Development Cooperation in Africa

Creating New Momentum for
China-U.S. Relations

Song Wei

Abstract: As China projects itself as an emerging donor of development aid, its development cooperation with Africa has garnered unprecedented attention from the world. While China is faced with many challenges in aid practices in Africa despite its remarkable achievements over the past decades, both developed countries and African countries set high expectations for China's potential contribution. Against this backdrop, it is crucial for China to enhance trilateral cooperation with developed donors and share experience with them on how to manage aid programs. Based on successful cooperation in the past, China-U.S.-Africa trilateral cooperation will not only strengthen China-U.S. bilateral ties, but also improve China's overall aid effectiveness to Africa. In the future, China should initiate more development cooperation programs and work to create a coordinating mechanism with the United States in areas of their common

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understanding and interests; it should also go beyond traditional means of assistance and try to get involved in the U.S.-led public-private partnership (PPP) projects.

Keywords: Development cooperation; Africa; China-U.S. relations; aid effectiveness.

With its rapidly rising economy and international status, China has been transforming from a traditional aid recipient into an aid donor. Development cooperation between China and Africa, in particular, has garnered unprecedented worldwide attention. On one hand, developed countries are urging China to follow the practice of the Development Assistance Committee in the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECE/DAC) when engaging Africa; at the same time, African countries also place high hopes on China's development assistance to help them alleviate poverty and achieve industrial modernization. In this light, development cooperation among China, Africa and developed countries, especially the United States, seems to be a viable approach for China to integrate perspectives from both developed aid donors and African recipients and help manage such transnational challenges as climate change and ecological degradation.

This paper attempts to explore China-U.S. development cooperation in Africa as a feasible way to strengthen China-U.S. bilateral ties as well as improve China's aid effectiveness to Africa. The first part introduces the achievements and challenges of China-Africa development cooperation since the 1960s. The second part elaborates on the major driving forces as well as obstacles for China-U.S.-Africa trilateral cooperation. The third part closely examines three pilot fields for China-U.S. development cooperation in Africa.

China-Africa Development Cooperation Since the 1960s

The first official encounter between the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Africa can be dated back to 1955, when Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai proposed the principle of "seeking common ground while reserving

differences" at the Afro-Asian Conference held in Bandung, Indonesia. As China was largely isolated from the international community at the time, and a large number of African countries¹ were striving for independence against growing political and economic pressure from colonial powers, Premier Zhou's proposal greatly helped mitigate the misunderstanding and hostility of many African countries toward China and thus brought them together with a common cause.²

China and Africa soon began their mutual engagement in political, economic and cultural arenas. From December 14, 1963 to February 29, 1964, Premier Zhou paid an official visit to ten African countries, which was seen as a milestone in the development of China-Africa relations. During his visit to Ghana, Premier Zhou announced the famous "Eight Principles on Economic Aid and Technical Assistance to Other Countries," including the principles of equality and reciprocity, no attached conditions, self-reliant development, guarantee of equipment and material quality, transfer of technology and knowledge, and non-prestigious treatment for Chinese specialists, etc.³ These principles reflected China's sincere dedication to the economic and cultural development of the newly independent countries in Africa.⁴ By delivering development assistance to African countries, China incorporated its Africa policy deeply into South-South cooperation, which was a counterexample to the then-prevailing Cold War mentality featuring hegemonism, power politics and zero-sum confrontation. Based on the advancement of China-Africa relations, Mao Zedong proposed the "Theory of the Three Worlds" in 1974 when meeting with

¹17 African countries won independence as late as in 1960, and by 1963 there was 34 independent African countries.

²George T. Yu, "China and the Third World," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 17, No. 11 (November 1977), pp. 1037–1038.

³Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Central Party Literature Research Office, *Selected Texts of Zhou Enlai on Diplomacy* (Beijing: World Affairs Press, 1994), pp. 388–389.

⁴Report of visiting 14 countries made by Premier Zhou Enlai at the Standing Committee of the 2nd National People's Congress and the Plenary Joint Session of the State Council on April 25, 1964. Quoted from Shi Lin ed., *Foreign Economic Cooperation of Contemporary China* (Beijing: China Social Science Press, 1989), p. 43.

Zambian President Kaunda, emphasizing the significant role of the Third World in the world order.⁵

In the meantime, China's development assistance to Africa added to its own economic burden. When China's gross domestic product (GDP) totaled RMB 226.13 billion in 1970,⁶ it extended a zero-interest loan of nearly RMB 1 billion for building railways in Africa. This loan agreement set a payback period of 30 years, which could be extensible in case of repayment problems.⁷ In order to

China's aid to Africa during the Cold War was based on political considerations.

avoid those problems, China later reexamined the guiding principles of its foreign aid. In January 1983, then Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang announced the "Four Principles of China's Foreign Aid" — equality and mutual benefit, stressing substantial results, and having multiform and common development — during his visit to Tanzania. A large number of joint projects were launched under the new principles. Between 1979 and 1985, China joined with 43 countries in 119 technical and management projects. Besides, China took an active part in the Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC) program initiated by the United States and supported nearly 500 TCDC projects in the 1980s and 1990s.⁸

In the post-Cold War era, China's development aid toward Africa has begun to highlight reciprocity with African partners. In May 1995, the State

⁵When meeting with Kaunda, Mao said, "I would say the U.S. and the USSR make the First World. Those in the middle, such as Japan, Europe, Australia, and Canada, are the Second World. We are the Third World." He also stated that "In Asia, all countries belong to the Third World except Japan. All of Africa is in the Third World and so is Latin America." Quoted from Central Party Literature Research Office, *Yearly Chronicle of Mao Zedong 1949–1976* (Beijing: Central Party Literature Press, 2013), pp. 520–521.

⁶National Bureau of Statistics of China, <http://data.stats.gov.cn/search/keywordlist2;jsessionid=0E84162C3C8CDED7D3D174C072CFF5C3?keyword=1970%20gdp>.

⁷"Zhou Enlai tong Tansangniyalianhegongheguo Zongtong Nileier Dierci Huitan Jilu [Minutes of the Second Meeting between Zhou Enlai and President Nyerere of the United Republic of Tanzania]," *Literature of the Chinese Communist Party*, No. 3 (2012), p. 11.

⁸Shi, *Foreign Economic Cooperation of Contemporary China*, p. 43.

Council published the *Reply on Issues Concerning Reform of Foreign Aid*, marking a big step in China's foreign aid reform by mapping out a grand foreign trade strategy. The document called for

learning from the effective practices of other countries on foreign aid, including pushing forward concessional loans with government-provided subsidy, expanding scale of foreign aid, and promoting the efficiency of foreign aid, in order to facilitate export of Chinese equipment, materials and technologies.⁹

The document also pointed out that

there is a need to actively promote beneficial ways of joint venture and cooperation in foreign aid projects and to adjust the structure of aid properly, the main goal of which is to expand the scale of concessional loans with government-provided subsidy and to increase grants. But generally, interest-free loans will not be supplied in the future.¹⁰

Two new approaches to delivering aid — concessional loans as well as joint venture and cooperation — were proposed in this landmark document. By the new approaches, China's joint ventures, combined with governmental aid funds and company funds, helped expand funding sources and enlarge aid scales to guarantee the benefits of aid projects in Africa.¹¹

Notably, China's foreign aid reform was conducive to boosting the country's trade and investment in Africa, although it also triggered some local backlashes. In Zambia, for instance, anti-Chinese sentiments began were rising during the 2006 presidential election. Michel Sata, the opposition candidate, threatened to restore the country's ties with Taiwan if Chinese companies failed to comply with international labor standards in

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Wang Chang, *Zhongguo Gaoceng Moulue — Waijiaojuan* [China's Top Policy Decision — Diplomacy] (Xi'an: Shaanxi Normal University Publishing House, 2001), p. 102.

their mining activities in Zambia.¹² Partly in response to the criticism from African countries, the Chinese government initiated the Forum of China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)¹³ by prioritizing African demands.

At the 2006 FOCAC Summit in Beijing, China declared that it would double the size of development assistance to Africa by 2009, including providing \$3 billion preferential loans and \$2 billion preferential export buyer's credit to African countries, exempting those heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) and least developed countries (LDCs) in Africa from repaying Chinese government interest-free loans (that had become due by the end of 2005), and training 15,000 professionals for African countries.¹⁴

In 2011, China published its first official white paper on foreign aid, according to which 51 African countries had received foreign aid from China by 2009, and 45.7 percent of China's foreign aid was delivered to African countries in 2009.¹⁵ During the fifth Ministerial Conference of FOCAC in 2012, African countries expressed appreciation for China's longstanding development assistance in diverse forms. It was also at this event that the Chinese government initiated the "African Talents Program" aimed at training 30,000 African professionals in various sectors while providing 18,000 government scholarships.¹⁶

China published its second white paper on foreign aid in 2014, which indicates that from 2010 to 2012, China appropriated RMB 89.34 billion (or \$14.41 billion) for foreign

China-Africa
development
cooperation has
grown rapidly since
the launch of
FOCAC.

¹²Vasiliki Papatheologou, "EU, China, Africa towards a Trilateral Cooperation: Prospects and Challenges for Africa's Development," *Journal of African Studies & Development*, Vol. 6, No. 5 (June 2014), pp. 78–86.

¹³The FOCAC was established in 2000 and the first ministerial meeting was held in Beijing in October of that year. But the first summit meeting was not held until November 2006.

¹⁴Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Beijing Action Plan (2007–2009), December 31, 2006, <http://en.pkulaw.cn/display.aspx?cgid=100670561&lib=tax>.

¹⁵Information Office of the State Council, "China's Foreign Aid," April 21, 2011, <http://www.scio.gov.cn/zfbps/ndhf/2011/Document/896982/896982.htm>.

¹⁶The Fifth Ministerial Conference of FOCAC Beijing Action Plan (2013–2015), July 23, 2012, <https://www.mfa.gov.cn/zflt/eng/ltada/dwjbzjjhys/t954620.htm>.

assistance to 121 countries, among which 51 were in Africa.¹⁷ At the FOCAC Johannesburg Summit held on December 5, 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping declared that China would continue to scale up its assistance to African countries within its capacity, giving priority to areas pertaining to people's livelihoods such as agriculture, health, infrastructure, education and human resources development, as well as wildlife and environmental protection. As a concrete step, China would exempt the LDCs, land-locked countries (LLCs) and small island developing countries (SIDs) in Africa from repaying the outstanding intergovernmental interest-free loans due by the end of 2015.¹⁸

China's aid practices have significantly aided social and economic development in African countries over the past decades. Most importantly, China has maintained sound records of fast aid delivery. China's aid projects in Africa, mostly infrastructure building projects, are usually implemented by Chinese enterprises and a workforce of mainly Chinese workers, generating high efficiency, though sometimes criticism of limited technological transfer as well. Besides, China tends to set flexible payback conditions for its loans and attaches no strings to recipient governments. Chinese loans can not only be paid for with oil, lumber, coco and other commodities, but also through franchising appointment of China's aid projects. For example, when a hydroelectric project is done and handed over to African countries, the local governments can appoint Chinese enterprises to operate it; a certain proportion of the profits will be used to pay back China's loans. Although it aggravates doubts of China's "neocolonialist ambition," this model is indeed very popular among African recipients of China's aid, for it is able to meet the immediate demands of recipient governments and local communities.

Meanwhile, China-Africa development cooperation is faced with quite a few challenges. For one, due to a lack of stakeholder engagement in the local communities, China's development aid to African countries has yet to win more social recognition. It is not always a result of China's state-centered approach in its aid practice, but it is sometimes due to the constraints

¹⁷Information Office of the State Council, "China's Foreign Aid," July 10, 2014, <http://www.scio.gov.cn/zfbps/ndhf/2014/Document/1375014/1375014.htm>.

¹⁸The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Johannesburg Action Plan (2016–2018), December 10, 2015, <https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/cgmb/eng/zgyw/t1323159.htm>.

of local conditions. For instance, the Chinese medical team in Cameroon had to limit its contact with local people and media because of the harsh living conditions, material deprivation and potential menace of various pandemics.¹⁹ For another, China needs to enhance its soft power in African countries by sharing more development experience with them.²⁰ Despite the fact that many incumbent leaders and civil servants of African countries often visit China or have even had training experiences in Chinese universities, most of the brilliant ideas they have learned from China on governance and development are yet to be localized and made operational.²¹

China-U.S.-Africa Trilateral Cooperation: Momentum and Challenges

Trilateral cooperation is defined as a relationship in which a DAC donor and/or multilateral agency partners with a so-called “pivotal” country to deliver development assistance to a recipient country. The Bogota Statement in 2010, entitled “Towards Effective and Inclusive Development,” affirms that trilateral cooperation can bridge the gap between South-South and North-South cooperation.²² By pooling resources, DAC and non-DAC donors can jointly improve aid effectiveness through better practices.²³

The intention of trilateral cooperation is to draw on respective strengths of each partner while promoting their collaboration. DAC donors and/or multilaterals can offer their financial resources, development experience and institutional capacity. For DAC donors, decades of aid engagement have led to robust institutions, trained personnel, strong networks with non-state actors and multilaterals, extensive experience of undertaking

¹⁹Zhou Haijin, “Zhongguo dui Kamailong de Yiliao Yuanzhu [China’s Medical Assistance to Cameroon],” *International Forum*, No. 1 (January 2014), p. 43.

²⁰Antoine Roger Lokongo, “Reflections on Colonial Legacies in Africa,” *World Economics and Politics*, No. 9 (September 2013), pp. 86–87.

²¹Song Wei, “China Can Offer Africa Lessons in Effective Governance,” *Global Times*, August 2, 2017, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/1058893.shtml>.

²²Guido Ashoff, “Triangular Cooperation: Opportunities, Risks, and Conditions for Effectiveness,” World Bank Special Report, October 2010, <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/WBI/Resources/213798-1286217829056/ashoff.pdf>.

²³Edien Pantoja and Cristina Elsner, “Triangular Cooperation: New Paths to Development,” July 2009, <http://www.oecd.org/dac/dac-global-relations/43705278.pdf>, pp. 5–6.

projects and programs, as well as familiarity with norms and requirements of the international development community. Their own experiences of development transition, combined with shared geographical, cultural and linguistic ties with recipient countries, may allow for more efficient and effective delivery of development assistance.²⁴ From the perspective of DAC donors, “pivotal” countries can provide cheaper goods and services, which makes the assistance more cost-effective. From the perspective of “pivotal” countries, benefits can be reaped through capacity building and knowledge exchange with DAC donors. In practice, some non-DAC development partners have already adopted DAC standards. For example, the United Arab Emirates and Turkey give their annual reports to the DAC and use DAC definitions and formulations of official development assistance (ODA).²⁵

Over the past few years, China has projected itself as an emerging donor of development aid. China’s efforts on the institutional reform of international development cooperation was highlighted by the establishment of the Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and the New Development Bank (NDB). Meanwhile, China’s support to the United Nations has been unprecedented. In September 2015, China initiated the South-South Cooperation Aid Fund to help accelerate the implementation of the *UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* in developing countries, with

an initial fund of \$2 billion.²⁶ In 2016, China again committed \$1 billion to the China-UN Peace and Development Fund. In all these new funding pledges, China has demonstrated great interest in trilateral cooperation programs.

The U.S. remains the largest aid donor to Africa.

²⁴Cheryl McEwan and Emma Mawdsley, “Trilateral Development Cooperation: Power and Politics in Emerging Aid Relationships,” *Development and Change*, Vol. 43, No. 6 (November 2012), pp. 1185–1209.

²⁵Richard Manning, “Will ‘Emerging’ Donors Challenge the Face of International Cooperation?,” *Development Policy Review*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (July 2006), pp. 371–383.

²⁶Christine Han, *Trilateral Cooperation with China: Sharing China’s Development Experience through Innovative Partnerships* (Beijing: UNDP China, 2017), <http://www.cn.undp.org/content/china/en/home/library/south-south-cooperation/trilateral-cooperation-with-china-.html>.

In the meantime, the United States has been the largest donor of development assistance to Africa since the end of the Cold War. While expanding the scale of its aid, the United States has been adjusting its aid policies and innovating the means of aid delivery, which serves as a good example for other aid donors.

First of all, the United States takes comprehensive assistance as the top priority in its overall foreign assistance strategy aimed at seven development goals, namely, maintaining food security, strengthening the world health system, reducing the impact of climate change, achieving economic sustainability, promoting democracy, providing disaster warning, and managing crisis and disputes.²⁷ To achieve these goals, the United States introduced a series of general aid programs such as the "Feed the Future Initiative," the "Global Health Program," and the "Climate Change Action Plan" under the Obama administration alone, carefully determining the capital scale, the execution scope and the objectives of each project. Besides, the United States has offered to implement tailored aid programs in different African countries. In Kenya, for example, the United States provided a 5-year agricultural development program, on the basis of which other aid programs on infrastructure building and technical training were carried out.²⁸ In this way, different aid programs can be integrated and implemented flexibly.

Second, the United States tries to rally multiple funding sources of development assistance. On one front, the U.S. government has scaled up its ODA by cooperating with actors from the private sector. As a result, charity funds, enterprises, universities, religious groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and even individuals have all become indispensable stakeholders of American foreign assistance. For instance, both the Asia Foundation and the America Foundation are key funding sources under the supervision of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In turn, the USAID provides special funds to numerous NGOs

²⁷USAID *Policy Framework 2011–2015* (Washington, D.C.: United States Agency for International Development, 2014), <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/USAID%20Policy%20Framework%202011-2015.PDF>.

²⁸USAID *Kenya Country Development Cooperation Strategy 2014–2018* (Washington, D.C.: United States for International Development, 2014), <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1860/CDCS-w%20Annexes%20Lo.pdf>.

Fig. 1. Number of Public-Private Partnership Established by Year

Source: George M. Ingram and Julie Biau, "A Date Picture of USAID Public-Private Partnership: 2001–2014," Brookings Institution, October 2014, https://www.usaid.gov/opengov/developer/datasets/Ingram_PPP_Fact_Sheet_Final.pdf, p. 2.

each year for them to implement specific aid programs. In addition to the official channel, private foundations represented by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have been playing an active role in the delivery of development assistance.²⁹ At the same time, the U.S. government continues to innovate the way it finances aid. In 2001, the USAID introduced the model of public-private partnership (PPP), which allows for participation of private companies in specific aid programs (see Figure 1). This innovation has successfully tapped the potential of the U.S. private sector and thus enlarged the scale of American foreign assistance.

Third, the United States tends to adopt a whole-of-government approach in its implementation of aid programs. With nearly 10,000 employees, the USAID as the official aid agency has set up its representative office in each African recipient country to supervise aid programs on the ground. Also, functional departments are designed and created within the USAID to manage specific assistance programs.³⁰ Besides, the USAID extends much support to small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in

²⁹U.S. Department of State, *Function 150 & Other International Programs Fiscal Year 2014* (Washington, D.C.: Department of State, 2013), p. 55.

³⁰See an introduction to the USAID at <https://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/organization>.

their participation of turnkey contracts and subcontracts, regarding them as preferred procurement targets³¹ and encouraging them to shoulder corporate social responsibility (CSR) in Africa.

Apart from the USAID, the Peace Corps has long been the largest official voluntary organization of the United States that is mandated to deliver aid services abroad. In Africa, the Peace Corps aims to meet the demands of “middle human resources” from developing countries, and sends its volunteers at the primary or intermediate level.³² Members of the Peace Corps are sent to the poorest areas in Africa to help local residents enhance their technical competence, which has not only generated a rather positive and appealing American image among Africans, but also helped spread American culture and values at the grassroots level.

In the past decade, development assistance to Africa has emerged as a shared topic in Sino-U.S. relations, for China has increasingly acknowledged the U.S. expertise and experience in the delivery of development assistance and begun to regard trilateral cooperation as an efficient way to tackle challenges in its aid to Africa. At least before the Trump presidency, China and the United States had been working well in their development cooperation in Africa, especially since the African Union (AU) adopted its Agenda 2063 on June 10, 2013 in order to achieve industrial modernization in the continent.³³

From the Chinese perspective, to foster mutual prosperity and development is the ultimate goal of China's aid toward Africa. During his state visit to Tanzania in March 2013, President Xi highlighted “sincerity” in laying out the future path of China-Africa cooperation. As he said, China views its own development as closely connected with that of Africa; China is ready to share development opportunities with Africa and sincerely hopes to see faster development and a better life for the African people.³⁴

³¹“USAID Earns an ‘A’ on the Federal Small Business Procurement Scorecard,” USAID Press Office, April 29, 2016, <https://2012-2017.usaid.gov/news-information/press-releases/apr-29-2016-usaid-earns-federal-small-business-procurement-scorecard>.

³²Liu Guozhu, “*Hepingdui de Lishi Wenhua Yuanyuan* [Historical and Cultural Origins of the Peace Corps],” *Anhui Journal of Historical Research*, No. 3 (March 2005), p. 12.

³³For details of “Agenda 2063: The Africa we Want (popular version),” see https://au.int/en/Agenda2063/popular_version.

³⁴Xi Jinping, *The Governance of China* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2014), p. 307.

Based on this belief, President Xi proposed to build “a community of shared future for mankind,” because all countries are interdependent and mutually connected today. As President Xi emphasized in his keynote speech at the 70th UN General Assembly in September 2015, “[w]e should renew our commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, build a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation, and create a community of shared future for mankind.”³⁵ In this vein, China is willing to take into account the interests of both the United States and African countries in trilateral cooperation.

Trilateral cooperation in Africa is in the interest of both China and the U.S.

From the U.S. perspective, working more closely with China in development cooperation in Africa will not only ease its financial and diplomatic burden, but also help stabilize its relationship with China. In fact, development cooperation was an important topic for China and the United States

under the bilateral framework of Strategic and Economic Dialogue (S&ED) as well as on such multilateral platforms as the Group of Twenty (G20). In September 2015, China and the United States signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on development cooperation, in which both sides agreed to — on the premise of being “raised, agreed, and led by aid recipients” — exploit their respective advantages to carry out various development programs and to expand areas of cooperation step by step, so as to alleviate poverty and hunger around the world.³⁶ The United States also welcomed China to increase its financial investment in strengthening regional infrastructure connectivity.³⁷

Since President Trump came into office and adopted the “America First” doctrine, however, China-U.S.-Africa development cooperation has

³⁵“Working Together to Forge a New Partnership of Win-win Cooperation and Create a Community of Shared Future for Mankind,” Chinese Foreign Ministry, September 29, 2015, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/wjdt_665385/zyjh_665391/t1305051.shtml.

³⁶“Zhongmei Qianshu Fazhan Hezuo Liangjie Beiwanglu [China and America Signed MOU for Development Cooperation],” Central Government of People’s Republic of China, September 26, 2015, http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2015-09/26/content_2939153.htm.

³⁷“Outcome List of President Xi Jinping’s State Visit to the United States,” Xinhua News, September 26, 2015, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2015-09/26/c_134661037.htm.

been faced with more challenges. Due to different development cooperation regimes, standards and stakeholder interests, trilateral cooperation requires tremendous efforts to address the coordination and harmonization issues that accompany any project, usually with additional independent actors.³⁸ A sound and trust-based bilateral relationship must serve as the basis for those efforts. Given that the Trump administration continues its threats to launch a “trade war” on China, and the U.S. policy community has openly expressed their pessimism about China-U.S.-Africa development cooperation,³⁹ it is unlikely that any progress in substantive trilateral dialogues can be achieved.⁴⁰

Revitalization of China-U.S. Development Cooperation in Africa

With the strategic and trade tensions between China and the United States being eased by strenuous efforts from both sides, China-U.S.-Africa trilateral cooperation should be revitalized — not just to facilitate development in Africa, but to enhance China-U.S. relations as well. The trilateral cooperation can be piloted in several African countries including Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Ethiopia.

In Liberia and Sierra Leone, China and the United States have already started technical cooperation since the breakout of the Ebola crisis. In 2014, Liberia and Sierra Leone were stricken by the infectious Ebola, and the death toll reached a record high. As a first response, China sent assistance including medical staff and equipment. Ban Ki-moon, then UN Secretary General, spoke highly of China’s contribution on backing Ebola-plagued

³⁸Gu Jing *et al.*, *China-UK-Africa Trilateral Cooperation on Trade and Investment: Prospects and Challenges for Partnership for Africa’s Development* (Brighton: Institute of Development Studies, 2017), https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/123456789/12727/ER218_ChinaUKAfricaTrilateralCooperationonTradeandInvestmentProspectsandChallengesforPartnershipforAfricasDevelopment.pdf?sequence=1.

³⁹Larry Hanauer and Lyle J. Morris, *Chinese Engagement in Africa: Drivers, Reactions, and Implications for U.S. Policy* (Santa Monica, RAND Corporation, 2014), https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR521.html.

⁴⁰He Wenping, “‘Trust’ is the Key Word for China-US Cooperation in Africa,” *China-US Focus*, August 6, 2012, <https://www.chinausfocus.com/foreign-policy/trust-is-the-key-word-for-china-us-cooperation-in-africa>.

countries to conquer the disease.⁴¹ In the meantime, the United States pledged to invest \$750 million into the prevention, control and treatment of infected diseases in Africa, with a special focus on the health of women, newborns and children.⁴² The United States also planned to help train African medical workers to strengthen the local capacity of managing public health crises.

It is notable that China and the United States had very constructive interactions in Liberia to jointly address the Ebola challenge. When chartered flights from China landed in October 2014 in Monrovia, capital city of Liberia, the U.S. Army in the airport promptly dispatched its forklifts to help unload Chinese aid materials. Shortly afterwards, China and the United States agreed to undertake the responsibility of rebuilding and upgrading the public health system in Sierra Leone; more importantly, both countries were determined to seize the opportunity in combating Ebola to facilitate the establishment of the African Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The U.S. working group invited its Chinese counterpart to provide technical support in the draft of implementation protocols, whilst China was in charge of the construction of a medical center to serve the local communities.

In Nigeria, achievement of agricultural rejuvenation has been one of the key economic policy goals for the country.⁴³ In 2008, China, in collaboration with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), set up a national food security program in Nigeria. Since then, 56 Chinese food experts have been sent to Nigeria, introducing farming technology and

⁴¹"Li Keqiang Yingyue Jiu Yingdui Aibola Yiqing tong Lianheguo Mishuzhang Panjiwen Tongdianhua [Li Keqiang talks to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon over phone on tackling Ebola]," *People's Daily*, October 22, 2014, <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2014/1022/c64094-25881893.html>.

⁴²Lena H. Sun and Juliet Eilperin, "U.S. Military will Lead \$750 Million Fight against Ebola in West Africa," *The Washington Post*, September 16, 2014, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/us-military-to-lead-ebola-fight/2014/09/15/69db3da0-3d32-11e4-b0ea-8141703bbf6f_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.9dca4de68771.

⁴³Wang Shan, "Niriliya Dali Fuxing Nongye Zhongguo Qiye Youwang Bawo Xianji [Nigeria Development Agriculture, Chinese Enterprises are Likely to Grab Opportunities]," *China Radio International*, July 8, 2013, <http://gb.cri.cn/42071/2013/07/08/6071s4174435.htm>.

experience to rural residents. So far, four demonstration centers of agricultural practice were established with China's help, including the Ibadan Fish, Farming and Bamboo-Planting Center, the Gombe Cage Fishing Center, the Locke Irrigation and Vegetable-Planting Center, and the Kaduna Bee-keeping and Aquatic Product Center. Under the guidance of Chinese experts, Nigerian farmers have greatly enhanced their capacity in the fields of agricultural production, water conservancy, aquatic production and animal husbandry.⁴⁴ With financial support from the U.S. Congress, the United States has also designed the "Agricultural Income Growth and Enhancing Key Enterprises" Program for Nigeria. The special program would invest \$61.1 million in its first phase, for the training of nearly 1.28 million people and 18,000 enterprises from the capital area and other 31 states. In the second phase, the program would invest \$60 million to improve the commercial operation of six agricultural products including rice and broom-corn.

Looking into the future, China and the United States can make full use of their advantages to deliver combined assistance to Nigeria in the agricultural sector, based on the principle of "proposed by Nigeria, and jointly sponsored and implemented by China and the United States." In this way, China can learn from the United States and get first-hand experience on how to design aid projects, so as to deliver its aid more effectively; the United States, in turn, can save on a large amount of financial and human resources. More importantly, such cooperation in a third country can greatly help strengthen the mutual understanding and trust of both countries, especially at the policy and operational levels, which is crucial to rebuilding their mutual strategic trust in view of the current strategic tensions between them.

In Ethiopia, the majority of electricity facilities are obsolete, outmoded and aging, too weak to resist disasters. In this regard, China

Development
cooperation in a third
country helps
enhance China-U.S.
mutual strategic
trust.

⁴⁴Li Huailin and Cao Kai, "Zhongguo Niriliya Nongye Hezuo Xiangmu Qude Xianzhu Jinzhan [Sino-Nigeria Agriculture Cooperation Program Achieved Remarkable Results]," News 163. com, September 19, 2011, <http://news.163.com/11/0919/14/7EAR3LLE00014JB5.html>.

can export its equipment and technologies of power generation to Ethiopia.⁴⁵ Similarly, the United States officially announced its "Power Africa" program during President Obama's visit to South Africa in 2013, which was set to double the power supply in sub-Saharan region within five years. To achieve that goal, the U.S. government has adopted many PPP projects, pooling \$7 billion ODA and \$9 billion private funds to the construction of power infrastructure in Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Garner, Uganda, Mozambique and Liberia.⁴⁶ The "Power Africa" program has so far completed its first phase of implementation, adding 4,300 megawatts of cleaner electricity to the regional power grid. The program also aimed to promote the use of other renewable energies and helped establish wind power parks in Kenya, solar panels in Rwanda, and geothermal power plants in Ethiopia.⁴⁷

Thus, Ethiopia can be another ideal destination for China-U.S. development cooperation in Africa. As the first step, alignment needs to be achieved between the "China-Africa Production Capacity Cooperation Program" and the "Power Africa" program, in order to avoid policy conflicts and resource waste. China National Machinery Industry Corporation (CNMIC) has already signed an MoU with General Electric (GE) to jointly promote renewable energies in sub-Saharan Africa.⁴⁸ Moving forward, China should try to foster technological and financial partnership with the United States. Given that the United States remains the largest aid donor to Africa, and that it has been driving most of the fund flows into the power sector, China should consider taking part in some PPP projects initiated by

⁴⁵For example, China's power grid system has already adopted the technologies combining power transmission and telecommunications. Adoption of such technologies in Africa will greatly save infrastructure investment. See Wang Nan, "Dianli: Feizhou Gongyehua de Tiaozhan yu Jiyu [Electric Power: Challenges and Opportunities for the Industrialization in Africa]," *Asia and Africa Review*, No. 16 (2014), p. 80.

⁴⁶Office of the Press Secretary, "Remarks by President Obama at the University of Cape Town," The White House, June 30, 2013, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/06/30/remarks-president-obama-university-cape-town>.

⁴⁷See USAID's "Power Africa" annual reports, <https://www.usaid.gov/powerafrica/annualreport>.

⁴⁸"Guoji Jituan yu GE Gongsi Qianye Tuidong Feizhou Qingjie Nengyuan Jianshe [Sino-mach Signs Agreement with GE to Promote Clean Energy in Africa]," Xinhua News, September 18, 2015, http://news.xinhuanet.com/fortune/2015-09/18/c_1116604673.htm.

the USAID to co-finance electricity development in Ethiopia and other African countries.

Conclusion

Due to historical reasons, China is playing a very unique role in international development cooperation, acting as both an aid recipient and a donor. With its keen efforts to advocate South-South cooperation in recent years, China's development cooperation with Africa has triggered significant skepticism from the West, especially the United States. Nevertheless, it is necessary to bear in mind that principles in the evaluation of aid effectiveness for traditional donors may not necessarily fit the Chinese case; instead, much of the criticism on China reveals that the existing international development system needs to be revamped to better accommodate the roles of emerging economies and recipient countries. At the same time, China needs to adopt an open minded and inclusive approach in its cooperation with Africa and try to avoid the "Left's naivety," which features both West-phobia and blind confidence.⁴⁹ With its increasing engagement with African countries in trade, investment and development, China should initiate more trilateral cooperation with developed donors and learn from them on how to manage aid programs.

If designed and implemented well, China-U.S.-Africa trilateral cooperation will not only strengthen China-U.S. bilateral ties, but also improve China's overall aid effectiveness to Africa in the long run. To achieve this end, China and the United States can begin with development cooperation in areas where both sides have the narrowest perception and interest gaps. Creation of a coordinating mechanism, ideally under the renewed S&ED, will be key to the success of China-U.S. development cooperation in Africa. In addition, China should abandon the traditional thinking on taking full control and full credit for its aid, and instead try to get involved in the U.S.-led PPP projects. That will help China grow into a more experienced and trusted partner in international development cooperation.

⁴⁹Song Wei, "Jingti Quanguo Jingji Zhili Zhong de Youzhibing [Stay Vigilant About Naivety in Global Economic Governance]," *Global Times*, July 18, 2016, opinion.huanqiu.com/hqsbpl/2016-07/9185817.html.