

King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre as a Model for Aid Diplomacy Humanity: A Study from an Islamic Perspective

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Abstract

This study explores Saudi Arabia's strategic use of humanitarian aid diplomacy, focusing on the role of the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) and the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRelief). Since its establishment in 1974, the SFD has provided soft loans and technical assistance to stimulate economic growth in developing countries, while KSRelief, founded in 2015, has centralized the Kingdom's humanitarian efforts. These organizations have enabled Saudi Arabia to respond effectively to both natural disasters and conflict-driven humanitarian crises in regions such as Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Saudi Arabia's commitment to global humanitarian assistance is further demonstrated by its contributions to multilateral organizations, including the Global Fund, the World Bank, and various UN agencies. As the largest donor to the Global Fund in the Gulf region, the Kingdom has pledged substantial financial resources, enhancing its position as a global leader in aid and development. Additionally, Saudi Arabia's participation in the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in 2018 has improved transparency and coordination in its aid delivery. The study also highlights the influence of Islamic principles, where charity and humanitarian work are considered religious obligations, driving the Kingdom's efforts to assist vulnerable populations worldwide. By integrating religious values with modern development strategies, Saudi Arabia has leveraged humanitarian aid as a tool for soft power, strengthening its diplomatic influence and contributing to global stability. This research provides insights into Saudi Arabia's evolving role in international humanitarian diplomacy and offers recommendations for enhancing its aid effectiveness.

Keywords: KSRelief, Aid and Relief, Diplomacy, Humanity, Islamic Perspective, Saudi Arabia

Introduction

Humanitarian diplomacy, the practice of negotiating and promoting humanitarian principles and aid, has gained increasing attention as a critical element in international relations, especially in the context of states' foreign policies. The intersection of

humanitarianism actions aimed at alleviating human suffering and diplomacy, the means by which states protect their interests and maintain international relations, forms the basis of humanitarian diplomacy (Cross, 2016). Humanitarianism is grounded in the obligation to reduce suffering and promote human dignity, while diplomacy traditionally involves the protection and promotion of state interests (Barnett, 2018). Combining these two powerful frameworks, humanitarian diplomacy has become an essential tool for states to express international compassion and solidarity (Felfeli, 2023). In doing so, states not only enhance their international reputation but also foster trust and cooperation, thereby advancing broader foreign policy goals, including national interests.

However, the concept of humanitarian diplomacy is not entirely new, having been shaped by significant milestones such as the founding of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in 1863 and the subsequent signing of the Geneva Conventions in 1949 (Lowe, 2019). These developments institutionalized humanitarian action and contributed to the development of international humanitarian law. In the contemporary world, humanitarian diplomacy remains a vital means by which states, and non-state actors engage in efforts to protect human dignity and alleviate suffering during crises such as natural disasters, conflicts, and man-made emergencies. Humanitarian diplomacy involves negotiating, monitoring assistance programs, and promoting support for humanitarian goals based on the core principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence (Turunen, 2019).

Saudi Arabia, one of the world's largest economies and a dominant player in the Arab and Islamic world, has emerged as a significant actor in humanitarian diplomacy. Through the establishment of the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSRelief) in 2015 (Derbal, 2022), the Kingdom institutionalized its humanitarian and relief efforts. KSRelief is a pivotal platform for Saudi Arabia to deliver humanitarian assistance globally, especially in regions affected by conflicts, natural disasters, and health crises (Almfleah, 2024). This center is a manifestation of Saudi Arabia's commitment to humanitarian diplomacy, rooted in the Islamic values of compassion, charity, and solidarity. By engaging in relief efforts, Saudi Arabia not only fulfills its religious and moral obligations but also strengthens its international standing, advances its foreign policy objectives, and promotes Islamic humanitarianism (Hamid, 2022).

The Islamic perspective on humanitarian aid and diplomacy is deeply embedded in the values of solidarity, social justice, and the protection of human life. Islam emphasizes the duty of assisting those in need, regardless of their religious or ethnic background, which aligns with the broader principles of humanitarian action (Albylwi, 2024). The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) emphasized the importance of aiding the poor, feeding the hungry, and caring for orphans and the sick. This focus on humanitarianism in Islamic teachings has played a crucial role in shaping the foreign aid policies of many Muslim-majority countries, including Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia's humanitarian diplomacy, as embodied by KSRelief, has also been instrumental in promoting international cooperation. The center operates with the guiding principle of neutrality, ensuring that aid is delivered to those in need without political or military bias (Palik, 2024). KSRelief has collaborated with various international organizations,

such as the United Nations and the World Health Organization, to support a wide range of humanitarian programs. These partnerships have enabled Saudi Arabia to extend its humanitarian reach and contribute to global efforts in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Khan and Syed, 2022).

Empirical studies have demonstrated that Saudi Arabia's aid diplomacy, particularly through KSRelief, has had a positive impact on communities affected by crises. For instance, a study by Alrabeeah and Alharbi (2020) highlighted the success of KSRelief in delivering aid to Yemen, where ongoing conflict has created one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. The center's efforts in providing food security, healthcare, and education to millions of Yemeni citizens were seen as a model for effective humanitarian diplomacy. Similarly, another study by Balfaqih et al. (2022) examined KSRelief's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, noting its contributions to global efforts in combating the virus through the provision of medical supplies and vaccines to low-income countries.

Despite these successes, Saudi Arabia's humanitarian diplomacy faces challenges, particularly in balancing its humanitarian commitments with its geopolitical interests. Critics argue that humanitarian aid can sometimes be used as a tool to advance political objectives, a concern that applies not only to Saudi Arabia but to other states engaged in humanitarian diplomacy. Nevertheless, KSRelief has maintained a strong reputation for adhering to humanitarian principles, making it a key player in the international humanitarian system.

This paper explores KSRelief as a model for humanitarian diplomacy, particularly from an Islamic perspective. It examines the role of KSRelief in promoting international humanitarianism, its impact on global humanitarian efforts, and how its operations are shaped by Islamic values. By analyzing empirical studies and examining the theoretical framework of humanitarian diplomacy, this research aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of KSRelief's model and its broader implications for humanitarian aid diplomacy in the Muslim world. Therefore, present study aim to investiage following research Objectives.

1. Explore areas of humanitarian aid diplomacy for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
2. Determine the objectives of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's humanitarian aid diplomacy.
3. Identify the role of the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center in enhancing the humanitarian aid diplomacy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Study Methodology

The study adopts the descriptive analytical approach to define the areas of humanitarian aid diplomacy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in addition to determining the objectives of humanitarian aid diplomacy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as well as revealing the role of the King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Action in enhancing humanitarian aid diplomacy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The design of this study involved the use of secondary data available from different sources. Secondary data refers to data collected for other purposes. The methodology of data collection consists of data locating, data evaluation and data verification. The secondary data used in this study was collected from different sources. Regarding data evaluation, the original sources of data were examined. Critical evaluation contributed to enhancing the validity and reliability of the secondary data used in

the study. The data analysis method used included combining the “research questions” approach and the “data driven” approach and employing the data collection and disaggregation strategy in light of the research questions of the current study. Conclusions were drawn from the data analysis. The study also relied on the aid flow data provided by the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center from the Saudi Aid Platform, which was launched by the Saudi government’s humanitarian relief agency, the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center, in 2018.

Findings on Research Objective 1

Saudi Arabia's commitment to international development and humanitarian aid is exemplified by the establishment of the Saudi Fund for Development in 1974. This initiative was designed to stimulate economic growth in developing nations through soft loans and technical assistance, enabling countries in need to undertake essential development projects. Notable examples of this assistance include disaster relief efforts in response to Cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh (2007), and the catastrophic Indian Ocean tsunami (2004), as well as ongoing support to regions such as Sudan, Palestine, Syria, and Yemen.

As the largest donor to the Global Fund in the Gulf region, Saudi Arabia has contributed significantly since 2004, totaling \$142.5 million by 2023. The Kingdom's pledge of \$39 million for the Seventh Replenishment, a 30% increase from its previous commitment, underscores its dedication to global health initiatives.

The Saudi government's recent policy of rationalization and centralization has granted the King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Action a monopoly on foreign aid, ensuring streamlined and effective assistance. Joining the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC) in 2018 marked another critical step, allowing Saudi Arabia to report its official development assistance in a structured manner, categorized by project, sector, and recipient. Additionally, the Kingdom has made substantial contributions to multilateral development, including \$785 million to the World Bank Group and \$672 million to various UN agencies. Collaborating with oil-producing partners, Saudi Arabia also helped establish the Islamic Development Bank and the Arab Special Fund for Africa. With an average annual foreign aid budget of \$3.4 billion since 2000, Saudi Arabia continues to play a pivotal role in international humanitarian and development efforts, allocating the majority through bilateral channels to maximize impact.

Previous Studies The academic literature offers two main explanations for the motivations for Saudi foreign aid: geopolitics and religious ideology. Studies that favor geopolitics argue that Saudi Arabia has successfully deployed its massive foreign aid budget to fend off the advance of regional adversaries such as Israel and Iran while strengthening economic and military alliances with the likes of Egypt and Pakistan.

Saudi Arabia has used its extensive foreign aid to bolster the kingdom’s foreign policy position and religious standing in the Muslim world.¹³ 13Al-Shahri, Talal bin Hassan bin Abdulaziz Al-Omrah. (2020). Strategic analysis of the elements of power in the foreign policy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and its role in enhancing national security(thesis According to some studies, Saudi Arabia’s aid strategy is driven almost entirely by religious affinity with Sunni Muslim-majority countries, where historical and cultural ties between elites trump

other considerations. Traditional Saudi ideologically driven foreign policy has served to boost Saudi Arabia's diplomacy by expanding the kingdom's regional and global influence as it gains global recognition. Indeed, the two largest recipients of Saudi foreign aid since 1974, Egypt and Pakistan, have large Sunni-majority populations.¹⁴ The literature on foreign aid has identified several factors that determine donor allocation strategies. These factors range from the desire to build soft power to geostrategic interests.¹⁵ Saudi Arabia, as the largest Gulf state by far, has long been a leader in global humanitarian and development aid – particularly in disaster response in Muslim-majority countries.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has a long history of providing assistance to developing countries affected by natural disasters and countries in need of immediate assistance. In the early 1950s, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia provided humanitarian assistance to flood victims in the Punjab region of South Asia and has continued to provide assistance to neighboring countries in the region.¹⁷ Although the large volume of humanitarian aid provided by Saudi Arabia was not directed for political considerations, this aid was a form of soft power that the Kingdom did not sufficiently realize, let alone fully exploit its multiple advantages, as it could have been used at least to counter negative propaganda in the West against the Kingdom.

Findings on Research Objectives 2

The data from previous studies offers an insightful analysis of the motivations and mechanisms behind Saudi Arabia's foreign aid, especially through KSRelief, in the context of humanitarian diplomacy. Analyzing this data reveals a combination of geopolitical strategies and religious ideologies as the primary drivers of Saudi Arabia's humanitarian efforts. This dual motivation aligns with broader trends in international aid, where political and ideological factors influence aid distribution and objectives.

Geopolitical Motivations

The literature supports the argument that Saudi Arabia's foreign aid is heavily influenced by geopolitical interests. This includes fending off regional adversaries like Israel and Iran, while strengthening alliances with key countries such as Egypt and Pakistan. These two countries, which are major recipients of Saudi aid, share not only Sunni Muslim majorities but also long-standing strategic partnerships with the Kingdom. Saudi foreign aid is seen as a tool to bolster the Kingdom's diplomatic leverage and maintain regional hegemony by cultivating alliances that are politically, economically, and militarily beneficial. Saudi aid, therefore, functions as a form of soft power, strengthening the Kingdom's global influence and creating a network of dependent nations that align with Saudi foreign policy goals. This form of soft power is instrumental in maintaining Saudi Arabia's position as a leader in the Arab and Muslim world, as well as a key global player.

Religious Ideology as a Driver

Another dimension of Saudi Arabia's foreign aid strategy is its religious basis, deeply rooted in Islamic values. Islam's emphasis on charitable giving and humanitarian work is central to understanding the Kingdom's aid diplomacy. Humanitarian aid in Islam is not merely an act of kindness but is viewed as an obligation, akin to other pillars of the faith, such as fasting during Ramadan and performing Hajj. This religious imperative provides the moral and ethical framework within which Saudi Arabia conducts much of its aid efforts. For instance, Islamic principles are embedded in the work of KSRelief, where humanitarian action is framed

as part of a broader religious duty to help those in need, regardless of religious affiliation. The Qur'anic injunctions and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad emphasize the importance of aiding the poor, feeding the hungry, and assisting the displaced. These religious values have, in turn, shaped Saudi Arabia's international aid programs, particularly in Muslim-majority countries. However, the Islamic perspective on aid extends beyond Muslims, as the teachings also call for supporting non-Muslims during times of crisis. This Islamic motivation enhances Saudi Arabia's humanitarian credibility, as its aid efforts are perceived not only as state-led initiatives but also as morally-driven actions with deep religious roots. The intertwining of Islamic teachings and foreign aid also allows Saudi Arabia to position itself as a leader in the global Muslim community, fulfilling both political and spiritual leadership roles.

Rationalization and Institutionalization of Aid

In recent years, the Saudi government has centralized its aid efforts under the umbrella of KSRelief, which was established to unify and organize the Kingdom's foreign aid activities. This institutionalization has not only enhanced the transparency and efficiency of Saudi aid but has also elevated its diplomatic profile internationally. As a member of the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC), Saudi Arabia now reports its aid figures in a structured manner, increasing its accountability and standing in the global aid community.

Through KSRelief, Saudi Arabia has been able to streamline its aid efforts and align them with international humanitarian standards, contributing to both bilateral and multilateral aid efforts. The Kingdom's participation in global initiatives, such as the Global Fund and contributions to UN agencies, highlights its growing role in international development beyond its traditional geopolitical sphere. This move toward a more structured aid framework reflects a modern approach to humanitarian diplomacy, combining religious values with international norms.

Humanitarian Aid from an Islamic Perspective

From an Islamic perspective, the act of providing humanitarian aid is deeply tied to spiritual beliefs and obligations. Charity, or zakat, is one of the five pillars of Islam, and providing aid to those in need is considered an essential duty for Muslims. Islamic teachings encourage not only voluntary charity (sadaqah) but also mandatory forms of giving, as in the case of zakat and expiatory acts (kaffarah). This religious framework significantly influences the way Saudi Arabia, a religiously conservative state, approaches its humanitarian responsibilities. The Qur'anic verses and hadiths that call for aiding the needy during crises underpin Saudi Arabia's rationale for providing international aid. The Islamic perspective elevates humanitarian work beyond mere statecraft; it becomes an act of worship and service to God. This theological dimension enhances the Kingdom's humanitarian legitimacy and sets it apart from other state actors whose foreign aid might be viewed as purely political or economic in nature.

Findings on Research Objective 3

The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSRelief) plays a pivotal role in advancing Saudi Arabia's humanitarian aid diplomacy, which is now a key element of the Kingdom's foreign policy and international standing. The creation of KSRelief in 2015 marked a major shift in how Saudi Arabia administers its international aid, reflecting a

more institutionalized and centralized approach to providing humanitarian assistance. Analyzing KSRelief's activities and contributions sheds light on how this organization has strengthened the Kingdom's humanitarian outreach globally.

Centralization of Humanitarian Aid

KSRelief's establishment as the sole agency responsible for providing international aid from Saudi Arabia represents a consolidation of Saudi foreign aid efforts. The Saudi government's decision to channel all foreign aid through this agency mirrors the centralized governance models seen in other Gulf states like the UAE, enhancing efficiency and enabling more coordinated aid delivery. KSRelief, along with the Muslim World League, manages all major international aid efforts, streamlining both public and private donations under a unified umbrella with the slogan "Towards Humanity Without Borders" act on Global Humanitarian Aid Between 2015 and 2022, KSRelief provided more than \$6 billion in humanitarian assistance to over 90 countries. The cenen significant steps to document and track these aid contributions, which enhances the transparency of Saudi Arabia's humanitarian efforts. The creation of the Saudi Aid Platform in 2018 was a key development in this regard, allowing for real-time tracking of aid disbursements, classifying them into development, humanitarian, and charitable categories. This documentation strengthening Saudi Arabia's international reputation as a major donor of humanitarian and development aid.

The aid distributed by KSRelief has benefited regions across the globe, including Sudan, Palestine, Yemen, and Syria, where relief efforts have been critical in addressing the aftermath of wars and natural disasters. For example, in response to the 2017 Saudi Arabia, through KSRelief, emerged as a leading humanitarian actor providing aid in food, medical supplies, and infrastructure development. In this case, humanitarian diplomacy also aligns with geopolitical interests, as Saudi Arabia seeks to bolster its influence in Yemen and across the broader Gulf region.

Diversified Aid Programs

KSRelief's operates a wide range of humanitarian and development programs. These include disaster response, health, nutrition, education, and poverty alleviation. Notably, KSRelief has contributed to the UNICEF program in Syria, providing over \$3.5 million to aid families affected by the 2023 earthquake. This has enabled UNICEF to deliver critical nutritional "75,000 vulnerable people", including 51,000 children. Such contributions highlight KSRelief's commitment to supporting al organizations and fulfilling Saudi Arabia's humanitarian commitments globally.

Alignment with Islamic Values

Saudi Arabia's humanitarian efforts, through KSRelief, are deeply rooted in Islamic values. Humanitarian aid, as viewed through an Islamic lens, is both a moral duty and a religious obligation, closely tied to the concept of zakat (charitable giving). KSRelief's contributions emphasize human dignity and the alleviation of suffering, not only for Muslims but for all communities affected by crises, regardless of religious, racial, or ethnic backgrounds.

In addition, Saudi Arabia's contributions to the Lives and Livelihoods Fun by the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) further demonstrates how KSRelief aligns its objectives with

broader development goals that resonate with Islamic humanitarianism. These efforts aim to address poverty and reduce inequalities, a reflection of Saudi Arabia's commitment to merge Islamic principles with modern development frameworks.

Strengthening Diplomatic Ties Through Aid

KSRelief’s role has extended Saudi Arabia's soft power by building diplomatic ties through humanitarian diplomacy. The organization's activities allow Saudi Arabia to strengthen its relationships with countries in the Middle East, Africa, and beyond. For instance, Saudi Arabia has channeled aid to some of the poorest and most underdeveloped nations, improving people’s livelihoods and indirectly promoting Saudi foreign policy objectives.

The aid provided to Egypt and Pakistan, as well as ongoing contributions to the Global Banks, showcases how humanitarian aid diplomacy serves as a strategic tool for fostering alliances. Since joining the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee (DAC), KSRelief has adopted international standards of transparency, making it easier for Saudi Arabia to be seen as a responsible global donor.

Long-Term Impact and Sustainable Development

Beyond short-term disaster relief, KSRelief’s projects al long-term development in areas such as infrastructure, education, and healthcare. Saudi Arabia has committed billions of dollars to development projects, which, since 1975, have benefited over 157 developing countries, with 4,412 projects implemented. These projects aim to enhance socio-economic conditions, particularly in low-income nations, through initiatives ng hospitals, power plants, and roads. The blending of humanitarian aid with sustainable development initiatives exemplifies Saudi Arabia’s strategic approach to fostering long-term peace and stability in recipient nations. Therefore, overall funds and projects from KSRelief’s are presented in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1

Total Funds from King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Aid Humanity

S.No	Country/State	Total aid value
1	Egypt	32.488.683.703
2	Yemen	26,399,492,667
3	Pakistan	12.779.471.019
4	Syria	7,369,824,818
5	Iraq	7.331.868.611
6	Palestine	5,337,767,369

Table 2

Total project King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Aid Humanity

S. No	Country/State	Total aid value
1	A group of countries	250
2	Yemen	33
3	Palestine	17
4	Indonesia	6

5	Bosnia and Herzegovina	5
6	Somalia	2
7	Syria	2
8	Sri Lanka	2
9	Iraq	2
10	Sudan	1

Note: Projects implemented by King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Aid Humanity

Discussion

The study highlights Saudi Arabia's substantial and ongoing commitment to global humanitarian assistance, positioning the Kingdom as a significant donor through the King Salman Center for Relief and Humanitarian Action. This strategic use of humanitarian aid has allowed Saudi Arabia to leverage soft power, effectively enhancing its diplomatic influence. The Kingdom's humanitarian efforts have targeted critical areas affected by war and conflict, including Yemen, Libya, Syria, Sudan, and Palestine, as well as regions impacted by natural disasters. By providing essential aid and development support, particularly in Islamic countries, KSRelief plays a crucial role in bolstering Saudi Arabia's humanitarian diplomacy. This approach not only addresses immediate needs but also fosters long-term development, reinforcing the Kingdom's position as a leader in humanitarian efforts globally.

In conclusion, the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRelief) exemplifies Saudi Arabia's commitment to humanitarian aid and development on a global scale. Since its establishment in 2015, KSRelief has streamlined and centralized Saudi humanitarian efforts, ensuring effective distribution of aid to those in dire need, particularly in conflict zones and disaster-affected areas. The Kingdom's substantial contributions, both bilaterally and multilaterally, demonstrate its leadership in humanitarian assistance, as evidenced by its significant funding to initiatives like the Global Fund and its participation in the OECD's DAC.

To enhance the effectiveness of its humanitarian efforts, several recommendations are proposed. First, strengthening coordination between KSRelief and international organizations, NGOs, and local authorities can ensure a comprehensive approach to humanitarian crises, improving response times and resource allocation. Increasing transparency by continuously improving the Saudi Aid Platform to provide real-time data on aid distribution and impact can foster trust and accountability among donor countries and recipient communities. Additionally, there should be a focus on sustainable development by aligning humanitarian aid with long-term development goals, ensuring that communities can recover and thrive post-crisis. Expanding outreach to engage more with vulnerable populations, including refugees and internally displaced persons, is crucial to ensure that aid reaches those most in need regardless of their background. Finally, enhancing capacity building by investing in local organizations and governments in recipient countries can promote self-sufficiency and resilience. By implementing these recommendations, Saudi Arabia can further solidify its role as a leader in humanitarian aid and development, contributing to global stability and human dignity.

Research Limitations and Future Directions

While this study provides valuable insights into Saudi Arabia's humanitarian aid diplomacy, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the research primarily relies on secondary data from publicly available sources, which may not capture the full extent of behind-the-scenes diplomatic negotiations or the internal strategies of KSRelief. Additionally, the focus on Saudi Arabia's aid efforts, particularly through KSRelief, may overlook the contributions of other Gulf states or non-state actors in shaping regional humanitarian policies, thus limiting the broader context of Middle Eastern humanitarian diplomacy. Future research should incorporate primary data collection, such as interviews with key stakeholders, including KSRelief officials, policymakers, and recipients of aid, to gain a more nuanced understanding of the motivations and impacts of Saudi humanitarian efforts. Furthermore, comparative studies examining the humanitarian diplomacy of other countries or regions could provide a broader framework for assessing the effectiveness of Saudi Arabia's strategies. Investigating the long-term impact of Saudi aid on post-conflict recovery and sustainable development in recipient countries, especially through field studies, would also be beneficial. Lastly, exploring the role of digital technology in enhancing aid transparency and efficiency could reveal innovative avenues for improving humanitarian assistance delivery.

Conclusion

Saudi Arabia's commitment to international humanitarian aid and development, exemplified by the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) and the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRelief), has positioned the Kingdom as a key global player in addressing both immediate crises and long-term development challenges. The establishment of these institutions reflects Saudi Arabia's strategic shift towards a more centralized, streamlined approach to aid delivery, which has enhanced the Kingdom's ability to respond effectively to global emergencies, support health initiatives, and contribute to infrastructure development across diverse regions, including Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia's substantial contributions to multilateral organizations, such as the Global Fund, the World Bank, and United Nations agencies, underscore the Kingdom's evolving role in the international aid community. The coordination of its humanitarian efforts through platforms like the Saudi Aid Platform has improved transparency, accountability, and the overall impact of its initiatives. Additionally, Saudi Arabia's participation in the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and its significant financial pledges to global aid efforts further reinforce its position as one of the largest providers of humanitarian and development assistance worldwide.

The Kingdom's approach to foreign aid is deeply rooted in Islamic principles, particularly the emphasis on charity and humanitarian assistance as religious obligations. This alignment between religious values and modern development strategies has not only amplified Saudi Arabia's diplomatic influence but also strengthened its leadership in global humanitarian efforts. Ultimately, Saudi Arabia's strategic and principled approach to aid contributes to global stability, promotes well-being in vulnerable populations, and enhances the Kingdom's role in fostering international development. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on international aid by highlighting Saudi Arabia's unique blend of religious

obligations and contemporary global strategies, offering insights for policymakers and development practitioners alike.

Contribution

Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on international humanitarian aid by examining Saudi Arabia's unique approach, which blends Islamic principles with modern development strategies. It contributes to the understanding of how religious and cultural frameworks can shape a nation's foreign aid policies and enhance its diplomatic influence. The analysis of the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) and King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSRelief) also adds to existing theories of centralized aid delivery, demonstrating how such models can increase transparency, accountability, and effectiveness. By linking Islamic obligations of charity with global development goals, this research offers a new perspective on the motivations and structures behind foreign aid efforts in the Middle East, contributing to broader discussions on faith-based diplomacy and international relations.

Practically, this study provides valuable insights for policymakers, aid organizations, and development practitioners. The Saudi model of centralized, faith-driven aid offers a framework that can be adapted by other nations or organizations aiming to enhance the impact and accountability of their humanitarian efforts. Furthermore, the research highlights the importance of aligning foreign aid with both domestic values and global strategies to maximize diplomatic influence and promote sustainable development. These insights can guide future policies on international aid, particularly in regions where religious and cultural values play a significant role in governance.

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