



The flipside of the wealthy and the curse is humanitarian donations

BY FU'AD HAJI ABDI WELI, 5 magazine

Since Somalia has struggled with food insecurity throughout the course of the last several decades, a common issue that arises is: who is to blame for the persistent pains of hunger that have been experienced by the vast majority of Somalia's citizens?

According to the opinions of some experts, the lack of food security in Somalia may be traced back to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). These organizations are in the hot seat for advocating laws that limit the growth of farms, turning Somali farmers into beggars, even though they have a budget that comes from the international community that is in the multi-million dollar range.

Ironically, the World Food Programme (WFP), which is not only the food-assistance

body of the United Nations but also the world's largest humanitarian organization addressing hunger and promoting food security, has been in Somalia for a very long time, claiming to improve food security in Somalia but with zero achievements. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has also been there. On the other hand, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations is a specialized body that is in charge of leading worldwide efforts to end hunger.

According to Somali academics working in the agricultural sector, the WFP and FAO are putting restrictions on the country's agricultural productivity. Farmers who found the activities of certain WFP and FAO employees to be annoying shared these thoughts and said that the two organizations function as what the farmers refer to as "the ministry of agriculture in Somalia."

In addition to gifts of food in general, the

groups are making life difficult for farmers by introducing their low-priced goods and products into the market. When it comes to preventing farmers from cultivating crops, one strategy that seems to be popular with the WFP and FAO is to time their food assistance disbursements to coincide with the harvest season of the nation. This is a situation that, according to the opinions of several experts, is designed to discourage farmers from cultivating crops and lowers the value of the products they do cultivate.

Somalia's Special Envoy for Drought Response Abdirahman Abdishakur said that over the past three years, close to \$7 billion was spent on humanitarian responses in the country. "If half of it was invested into resilience, we wouldn't be where we are today," Abdishakur said, citing research which found that for every \$1 spent on resilience, up to \$7 can be saved on losses for disaster-affected communities. "Once



people lose their animals then they have no reason to stay in the rural areas. If their animals are alive, then they have a reason to stay behind and keep fighting,” he said.

The industry of humanitarian aid is comparable to the industry of philanthropic giving by the world’s wealthiest men. If you heard that someone was giving away one billion dollars to charity, what would you think? If you met them, you’d probably get the impression that they’re the kindest person on the face of the planet. However, giving money to charity from the ultra-wealthy is not as simple as it seems. Because of these incredibly wealthy billionaires, the act of giving to charity has been corrupted and transformed into something else entirely. Because they view giving away their wealth as an investment and a means of making more money, we refer to this phenomenon as “the reverse aid.”

Mark Zuckerberg said in 2014 that he intended to give away \$1 billion worth of his enormous enterprise to charitable causes. Because of his generous contributions, people all around the globe were talking about him and heaping admiration on him. Even going so far as to name him the planet’s finest human being, the *Business Insider* praised him highly. This was just one example of the media going crazy after his declaration and swooning all over him.

However, when you look beyond the news attention and the appearance of social duty, you can’t help but question if this isn’t an attempt to soothe his critics. One can’t help but wonder if this isn’t an attempt to placate his critics. When it comes to the never-ending monetization of its customers’ lack of privacy, the corporation Facebook has been experiencing major challenges. These challenges have been compounded by recent events. It would seem that these acts of kindness should be sufficient to mute the critical voice that exists in the brain of any person.

It is important to follow up on these remarkable contributions to charitable organizations.

Donating to charitable organizations is the most common strategy used by the

wealthy to avoid paying taxes. In 2014, Nicholas Woodman, who is both the creator of GoPro and its chief executive officer, informed to the world that he would be contributing a donation of almost half a billion dollars’ worth of GoPro stock to the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, an entity with its headquarters in Mountain View, California, that would be responsible for managing the assets of the newly established Jill and Nicholas Woodman Foundation. At the time that the news was made, the value of GoPro was close to 3 billion dollars.

The year 2018 has come and gone, and there is no record of the foundation whatsoever; they do not have a website, nor do they indicate any areas of interest. It would seem that there is just one recipient of the foundation’s generosity, a primary school in California. There is also no sign of the five hundred million dollars, which is not shocking given the circumstances.

GoPro was looking at a massive tax burden in 2014, but they were able to instantly clear it out by making a donation to the Silicon Valley Community foundation. Not only did Mr. Woodman save himself from owing the government millions of dollars in taxes, but he also likely reduced his individual tax liability by at least fifty percent for future years. The greatest part was that he also got favorable media attention for his firm, and if bad publicity is still good press, then think of what good free positive press can do

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Donor-advised funds make it possible for wealthy individuals to contribute their assets to charitable organizations without giving up ownership of those assets. These assets may include cash, corporate shares, real estate, crypto currencies, or works of art. This allows the donors to be relieved of the burden of paying taxes as soon as they give their assets to the sponsoring institutions. On the other hand, the sponsoring institutions may have to wait a significant amount of time for the funds, and in some instances, they may never receive the funds at all.

Critics assert that donor-advised funds have given rise to the most problematic kind of charity practiced in the modern world. The wealthy are able to benefit in several ways from philanthropy, whereas others who do not have millions stashed away in the bank are subject to a great deal of uncertainty. It has granted the wealthy the privilege of privacy by relieving them of the need to reveal the manner in which and the location of any charitable contributions they make.

They are not subject to the scrutiny of the general public and are allowed to donate money to whatever cause they like, regardless of whether or not it is political. They have been able to conceal their political actions as a result of this advantage, which is becoming much more straightforward now that President Trump is in control.

Matthew Bishop and Michael Green, writers of the book ‘the philanthrocapitalism,’ explore the concept of philanthrocapitalism, which is the view that wealthy people have the ability to rescue the world. It would seem that there are certain significant issues in the world that can only be resolved and made right by wealthy people. This raises the issue of whether or not we really need the very wealthy to preserve the planet. The reality of the situation with regard to these philanthropic contributions made by the wealthy is that very little of it really goes toward helping to make the world a better place.

