa relations to determine the impacts of Türkiye’s foreign aid and approach in Africa. By assessing the solutions and challenges of the relations and determinants of foreign aid provided by Türkiye, this paper discusses its implications for Türkiye and Africa.

**Main part.**

The relations between Türkiye and Africa are entrenched in history and religion from the Ottoman Empire legacy, which established substantial relations with different African countries in the 15th and 16th centuries. Though more popular among the North African countries and the Muslim population in the continent, the legacy of the Ottoman Empire and its success in the past appear to be revisited through Türkiye’s foreign aid policy. Countries in the Northern Africa and others like Somalia, Sudan, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Niger, and Chad who lived under the Ottoman Empire appear to be the highest recipient of foreign aid and humanitarian support from Türkiye in the modern age [12]. Likely to be facilitated by other reasons, it is impossible to acknowledge the historical linkage and the possible relationship between such historical association and Türkiye’s foreign aid approach in Africa in the 21st century. Türkiye’s foreign aid policy and corresponding actions worldwide are not disputed. Still, the pattern, strategy, and foreign aid preferences in Africa are gaining attention and are well documented by different scholars.

Kulaklikaya and Nurdun [13] observed that Türkiye’s foreign aid is motivated by political and strategic considerations concerning trade concerns with countries receiving Turkish foreign assistance. Political motivations make Türkiye a ‘political’ actor in Africa based on aid activities in Somalia [14]. When assessed, the food security crisis in Somalia in 2011, which prompted an immediate response from Türkiye, also increased Turkish involvement in the politics of Eastern African countries. What was initially a humanitarian response to the food crisis evolved into political and social dimensions [14]? According to Özerdem [15], Türkiye’s interests and foreign aid mission to Somalia are frequently questioned concerning whether it brings a lasting solution to the challenges experienced in the country or not. The case of Somalia is just one of several of Türkiye’s foreign aid to African countries that remains in doubt, not for its efficacy or difference it makes on the ground to those who benefit from the aid program, but for motives that drive the policy agenda.

Opening representative offices in every African nation is crucial for fostering Türkiye’s ties with the continent. In contrast to the 12 embassies that Türkiye had in
Africa in 2002, there are now 43 of them there by the year 2021. The number of African embassies in Ankara expanded from 10 at the beginning of 2008 to 37 due to African nations’ continued interest in Türkiye. Mutual high-level visits are crucial to upholding Türkiye’s foreign policy toward Africa. For instance, the President of the Republic of Türkiye, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, visited 28 African nations, namely; Algeria, Djibouti, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Morocco, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Republic of South Africa, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Egypt, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia. Thanks to those visits by President Erdoğan, Türkiye’s Africa policy gained momentum more than ever in the history of modern Türkiye. Of course, those mentioned high-level visits are pioneers for establishing the suitable and solid ground for building everlasting partnerships with the African states. TIKA is actively working in the region through one of Türkiye’s foreign aid and soft power instrument institutions, which is the subject of this study [16].

Apart from that, Türkiye’s expanding economic ties and rapidly rising trade numbers are two of the most evident signs of improving Türkiye-Africa relations. By 2020, Türkiye’s overall trade with the African continent will have grown from 5.4 billion dollars in 2003 to 25.3 billion dollars. From $1.35 billion in 2003 to $10 billion in 2020, Türkiye’s commerce with African nations increased significantly. Despite the pandemic conditions, maintaining a consistent commerce volume in 2020 is a significant accomplishment [17].

The measures Türkiye has undertaken on the African continent in recent years have attracted attention due to this goal, both domestically and internationally. Today Türkiye has 42 Embassies in more than 50 countries in the African region. Also, apart from the formal diplomatic missions, Türkiye supports her initiative in Africa with state and non-state actors. First and foremost, Turkish Airlines (THY), Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA), Anadolu Agency (AA), Yunus Emre Institute (YEE), Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency (AFAD), and Turkish Maarif Foundation (TMV) are acting in the region. Furthermore, Türkiye’s Foreign Economic Relations Board (DEIK), Independent Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association (MUSIAD), non-governmental organizations, and companies establish contact with the people of the continent [17].

Before shedding light on the state mentioned above institutions’ activities, explaining the concept of soft power is crucial. In 1990, Joseph S. Nye’s book “Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power” introduced the idea of soft power to the field of international relations [18]. More complex new sub-concepts have either begun to receive renewed attention in the literature or have been the subject of several investigations by academics like Joseph Nye and others that have followed this novel idea [19]. In the work mentioned above, Nye introduced the concept of “Soft Power,” which he defines as “the ability to achieve what you want by attracting it rather than using orders/force or persuading it somehow (such as providing money).” In other words, exporting a country’s positive image attracts
other countries to reach foreign policy goals [8]. In its broadest definition, soft power refers to the circumstance in which a state achieves its foreign policy objectives solely through the attraction effect on other nations, without any material, moral, indirect, or direct intervention. The essence of a country’s “Soft Power” potential, according to Nye, is its ability to attract people with its culture, political ideals, and policies. The soft power of a nation will expand or diminish depending on the legitimacy of its policies in the eyes of the general public because Nye asserted that “soft power is needed to create peace” and that “making peace is tougher than winning the war” [18].

The political and military crises of the early 1990s marked the end of the Cold War and the beginning of a new age to which the Cold War-era balance of power strategies was ill-equipped to adapt. Because state-centered strategy and bilateral agreements are no longer successful at preventing conflicts, as seen by the bloodshed experienced on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. In such a setting, Türkiye has established new institutions that will serve as the pinnacle of regional and global cooperation and the power-related aspects of its foreign policy. However, Türkiye’s sensible use of its “Soft Power” capability is the only means by which the new direction taken over its foreign policy can be realized [8].

According to Ibrahim Kalin, Spokesperson of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye, the traditional definition of foreign policy is no longer relevant. Because foreign policy and international relations now involve a broad range of actors, including businesspeople, non-governmental organizations, intellectuals, opinion leaders, journalists, think tanks, humanitarian aid, and international law, in addition to states and diplomats, according to Kalin, “national interest”-centered policies developed and implemented by states and diplomats no longer determine the framework of international relations. In addition, Kalin, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, does not alone construct the Republic of Türkiye’s foreign policy, which aspires to become a global power. Kalin implies that Türkiye’s foreign policy is also directly influenced by organizations like TIKA, Anadolu Agency, Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities, YEE, TRT, Turkish Red Crescent, and AFAD [20]. According to Kalin, “Soft Power” refers to a conception of foreign policy based on aspects like diplomacy, culture, discussion, collaboration, interdependence on one another’s economies, and historical accumulation [21].

But according to Kalin, Türkiye’s soft power is distinct from other nations’ structure and reach. He emphasized that Türkiye’s soft power potential reflects its rich historical and cultural heritage. He implies that Türkiye’s subtle power potential begins in the Balkans and extends into Central Asia and Africa, which originates from its inherited history and culture rather than its advantage in terms of technology or military might [22].

**Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA)**

From its founding until the conclusion of the Cold War, the Republic of Türkiye had only limited contact with the Turkic republics of the Soviet Union.
Türkiye made significant efforts by making drastic decisions to develop its bilateral ties with the aforementioned Turkic Republics after turning its attention to this region following the fall of the Soviet Union. With the vision of Turgut Ozal and the TIKA, established in 1992 under the leadership of Umut Ark, the first and maybe most significant of these steps was achieved. Türkiye’s relations with the mentioned Turkic Republics remained strained in the world order that the Soviet Union presided over, making the desired actions impossible. However, one of the crucial stages stated above was the founding of TIKA in the early 1990s, at the time of the Soviet Union’s collapse and the end of the bipolar international system. To advance relations between the Turkic Republics and Türkiye more quickly, TIKA, in particular, conducted significant research on collaborative projects, infrastructure, and technical support during its development [8].

It is feasible to divide TIKA’s actions since its founding in 1992 into two distinct periods, 1992-2002 and 2002-2013. The institution operated to provide technical assistance to the newly independent states in the former Soviet geography, namely the Caucasus and Central Asia, between 1992 and 2002, when TIKA was founded and can be considered in its infancy. During the ten years, that is, between 1992 and 2002, 2241 projects were completed. Between 2003 and 2011, TIKA signed roughly four times as numerous projects. Within the parameters of the 2011 research, the following nations utilized the most resources: Afghanistan is first with 20.61 percent, followed by Bosnia and Herzegovina with 6.76 percent, Palestine with 5.47 percent, and Lebanon with 3.89 percent [8].

The new discourse that governs Turkish foreign policy, known as TIKA in the form of humanitarian diplomacy, has drilled water wells and installed water pipelines to address the urgent need for clean water, not only for the local geography but also for the nations on the African continent, such as the crucial role it plays in the reconstruction of Afghanistan. TIKA’s projects and activities, which provide for meeting the basic needs, such as shelter and food, of countries that have not yet established diplomatic relations with Türkiye. The technical assistance and foreign aid supplied by the completed projects helped build cordial and positive ties between Türkiye and the nations providing these services. Because its main objective is to reach the heart of the historical and cultural depth in the countries where the Turkish language is spoken and revitalize it, it is an extension of an active and multidimensional foreign policy concept. By 2022, the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency Presidency will have 62 Program Coordination Offices spread across 60 nations, operating in 150 countries. The Republic of Türkiye has an active and principled foreign policy, and as a result, the number of nations we collaborate with grows daily [23]. TİKA’s main priorities in its activities in Africa:

- To ensure sustainable development in Africa,
- To help Türkiye share its experience, knowledge, and resources in line with the principle adopted to find “African solutions to Africa’s problems” to provide mutual benefit,
To accelerate Türkiye’s development assistance activities while also fulfilling its commitments to the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and

To improve the relations between Türkiye and Africa [24].

Determinants of Türkiye’s Foreign Aid in Africa

Authors have explored different determinants of Türkiye’s foreign aid in other parts of Africa. Zengin and Korkmaz [25] analyze the determinants of Türkiye’s foreign aid in Africa to identify that African behavior focuses more on nation-building activities where foreign policy tools can be conveyed. In Sub-Saharan Africa, for instance, the involvement of Türkiye only increased after the 2000s, which is noticed through the increase in Turkish financial commitment to the region. For example, Turkish foreign aid to Sub-Saharan African countries increased significantly from 38 million USD in 2010 to 782.7 million USD in 2013 [26]. It is reported that a more significant percentage of this foreign aid budget goes to economic and social development in recipient countries. Türkiye’s disbursement of development and aid funds since the start of the 2000s in Africa, especially in this region, and commitment therein is considered successful but not without raising suspicion and questions about motive [27]. The rapid increase in funding commitments and more active role in political, social, and economic activities in different African countries have motivated inquiries into Türkiye’s motive and increasing role of Turkish civil organizations, businesses, and NGOs on the African continent, especially in Sub-Saharan region. Türkiye’s tenacity in this region and entrenched involvement and approaches in otherwise problematic countries have helped differentiate Türkiye from more established donors [28].

While economic potential and other benefits are often identified by authors who examine Türkiye’s foreign aid policy and plan, international relations, aid institutionalization, regional affinity, and religious factors are also strong determinants of Türkiye’s foreign aid agenda. When further assessed beyond face value, Turhan [29] identified that Türkiye’s foreign aid to Sub-Saharan Africa is one with moderate importance to countries collaborating with Turkish authorities. It is seen that continued ties with Türkiye are sustained through the assured context of humanitarian aid, which promotes Türkiye as the principal actor in the region [26]. While Türkiye’s plan in this region remains debatable, the political and economic relations promoted through foreign policy are not different from other established donors in Africa. However, Türkiye’s focus, commitment, and ability to work with various countries in the Sub-Saharan region, irrespective of their differences, differentiate Türkiye from other established donors. Therefore, the core determinants of Türkiye’s foreign aid in Africa, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, range from humanitarian to economic, social, political, and development. The impacts of these determinants and complementary approaches may be associated with the progress made by Türkiye in this region thus far.

Impacts of Foreign Aid Determinants and Approaches
Türkiye’s foreign aid approach in this region is seen to attribute relevance to non-state actors, understanding that NGOs, business, educational institutions, and trade associations are critical in a country’s political, economic, and cultural interests in the Sub-Saharan African region [26]. The commitment of Türkiye to value common language more than other donor countries do is seen to differentiate Türkiye’s foreign aid agenda in the Sub-Saharan African region [25]. The immediate goal of mediating in crisis to provide humanitarian assistance in countries in this African region is overtly conveyed [25]. However, Mehmetcik and Pekel [30] identified a multi-track approach where there are distinct interests and core motivations for Türkiye.

Though understandable to examine Türkiye’s motive and plan, the positive impacts or benefits of the aid agenda are well-acknowledged in Africa, perhaps more readily than contributions from the West. Africa has increasingly recognized Türkiye’s foreign aid policy, and increasing interests can also contribute to the success of social and economic development in countries benefiting from the aid. The benefit of financial gains for both sides cannot be denied because, through the aid, trade volume between Türkiye and Africa increases with the potential to generate high investment, which subsequently influences the employment rate. Strong political and economic ties are significant for trade, stability, and pathway for diversifying energy resources in Türkiye and Africa.

According to Ozkan [31], improving the volume of trade and export markets is significant for the economy in Türkiye. For example, through the aid agenda and implementation of humanitarian development of Türkiye to African countries, Turkish NGOs and business organizations can also benefit and expand their organizational goals as critical actors in the action plan for Türkiye [29]. As such, Türkiye’s foreign aid is crucial to generating the international recognition and image sought by Türkiye. More importantly, it generates a more favorable mechanism for Turkish businesses to establish new markets and increase profit while accelerating foreign aid with its investment [26]. The ability to sustain such an economic agenda through foreign aid may further consolidate the image of all parties involved, especially Türkiye’s emerging power that is more focused on humanity and nation-building [32]. When explored through the economic and political lens, it is easier to conceive Türkiye as the only beneficiary of Türkiye-Africa relations. It is often overlooked that donors like Türkiye are primarily in countries with economic, political, social, and other problems.

Somalia is considered a failed state, though it remained functional in some capacities [33]. With a history of continued violence, instability, and crises, Somalia has become increasingly less attractive for most donor countries, and intervention remains challenging even by well-known Western powers. Türkiye’s foreign aid is evident through hospital renovations, rebuilding efforts, offers of scholarships, and hosting international conferences [12]. However, the involvement of Türkiye in Somalia has seen Türkiye now controlling and managing the country’s most lucrative
assets, such as the airport and the seaport. The direct contributions to social good through the means mentioned above project Türkiye’s foreign aid as more humanitarian than economic. The array of soft power approaches used by Türkiye in Somalia, including diplomatic, direct, and engagement tactics, have helped fuel the success recorded thus far in a country otherwise known as a failed functional state. Establishing a direct flight from the capital city of Somalia to Istanbul on Turkish Airlines may be viewed by Somalis as a more genuine interest of Türkiye in the country’s economic development than other world powers and established donors. Türkiye’s businesses have undoubtedly benefitted from direct flights to the government, reaping its financial and lucrative contracts. Such an act also signals the shift of Türkiye’s foreign aid agenda from humanitarian to economic.

According to Cannon [32], Türkiye’s hybrid approach to assuage rather than solve the protracted problems in Somalia has created a level of trust between both parties to engage in profit and assistance-driven investment coordinated investments based on identified needs in Somalia. Thus, whether considered as an array of soft power, commitment to value local language, or hybrid or humanitarian approaches, the impact of Türkiye’s foreign aid agenda in Africa, especially in Sub-Saharan African countries where most established donors have failed, is evident in the social and economic developments that have occurred in the region in recent years. However, the history of development and humanitarian aid is not without its challenges. Though, in the case of Somalia, there are more positives than negatives based on documented accounts from both parties, Andrews [34] explains that foreign aid and implementation of any development activities by foreign actors are not without their challenges in Africa.

**Solutions from Challenges**

Türkiye’s foreign aid shift from humanitarian to prioritizing economic and political dimensions might be considered rational after some time. It could be argued that such change is inevitable if Türkiye were to sustain its humanitarian investments and not end up like other established donors in Africa. Considering the history of political instability, unrest, and security challenges in the African continent, such a record indicates that threats through the means mentioned above can threaten the country’s sustainability and adversely impact progress made through humanitarian development [32]. The shift from humanitarian aid to accommodate security and political concerns is noted yet acknowledged as instrumental to the noticeable improvements in Somalia over the past few years [35]. An inherent risk factor often frustrates other donors and foreign powers who have operated in this region before Türkiye. Yet, Türkiye, through its foreign aid agenda focused on capacity building and self-development collaborative projects, Türkiye has managed to find its niche [32].

Türkiye’s efforts brought immediate stability to relieve the situation in Somalia; it further located Türkiye as a political actor in Africa, which is more complex and multifaceted in the long term. Challenges associated with sustaining aid programs led to development intervention in Somalia [35]. As peculiar to most
African countries, different social, political, economic, and environmental factors interact, leading to the onset of any crisis [15]. As a result, immediate response to any situation is often ineffective without long-term commitment to stabilize and ensure that aid missions and foreign aid policies are considered successful by the donor country. Perhaps Türkiye has found herself in similar complex and multifaceted situations in which other donors such as the United States of America (USA), the United Kingdom (UK), and other Western powers.

Conclusions. Increased activities of Türkiye in Africa, especially in the Sub-Saharan region, may be viewed through different lenses. The approach taken in this paper to evaluate the major determinants, benefits, and challenges has shown that any donor country’s aid provision to Africa would always be viewed with mixed feelings. Though this finding implies that all donations and foreign aid agenda are embedded with questionable motives, aid is no doubt needed, as seen in a country like Somalia. This paper is not to endorse Türkiye’s foreign aid agenda in Africa, especially in the region mentioned in this paper; it is to contribute to discussing the dimensions of foreign aid in Africa. The theoretical implication also emerged from this paper by reviewing different approaches adopted by Türkiye in certain African regions. Whether intentional, orchestrated or inadvertently informed by a country of interest, it is undoubtedly one that has led to the progress Türkiye has made in an otherwise failed country. Therefore, future studies would benefit from this paper by exploring theoretical explanations for the determinants of Türkiye’s foreign aid in other African regions and continents to which Türkiye is committed. While this paper has contributed to knowledge by advancing discussions on Türkiye’s foreign aid behavior and approaches, it also raises questions about how Türkiye conducts risk management and establishes risk thresholds in countries of interest. As identified by Cannon [32], the economic rationale for risk among Turkish businesses is considerably high compared to the difficulties and challenging environment they are launched into in recipient countries. Though acknowledged as sensible in the actions taken in Somalia, they are nonetheless risky in every sense of safety and security for Türkiye and the businesses, NGOs, and civil organizations investing and operating in the country. In practice, African countries depend on donor countries like Türkiye, especially where host countries lead no transition plan or capacity and nation-building projects.

As the President of the Republic of Türkiye, H. E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan said, “In Africa, we do not leave any friend whose door has not been knocked, any heart whose wound has not been healed, any country we have not collaborated” [24], Türkiye’s soft power is an extension of Türkiye’s helping hand toward to Africa. As mentioned above, Türkiye is actively developing foreign policy steps in the African region through TIKKA and related state institutions. As those institutions grow in the region, Türkiye’s positive influence and effectiveness in Africa also grow.
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