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Aid for Elites: Building Partner Nations and Ending Poverty through Human Capital

By Mark Moyer



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Current foreign aid programs are failing because they are based upon flawed assumptions about how countries develop. They attempt to achieve development without first achieving good governance and security, which are essential prerequisites for sustainable development. In focusing on the poorer members of society, they neglect the elites upon whose leadership the quality of governance and security depends. By downplaying the relevance of cultural factors to development, they avoid altering cultural characteristics that account for most of the weaknesses of elites in poor nations. Drawing on a wealth of examples from around the world, the author shows that foreign aid can be made much more effective by focusing it on human capital development. Training, education, and other forms of assistance can confer both skills and cultural attributes on current and future leaders, especially those responsible for security and governance.



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Editorial Review

Review

"Mark Moyar has written a compelling critique of the prevailing practices and underlying logic of the development community and its approach to foreign aid. He draws upon an impressive intellectual lineage in his broader arguments about the importance of culture and civilization. He is especially critical of the Annales School of Braudel and its adherents. In doing so, Moyar argues that the predominant emphasis on development itself, including policies and infrastructure, is largely misplaced and that the building of human capital, including training of elites, effective governance, and the provision of a stable security environment, constitutes an essential sine qua non for progress in the developing world."

Robert J. Lieber, Georgetown University

"Mark Moyar's brilliantly argued and thoroughly researched new book is a fine contribution to the debate over more effective development theory and practice. He writes as a pro-aid conservative unfettered by the heavy ideological baggage of the egalitarian left which has for too long dominated (and distorted) the debate on aid reform. Aid for Elites should be added to the reading list of all development professionals."

Andrew S. Natsios, George H. W. Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A & M University

About the Author

Mark Moyar is the author of numerous books and articles on national security and capacity building, including *Triumph Forsaken: The Vietnam War, 1954-1965* and *A Question of Command:*

Counterinsurgency from the Civil War to Iraq. He has been a professor at the US Marine Corps University, where he held the Kim T. Adamson Chair of Insurgency and Terrorism, and, most recently, at the Joint Special Operations University. A frequent visitor to foreign conflict zones, he has served as a consultant to the senior leadership of several US military commands.

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