

Does Aid Work?

Economics

What the evidence shows about development assistance.

Strong evidence

- Vaccination and disease control
- Bed nets against malaria
- Deworming, though effect size is debated
- Cash transfers to households
- Specific infrastructure with clear demand

Weak or contested

- Aggregate aid raising growth rates
- Large donor-designed projects
- Aid conditional on policy reform
- Technical assistance without local demand
- Programmes without an evaluation design

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

The shift toward randomised evaluation came from precisely this gap between confident claims and measurable results.

Educational reference. Aid effectiveness is contested; findings vary greatly by intervention, context and time horizon.