P02 / Politics of Development Cooperation: From North to South

Topic : POLICY, POLITICS AND POLITICAL REGIME

Chair : Xiaoye She (California State University San Marcos)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

The United Nations defines development cooperation as activities specifically aimed at supporting national or international development goals, carried out on a non-profit basis, with a focus on developing countries, and grounded in cooperative relationships that encourage local ownership (UNECOSOC, 2015). Since the end of the Cold War, foreign aid from countries in the global North, typically in the form of official development assistance (ODA), as well as grants and loans from multilateral development finance institutions (DFIs) such as the World Bank and regional development banks, have dominated global development cooperation. However, recent shifts are challenging the longstanding dominance of the global North. These shifts include the rise of the BRICS nations and other emerging powers, the establishment of new DFIs like the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank (NDB), the resurgence of South-South Cooperation (SSC) strategies among countries in the Global South, and new forms of triangular development cooperation (TDC) among global North and South partners.

This panel proposes an analysis of the expanding and increasingly diverse landscape of development cooperation, focusing on bilateral, triangular, and multilateral partnerships involving the global North, emerging donors, and the Global South. At the international level, the analysis will explore how state and non-state actors are navigating the growing complexity of development cooperation, including shifting power dynamics within these partnerships. Drawing from the concept of regime complexity in international relations, this panel builds on the idea that a regime complex is “an array of partially overlapping and non-hierarchical institutions governing a particular issue area” (Raustiala & Victor, 2004). Contributing factors to regime complexity may include misaligned power structures in existing global governance frameworks and the proliferation of new institutions in response to these imbalances (Pratt, 2018). In this context, states and non-state actors often employ strategies such as forum shopping, regime shifting, and contested multilateralism to respond to these complexities (Alter & Raustiala, 2018; Morse & Keohane, 2014). The expansion of new development cooperation partnerships provides opportunities to explore how these strategies are being applied in practice.

Domestically, we propose to examine the domestic context of state and non-state actors, focusing on factors such as political regimes, economic and social transformations, and prevailing development norms and discourses. While much of the existing literature has focused on the domestic politics of foreign aid in developed democracies and countries of the global North (Breuning, 1999; Dadabaev, 2016; de Felice, 2015; Faust & Koch, 2014; Gibson et al., 2005; Molenaers et al., 2015; Tingley, 2010), a growing body of work is also emerging on the domestic processes shaping bilateral development cooperation in more powerful countries in the Global South, including China, Brazil, Turkey, and others(Farias, 2019; Huang, 2014; Kavakli, 2018; Scoones et al., 2016; Shi & Hoebink, 2019; van der Westhuizen & Milani, 2019; Varrall, 2016). This panel seeks to extend these analyses beyond the traditional North-South aid framework and case studies of emerging powers, exploring the domestic political dynamics that drive development cooperation in increasingly complex and multi-actor partnerships across the North and the South.

This panel seeks to address the following research questions:

1. How can we conceptualize the increasing diversity and complexity of development cooperation partnerships among the North, emerging powers, and the broader Global South?

2. What underlying determinants lead states or non-state actors to prioritize particular development cooperation policies and partnership modalities over others?

3. Which structural and agency-driven factors contribute to the observed proliferation and diversification of these policies and partnerships, particularly new forms of SSC and TDC?

Empirically, we invite papers that use comparative or case study methodologies to identify the conditions, actors, and strategies that influence the proliferation and variation of development cooperation policies and partnerships. To encourage cross-regional comparisons and potential collaborations, we welcome submissions that explore the different actors, conditions, and strategies shaping development cooperation

across various regions of the world.

References

Alter, K. J., & Raustiala, K. (2018). The Rise of International Regime Complexity. *Annual Review of Law and Social Science*, *14*(1), 329–349. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-lawsocsci-101317-030830

Breuning, M. (1999). Ethnopolitical Parties and Development Cooperation: The Case of Belgium. *Comparative Political Studies*, *32*(6), 724–751. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414099032006003

Dadabaev, T. (2016). Japan's ODA assistance scheme and Central Asian engagement: Determinants, trends, expectations. *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, *7*(1), 24–38. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euras.2015.10.002

de Felice, D. (2015). Diverging Visions on Political Conditionality: The Role of Domestic Politics and International Socialization in French and British Aid. *World Development*, *75*, 26–45. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.01.010

Farias, D. B. (2019). Brazil's South–South development cooperation: Principles and experiences of the domestic bureaucracy. *Public Administration and Development*, *39*(4–5), 174–181. https://doi.org/10.1002/pad.1825

Faust, Jj., & Koch, S. (2014). Foreign Aid and the Domestic Politics of European Budget Support. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2476316

Gibson, C. C., Andersson, K., Ostrom, E., & Shivakumar, S. (2005). *The Samaritan's Dilemma: The Political Economy of Development Aid* (1st ed.). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/0199278857.001.0001

Huang, Y. (2014). Domestic Politics and China's Health Aid to Africa. *China: An International Journal*, *12*(3), 176–198. https://doi.org/10.1353/chn.2014.0031

Kavakli, K. C. (2018). Domestic Politics and the Motives of Emerging Donors: Evidence from Turkish Foreign Aid. *Political Research Quarterly*, *71*(3), 614–627. https://doi.org/10.1177/1065912917750783

Molenaers, N., Dellepiane, S., & Faust, J. (2015). Political Conditionality and Foreign Aid. *World Development*, *75*, 2–12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.04.001

Morse, J., & Keohane, R. (2014). Contested Multilateralism. *The Review of International Organizations*, *9*. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11558-014-9188-2

Pratt, T. (2018). Deference and Hierarchy in International Regime Complexes. *International Organization*, *72*(3), 561–590. Cambridge Core. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818318000164

Raustiala, K., & Victor, D. G. (2004). The Regime Complex for Plant Genetic Resources. *International Organization*, *58*(2), 277–309.

Scoones, I., Amanor, K., Favareto, A., & Qi, G. (2016). A New Politics of Development Cooperation? Chinese and Brazilian Engagements in African Agriculture. *China and Brazil in African Agriculture*, *81*, 1–12. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.11.020

Shi, X., & Hoebink, P. (2019). From Chengdu to Kampala: The Role of Subnational Actors in China's Foreign Aid. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2019.1621534

Tingley, D. (2010). Donors and domestic politics: Political influences on foreign aid effort. *The Quarterly Review of Economics and Finance*, *50*(1), 40–49. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.qref.2009.10.003

UNECOSOC. (2015). *2016 Development Cooperation Forum Policy Briefs*. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwiTpp2BjcT

van der Westhuizen, J., & Milani, C. R. S. (2019). Development cooperation, the international–domestic nexus and the graduation dilemma: Comparing South Africa and Brazil. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, *32*(1), 22–42. https://doi.org/10.1080/09557571.2018.1554622

Varrall, M. (2016). Domestic actors and agendas in Chinese aid policy. *The Pacific Review*, *29*(1), 21–44. https://doi.org/10.1080/09512748.2015.1066414

CALL FOR PAPERS

The landscape of development cooperation—including traditional North-South aid, South-South Cooperation (SSC), and Triangular Development Cooperation (TDC)—has grown increasingly complex. This complexity arises from a proliferation of state and non-state actors, intensifying geopolitical rivalries, and the dynamic and expanding roles of Global South countries, often driven by a combination of strategic self-interest and solidarity. This panel proposes an analysis of the expanding and increasingly diverse landscape of development cooperation, focusing on structures, agencies, and strategies of states and non-state actors in bilateral, triangular, and multilateral partnerships involving the global North, emerging donors, and the

Global South.

We seek to address the following research questions:

1. How can we conceptualize the increasing diversity and complexity of development cooperation partnerships among the North, emerging powers, and the broader Global South?

2. What underlying determinants lead states or non-state actors to prioritize particular development cooperation policies and partnership modalities over others?

3. Which structural and agency-driven factors contribute to the observed proliferation and diversification of these policies and partnerships, particularly new forms of SSC and TDC?

Drawing on case studies from countries and regions around the world, the panel examines how states and non-state actors navigate the intensifying complexity of development cooperation, shaped by factors including but not limited to domestic political considerations, economic imperatives, foreign policy objectives, and prevailing development norms and discourses.

P02 / Politics of Development Cooperation: From North to South

Chair : Xiaoye She (California State University San Marcos)

Session 1Agency and Alignment: Southeast Asia in Shifting Politics of Development Cooperation

Thursday, July 3rd 10:15 to 12:15 (B1)

Discussants

Anissa Bougrea (Universiteit Gent)

Jan Orbie (Ghent University)

Donors and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Insights from Indonesia

Andrew Rosser (University of Melbourne)

In 2011, the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council (HRC) endorsed the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) to combat corporate abuses of human rights. Emphasising ‘a proactive role for the state’ (Ramasastry 2015: 247), they call on states to foster measures to cultivate business respect for human rights and, in particular, to formulate and implement laws, regulations, and policies on business and human rights (BHR). The HRC has actively promoted this agenda, supported by many donor governments and international organisations, including the European Union, Scandinavian governments and UNDP. Yet assessments suggest that states have moved slowly and inconsistently to adopt and implement the UNGPs, especially in the Global South, while in some cases donors themselves have been accused of facilitating breaches of the UNGPs. What explains this outcome? What have been the obstacles to state adoption and implementation of the UNGPs? Under what conditions have states adopted and implemented the UNGPs? What can government, business, and civil society actors do to compel states to go further in implementing these norms? And why have some donors been accused of enabling breaches of the UNGPs? This paper seeks to address these questions focusing on the case of Indonesia. It argues that the primary obstacle to UNGP implementation in Indonesia has been power asymmetries between politico-business and technocratic elites, on the one hand, and rights coalitions, on the other. At the same time, the latter have been able to make some headway in promoting UNGP implementation where they have leveraged market forces in their favour. This has served to narrow power asymmetries, albeit with different effects on the form of implementation depending on the history of struggle over business and human rights in the relevant domain and the extent of high-level political support. Donors have attracted criticism for facilitating breaches of the UNGPs when they have backed dominant politico-business coalitions in struggles with poor and marginalised elements and rights coalitions over the social or environmental impact of the projects they have funded. In terms of strategy for promoting UNGP implementation, the paper thus argues that Indonesia’s experience suggests that donors’ and others’ efforts to promote UNGP implementation need to go beyond measures of socialization and learning to focus on enabling rights coalitions to confront corporate power. This approach includes ensuring supporting the monitoring and mobilizational capacities of these coalitions over time and, to the extent that hard law responses by states are considered desirable, facilitating their ability to forge alliances with sympathetic elements in the state apparatus. Donors also need to maximise independence from elite coalitions.

Development Cooperation for the Circular Economy in the Agri-Food Sector: Perspectives from India and VietNam

Camelia Adriana Bucatariu (University of Bucharest)

This paper examines the role of development cooperation in advancing the circular economy (CE) in the agri-food sector, focusing on collaboration between the European Union (EU) and two Asian

countries—India and Vietnam. The research question is: How can EU-Asia development cooperation foster the adoption of circular economy practices in the agri-food sector? To address this question, the study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining policy analysis and case studies. Case studies of EU-funded projects, such as SWITCH-Asia programs in India and Vietnam, are examined to assess their socio-economic impacts.

The findings indicate that while the European Union's expertise in policy design and technology transfer has, to some extent, facilitated the adoption of circular economy (CE) practices in Asia, significant barriers remain, including fragmented policies, limited connection to the private sector to facilitate investments, and cultural and institutional resistance.

The paper underscores the necessity of aligning regulatory frameworks, increasing public-private partnerships for investment, and clarifying how digital technologies can support scalability for circular economy practices.

By identifying synergies and gaps in EU-Asia cooperation through the cases of India and VietNam, this paper provides actionable recommendations for strengthening the governance coherence for sustainable agri-food systems in both regions.

Triangular Cooperation in Southeast Asia: Juggling between North and South

Xiaoye She (California State University San Marcos)

Triangular development cooperation (TDC) is a growing form of development assistance that involves a traditional donor, an emerging country, and a beneficiary or recipient. While much research has focused on the power dynamics within TDC partnerships and the role of emerging countries, the analysis often centers on BRICS nations and TDC trends in Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa. This paper explores the evolving TDC patterns in Southeast Asia, highlighting middle powers and smaller states such as Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines. I argue that emerging Southeast Asian countries have played a significant role in expanding TDC efforts both within and beyond the region. They have also diversified their TDC strategies by engaging in multilateralism, traditional North-South partnerships, and newer South-South Cooperation platforms. However, their TDC agency is sometimes limited by shifting domestic political landscapes and foreign policy priorities.

P02 / Politics of Development Cooperation: From North to South

Chair : Xiaoye She (California State University San Marcos)

Session 2Decolonizing Development Cooperation: Narratives, Institutions, and Resistance in North-South Relations

Thursday, July 3rd 16:00 to 18:00 (B1)

Discussants

Andrew Rosser (University of Melbourne)

Xiaoye She (California State University San Marcos)

EU-Africa Relations and the Coloniality of Money: Analysing funding and financing

Anissa Bougrea (Universiteit Gent)

The status of coloniality in EU-Africa relations is ambivalent. Scholars and some practitioners agree on the persistent vestiges of colonialism in this relationship, while diplomats commit to the idea of an ‘equal partnership’. While overt coloniality has become marginalised, this paper focuses on the elusive dynamics of coloniality: funding and financing. This paper theorises the coloniality of money in EU-Africa relations, focusing on how colonial legacies shape power dynamics, decision-making, and institutional practices, using a decolonial lens centred on the ‘coloniality of power’. We scrutinise how EU institutions reproduce Eurocentric worldviews and power imbalances, despite EU rhetoric advocating for equity and pragmatism. We illustrate how Eurocentric practices legitimise ongoing colonial projects and perpetuate racial and economic hierarchies through money-based partnerships. It investigates the strategies employed by African states and institutions to assert agency, and how African countries leverage alternative partnerships, exploit institutional overlaps, and renegotiate rules and standards to challenge Eurocentric financial practices. The paper combines decolonial theory with an empirical analysis of three aspects of EU-Africa relations: institutions, rules and standards, and diplomatic practices. Case studies include the Organization of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (OACPS), the EU-African Union (EU-AU) partnership, the European Investment Bank (EIB), and the European Peace Facility. By combining detailed empirical case studies with a close re-reading of debates on coloniality and decolonization, we argue that understanding the interplay of money, power, and coloniality is vital.

Why Do Collaborative Arrangements Fail? A Multi-Method Analysis of Public-Private Partnerships in Development Cooperation

Angela Samuel (Vienna University of Economics and Business)

Public-private partnerships (PPPs) have become a prominent strategy for delivering public goods and infrastructure, often seen as a mechanism to enhance efficiency, innovation, and resource mobilization. They are increasingly used in development cooperation, where collaboration between governments and private sector actors addresses key challenges, particularly in the development of public infrastructure. However, despite their potential, many PPPs encounter significant obstacles and fail to deliver intended outcomes.

This study investigates the factors that contribute to the failure of PPPs, particularly in development cooperation contexts involving North-South partnerships, using a mixed-method approach. More specifically, it addresses the following research question: *"What are the key political, governance, and institutional barriers undermining the success of collaborative arrangements like PPPs?"* By combining quantitative and qualitative methods, this study provides a comprehensive view of the operational and contextual challenges faced by such partnerships.

The quantitative analysis draws from an integrated dataset that includes the World Bank's Private

Participation in Infrastructure (PPI) project database, the World Governance Index (WGI), and regime classifications from Our World in Data. Additional data on failed projects is gathered from media reports, court documents, and official company statements to identify reasons for cancellations. In parallel, qualitative insights are obtained through interviews with experts and practitioners involved in the planning and oversight of PPPs. These interviews provide context-specific knowledge that complements the quantitative findings, shedding light on governance dynamics and operational challenges that are difficult to capture through archival data alone.

Preliminary results suggest that political barriers often arise from the tradeoffs inherent to different political regimes. For example, authoritarian regimes struggle with high levels of corruption, while democratic regimes experience regulatory delays to more extensive oversight – both of which hinder collaborations. In democracies, project cancellations often stem from regulatory delays such as land acquisition or environmental clearances. Across political regimes, financial constraints consistently affect project viability.

This study contributes to the literature on development cooperation by offering a novel perspective that highlights specific pathways through which governance, economic stability, and institutional quality collectively shape PPP outcomes. The combination of quantitative data and qualitative insights enriches our understanding of how political and institutional structures influence collaboration viability across different regimes. This study provides practical insights for policymakers, development practitioners, and private sector actors aiming to design more resilient and sustainable collaborative partnerships. By identifying key barriers to success, it offers actionable recommendations for strengthening governance structures and mitigating risks in PPPs, particularly in contexts marked by diverse and evolving development cooperation arrangements between the North, South, and emerging economies.

RETHINKING THE EUROPEAN PROJECT THROUGH PAN-AFRICAN NARRATIVES

Jan Orbie (Ghent University)

Official history and historiography of European integration – let alone of Europe as a social, geographical, cultural entity –, has long-time been polished through a selection of conventional narratives (Manners and Murray 2016). Such narratives have until recently omitted to account for the specific experiences of Europe by Africans and people of African descent (Afro-descendants). Yet the historical development of Europe, and of the European integration process leading to the European Union (EU) today, happened in strong relation to political, economic and social processes in the African continent, in triangulation with developments in the Americas (Rodney 1973; Hansen and Jonsson 2014; Dimier 2014).
In connection with works aiming to decentre Europe (Fisher Onar and Nikolaïdis 2013; Keukeleire & Lecocq 2018) and EU narratives about its own history and historiography, and to propose a decolonial project for Europe (Bhambra 2022), we focus here on Pan-Africanism as a (diverse) political and philosophical movement whose links with Europe have been largely neglected. If Pan-Africanism has the purpose for Africans and Afro-descendants to claim back centrality in their political, economic, social choices – reclaiming full democratic sovereignty over African countries –, this endeavour comes in reaction against historical and current actions by other political and social entities, particularly “EUrope”, with its specific ties (euphemistically called “special relationship”) with the African continent. Taking stock of McEachrane’s work on Pan-Africanism in a European context (McEachrane 2020), we aim here to critically understand and ‘provincialize’ the EUropean project by engaging with Pan-African activists and thinkers. Our research question then reads, how do Pan-African narratives conceive of the EUropean project?
Our analysis follows a two-pronged approach. First, we analyze ‘Pan-Africanism from below’ (Mampilly 2024), focusing on activists within the Pan-African League Umoja (LP-U). Pan-Africanism from below is being revived among African diasporas in Europe, in connection with Africans on the continent, since the beginning of the 2010s, through the creation of new Pan-Africanist organisations. Second, we analyze ‘Pan-Africanism from above’ in terms of the key thinkers that continue to inform current activism. This is connected to the LP-U analysis, as their narratives are remarkably similar to, and nurtures itself abundantly of, iconic historical Pan-Africanist thinkers. Such a nurtured presence shows the continued relevance of these figures and their ideas, some of which are being rediscovered (ex: Diop): LP-U analyses of current African issues are often proposed in direct conjunction with the analyses made by key Pan-Africanists in different historical contexts.

Situating the Public in Public Policies: The UNDP’s Role in Humanizing Development

vipul verma (Jawaharlal Nehru University)

The paper examines the transformative role of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in shifting the development discourse from traditional macroeconomic indicators to a human-centred approach,

as exemplified by the Human Development Report (HDR). UNDP's HDR interventions primarily focused on the vital aspects of human well-being: health, education, and standard of living(Conceição, 2020). Later, the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals were formulated, building on the Human-centric development discourse. The introduction of the HDR marked a pivotal change, positioning people at the core of development strategies and influencing governments worldwide, including India, to re-evaluate their policy frameworks.

This study aims to analyze the following research questions:

1. How did the UNDP's HDR influence the redefinition of development among international organizations and member states, including India?

2. In what ways have the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) evolved from the principles established by the HDR, and what role has the UNDP played in this transition?

3. How do contemporary public policies in various countries, including India, reflect the impact of UNDP's human development approach on global governance and responses to pressing issues such as poverty, health, and climate change?

By exploring these questions, this paper particularly highlights the UNDP's pivotal role in promoting people-centred development, the continued relevance of the HDR framework in guiding policy formulation worldwide, and the relevance of such International Organizations in general in today's world.

Keywords: UNDP, human development, HDR, SDGs, global governance.

References:

Conceição, P. (2020). Human development report 2020-the next frontier: Human development and the Anthropocene. United Nations Development Programme: Human Development Report.