Abstract
This literature review provides an overview of the research on unintended effects of international cooperation. The 64 analyzed documents demonstrate a wide variety of remarkable unintended effects in sectors as diverse as governance, livelihoods and gender. These unintended effects can be positive or negative, anticipated or unanticipated, avoidable or unavoidable, spill-over effects and finally be irrelevant in relation to the original objective or have perverse effects. It was also found that not all ‘unintended’ effects were truly unintended. The literature shows little attention for positive unintended effects and for unintended effects on the intermediaries of international cooperation themselves. The analysis also highlights that most of the unintended effects appear avoidable. Currently only 15% of USAID, and 26% of NORAD evaluations pay attention to unintended effects, which is insufficient in light of the findings of the review. New methodologies to capture unintended effects need to be developed further. It also suggests that while all research into unintended effects is welcome, newer international cooperation themes, such as the fight against climate change, need priority attention. Finally, positive unintended effects and unintended effects on the intermediaries of international cooperation merit particular attention.

Key words: Unintended effects – international cooperation – perverse effects

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1. Introduction

The unintended effects of international cooperation are a contentious issue. The Nobel Prize winner in Economics in 2015 is of the opinion that unintended effects of international aid are so great that aid should be reduced as soon as possible: “Negative unintended consequences are pretty much guaranteed when we try. And when we fail, we continue on because our interests are now at stake – it is our aid industry, staffed largely by our professionals, and generating kudos and votes for our politicians – and because, after all, we must do something… Large-scale aid doesn’t work because it cannot work, and attempts to reform it run aground on the same fundamental problems over and over again. Bridges get build, schools are opened, and drugs and vaccines save lives, but the pernicious effects are always there” (Deaton, 2014, p. 312 & 317). Conversely, others argue that unintended consequences are “never a given. In fact, all of these possible effects can be – and are – questioned, disputed and sometimes repudiated” (Newby, 2010, p. 18).

This literature review focuses hence on the academic literature with respect to the unintended consequence of international cooperation. The guiding question of the literature review is: ‘What types of unintended effects have been researched, and which effects have been relatively less researched?’ A recent meta-evaluation of the evaluation quality of the largest aid agency in the world USAID, showed that only 15% of it evaluations paid attention to unintended effects (Hageboeck, Frumkin, & Monschein, 2013). In the case of NORAD, only 40% of the Terms of Reference request the evaluators to take unintended effects into consideration. Of this 40%, two thirds actually do so, but often in a superficial way (Norad, 2014). There is increasing acknowledgement that this dearth of (evaluation) research on the unintended effects of international cooperation needs urgent attention (Jabeen, 2016). However, no systematic literature review exists on the research that has taken place. By analyzing in depth 64 relevant books, articles and papers, this literature review aims to fill this gap, as well as provide the necessary tools and background material to strengthen the contribution and participation of those academics and professionals who are participating in the conference ‘Unintended effects of international cooperation’ at the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs in January 2017 (in collaboration with the Radboud University).

The final aim of the research project is to ensure that the international efforts become more effective, and the conference is an important intermediary step towards this aim. The conference aims to 1) take stock of existing studies of both positive and negative unintended effects of international cooperation and identify gaps in knowledge; (2) contribute to new methodologies that enable a more systematic planning for and analysis of unintended effects; and (3) establish a community of practice that will intensify their efforts and exchange in this domain over the coming years.
The ultimate aim of the literature review is to identify both gaps and controversies with respect to the research on the unintended effects of international cooperation, with the aim of coming to a potential research agenda on unintended effects. The review suggests that more attention could be paid in future research to the unintended positive effects of international cooperation, as until now less than 10% of all reviewed literature focuses exclusively on this. Additionally, the overwhelming majority focuses on the unintended effects of the cooperation on the target group, whereas there are clear indications that there are also unintended effects outside the target group. Notably, studies on unintended effects on the intermediaries of international cooperation themselves are virtually lacking (e.g., only 2 of the 64 studies focuses on peacekeepers, local aid workers, diplomats etcetera). Lastly, the literature review concludes on a positive note, namely that hardly any unavoidable negative effects were encountered; this implies that if unintended effects are anticipated, a remedy can be developed a priori in most instances.

In this review we will start by defining what is meant with international cooperation and unintended effects. This is followed by a description of the methodology used for selecting and analyzing the literature. After this we turn to the two more theoretical sections. Firstly, two main competing theories on the origins of unintended effects are outlined: those who think human planning failures are to blame and those who argue that the complexity of the system is the cause. A second theoretical section explains and illustrates six different typologies of unintended effects. In the results section, a sectoral distribution of the unintended effects literature is provided and illustrated, and tentatively three gaps in the literature are identified. We end the review with a discussion of the findings, and a conclusion in which we tackle the question of what the findings mean from a broader and practical (policy) perspective.

2. Definitions

Before analyzing the literature it is important to determine how we define unintended consequences. The term ‘unintended consequences’ was first coined by the sociological functionalist school. In this school of thought, an unintended consequence refers to a particular effect of purposive action, which is different from what was wanted at the moment of carrying out the act (Baert, 1991).

The word ‘unintended’ is currently interchangeably used with ‘unanticipated’. However, the original work of Merton, which started the debate on these consequences, deliberately used the word ‘unanticipated’ and some argue we ought to go back it. Zwart (2015) argues we ought to use the term unanticipated as there are as well unintended anticipated effects, which we would risk lumping together with the unintended unanticipated effects if we use the term unintended consequences. He shows the example of certain medicines: the doctor knows that prescribing a certain medicine can have unintended consequences, but can still decide to go ahead regardless, because the intended effects outweigh the potential unintended consequences. Hence, even though the doctor foresees the potential
consequences, she presses ahead: the consequence was unintended, but anticipated. Most scholars use these days use the term ‘unintended’; in this article it is understood that this comprises both foreseen (anticipated) and unforeseen (unanticipated) effects.

The word ‘consequence’ can be, and is, used interchangeably with the words ‘effects’, ‘outcomes’ and ‘impact’. Traditionally the term ‘consequence’ is used. However, this appears to have a negative connotation (e.g. ‘if you do this, you will face the consequences’). As ‘consequences’ can also be positive and we wish to underscore the need to both look for positive and negative unintended effects, the more neutral word of ‘effects’ is used here.

The term ‘international cooperation’ refers to all those forms of international cooperation that exist between the economically richer and the more disadvantageous nations. It is important to note that in this review, this comprises much more than the traditional foreign aid (e.g., the actual transfer of money, goods or services from the Global North to the Global South as measured in ‘Overseas Development Aid’); it also covers other domains such as international judicial initiatives (such as the international criminal court), and peacekeeping missions, and international cooperation in the ‘War on Terror’ and the ‘War on Drugs’.

A final term that is regularly used in this literature review is the term ‘intermediaries’ (of international cooperation). This term refers to the individuals that are often a part of agencies in the international cooperation chain, ranging from local aid workers of local NGO’s, to diplomats in embassies, to soldiers in peacekeeping missions, to development bankers in European capitals, and anybody in between. The term intermediary is used, as they are neither the final target group, nor the initial originators of this international cooperation.

3. Methodology
The literature review is divided in two parts: a theoretical part and an empirical part. The theoretical part was informed by a broader study of unintended effects in the social science literature. It is by no means exhaustive, and the first aim is to shed light on two competing theories on the origins of unintended effects. A second aim is to create a typology of unintended effects, which will enable a systematic analysis of those encountered in the field of international cooperation. To elucidate the various typologies some examples of the case studies will already be referred to. After the more theoretical part of the literature review, the attention is turned to the empirical part.

For the empirical part, a systematic literature search was executed. Firstly, elaborate key-word searches were done in both the Radboud University electronic-library and in Google Scholar with the key-words of ‘unintended effects international cooperation’. The exact search terms can be found in Annex 1. The word ‘unintended’ was also replaced with ‘unplanned’, ‘unanticipated’, ‘unexpected’ and
‘unforeseen’. The word ‘effect’ was also changed to ‘result’, ‘consequences’, ‘outcome’ and ‘impact’. The words ‘international cooperation’ were also altered to ‘development assistance’ and ‘foreign aid’ and ‘development aid’. Secondly, on the basis of the relevance of title and the abstract of the first 100 hits for all different search combinations, relevant articles, books and chapters were selected and read. Between the key words the word ‘AND’ was inserted. Thirdly, the bibliography of the selected documents were analyzed to determine if there were more relevant academic documents that hadn’t showed up in the initial key-word search.

To avoid too large a number of sources, the following restrictions were applied for documents to be included: (1) the publication had to concern primary research (the theoretical papers were used for only the theoretical and typology section of this paper); (2) the publication had to focus on the effects; (3) the publication had to focus on unintended effects which already had taken place, and were not a prediction. The quality of the study (analytical, methodological, empirical) was not an exclusion criteria.

The literature search led to a total of 64 documents; 35 journal articles, 13 books, 8 reports, 7 research papers and 2 chapters in books. The first documents included in the literature review date from 1998, and the last publications from 2016. 30 of those articles focused on the macro-level (multiple sites/countries and/or multiple themes), 18 of them on the meso-level (one theme on multiple sites in a country, or multiple themes in one site) and 16 of them were micro-level (one site, one theme).

4. The origins of unintended effects: human failure or system complexity?
There is no academic discussion on whether unintended effects are occurring; there is more of a debate on why they are occurring. There are broadly speaking two schools: one claiming that they largely stem from human mistakes when planning interventions and a second school arguing that reality is so inherently complex that unintended effects are bound to occur, no matter how well thought-through external interventions are.

Sociologist Merton is considered to be the founding father of the academic literature on the unintended consequences (of purposive action) and an adherent of the first school of thought (Merton, 1936). He proposes five factors contributing to unintended consequences: four of which are related to human intelligence failures. He argues that unintended consequences are due to:

1. ignorance;
2. erroneous ideas;
3. imperious immediacy of interest (a certain myopic focus on the objectives to be obtained);
4. value driven decisions which work in the short term, but not in the long term;
5. self-defeating prophecies.
Only the fifth factor relates to way the world works: the purposive social action influences the actual world to such a degree that initial causal interferences are no longer accurate. This last argument is referred to as a self-defeating prophecy; the fear of some consequence, which drives people to find solutions before the problem occurs, thus the non-occurrence of the problem is not anticipated. In sum, Merton was of the opinion that unintended consequences could largely be avoided if planners would only think in an objective and well-informed way.

With the arrival of the complexity and systems-thinkers half a century later, the theoretical understanding of the frequency and the origins of unintended consequences shifted. They argue that there are a multitude of interconnections, non-linearities, multi-dimensionalities and unpredictabilities that interact with external interventions. These complexities render it difficult to understand the potential ambiguous effects of external interventions in integrated systems (Brusset, Coning, & Hughes, 2016). As one of the key authors on complexity in the social sciences writes: “Outcomes are determined not by single causes but by multiple causes, and these causes may, and usually do, interact in a non-additive fashion...It may be greater or less, because factors can reinforce or cancel out each other in non-linear ways. It should be noted that interactions are not confined to the second order; we can have higher order interactions and interactions among interactions” (Byrne, 1998, p.20).

As complexity theory has gained ground in social sciences, it has moved researchers and social sciences to take unintended effects more seriously. Merton argued that unintended effects would be hard to measure, as many social planners would afterwards declare that the effects were intended right from the start. However, evaluation specialists have been aiming to detect unintended effects, and have made some headway. Morell (2005) presents seven risk factors contributing to the prevalence of unintended effects as a result of external interventions:

1. tightness and richness of linkages between the program and the external environment;
2. size of the program relative to the boundaries of the system in which it lives;
3. stability of the environment of implementation and results of the program;
4. time elapsed between a / the program and intended results;
5. robustness of an external intervention over time and place;
6. level of innovation in a program, and finally;
7. level of knowledge present about the context (Morell, 2010, p. 25 & 45).

It is interesting to contrast the risk factors of Morell to those of Merton. Where 4 out of Merton’s 5 risk factors were related to the level of knowledge of the social planner, this is the other way around for
Morell; 6 out of 7 factors are related to the intrinsic characteristics of the social action, and only one relates to the knowledge of the intervener.

Both theories share the view that there are a large number of unintended effects, which can hamper the effectiveness of social action and merit to be researched. Both underline the importance to understand the contexts in which one is intervening to predict and prevent undesired unintended effects. With this as a general background to how the thinking on unintended consequences has evolved over time, we can now turn to the various typologies of unintended effects documented in the literature.

5. Typologies
There is an ever-expanding literature on unintended effects of social actions; the former president of the American Sociological organization even argues that sociology is the ‘analysis of the unexpected’ (Portes, 2000). There are roughly six different ways of classifying unintended effects by determining whether or not they are:

1. really unintended;
2. anticipated;
3. positive;
4. spill-over effects;
5. unavoidable;
6. bigger than and relevant to the initial effect.

Since there are 6 different ways of classifying unintended effects, there are logically dozens of different types of unintended effects (e.g. a truly unintended yet anticipated negative spill-over effect, which is unavoidable and stronger than the intended effect, would be one of the dozens of options).

5.1. Fake surprises – uncovering the hidden abode
Portes argues that the first distinction that needs to be made are those between real unintended effects and fake unintended effects. Often, the announced goal is not what it seems—that is, it is not what the actor or those in authority in a collectivity actually intend. Marxist and neo-Marxist analyses of social structure have made a specialty of unearthing the ‘real’ ends of capitalism—the ones behind its alleged political facade and cultural superstructure.

The work of Klein illustrates why regularly unintended effects were actually not unintended. She suggests that the way in which the International Monetary Fund (IMF) dealt with the Asian Financial
crisis in 1996/1997 is a case in point (Klein, 2007, chapter 13). The Asian financial crisis was longer and deeper than expected, this ought not to have surprised the observers, she argues. The international intervention was actually not primarily intended to stabilize the Asian economies quickly, but it was deepened and used to give western companies ownership over Asian means of production. The only government that did not listen to the advice of the IMF, Malaysia, saw its economy recover quicker that those who did (and its companies were also less sold to firms from abroad) (Stiglitz, 2002).

5.2. Unintended but anticipated effects
One of the misconceptions about unintended effects of purposive social action is that they are actually not foreseen, not anticipated. Yet, this is often not the case: effects that are not intended might very well be anticipated. However, because those effects are deemed of lesser impact or low probability (or both) the social action is executed regardless. Zwart (2015) argues that these unintended effects are not a consequence of what Merton calls ‘ignorance, error or ideological blindness’, but the result of protracted deliberations on intervention dilemmas.

The humanitarian intervention for Rwandese refugees in and around the city of Goma in the DRC in 1994 is a good example. After the genocide and the winning of the war by the Tutsi, the genocidaires and other Hutu were fleeing Rwanda and most of them (about 1 million) sought refuge in North-Kivu, Goma. Cholera was killing 600 people per day. Right from the start the aid agencies knew that within the refugees there were also genocidaires (Stearns, 2011). The unintended but anticipated effect of the relief effort was that genocidaires would also receive food, and could regroup as it later turned out. It was not possible for the aid agencies to only target the non-genocidaires: the unintended effects were unavoidable. In the second half of 1994 it became clear that a substantial part of the aid operations was being siphoned off by the genocidaires and that they were staging military attacks back in Rwanda with the refugee camp as a base (Polman, 2010). In late 1994 the French section of Medecines Sans Frontières pulled out of the camps, as the unintended (negative) anticipated effects outweighed the positive effects. Other aid agencies continued until 1996 when the Rwandese government soldiers invaded the refugee camps and send the aid agencies home packing.

5.3. Unintended effects: both positive and negative
Often unintended effects are incorrectly reduced to undesired effects (Baert, 1991). This would however be a mistake as there are also clearly unintended positive effects, also in the field of international cooperation (Klitgaard, 1997). Often these unintended positive effects are ‘latent functions’, which are visible after careful analysis. The work by Kamanzi shows that while aid might fail from the donor’s
perspective, it is still highly relevant for the livelihoods of the recipients and the aid intermediaries (Kamanzi, 2007).

By analyzing the 18-year long district rural development program of the Dutch embassy in Bukoba, Tanzania, Kamanzi shows that the livelihoods of local aid intermediaries, such as district officials, had improved. Interestingly, a harsh international evaluation (IOB Policy and Operations Evaluation Department, 2004), shows that there were insufficient livelihood effects, but omits an analysis of this large group of unintended beneficiaries. He shows how, for instance, the local district officers have maximized the number of trainings for which they would receive a stipend from the implementing partners. These stipends were invested in income-generating activities for their retirement: investment in schooling of their children, their housing and their plots (Kamanzi, 2007; 123). These unintended positive effects had a trickle down effect on the rest of the local population: hence, the aid had most definitely had effects on poverty reduction, but not as anticipated.

5.4. Unintended spill-over effects
While it is quite logical that most research on international cooperation focuses on the ‘beneficiaries’ or other intended targets of the action, this may lead to blind spots. Unintended effects may as well concern spill-over effects on non-target groups (Baerd, 1992). An interesting theoretical example is provided by Maseland and de Vaal (Maseland & Vaal, 2008). They concentrate on unintended negative spill-over effects of fair trade certification on non-fair trade certified farmers.

Maseland & Vaal demonstrate by modelling that while there are positive price effects for fair trade farmers, there is a serious risk that there are negative price effects for adjacent farmers which are not producing fair trade products, but cater for the same market (both internationally and domestically). These negative income effects result from a decrease in demand for non-fair trade products or cross-subsidization. Since better-organized farmers are in a better position to join fair-trade production schemes (because of entry costs there is a selection problem), poor farmers might actually share the brunt of the unintended negative spill-over effects (Breimer & Vaal, 2012).

5.5. The double effect: unavoidable unintended effects
A specific subset of unintended effects are the so-called double effects (Zwart; 2015). Double effects are akin to collateral damage in the military sense; while the interveners can do their utmost best to minimize them, there will be always a second effect: hence the term ‘double-effect.’ They are unavoidable. Mostly, they are unintended, but anticipated, and negative. The large influx of either financial and/or human capital as a result of international cooperation in areas where these types of capital are more scarce, are
bound to create some undesirable distortions. A typical example in the field of international cooperation has been food aid; for decades it was predicted and reported how in-kind food aid from rich countries to poor countries reduced local incentives to produce food, leading to increased food insecurity in the long run (Isenman & Singer, 1975). Yet, the practice continued as the short term benefits were deemed larger than the ‘unavoidable’ long term costs, and as United States farmers were benefitting from it (Barrett, 2006).

However, it appears that by changing the intervention model these ‘unavoidable’ unintended effects of food aid, could actually be avoided. It required that the food would not be shipped in from the United States, but be purchased locally. Policy changes of, amongst others, the World Food Program from the 2000s onwards have shown that it is possible to stimulate local (or regional) producers while providing food relief. A gradual shift towards more local procurement was agreed upon; the Purchase for Progress program.\(^1\) An initial impact assessment shows that the ‘double effect’ (surpressing of local markets) was actually largely avoidable, and that it was possible to stimulate local farmer organizations close to food-deprived areas, without making prices skyrocket (World Food Program, 2015). To return to the analogy with the doctor; when the doctor argues that the negative side effects that a patient encounters cannot be avoided, it is important to see if another cure can be found without these side effects, especially if the doctor is making money on this ‘double-effect’ cure, as was the case with in-kind food aid from the United States which surpressed local markets.

5.6. Drawback and perverse effects

A last important dimension with respect to unintended effects is the relationship with the intended effect (Beard, 1992). The unintended effect can be neutral in the fulfilment of the initial intended effect or frustrate it. If the size of the unintended effect is small and it goes in the opposite direction of the intended effect, it merely reduces the intended effect and is referred to as drawback effect. However, if the size of the unintended effect is larger in size than the intended effect and goes in the opposite direction of the intended effect, it is called a perverse effect. A relevant description of an unintended (and unanticipated) perverse effect is highlighted by an ethnography of an AIDS orphan project in Botswana (Dahl, 2015).

One of the problems that AIDS orphans (children who lost their parents due to the AIDS pandemic) face are the temptations to get involved with ‘sugar daddies’. Interaction with these older males, who provide the AIDS orphans with presents - such as fancy phones and designer bags - in

\(^1\) The program was started by president LB Johnson in the United States. As a democratic president he dearly needed to win votes in the South of the United States, and this was a way for him to consolidate his support there. It can hence be argued whether the destruction of local food production capacity in poor countries was really an unintended effect, if the real objective was support for American farmers, and not reduce hunger overseas. US’ food aid (in-kind) might have been one of those ‘hidden abodes’.
exchange for sexual favours can lead to early pregnancies and sexual transmittable diseases. The local (internationally-funded) orphan support centre aimed to discourage this practice. The centre came up with a much-lauded innovative system in which the young girls would receive similar presents from the centre. The presents would be sent from sponsors in rich countries, and in exchange for the presents the girls stated that they would abstain from contact with potential sugar daddies. The ethnography showed however a perverse effect: the girls now had already fancy phones and designer bags and were therefore in a position to target even wealthier and older sugar daddies. The girls’ motivations for romance—and their desire to assert the primacy of their own sexual agency—led them to leverage the NGO’s gifts for precisely the opposite ends intended (Dahl, 2015). By overlooking one of the desires of the adolescent girls, the motivation for romance, the external intervenors were actually supporting the very patriarchal dynamics they ostensibly sought to undermine.

After having established the various different typologies of unintended effects, it is now time to turn to the results of the literature review.

6. Results

6.1. Themes of concentration of unintended effects
As a first step of analysis, the 64 articles were categorized per theme. If, for instance, an article was dealing with the effects of a large group of expatriates arriving in a city for a peacekeeping mission, but the article was focusing on the unintended effects with respect to inequality, the article was classified with the theme ‘inequality’. The three themes in which the unintended effects mentioned in the selected literature concentrate are livelihoods, governance and gender (Table 1).

Table 1: Thematic sectors in which unintended consequences occur in the selected literature

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<th>Sectors</th>
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<td>Livelihoods</td>
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<td>Civil Society strengthening</td>
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When analyzing the 13 researches which document unintended effects in the sector of livelihoods, it becomes clear that the majority of them (10) focuses on the negative ones. In the majority of the cases it concerns the livelihoods of the initial target group and in most instances it was not a double-effect, meaning that the adverse effects could have been prevented. The studies focusing on the unintended effects of new anti-money laundering, anti-terrorist financing regulations are interesting case in point. The Financial Action Task Force (introduced by the G7) adopted nine Special Recommendations on combating terrorism finance, including Money-Transfer organizations and NGOs. Recent studies have shown a couple of unintended effects (Centre for Global Development, 2015; Hayes, 2012).

The research demonstrates that a large number of NGOs and money-transfer organizations providing important services in poor countries were ‘de-risked’ by banks (their accounts were closed) which hampered their capacities. These NGOs and money-transfer organizations provided important livelihood services to the poor in developing nations and became less effective because of this regulation. When the G7 countries came up with these guidelines, they did not aim for these unintended effects, so they are real. It also appears that they were largely unanticipated and negative. While the official target of the regulation were terrorist organizations, bonafide money-transfer and non-governmental organizations felt its effects. It appears that those could have been avoided to a large extent if banks would have been provided with more guidance. The unintended effects can in the long run have a bearing on the intended effects of the regulation; the void created by the inability of bonafide NGOs to operate in countries such as Somalia gives terrorist organizations more space to gain ground there (Hayes, 2012; 7). Hence, the unintended effect of the terrorist financing regulation is real, unanticipated, negative, outside-the-target group, largely avoidable and has drawback effects.

With respect to the sector of governance, most of the documented unintended effects are negative. Most studies are performed at the macro-level, and concern the target group (often national governments). A representative study in this field is a (panel) analysis from Simpser and Donno with respect to the effects of election monitoring missions on the general governance situation (Simpser & Donno, 2013). Looking at the abovementioned typologies of unintended effects they are real, unanticipated, negative, on-the-target-group, avoidable and perverse. The authors argue that external short-term election monitoring have negative effects: “By preventing certain forms of manipulation such as stuffing ballot boxes, they unwittingly induce incumbents to resort to tactics of election manipulation that are more damaging to domestic institutions, governance, and freedoms. These tactics include rigging courts and administrative bodies and repressing the media” (Simpser & Donno, 2013, p. 501). They find that on average, high-quality election monitoring has a measurably negative effect on the rule of law, administrative performance, and media freedom. Since nobody has argued that the election monitoring
missions have any hidden objectives it is assumed that the noted unintended effects are truly unintended. This is the first time that this unintended effect has been researched in such detail, so it can be assumed that they were hitherto unanticipated. Manifestly, the unintended results are negative and concern the target group of national governments. The authors make some suggestions how to avoid this adaptation behavior by incumbent governments which demonstrates that they can be avoided. The results can be labelled as perverse by the authors, as they are sizeable, as they extend just beyond the electoral domain and are long-term.

The last sector with a high prevalence of reported unintended effects, besides governance and livelihoods, is the sector of gender. A total of eight articles focused on the unintended effects of international cooperation on gender relations. The type of interventions that were mostly linked to that were peacekeeping and micro-credit operations; both of them appear to have had the unintended effect of increasing violence against women. This review focuses on some of the unintended gender effects of peacekeeping, especially with respect to Liberia, but it represents a broader pattern (Jennings K. M., 2010; Jennings & Bøås, 2015; Aoi, Cedric, & Thakur, 2007; Aning & Edu-Afful, 2013).

While the peacekeeping mission had substantial positive effects for women, such as increased access to paid jobs and increased sales of their micro-enterprises, also an increase of violence against women was noted, as well as unplanned pregnancies. At the end of the ECOMOG mission a total of 30,000 additional babies were born with peacekeepers as fathers (Aning & Edu-Afful, 2013; p. 23). This appears to be a real unintended effect (nobody send those peacekeepers there with the hidden objective to impregnate local women). It could however have been anticipated, as prior examples of this had been noted in the literature. It could be argued that these pregnancies are probably on average a negative unintended effect, as the fathers have mostly abandoned those children and those kids will have limited financial support from their biological fathers. The effects concern the target group, as the peacekeepers were sent there to protect (amongst others) those women. The effects could have been largely avoided, if the troops would have received more prior-deployment training and more adequate sanctions when returned home. Lastly, the effects did have a drawback effect on the official objective of the mission: protect civilians, but not to the degree that one can speak of a perverse effect; the peacekeeping mission did broadly achieve its objectives. So, this is a truly unintended, could have been anticipated, negative, avoidable drawback effect on the target group.

Having provided an overview and some examples of the sectors where unintended effects concentrate, we can now turn our analysis to the prevalence of unintended effects of international cooperation.
6.2. Relatively few reported positive unintended effects noted

All the documents in the literature review were classified on whether the unintended effects were (a) positive; (b) neutral; (c) negative or (d) both positive and negative. The absolute majority, 76% of the 64 documents, focused on negative effects exclusively. The remaining 24% focused on the other three categories, with only 8% highlighting positive effects exclusively. It is noteworthy that NORAD, in their assessment of the uptake of unintended effects in their evaluations, observed a different tendency. Those Norwegian evaluations that mentioned unintended effects noted mostly positive ones, even though they were most often not substantiated (Norad, 2014). There might be a discrepancy between evaluators and academic researchers, since the evaluators depend on the funder, and would like to avoid lengthy discussion on potentially critical reports (ibid. 2014). In the academic literature, the tendency to pay scant attention to the unintended positive effects is not only seen with respect to the field of international cooperation; almost all studies on unintended effects of policy these days are focusing on undesired effects (Zwart, 2015).

Interestingly, of those studies that deal with unintended positive effects, nearly all of them looked at unintended positive effects beyond the target group. To better understand the unintended positive effects, it is worthwhile to analyze those studies which have focused on the export-effects of donor countries to aid recipient countries. Interestingly, recent research has shown that countries such as Germany and the Netherlands have seen their exports increase to their partner countries, even after they have stopped providing aid to these countries (Martinez-Zarzoso, Nowak-Lehmann, Klasen, & Larch, 2010; IOB, 2014).

Officially, export promotion has not been a stated objective of German and Dutch aid, which have publicly supported the ‘untying’ of aid for over two decades, which means that recipient countries could spend their aid where they pleased. However, these ‘unintended effects’ were probably partly a hidden objective of the aid, to maintain public support for aid in those countries, so they are likely partially fake unintended objectives. The articles show that the mechanism through which these increased exports work is through the quality of services delivered during the aid-period, and also the networks that are established in that period. Yet, it is not clear to which extent these effects could really have been premeditated, as the effects were quite indirect. The effects are positive, at least for the German and Dutch exporters: German exporters saw every euro of aid rewarded in 1.4 euro of increased exports, leading to 64,000 jobs in Germany (Martinez-Zarzoso, Nowak-Lehmann, Klasen, & Larch, 2010) (IOB, 2014). The positive effects are avoidable, for instance when a donor chooses to give aid where already many other donors are active: in that case there are less increased exports. As most studies on positive
unintended effects, the authors look at spill-over effects beyond the target group. Lastly, the question is whether or not this has a negative effect on the officially stated effect of aid: the reduction of poverty in developing countries. Of course, the economies of these countries would be more stimulated if these 64,000 German jobs would have been created in Africa, instead of Germany. The question is whether those imports from Germany substitute domestic production or are complementary and provide much needed know-how and production machines, which add value to local production and export capacities.

In sum, this example shows that positive effects may occur outside the original target group, albeit in this case not truly unintended, probably partly anticipated, avoidable and perhaps with repercussions on the stated objective.

Finally, the question that remains is whether or not the large representation of negative unintended effects in the academic literature is a bias, or represents the reality that indeed more negative than positive side effects occur. This is something that merits further research.

6.3. Few registered unavoidable unintended effects

The take-away from the literature review is that while most reported unintended effects are negative, in the large majority of cases the authors argue that they can be avoided. Of the 64 documents, 75% indicated that the (predominantly negative) effects could be avoided. Another 13% showed that they could be avoided to a certain degree, a mere 11% of studies indicated that the effects would be impossible to avoid, the so-called ‘double effect’. The literature suggests that unintended effects could be avoided by more thoughtful planning and better monitoring and adaptation.

In the category of unintended effects that could partially have been avoided, they largely relate to the unintended effects of the sudden arrival of large groups of expatriates to a certain geographic zone (Autesserre S., 2014) (Büscher & Vlassenroot, 2010) (Carr, Chipande, & MacLachlan, 1998). Often the effects of the sudden influx of expatriates are linked to the unintended negative effect of increased inequality. An interesting example is provided by Büscher and Vlassenroot (2010) with respect to increased inequality in the city of Goma, in the DRC. This is an important finding, especially for those donors that are aiming for inclusive economic growth.

For about two decades Goma has been one of the focal points worldwide of humanitarian action. After the abovementioned influx of one million refugees from Rwanda, it became three times the capital of Tutsi-lead rebellions (1996, 1998 and 2013) and saw a major eruption of the nearby volcano (which destroyed half of the city). During this period over a hundred NGOs flocked to the region, as well as the largest UN peacekeeping mission of the world. The thousands of accompanying expatriates needed places to live, and they needed to be safe, have access to water and electricity. One neighborhood that responded
to the criteria was that part of the city that was close to Rwanda and the lake Kivu. While this used to be an area inhabited by local middle and upper-class, they could not afford the rising rental prices anymore; so they were pushed out this part, and had to join the townships surrounding Goma, with less access to electricity, water and security. Hence, as a result of the large-scale arrival of expats, the entire urban planning of the city was overthrown. It resulted in entrenching inequality, as the middle class saw access to social services, such as water and electricity decrease.

Autesserre and Smirl (Smirl, 2015) argue that this clustering of expatriates in compounds has a bearing on the original objective of their intervention. They have a lack of understanding of local realities, and hence propose wrong interventions. They tend to prefer external (costly) solutions, whereas the solution can often be found locally. As they tend to overestimate the level of danger they are exposed to, as a result of group think, they go too little into the ‘field’ and do not notice when their programs go astray.

While the unintended effects related to the large incoming flux of expatriates are real, anticipated, mostly negative, have drawback effects and concern the target group, most authors think that they can be avoided to a certain extent in a couple of ways. They propose amongst others a de-securization, which would allow for more field visits and a more equitable spread of expatriates in cities. Also, they have practical suggestions for more intermingling between local and expatriate staff, share the local knowledge that is available and reduce program failures. These changes would mean a major overhaul of the aid apparatus and will not be brought about easily, but it is feasible. However, not all unintended effects can be avoided: a large influx of human capital coming from countries with a GDP per capita that is 50 times as high, will inevitably lead to some distortions (Noard, 2014).

The literature suggest that there is just a small group of ‘double-effects’ in international cooperation efforts. For instance, the creation of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the consequences of its trials have a host of unintended effects (Dancy & Monta, 2015) (Espinoza, 2014). These unintended effects, such as a reduction in the democratic space in the DR Congo because the leader of the opposition was imprisoned by the ICC, are unavoidable because of the independence of its prosecutor. However, it turns out that most of the unintended effects are avoidable with better knowledge of the local context, better planning & monitoring. Looking back at the theoretical section on the origins of unintended effects, this suggest to give credence to those who think that human failure is the most common driver of unintended effects. There is a middle group of unintended effects that are partially avoidable, such as the ones related to large incoming flux of expatriates.
6.4. Comparatively few studies look at unintended effects on intermediaries

There are hundreds of thousands - if not millions of people - working as peacekeepers, aid workers, diplomats, volunteers, whose lives are likely thoroughly impacted by their international cooperation efforts. Effects on them, and (indirect) effects to their families would help to contribute to a holistic overview of the total impact of international cooperation. However, an analysis of the documents shows that the vast majority of studies on the unintended effects study the level of the initial target group (61%). Only in 19% of the cases it focused on both the initial target group and others, and another 19% focused on exclusively only others than the initial target group (spill-over effects).

In earlier examples we already showed the unintended effects on the donor economies (the case of increased exports for the Netherlands and Germany) and on bonafide money transfer organizations (who saw their bank accounts closed due to anti terrorism regulations). It is noteworthy that only a very small portion of the literature analyzes the unintended effects on the intermediaries of international cooperation. Of the 64 studies, only 2 deal with them. The study by Kamanzi (2008) showed mostly the positive livelihood effects for intermediaries (the case of the investment strategies of district officials in Tanzania). It is relevant to highlight the conclusions of another study which reported opposite findings (Swidler & Watkins, 2009).

In their study on health financing in Malawi, Swidler and Watkins analyzed in depth the unintended effects on aid intermediaries, such as aid workers. The researchers had a particular focus on the repercussion of the current emphasis on sustainability. This meant that most aid intermediaries knew that the current financial benefits would not last for a long time, which created a certain short-term-mindedness. For instance, the urban aid professionals that wanted to continue to enjoy the new high living standards “needed to accumulate resources to make their incomes secure, which led to lives that are highly irrationalizing: multitasking, fragmented, fluid, opportunistic, as they constantly scan the environment for new opportunities and try to juggle multiple responsibilities” (Swidler and Watkins, 2009; 10). In sum, there are few studies on the unintended effects on international cooperation intermediaries, and the few studies that exist point in a different direction. This might hence be an area that deserves further investigation.

7. Discussion of findings

7.1. Controversies in literature
At least two controversies come to the fore when analyzing the literature, as researchers who have researched same effects, have reached different conclusions: (1) the degree to which unintended effects
can be avoided; (2) whether the unintended effects exceed the intended effects. Both questions can’t probably be anwered in a generic sense, but case studies can shed light on specific cases.

When analyzing in more detail if unintended effects of international cooperation can be avoided, it is interesting to note that studies which have researched similar effects reach divergent conclusions. A case in point is the literature with respect to civil society strengthening. As section 6.1 shows there were 5 studies dealing with unintended effects in this sector, and they mostly focused on the negative unintended effects of increased financial dependency of local organizations on foreign donors. Increased foreign financial support had reduced the need for local NGOs to be truly connected to their base, the local population, and it made them accountable to foreign donors instead (Ancker & Rechel, 2015) (Henderson, 2002) (Jalali, 2013). Ancker and Rechel found this in their study on Kyrzygstan, Jalali for Russia and Henderson more globally.

Interestingly, comparing the text of Ancker and Rechel with the one from Henderson, the former postulates that these negative effects can be avoided, while the latter indicates this is not possible. Ancker and Rechel stipulate that foreign funding can further strengthen civil society, and even mass mobilization, if the local organisations have already done so in the past. So to avoid frustrating the mobilization capacity of local NGOs, donors should only work with organizations with strongly embedded network organizations with a proven trackrecord of grass roots mobilization. Conversely, Henderson disagrees. She argues that since thousands of NGOs still lie outside the scope of influence of Western assistance, they have not been ruined yet (Henderson, 2002, p. 164) hence dissuading foreign funding to local NGOs altogether.

A second controversy relates to whether the unintended effects overshadow the intended effects (the perverse effects) or whether in the end the benefits outweigh the unintended costs (the drawback effect). General statements such as by Deaton (2014, see introduction) appear impossible to hold, and a case-by-case analysis appears more appropriate. Also, in this case it is interesting to note that authors studying the same unintended effect reach different conclusions. The unintended effect that can illustrate these divergent views is the clustering of donor attention in the field of sexual violence in Eastern DRC.

Three different studies all focus on the unintended effects of this allegedly exagerated financial and PR focus on just one of the many problems in DRC: rape in times of war (Autesserre S., 2012) (Douma & Hilhorst, 2012) (Heaton, 2014). All argue that other just as important themes receive too little attention as a result of this herding behaviour, where even sexual violence cases are invented to attract financial compensation. Yet their appreciation of the severity of this effect differs. According to Autesserre (p. 202) dominant narrative leads to ‘increased human rights violations’ (hence: perverse effects). Contrariwise, according to Douma and Hilhorst (2012, p. 5) these unintended consequences ‘risk undermining progress in addressing sexual violence’ (hence: drawback effect). Just as with respect to the previous controversy
with respect to whether or not the effects could be avoided (and to what degree), there is debate on just how pernicious they are.

### 7.2. Gaps in the literature: towards a research agenda

A first conclusion is that there are relatively few empirical studies on unintended effects of international cooperation. Despite the relative wide net that was cast for this literature review, only 64 studies were found. This corroborates the finding of, for instance, Samii et al. (Samii, Lisiecki, Parashar Kulkarni, & Chavis, 2014) who were engaged in a systematic review of all literature related to the financing mechanism currently in vogue to combat climate change: the Payment for Environmental Services approach. Despite the fact that in a couple of years 100 billion dollar will be spent in this way annually, and despite the fact that these programs already exist for over a decade, they were unpleasantly surprised that they could actually found only two reliable studies on this topic. Thus, in general more research into the field of unintended effects appears warranted, especially into the newer forms of international cooperation. For that to happen, new methodology would be very helpful.

The four studies that focused on the (lack of) evaluation on unintended effects highlighted that there is a shortage of methodologies to capture unintended effects. There has been some progress in developing tools to capture unintended effects of development programs, such as the Randomized Control Trial + approach (Bamberger, Tarsilla, & Hesse-Biber, 2016). In this RCT+ approach qualitative methods are used both in the preparatory phase, during the research phase and to interpret results. Key questions with respect to methodology development are: what can the field of international relations and development studies learn in this respect from other disciplines? What qualitative methods are particularly promising to capture unintended effects? (e.g. Smirl, 2015) analyzes autobiographies of aid workers; is this an interesting approach?) What quantitative methods to capture unintended effects are promising? (How can big data analyses be useful without falling in the data-mining pitfalls?)

This literature review can indicatively highlight some potential gaps in the encountered literature, based on a systematic analysis of the prevalence of the typologies, namely: (1) very little focus on positive effects, (2) a low prevalence of unavoidable unintended effects; (3) little attention for spill-over effects (notably on the intermediaries of international cooperation).

The first typology, on which very little studies are done, concerns the unintended positive effects. Of the 64 reviewed studies, only 5 focused on this. This might mean that there are just very little positive unintended effects to discover, or that there is a research bias towards finding negatives. This is something that future research should attempt to find out.

A second typology that occurs very little are the unavoidable unintended effects (‘double effects’); only 7 out of the 64 focused exclusively on this. Also with respect to this typology it can be researched if
this is the result of a developmentalist research bias (all potential negative side effects can be dealt with, hence the work can continue), or if the unintended negative effects have truly been avoided or mitigated.

A surprising last relatively rare typology has been research focused on other actors than the original target groups. The fact that only 2 out of the 64 studies focus on the unintended effects on the intermediaries of international cooperation, shows that further research is needed. By not analyzing the welfare effects of international cooperation of those hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of intermediaries and their families, a large segment of unintended effects are largely ignored.

8. Conclusion

With an increasing number of global problems, ranging from human trafficking to global warming, international cooperation is expanding and changing as well. International cooperation encompasses more than just traditional development aid, and includes amongst others peacekeeping missions, responsible business guidelines and wildlife protection. Evaluation departments have been created across the world to measure whether or not the publicly funded international cooperation efforts are meeting their objectives; sometimes objectives are met, sometimes not or only partially. What is not systematically addressed is the question whether these interventions also have unintended effects. That makes the search for effects that fall outside the stated theories of change and log-frames an under-researched topic. By analyzing the studies that have been done, this review aims to begin to address this blind spot.

The guiding question of the review was: ‘What types of unintended effects have been researched?’, and ‘which effects have been relatively less researched’? Consequently, in the theoretical section six different typologies of unintended effects were developed. An analysis of 64 relevant studies with the use of these typologies demonstrated a wide variety of unintended effects in a multitude of sectors. Most of the reported effects were negative, focussed on the target group and were avoidable. In quite some cases the unintended effects were so significant that they annihilated the positive effects that were obtained, and the net effect of the international action was hence negative. This literature review can indicatively highlight some potential gaps in the encountered academic literature, namely: (1) little focus on positive effects, (2) a low prevalence of unavoidable unintended effects; (3) little attention for spill-over effects (notably on the intermediaries of international cooperation).

Wiers (2016) has argued that those engaged in international cooperation need to assess more critically their own assumptions on a continuous basis. If there is one lesson that can be taken away from the analysis of the studies on unintended effects of international action, it is that this would be a highly relevant endeavour to make international action more effective. By studying unintended effects more
systematically, it is possible to prevent negative unintended effects, mitigate unintended unavoidable effects and capitalize on positive unintended effects.

Bibliography


Annex 1: Overview of literature search terms

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