

The Dictator’s Playbook: Poverty Perpetuating Power Structures in Azerbaijan and Chad

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Abstract

This article looks at poverty in Azerbaijan and Chad, which are both authoritarian states that have been dominated by dictators for years. This is a valuable ethical topic to address widespread poverty in both nations while their dictators, generals, and top bureaucrats enjoy lavish lifestyles. Poverty in Azerbaijan and Chad are at least partly the result of deliberate policy changes designed to keep the population impoverished and the ruling class wealthy. Azerbaijan and Chad also enjoy access to valuable natural resources, yet the dictators prefer to distribute most of the profits to support their own power rather than their people. The goal of this article is to analyze the relationship between dictatorship and poverty in Azerbaijan and Chad, with a focus on poverty ethics, paying close attention to how dictatorship creates and prolongs suffering.

I. Introduction

In June 2016, the notorious dictator of Chad, Hissene Habre, has been arrested and faced charges of crimes against humanity at an international tribunal. His reign of terror saw the deaths of around 40,000 Chadians and record-high poverty rates. Habre was replaced in December 1990 by Idriss Deby, a man who would go on to rule the country for the next 30 years. Under his reign, the press was suppressed, opponents were subdued, and protestors were quelled. The nation made billions of dollars from oil revenue, yet a fifth of its children died before they turned 5 years old. Azerbaijan sees a similar pattern. Hedar Aliyev ruled the country for 30 years (1993–2003), being replaced after that by his son Ilham Aliyev, who has been president/dictator since 2003. Much like Chad, Azerbaijan enjoyed extensive oil resources, yet half of the nation lived under poverty during the Aliyev regime.

Both Chad and Azerbaijan have been plagued by dictatorship for decades. Corresponding with authoritarian control has been systemic and unaddressed poverty. The populous struggles to stay alive whilst their leaders spend federally controlled oil revenues on paying off political elites and security forces to enshrine their power. These two countries, being on the United Nations (UN) list of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), present an opportunity to explore the link between authoritarian political structures and poverty. What emerges is the understanding that dictators neglect the developmental needs of their populous in favor of maintaining their continued power. Ethical understandings of poverty, through both a utilitarian and rights-based lens, tell us that we

should push for democratization in these and other authoritarian nations as a means of alleviating poverty and inequality.

Following this introduction, Section II provides a brief review of the literature. Section III illustrates the evolution of gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, life expectancy and literacy rates for the two countries. Some of the main facts related to poverty in Chad and Azerbaijan are provided in Section IV, while ethical aspects of poverty and dictatorship are examined in Section V. The last section provides some conclusions.

II. Literature Review

There is ample literature on both Chad and Azerbaijan, and the challenges both have faced in their economic development journeys. Likewise, plenty of literature exists on dictatorships and how they operate. However, only a few specific sources specifically touch on the dimension of poverty as it relates to dictatorships. Aristide and Moundigbaye (2017) cover Chad and its economic journey, whilst Rasizade (2002) explores Azerbaijan. Both Nega and Schneider (2012), and Espuelas (2012) discuss dictatorships and their role in poverty, with Nega and Schneider having a specific focus on Africa.

- Aristide and Moundigbaye (2017) discuss the history of the oil industry in Chad. Their goal was to analyze how oil revenues have been allocated since the discovery of commercially viable oil in the 1990's, and to see if said allocation achieved the Chad's government's commitments to use oil revenues to aid the poor. They consistently rely on and discuss the resource curse theory, and how it creates environmental and political motivations for violence in the country. By comparing economic indicators between different regions in Chad to the ones that produce oil, they found that poverty actually increased in the major oil producing regions, supporting the notion that oil revenues were not allocated properly to support the poor.
- Rasizade (2002) covers Azerbaijan a decade after it gained independence from the USSR. He discusses the role of corruption, poverty, politics, the oil industry, and U.S investment and diplomacy with the country. Key points are that of corruption in the nation, given that it consistently ranked the 3rd most corrupt nation in the world at the turn of the century. This is largely due to the system of patronage set up by the Presidential Aliyev family, who consistently funneled money from the state oil company into their own pockets and those of their political patrons. Rasizade (2002) emphasizes that all of this happened whilst the population was experiencing extreme poverty, with 78 percent of Azeris living on less than \$1 a day.
- Espuelas (2012) seeks to examine the relationship between dictatorships and social spending. Their thesis is that dictatorships reduce social spending, particularly on redistributive programs, education, health, and unemployment benefits. He examines Spain, Portugal, and Greece during their periods under dictatorship to gather empirical evidence. Espuelas explains that dictatorships limit the voice and political power of voters and interest groups who want to increase social spending. They do so in the hopes of maintaining the status quo. Finally, social spending that did exist was funded in non-redistributive ways, usually by the direct contributions of poorer workers.

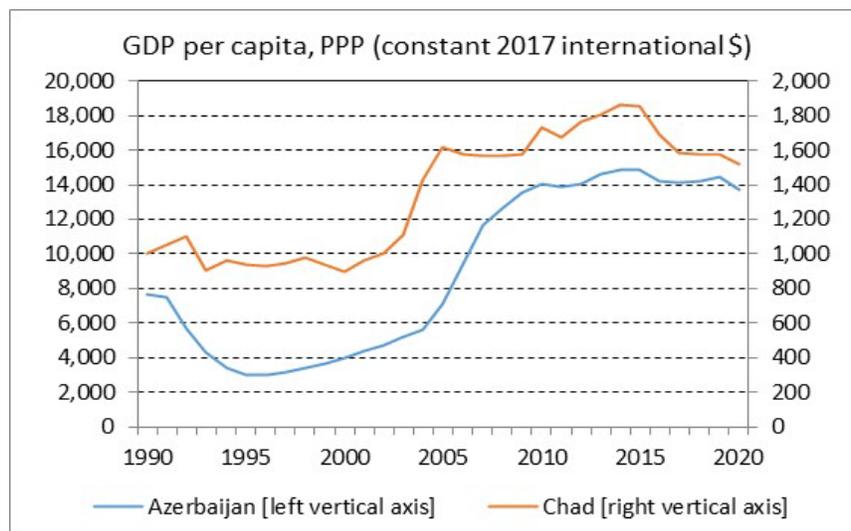
- Nega and Schneider (2012) discuss dictatorships in Africa as a means of demonstrating that dictatorships are not effective at meeting the needs of their people. They attempt to debunk other theories on democratization, namely that democracy is applicable only to certain cultures, a notion the authors argue was disproved by the Arab spring. In reference to dictatorships, they point out that dictatorships are only interested in creating enough economic development to pay themselves, their elite base, and security forces to crush rebellion. Thus, any foreign investment or development efforts should be given to these dictatorships only on the condition they slowly adopt democratization measures.

III. Socio-Economic Background

Both Chad and Azerbaijan have experienced economic and social setbacks to their development. Azerbaijan’s overreliance on oil has meant that its economy and GDP per capita have been volatile.¹ Chad struggles with economic development due to internal and external security threats, and the growing impact of climate change on its largely agrarian economy.²

As shown in Figure 1, Azerbaijan’s GDP per capita was pitiful following the collapse of the Soviet Union due to economic restructuring and endemic corruption, decreasing from \$7,617 in 1990 to \$2,977 in 1995. It then grew moderately from \$2,985 in 1996 to \$5,610 in 2004, and rapidly from 2004 to 2010, reaching \$14,082 in 2010. However, in 2020, Azerbaijan’s GDP per capita was \$355 lower than it was in 2010. Chad’s GDP per capita evolution is very similar to that of Azerbaijan except that it has been about one tenth of Azerbaijan’s GDP per capita. Some other differences are that Chad’s GDP per capita stagnated during the 1990s, and that it grew more rapidly from 2000 to 2005 than that of Azerbaijan. Chad’s GDP per capita then stagnated overall during the last 15 years, with Chad’s GDP per capita being \$99 lower in 2020 than it was in 2005.

Figure 1: GDP per capita, PPP, (constant 2017 international \$), 1990–2020



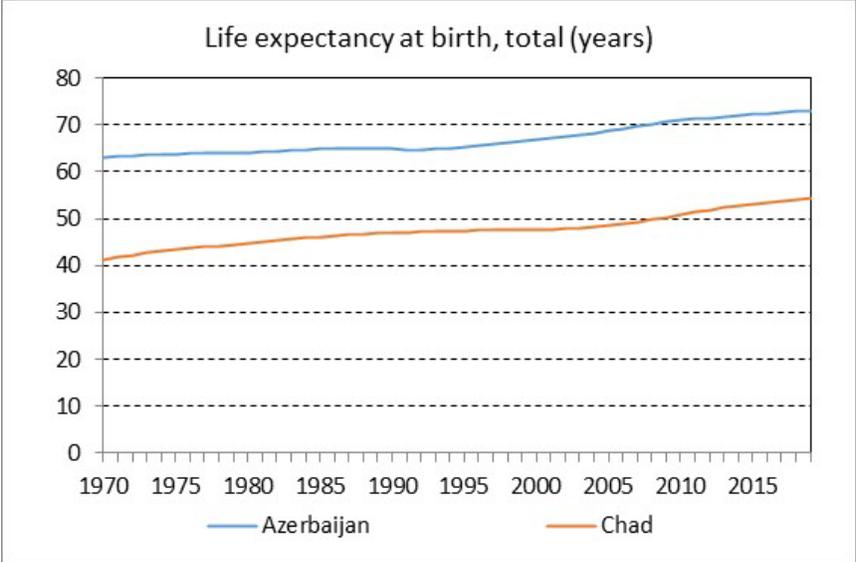
Source: Created by author based on World Bank (2022a).

¹ Asian Development Bank (2018).

² World Bank (2022b).

As Figure 2 demonstrates, Azerbaijan and Chad have both seen promising and consistent growth in their populations’ life expectancy since 1970. This is partly due to global trends in increased life expectancy due to improved medical technology and immunizations. However, despite rising life expectancy rates, Chad still has a relatively low rate, especially when compared to Azerbaijan, with contributing factors being a growing humanitarian crisis in neighboring countries (which led to over 675,000 refugees fleeing to Chad), high food insecurity, a measles epidemic reported in May 2018, and unfavorable rain amounts which decreased agricultural production in 2017.³

Figure 2: Life Expectancy at Birth, 1970–2018

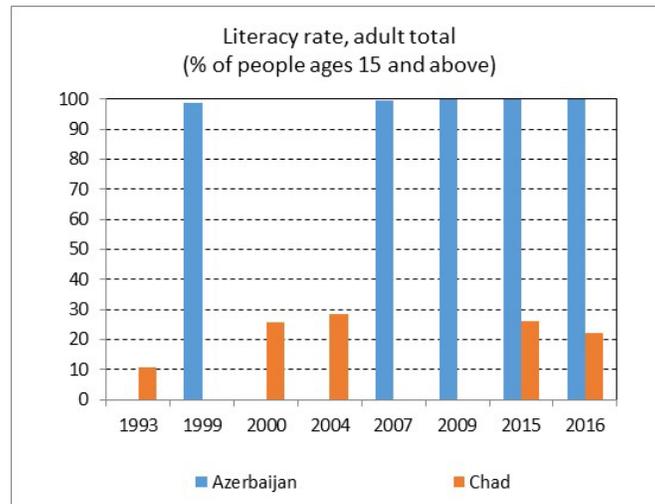


Source: Created by author based on World Bank (2022a).

As shown in Figure 3, the countries deviate drastically from each other in their literacy rates. Azerbaijan maintains a nearly 100 percent literacy rate since 1999. This is due to a few reasons. The Soviet education placed a high emphasis on literacy, and as a result produced a very literate population in Azerbaijan. Additionally, the government made large investments into public libraries and its universities starting around 2006.⁴ Chad is burdened with several educational issues. Refugees from Sudan, Nigeria, and the Central African Republic put added strain on the education system. There is little to no access to higher education. Most teachers are not educated past a secondary level.⁵ Many children are not even able to attend school. These and other factors explain the nation’s low literacy rate, which peaked at 28.4 percent in 2004.

³ UNICEF Chad (2020).
⁴ Kniffel (2014).
⁵ UNICEF Chad (2019).

Figure 3: Adult Literacy Rate, all available years



Source: Created by author based on World Bank (2022a).

IV. Analysis of Facts

The three indicators from the last section provide a baseline understanding of the socioeconomic context of Chad and Azerbaijan. This section reviews the available data on poverty and poverty-related indicators. Section IV.1. provides the available data on three headcount poverty ratios, which are due to severe data gaps in both countries complemented with two poverty-related indicators in Section IV.2.

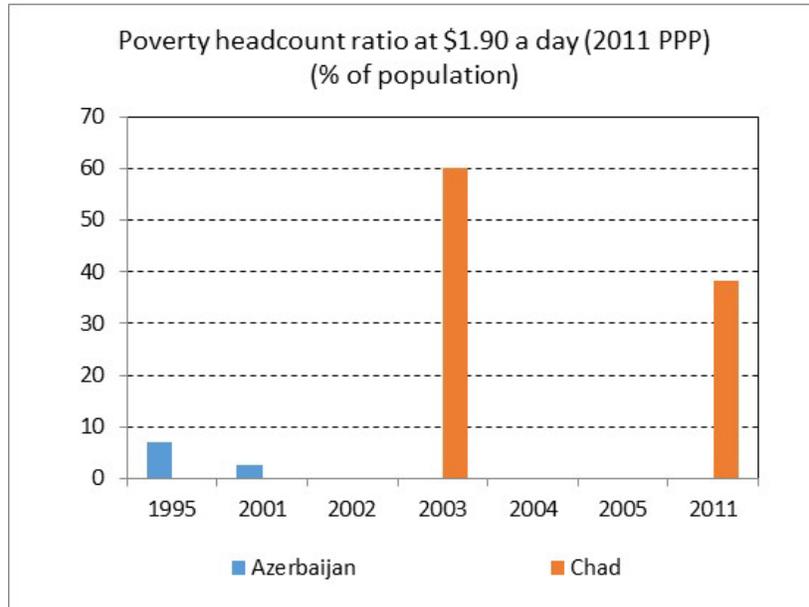
IV.1. Headcount Poverty Ratios

Figures 4 to 6 provide all the available data on poverty headcount ratios, respectively at \$1.90 a day, \$3.20 a day, and \$5.50 a day. Though the World Bank (2022) is missing figures for most years for both nations, the available data nevertheless provide some insight into the states and evolution of poverty in these two countries.

First, poverty is far lower in Azerbaijan than in Chad. As Figure 4 shows, while 7.1 percent of Azerbaijan's population lived below \$1.90 a day in 1995, extreme poverty was eliminated in Azerbaijan by 2002. In Chad, there were still 38.1 percent of their population living in extreme poverty in 2011. Figure 5 shows a similar picture, with moderate poverty (defined as living below \$3.20 a day) having been eliminated in Azerbaijan by 2004, while 66.3 percent of Chad's population lived below \$3.20 in 2011. Figure 6 shows that 7.0 percent of Azerbaijan's population lived below \$5.50 a day in 2005, while 86.2 percent of Chad's population lived below \$5.50 in 2011.

Second, while Chad has reduced extreme poverty from 60 percent in 2003 to 38.1 percent in 2011 (reducing extreme poverty by about one-third), Chad has made relatively little progress with reducing the percentage of population living below \$5.50 a day, which was reduced from 83.7 percent in 2003 to only 66.3 percent in 2011. Azerbaijan also made relatively little progress in reducing the percentage of their population living below \$5.50 a day from 1995 to 2001, but ultimately succeeded to reduce it to 7.0 percent in 2005.

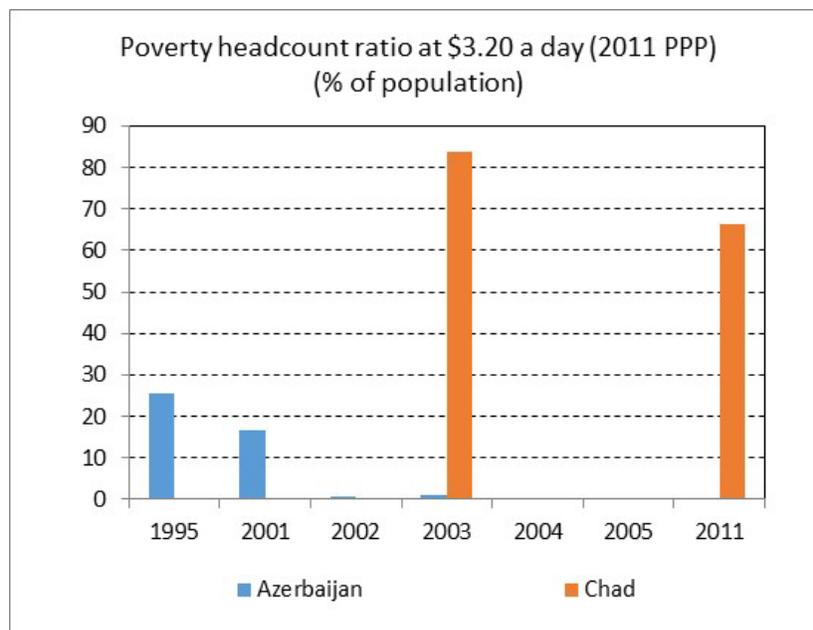
Figure 4: Poverty Headcount Ratios at \$1.90 a day (percent)



Source: Created by author based on World Bank (2022a).

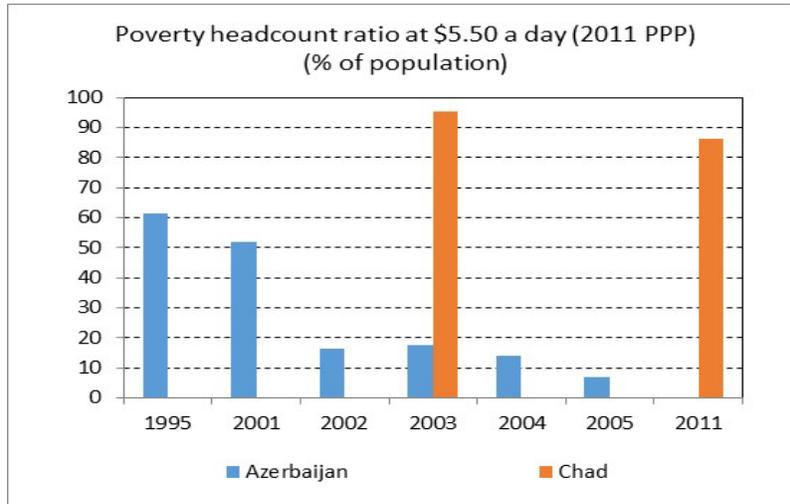
Third, while the only two data points for Chad indicate continuous progress with reducing poverty over time for all three poverty indicators, Azerbaijan has seen an increase in both, the percentage of people living below \$3.20 a day and the percentage of people living below \$5.50 a day from 2002 to 2003.

Figure 5: Poverty Headcount Ratios at \$3.20 a day (percent)



Source: Created by author based on World Bank (2022a).

Figure 6: Poverty Headcount Ratios at \$5.50 a day (percent)

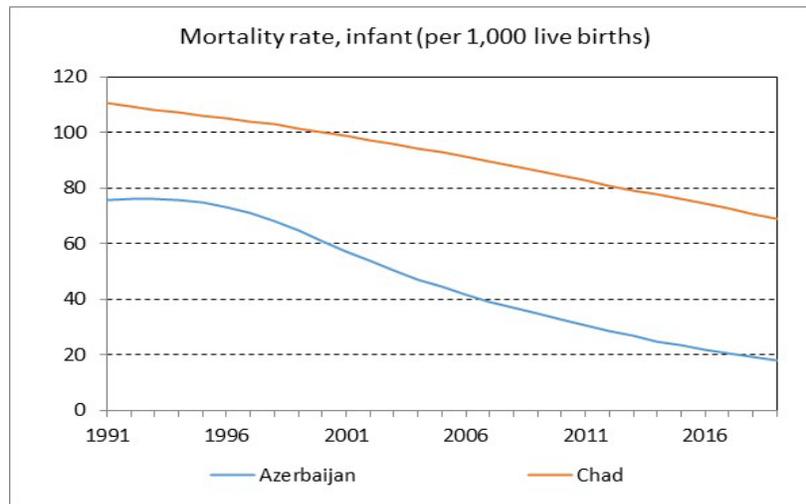


Source: Created by author based on World Bank (2022a).

IV.2. Other Poverty-Related Indicators

Given the severe data gaps for poverty headcount ratios, this sub-section reviews the available data on infant mortality rates and the prevalence of underweight children. Figure 7 shows the evolution of infant mortality, for which data is available for both countries on an annual basis from 1991 to 2019. Consistent with Chad's far higher poverty rates, infant mortality is higher in Chad than in Azerbaijan. However, the difference between the two countries seems less severe for infant mortality than for poverty. Azerbaijan reduced its infant mortality rate from 75.9 percent in 1991 to 19.1 percent in 2019, which is a reduction of about three-quarters, while Chad reduced its infant mortality rate from 110.5 percent in 1991 to 69.1 percent in 2019, which is a reduction of slightly more than one-third.

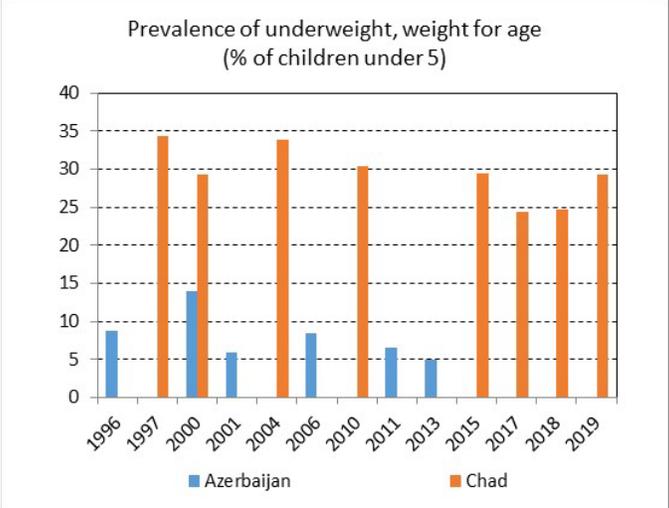
Figure 7: Infant Mortality (percent), 1991–2019



Source: Created by author based on World Bank (2022a).

As shown in Figure 8, the prevalence of underweight children is at least four times higher in Chad than in Azerbaijan but comparing the data for this indicator with the headcount poverty ratios shown above, both countries have made relatively little progress. The prevalence of underweight children was reduced from 8.8 percent in 1996 to 4.9 percent in 2013 in Azerbaijan (which is a reduction of only 44.3 percent over nearly 20 years), while it was reduced from 34.3 percent in 1997 to 29.2 percent in 2019 in Chad (which is a reduction of only 14.9 percent over more than 20 years).

Figure 8: Prevalence of Underweight Children (percent), all available years



Source: Created by author based on World Bank (2022a).

V. Ethical Analysis

The figures on poverty and poverty-related indicators in the last section can only paint part of the picture. The story and real-world experiences behind the numbers are those of hardship and exploitation. This section provides an ethical analysis of poverty in Azerbaijan and Chad by first reviewing the relationship between dictatorship and poverty. Based on that, the article will then demonstrate the link between authoritarian structures and poverty. The ethical lens will also provide a basis for speaking out against authoritarianism on a utilitarianist and rights-based approach.

V.1. Dictatorship and Poverty

Chad and Azerbaijan are authoritarian regimes, (although of varying degree), and have experienced periods under strict dictatorial rule. In Azerbaijan, it was Heydar Aliyev, and his son Ilham after him. In Chad, it was Idriss Deby until his recent murder, leaving Mahamat Deby in his place. Empirical evidence suggests these nation’s authoritarian structures make them less inclined to address poverty. Evidence from Espuelas (2012) supports the notion that dictatorships are less likely to implement social spending initiatives, particularly on redistributive programs, education, health, and unemployment benefits.

Nega and Schneider (2012) explain that dictatorships are only interested in creating enough economic development to pay themselves, their elite base, and security forces to crush rebellion. We see evidence of both truths in Chad and Azerbaijan. During the reign of Heydar Aliyev, he was more interested in using public money to pay off the military and political elites than using it for anti-poverty programs.⁶ The military is important to these leaders as they serve as a tool to crush rebellion when the untended populous eventually raises their voice against the regime. In Chad, we see the authoritarian government under Idriss Deby neglect their obligation to share oil revenues with the poor, leading to increased poverty in the oil producing regions.⁷ In addition to imprisoning opponents and using the military to inflame political conflict, Idriss Deby used oil money to pay patronage to those loyal to him, and no one else.⁸ It is clear that in both Chad and Azerbaijan, vital resources were held back from those who needed it (namely the impoverished), so that their dictators could instead use those resources to protect their own power.

V.1.a. Dictatorships and Poverty in Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan is a nation that has been marred by poverty in the midst of government corruption and profiteering. It is worth discussing Azerbaijan in the context of two eras. The first era is from the 1990s and early 2000s under Heydar Aliyev and the immediate period of Soviet Independence. The second era would be the more modern era. Rasizade (2002) covers the first era in great detail. He describes a rise in poverty, a decline in the standard of living, and increased corruption in the Heydar era. Aliyev was able to consolidate political power because the populous was too busy trying to survive to be invested in politics.

The presidential family's control over petrol dollars also increased their power. As Rasizade (2002, p. 353) explains: "A regime with oil revenue is less accountable to ordinary citizens; it does not have to collect their trifling taxes or meet their tedious demands. A portion of the petrodollars must be spent on the armed forces to keep the masses in line, but the rest can be split among the political elite." This theme of corruption was widespread and served to divert money from the country's poor into the pockets of those who Aliyev needed to keep happy in order to maintain power. The country's vast oil revenues were at the heart of this corruption. There was a grand oil smuggling scheme set up by the presidential family, who held a monopoly on the export and domestic distribution of local petroleum products. The president's son was vice president of the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR), which brought in \$1 billion of unreported oil revenues directly to the presidential family.

At the same time, most Azeris lived below the national poverty line. The government failed to provide any sort of public services or welfare. Its education, health care, and pensions systems are all in distress. Despite such conditions, Aliyev was more than happy to flout that GDP had grown by 66 percent in 2001.⁹ In terms of unemployment at the time, in 2002 only 18,000 were employed in Azerbaijan's second largest city of Ganja out of a total population of 300,000. The country saw a different trend after the 2008 financial crisis. The country was and still is ruled by Ilham Aliyev, Heydar's son. It is an authoritarian state, but as the data has indicated, the country has seen drastic

⁶ Rasizade (2002).

⁷ Aristide and Moundigbaye (2017).

⁸ The Economist (2019).

⁹ Rasizade (2002).

declines in poverty rates and rises in the quality of living, largely due to rising oil prices. However, much of the wealth of larger cities like Baku are not extended to its outer suburbs.¹⁰

V.1.b. Dictatorships and Poverty in Chad

While Azerbaijan tells the story of a nation improving, despite its continued authoritarian political structures, Chad has not had as much success. Commercially viable oil fields were discovered in Chad in the 1990s. The World Bank agreed in 2000 to tap the undeveloped oil wealth of Chad under the condition that Chad dedicates its earnings from oil to attacking its poverty. However, as reported in Polgreen (2008), the World Bank pulled out of the agreement in 2008 stating that Chad failed to allocate adequate resources critical for poverty reduction. The oil boom also disrupted other industries in the country.

Growth in the oil market led to stagnation in the country's agricultural sector, where poverty was most present. Further, research from Aristide and Moundigbaye (2017) demonstrated that poverty actually increased in the major oil-producing regions, supporting the notion that oil revenues were not allocated properly to support the poor. Instability issues also threaten the poor in Chad. In addition to the aforementioned humanitarian crisis, there is an ongoing conflict between the dictatorial Mahamat Deby's military government, (the CMT), and rebel groups.¹¹ Political conflict in a state which already lacks many basic social services is sure to lead to further poverty.

V.2. Ethical Structures in Chad and Azerbaijan

Given how systemic the challenge of poverty was and still is in these countries, both have taken efforts to implement better social assistance programs, and other ethical structures to address poverty. As shown by the factual analysis of the previous section, Azerbaijan has had noticeably more success in alleviating poverty than Chad, likely due to a greater range of anti-poverty programs and greater political stability afforded by Ilham Aliyev's growing political consolidation.

In response to endemic poverty rates in the 1990s and early 2000s, the government has implemented several anti-poverty programs and laws. They have social insurance, labor pensions, and social assistance laws for the elderly and disabled per 1997 and 2006 changes. They have sickness and maternity social assistance programs that allow for up to 12 months of earnings being insured by the government, as per 1997 and 1999 laws. They have work accident insurance as of a 2010 law. A new 2017 law updated unemployment insurance, which gives the insured 50 percent of their average wage in the last 12 months for up to 9 months. In terms of direct assistance to the poor, they have several family-based protections, including those for childcare and orphans, and direct allowances to needy families who make below a certain amount.¹²

Most of these programs represent pure income transfer programs that protect Azeri citizens going through difficult circumstances. However, a few of these programs do qualify as asset accumulation programs or integrated poverty reduction programs. Work injury protection, childcare, and certain maternity benefits provide greater access to health care, an essential asset. What is missing are other, grander asset programs, such as universal health care or education programs.

¹⁰ Parts of his paragraph are based on The Economist (2011).

¹¹ Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) (2022).

¹² United States Social Security Administration (2018).

Azerbaijan's rationale for these programs does arise from the genuine need to address their poverty issue, but it also gives greater legitimacy to Ilham, allowing him to further consolidate his political power. Aliyev won 86 percent of the vote in the 2018 election. This election was one that all major opposition parties boycotted over claims it was fraudulent, and one full of fake candidates. A 2009 law scrapped term limits, which were recently increased from 5–7 years. Independent new organizations have been shut down, whilst investigative journalists languish in jails along with protestors. Aliyev's increasingly rapid drive towards authoritarianism is ignored by a politically apathetic population, who are grateful to Aliyev for improving their living standards.¹³

Chad faces ongoing struggles with poverty, with the country falling back into a recession in 2020, due to Covid-19, ongoing political conflict, and a refugee crisis.¹⁴ However, there are still promising initiatives and programs active in Chad that may help lift Chadian citizens out of poverty or alleviate poverty's worst impacts. Reviewing the social security and assistance programs, Chad has among others implemented a.) old age, disability, and survivor pensions, b.) a National Health Insurance Fund and National Social Insurance Fund that help pay for certain health services in addition to employer contributions, and c.) mandatory severance pay laws.¹⁵

In addition to these programs, there are several international and non-governmental organizations the Chadian has allowed to do poverty alleviation work in the country. The ResEau project is working to solve water scarcity in Chad, an issue which perpetuates poverty. The Chad Education Sector Reform Project (PARSET) is providing primary education to thousands of Chadian children, as well as training for over 13,000 teachers. They have also built and supplied 500 new schools. The Emergency Agriculture Production Support Project is a joint operation with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Program (WFP) that gives food vouchers and nutritional supplements to malnourished children.¹⁶ These and other organizations have stepped up in part to the lack of sufficient social services available in Chad, which is evident when compared to those available in Azerbaijan. These organizations provide a stronger integrated poverty reduction approach to poverty alleviation, by providing direct financial support, as well as asset accumulations like education and health services.

In light of the presence of these programs, it is important to remember that poverty and its alleviation is chiefly an ethical issue. If we expect other countries to prioritize poverty alleviation, it is important to present ethical arguments for why it is important. According to Barrientos et al. (2016), ethical perspectives are crucial to influencing poverty reduction policies. He points out that ethical perspectives create shared values and social norms. These in turn influence the political processes of a country, which then leads to poverty reduction programs based on those shared values. In other words, the ethical viewpoint a populous adopts will determine what kinds of poverty initiatives will be adopted if any.

Barrientos et al. (2016) presents five different ethical perspectives related to poverty. They are the egalitarian perspective, the utilitarian perspective, the priority perspective, the sufficiency perspective, and the humanitarian perspective. Each perspective offers a unique argument for why poverty should be reduced, but the most impactful in my view are the egalitarian and humanitarian perspectives. The egalitarian perspective is closely linked to the fairness and justice approach to

¹³ Most of the information provided in this paragraph is based on The Economist (2018).

¹⁴ World Bank (2022b).

¹⁵ United States Social Security Administration (2018).

¹⁶ Wright (2020).

ethical standards and argues that reducing poverty makes societies more just. This certainly applies to Chad and Azerbaijan. It does not seem fair or just that their ruler and political elites should live prosperously whilst the large majority of the people they rule live in squalor. This is especially true when political elites are able to do so because of their exploitation of a supposedly nationally owned resource (oil), which should be shared amongst the citizenries.

The humanitarian perspective makes the case that poverty reduction is required based on humanitarian reasons, (i.e., we are all humans). This perspective relies on human rights, and the notion that poverty threatens the human rights of those under its oppression. Chiefly, poverty deprives people of their human right to be free from want, and to be free from exploitative working conditions. By implementing anti-poverty programs, countries like Chad and Azerbaijan have the opportunity to create fairer and more just conditions, and to provide a good environment for the development of their people's human rights. It is clear that at least in the case of Azerbaijan, this argument is being heard, albeit gradually. Ilham Aliyev has increased the standard of living of his people. However, full realization of the egalitarian perspective still needs to be achieved, as corruption is still endemic under Ilham's rule as it was under his father. As for Chad, they have been unable to consider poverty under these frameworks, and its people have suffered as a result.

One explanation for the reluctance of Chad and Azerbaijan to fully adopt or properly prioritize poverty alleviation may be again linked to regime type. Looking again at Barrientos, he established that social norms impact political processes, however, the case of these two nations may indicate the reverse may be true in some cases, i.e., that political processes influence social norms. In Azerbaijan, the government has cracked down on press freedom, fair political participation, opposing parties, and protests during the reign of the Aliyev family. The result of these authoritarian practices has been the creation of a politically apathetic population, more concerned with survival than anything else.¹⁷ Hence, political practices have impacted social norms in Azerbaijan. It could then be argued that the changed social norms have reduced the space for proper ethical considerations of poverty in the national consciousness, seeing as how Barrientos et al. (2016) have already linked ethical perspectives with social norms.

VI. Conclusion

Chad and Azerbaijan are nations with complex histories. The Azeri people endured years of stagnant GDP per capita growth, poverty, unemployment, and corruption of the Aliyev family. Under the rule of Idriss Deby, Chad was not only plagued by low life expectancy rates, low literacy rates, and crippling poverty, but also by sustained political conflict between rebels who sought to end the Deby rule. As the 21st century has progressed, these countries have had varying success in addressing their challenges. Azerbaijan has leveraged its resources to institute more far-reaching and successful poverty alleviation programs which have improved the lives of Azeris, although they still have ways to go. Chad, plagued by political instability has neglected its poor, and as a consequence, the nation has seen little development progress.

What has been the same across both nations is their authoritarian character. Both countries are oil-rich, yet dictators like Deby and Heydar Aliyev refused to use their nation's natural wealth to fund poverty alleviation programs. They and other world dictators do so because they were more

¹⁷ Rasizade (2002).

concerned with keeping their political support bases and the military happy. This translated to Azeri corruption and Chadian neglect.

Ethics tells us that these countries have an egalitarian and humanitarian obligation to fight poverty. Luckily, in face of government neglect to do so, some international organizations have intervened to help assist the portion of the global majority that live in Chad and Azerbaijan. However, if these countries want to see sustained development improvements, particularly in the case of Chad, its citizens need to recognize that its authoritarian leaders often do not have their interests in mind. Long-term democratization efforts in Chad and Azerbaijan may have the potential to make their governments more accountable to their citizens, and thus more willing to address poverty. If Barrientos is to be believed, a population interested in democracy has the potential to shape the political processes of the state to be more democratic. Perhaps then, the poor of Azerbaijan and Chad can begin to hope for a better future.

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